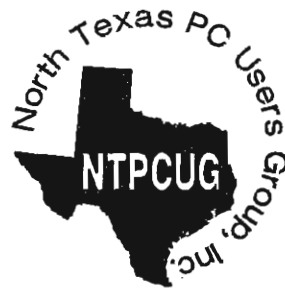


Price \$3.00

North Texas



PC NEWS

1998

NTPCUG Officer Elections
(See Pages 4 - 6 for details...)

BEGINNER'S



Guide

SEE
PAGES
7 - 12

January, 1998
VOLUME 17 • NUMBER 1

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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.

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DEADLINE
Copy deadline for January
North Texas PC NEWS:
Saturday, January 10th

Meeting Dates:

January 17, 1998 – 3rd Saturday
February 21, 1998 – 3rd Saturday
March 21, 1998 – 3rd Saturday



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Visit the North Texas PC Users Group web page:
<http://www.ntpcug.org>

North Texas PC News

Advertising Prices and Policies

Ad Size	1X	3X	6X	12X
2-Page Spread	\$400	\$325		
Full Page (7 x 9)	225	195	\$165	\$150
Half Page (7 x 4 1/2)	150	125	110	100
Qtr Page (3 1/4 x 4 1/2)	100	80	65	55
Business Card (2 x 3 1/4)	65	50	40	35
Business Card (Members)	35	25	20	20

Reduced rates for multiple insertions of same ad. Require prior commitment in writing and payment in advance (3 months minimum). Copy and mechanical changes requested between insertions will be billed accordingly.

Deadlines: All advertising copy must be received by the PC News staff no later than the 10th day of the month prior to the month of publication unless other arrangements are made with the Publisher. NT PC News publication date is 10 days before the monthly meeting of the North Texas PC Users Group.

Policies & Mechanicals:

- Commercial ads must be in repro form, in final size, ready for printing.
- Halftones must be furnished as final size, screened prints or negatives.
- Halftone screens cannot exceed 100 LPI maximum.
- No ads on front cover. Bleed pages and color must be discussed with Publisher before submission.
- Related ads only; suitability is at discretion of the Publisher and the North Texas PC Users Group Board of Directors.

Payment: Payment in advance of publication.
Make checks payable to: North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

9:00 AM - 9:55 AM

**Make Room for the New 120MB Diskette
Imation Corporation (www.imation.com)
Walt Wilson, Technical Service Specialist**

The New 120MB "SuperDisk(TM)" diskette allows storage of large files for transfer, hard disk management, and backup. Used in the new SuperDisk LS120 internal drive (which can be your "A" drive) or the new SuperDisk external Parallel Port drive, you can experience up to 5 times faster transfer rate -More-over standard diskettes. Best of all, the SuperDisk drive is backward compatible and will read and write to your 1.44MB and 720KB diskettes! Come learn all about it. There will be a drawing for a free Parallel Port drive. *

10:00 AM - 10:55 AM

**How to Build a PC from Scratch (and why you should)
Billy Newsom, Webmaster of The Motherboard HomeWorld
(http://www.motherboards.org)**

Come learn from a hardware guru how to build your own PC. Learn about the advantages of building your own, what makes a good system good, the basics of motherboard shopping, and chipsets and why they're important. Discuss where and how to buy the case and other parts, how to put it all together, troubleshooting, and more. There will be a drawing for Spot the Motherboard. *

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

**NTPCUG Business Meeting
(Room 1061)**

1:00 PM - 2:55 PM

A Special OS/2 User Group Meeting

Details will be posted on the NTPCUG BBS Meetings Conference and on the NTPCUG web site at www.ntpcug.org.

* 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.

**PROGRAMS &
PRESENTATIONS...**
TIMOTHY CARMICHAEL

JANUARY 17

**SIGs NTPCUG SPECIAL
INTEREST GROUP
MEETING SCHEDULE**

8:00 - 8:55
Internet - WEB Developers
Microsoft Networking
Visual BASIC - Beginning
MultiMedia

8:00 - 9:55
Hardware Solutions
MS Word for Windows

9:00 - 9:55
DOS/ Operating Systems
General Genealogy
Internet-Advanced
SQL Server
introduction to the PC
Quicken
Visual BASIC
Windows Applications

9:00 - 10:55
Dallas Corel

10:00 - 10:55
ACT!
CAD
Delphi

Emerging Technologies
Fox Pro Database
Networking
Internet-Beginning
PAF-Genealogy
introduction to the PC
WordPerfect/Windows
UNIX

11:00 - 11:30
Business Meeting

11:00 - 11:55
Assembly Language
Brother's Keeper

11:00 - 11:55 Ctd.
CAD (Cont.)
Investors
Graphics
Microsoft FrontPage,
Paradox
Roots III/IV - Genealogy
Spreadsheets
Microsoft Visual C++/MFC

11:30 - 12:00
NTPCUG Orientation

12:00 - 12:55
Access
Alpha Four
C++ Language
Communications
Desktop Publishing
Java

introduction to the PC
The Master Genealogist

1:00 - 1:55
ActiveX Developers
Business Apps./DAC Easy
Lotus Notes & Domino

1:00 - 1:55 Ctd.
introduction to the PC
QuickBooks

2:00 - 2:55
Advanced Programmers

**Special Meeting for SIG
Leaders and NTPCUG
Officers & Members**

**SIG Schedules may be
subject to changes at
the last minute. Please
consult the BBS, or the
NTPCUG Web page
(www.ntpcug.org) and
remember to check the
handouts in the IN-
FOMART lobby and at
the NTPCUG Information
Booth in the Vendor**

1998 – New Directions Needed If NTPCUG is to Survive

JANUARY 1998 – Two years to go until the year 2000. No big revelation there. I'm sure we'll hear about Y2K ad nauseam in the next 730 days. Sometimes, the best way to look forward is to look back. Learn from our mistakes, improve on our successes, and keep our goals in perspective: family goals, personal goals, work goals, volunteer goals, and spiritual goals. Not arranged in any particular order because for different people on any given day, the goals have a way of arranging themselves.

JANUARY 1996 – I was writing about the CompUSA Expo at the Infomart, the Home and Family Computer Show at the Convention Center. **Lewis Graber** wrote about Internet Mail and **JoAnn Elliott** (now retired to Florida) was extolling the virtues of *CorelDRAW 6*. For those of you who didn't catch the show in December, the NTPCUG helped Corel roll out *CorelDRAW 8*.

JANUARY 1994 – **Jim Carter** defined databases and the feature set in *Visual Basic 3.0*. **Brian Mickel** gave the 1993 Annual Report of the Dallas Computer Literacy Program. **Reagan's** column covered the 1993 COMDEX Show where the emphasis was on the battle between RISC and CISC chips. Battling for supremacy were the Motorola PowerPC, the Sun SPARC CPU, the MIPS CPU, the DEC Alpha, and the Intel Pentium. Gosh, I wonder who'll win.

JANUARY 2000 – I wonder if the Users Group will still be around. My prognostication is that it will not be around unless EVERY member of this group contributes to our survival.

Why would I make such a statement? The North Texas PC Users Group, Inc. has lost over 30% of our membership in the past year. At that rate, it will be the North Texas Couple of People Hanging Around With Lost Looks Group, Inc. by January 2000.

WHAT DO WE NEED?

- **1. We need members**, so if all you do is convince one person to join the group, you have done your share. Oh, also renew your own membership.
- **2. We need ideas**. Ideas for membership services that we have not thought of. Ideas for improving services that we currently offer, and



consensus that some membership benefits may have outlived their usefulness. So how do we replace these services and with what?

- **3. We need help**. This is a nonprofit corporation. It requires volunteers in all positions in the organization. If there is no one that you can convince to join the group, then give us an hour of your time at the Saturday meeting, or commit to fill in for a behind-the-scenes job like calling volunteers, or assisting us with the financials, or one of the many other tasks that need a constant source of volunteer help.

THERE will be a SPECIAL MEETING to discuss these topics and related issues on Saturday, January 17, 1998 from 2:00-3:00 p.m., room to be announced.

SIG LEADERS, if there is any way that you can attend, your presence and contributions are needed. SIG Leaders have a lot of time and effort invested in the Users Group, and are in close contact with the membership. Please be thinking about items 1, 2 and 3 above. The membership is also welcomed at the meeting.

If you cannot attend, but you have a contribution to make, you can e-mail me at andy.oliver@ntpcug.org.

If you can not make it to the Saturday Special Meeting, please e-mail your suggestions to one of the Board of Directors:

reagan.andrews@ntpcug.org
marsha.drebelbis@ntpcug.org
doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org
jim.hoisington@ntpcug.org
alex.lilley@ntpcug.org
andy.oliver@ntpcug.org
fred.williams@ntpcug.org

To NTPCUG MEMBERS AND OFFICERS — A NOTE OF THANKS FOR YOUR HELP

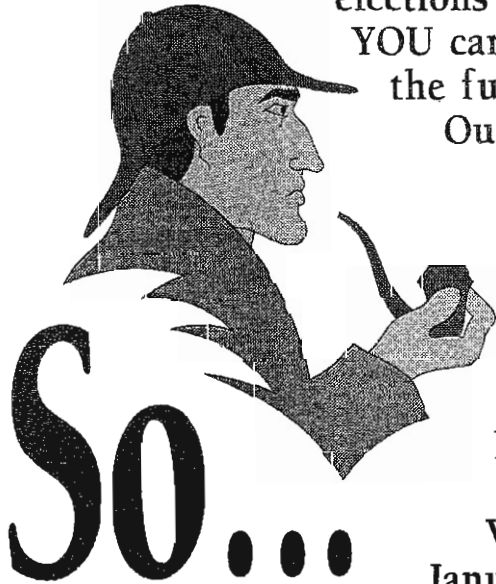
Texas Center for the Physically Impaired — Progress Report

For many months now the monthly newsletter for the NTPCUG has run a full page courtesy ad encouraging members to donate no longer needed computers, printers, floppies, and software to the Texas Center for the Physically Impaired.

During this period **Russ Casey**, as a volunteer, has put back into working order more than 30 computers and printers that have been shipped to blind and visually-impaired persons all over the world. **Bob Langford** has written stories, ads, provided hours of telephone counseling, and prepared audio training tutorials for the growing number of requests for computers.

When the handicapped person has a computer, the State rehabilitation agencies are paying for the synthesized voice and/or screen enlargement programs that are allowing these handicapped persons to find a whole new world of opportunities in word processing, e-mail, checkbook management, games, calendar and address books that were not available to them before. Some will go on to faster computers, Windows, and jobs.

**It does not take a Great Detective
to know that voting in NTPCUG
elections is how
YOU can shape
the future of
Our Users
Group!**



**Be sure
and
Vote on
January 17!**

This is the first step in learning DOS and *WordPerfect 5.1* for the activities described above. Learning to do word processing is complicated by having to learn the additional commands to direct the synthesized voice where to read. The TCPI-supplied training tutorials on audio cassettes are helping these persons to get up and running.

Thanks again NTPCUG, for the help in providing computers that are being used to bring skills that these blind persons did not have before.

Robert Langford Ph.D. President, Texas Center for the Physically Impaired

11330 Quail Run
Dallas, Texas 75238
Voice: (214) 340 6328
FAX: (214) 340 0870 Fax
E-mail: robert.langford@ntpcug.org

PREZ SEZ ... Ctd.

NTPCUG & DFWX JOBS

INTRODUCTION TO THE PC SIG LEADER – The Intro to the PC SIG consists of a series of 16 classes, taught four per month, for four months. After a one-month break, the series starts over again. The SIG Leader recruits others to teach the classes, and teaches a few of them as well. These classes have been a mainstay of the NTPCUG; they could use some updating and reworking. This would be left for the new SIG leader to determine and organize. This job needs to be filled before the February meeting. Contact Alex Lilley for more information.

TREASURER FOR THE DFW XCHANGE CORPORATION – The DFW Xchange Corporation is owned by the NTPCUG and the Apple Corps of Dallas. This organization is the Users Group's liaison with the Infomart, and it runs the vendor area at the Saturday meetings. The Treasurer's position takes approximately 10 hours per month, and DFWX is looking for a volunteer who is a member of NTPCUG or Apple Corps and a CPA. Contact **Stuart Yarus** for more information.

**SOFTWARE GIVEAWAY AT THE JANUARY
NTPCUG BUSINESS MEETING!!!**

Happy New Year!

Andy

NTPCUG President-Elect & Board of Director Elections

The North Texas PC Users Group will hold elections for President-Elect and five members of the NTPCUG Board of Directors (BOD) in January. The President -Elect is a member of the BOD and serves in that role for one year, then becomes President the following year. The five other Members of the NTPCUG Board of Directors serve one-year terms.

OFFICER ELECTIONS

NTPCUG

& Candidates for Board of Directors



Candidate for President-Elect

Jim Hoisington

Jim is a graduate of Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas and joined the North Texas PC Users Group at its second meeting. Since then he has served 4 terms as President, two terms as a Director, and has been Membership Chairman for over five years. Together with Reagan Andrews, Jim leads the DOS SIG and he has been the back-up leader for the Advanced Programmers SIG since the SIG began. In addition, Jim was the first treasurer of the Computer Council of Dallas, and is the current vice-president of DFW Xchange Corporation. Jim is also a member of the Metrocrest Amateur Radio Society (MARS). When he isn't attending meetings, Jim does a little consulting to pay for all the computer "stuff" that he buys.

Candidates for North Texas PC Users Group Board of Directors

Reagan Andrews

Reagan is currently a member of the Board, and a past NTPCUG President. He is Co-leader of the DOS SIG and stepped in four years ago to become "temporary" Publisher of the *North Texas PC News*, a tremendous volunteer task. The *Variety Store* column in this newsletter was his idea and has become a mainstay of keeping on top of industry news. Reagan works for the Dallas VA Hospital as a Clinical Psychologist treating veterans suffering from delayed stress syndrome. Reagan was named as a Member Emeritus last year.



ber Emeritus. As the Program Chairman, he is responsible for arranging the Auditorium vendor presentations at our Saturday meetings and Timothy continues to do an excellent job for us. In his real job, he is an electrical and biomedical engineer doing research, applying computer hardware and software for medical measurement and diagnostic systems.

Marsha Drebelbis

Marsha Drebelbis is currently a Board member and SIG



Timothy Carmichael

Timothy currently serves as Program Chairman of the NTPCUG and has done so since 1989 when he took over the job of arranging and scheduling vendor presentations for NTPCUG. Timothy is a past member of the Board of Directors and is a Mem-

Leader of the Corel SIG, author of the *Corel Corner* column, and came to the NTPCUG in March, 1995, when the Corel group merged with us. She currently operates two design houses, Marsha Drebelbis Studios, a graphics design firm, and Litigation Graphics which serves the le-

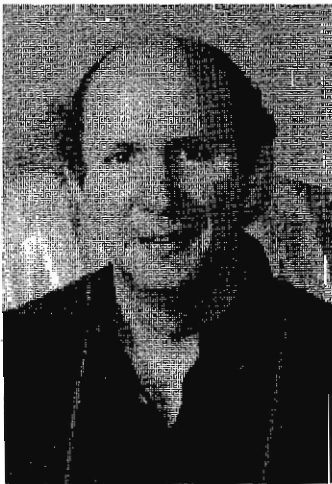
gal market with design of demonstrative graphics in Dallas. Marsha earned Bachelors degrees in Art Education and Fine Arts from the University of Kansas, and serves in a Pro Bono capacity with the Dallas Theater Center and Old East Dallas Renaissance Coalition.

Doug Gorrie

Doug was the 1993 President of the NTPCUG. He is the Co-leader of the Advanced Internet SIG and is involved in the day-to-day support of our Bulletin Board System. Doug was instrumental in efforts to establish the NTPCUG Home Page and continues to serve as Webmaster. He has spent the past 28 years with Southwestern Bell Telephone, 17 of those were working with IBM mainframes. Currently, Doug is working with wide-area-network implementation and support for SWB.



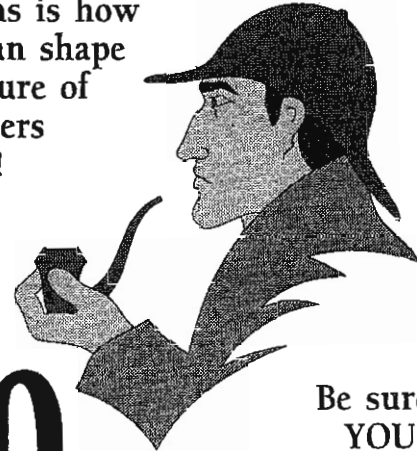
Alex Lilley



Alex has been the Special Interest Group (SIG) Coordinator for the past five years and is also the SIG Leader for the *Introduction to the PC* series of classes on use of personal computers. Alex is the room scheduler for all computer groups that meet at Infomart. In addition, Alex coordinates all audio-visual and white-board equipment used at

the DFW Xchange meetings at Infomart. Alex is married with two grown children and works as an IS for a local commercial real estate company. He is a Certified Property Manager and graduate of Texas A & M University.

It does not take a Great Detective to know that voting in NTPCUG elections is how YOU can shape the future of Our Users Group!



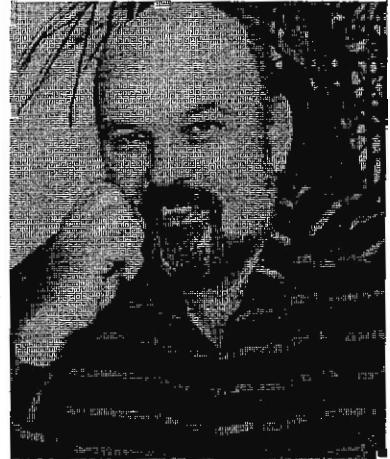
So...

Be sure YOU Vote on January 17!

Fred Williams

Fred is a current BOD member and has been a member of NTPCUG since its founding in 1982.

He has been SIG Leader for the Communications and LAN SIG's, and is the founder and current leader of the *Delphi* SIG. He chaired the BBS Steering Committee which reorganized the BBS support staff, and he is providing project management and technical services while



converting the BBS software from the current TBBS to a Windows NT Intranet BBS system. Fred is SYSOP of the BBS and helps maintain the system. He has been an independent software developer of communications and database systems for personal computers since 1982.



Please See the NTPGUG 1997 Election Ballot on the next page...

**QUESTIONS ABOUT USING THE INTERNET?
 JANUARY 1998 will FEATURE SPECIAL 5-
 HOUR INTERNET FOR BEGINNERS SERIES**

Basics of the Internet - A Presentation

It's after Christmas!! You (or someone you know) just received a new PC that just *SCREAMS* to be connected to the Internet. Friends and relatives want to communicate with you via electronic mail (E-mail), while your long distance calls to your kid in college are becoming as much as tuition!! But what is the Internet? How do I get to it? Once connected, what can I do?

The answers are in the North Texas PC User Group's Beginning Internet SIG.

At our January 17th meeting, we will repeat our multi-hour *Introduction to the Internet* session. This periodic course is primarily designed for the beginner or novice user who has had little or no experience with the Internet.

We plan to start at 10:00 AM and go about five hours. Our usual room is 5006, but please verify the location on the schedule sheets (available in the Infomart lobby) or from the overhead projectors in the vendor sales area.

The course will include as much of the following as time permits:

- An introduction to and general history of the Internet
- How to choose an internet service provider (ISP) to connect to the Internet



- Hardware and software requirements, i.e., what you really need to get on and use the Internet
- Familiarization with common Internet applications for viewing the World Wide Web (WWW)
- Sending mail electronically (E-mail)
- Downloading files
- Reading and joining newsgroups
- Creating your own web page to put on the Internet

This course will give members and non-members the chance to ask those basic questions about the Internet. Even members who have been on the Internet may discover tips and techniques that may help in future visits to the Web. Pass the word, and we hope to see you on January 17th.

Erik Leaseburg, Doug Gorrie & Kiff Barnes

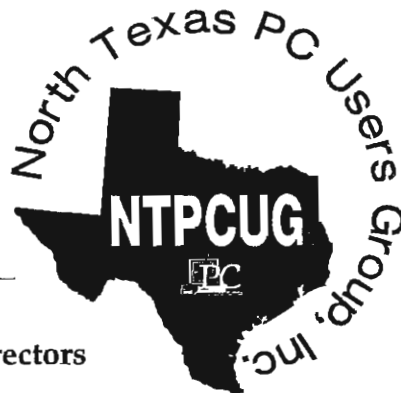
**North Texas PC Users Group
 Official 1998 Election Ballot**
*(Detach and use original ballot
 — Copies are not acceptable.)*

**Nominees for
 President-Elect:**
(Vote for 1 — at right)

- Jim Hoisington
- _____

Nominees for Board of Directors
(Vote for 5 — below)

- Reagan Andrews
- Timothy Carmichael
- Marsha Drebelbis
- Doug Gorrie
- Alex Lilley
- Fred Williams



Mail Ballot to Secretary, North Texas PC Users Group, P.O. Box 703449, Dallas, TX 75370-3449, or bring to the January 17 Meeting. All ballots must be received by the secretary no later than January 20, 1997.

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO THE INTERNET, 2ND EDITION

Erik Leaseburg

Email Address: erikleas@ix.netcom.com

Over the past several years the popularity of the Internet has exploded. You cannot seem to get through a day without seeing an advertisement on TV, in the newspaper, or hearing one on the radio encouraging you to visit a company's web site or send them your comments via email. Your co-workers, friends, and relatives are talking about all this neat "stuff" they found while surfing the Net. So, why do so many feel like outcasts from this global village the Internet has helped create?

The problem is that the Internet seems so big and vague that most do not even know where to begin or what questions to ask. If this describes your predicament then read on. In this article the following questions will be raised and their answers given: What is the Internet? What equipment do I need? How do I connect to the Internet? How much will it cost me? What can I do on the Internet? What do all these strange-sounding Internet terms mean (web, email, etc.)? Where can I go to learn more about the Internet? These questions are the most common ones asked by beginning Internet users. By seeing these questions and their answers, this article hopes to bring a few outcasts into the Internet community.

WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

In a nutshell, the Internet is the largest computer network in the history of mankind, allowing millions of people to communicate and share information with one another. The amount and diversity of information available on the Internet is enormous, exceeding even the United States Library of Congress. The beginnings of the Internet started in the 1970's when the United States Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency sponsored a computer network called the ARPANet. This network connected several government and university labs together allowing researchers to communicate and share information and computer resources. The original ARPANet has long since been replaced, and the government no longer owns or runs the Internet.

Today, parts of the Internet are owned and run by numerous commercial companies. No one organization owns the Internet. The important thing to remember is that the Internet is more than just a bunch of networks and computers. It is people communicating and sharing thoughts and information with other people. The computers and the network are just there to do the grunt work of moving the information between those on the Internet.

WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED?

Since the Internet is just a big, complex computer network, you will need a properly equipped computer to use the Internet. The following list gives the typical minimum requirements and optional hardware your PC should be equipped with before you venture out onto the Information Superhighway.

Making sure your system meets or exceeds these requirements will help you avoid a big pothole found on the information onramp.

ONRAMP
TECHNOLOGIES

Voted "**BEST REGIONAL ISP**"
by *SmartMoney* Magazine (May 1997)

BUSINESS CONNECTIVITY

Lan ISDN, Point-to-Point T1, Fractional T3

WEB SITE HOSTING & MANAGEMENT

Virtual Domain, Server Collocation

CONSULTING

Firewall Security, Network Design

DIALUP ACCESS

28.8K - 56K analog, 64K-128K ISDN

www.onramp.net, info@onramp.net

1-888-2-ONRAMP

Minimum Requirements

- ❖ - 486 PC Compatible
- ❖ - MS Windows 3.1, 95, or NT
- ❖ - 3.5" Floppy Drive
- ❖ - 4MB of RAM (8MB or more preferred)
- ❖ - 14400 Baud Modem (28800 or higher preferred)
- ❖ - Standard Analog Phone Line
- ❖ - 10MB of Free Hard Drive Space

Optional Hardware

- ❖ - VGA/SVGA Monitor and Graphic Card
- ❖ - CD-ROM Drive
- ❖ - Sound Blaster Compatible Sound Card

How Do I Connect To The Internet?

To be able to communicate and find information on the Internet, you have to first connect your computer into this global network. This requires both hardware and software. The hardware involved in making the connection is your computer's modem. A modem is a device which allows your computer to dial phone numbers and send and receive information over a standard phone line. You simply plug your phone line into your computer modem and the hardware part of the process is complete. A later section will detail who your computer must call to connect to the Internet.

Installation of software on your computer is the next step to connecting to the Internet. When people wish to speak to each other, they have to agree on a common language. Remember that since the Internet is a computer network, you have to configure your computer so that it can understand what other computers on the Internet are saying. This "common language" is called a protocol, which is simply an agreed upon approach by which two systems plan to communicate with one another. Nearly every type of computer imaginable is connected to the Internet, and they can all share information because they all use the same protocol, TCP/IP. Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol is the basic communication protocol that forms the foundation of the Internet. All other Internet protocols (FTP, HTTP, explained later) are built on top of TCP/IP. To connect to the Internet you must install software on your PC which translates the TCP/IP protocol to commands your computer can understand and trans-



mit over a phone line. The software protocol used to perform this job is called the PPP, Point-to-Point Protocol. You may occasionally hear references made to a predecessor to PPP called SLIP. The Serial Line Internet Protocol is an older, less sophisticated protocol which has been replaced by PPP.

So, who do you have your computer call to connect to the Internet? That would be your friendly neighborhood ISP. An Internet Service Provider is a company which sells you a connection to the Internet. ISPs own their own computers which are connected to the Internet 24 hours a day. ISPs pay big fees so that they can connect to the Internet. These big fees are paid to commercial companies like Sprint who own a portion of the Internet. ISPs then spread that cost over all their customers, people like you, who dial into their computers to connect to the Internet. In summary, the process of connecting to the Internet involves you having your computer make a local call to your ISP's computer, which in turn connects through a part owner to the Internet.

Once you have the hardware and software installed properly on your computer, you are ready to begin making your connection. First, you have your modem dial the local phone number of the ISP. The phone is answered by a bank of modems connected to the ISP's computer. After the computers determine that they can talk to one another using a common protocol, you are prompted on the computer screen to enter your personalized name and password. This is done to identify to the ISP's computer which of their customers is wanting to connect to the Internet. Once you enter this information correctly, you officially become a computer on the Internet.

How Much Will It Cost Me?

The price of connecting to the Internet is made up of several costs. First, you must have a computer. Second, you may have to augment your system with the appropriate equipment required for logging on: a modem, sufficient RAM, etc. The third

is a fee charged by the ISP for Internet access. If you already own or have access to a computer, a decent 28800 baud modem costs \$100 - \$200. Note, the higher the baud rate of the modem, the faster your computer can receive and send information over the Internet. Faster is always better unless the cost of the modem is prohibitively high. Most ISPs support modem speeds up to 33600 baud. Check with your ISP first before buying the latest, greatest, and fastest modem to make sure they can support the higher speeds on their end. Otherwise, you are stuck driving a really fast car in a school zone.

WHAT FEES ARE INVOLVED?

The fee for connection to the Internet is typically a setup fee plus a monthly or yearly fee charged by your ISP. The setup fee is a one-time cost the ISP charges for signing you up and sending you the software needed to connect to their services. This fee is usually \$15 - \$30. Most ISPs have several connection plans from which to choose, but they typically fall into two main categories: hourly access and unlimited access. Hourly connection plans charge you a given rate for each hour you are connected to the Internet. Unlimited connection plans charge you a fixed fee per month or year no matter how much time you spend on the Internet. Typical price figures for the hourly plans are \$10 per month for the first 5 hours, and then \$3 per hour after that. The unlimited plans average \$20 per month. Many unlimited plans will let you pay for a year of access in advance at a reduced rate of around \$120 (a deal at \$10 per month).

FINDING ISPs IN MY AREA

How do I find the phone numbers of ISPs in my area? The latest edition of your yellow pages should have a section titled "Internet" or "Internet Service Providers," which lists local and national sales numbers. You can also try a company called ISP Finder (1-888-ISP-FIND) that will mail, fax, or email you a list of ISPs with local phone numbers in your area. Most computer magazines also have many advertisements for ISPs and often run ISP comparison articles several times a year to help you find and choose a good ISP. The best resources are friends, relatives, and coworkers that

are already connected. They can tell you how satisfied they are with their service.

How do I know which ISPs are the best? Here are some points to keep in mind when making your choice. ISP access is divided into two groups, local and national. A local ISP generally serves a small region, usually within a single area code.

Whereas, a national ISP provides access in areas all over the United States. Local ISPs are typically cheaper, but if you travel often and want to connect to the Internet while you are on the road, you should definitely go with a National ISP with local numbers in the cities you frequent. National ISPs are further divided into two basic groups: the Big Four online services (America Online, CompuServe, Microsoft Network, and Prodigy) and everyone else (ITR, Netcom, Pipeline, etc.).

Along with providing Internet access, the Big Four offer their own content, including chat rooms; news updates; searchable references (travel guides, cookbooks, and encyclopedias); special interest groups; and online shopping—all accessible from an easy-to-use interface. Recently, other big national ISPs such as Netcom and PSINet Pipeline USA have begun to look like online services by adding original content and slick interfaces, but they lack the breadth and depth of the Big Four's offerings.

CHEAPEST ISP NOT ALWAYS

BEST

Choosing the cheapest ISP is not always the best move. Because they are inexpensive, there may be too much demand for the company to handle, making it difficult for you to dial into their computer during peak hours (evenings). With any provider 24 hour customer support is a plus, especially if they provide a toll-free support line. Before signing up with a specific ISP have the salesperson give you their local access phone numbers (the numbers your computer uses to hook up), and their customer support phone number (the number you use to speak to a human being). Try dialing both these numbers during peak evening hours and see if you get busy signals or have to wait a long time to talk to someone.

Other questions include how long they have been in business, and what procedures they have in place for when they get overloaded with new cus-



tomers. ISPs have large numbers of modems to serve their customers who dial in. They should keep the customer-to-modem ratio between 8:1 and 12:1. This means that every 8 to 12 customers will have one modem at the ISP that they can dial up for Internet access. While only one user can use each modem, the likelihood of all the ISP's customers calling in at the same time is small. The only time this is a problem is during peak hours. The ratios above are usually sufficient to cover demand. If they do not have plans to add more modems as their customer base grows, you may not be able to connect to the Internet during peak hours.

WHAT SOFTWARE IS PROVIDED?

The ISP provides two kinds of software when you sign up. The first is used to connect your computer to the Internet (often called dialer software). It is this software that negotiates the protocol between your computer and the Internet. The second is used once you have made your connection. The Internet is full of many different services that will be detailed below. This second type of software is required to utilize these Internet services. Both software packages are part of the service provided by your ISP and should not incur any extra cost.

WHAT CAN I DO ON THE INTERNET?

Once you are on the Internet, you will want to partake of the many different services available. You can communicate with friends using email, visit great places on the Web, peruse topics of interest in Usenet Newsgroups, and take home some cool souvenirs by downloading free software, pictures, movies, songs, and games with FTP. These specialized Internet programs will be discussed in greater detail below. As you read about these programs keep in mind that there are many different makes and models of each Internet software utility for your computer.

One of the reasons for the explosion in Internet popularity is the addition of the World Wide Web (WWW or Web). Quite a bit of confusion exists over the distinction between the Internet and the World Wide Web. Originally, there were many different smaller information sites on the Internet that each required a different way to access and download their information. The World Wide Web came along to make access to these sites more centralized. If you can envision the Internet as a large library full of card files, microfiche, magazines, books, and audio-visual resources,



and the World Wide Web as a device to view all these resources from one place, you have an idea of how the Web functions within the Internet. The advent of the Web has made the Internet much more accessible to the average home computer user.

Web BROWSER MOST POWERFUL

A web browser is the most powerful and versatile Internet software program a surfer of the Net can own. The web browser, which runs on your PC, makes finding and viewing information on the Internet an easy point-and-click task. The two most popular web browsers used today are Netscape's *Navigator* and Microsoft's *Internet Explorer*. The Web utilizes the HTTP - HyperText Transfer Protocol to send multimedia documents (containing text, pictures, sounds, and hypertext links) from remote Internet computers to your PC. Hypertext refers to a system of linked information that works similarly to the underlined areas in a Windows help files. Just as the underlined, colored text in a help file jumps you to another help screen with related information, a Web hypertext link jumps you to another multimedia Web document somewhere else on the Internet. Like tangents of a spider web these hypertext links effortlessly connect you to related pieces of information found on the Internet.

Another reason for the popularity of the Internet is the wide variety of free and demonstration software available for download to your PC for personal use. The program and protocol used to download this information is called the File Transfer Protocol, or FTP. In the past, a separate FTP program was used to download files and software from computers on the Internet. Today, with the increasing popularity and ease-of-use of the Web, downloading files on the Internet is done mostly through the web browser's built in FTP program. When you see a file on a web page that you want to download to your computer, you simply click on it.

If you like reading newsgroups covering topics of interest, you will love the variety provided by Internet Usenet Newsgroups. Usenet is the Internet's worldwide bulletin board system, consisting of over 5,000 topical discussion groups, called newsgroups. Nearly every topic you can think of is covered by one or more newsgroups. The program which runs on your PC allowing you to view these newsgroups is called a newsreader. Again, newer web browsers include an integrated newsreader, although several popular newsreaders exist which are not part of a web browser.

Of course, one of the first uses of the Internet was to send electronic mail, or "email", from person to person. Most ISPs let you choose your own email address so anyone on the Internet can drop you a note at your own personalized email address. Email is still the most popular utility used on the Internet. Most avid email users have all but forgotten how to use the US Mail system. The advantage of email is that it usually gets to its destination, anywhere in the world, in just a few minutes, and you never have to buy a postage stamp!

There are some final steps you must take after using FTP to download files (programs, text, graphics, movies, sounds, and games) so that you can use them. Because a modem connection to the Internet is relatively slow (e.g., a 1MB sized file takes approximately 12 minutes to transfer using a 14440 baud modem), most files are compressed. The concept of compressed files is similar to evaporated milk or orange juice concentrate, all the essential elements are still there, but its volume is smaller. This saves storage space at the Internet source and decreases the time necessary to download the file to your PC. There are several common compression programs on the Internet, but the main one used is PKZip. You may be wondering what your downloaded item will look like compressed. You will use a program on your PC to decompress the data before you try to use it. Such a program will be included with the software package from your ISP.

If you are concerned with protecting your PC from viruses, you will want to check all files you copy from Internet sites with some type of virus scanning software. You are exposing your computer to files copied from exotic sites all over the

world and viruses spread easily in the global Internet village. If you feel uncomfortable with the level of cleanliness on your local public phone, you should be equally concerned for your computer.

Now that the downloaded file is decompressed and free of any viruses, your PC must run software that knows the format of the file and knows how to display or play its contents. Viewer applications are software that you run on your PC to display images, play sounds, or run movies you downloaded. On the other hand, setup programs that come with the downloaded file are used for installing and running games and programs. The difference is that a viewer is used to read passive documents and pictures, while a setup program is used to install and run active games and programs.

WHERE CAN I GO TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE INTERNET?

The world of the Internet is the newest and probably most dynamic area in the computer world. Some books and software utilities written only a year ago are already out of date. Publishers and software firms are rushing to keep up with the tremendous growth of the Internet. Most good Internet books are into their 2nd and 3rd editions, and program versions are changing almost

monthly. Always buy the latest version of any book or software package.

As a new Internet user, you should read a good book which covers the Internet in general. Some people hope to gain all the knowledge they need by simply using the Internet. You will learn much more about how to effectively use the Internet, if you take the time to read a good reference guide. Listed below are several good Internet books which are available in the computer section of Barnes and Noble bookstore. Other places to find good Internet related books are computer stores, Taylor Technical Books, and Pro-Tech Books.

Beginning Internet Books

- ❖ *The Internet for Busy People*, \$22.95 by Christian Crumlish, Osborne/McGraw Hill 1996
- ❖ *The Internet for Dummies 3rd Ed.*, \$19.99 by John Levine, Baroudi, and Young, IDG Books 1996



- ❖ *Teach Yourself the Internet in a Week 2nd Ed.*, \$25.00 by Neil Randall, Sams.net Publishing 1995
- ❖ *Official Netscape Navigator 3.0 Book*, \$39.99 by Phil James, Netscape Press 1996
- ❖ *Microsoft Internet Explorer 3*, \$39.99 by Glenn Fincher, Kraynak, etc., Sams.net Publishing 1996
- ❖ *The Internet Complete Reference 2nd Ed.*, \$32.95 by Harley Hahn, Osborne/McGraw Hill 1996
- ❖ *The Whole Internet User's Guide & Catalog*, \$24.95 by Ed Krol, O'Reilly & Associates, Inc. 1994

After getting a firm grasp on the basic Internet concepts, you can keep your knowledge current by subscribing to any of the many monthly Internet magazines listed below. Most computer stores and bookstores carry several of them. Note, "Computer Currents" is an excellent free magazine with many Internet-related articles and ads in every issue. Copies are available at the monthly NTPCUG meetings and at many computer stores and technical book stores.

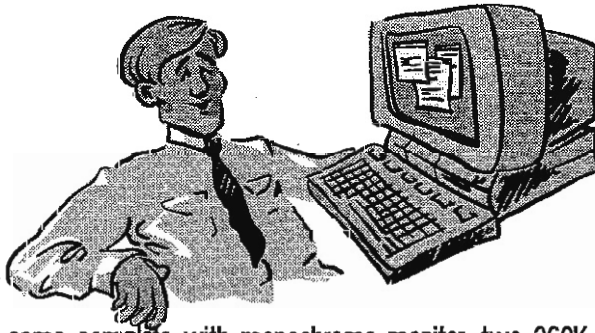
Beginning Internet Magazines

- ❖ - Internet World, \$4.95
- ❖ - ZD Internet Magazine, \$3.99
- ❖ - Online Access, \$4.95
- ❖ - The Net, \$4.99
- ❖ - Wired, \$4.95
- ❖ - Computer Currents, Free!

Because of the popularity of the Internet, you can often find inexpensive and even free courses and group discussions being held on using the Internet. Listed below are some places to begin looking.

Beginning Internet Class Locations

- ❖ - Community College and University Classes



It came complete with monochrome monitor, two 360K floppy disk drives and 640K of DRAM. Could I ask for more to work the Usenet Newsgroups via Telnet?

BEGINNER'S INTERNET Guide

- ❖ - Company Classes
- ❖ - Public Library Books and Classes
- ❖ - Internet Service Provider Classes
- ❖ - NTPCUG Beginner and Advanced Internet SIG Meetings

Many TV and radio shows have popped up in recent years to discuss how the Internet is being used, and where its future is headed. Below is a list of some of these shows.

Beginning Internet TV & Radio Shows

- ❖ - NetTalk Live, The Internet Talk Show, 27 KDFI TV, 570 AM, Sun 10pm-Midnight
- ❖ - The Web, Sci-Fi Channel, Sun 11am & 10pm
- ❖ - The New Edge, Sci-Fi Channel, Sun 12pm & 11pm
- ❖ - CNET Central, Sci-Fi Channel, Sun 12:30pm & 11:30pm, USA Network, Sun 5am & Tue 12pm
- ❖ - TV.COM, FOX - Dallas, Sun 5am, ABC - Dallas, Sun 5am, FOX - Ft Worth, Sat 10am

Hopefully this article has given you enough information about the Internet to get you started. Building a network of other NTPCUG members and friends that share an interest in the Internet is a terrific way to ensure that you continue to learn new and exciting things occurring in and around the Internet. The NTPCUG has a Beginning (10-11am) and Advanced (9-10am) Internet SIG that meets each month to talk about current and future Internet developments and products. The Beginning Internet SIG also plans on holding an "Introduction to the Internet" course series several times a year specifically for new Internet users.

The Internet is an exciting place to be. Good luck on your journey.

Erik Leaseburg

TEACH YOURSELF BORLAND C++ BUILDER IN 21 DAYS – A REVIEW

Kent Reisdorph and Ken Henderson. Published by Sams/Borland Press, ISBN 0-672-31020-1. 804 pages. \$40.

Review by Howard Lee Harkness, C++ Language SIG Leader, North Texas PC Users' Group.

I got this book because I needed to get a quick introduction to Borland's C++ Builder for work (the manuals and help files included by Borland in this package were only slightly better than the miserable excuse for documentation they shipped with Delphi 1.0), and I had seen a recommendation for it on a Borland public Usenet group.

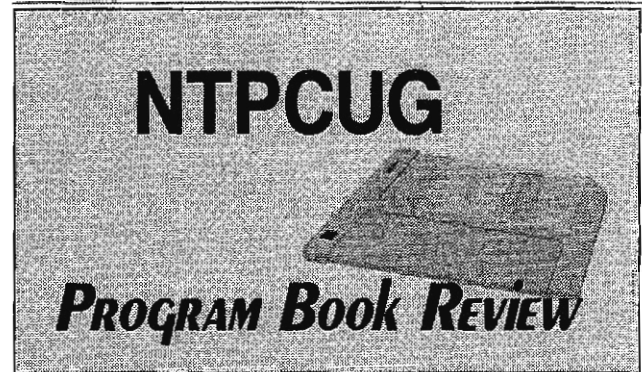
The book is divided into 23 chapters, or "days," the last two chapters being "bonus days." Supposedly, the reader can work through this book at the rate of one chapter per day, and thereby master all of the material presented.

As "Teach Yourself X in Y Days" books go, this one is OK. Not wonderful, but OK. There was some useful information in there, but about a quarter of the book was wasted dead trees. The authors attempted to cover everything from the C++ language itself to the process of writing Internet applications. If you already know C++, the first four chapters are completely useless. If you don't already know C++, then you have *two* problems, the first being that there are much better books to start out with, and the other is that there is no way you are going to master the material in

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to know that voting in NTPCUG
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21 *weeks*, let alone in 21 *days*. Either way, the authors could have left out the first four chapters, and the book would have been better for it.

The last part of the book ("bonus days 22 and 23") probably could have been left out, as well. I would have preferred to have the remaining material in more depth.

The book includes a CD. The CD has all of the authors' example source, and also includes a 60-day trial version of Borland C++ Builder, which definitely is worthwhile. I did not install the trial version, since I already have the full version.

The accuracy of the information was fairly good, although I did come across some rather mysterious errors. There were a couple of times when the steps given for building an example program didn't work. There was also a curious misstatement about the process of entering a special character using the *alt* key; the author insisted that in order to enter a special character using the *alt* key, you have to enter four digits, including leading zeros. Anyone with access to a PC can quickly verify that this is not so. This particular error, which was near the front of the book, made me more wary of trusting any of the other examples, but I didn't find any more errors quite that bad.

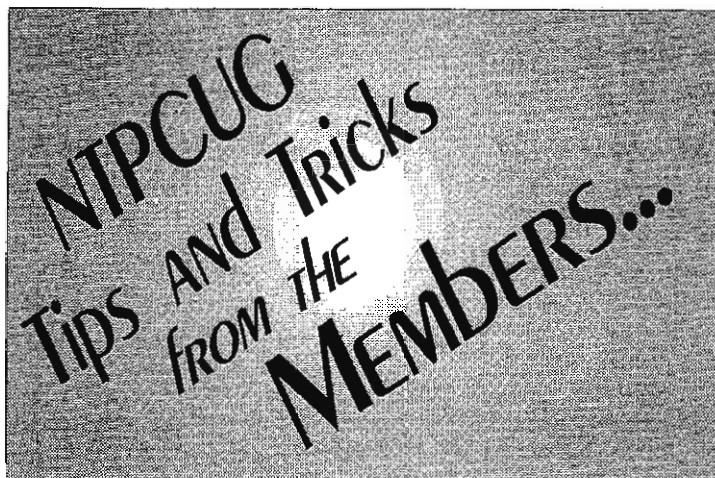
The writing style of the authors was fairly good, but they would have done well to leave out the lame attempts at humor. To be really successful at humor in a book of this type is very difficult; it usually requires being sufficiently subtle that it goes completely over the heads of humor-challenged readers. There are places in this book where it appears that the authors thought they were writing Borland C++ Builder for Dummies. I'm afraid I wasn't amused.

I would rate this book about a 6 on a scale of 1 to 10.

Howard Lee Harkness

SAVING \$\$\$ – Didn't Save Time – Fred Learns Hard Lessons in Upgrading Toshiba Notebook

Fred Williams is NTPCUG BBS Sysop and a member of the North Texas PCUG Board of Directors. The following is an account of the pitfalls awaiting both the unwary and experienced user in upgrading their PC's, and was "cut" from Fred's December BBS column for publication this month.



Speaking of large capacity disk drives. I recently devoted the best part of a Sunday to installing a new 2.1 gig disk drive in my Toshiba notebook. The actual installation of the hardware took only minutes. The software on the other hand took many hours. I finally finished the project late Sunday evening.

I took the machine to the client's site as I always do. I used the system all day long Monday. I also discovered that I had not entered the serial number for the Crystal Reports report design package.

When I got home Monday evening I set up the notebook in the office with the intention of entering the serial number for Crystal Reports and cleaning up a couple of other odds and ends related to the new disk installation.

I pressed the power button and when the Toshiba hit the post program spot where the disk drive is accessed to load the operating system, I didn't know a notebook could beep that loud and long!

I ended up pulling the battery after pressing the off button then pulling the AC power cord made no difference.

I tried to restart the system a couple of more times before giving up and reinstalling the "old" disk drive. Once the old drive was back in place the notebook was back to its old reliable self.

I ended up learning a couple of useful things from this. One is don't spend hours loading software on a brand new disk drive until after running some kind of disk-exercising software for at least a weekend with several power up and down sequences thrown in for good measure. The last most valuable lesson is to only do mail order business with a peer recommended company.

I ordered the new "big" disk drive from a company after an OEM friend I have been working

with recommended them as a reliable supplier. I got to test his faith in them firsthand as I returned the disk drive with an RMA. The entire process was prompt and painless. I have the replacement drive sitting on my office desk, awaiting that "free" weekend which will allow me adequate "burn in" time prior to loading up this one.

The reason I ordered the drive from a third party? Seems their price is far less than half the cost of a Toshiba unit. When you turn my new drive upside down the hub cover has a Toshiba label stuck on it. Seems my supplier buys "overruns" and excess inventories from many disk drive manufactures. Ah, ain't competition grand!

Fred Williams

MORE MICROSOFT HUMOR...

Bill Gates wanted to impress everyone with his success, so he decided to measure the accomplishments of Microsoft against General Motors.

The comparison went like this:

If automotive technology had kept pace with computer technology over the past few decades, you would now be driving a V-32 instead of a V-8, and it would have a top speed of 10,000 miles per hour. Or, you could buy an economy car that weighs 30 pounds and gets a thousand miles to a gallon of gas.

In either case the sticker price of a new car would be less than \$50.

In response to this goading, GM responded: "Yes, but would you really want to drive a car that crashes twice a day?"

Microsoft v. DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE KINDLES ANGRY FLAMES AMONG LEGAL & PC COMMUNITIES AS SUIT TAKES ON RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS WITH NO 'NEUTRALS' — STILL NO RESOLUTION IN MICROSOFT v. EVERYONE

Gosh, things slowed-down in December. Vendors (with exception of Microsoft and the Department of Justice) seemed to turn closed-mouth and flow of interesting PR releases trickled to a halt. Well not all. Sun Microsystems' CEO Scott McNealy just couldn't resist shooting himself in the foot/leg/hip/abdomen/thorax/shoulder/throat and head. Someone must have given him a fully automatic M-16 or AK-47 to do this much potential self harm.

Really didn't expect too much news over December since 1Q '98 will be the wellspring for PR releases from the major vendors pushing to capture either market share or instill some "FUD" — "Fear, Uncertainty & Doubt" in minds of buyers, potential buyers and media reporters. Although it's popular now to accuse Microsoft of this marketing strategy, credit really belongs to the IBM of yore. Armonk (still love that town/city name) used "FUD" like a surgeon's scalpel, wielding rumours and innuendo to dissuade recalcitrant MIS's (Managers of Information Systems, or whatever) from buying the competition's products since IBM "would be releasing a far-superior version" "Real soon now."

IBM wasn't alone — almost every hardware and software vendor has played the game since computers became marketing targets and profit centers. Habit produced a lot more humor than any other aspect of the PC/mini/mainframe world with best example being a variant of the much over-worn "knock-knock" jokes

Example being "knock-knock...". "Who's there?" "Oracle" "Oracle who?"

"Oracle on our best platform — a 35 mm slide projector."

MUST BE TIME FOR REAGAN'S AWARD FOR THE "WORST PUBLIC RELATIONS QUOTE OF 1997."

Award? Can't go to anyone else than Sun's Ralph McNealy.

Sun is a very bright, aggressive company headed up by Ralph McNealy who hates Microsoft's CEO Bill Gates with the passion usually reserved for jilted lovers or folks involved in atrocities. That's background. Current situation is a "to-the-death" struggle by Sun to force Microsoft to use non-Windows-friendly *Java* components rather than Microsoft-designed, Windows-friendly replacements/extensions.

Apparently without much forethought, or reflection, the Sun CEO commented to media reporters that Sun was releasing a *Java* utility to developers that would identify the 'offending' MS components on users machines and replace them with the 'official' *Java* routines. Has to be the most inept, stupid revelation to come from an otherwise relatively-savvy CEO.

Where has McNealy been for the last decade? Didn't he pay attention to the problems Prodigy and others (AOL) have had at the hands of really angry customers at thought that an online service would "pry" into their machines

THE VARIETY STORE

A PERSONAL VIEW OF THE PC INDUSTRY,
NEW HARDWARE OPERATING SYSTEMS,
SOFTWARE AND APPLICATIONS
by REAGAN ANDREWS

for user information? Sure, I want some 'Twinkie-snuffling' dweeb deciding what should run on my PC. Even though IBM pulled out of the Prodigy debacle ASAP, there is still a lot of user anger percolating over the incident. This has to rank up there with selling tickets to Dallas Cowboy 1997-8 playoff games after the last Cowboy game for stupidity.

Reagan Andrews

INSIDE THE NORTH TEXAS PC USERS GROUP COMMUNITY

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION



by Claude McClure

This Will be a Great Year

A new year is upon us, along with the accompanying resolutions we made a few short days ago. Each of us has some special goal picked out for accomplishment this year. Some may want to improve computer-based skills in using or writing computer programs. I can't think of a more worthy goal than mastering one of the often-used programs on your computer, or learning to write your own solution in one of the popular computer languages.

We are fortunate to have some very high-quality software manufacturers producing programs that can make our jobs much easier. **Timothy Carmichael** often arranges demonstrations of the better new products at the monthly auditorium presentations. Computers are also more powerful than we ever thought they would be, and they make any task easier. We are getting accustomed to

sound and animation in even the most humble business office routine through improvements in programming and equipment. There is plenty to learn and do. This is the time to master the powerful tools we have to work with. This is the time to keep your resolution. This is the time to squeeze the full value out of that beautifully-wrapped box of technology you call a computer.

If you fear that challenge may be too great, or that your resolution was a bit rash - never fear, the NTPCUG is here. The North Texas PC Users Group has dozens of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to include your pet project and scores of **Leaders** and **Instructors** who have volunteered to help you.

This page is dedicated to the many volunteers who have coached and helped me and others learn more. Some of them are named here. Thanks to the officers and leaders who make the NTPCUG a possibility, and an opportunity for all of us.

Infomart Liaison

Stuart Yarus
Robert Hilliard
Alex Lilley

Vendor Setup/Breakdown

Anchors:

David Slavik
Kenneth Berg

Crew:

Dick Abbott
Dennis Brinninger
Tim Foster
Tony Pham

Auditorium Presentations

Timothy Carmichael
Christopher Carmichael

Newsletter Labels

Charlie Fernandez

Information/Registration Booth

Statistician:
Connie Andrews
Ralph Beaver (Assistant)
Scheduler:
Bob Wuller
Anchors:

Ralph Beaver
Vernon Cates
Eteta Eta
Hank Holt
Cinda Lovil (Double)
David Martin
Bob McNeil
Foy Mills
Carl Oehmann
Fred Toulmin
Paul Williams

Booth Crew:

Al Aston
Roger Bopp(Double)
Glynn Brooks
Randy Durham
Tim Foster
Thelda Opella
Raymond Reyes
Ken Sauter

Disk of the Month (DOM)

DOM Shift Supervisors:

Joe Allen
Roy Bales
Don Chick
James Donlon
M. Pat Henley
Arnold Krusemark

DOM Desk Crew:

Richard Abreu
Michael Ashley
Douglas Athas
Bernie Baars
Richard Blair

Jim Boyce
Philip Bridge
Linda Campbell
Gene Carleton
Norm Dang
William Farris
Brad Ficke
Martin R. Gluck
Edwin Griffin
Jimmy Hurst
Tom Jackson
Tom Jones
Mac McKeethen
Mark Miller
Nancy Ogden
John Primm
George Read
Jim Russell-Redman
Oscar Tyler
Lee Williams

With Special Thanks to:

Set Up Crew:

Mark Gruner
Kent Haven
M. Pat Henley
David Huckabee
Jerry Stone

Inventory and Take-down Crew:

Richard Blair
Mark Christopher
Brad Ficke
Martin R. Gluck
Arnold Krusemark

DOM Desk Scheduler:

Philip Bridge

Disk Production:

Gene Carleton
Howard Hamilton



VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

1. Via BBS: (972)387-2751, (972)387-2752 or (972)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 (972) 661-4626 (w)

DOM Booth Scheduler

Phil Bridge (972) 422-5400

DOM Software Review

Mark Gruner (972) 964-8147 (h)

Information Booth and General Information

Claude McClure (972) 867-0978 (h)

Selected SIG Reports . . .

News and meeting notes of Special Interest Groups

(Material for this column should be sent to NTPCUG BBS SIG Upload Area or to Connie Andrews, Special Interest Group Editor, before the 10th of the month)

ACCESS SIG

In January, **Larry Linson** will discuss and demonstrate several additional controls from *Total Access Components* -- our November presentation was somewhat abbreviated due to our distributing the T-shirts donated by Microsoft -- we had one for everybody. Total Access Components - Custom Controls for Microsoft Access is available in versions for Access 2, 95, and 97. The Access 95/97 version contains 27 custom (ActiveX) controls to create user-friendly forms and reports, improve data display and input, enhance the functionality of forms, incorporate multimedia effects, and easily include Windows features.

Many thanks to **Jack Atkinson** who both hosted and was the speaker for the December meeting. His application illustrated how to do lookup by name or ID number on the main form, and choosing an edit/delete or add sub-forms depending on whether the ele-

ment was found and a Year 2000 compliant date field. He also showed how to simply put together "visuals" (LED meter, simple bitmaps to generate movement, and embedding symbols or folders, copyright, cards, clocks, etc..) Thanks also to Jack for the samples he donated for the giveaway.

Thanks to **Tom Browning** for the donation of several useful (and not inexpensive) books for our "major" giveaway in December: Ken Getz and Paul Litwin's *Access 95 How-To*, Roger Jennings' *Special Edition Using Microsoft Access 97*, and Susan Novalis' *Automating Microsoft Access with Macros*.

Coming soon: Larry's tutorial on processing different kinds of files in Access VBA -- text files, random files, and binary files. Although we handle much of our data in the database itself, and Access provides good facilities for importing, exporting, and linking to specific types of data files, we still encounter

FROM THE SIG COORDINATOR

The following are changes/additions/needs that the NTPCUG has made to the SIG's.

Groups Looking for Help in Leading their SIGs:

- **Introduction to the PC** [Contact Alex Lilley @ (972) 517-7430 h]
- **Spreadsheets SIG** [Contact Eb Foerster @ (214) 357-7602 h]
- **Visual Basic** [Contact Jim Carter @ (972) 235-5968 h]
- **Dallas Corel** [Contact Marsha Drebelbis (214) 951-0266]
- **Hardware Solutions** [Contact Charles Miller (903) 938-4220 h]

The requirements for forming a SIG are:

Leadership — at least one individual willing to lead the SIG, and an assistant.

Membership — at least eight individuals willing to attend the SIG fairly consistently.

If you have a group that meets these qualifications or would like help in finding others who might share your interests, please contact me at (972) 517-7430 (H) or (972) 960-4276 (W).

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS SIG LEADER LISTINGS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS SIG LEADER LISTINGS

SIG Coordinator

Alex Lilley (972) 517-7430 h

Legend: h = Home #, w = Work #

M = Metro #

ACT /

Jim Thompson (817) 261-6159 h

..... (972) 487-8499 w

Deborah Bean (972) 475-7463 h

..... (972) 475-3124 w

Access

Larry Linson (817) 481-2350 hM

Jack Atkinson (817) 481-6623 h

Dianna DeCicco .. (972) 446-0639 h

Tom Lukers (972) 423-4308 h

Alpha 4 / 5

Ron Jackson (972) 276-3661 h

Bill Parker (214) 369-5889 h

ActiveX Developers

Larry Linson (817) 481-2350 h

Linda Moore (214) 342-8833

Vince Prehn (214) 880-0000

Dan Ogden (972) 417-1916 w

Assembly Language SIG

Frank Cavallito .. (972) 423-9221 h

Glynn Brooks (972) 578-8737 h

..... (972) 716-3281 w

Business Applications/DAC

Putt Shaw (972) 235-2559 h

Bruce Schubert .. (972) 394-5328 h

..... (972) 233-8353 w

C++Language

Howard Harkness (972) 492-1508

CAD

Bill Sephton (972) 296-1799 h

..... (972) 387-3500 w

Neil Culver (972) 690-6552 h

..... (972) 235-3031 w

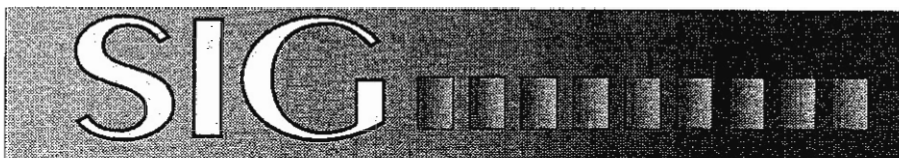
Communications

Alan Brosz (972) 548-7928 h

..... (972) 498-1237 w

Birl Smith (972) 960-8227 h

..... (214) 220-9388 w



situations where there is no substitute for reading and writing disk files.

If you registered your copy of *Microsoft Office 97*, you probably are aware that Microsoft has issued a Service Release. They mailed an alert from which you could order the CD. They haven't publicized as much that you can obtain, free, the "Enterprise Update" -- a complete new Office CD with the corrections incorporated, and it even has a correction or two that isn't on the Service Release CD. There is a special Microsoft number for ordering the Enterprise Update: (800) 370-9272. Have your MS Office CD ROM key ready. You'll usually find that on a sticker on the jewel case in which you received the Office CD. There are versions of the Enterprise Update CD for Office 97 Standard and Office 97 Pro (the difference, of course, being that Pro includes our favorite database, Access 8.0). They have had some supply and internal communication problems -- if the person who takes your call doesn't know about the Enterprise Update or tries to steer you to the Service Release, politely ask to speak to a supervisor, or even better, just call back later. I had no such problems and I hear they've solved many of the problems.

Between meetings, check out our local MS ACCESS message conference on the NTPCUG BBS (electronic bulletin board system). Telephone numbers are inside the back cover of this issue. It's where we ask and answer questions, post sample code, and keep in touch between monthly meetings. If you're on the Internet, the Access "meeting place" is the comp.databases.ms-access newsgroup.

We look forward to seeing you at the January meeting. Come join us!

Larry Linson

ActiveX Application Developers SIG

In January, **Larry Linson** will explore the *TechNet* offering from Microsoft. It's a subscription service, and each month you receive two CD's chock full of information: Knowledge Bases, fixes and patches, explanatory whitepapers, updated and revised hardware drivers, and more. We'll take a tour of one of those CD's, courtesy of Microsoft. With a little luck, and good mail schedules, we'll also have some brochures on TechNet, too.

Thanks to **Jack Atkinson** for standing in in **Dan's** and **Larry's** absence, hosting the meeting, and leading the discussion session in December. Publication deadlines force this article to be written before the December meeting, but I'm sure it was both lively and interesting.

Owners of Microsoft Office 97 who haven't obtained a copy of the "Enterprise Update", with significant corrections and improvements, take a look at the Access SIG Notes for information on how to get yours, free, from Microsoft.

The ActiveX Application Developers SIG addresses issues of developing applications under the *Component Object Model (COM)* using ActiveX Controls and other ActiveX components. We still ask and answer a few questions about *Open Database Connection (ODBC)* technology, too. As hot as the Internet is, our topics aren't necessarily about *Internetting*, since ActiveX controls work equally well on the desktop and in client/server environments. That's one of the attractive features: one type of control, usable in many environments.

Come join us in January, and keep on coming in the future. We'll do our best to make it interesting and productive for you.

Larry Linson

SIG LEADER LISTING

Legend: h = Home #, w = Work #
M = Metro #

Dallas Corel

Marsha Drebelbis (214) 951-0266
Susan Biggs (214) 340-7794

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Reagan Andrews (214) 828-0699 h

Delphi

Fred Williams (972) 492-1315
Tom Browning (214) 692-9784 h
Frank Cavallito (972) 423-9221

Desktop Publishing

Mark Stuertz (214) 528-5311 h

Emerging Computer Technologies

Dick Vedder (817) 481-6457 w
Lynn Peterson
Walter Johnston .. (972) 612-0604 h

Fox Pro

Kevin White (972) 383-5211 w

Genealogy - General

Al Sanford (972) 278-7888 h

Genealogy - Brother's Keeper

Neil Sunderland .. (972) 272-2869 h

Genealogy - PAF

Joe Waldrop (817) 498-5856 h

Genealogy - Roots III / IV

John Wylie (972) 495-4410 h

Genealogy - The Master Genealogist

Jeri Steele (972) 306-1596 h
..... (972) 917-3917 w

Graphics

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..... (972) 475-3124 w

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Ralph Beaver (817) 624-9530 h
Gary Johnson (972) 938-0344 h

Internet-Beginner

Tom O'Keefe (972) 247-8812 h
Doug Gorrie (972) 618-8002 h
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Internet-Advanced

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Tom O'Keefe (972) 247-8812 h

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David Maxwell ... (214) 977-7584 w
..... (972) 299-6295 h

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..... (972) 960-4276 w
Bob Russell (972) 422-4269 h

Investors

Dick Fichtman ... (972) 437-0322 h

JAVA

Art English (972) 567-2253

Lotus Notes & Domino

B.J. Shultz

MS Word for Windows

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Jan Patton (903) 886-6249 h
..... (903) 886-6466 w
Bob Rice (214) 885-0202 w

Microsoft FrontPage

Robert Masters ... (972) 462-7490 hw
Jeff Cooper

Microsoft Networking

Bruce Wynn (972) 335-2507 h
..... (972) 756-7832 w
Richard Miles (214) 767-7315 w
..... (972) 296-5356 h
Gil Brand (214) 508-8370 w
..... (214) 341-7182 h

Microsoft Visual C++/MFC

Art English (972) 567-2253

Multimedia

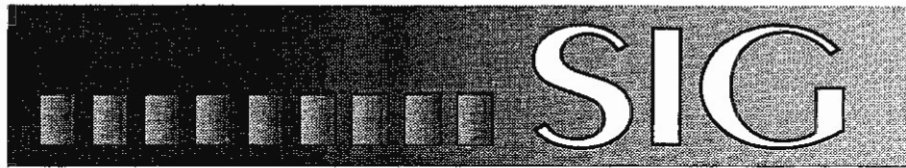
Dennis Rice (972) 680-8299 h

Networking

Mike Momen (972) 238-1244 h
..... (972) 915-2158 w
Leroy Tennison
Francis Bright

Paradox

Tom Browning ... (214) 692-9784 h
Fred Williams ... (972) 492-1315 h

**ASSEMBLER SIG**

Our December presentation consisted of a review of the book *Inner Loops A Sourcebook for Fast 32-Bit Software Development* (ISBN 0-201-47960-5) by Rick Booth. This book makes a number of interesting suggestions regarding code optimization and presents programs useful to Assembler and C programmers alike. This is an excellent and highly recommended book.

The topic for our presentation in January was suggested by one of the points made in the *Inner Loops* book - data alignment is critical. We will look into alignment issues from both a C and Assembler perspective.

Our topic for February will demonstrate the use of the MSVCRT.DLL (the runtime DLL that implements some of the standard library functions for Visual C++) from Assembler programs. Since these are available on most Win95/NT machines, it should be possible to allow Assembler programs access to the C standard library.

We hope to see you in January - as usual, suggestions for future presentations are always welcome.

Frank Cavallito & Glynn Brooks

COMMUNICATIONS SIG**SOHO (Small Office/Home Office) Connectivity**

The communications SIG will host Dave Casey, Westron Communications in our January 1998 meeting. He has spoken to our group on several occasions on high-speed communications. Dave Casey will do a presentation on small office productivity. Many Internet and corporate users need and want higher-speed connectivity. His company has several products from

Cisco, Compaq, Nortel, OpenRoute Networks, and Adtran that address this requirement. Dave will discuss the services available from ISP's as well as corporate networks for Internet connections. This presentation will give us some insight to what goes on behind the scenes at our ISP's. This is a discussion you will want to attend.

Birl Smith and Alan Brosz

DALLAS COREL SIG**Corel Round Table Discussion**

Bring your burning questions about Corel graphics to discuss with the group in January. Our SIG members are quite knowledgeable and you can exchange needed information or you will find out where to get it. Whether you are a novice just now learning the difference between a bitmap and a vector graphic, or whether you are a professional at using CorelDRAW daily for years, all are welcome. Come and join in the fun of information exchange. Maybe we will even get the new DRAW 8 installed on our SIG computer to peek at!

NOTE: In January, do not go to room 7007 where our SIG usually meets. Instead, check the overhead projection in the vendor area on the first floor. That's where the latest SIG room assignments are posted. Then come to the appropriate room 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. where Dallas Corel will proceed as usual.

Sneak Preview

February's SIG program will focus on "Pre-press Tips for CorelDRAW".

December Program in Review

Corel Corporation launched *CorelDRAW 8* in North Texas to an en-

SIG

thusiastic audience right here at NTPCUG as our Main Auditorium Program. Corel Product Specialist Dennis Van Staalduinen gave a bang up presentation with multimedia sights and sounds, while demonstrating many of the new power features of 8. Billed as "The Choice of Professionals", CorelDRAW 8 and *Corel PHOTO-PAINT 8* have been enhanced for maximum productivity. 3-D features abound too. Dennis noted that 8 will occupy less space on our hard drives and will be a faster program to use than 7. Whether designing professional graphics for print media and presentations or for publishing to the Web, CorelDRAW 8 promises an outstanding tool set that facilitates creativity and job efficiency. Dennis also dipped briefly into *WordPerfect 8* and *WebGraphics Suite*, which are other major Corel products. He also predicted that *VENTURA 8* will be released in April 1998. Many attendees availed themselves of special user group prices for Corel products that day. CorelDRAW 8 hit store shelves at the end of November and carries a suggested retail price of \$695 for the full version. Prices as low as \$199 for the upgrade version have already been found.

Many thanks to Dallas Corel SIG members who assisted with the exciting DRAW 8 launch in December: **Jay Bartlett, Dick Blair, Rob Alschbach, Maren Riise, Marsha Drebelbis, Chris Young, and Timothy Carmichael.**



Dallas Corel is A SIG Of North Texas PC Users Group

Rebate Offers

User Loyalty Mail-in Rebate: Until February 28, 1998, Corel is offering registered users of CorelDRAW 7 the opportunity to upgrade to the full retail version of CorelDRAW 8 and receive a rebate. (This offer does not apply to Academic, OEM or licensed versions of CorelDRAW 8.) Call Customer Service at 613-728-3733 for the latest details.

IMSI Acquires Products from Corel Corporation

Have you found it hard to keep up with all the Corel software products lately? Well, several products, which Joanne Runte from Corel Corp. demonstrated at NTPCUG's August Program in the Main Auditorium, were acquired by IMSI in September. They include *CorelCAD Modeler*, *CorelCAD Technical*, *CorelFLOW*, *Corel Click & Create*, *Corel Lumiere*, *Corel Family Tree Suite*, *CorelTM Family Publisher* and *Corel Personal Architect*.

However if you own any of these, do not despair. Support will be there. IMSI is a leading developer of computer-aided design, graphics and productivity software for business and home markets. It acquired rights to products in the CAD, diagramming, and consumer categories, in exchange for which Corel Corporation will receive shares of IMSI common stock and cash to the value of \$5.6 million, in addition to further royalties and development payments. IMSI plans to hire approximately 20 Corel employees and will establish a development center in Ottawa, Canada.

Similarly, in the graphics category, IMSI will now offer its customers a complete range of tools for their graphics needs. These include MediaPaq for image management, Hijaak for graphics file conversion and image manipulation; MasterPublisher for page layout

SIG LEADER LISTING CONTINUED ...

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M = Metro #

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Phil Faulkner..... (972) 239-0561 h

..... (214) 654-6610 w

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Eb Foester..... (214) 357-7602 h

SQL Server

Ada Finigan.....

Steven DeSalvo... (972) 716-2684

John Penaska... (972) 431-3979

Erin Weiker..... (972) 462-6033

UNIX

Doug Scott..... (817) 261-4653 hM

..... (817) 878-0367 wM

Visual Basic -- Beginning

Jim Carter..... (972) 235-5968 h

Jim Hart

Visual Basic

Ed Diehl..... (972) 687-9043 w

Jim Carter..... (972) 235-5968 h

Windows - Applications

Neal Berkowitz.... (972) 475-7463 h

..... (972) 475-3124 w

Deborah Bean.... (972) 475-7463 h

..... (972) 475-3124 w

WordPerfect / Windows

Gindy Adams..... (817) 481-1300 wM

Diane Bentley

and illustration; Corel Lumiere for video editing; MasterClips and MasterPhotos for electronic art and photos, and Corel Click & Create for combining content into a multimedia presentation.

In the consumer category, Corel Family Tree Suite 2.0 offers users industry-leading features. Under the terms of the agreement, Corel has licensed IMSI the right to offer Corel Photo House within IMSI's Family Tree Suite package. Family Tree Suite 2.0 is a significant upgrade and will be released in time for the holiday selling season. Corel's Personal Architect product provides powerful home design and layout capabilities and is expected to be released in early 1998.

For more information about these products, visit Corel's home page on the Internet at <http://www.corel.com> and visit IMSI's home page on the Internet at <http://www.imsisoft.com>.

Recent Programs at Dallas Corel SIG

1997:

- ❖ January - Web page design with *Corel Web Graphics Suite*

- ❖ February - Photo Retouching in *CorelPHOTO-PAINT 7*
- ❖ March - *VENTURA 7* Demonstration
- ❖ April - *CorelDRAW 7 & PHOTO-PAINT 7* in Real World Uses
- ❖ May - Corel SIG Members Showcase Their Work
- ❖ June - Productivity in *DRAW 5, 6 & 7*
- ❖ July - *CorelDREAM 3-D 7*
- ❖ August - Corel Corp. *WebMaster Suite, Lumiere* and *Click & Create*
- ❖ September - *Presentations 8*
- ❖ October - Font Management and *Acrobat*
- ❖ November - Customizing *CorelDRAW 7*
- ❖ December - *CorelDRAW 8* Launch by Corel Corp.
Marsha Drebelbis

This situation best fits those environments where several Delphi-developed software products are to be installed on a single machine. The ability to deliver a single set of DLL's, that support multiple small footprint software products, allows an overall savings of system resources.

The down side to this scenario is that the delivery mechanism is more complex as the separate DLL's must be delivered along with an application. This is not a major problem if you are using a good installation building tool. You just have to insure that all required DLL's make it into the installation package.

I'm really beginning to like 3.0 and don't expect to be doing much, if any, future development in either 1.0 or 2.0. Naturally if a client waves green crinkly stuff in my face I will reconsider.

The great bar code scanning project that I have mentioned several times in the past, like most all projects, is past deadline and progressing slowly. I still plan on bringing it in when it is finally ready for prime time.

Seems once we got the scale heads squared away the first scan gun was choking on every flash card we offered it. Tonight I picked up a brand new scan gun with a functioning flash card installed. Life is good!

Been really busy in the chicken bid'ness so don't figure I'll have a formal presentation ready. But, I'm certain I can find something of interest in 3.0 to demo. Maybe I'll show how to configure a project to produce various flavors of run time packages.

I wish some of you out there would get tired of my rambling and stand up and do a slick presentation of your own. You certainly won't hurt my feelings.

Delphi SIG

Well the big December give away is history. I hope the prizes will serve their winners well.

Now it is back to the things Delphi.

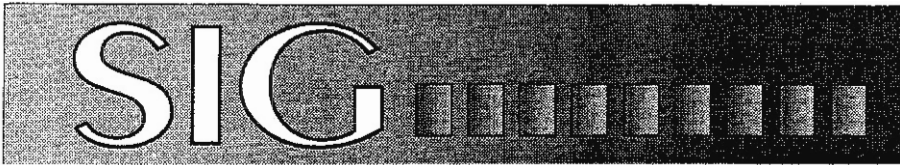
I am beginning to migrate almost everything I have done to date in Delphi 1.0 to Delphi 3.0. Seems the long-awaited critical mass of 32 bit user platforms has developed. Now the standard answer has become, "We won't worry about it, we'll just install '95 and get on with it."

There are some real advantages to moving to Delphi 3.0. One of the more obvious is the ability to do "stripped" compiles which produce very small (relatively, that is) executable files. These compiled projects do require a set of supporting DLL's be installed on target platforms.

IMPORTANT COREL ADDRESSES & PHONE NUMBERS

Corel Corporation
1600 Carling Avenue,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1Z 8R7

- ❖ Technical Support Representatives..... 800-818-1848
- ❖ G1 Release, CD-Rom only (latest "fixes" and patches for Corel products) 800-772-6735
- ❖ Customer Service Representatives 800-772-6735
- ❖ IVAN (Interactive Voice Answering Network) 613-728-1990
- ❖ 24 Hour Automated Fax System 613-728-0826 Ext.3080
- ❖ Technical Support hours are 4AM to 8PM (EST) excluding holidays
- ❖ To obtain our catalogue please request document #2000



Anyhow, drop on by the SIG this month, maybe we will even have some answers for all those questions.

Fred Williams

DOS SIG

We really tried to follow some of the SIG Notes, i.e., do what I/we said we were going to do in December. **Jim Hoisington** and I managed that for close to five minutes. Think I'll continue looking at tightening up the old system again this month in the DOS/Operating Systems SIG. May also look at how to handle moving to ever larger hard disks gracefully since that's what most of us are doing these days. PowerQuest — folks who produce *Partition Magic* — recently released a new product called *Drive Image* which picks up where *Drive Copy* left off that I plan to review and describe as part of the upgrade discussion.

Secrets in the night — “slipstream upgrades” to Win 95 continue. Prices on OSR2.x continue to fall, DRAM/SDRAM prices continue to fall. Motherboard and CPU prices are doing likewise. Last seems to be driving the first.

Microsoft slipped another upgrade into Win 95 OSR2 which in the 2.1x ver-

sion supports USB (Universal Serial Bus) functions that were not supported in the first of the OSR releases. Reason is widespread availability of USB connections on the new motherboards as well as other features/improvements added to enhance operation. USB will have a lot of the daisy-chain functionality found in SCSI, that is ability to attach multiple devices such as keyboards, scanners and additional drives to the system without need for multiple IRQs. **Glynn Brooks** can describe the USB and why it's important much better than I. Perhaps we can convince him to do so at a coming SIG meeting.

Problem is, there aren't many USB devices (none I've seen in stores) at time of this writing. They are coming, though, and new features such as USB and Ultra IDE may provide powerful incentive to upgrade.

Tip of the month

I keep encouraging users to add memory for the most upgrade bang for their bucks. There's a caveat here though adding DRAM beyond the cache capabilities of the motherboard chip set can actually degrade system performance. Intel's *Triton i430VX* chip set and its clones found on most Pentium motherboards two years ago definitely see 64 MB of DRAM as the cache limit. The VX is obsolete and its presence on a prospective new motherboard is sufficient reason to seek another make/ model. I'd suggest browsing one or more of the Websites listed below for more details and suggestions.

<http://www.tom-shardware.com/>
<http://www.alternativecpu.com/>

<http://www.motherboards.org/>

Since **Billy Newsom**, Webmaster of the last — *motherboards.org* — will be presenting at 10:00 AM, might be worth your time to segue over to the In-fomart Auditorium to see what he thinks is the latest/greatest this month.

Reagan Andrews

INTERNET SIG - BEGINNING

It's finally here (again) !! Our periodic 3-4 hour "Introduction to the Internet" session at the **January 1998** meeting will help you, your family and your friends/associates come to grips with that nebulous entity, "The Internet". This course is designed for the rank beginner, who just heard the word "Internet" yesterday.

We'll begin at our regular 10 AM time, probably in our usual room. This course will give those new to the Internet the chance to ask those basic questions that they may have felt uncomfortable asking in the general meetings. Or, you (or a friend) may have just received a new PC for Christmas, and want to "surf the net" but don't know where to begin. We can fix that. Look for more details elsewhere in this newsletter.

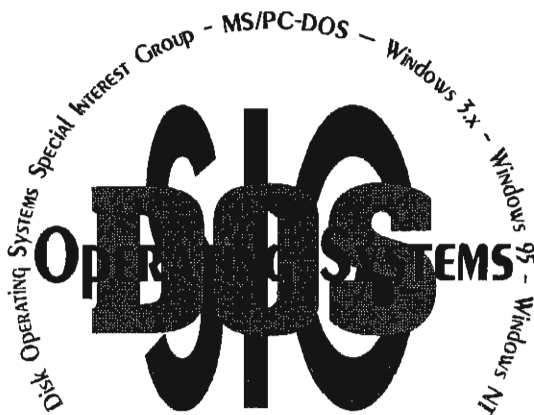
The ongoing purpose of the Beginning Internet SIG is to explain the Internet to those unfamiliar with it. This includes such things as how to choose and connect to an Internet Service Provider (ISP), what software options are available, what hardware is needed, and how to decipher all those confusing acronyms and buzzwords. Although we have several "prepared" sessions and speakers, look for general Q&A sessions (Question and Answer) periodically, too.

See you January 17th!!

*Erik Leaseburg, Doug Gorrie,
Tom O'Keefe & Kiff Barnes*

INTERNET SIG - ADVANCED

During the November meeting, **Mark Camp** spoke to the group about Windows NT-based E-mail servers. concen-



trating on SLMail from Seattle Labs. During the meeting, free evaluation CD-ROM copies of this software were given away to every attendee.

In January, Mark will return to finish with a demonstration of another popular NT Email server, *Post.Office*, produced by Software.Com. Although evaluation copies will not be distributed, there is a free, non-expiring version for up to 10 users, available for download from the Software.Com Web site.

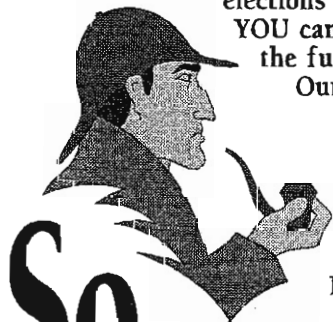
The Advanced Internet SIG addresses topics and issues of interest to experienced Internet users, who are looking for more in-depth content. Sessions address such topics as IP addressing, Domain Name Services, Internet phone and teleconferencing capabilities and tools, basic Web page development, Web server options and features, network and data security, search engines, and more.

Sessions include time to address member's questions. Answers may come from SIG leaders, session presenters, or from other attendees in the audience.

We encourage you to join with us January 17, 1998.

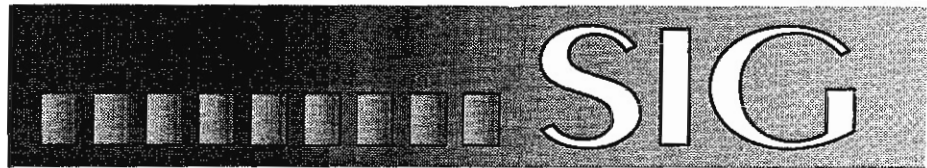
*Tom O'Keefe, Erik Leaseburg
& Doug Gorrie*

It does not take a Great Detective to know that voting in NTPCUG elections is how YOU can shape the future of Our Users Group!



So...

Be sure and Vote on January 17!



INTERNET - Web Developers

SIG

The January meeting will cover the survey results we are gathering on the scripting access available from DFW-area ISPs and presence providers. We're currently asking local ISPs about what type of support they offer Web site creators for running back-end scripts and applications servers, such as Allaire's Cold Fusion, IHTML, Microsoft's Active Server Pages, etc.

We will also have a demonstration by **David Wier** of his creation, HTML Editor. David has created Web sites for Parkland Hospital and The Ronald McDonald House in Dallas.

Meetings currently have 55-60 attendees and are open to all.

Mark Camp, Clifford Lopez & Chris Nelson

INTRODUCTION TO THE PC SIG

The following is the tentative schedule for SIG classes that will be offered as an Introduction to the PC during the next listed months. Classes can be taken in any order suitable to the individual student's schedule. Printed notes are provided during classes.

January 17, 1998

- ❖ 9:00 Viruses and Their Prevention

***** Please Note: The Introduction to the PC classes will discontinue in February unless and until a new SIG Leader comes forth. If you know of anyone who might volunteer for this position please contact Alex Lilley.*****

February 21, 1998*

- ❖ 9:00 Class 1
Introduction to the SIG and the Personal Computer
- ❖ 10:00 Class 2
Working with Files & Directory Structures
- ❖ Noon Class 3
Disk Operating System (DOS) - Part I
- ❖ 1:00 Class 4
DOS - Part II

March 21, 1998*

- ❖ 9:00 Class 5
Graphics for the PC
- ❖ 10:00 Class 6
Word Processors
- ❖ Noon Class 7
Spreadsheet Programs
- ❖ 1:00 Class 8
Other Software for the PC

April 11, 1998*

- ❖ 9:00 Class 9
Hardware for the PC
- ❖ 10:00 Class 10
Printers for the PC
- ❖ Noon Class 11
Overview of Quicken Accounting Software
- ❖ 1:00 Class 12
Modems & Telecommunications
- ❖ 2:00 Class 12a
NTPCUG Bulletin Board System (BBS)

May 16, 1998*

- ❖ 9:00 Class 13
Overview of Microsoft Windows

SIG

- ❖ 10:00 Class 14
Overview of Multimedia Software & Hardware
- ❖ Noon Class 15
Disk of the Month (DOM)
- ❖ 1:00 Class 16
PC's Into the 21st Century

* These dates are subject to change. Check your *PC NEWS* and/or the NTPCUG BBS for corrected dates before the meetings.

Alex Lilley

MS Networking SIG

January 17th Meeting - Workgroup (Peer-level) Networking

Topics to be covered:

- ❖ Win 95
- ❖ Win NT
- ❖ Mixed Win95 and WinNT

February 1998 - Directory Services - NTDS

The purpose of the MS Networking SIG is to technically showcase Microsoft Networking products, including Windows NT Server, Windows NT

Workstation, Systems Management Server, Exchange, SNA Server, Internet Information Server, and Windows 95.

The SIG highlights the capabilities and features of these products for all users, from individual end-users to corporate users, small and medium size businesses, and beginning to experienced.

We present the various options within Microsoft's networking products line and help members understand how they are positioned to solve their computing, connectivity and business needs. We help members understand how these products interoperate with other third party and legacy products.

The strength of an effective users' group is the opportunity to share common experiences and learn from others. We try to end each meeting with an open question and answer session which can transition to other SIG meetings, the DFW Xchange vendor area, or the Infomart restaurant.

By staying informed of the activities of other NTPCUG Special Interest Group's (SIGs) and area users groups with common interests, we answer members' questions and help them

identify other resources available in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

Past Meetings:

December 1997 - Back Office

- SMS - Systems Management Server
- Exchange Server
- SNA Server
- Internet Information Server (IIS)

November 1997- Windows NT v5.0 Features Preview

Mark Moore of Microsoft will be back to do his presentation on the upcoming features of Windows NT v5.0. Bring all of your questions and wish list items. Mark should have updated his presentation since our initial attempt to have him in October.

October 1997 - Dial-up Networking and RAS

Paul Sloane, one of our members, did an excellent step-by-step presentation on installation and configuring Windows NT RAS (Remote Access Server) on a Windows NT server and a Windows 95 laptop client. Many thanks to Paul on the fine job he did for the SIG.

September 1997- Windows NT v5.0 Features Preview

Mark Moore and we missed each other in the early morning fog. Instead of



Join the crowd of NTPCUG Members rushing to make sure their votes are counted at the January 17 Business Meeting!

having his discussion of features of the upcoming Windows NT v5.0, we had a spirited question and answer session and general discussion. This was an unexpected boon for the attendees and we promised to have more such sessions.

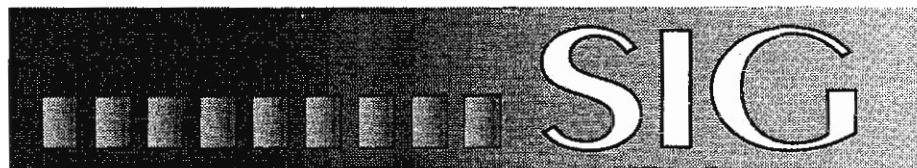
*Richard Miles, Gil Brand &
Bruce Wynn*

PRO SIG

With two years to go until the year 00, programmers are in short supply. Over half the attendees at the January meeting were recruiters. The *real* programmers have taken to using *handles* or assumed names.

Programmers in attendance were: Punch Card, Macro Boy, and JCL Maven. **Fred Williams**, known as Big Baud, was deer hunting.

Evidently, several of our regular attendees took my suggestion last month and set the clocks on their main frames to 12/31/99 on New Year's eve. I am in



the process of getting their addresses at the correctional institution at Huntsville.

Jim Hoisington

SPREADSHEET SIG

Our longtime Spreadsheets SIG leader, **Mark Gruner**, has been transferred to Atlanta. The NTPCUG will miss his participation and leadership not only as the Spreadsheet SIG Leader but also as a volunteer and member of the Board of Directors. We wish Mark well in his new endeavor and thank him for all his expertise he has shared with us over the many years. Mark claims he started with spreadsheets using *VisiCalc* back in the days when you still used Roman numerals.

The Spreadsheet SIG will continue with me, **Eb Foerster**, as your new

leader. We will continue to have presentations and Q&A sessions. My experience is with *Microsoft Excel* and thus our primary focus will be with that application. However most spreadsheets have like capabilities with the only differences being in the implementation. So join us no matter which specific application you use.

I solicit your ideas and suggestions for changes in the meeting. If someone has an interesting application that they have developed and would like to share with the group, let me know and I will arrange time for your presentation. If you have a question for the meeting you might send me a sample spreadsheet as an attachment (File) to an E-Mail message to me so that I can better illustrate and prepare an answer at our meeting. I am listed on the BBS as Eb Foerster (be sure to get spelling correct) and can also be reached at ebfoerster@juno.com (no attachments). My phone is 214-357-7602. Preferred time is between 7-9:30 PM. I could use an assistant SIG leader. So if you are interested, give me a call.

The NTPCUG is trying to locate us in a room with an available computer. This may mean a time change for our SIG. I will keep you posted on the bulletin board before the next meeting

Eb Foerster

VISUAL BASIC SIG - BEGINNING

The January 1998 meeting scheduled for January 17, 1998 will include a discussion of the data control in Visual Basic 5.0. The data control acts as a "traffic cop" between the data in a database and presentation controls like text boxes, list boxes and grid controls in a Visual Basic application.

We will demonstrate how the control works in an application using the biblio.mdb database included with Visual Basic 5.0. For those wishing to get an

A QUICK NOTE FROM THE PC NEWS PUBLISHER

The PC News is now accepting SIG Notes across the Internet! Address is:

reagana@swbell.net

Send your SIG Notes as attachments to your E-mail message and please heed the following concerning word processing formats and Long File Names.

You've got a stable installation of *Windows 95* or *NT 4.0* and the absolute latest version of your favorite, super, 32-bit word processor? Everything works well together and you're basking in the warm glow?

That's great!

But... Please, please, please don't submit your SIG notes or articles with Long File Names (LFN's), or in the latest version of your word processor if the vendor changed file formats. The *PC News* layout and formatting is still being done via *Ventura Publisher 4.2*

which definitely won't deal with LFN's and most of the latest word processor versions. That's especially true for *Microsoft Office 97* which was Microsoft's latest file-format switch in the *Word* series.

Do we enjoy being archaic? No.

We haven't upgraded to *Ventura 7* — yet — and the 5.0 version was so unstable and buggy that I reinstalled 4.2 after a number of unpleasant surprises. I still rely on an "old" DOS-based file manager, *Norton Commander*, which also doesn't handle LFN's gracefully. When I convert fully to 32-bit applications and utility software, the story may be different, but for the present, stick to the "antique" DOS 8.3 file naming convention and word processor versions *Word 7* (*Office 95* version) can convert to *Word for Windows 2.0* format.

Of course, ASCII is always welcome.

Reagan Andrews

SIG

insight into this control, read Chapter 20 of Gary Cornell's book entitled *Visual Basic 5.0 from the Ground Up*.

I have often expressed the opinion that the best way to learn to program in Visual Basic is to . . . program in Visual Basic! Another technique for improving your knowledge of a particular topic is to give a presentation on that topic at a meeting of the Beginning Visual Basic SIG.

For example, you could put together a 30-minute presentation on using the FlexGrid control. This control, new in Visual Basic 5.0, has quite a few interesting features and would make a very interesting and timely topic. Your preparation for that presentation would take some time, but you would have a far greater understanding of the features of the FlexGrid control and so would approximately 40 other members of the SIG.

One of the principal purposes of the NTPCUG is to enable members to help members. This peer-to-peer support has flourished in both Visual Basic SIGs from the beginning. You will find that giving a presentation to your SIG will pay dividends long after the event itself. Give me a call at (972) 235-5968 and I will work out the schedule with you. By the way, you can pick your own topic, the FlexGrid control was just my suggestion.

Last month, we looked at a couple of the sample applications included in Visual Basic to illustrate the usefulness of those applications and their source code in developing our own applications. There are over 200 sample applications included in Visual Basic 5.0 and they range from easy, straightforward applications to applications that are complex and very powerful. Devote some time to familiarizing yourself with these significant learning tools.

As we do every month, we will set aside some time for Q and A. If you are needing help with Visual Basic 5.0, this would be an excellent opportunity to ask your questions.

Bring your questions on Beginning Visual Basic to our meeting beginning at 8:00 AM on Saturday, January 17, 1998 at the Infomart. Check the projection screens in the vendor area on the first floor for the correct room assignments.

Jim Carter

WORDPERFECT / WINDOWS

Well, it's a new month and a brand-new year, so let's start out with a fairly brand new product - WordPerfect 8! Diane and I have put our heads together and have a very full year ahead of us, as well as a few surprises! This month we are going to introduce you to WordPerfect 8. For those of you who have been using the Windows products already, you will notice that the menu's have changed a little and there are more advanced (whiz-bang) features you will enjoy. If you are coming from the WordPerfect 5.1 DOS world, EVERYTHING will be different, so sit back and enjoy.

Keep in mind that if you have not yet upgraded to Windows 95 or WordPerfect 8, don't feel left out. We will answer all questions at anytime regarding any WordPerfect version for you. There are many features which have not changed much, therefore you will still gain knowledge by attending. And if you are on the fence about upgrading, this will possibly help you out on which side of the fence you want to be on! We look forward to seeing you all there.

Tip of the Month . . .

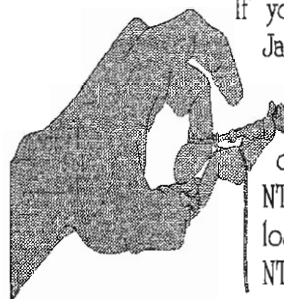
The tip this month is . . . keep up with your tips! All of the Tips of the Month will come in very handy at the end-of-the-year review in December. We are going to pull all review questions and game answers from the SIG notes, Tips of the Month, as well as handouts given at all of the meetings. When you attend a meeting in 1998, you will receive a handout for that month. In December, the people who have attended all 11 meetings will receive a special prize. We want to reward you for your effort and attendance, but you have to make sure you are there! Diane and I are still ironing out this method to our madness, so attend this month to get all the details. See you there!

Cindy Adams & Diane Bentley

Don't Forget to Vote!

It's important to you — and to us. Make a choice of who you think will represent you best — and VOTE . . .

If you don't vote at the January 17 NTPCUG Business Meeting — or mail in your ballot for the President-Elect and your choice of five (5) members of the NTPCUG Board of Directors, you'll lose your voice in how the NTPCUG is run!



Please see Pages 4 - 5 for more information.

NTPCUG USER - To - USER PROGRAM

Introducing the NTPCUG User-to-User program, composed of members who are willing to donate their time to help others with software and hardware questions. Some of our helpers are professional consultants. All have joined the User-to-User Program because they want to share their knowledge with others and help them. They agreed to answer questions that they are comfortable handling over the phone, without charge, and within reasonable time limits (at the volunteer's discretion).

These individuals are volunteering to assist NTPCUG members. NTPCUG is assisting in finding these volunteers for you, but cannot be responsible for unsatisfactory outcomes. Next to each subject, we will list the person's name, phone number and the times they are available. Please honor the wishes of our helpers by seeking help only during those hours.

Please try to resolve your problem by reading the manual and any on-line help BEFORE calling.

SUBJECT	HELPER	PHONE	DAYS/HOURS	SUBJECT	HELPER	PHONE	DAYS/HOURS
Access				Excel			
	Ram Bhandari	(972)243-4056 h	M-F 1300-1700		Warrington Williams.....	(214)348-6869	M-F 1800-2100
					.....		S&S 0900-2100
Assembly Language				Hardware Help			
	Frank Cavallito	(972)423-9221	7 1800-2200		Charles Miller.....	(903)938-4220(*)	7 1900-2400
	Glynn Brooks.....	(972)578-8737	M-F 1700-2200	Internet - General			
BASIC					Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200
Beginner Problems					David Martin	(972)930-0283	M-F 1900-2200
	Jan Parkhill.....	(214)828-2216	M-Sa 0900-1700	Internet - Telnet, FTP, NetScape, Web Explorer (OS/2)			
	Shirley Hudgens.....	(903)432-9780	7 0900-2000		Bob Wilson	(972)517-1434	M-F 1900-2200
Brother's Keeper					.....		S-S 1000-2200
	Neil Sunderland.....	(972)272-2869	7 0900-2200	LANs — Novell			
C++ (the language)					Joseph Beasley	(972)225-8752	7 0800-2400
	Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900	— Lantastic			
	Howard Harkness.....	(972)492-1508	7 1000-2100		Joseph Beasley	(214)410-3818	7 0900-2200
CA Clipper				Managing Your Money			
	Richard Mitchell.....	(972)625-9130M	M-F 1900-2100		Glynn Brooks.....	(972)578-8737	M-F 1700-2200
	.....		SS 0900-2300	Modems			
CorelDraw					Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200
	Linda Hume.....	(817)472-7555	M-F 1900-2200	MathCAD			
	.....		S-S 1300-2200		Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900
Batch Files				Norton Utilities			
	Charles Miller	(903)938-4220(*)	7 1900-2400		John Dyer	(972)790-3311	M-Sa 0800-2200
Borland C++				OS/2			
	Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900		Larry Truesdale	(972)442-7074	7 1000-2200
	Howard Harkness.....	(972)492-1508	7 1000-2100	PC Tools/Win			
CompuServe					Glynn Brooks.....	(972)578-8737	M-F 1700-2200
	Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900	Paradox			
dBASE III, III+, IV & Windows					Fred Williams.....	(972)492-1315	7 1300-2100
	.....	(972)964-7923	7 0800-1700	PKzip/PKUNzip			
DOS					Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200
	Bob Russel	(972)422-4269	7 1900-2200	ProComm/ProComm+			
	Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200		Bill Green.....	(817) 731-1308	
DR DOS							
	Ralph Beaver	(817)336-2570	M-F 0800-1700				
	.....	(817)624-9530	SS 0900-2100				

NTPCUG User — To — User Program

SUBJECT	HELPER	PHONE	DAYS/HOURS
ProComm/ProComm+ (Ctd.)...			
	Joseph Beasley	(972)225-8752	7 0800-2400
	Joseph. Beasley	(214)410-3818	7 0900-2200
Publisher (Microsoft)			
	Bob Russell	(972)422-4269	7 1900-2200
	Pat Cote.....	(972)831-8055	M-F 0800-1700
	.....	(972)496-3894	7 1000-2200
Quicken			
	Jim Hall.....	(214)348-7848	7 1000-2100
Quickbooks			
	Jim Thompson	(214)953-0051	M-F 0800-1800
SPFPC			
	Doug Gorrie	(214) 464-4568	M-F 0800-1700
	.....	(972) 618-8002	S-S 1000-1900
UNIX			
	Doug Scott.....	(817)261-4653	7 1830-2200
Virus & Anti-Virus			
	Charles Miller.....	(903)938-4220(*)	7 1900-2400

SUBJECT	HELPER	PHONE	DAYS/HOURS
Visual Basic -			
	Jim Carter	(972)235-5968	7 1700-2130
	L.J. Johnson	(972)495-9067	7 1700-2130
	Gene Hamelman.....	(972)495-6342	7 1700-2130
Windows for Workgroups			
	Joseph Beasley	(972)225-8752	7 0800-2400
	Joseph Beasley	(214)410-3818	7 0900-2200
	Bob Russell.....	(972)422-4269	7 1900-2200
Windows NT 4.0 & 3.51			
	Richard Miles	(972)296-5356	M-F 1900-2200
	.....		SS 10:00-16:00
	.....	(214)767-7315	M-F 1500-1700
Word for Windows			
	Bob Russell.....	(972)422-4269	7 1900-2200
XENIX			
	Doug Scott.....	(817)261-4653	7 1830-2200
XTREE			
	John Dyer	(972)790-3311	M-Sa 0800-2200

The subject areas below do not have a volunteer to answer questions. If you would like to assist or add possible categories for the future, please contact Doug Gorrie at (214)464-7924 M-F 0800-1700 or Sa & Su 1000-1900 at (972)618-8002. Doug will send you a form on which you can list your qualifications and sign.


LEGEND:

7..... All 7 days of each week M-F ... Monday through Friday
 T&T... Tuesday and Thursday M-Sa .. Monday through Saturday
 S&S... Saturday and Sunday (*). Caller should incur any Long Distance charges

Areas Needing Helpers:

- Borland Turbo C
- CAD
- Delphi
- Fox Pro
- Harvard Graphics
- LapLink
- Microsoft C
- Microsoft C++
- Microsoft Visual C++
- Microsoft Word
- Pagemaker
- Roots
- Sound Blaster
- TurboTax
- Corel Ventura
- WordPerfect/ Windows
- XTREE

North Texas PC Users Group, Inc



Membership Application

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

Member # _____

Name (Last): _____ (First): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone (Check preferred.) Home: (_____) _____ - _____

Work: (_____) _____ - _____ Ext. _____

Occupation/Profession: _____

Check one from each column below

Payment:	Membership	Application Status:
Cash _____	Classification:	New Member _____
Check _____	Regular (\$30.00)	Renewal _____
Credit Card _____	Student (\$25.00)	Address Change _____

Applications should be mailed to: North Texas PC Users Group, P.O. Box 703449, Dallas, TX 75370-3449 (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 PC compatible products.

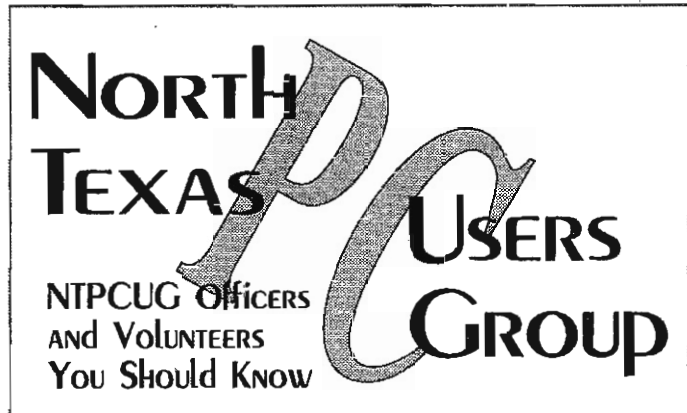
North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

P.O. Box 703449, Dallas, TX 75370-3449

Phone (214) 746-4699 for recorded information about the North Texas PC Users Group and scheduled meeting date times and locations. Please leave a message if you would like specific information about the Group. Or, visit our Web Page at: www.ntpcug.org

The North Texas PC Users Group, Inc., is a non-profit, independent group, not associated with any corporation. Membership is open to owners and others interested in exchanging ideas, information, hardware, predictions, and other items related to personal and compatible computers. To join the Group, complete the application blank printed elsewhere in this newsletter, and send with \$30 membership dues to the Membership Director — address shown below. Subscription to the newsletter is included with each membership.

The Group meets once each month, usually on the second or third Saturday. See inside front cover for date, time and place of the next North Texas PC Users Group meeting.



North Texas PC Users Group, Inc. Board of Directors

Jim Hoisington *Chairman*
Reagan Andrews *Marsha Drebelbis*
Doug Gorrie *Alex Lilley*
Andy Oliver *Fred Williams*

NTPCUG Bulletin Board

NOTE: To access the BBS Metro line from outside Area Code 972, use Area Code 972. (This is NOT a toll call from Fort Worth and the Mid-Cities area.)

Bulletin Board Settings: N – 8 – 1
 (No parity, 8 data bits, 1 stop bit)

NTPCUG BBS Telephone Numbers:

..... (972) 387-2751
 (972) 387-2752
 METRO (972) 263-9036

SYSOP: Fred Williams
 Assistant Sysop: Tom Prickett
 Assistant Sysop: Doug Gorrie
 Information Mgt: Lewis Graber
 User Relations: Adam Peterson

Password problems?
 Call Doug at..... (214) 464-4568

TI PRO BULLETIN BOARD (214)361-5275
 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 703449
Dallas, Texas 75370-3449

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

NTPCUG Officers

President	Jim Hoisington	(972) 416-3101 h
President-Elect	Andy Oliver	(972) 462-1896 h (972) 960-4215 w
Program Chairman	Timothy Carmichael	(972) 566-4626 w
Treasurer	Eb Foerster	(214) 357-7602 h
Secretary	John West	(972) 620-8741 h
Membership Dir.	Jim Hoisington	(972) 416-3101h
Advertising Dir. (Acting)	Connie Andrews	(214) 828-0699h
Publicity	Rob Alschbach	(214) 368-4979 b
Disk of the Month		
Volunteer Coord.	Claude McClure	(972) 867-0978 h
Bulletin Board	Fred Williams	(972) 492-1315
DFW Xchange	Information	(214) 746-3365 www.dfwxchange.com

Members Emeritus

John Pribyl (1924 - 1993)
Phil Chamberlain *Jim Hoisington*
David McGehee *Stuart Yarus*
Tom Prickett *Connie Andrews*
Kathryn Loafman *Reagan Andrews*
Fred Williams *Timothy Carmichael*
Andy Oliver *Mark Gruner*



North Texas PC Users Group
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Address Correction Requested

17.1

North Texas PC Users Group

Next Meeting:
17 January 1998

