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Deadline:

All advertising and other material for publication in North Texas PC NEWS must be received by the NEWS staff by the 10th of the month prior to publication. See deadline information below.

Circulation:

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Member distribution was 1,600; remaining copies were distributed to PC user groups around the country, and to advertisers, prospective members and others with common interests.

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DEADLINE

Copy deadline for April
North Texas PC NEWS:
Monday, April 20th

Meeting Dates:

April 11, 1998 – 2nd Saturday
May 16, 1998 – 3rd Saturday
June 20, 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

Drive Image 2.0
PowerQuest Corporation (www.powerquest.com)
Dave Whittle, User Group Relations

This new version of Drive Image has a new graphical, wizard-like interface which takes the user step-by-step through the disk imaging process. The feature-packed upgrade also includes enhanced removable media support, the ability to extract individual files from within a disk image, the ability to resize images to fit smaller drives, and *a new feature, ImageShield, which allows users to password protect important image files. There will be special discounts and a drawing for free products. *

PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS...
TIMOTHY CARMICHAEL

10:00 AM - 10:55 AM

PhotoSuite for Digital Photography
MGI Software, Inc. (www.mgisoft.com)
Dave Whittle, User Group Relations

MGI PhotoSuite gives you unlimited options when it comes to your photos. It is the fastest, easiest way to edit and organize your photos while giving you a creative freedom you've never had before. Turn your photos into greeting cards or incorporate them into personal calendars, web pages, family letters, and share them with others via email or on the Internet. There will be special discounts and a drawing for free products. *

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

NTPCUG Business Meeting
(Room 1061)

11:00 AM - 11:55 AM

DesignCAD 97 and LT
ViaGrafix Corporation
Rick Spaulding

DesignCAD 97 includes a comprehensive array of 2D drafting tools and a powerful set of solid 3D modeling tools in one package. It is well suited for the professional architect, engineer, or technical illustrator, and the logical interface and affordable price make it ideal for the beginner, student, or novice designer. Other features include animation with AVI support, Internet-ready with e-mail support and VRML output, direct scanner support with vector conversion, and customization with enhanced Visual Basic and Visual C++ support. DesignCAD LT is an enhanced version of DesignCAD 2D. There will be a drawing for free products. *

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

April 11

SIGs **NTPCUG Special INTEREST GROUP MEETING SCHEDULE**

8:00 - 8:55 Internet - WEB Developers Microsoft Networking Visual BASIC - Beginning MultiMedia	9:00 - 10:55 Dallas Corel
8:00 - 9:55 Hardware Solutions	10:00 - 10:55 ACT! CAD Delphi Emerging Technologies Fox Pro Database Networking Internet-Beginning Introduction to the PC PAF-Genealogy WordPerfect for Windows UNIX
9:00 - 9:55 DOS/ Operating Systems General Genealogy Internet-Advanced Introduction to the PC SQL Server Quicken Visual BASIC Windows Applications MS Word for Windows	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
 Introduction to the PC
 Java

The Master Genealogist
1:00 - 1:55
 ActiveX Developers
 Business Apps./DAC Easy

1:00 - 1:55 Ctd.
 Introduction to the PC
 Lotus Notes & Domino
 QuickBooks

2:00 - 2:55
 Advanced Programmers

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 INFOMART lobby and at the NTPCUG Information Booth in the Vendor Area for latest SIG schedules and room locations.

ON EXTREME

I hope you were able to attend the Microsoft eXtreme 2 event at the Prestonwood Theater on April 4th to see the new Windows 98. The Users Group was treated to a preview of the preview at the March 21st Saturday meeting.

The preregistration numbers for the eXtreme 2 event were some of the highest in the country. eXtreme 2 was downlinked by satellite to 22 theaters across the country, simultaneously. That was a whole mess of people seeing it at once.

Thanks go to the NTPCUG volunteers who helped pull this off.

ON MOVING . . . OR GETTING OUT OF THE WAY

The industry changes are so fast, the technology keeps exceeding all predictions, and corporate America is hard-pressed to keep up. The magnitude of the task, the expense involved, and the strain on personnel is beginning to show. With more technical jobs than there are people to fill them, we are starting to experience what Petroleum Engineers and Geologists were going through during the oil boom days.

Walk out on your job and have a new job before your foot hits the asphalt, making more money, and with a signing bonus. Not quite, but close.

Where do we go? We have been through it all, boom and bust, XT and Personal PC, *Windows 95* and *DOS.4.0*. The Users Group is here to help explain, as best that we can, what's necessary technology, and what is not.

ON ANSWERS

If someone tells you that they know all the answers, or all about the technology, then avert their gaze, back away from the person, and seek medical or psychiatric help for the person. I probably say, "I don't know" as many times as I have an answer. All any of us can do is to find the answers among our co-workers, our peers, our Users Group community.

ON WAITING

If you are going to wait until something better or cheaper comes along, then you will never own whatever it is that you were waiting on. It just



keeps coming, faster, cheaper, better, faster, cheaper, better. Nonstop.

ON SHARED SIGs

Look in the SIG News section of this newsletter and you will see a "side bar" for an AppleCorps SIG, the *FileMaker* SIG. *FileMaker* is a cross-platform application with both MAC and PC versions and has adherents from both camps. There is a precedent for doing so — the Genealogy SIGs have always appealed to both PC and Apple users and were initiated and led by Al Sanford, a long-time AppleCorps member,

Given that the new graphical operating system for the MAC, *BeOS*, has been ported to the PC, I predict there will be more of these SIGs as "traditional" MAC vendors are now porting their software to the PC as well as to the Apple platform.

ON RESURRECTIONS

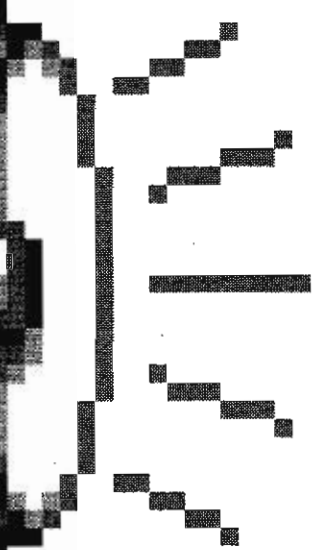
The *Disk of the Month* (DOM) and *Multimedia Rental Library* services of the NTPCUG for members aren't dead. Both NTPCUG functions have languished as a result of illness and lack of leader (DOM) in past months, but we do see a need for both member benefits and are planning on bringing both back to life in the next several months at the Information Booth area in the vendor hall.

ON WHY WE ARE HERE

Hang in there. We are in this together. The North Texas PC Users Group, our Special Interest Group leaders, our officers, Board of Directors, and army of volunteers are here to help.

Andy

Products featured at eXtreme: Microsoft
 Windows 98 Office 97 Small Business
 Edition Outlook 98 Publisher 98
 Money 98 Financial Suite Products
 featured at eXtreme: Microsoft
 Windows 98 Office 97 Small Business
 Edition Outlook 98 Publisher 98
 Money 98 Financial Suite Products
 featured at eXtreme: Microsoft
 Windows 98 Office 97 Small Business
 Edition Outlook 98 Publisher 98
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 Windows 98 Office 97 Small Business
 Edition Outlook 98 Publisher 98
 Money 98 Financial Suite Products
 featured at eXtreme: Microsoft
 Windows 98 Office 97 Small Business
 Edition Outlook 98 Publisher 98
 Money 98 Financial Suite Products



Get
 ready
 for
Windows 98!

Win

Windows 98!

North Texas PC User's Group Inc.
 presents:



DATE: **Saturday, April 4, 1998**
 PLACE: **UA Prestonwood**
Dallas, TX
 TIME: **12:00 P.M.**
 EVENT CODE: **16124**

Register now to attend!

You must register to attend this free event. For registration and complete information, visit:
www.microsoft.com/magazine/msxtreme/
 and be among the first to eXperience Windows 98! Or call (800) 550-4300 to register.

**Register early.
 Seats are limited.**

VIP CODE: **31233-077A0**

FREE EVENT!
Saturday, April 4, 1998

LIVE SATELLITE BROADCAST

Be the first to preview Windows 98!

Microsoft eXtreme is:

A two-hour LIVE broadcast with Microsoft product managers presenting NEW product demonstrations of the most eXtreme features of:

- **Microsoft Windows 98 operating system**—*Works Better. Plays Better* (in-depth, 45-minute demo)
- **Office 97 Small Business Edition**—*Essential Tools for Running Your Small Business*
- **Outlook 98 messaging and collaboration client**—*One Window to Your World of Information*
- **Publisher 98 desktop publishing program**—*Create Unique, Professional-looking Color Publications*
- **Money 98 Financial Suite**—*The Complete, Integrated Personal Financial System*
- **An eXclusive inside look at future technologies**

You'll get:

- **Firsthand eXposure to the most eXceptional features of Microsoft's new products**
- **Free popcorn and soda**
- **eXcellent giveaways, special offers, and more**
- **Plus, the first 400 attendees at each theatre receive an eXtreme T-shirt**

Microsoft

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A FOND FAREWELL

All good things must come to an end. And so it is with my SIG leadership of the Word for Windows SIG. In fact, over the past decade, I have lead several SIGs.

I'll not rehash them here; it will just bring back too many memories for me, all of them good. However, now that I have to curtail some of my physical activities, I don't want to think back on what I can't do; I prefer to look forward to what I can still do.

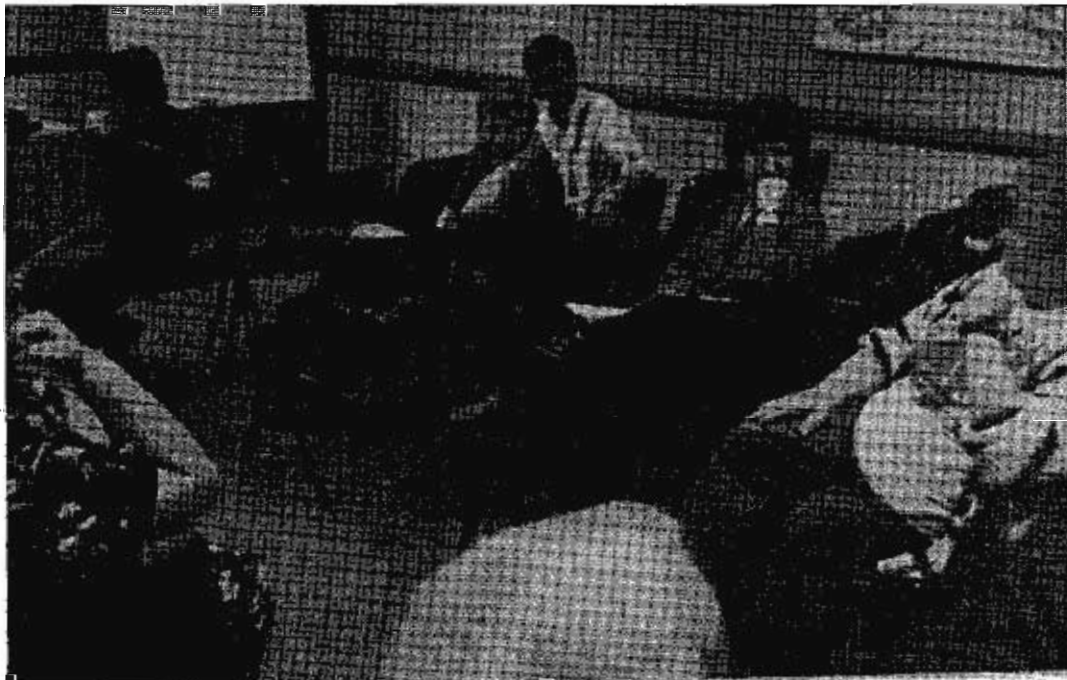
I think that's why we don't have an eye in the back of our heads, so we can't look back, only forward. Yesterday is gone. All we have is today and the future. Do the best you can today and plan to do the best you can in the future. That's all any of us can do.

Saturdays have become vital to the work I am doing in the prevention of brain attacks (strokes) and heart attacks. I have been attending seminars to certify me as a "peer visitor" in hospitals. I am travelling out-of-state to attend conferences and seminars. In other words, my Saturdays are spoken for.

Add that to the work I do (why didn't someone tell me retirement was so exhausting?) as facilitator of two health-related support groups and I am certain that you will agree that I have placed my priorities where they belong: on trying to save lives.

Jan Patton, my trusty assistant SIG leader is without equipment that she can bring to the Infomart. I hope that one of you will be able to supply her with what she needs to continue the SIG

Bev Kurtin, far right, describes some of the finer points of files in Microsoft Word to the members of the MS Word SIG of the NTPCUG



ome way the SIG will continue.

I wish you - each and every one of you - the very best as you press forward in your search for an ever expanding knowledge of what I believe is the world's finest word processor.

Beverly Kurtin

How Specs Live Forever

Taken from the Internet by Deborah Bean and Neal Berkowitz

The US Standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used?

Because that's the way they built them in England, and the U.S. railroads were built by English expatriates.

Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing the wagons would break on some of the old,

How PC STANDARDS LIVE FOREVER...

NTPCUG SIG Leaders and frequent volunteers Neal Berkowitz and Deborah Bean forwarded the piece on railroad history for its curiosity value. It made me think and reminded me of my railing in Variety Store last month about the "antique" bus design we are saddled with in the PC world.

I'll share a little personal history and some important PC history as a result.

My first exposure to "micro computers" came through doing my dissertation in 1974 and was in the form of a Raytheon 8-bit micro with 4K of DRAM that was controlling several aspects of my EMG biofeedback data gathering. "Micro" meant it fit in a four-foot high relay rack along with its *paper* tape program drive. Although it looked important, it really didn't do very much and I wasn't all that impressed.

Seven years later, I was a staff psychologist at the Dallas VA Medical Center and participating in a "demonstration project" to move patient mental

health data from paper to a computer database, forerunner of the VA's DHCP system. Computer this time was a DEC PDP-11/44 and had a 68M hard disk drive and magnetic tape drive — in about the same size relay rack as the Raytheon. It also had a MUMPS version of *Adventure* I could and too frequently did access.

Taught me two lessons. First was need to become computer literate quickly because that was where the medical community was headed. Second was recognition of a future paradox — the power the computer would someday wield over all of us because of the power it made available to us.

Connie and I began talking about purchasing one of the "new" home computers. Being somewhat compulsive, I began reading about what was becoming available in the home computer market. It seemed everybody was gearing up to produce microcomputers as rapidly as possible. Tandy had an 8-bit machine, Apple had their II series announced, TI had announced the 99/4A's, there were dozens of S-100, Z80 vendors including Osborne and Kaypro, Commodore had the PET and IBM had the PC.

Continued on Page 18.

How Specs LIVE FOREVER ... Ctd

long-distance roads, because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts.

So who built these old rutted roads? The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts? The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons, were first made by Roman war chariots.

Since the chariots were made for or by Imperial Rome they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Thus, we have the answer to the original questions. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derives from the original specification (Military Spec) for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. MilSpecs and Bureaucracies live forever.

So, the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's ass came up with it, you may be exactly right. Because the Imperial Roman chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate the back-ends of two war horses.

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INSIDE THE NORTH TEXAS PC USERS GROUP COMMUNITY

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

by Claude McClure



The Big Bang

Behind the unfathomable universe there is a mysterious theory called the *Big Bang*. The time and place of that event is theoretically known. We accept that explanation as a good answer, but there is one question of greater significance. **How does the monthly meeting of the NTPCUG come to be?** How do all of the elements come together? I don't think the rooms, equipment, vendors, presenters and SIG leaders are the result of a BIG POP.

We have to thank **Alex Lilley** for the countless hours spent in arranging room and equipment schedules, along with the special efforts of **Stuart Yarus** and **Robert Hilliard** in working with the Infomart to set up the vendor marketplace. We need to acknowledge the effort **Timothy Carmichael** puts into contacting and ar-

anging speakers from leading computing companies. We appreciate the hard work of all our SIG Leaders who prepare for the hour-long sessions, and often bring their own computers and software. The volunteers at the Information Booth and other NTPCUG tables and booths receive our gratitude as well. All of these individuals and volunteers dedicate an hour or more of their time on our group meeting day. Without individual commitment by each and every one it would be impossible to continue the terrific events that take place once each month. It doesn't take a Stephen Hawking to appreciate that brief moment in time.

This page is dedicated to the many volunteers whose names are mentioned here and in other parts of this newsletter. Thanks to the officers and leaders who make the NTPCUG weekend a good Saturday activity for the rest of us.

Infomart Liaison

Stuart Yarus
Robert Hilliard
Alex Lilley

Vendor Setup/Breakdown

Anchor:
David Slavik
Kenneth Berg
Dick Abbott
Crew:
Dennis Brinninger
Allen Drake
Tim Foster
David Goldstein
Son Hong
Larry Matzek
Robert Whiteside

Auditorium Presentations

Timothy Carmichael
Christopher Carmichael

Newsletter Labels

Charlie Fernandez

Information/Registration

Booth

Statistician:
Connie Andrews
Ralph Beaver (Assistant)
Scheduler:
Bob Wuller
Anchor:
Ralph Beaver
Vernon Cates
Hank Holt

Cinda Lovil (Double)
David Martin
Bob McNeil (Double)
Foy Mills
Martin Moomaw
Fred Toulmin
Paul Williams
Matt Williams
Booth Crew:
Deborah Bean
Glynn Brooks
Jim Boyce
Randy Durham
Tim Foster (Double)
James Gorak
Bill Hatchel
Nora Carambot- Muentes
Thelda Opella
Raymond Reyes
Ken Sauter

Disk of the Month (DOM)

DOM Shift Supervisors:
Joe Allen
Roy Bales
Philip Bridge
Don Chick
James Donlon
M. Pat Henley
Martin R. Gluck
Arnold Krusemark
DOM Desk Crew:
Richard Abreu
Michael Ashley
Douglas Athas

Bernie Baars
Richard Blair
Jim Boyce
Linda Campbell
Gene Carleton
Norm Dang
William Farris
Brad Ficke
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:
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) 681-4826 (w)
DOM Booth Scheduler
Phil Bridge (972) 422-5400
DOM Software Review
Mark Grunerl (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 NTPCUG BBS SIG Upload Area or to Connie Andrews, Special Interest Group Editor, before the 10th of the month.)

Access SIG

Happy Birthday to Us! In April, we celebrate our fifth anniversary as a SIG. We had about 60 people at our initial organizational meeting in April 1993. We've averaged between 40 and 60 attendees at most meetings since then, with an occasional dip to around 35 and one spike to 90+ when **Fred Williams** treated us to his *Relational Database Design* presentation. We still have three of the original four leaders who signed on at that first meeting: **Jack Atkinson**, **Dianna DeCicco**, and **Larry Linson**. When **Frank McCoy**, after three years of solid service, moved out of the area, **Tom Lukers** stepped in to fill the gap.

Our only promise when we started was that we were going to "learn Access together" and that's just

what we have done. We've gone through versions 1.0, 1.1, 2.0, 7.0, and are now up to 8.0. The two that we're still covering are 2.0 (a stable and usable product and the last version that can run under Windows 3.1) and 8.0 (also stable and usable, with additional features for those who have Windows 95 or Windows NT 3.51 and above).

We've mostly held to a fixed agenda over that time: introductory remarks and reminders, a presentation, a question and answer period, and a drawing for "valuable prizes". Our top prize was manufacturer-donated software with a list price of \$800. A more usual one is "freeware or demo code on a freebie diskette". But we are fond of saying, "Value, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder." Still, it must be of interest, since almost

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:

- **MS Word for Windows** [Contact Jan Patton @ (903) 886-6249h or janpat@unicomp.net]
- **Spreadsheets SIG** [Contact Eb Foerster @ (214) 357-7602 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**

SIG Coordinator

Alex Lilley (972) 517-7430 h

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

ACT I

- 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 Pehn**..... (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
- Biri Smith**..... (972) 960-8227 h
- (214) 220-9388 w



everybody sticks around until the last slip is drawn. One "casualty" was the desktop-published *Access SIG Notes*, after three years time came at too much of a premium for Larry to continue writing and publishing it. We've also been fortunate to have a number of very interesting and entertaining guest speakers and presentations of useful information in our five years.

Access 9.0, we hear, is in beta test and we're keeping our eyes and ears peeled for rumors, hints, and raw data that may leak from that beta. What we've heard so far is that it will ship with a "light" version of SQL Server to expedite Access client application development. We also hear that the faithful Jet engine will still be around for the many instances in which it is the appropriate technology.

Our topic for April will be "Miscellaneous Musings on Access and Server Databases," by Larry Linson. Larry's worked with Access client applications for several server databases: Microsoft and Sybase SQL Servers, Sybase SQL Anywhere, and Informix. Access makes an excellent client, but there are some different considerations to take into account. Since we do not have a network, nor a copy of a "same-machine server DBMS" on our demo machine, don't look for an impressive demo. Do look for some solid information, tips, hints, and warnings of a few potential stumbling blocks.

In March, Larry Linson showed another FMS, Inc. product: *Total Access Analyzer*. Impressive for its flexibility, usability, and features, most professional developers swear by it as the best documentation tool for Access databases.

Coming Soon to An Access SIG Near You: FMS, Inc. *Total Access Code Tools* - tools to make life easier for the Access user and developer, "Odd and Not-So-Odd Items of Interest" - near to and far back from the bleeding edge (many not even remotely connected with Internetting), and, finally, "That Presentation You've Been Planning to Tell Larry You'll Do," the one that can be for any level of Access user.

The Penultimate Notice: (just so nobody gets left out of the free update) Several SIG members have reported that ordering was smooth and delivery prompt for the free "Enterprise Update" -- a complete new Office CD with the Service Release 1 corrections incorporated. 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).

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. Oh, yes, while you're on the BBS, take advantage of the free Internet e-mail. If you're on the Internet, the Access "meeting place" is the *comp.databases.ms-access* newsgroup.

SIG LEADER LISTING

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

Dallas Corel

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

DOS/ Operating Systems

Jim Holsington (972) 416-3101 h
Heagan Andrews (214) 828-0699 h

Delephi

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

Desktop Publishing

Mark Stuert (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) 278-7886 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

Neal Berkowitz (972) 475-7463 h
..... (972) 475-3124 w

Hardware Solutions

Charles Miller (903) 938-4220 h
Ralph Beaver (817) 624-9530 h
Gary Johnson (972) 938-0344 h

Internet-Beginner

Tom O'Keefe (972) 247-8812 h
Doug Gorre (972) 618-8002 h
..... (214) 464-4568 w
Erik Leaseburg (817) 285-7550 hM

Internet-Advanced

Tom O'Keefe (972) 247-8812 h

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Internet-Advanced Ctd.

Doug Gorne (972) 618-8002 h
..... (214) 464-4568 w
Erk Leaseburg ... (817) 265-7550 hM

Internet-WEB Developers

Mark Camp (214) 583-9012 w
David Maxwell ... (214) 977-7584 w
..... (972) 299-6295 h

Introduction to the PC

Alex Lilley (972) 517-7430 h
..... (972) 960-4276 w
Bob Russell (972) 422-4269 h

Investors

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

JAVA

Lotus Notes & Domino

B.J. Shultz

MS Word for Windows

Jan Patton (903) 886-8249 h

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) 296-5358 h
Gil Brand (214) 508-8370 w
..... (214) 341-7182 h

Microsoft Visual C++/MFC

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

Programmers

Jim Hoisington ... (972) 416-3101 h



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

Larry Linson

ActiveX Application Developers SIG

In April, as usual, we will be covering a subject related to ActiveX and Application Development, but neither a speaker nor the specific topic for April had been determined at the time of this writing.

In March, we looked at some samples and examples from the *Office 97 Developer's Handbook*, by Christine Solomon. Time was short in February, and we couldn't do the book justice in just one meeting.

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. Just because so many of our attendees work in Microsoft Office and other software using it, we have considerable emphasis on VBA issues. 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 April, and keep on coming in the future. We'll do our

best to make it interesting and productive for you.

Larry Linson

Assembler SIG

Our March meeting consisted of a presentation showing how to create a complete console application in Assembler using the Microsoft VC++ standard runtime library DLL (MSVCRT.DLL) and the Win32 API. A major advantage of using Assembler to code these routines is that the resulting .EXEs are one fifth the size of C coded routines.

Our topic in April will consist of a review of an article that appeared in the March 1998 *Windows Developer's Journal*, "An Undocumented Function for Formatting Drives". Of major interest to the SIG is the techniques used to locate the function, as well as figuring out how to use it.

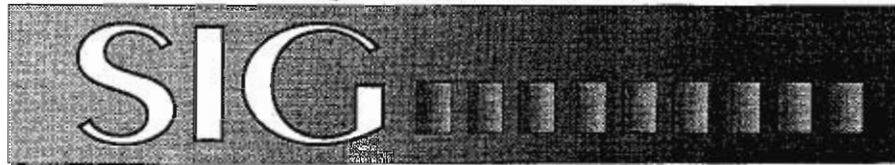
We hope to see you in April - as usual, suggestions for future presentations are always welcome.

Frank Cavallito and Glynn Brooks

C++ LANGUAGE SIG

General Format: Approximately one-half hour presentation on the C++ language, followed by a Q&A session, with occasional presentations by guest speakers. Suggestions (and volunteers) for future programs welcome.

The March meeting topic was an introduction to C++ templates. Templates is a big topic, and we will be spending several meetings covering various aspects of templates. In April, we will continue our dis-



cussion with an introduction to the Standard Template Library.

Also at the April meeting, I will be giving away one copy of Dr. Tom Cargill's book, *C++ Programming Style*. Remember, you must be an NIPCUG member to participate in this giveaway.

*Howard Lee Harkness
(harkness@skeptics.org)*

New Phone # 972-492-1508

COMMUNICATIONS SIG

Our March meeting featured our very own **Bob Giles**. Bob introduced us to ICQ or "I Seek You", a free collaboration service using the WEB (<http://miribilis.com>) for chat and telephone like services. ICQ operates from your PC after an initial registration and is very useful when playing interactive games or just needing to chat in a group meeting environment. Check it out for a great experience using the Net as your party-line. Thanks, Bob, for a great presentation.

Our April meeting will feature a Q/A session with emphasis on 56k modems in general. We will have some great hand-outs concerning the new modem standard identified as V.90. The modem is an important part for Internet access and with a 56k standard in place the user can achieve some very fast down-link speeds. US Robotics and Zoom are currently the first modem manufacturers to deliver V.90 technology with the new standard on board. Hayes modems provide a free upgrade path and will have the new code available in 2-4 weeks. So should you buy 56k modems now with cool rebates, wait for the V.90 modems to appear with great pricing, or buy into the propriety 112k modems using

2 - telephone lines ? These questions we will try to answer so come to our April Communications SIG Users Group meeting at 12 noon for an interesting and exciting discussion on 56k modem issues.

Alan Brosz and Birl Smith

Dallas COREL SIG

Web Page Design and Corel

Jay Bartlett got so enthused about designing Web pages after our SIG's session on *Web.Graphics Suite* when it came out over a year ago, that he jumped into the deep end and learned to swim. He now maintains hundreds of Web pages as an Intranet/Internet Developer for IBM and loves every minute. Jay will demonstrate how he uses *Corel PHOTO-PAINT, DRAW, and Web Master Suite* to quickly create sites. He will show and tell us how to optimize the color palette and

IMPORTANT COREL ADDRESSES & PHONE NUMBERS

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

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- ❖ Customer Service Representatives 800-772-6735
- ❖ IVAN (Interactive Voice Answering Network) 613-728-1990
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- ❖ Technical Support hours are 4AM to 8PM (EST) excluding holidays
- ❖ To obtain our catalogue please request document #2000

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QuickBooks

Dave Guier (817) 429-7417 h
..... (817) 265-1618 w

Quicken

W. L. Harris (972) 291-7616 h
Phil Faulkner (972) 239-0561 h

Spreadsheet/Spre.Dev

Eb Foerster (214) 357-7602 h

SQL Server

Ada Finigan
Steven DeSalvo (972) 716-2684
John Penaska (972) 431-3979
Erin Welker (972) 462-6033

UNIX

Doug Scott (817) 261-4853 hM
..... (817) 878-0367 wM

Visual Basic -- Beginning

Thomas Lewis (972) 994-6387
Jim Carter (972) 235-5968 h
Jim Hart

Visual Basic -- Advanced

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

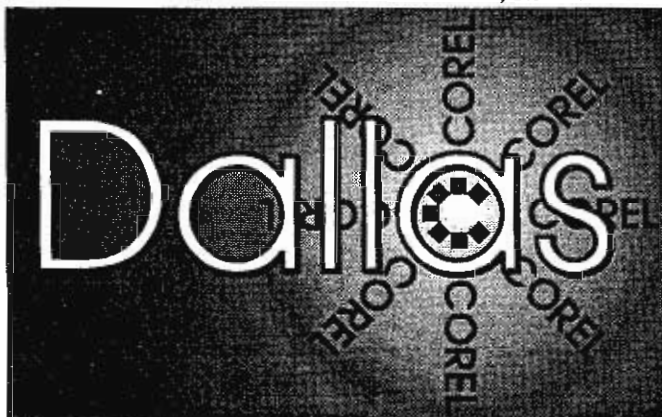
Cindy Adams (817) 481-1300 wM
Diane Bentley

sites. He will show and tell us how to optimize the color palette and file size of images, and how to break up large images to make them download quickly. If you are curious about current trends in the fast moving world of Web page design, join us in April. Since Jay designed our Dallas Corel SIG Web page, you can check out an example of his work in advance.

Since this writing is in advance of the March meeting, more will follow in next month's issue covering *DRAW 8 Tips & Tricks*.

Recent Programs at Dallas Corel SIG

- ❖ Mar/97 - VENTURA 7 Demonstration
- ❖ Apr/97 - CorelDRAW 7 & PHOTO-PAINT 7 in Real World Uses
- ❖ May/97 - Corel SIG Members Showcase Their Work
- ❖ Jun/97 - Productivity in DRAW 5, 6 & 7
- ❖ Jul/97 - CorelDREAM 3-D 7
- ❖ Aug/97 - WebMaster Suite, Lumiere and Click & Create
- ❖ Sep/97 - Presentations 8
- ❖ Oct/97 - Font Management and Acrobat
- ❖ Nov/97 - Customizing CorelDRAW 7
- ❖ Dec/97 - CorelDRAW 8 Launch by Corel Corp.



Dallas Corel Is A SIG Of North Texas PC Users Group



- ❖ Jan/98 - Roundtable Discussion
- ❖ Feb/98 - Inkjet Desktop Printing Papers by Red River Paper Co.
- ❖ Mar/98 - DRAW 8 Tips & Tricks
Marsha Drebelbis

Delphi SIG

If things went as designed in March, I did a bang-up demo of a highly-integrated chicken parts tracking system. The system is flexible enough to even allow for tracking of bull parts, pig parts, and even turkeys, whole or dismembered.

I just happened to think of one of the reasons that I've grown so fond of chicken processing. It's the "product testing and evaluation" we regularly do at Hooters. We strictly go there for business reasons, of course! Hum, that just popped up when thinking of how big turkey "buffalo wings" would be!

Anyhow, I do hope the March presentation showed some of the diversity of products that may be integrated into a "total solution" with Delphi providing the "glue" (code) to bring it all together. We have one former *Visual Basic* developer on the department's team now. So far, he has been impressed with the speed and adaptability that are accepted facts among us Delphi developers.

Delphi is working so well we are expanding its role in the implementation of Pilgrim's new in-plant systems development.

Things like the doubling of speed gained by switching to "native" Borland BDE's SQL Server access, has made a very positive impression. This is compared to the Microsoft supplied 32-bit ODBC driver we had been using before upgrading to the Delphi Client Server edition.

Seems the only way to access SQL Server using Power Builder is through the aforementioned ODBC driver. Plus, Power Builder is very Paradox for Windows like, with its very tight integration of the GUI interface to the "data window". In other words, it is not very "object oriented" as is Delphi.

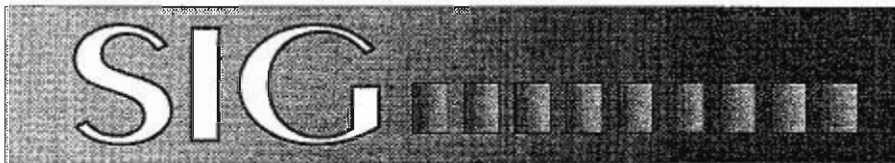
I've been doing a lot of SQL work lately. It has been a while, and I sure am rusty! The new in-plant systems will all be SQL Server-based. That means most everything database-wise works best if done with SQL. Fact is I strongly recommend if you are working on code that may eventually migrate to a client server environment, you concentrate your database access development around TQueries and use TTables sparingly.

I'm not going to be able to attend the April meeting, unfortunately. But, I do hope to have a substitute in place this time, and not drop the ball as I did in February. Hopefully with a little advanced planning my substitute will be able to do more than run a question and answer session.

Fred Williams

DOS/OPERATING SYSTEMS SIG

What do you do when everything goes absolutely crazy just before an important deadline? Example: I have been fighting with *Word 97* since I installed it several weeks



was installed as a stand-alone on Connie's PC it removed both her stable *Word 95* and *Word 6* versions. Uninstalling *Word 97* didn't entirely remove the problem(s) on her machine since Word graciously left some files behind that re-installation of 95 apparently adopted.

Worst aspect of situation was time — just before we were scheduled to get this newsletter to the printer and both versions of Word were saving files as HTM documents when *Word 2.0* documents were intended. In the middle of all this, I had a monitor decide to blow up and go black.

Solution was digging back into my disk archives for a set of *Word 6.0* disks and installing to a different drive/directory. Surprise! When *Word 6* is installed, it expects to find a copy of the *old* DOS SHARE.EXE file before it will continue with SETUP. Don't bother looking in \WINDOWS\COMMAND\ because it ain't there. Back to the disk archives again for a copy of SHARE. By this time, I was so pleased it is impossible to repeat in this publication my exclamations of appreciation to the won-

derful programmers in Redmond, WA.

Since only Microsoft knows which files were left behind or corrupted, next step will be a toughie and will involve use of FDISK... I.e., go back to a clean disk and reinstall Win 95 and my applications programs from scratch.

Installing Win 95 OSR 2.1

I've had a lot of practice (lately) installing Win 95 OSR2.x, but hadn't intended doing it on two PC's with over 8,000 files installed. First step will be a complete tape backup of both machines. Then, a second backup of the data and font files only. Third, gather up the materials to do the installations including bootable floppy disks with OSR2.x DOS, FDISK, FORMAT and necessary SCSI (if you are running SCSI) and CD-ROM drivers to get to the Win 95 CD-ROM.

I usually start from a "barefoot" machine with just the CD-ROM drive, hard disk and video card installed. If you are really confident, you can leave everything on the PC, but be prepared to watch the blue bar stop a few times...

- ❖ 1. From the A: prompt, FDISK, set partitions and FORMAT C: /S. Then copy the two minimalist files AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS to C:\, switch to C:\ and create a DOS directory on C:\ by the following: MD\DOS [Enter], CD\DOS[Enter],

COPY A:*. * [Enter].

- ❖ 2. Make sure the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files are configured to load HIGHMEM.SYS, your CD-ROM drivers and MSCDEX.EXE, with preferred drive assignment for the CD-ROM drive via the MSCDEX L:/ switch.
- ❖ 3. Reboot, then switch to the CD-ROM drive and enter SETUP.
- ❖ 4. Watch Win 95 install itself.

Reagan Andrews

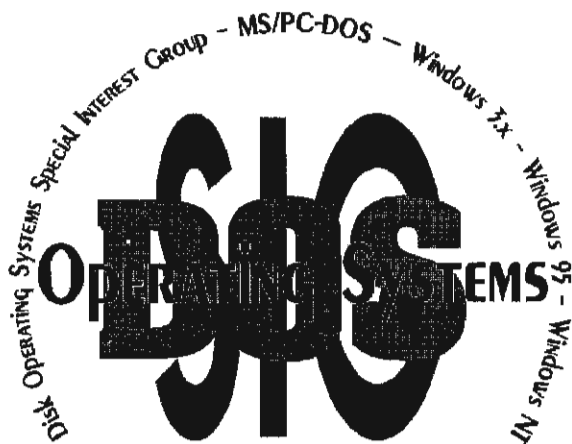
INTERNET SIG - BEGINNING

At our last meeting (March 21st), we continued with a discussion of the newly "Determined" (frozen) specification for 56K modems, labeled as v.90. Modems using this near-final spec are already beginning to show up in stores, and flash ROM updates are being provided by vendors. Mr. Bruce DeGrasse, who had already discussed this standard the previous hour, continued to assist in the discussion.

In addition, SIG Leader Tom O'Keefe presented further information about a testing procedure available to determine if your line can support 56K modems. The procedure is easily accomplished, and can be found at http://www.3com.com/56k/need4_56k/linetest.html. Your ability to use the full functionality of 56K modems is contingent on your phone line's design, and this test will tell you whether a move to 56K modems is justified.

The 3COM site has several good articles on how 56K technology works. If you are interested, read up !!

During our March meeting, we also began asking what our attendees wanted to see presented. Time was short, so only a couple of suggestions were received. But we would like more, and encourage you to contact Doug Gorrie (dgor-



suggestions were received. But we would like more, and encourage you to contact **Doug Gorrie** (dgorrie@onramp.net) with whatever thoughts you may have.

In that light, at our April 11th meeting, we would like to cover Internet browsing software, most likely *Internet Explorer 4.01*. While we have covered this issue before, it always seems to be a topic of interest. But I do want a full house, so please send, or bring someone that wants to understand browsers in greater detail.

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.

AppleCorps FileMaker SIG Meetings Feature Both Macintosh and PC Tips

The Apple Corps of Dallas FileMaker SIG meets monthly in Room 1060 at the InfoMart at 1pm (or see the Room Schedule Sheet under Apple Corps of Dallas). *We welcome PC users as well, since FM is such a great cross platform app!*

Our SIG is showing signs of life again! Although our numbers are still few, a core group of supporters are attending regularly and are very supportive of our meetings.

At the February SIG we talked about several options for an improved meeting format. After a good discussion we reached the following consensus: a) do *not* divide the group into *ibeginners* and *iadvanced*, b) present an ongoing tutorial about FM at each meeting (perhaps 30 minutes), progressing



See you April 11th!!

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

INTERNET SIG - Advanced

At our last meeting (March 21st), we were fortunate to have with us **Mr. Bruce DeGrasse**, an independent consultant involved with ITU standards issues for over 18 years. In fact, Bruce currently *chairs* the T.120 committee, which deals with "audiographic" (speech and data) conferencing, and just recently returned from an ITU meeting in Geneva.

Bruce described the procedures used within the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) when developing communications standards. More specifically, he discussed the new 56K modem stand-

ard, V.90, how it works, and what makes it both different and better than V.34. Several positive comments were received afterward about how Bruce had clarified many of the tougher items.

At our upcoming **April 11th** meeting, Bruce will be continuing on into the T.120 standard by demonstrating the functionality of Microsoft's *NetMeeting* software. What does it do? It allows for data, audio and video conferencing, whiteboarding, transferring of files, and Chat between multiple NetMeeting users. With NetMeeting, two or more users can join together to exchange information and work on projects, or just have fun.

One member told of a unique function – taking control of a relative's PC (with their permission, of course) to perform updates and do maintenance on that remote machine, similar to pcAnywhere.

NetMeeting can be individually downloaded from Microsoft, or as a component of Internet Explorer 4.01. It is free to the public.

Note: There is (optional) homework for the April 11th meeting. Interested participants are being requested to acquire and install NetMeeting, then "meet" with us at 8:00 PM on Tuesday, March 31st. Instructions will be posted on the NTPCUG Web page (www.ntpcug.org) within the Advanced Internet SIG description. Since newsletter readers will have probably missed that date, an additional date will probably be selected between April 6-9. That date, too, will be posted on our Web site.

Other News: This past January, we received several good sugges-

from a simple to more complex database, c) SIG members submit specific questions about FM in advance of the meeting so answers can be prepared and demoed more efficiently (e-mail or BBS is ideal way!).

We hope so see some PC users at our next Super Saturday meeting!

FM SIG Leaders:

Ray Thompson
ray_thompson@acd.org

Burke Squires
burke_squires@acd.org



Presentations on using Internet tools – those that "power users" would use.

- ❖ DNS and routers
- ❖ TCP/IP tools
- ❖ How TCP/IP works
- ❖ PPP (dial-up)
- ❖ How to call a Winsock driver
- ❖ Dynamic HTML
- ❖ Plug-ins
- ❖ Cookies
- ❖ Connection systems
- ❖ 56K (discussed March 21st)
- ❖ ISDN
- ❖ Cost effective options (home/business)
- ❖ Equipment
- ❖ ADSL

Demonstrations might include:

- ❖ NetMeeting (April 11th meeting)
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Whiteboarding
- ❖ C U C Me
- ❖ Audio streaming
- ❖ Internet Phone

And, don't forget that we are always looking for additional assistants for the Beginning and Advanced Internet SIGs. Many of you probably have Internet and/or Web experience, or have access to speakers within your firm that could be persuaded to volunteer some time. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

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 usually 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 April 11th.

Tom O'Keefe & Doug Gorrie

INTRODUCTION TO THE PC SIG

The Introduction to the PC classes are designed to give the novice or newcomer to computers the basic knowledge to get started and also a direction to pursue for obtaining more extensive coverage about certain areas.

These classes will rotate and be presented on a continuous program. Each class can stand alone to benefit those desiring information on a limited basis and for those who wish to return or may have to miss some classes. The sequence of these classes will provide a logical progression from the need of a computer through the operation of one while filling in with the basics, options, and enhancements.

Those of you attending for the first time may have only a limited knowledge or requirements for personal computing. These may vary from a business need, accounting, word processing, scientific analysis, graphics arts, maintaining names and addresses, and entertainment and games. Whatever your goals are, we will attempt to give you an excellent overview on

small computers and to pique your interest so that you may develop your skills accordingly.

A tentative class schedule follows showing the topics to be covered. The actual sequence may shift slightly to ensure availability of specific instructors. These classes will also continually be upgraded to represent newer equipment and programs as they become available. Enjoy.

April 11, 1998

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

May 16, 1998

- ❖ 9:00 Class 9
Hardware
- ❖ 10:00 Class 10
PC Printers
- ❖ Noon Class 11
Quicken/QuickBooks
- ❖ 1:00 Class 12
Modems & Telecommunications
- ❖ 2:00 Class 12a
NTPCUG Bulletin Board System (BBS)

June 20, 1998*

- ❖ 9:00 Class 13
Other PC Software
- ❖ 10:00 Class 14
Multimedia Software & Hardware
- ❖ Noon Class 15
Disk of the Month (DOM)/Educational Video Cassettes rental
- ❖ 1:00 Class 16
PC's Into the 21st Century

July 18, 1998*

- ❖ 1:00 Class 16
PC's Into the 21st Century

July 18, 1998*

- ❖ 9:00 Virii and Their Prevention

August 15, 1998*

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

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

Harold (Spike) Smith, NCE

MS Word for Windows

There will be no SIG meeting in April. We will be up and running in May, but the time and room number depend on SIG computer availability. Look here in April for any announcement. Also, check the overheads in the vendor area for the room number and time for any last minute changes.

Jan Patton

Microsoft Visual C++/MFC SIG

After a brief hiatus, the Visual C++ SIG is once again a valuable contributor to the SIG notes. In March, we discussed the New and Improved Common Controls that have been incorporated into Windows 95 via Internet Explorer 4. We saw examples of how to use the new controls, such as the ReBar (a.k.a. CoolBar), and the Flat Toolbar, into our own apps.



In April, John Cole will teach us all there is to know about ActiveX Data Objects (ADO). ADO is Microsoft's strategic, high-level interface to all kinds of data. ADO provides consistent, high-performance access to data, whether you're creating a front-end database client or middle-tier business object using an application, tool, language, or even an Internet browser. ADO is the single data interface you need to know for 1- to n-tier client/server and Web-based data-driven solution development.

ADO is designed as an easy-to-use application level interface to Microsoft's newest and most powerful data access paradigm, OLE DB. OLE DB provides high-performance access to any data source, including relational and non-relational databases, email and file systems, text and graphics, custom business objects, and more. ADO is implemented with a small footprint, minimal network traffic in key Internet scenarios, and a minimal number of layers between the front-end and data source—all to provide a lightweight, high-performance interface. ADO is easy to use because it is called using a familiar metaphor - the OLE Automation interface, available from just about any tool and language on the market today. And since

ADO was designed to combine the best features of, and eventually replace RDO and DAO, it uses similar conventions with simplified semantics to make it easy to learn for today's developers. Check out this site for a good overview of ADO: <http://www.microsoft.com/data/ado/sams/ch08.htm>.

Please join us as we explore this exciting topic.

Wade Emmert

PRO SIG

The annual tug-of-war was held at the creek behind Infomart. In the past, the programmers divided up into two groups, object-oriented versus procedure-oriented. However, this year there were only two procedural programmers, one a FORTRAN programmer and the other an APL programmer. To even things out, SIG leader Jim Hoisington asked all the object-oriented RPG programmers to join him and Stuart Yarus. The procedural team won!

Join us next month as we learn about object-oriented SQL.

Jim Hoisington

Visual Basic SIG - BEGINNING

The April meeting scheduled for April 11, 1998 will feature a discussion of the most used controls in a Visual Basic application; the Command Buttons, the Image Controls, the Text Boxes, and the Labels. We will discuss the properties and event procedures associated with each of these four controls. We will conclude with a simple application utilizing one or more of these controls.

E-MAIL, SEX & SIG LEADERS

Thought that would get your attention. If you are a SIG Leader or Co-leader and want to have your E-mail address listed in the PC News SIG area, send us an E-mail with the preferred listing to one of the two following E-mail addresses:

reagana@swbell.net
candre@worldnet.att.net



wait for next month to discuss the results of the March meeting.

At some future meeting, I would like to host a presentation on the Visual Basic classes offered by the local community colleges (Richard, Brookhaven etc.), four-year colleges (SMU, UTA, UTD etc.), commercial business schools (DeVry, ATI etc.) and anyone else teaching Visual Basic courses. If you are an instructor of one of these classes or have specific information about someone who is teaching such a class, please contact me at Jim_Carter@msn.com with details. My plan is to invite a panel of instructors to discuss their courses during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Beginners Visual Basic SIG. It is my hope that we can pull this information together for our meeting in July of this year.

Bring your questions on Beginning Visual Basic to our meeting beginning at 8:00 AM on Saturday, April 11, 1998 at the Infomart. Check the projection screens in the vendor area on the first floor for the correct room assignments. I look forward to meeting you this month.

Jim Carter

Visual Basic SIG - Advanced

A recent article I read reported that the percentage of Americans who consider technology somewhat confusing was 27%. It also stated that 7% found it "scary". I can't say I blame them. I do not think that as developers we have tried hard enough to bring technology to the masses. I find many developers who sit in ivory towers looking down at users saying "All they have to do is right double-click while holding down the shift key

and drag it to the system folder! These users are idiots!"

When discussing this issue with developers, the usual response is "Why do I have to dumb-down my software?" I don't believe that we have to "dumb-down" the programs we write, but I think we need to consider how our programs interact with the user instead of just concerning ourselves with Rapid Application Development and minimal lines of code. Pay attention to the word "just" in the previous sentence. I am not saying RAD and elegant code are not important, I am just stating it is not the only important thing, contrary to what your deadline may say. My clients have never said "Wow, we love the sort and file routine!", but they have commented how the application is much easier to use than what they had before.

So what do I suggest to make the life of a user easier and to get glowing comments from them? I will discuss three items: Consistency, Wizards, and Microsoft Agent.

Consistency

I would suggest that you be consistent. If your users are familiar with the way something works, use it. If you are writing an Accounting Module and your users are very fluent in Microsoft Excel, I would try to use common functionality between the two in your program. Don't put the Save command under the Tools menu, but under the File menu where it belongs. This makes it much easier for a user to learn your program.

If users are used to doing tasks in a DOS package and have now been converted to Windows, I would suggest using Windows functionality (i.e., Alt+F4 is Close/Exit) for

common functions and using what they were used to for any application-specific functions (i.e., Ctrl+F2 runs the nightly batches).

Wizards

I enjoy Wizards and most users do, too, especially when using an application that you are not familiar with. Wizards have made life quite a bit easier than it used to be when using applications. Just look at the Class Builder Wizard in Visual Basic 5; it makes it very easy to start building the framework of your application instead of typing every declaration out. Wizards also are good as tutorial devices. An example of this is the Application Builder Wizard in VB5. A new programmer could run this Wizard and respond to the questions, and at the end be able to look at the code generated and figure out how to build the basic architecture of a program.

I am sure you have an application where a Wizard or two would make your application easier to work with. What is great about VB5 is that it has a Wizard Add-In to easily create your own Wizards! How about that?

Microsoft Agent

This is a new idea on an old concept. Remember Microsoft Bob? I know, some of you would like to forget. Microsoft Bob was software in which you had an agent who was represented by a character such as a dog. This agent would help you to learn the software and help you when it thought you were in trouble. (No, it would not get you out of debt or send flowers to your wife.) It was a great concept, just poorly executed in my opinion. The second generation came with Office 97, known as Office Assistants. They serve as an interface to the help system. Unfortunately, they run in a window which takes up screen real estate and sometimes have not been the most helpful.

terface to the help system. Unfortunately, they run in a window which takes up screen real estate and sometimes have not been the most helpful.

Well, then came Microsoft Agent. If you are interested in finding out more about these new agents, you can go to <http://www.microsoft.com/workshop/prog/agent/>.

Please Insert Genie.bmp Graphic File Here

[Ed. Note: Graphics files included with E-mail messages as part of the body usually don't come across intact in my mail program. To make sure your graphics can be used in the PC News, include them as an Attachment to the E-mail.]

A Microsoft Agent only takes up as much screen space as is needed by the agent. One of the great thing about the new agents is that they speak and can be spoken to. Another great thing is that they are totally programmable through Visual Basic, VBA, and VB Script. That means you could create an agent in your home-grown Accounting application, as an add-on to help a user with an unruly Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, or an Intranet/Internet site!

Think of the possibilities. A user when having trouble could ask the agent for help and the agent could walk them through a difficult task and then disappear in a puff of smoke after helping, saving valuable real estate. How about an agent that speaks up when your server goes down? Or an agent who every morning when you boot up gives you the latest sports scores and stock prices?

It is very simple to program these agents using any flavor of VB and many are impressed when they see what the agent can be programmed to do. You may even create your own agents.



Conclusion

I suggest making it a habit when you are designing your application before coding it, think about the end result and how your users will interact with your application. By doing this, I think you will begin to write software that your users will find easy to use and intuitive.

*Thomas Lewis
aliensite@msn.com*

**WORDPERFECT FOR WINDOWS
SIG**

This month we are going to be investigating into the Address Book. The address book in WordPerfect 8 is similar to many you have already experienced, but it is more robust. Not only can you merge and print directly from the address book, you can have different address books for different needs. You can create books for your clients, your friends, your family, etc. on their own tab.

Eight allows the user to change the way the display looks, adjust the

columns and sort the addresses as well. The address book has new tools, such as filters and search, for creating the perfect mailing list targeting specific people you have in the address book. This can be very helpful if you are sharing the address book with others in your organization. Come and learn all the do's and don'ts of the latest and greatest address book in Corel WordPerfect 8!

Cindy Adams

Tip of the Month - Make It Fit

"If only I could get these last few lines on the previous page." No problem! Make It Fit can either shrink or stretch your document up to 50% of its current size, e.g., a four-page document can be stretched to six pages or shrunk to two pages.

1. Format, Make It Fit
2. Desired Number of (filled) Pages: enter the number of pages the final document should fill
3. Items to Adjust: select or deselect the items WordPerfect can adjust to achieve your request
4. Make It Fit

If the results are not acceptable, just Undo it (Ctrl+Z) and try another combination of Items to Adjust.

Diane Bentley



PC STANDARDS NEVER DIE...

Continued from Page 5

IBM became more interesting when Compaq was formed to produce the first PC "Clone." That appeared to suggest the PC was going to set a standard. We shopped the computer stores and while browsing in Computer Land, saw a small flyer describing the IBM PC Users Group formed at SMU. We went to our first meeting in December, 1982, and immediately decided to join — and buy (eventually) an IBM PC.

IBM did set the standard for what they expected to be a "smart terminal" attached to an IBM mainframe in a corporate setting. In planning the PC, IBM never thought of it as a household appliance and that attitude marked a future we are still living with and often fighting.

The IBM design group at Boca Raton, FL, had some guidelines. IBM selected the Intel 8088 CPU over the 8086 CPU. Both chips were 16-bit internally, but the 8088 addressed an 8-bit bus externally. IBM already had experience with the 8086 architecture in a stand-alone word processor. What they wanted for the new "smart terminal" was a machine that could be built entirely with off-the-shelf components and that meant 8-bit components and the interrupt-driven architecture we're all cursing now.

Apple had done essentially the same thing with the Apple II series, but envisioned this as a stepping stone that would lead to more capable and powerful computers. Apple's co-founder, Steve Jobs, had visited Xerox' Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) and saw the real future — the Graphical User Interface (GUI) — that appeared initially in the ill-fated LISA, and finally in the Macintosh.

Before the Macintosh was released by Apple, IBM was highly surprised by the popularity of the PC

and in a grudging mood in March, 1983, did do some enhancement of the original PC by releasing the PC (2) in two variations. First was a hard-drive equipped model (10M) with eight expansion slots that could place 256K DRAM in 64K chips on the motherboard and could do color via the new CGA standard. Second was the original five-expansion slot motherboard with upgraded BIOS that would also take 64K DRAM chips — and also use the new CGA adapters. (Unfortunately, IBM neglected to inform the dealers that the "new" five-slot motherboard would also use the 64K chips which led to a lot of error messages when they attempted to install 16K chips.)

Every PC, regardless of vendor, produced since then has been an enhancement to the original IBM design, but has retained the 1981 technology in terms of interrupt-driven architecture, the ISA bus for peripherals and the truly outdated I/O addressing scheme.

Apple, on the other hand, released the Macintosh in 1984 with the GUI, new architecture and possibly one of the most stunning ad campaigns in the industry. Apple also managed to shoot themselves in the foot at the same time. Apple had an extremely loyal core of users who were "experimenters" and loved making their II's do things Apple never imagined. The new Macintosh was different — users who opened the case to add anything (mostly memory since the first Mac could only run the OS with "standard" memory) voided their warranty.

If Mac users needed/wanted more memory and their warranty, they had to purchase Apple memory and have an authorized Apple dealer install it. And, Apple memory cost three - four times that of "street" DRAM. Apple lost the "techie" pretty much on this basis.

They gained another crowd, though. The art community found they could do graphics with a Mac

that PC users could only dream about. The Macintosh became (and still is) the low-end standard for the art and publishing world. Visit almost any local service bureau, the folks who turn the computer graphical images into negatives and transparencies for use in display and printing, and you'll see a Mac shop with some (if you are lucky) support for PC-generated art.

Microsoft's first Windows was so far behind the Mac OS it was laughable. A second iteration, made possible by the 80386 PC's was a little better, but still no competition. Release of *Windows 3.0* in 1990 went a long way toward catching Apple and the race was finally won when *Windows 95* was released. Apple found themselves playing catch-up now.

On the hardware side, though, Apple is still ahead. They've managed to change the bus more than once to accommodate newer, faster CPU's while the PC world is still slogging tiredly in the IRQ quagmire. Apple can do this because the Mac is proprietary again (after Jobs began killing-off the low-priced clones) and can set the tune — even if the band is much smaller than it might have been.

That's the problem in the PC world. It is not proprietary and has made possible the huge price cuts we've seen since 1983 when our original 8088-powered IBM PC with 256K DRAM, two 5.25" DSDD floppy drives and monochrome monitor cost \$5,000+. Cost of these prices is progress unless we're willing to live in an Intel-dominated PC universe. (Intel is probably the only vendor who could get by with a totally new PC bus since they are the major motherboard/mainboard vendor in the US at this time.)

Reagan Andrews

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				
BASIC				Internet - General			
Beginner Problems					Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200
	Jan Parkhill.....	(214)828-2216	M-Sa 0900-1700		David Martin	(972)930-0283	M-F 1900-2200
	Shirley Hudgens.....	(903)432-9780	7 0900-2000	Internet - Telnet, FTP, NetScape, Web Explorer (OS/2)			
Brother's Keeper					Bob Wilson	(972)517-1434	M-F 1900-2200
	Neil Sunderland.....	(972)272-2869	7 0900-2200		.....		S-S 1000-2200
C++ (the language)				LANs — Novell			
	Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900		Joseph Beasley	(972)225-8752	7 0800-2400
	Howard Harkness.....	(972)492-1508	7 1000-2100	— Lantastic			
CA Clipper					Joseph Beasley	(214)410-3818	7 0900-2200
	Richard Mitchell.....	(972)625-9130M	M-F 1900-2100	Managing Your Money			
	.....		SS 0900-2300		Glynn Brooks.....	(972)578-8737	M-F 1700-2200
CorelDraw				Modems			
	Linda Hume.....	(817)472-7555	M-F 1900-2200		Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200
	.....		S-S 1300-2200	MathCAD			
Batch Files					Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900
	Charles Miller	(903)938-4220(*)	7 1900-2400	Norton Utilities			
Borland C++					John Dyer	(972)790-3311	M-Sa 0800-2200
	Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900	OS/2			
	Howard Harkness.....	(972)492-1508	7 1000-2100		Larry Truesdale	(972)442-7074	7 1000-2200
Borland Turbo C				PC Tools/Win			
	John Keohane	(972)690-8092	7 1900-2100		Glynn Brooks.....	(972)578-8737	M-F 1700-2200
CompuServe				Paradox			
	Bob Adams.....	(214)328-1455	M-Sa 0900-1900		Fred Williams.....	(972)492-1315	7 1300-2100
DOS				PKzip/PKUNzip			
	Bob Russell	(972)422-4269	7 1900-2200		Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200
	Erik Leaseburg	(817)265-7550(m)	7 2000-2200	ProComm/ProComm+			
DR DOS					Bill Green.....	(817) 731-1308	
	Ralph Beaver	(817)336-0570	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

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

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)464-4568 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.

Areas Needing Helpers:

- CAD
- dBase
- 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.

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

Work: (____) _____ - _____ Ext. _____

Occupation/Profession: _____

Check one from each column below

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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.

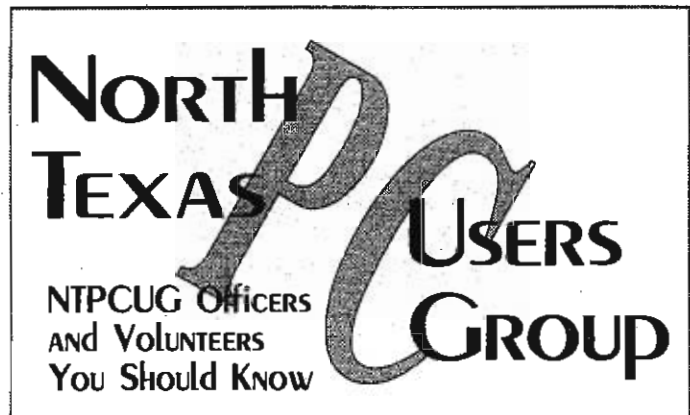
North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

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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.njpcug.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

Andy Oliver *Chairman*
Reagan Andrews **Marsha Drebelbis**
Timothy Carmichael **Alex Lilley**
Jim Hoisington **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 Officers

President	Andy Oliver	(972) 462-1896 h (972) 960-4215 w
President-Elect	Jim Hoisington	(972) 416-3101 h
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

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Kathryn Loafman **Reagan Andrews**
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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

Address Changes, etc...
Payment of dues, address changes, and inquiries about membership should be directed to:

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Dallas, Texas 75370-3449

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



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North Texas PC Users Group

*Next Meeting:
11 April 1998*

