

Price \$3.00

North Texas



PC NEWS



October, 1999

VOLUME 18 • NUMBER 10

Published monthly by members of North Texas Personal Computer Users Group for their use. Members each receive a free subscription; for others, price of the NEWS is \$3 per copy. Members are requested to notify the Membership Director in writing of address changes. Send all editorial correspondence to: Editor, North Texas PC NEWS, 6402 Vanderbilt, Dallas, TX, 75214-3453

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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 15th of the month prior to publication unless otherwise listed. See deadline information below.

Circulation:

North Texas PC NEWS circulation was 1,500 last month.

Member distribution was 1,200; remaining copies were distributed to PC user groups around the country, and to advertisers, prospective members and others with common interests.

The editors of North Texas PC NEWS use Microsoft Word for Windows 97. This issue of North Texas PC NEWS was composed using Corel Ventura 8.0, Corel Draw 8.0, Arts & Letters Express 6.01, Adobe Photoshop 4.01, Micrografix Picture Publisher 8, Microsoft Publisher 98 and HP Scanjet 6200Cse. Repro was printed on a HP LaserJet 4M. Principal typefaces include: Times, Palatino, Helvetica, A&L Cafe, French Vogue, and Lithos.

DEADLINE

Copy deadline for November
North Texas PC NEWS:
October 17, 1999

Meeting Dates:

October 16 – 3rd Saturday
November 13 – 2nd Saturday
December 18 – 3rd Saturday

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Submit Newsletter articles to: newsletter@ntpcug.org
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.

PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS . . . *TIMOTHY CARMICHAEL*

NTPCUG MEETING -- OCTOBER 16, 1999

Main Presentation #1 - 10:00 - 11:30 AM— Microsoft

Main Presentation #2 - 1:00 - 2:00 PM— Microsoft

Windows 2000 Technical Tips & Tricks

Come find out the latest tips and tricks about Windows 2000 through product demonstrations, Q&A and informal discussion with the Windows 2000 Development Team. We'll show you how you can get the most out of Windows 2000 Professional and Server. Content will include (but will not be limited to): Multilanguage support; How to use SysPrep; Advanced Power Management solutions; new networking capabilities, Infrared support; Content Indexing; Disk Quotas and Disk Defragmentation; Management via scripts; Active Directory; Group Policy; An overview of how Windows NT 4.0 tools have been integrated into Windows 2000; and much, much more.

Description of giveaways:

- * Customer Satisfaction Tour T-shirt
- * Windows 2000 Release Candidates for Professional and Server
- * Windows NT Magazine
- * And, much more via drawings including subscriptions to Windows NT Magazine and Microsoft products.

OCTOBER 16

SIGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP MEETING SCHEDULE

Time	Room	SIG
8:00	A	Assembler
	B	Microsoft Networking
	C	-
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Hardware Solutions
	F	Excel/Spreadsheets
	G	-
9:00	A	WordPerfect for Windows
	B	Word for Windows
	C	DOS/Disk Operating Systems
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Quicken
	F	Visual Basic - Beginning
	G	Alpha 5
	H	Dallas Corel
10:00	A	WordPerfect for Windows (continued)
	B	Communications
	C	Main Presentation #1
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Introduction to the PC
	F	Visual Basic - Advanced

Time	Room	SIG
10:00	- Ctd.	
	G	Professional MIDI & Audio
	H	Dallas Corel (continued)
11:00	A	Investors
	B	Internet - Beginning
	C	Main Presentation #1 (continued)
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Java
	F	Access
	G	ACT!
	H	-
12:00	A	AppleCorps/ClarisWorks
	B	Internet - Advanced
	C	-
	D	AppleCorps/FileMaker
	E	Introduction to the PC
	F	ActiveX
	G	-AppleCorps/Beginners
	H	Games
12:30	C	NTPCUG Business Meeting

Time	Room	SIG
1:00	A	Lotus Notes & Domino
	B	FrontPage
	C	Main Presentation #2
	D	AppleCorps/Beginners
	E	Introduction to the PC
	F	-
	G	-

SIG meetings are listed by time and location for the October 16 meeting. Times and locations may change and members are advised to check the NTPCUG Web site for latest listings.

Layout of the new SIG Meeting area and locations of the rooms are found on page 5.

Alex Lilley RESIGNS AS SIG COORDINATOR

Alex Lilley resigned his position as SIG Coordinator. His mother is in poor health and he is spending his weekends with her.

Alex, thanks for all the years you have held the position. We all wish your mother well.

Timothy Carmichael has stepped forward and agreed to fill in as SIG Coordinator until a replacement to assume the role permanently can be found and trained. Thank you Timothy for adding this role to an already full plate.

ELECTIONS

The Board and I are finalizing the ballot for the election of officers for next year. One obvious issue is that we have too many board members.

We used to have 3 board members at large plus the President and the President - Elect. We changed that to 5 board members when we had 2,000 members. Now that we are only 1,100 members, it is hard to get candidates for all 5 at large positions.

The board proposes a return to 3 board members elected at large.

NTPCUG TRAINING VIDEOS

Check out the new NTPCUG Multimedia Rental LIBRARY

*NTPCUG is now offering
(as a member benefit) rental of training
videotapes, audiotapes and CD's to
Members at the NTPCUG Information
Booth in the Vendor Area*

The NTPCUG Multimedia Library Includes:
Program Tutorials, Interactive Learning Guides
for Beginners and Advanced Users in a wide
range of PC Applications from Arts & Graphics
to Windows 95 and ... Everything in Between

Contact us NOW!
NTPCUG Information Booth
Claude McClure (972) 867-0978



MORE BYLAW CHANGES

While we are changing the bylaws for the number of members, we are going to propose some bylaw changes.

For a reason which I can only vaguely remember, the bylaws state that our fiscal year runs from August through July. We've never ever done that. We've always run the group on a fiscal year of July through June. We might as well get the bylaws to agree with what we actually do.

And there are some other changes which the Board and I are proposing on the ballot. The bylaws need to be updated in many areas to reflect the changes in the last ten years. For example, in one place the bylaws talk about "IBM Personal Computers and other compatible computers." It's a good thing we didn't write in a test for compatibility using Microsoft's Flight Simulator.

All of these changes are included on the election ballot.

THE NORTH TEXAS PC NEWS

And while we're changing things, we need to rethink the newsletter. The cost of producing the newsletter has grown to about \$30 per member. That's not good because annual dues are \$30.00.

There's not much we can do to lower the cost. Reagan periodically puts the printing out for bid. There's just not much we can squeeze out of costs. And, I would expect another rate increase by the Postal Service in the coming year.

This is what the Board is looking at. It's not final but it's probably close to what we will be proposing:

We will offer reduced dues of, \$20 per year, if you are willing to log onto our web site using your member number and a password and downloading your copy of the newsletter in Adobe Acrobat

FREE LIVE event, Saturday, Nov. 6!

Coming to a
movie theatre
near **you...**

Get inside information
on the future of
Microsoft Windows
for consumers

PREVIEW

Microsoft's all-new
2000-version products!

Picture It! 2000

Home Publishing Suite 2000

Microsoft Works Suite 2000

Encarta Reference Suite 2000

Expedia Streets and Trips 2000

Money 2000 Deluxe

IntelliMouse Explorer
and Internet Keyboards

Hot new games!



Attend If:

- You love being the first to know what's new in software...
- People come to you for computing advice...
- You use your home computer for work or play...

Register to attend Microsoft **eXtreme**, the **eXclusive preview** that gives you two hours of LIVE and UNCUT product demonstrations!



DATE: Saturday, November 6, 1999

PLACE: UA Plaza 8
Dallas, TX

TIME: 12:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. CENTRAL TIME

HOSTED BY: North Texas PC Users Group

**Register
now!**

**Seats are
limited!**

For registration and
complete information, visit
www.microsoft.com/extreme



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PREZ SEZ... Ctd.

format. (The Adobe Acrobat viewing software is a free download.)

For those of you that want to continue to receive a copy via the US Postal Service, there will be an increased dues rate that covers the cost of mailing you the newsletter.

WE HAVE CHAIRS

We now own the 300 chairs that are in the meeting hall. We'd been renting them and the rental

company made us a great deal on purchasing them.

BUSINESS MEETING

Last month we had the business meeting at 12:00 p.m. and only 3 people came. This month I've moved it to 12:30 p.m. to see if that is a better time.

I can't stay around and answer questions for half an hour as people wander in and out because I have to sign checks for DFW Xchange in the Vendor Show during the noon hour.

MICROSOFT AND WINDOWS 2000

Last month we had Borland introduce Delphi 5 as our main presentation. This month we have Microsoft presenting Windows 2000 at 10:00 a.m. and at 1:00 p.m.

Classroom C, the big meeting room, comfortably holds 200. We hope that everyone who wants to see Windows 2000 can find a seat at one of the two presentations.

(Don't tell anyone but I heard from Microsoft that there will be lots of give-aways at the end of both presentations.)

Jim

ANNOUNCEMENTS
NTPCUG
& Special Events

MICROSOFT ANSWERS Why USE VBA MACROS?

While most people get by just fine without using the macro capabilities of Office, there are many times when repetitive operations have to be carried out. At those times, it is nice to have a macro capability in your bag of tricks. The macro recorder provides an easy route to generating code once you have overcome the initial barrier to using macros in VBA. VBA is a full bodied programming language, approaching true object oriented capability. The Office products provide a macro recorder to assist the user in learning how to begin.

To record a macro, click on Tools, macro, record new macro. The record function will begin writing code on a VBE module after asking for the name of the new macro. When you have finished the sequence of keystrokes you wanted to record, click the record button again, and the recording will stop. Press alt+F11, and the VBE editor will show its environment, where you can select the

module and view the code that was generated. This code is very simple minded, though, and will only work for the exact situation that you recorded, i.e., a particular cell to start, and a series of operations carried out just as you did during the sequence you recorded. In order to generalize the macro, you need to learn a few of the methods used in programming VBA. These will help you realize some of the power of the language built into the office applications.

We show you here a VBA example showing looping, string parsing, and chart manipulation. This was created for a customer that wanted to set the minimum scaling of his chart and did not like the way the "auto scale" estimated the minimum. This was created in Excel 97 and should work in Excel 2000.

The customer has random data in Sheet1!A1:C4. The chart is on Sheet2. We can create a line chart with 3 series. Note we are using all series as Y values and not generating any X labels. It is not sig-



Continued on Page 6

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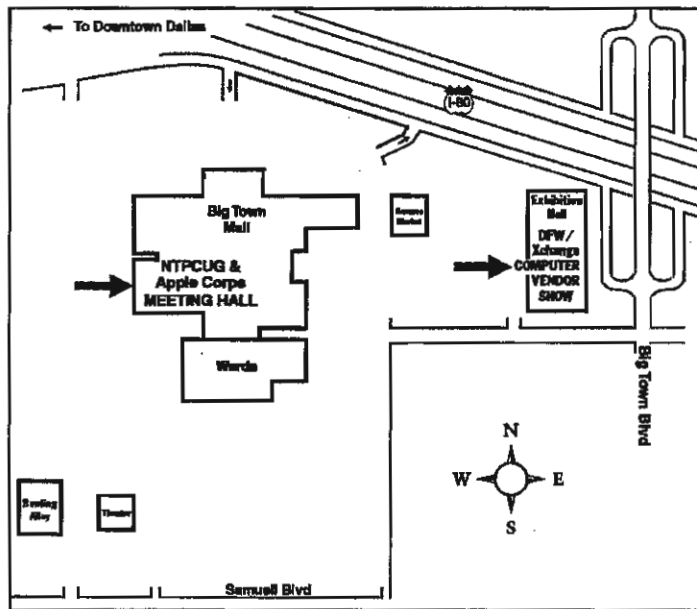


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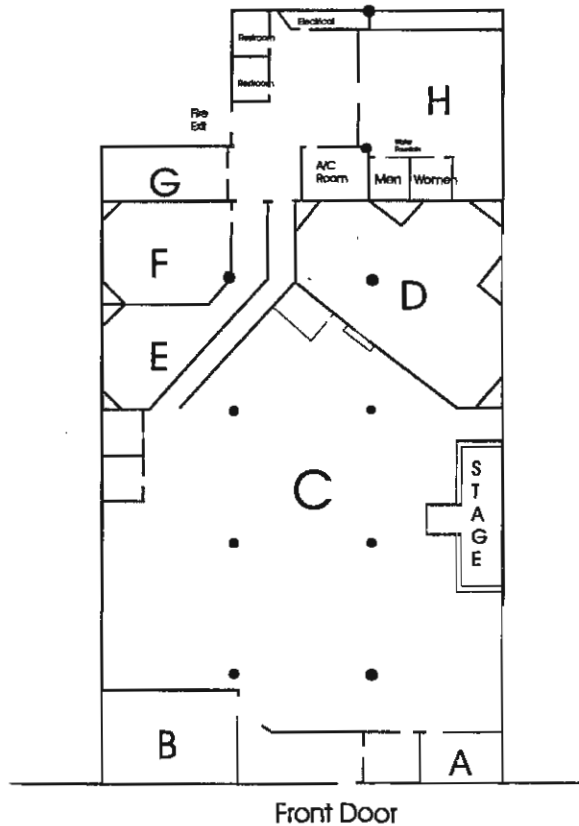
Site Map



NTPCUG SIGs ARE back...

June saw the resumption of NTPCUG SIGs at the Big Town site. Members appeared to find themselves at home in the new area and gave the impression of a willingness to make any necessary adjustments to accommodate operation in the space. *The PC News* will continue to run maps of the Big Town Mall and Exhibition Center locations until NTPCUG members have familiarized themselves with the new space..

Big Town Mall User Group Meeting Room



PARKING LOT



MICROSOFT ANSWERS... Ctd.

nificant to the problem if you added another series as for the X labels. I only parse the Y series.

The macro code follows. It has In-line comments in the VBA code. Enjoy the techniques. Please note you may discover more efficient detail if you look. I was in a hurry and "brute forced" the elements.

```
Sub SetChartMinimum()
Dim y As Object, z As Single, M As Single

Dim R As String, S As String, T As String

Dim Y1 As Integer, Y2 As Integer, Y3 As Integer

    ActiveSheet.ChartObjects("Chart 1").Activate
    M = 0
    For Each y In ActiveChart.SeriesCollection
' Capture each chart series formula and parse it for sheet name and range
        T = y.Formula
' Where is the first comma?
        Y1 = Application.WorksheetFunction.Find(",", T, 1)
' Where is the second comma?
        Y1 = Application.WorksheetFunction.Find(",", T, Y1 + 1)
' Where is the exclamation mark?
        Y2 = Application.WorksheetFunction.Find("!", T, 1)
' Where is the third comma?
        Y3 = Application.WorksheetFunction.Find(",", T, Y2)
' The sheet name is between the second comma and the exclamation mark
        S = Mid(T, Y1 + 1, Y2 - Y1 - 1)
' The range is between the exclamation mark and the third comma
        R = Mid(T, Y2 + 1, Y3 - Y2 - 1)
' Find the minimum value of this series
        z = Application.WorksheetFunction.Min(Sheets(S).Range(R))
' Keep the lowest value of all the series
If z < 0 Then
    If M < 0 Then
```

Microsoft®
Answers

```
        If z < M Then M = z
    Else
        M = z
    End If
End If
```

```
    Set the y-axis scale to 90% of the minimum value
    M = Application.WorksheetFunction.Round(0.9 * M, 0)
    ActiveChart.Axes(xlValue).MinimumScale = M
End Sub
```

Frank has created this article to show how macro code can be used to customize the components of Excel. Much of it could be recorded, but the looping and if statements must be added by hand. To learn more about iteration and judgment in macros, look up some of the articles in the Knowledge Base (KB) at <http://support.microsoft.com/support> <<http://support.microsoft.com/support>>. In the query box, type the word you are looking for, "loop" (without the quotes), for example, and add the keyword "kbprg" to indicate you are interested in VBA examples of looping. There are many code samples in the KB that have been written to show how best to accomplish iterative tasks, and the code can be adapted to your task and used freely.

If you have questions you would like us to address, let us know by sending e-mail to questions@microsoft.com or <mailto:questions@microsoft.com>. We'll see if we can address the question in an upcoming edition of the newsletter.

*Bob Russell and Frank Tubbs,
Office and Consumer Support*

INTERNET USE AT BIG TOWN MEETINGS—ON THE BEAM

We now have Internet connectivity at our Big Town meeting site, provided to NTPCUG by The Beam (<http://www.thebeam.net>). All eight rooms have dual RJ-45 ethernet connections that go back to our "hub room". A multi-port hub consolidates data from all the rooms into a single connection to The Beam's equipment. In effect, we have created an internal Local Area Network (LAN) which connects to The Beam's equipment, which in turn connects to the Internet.

The Beam's service operates on an asymmetric principle, similar to ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line). That principle suggests that data requests TO the Internet (upload) are typically small in size, while the data being returned FROM the Internet to the user (download) is much more voluminous. Therefore, downloads require much more bandwidth to meet user's needs.

Implementation of this principle by The Beam is accomplished by installing a Remote Link Adapter (RLA) at our Big Town site. A single phone line from the RLA is used to connect to their Internet service point, just as you would connect to any other Internet Service Provider (ISP). The phone line provides the smaller upload capability.

But the download side, where high bandwidth is needed, is provided over the airways using a compressed, encoded advanced 2 GHz frequency signal. This translates to a speed of 10 Mbs – 10 million bits per second. This is significantly faster than regular 56k modems, ISDN, ADSL or even commercial T-1 circuits.

A transmission tower located near Northwest Highway and the Tollway sends our requested Internet data to an antenna located on our roof at Big Town, where it is fed into the RLA and routed to the appropriate meeting room. The end result is rapid screen updates on any PC or laptop connected to our internal LAN.

You might ask how a single Internet connection can accommodate the needs of up to 16 users in 8 rooms. The answer lies in how we use the Internet. Typically, any downloaded Web pages are visually reviewed for a period of time before a new

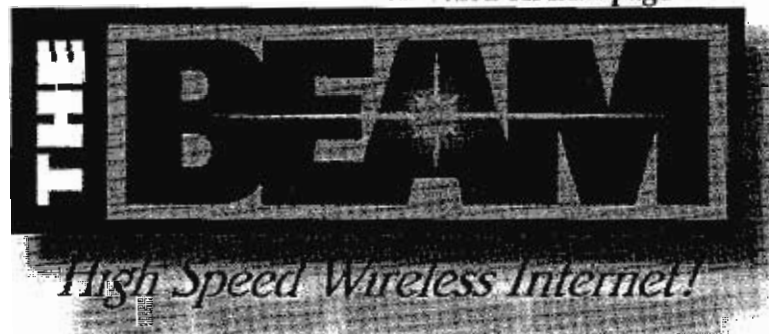
page is requested. As a result, while members in one meeting room are reading a page and discussing it, members in another room may be downloading a new Web page for their own use. In effect, each room will typically have access to the full 10 Mbs signal most of the time they request data.

How does all this work in practice? Prior to each monthly meeting, the equipment sits idle. But once the first SIG Leader arrives and plugs a PC into one of our Ethernet ports, things change. As the first request is issued by the Web browser to get a Web page, the signal passes to the hub, to the RLA, and the RLA initiates a phone call to The Beam. This takes around 15 seconds. The requested page is secured over the Internet, then transmitted to our RLA, through our hub and back to the SIG Leader. The phone line remains up and connected throughout the day until such time as all Ethernet connections on our LAN have been removed. With no data requests coming to the RLA, it "hangs up" the phone line.

Those familiar with LAN environments know that a unique IP address is required for each PC or other device in use. The RLA supports up to 20 simultaneous users by providing a unique IP address dynamically to each user, using DHCP protocol. Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol assigns an available IP address "on the fly" as the SIG Leader connects to the LAN. As such, it eliminates the need for "us" to assign each SIG Leader and each possible presenter their own IP address. Administration becomes much easier.

What did it take to install The Beam's service? The antenna was mounted on the roof, and a coax line was run inside our phone/power/hub room. The coax was terminated on a wooden backboard (very professionally, I might add) and cabled to the RLA. The RLA has only 3 connections – one for the modem/phone line, one to connect to our Ethernet hub, and one for power. No setup/con-

Continued on next page



...ON THE BEAM CONTINUED

figuration of the RLA was required – it just "worked". It was a LOT more trouble getting the phone line installed than getting the RLA and antenna in place.

Because of our special needs, we did have to install the LAN from the RLA to each room. My sincere thanks to **Putt Shaw, Vincent Gaines, Alan Brosz, Spike Smith and Rob Woods** for investing several hours with me pulling cable across the dirty, hot attic, down into walls, and terminating the 8 itty-bitty wires in Category 5 cable. Pat these folks on the back next time you see them – they are the ones that made this possible.

We encourage you to become familiar with this new technology. We will try to demonstrate its speed at each meeting, and can show our members what the RLA looks like. If you have need for fast Internet download speeds, The Beam is definitely an option to consider.

Doug Gorrie

The Perfect Gift!

Looking for a last-minute gift that's quick, easy and keeps on giving for the entire year? Take a tip from Doug Gorrie and consider giving a one-year membership in the North Texas PC Users Group. This is an especially appropriate gift for a friend or relative who is new to computing and interested in learning how to use and enjoy the PC.

Point out the Genealogy SIGs to people who are collecting information about their families, tell friends how much the Internet SIGs can help in easing their way into really using the Web, and the benefits of friendly, early computer lessons in the Introduction to the PC SIG.

More experienced users would appreciate value of vendor presentations in making important software and hardware decisions during the year.

If you have a friend or relative who constantly "borrows" your copy of the latest *North Texas PC News*, a gift membership might be especially welcome.

**FOR SIG LEADERS - HOW TO ACCESS THE INTERNET AT MEETINGS**

Elsewhere in this newsletter, I described the new Internet service available at our Big Town meeting site. Here, I hope to make our SIG Leaders and potential presenters aware of how to set up their own machines to utilize this service. (User Group machines will already be set up.)

Any PC or laptop needing access to the Internet at our meetings will need to have a 10 megabit Ethernet card of some type. If you don't have one, they are pretty cheap these days for desktop PCs, although more expensive in PCMCIA format for laptops.

The only setup option to remember is to use DHCP to acquire an IP address. This can be set by going to Control Panel and accessing the Network icon. Then, the following as appropriate:

If you are running Windows NT 4.0, select the Protocols tab, then double-click on TCP/IP Protocol to bring up its properties. Choose your 10 megabit adapter from among those listed (mine is a 3Com Etherlink III). Below the adapter line, ensure that you have selected "Obtain an IP address from a DHCP server". WINS Addresses for this adapter can be left blank. Click OK, then Close. It may be necessary to reboot to implement these settings.

If you are running Windows 95, in the Configuration tab of the Network icon, double-click on the TCP/IP line that identifies your Ethernet adapter, and click on "Obtain an IP address automatically". DNS, WINS and Gateway should be blank as well. Click OK and reboot.

The only other consideration is your browser. Ensure that it is NOT set to use a Proxy Server, as is often done in today's business environments. In Internet Explorer, this is under Tools, Internet

Continued on Page 23

You know you are a Texas computer geek when

Your e-mail address ends in:
"@over.yonder.com."

If the bumper sticker on your truck says, "My
other computer is a laptop."

Your laptop has a sticker that says, "Protected
by Smith and Wesson."

You've ever doubled the value of your truck
by installing a cellular phone.

Your computer is worth more than all your
cars combined.

You wire your network with jumper cables.

Your wife said either she or the computer had
to go, and you still don't miss her.

You've ever used a CD-ROM as a coaster to
set your drink on.

You ever refer to your computer as "Ole
Bessy."

Three Words: Daisy Duke Screensaver

You start all your e-mails with the words,
"Howdy y'all."

Your spell checker knows words like, "Y'all",
"Yonder", and "Reckon."

Your cars sit in the yard because your garage
is full of dead CPUs, printers, modems and
monitors.

Your belt buckle is made from a dead 3.5"
disk drive.

You ever felt you had to move your computer
desk so it didn't block the velvet picture of
Elvis.

Yer mouse keeps knocking over yer spitcan.

Smith & Wesson...the original Point-N-Click
interface.

When you're friends comment on your "nice
boots" and you say, "Yea, thanks, Its my
spiffy, new Phoenix BIOS."

When your wife catches you again with your
"Farm Animals of the Orient" CD-ROM.

When you order your new pick-up truck with
a gun rack and PCMCIA sockets.

Your PC Games collection consists of nothing
but Bass Fishing tournament games.

You only buy from GateWay, 'cause the cow-
colored boxes are a hoot.

Submitted by Patrick Dryden



*Formerly OnRamp, National Knowledge
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DRAM prices skyrocket in AUGUST, SEPTEMBER And situation worsened by TAIWAN EARTHQUAKE, AMD MAY COME TO APPLE/MOTOROLA'S RESCUE

DRAM prices take center stage...

Has anybody noticed the huge increase in DRAM prices? DRAM prices have skyrocketed over the last two months—doubling and more for high-end PC 100 SDRAM. It's going to get worse, much worse for several reasons including a number of former DRAM houses that have left the business over the past year. Couple this with massive sales of sub \$1000 systems and vastly increased use of DRAM in non-PC products, and a former "glut" becomes a drought.

Haven't heard much about mislabeled DRAM lately (I'm using "DRAM" as a generic term), but the escalating prices for DRAM may bring back the practice (if it ever went away) of re-labeling "generic" DRAM as more expensive and reliable "branded" DRAM. A lot of users may have been scammed by this if they purchased DRAM from unknown sources and may be blaming system crashes on the operating system or applications software when it's really "marginal," mislabeled DRAM that's the culprit.

TAIWAN 'QUAKE MAY IMPACT MORE THAN DRAM

Situation may get a lot worse since the September 21 earthquake in Taiwan. Stories in the media indicate a number of chip houses are having difficulty getting back online as a result of no electricity or erratic electricity. In addition, a lot of the surviving fabrication equipment may need recalibration as a result of the very tight tolerances involved.

ELECTRICITY THE MAIN PROBLEM

According to a September 24 article in *The Wall Street Journal* by Matt Forney, bulk of Taiwan's semiconductor production is in an area, the Hsinchu Science Park just outside of Taipei, that appeared to experienced no or minimal damage.

However, they have been without electricity and available backup generators aren't capable of running the production lines. Forney added, "Taiwan's cabinet announced that the blackout is causing \$2 billion Taiwan dollars (\$63 million) a day in losses to companies in the park."

Extent to which this may affect the PC community may be somewhat more extensive than we would originally guess. A recent check of the Web sites for a number of motherboard/ mainboard vendors found quite a few down or unreachable. There has been some speculation that the busy holiday buying season ahead may compound

problems in terms of scarcity of certain PC products due to delays involved with recovering earlier production levels.

AMD MAY BENEFIT AS G4 CPU SHORTAGES HIT THE MAC WORLD

Recent financial reports from Apple Computing underscore an unexpected shortage of the Power PC G4 CPU chips supplied by Motorola. Seems there was a lot of product demand for the G4-powered Macs, but not enough chips to make them.

This brings AMD, producer of the K6 and K7 Athlon (x86) CPUs into the picture. AMD has a new plant in Germany

THE VARIETY STORE

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

THE VARIETY STORE

that isn't working at capacity now. AMD also has some technology sharing agreements with Motorola that may lead to production of the G4 chips at the German AMD facility. AMD intends to produce the Athlon CPUs at this plant when they shift from 0.25 micron technology to 0.17 micron technology—next year.

Such a deal could help AMD maintain the plant until production of the Athlon is underway. Several media sources have hinted that AMD was seeking a partner in the plant to offset the costs involved. Neither Motorola nor AMD confirmed any discussion of this possibility at time this is being written.

Wonder if the Mac CPU shortage has caused Steve Jobs to reconsider his moves against Power PC clones which ran

IBM off—since IBM could be producing 1 GHz chips now.

LINUX ON SILICON? RUMORS FLY ABOUT TRANSMETA

This is fun as rumors are flying that Linus Torvalds, developer of the Linux operating system, working with a highly secretive, Silicone Valley startup, Transmeta, has confirmed that Transmeta may finally make a product announcement at Comdex/FALL 99.

The fun part is that nobody knows what the product is or will do.

There's been lots of speculation about it though, including a column by *PC Magazine's* John C. Dvorak. Dvorak speculated some months ago that Transmeta was working

on a programmable CPU and suggested that such capability would allow the CPU to run almost any operating system via the capability.

What I didn't remember until I saw the Reuters story on the ZDNet Web page is that Paul Allen, Microsoft co-founder, was involved in the Transmeta project.

Allen really does get around and his association with Transmeta makes the story all the more interesting.

I DON'T HEAR THE FAT LADY SINGING, BUT MICROSOFT CASE MAY BE ENDING

Finally, *Microsoft v. the Known Universe* may be drawing to an end. Some smart money thinks MS may be broken into pieces—which may be just what Microsoft wants at this time and place.

Who knows? What's for sure is that any "negative" ruling(s) (from the MS perspective) will inexorably lead to years (perhaps decades) of appeals through levels of federal jurisprudence until the real result is known.

'REAL' V. SMOKE & MIRRORS IN DOJ CASES RAISES DOUBTS

How much of the issue is "real" and how much is politics—and evasions of more sticky legal issues by the DOJ—is unknown at this juncture.

The fed's have just announced that they are suing their former "business partner", the to-



tabacco industry, for the harm (i.e., health costs) done by the US citizenry using tobacco products. This comes on the heels of very interesting revelations concerning the behavior of the ATF and FBI at the Waco, TX, Branch Davidians compound in 1993, and one can't help but speculate on the "smoke and mirrors" nature of both cases.

I used the term "business partner" on purpose. The Federal establishment has benefited substantially from tobacco-related taxes (as have the states), has subsidized tobacco farmers, and has also provided free tobacco products to military personnel in at least three periods of active war/combat.

Since tobacco has "positive" aspects from a military point of view, i.e., is a mild, non-se-dating tranquilizer which also enhances concentration, its deficits/health concerns have been understandably ignored by the DOD and service branches during wars.

ARE THE PERSONNEL LOSSES REALLY GAINS AT MICROSOFT

What do you do — After you've won all the Marbles? Made more money than you could possibly ever spend in many lifetimes? Unfortunately, however hard I may wish, that's not one of the problems I face.

But, many top Microsoft executives find themselves in that position. MS is laden with multimillionaires/billionaires who are striving to an-



swer that question in some meaningful manner.

If you've been following the media announcements for the last six months, one of the answers has become obvious. There has been a steady flow of key MS people deciding they prefer to spend more time with their families and much less time in the 16-20 hour days, seven days a week, typical duty tour in a top-level software house.

These people are following the paths taken by many of their peers in other businesses with similar time demands who have achieved equal success and have found success alone somewhat empty. (Microsoft isn't the only place where an outstanding individual can acquire substantial success — it's just the best publicized.) And, MS isn't the only high-tech concern experiencing such losses as a result.

On the surface, this looks bad for MS since many of the key people have played extremely important roles in Microsoft's growth and subsequent prosperity. I look at the situation through another filter, however.

The people leaving knew how to forge the game board in the past, before the giant explosion of the Web and E-commerce. This isn't to say they couldn't adapt to the "new

rules" MS is going to follow in the future, but there is a tendency to repeat successful past attacks when a newer approach would be better.

Microsoft is swimming in extremely bright, very young and talented professionals. These are people who have a different view of the universe than their elders (the 30 & 40-somethings) and may find more creative paths for the software giant to follow.

A drawback is that most of these people haven't experienced the growth opportunities presented by failure, since they've been riding the most successful horse in the 20th century. Although failure is abhorrent in our "instant" society, it has a tempering quality that constant success lacks, and is often a precursor that prepares the individual or group for renewed efforts and perseverance in future ventures.

Constant success is a double-edged sword. Always winning is a heady brew, but this lack of experience with failure may be a key factor in MS's future survival and growth.

Only the future will tell.

Reagan Andrews

Selected SIG Reports . . .

News and meeting notes of Special Interest Groups
 (Material for this column should be sent to Connie Andrews, Special Interest Group Editor, at newsletter@ntpcug.org before the PC News monthly deadline listed on the inside front cover.)

Access

Coming in October: SIG Leader **Larry Linson** will discuss three approaches to handling images and photos in Access databases and considerations in deciding which to use in a particular set of circumstances. (1) Storing images as OLE Objects and using bound OLE Controls to display can be easy to implement but significantly increases storage needed and requires that each computer have an OLE automation-enabled application installed to display the image. (2) Displaying images stored separately in disk files is simple and eliminates the need for the automation server, but raises issues of redundant storage in multi-user environments and exposes the image files to "outside influences" (accidental deletion, for example). (3) Storing the images in the database, but as

"Binary Large Objects (BLOBs)" rather than as OLE objects can reduce storage needs and eliminate the requirement for each user to have an automation server installed, but increases processing time. Live demonstrations will augment the discussion and, as usual, expect a giveaway of valuable prizes.

In September: NTPCUG Member **Martin Hellar** demonstrated the Access 97 interactive training CD from the Virtual Training Company. Martin always offers a substantial discount (15%) to NTPCUG members, and he offered an even deeper discount (20%) to attendees at our September meeting. If you were there, you know how to request the additional discount. If you want more information, Virtual Training Company has

FROM THE SIG COORDINATOR

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

New SIGs:

- **Games SIG** [Contact Chris Carmichael @ (214) 331-6303 h or chris.carmichael@ntpcug.org]
 - **Professional MIDI & Audio SIG** [Contact Alan Lummus @ (972) 733-4141 w&h or alummus@airmail.net or timothy.carmichael@ntpcug.org]
- Groups Looking for Help in Leading their SIGs:**
- **Visual Basic - Advanced needs a new SIG Leader** Contact Jim Carter @ (972) 235-5968 h]
 - Help Center** [Contact Reagan Andrews @ 214-828-0699h or reagan.andrews@ntpcug.org]
 - **Excel/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]
 - **Networking** [Contact Mike Momen (972) 238-1244 h or (972) 501-1538 w or momen@wtd.net]

The requirements for forming a SIG are:

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a Web site, <http://www.vtco.com>. Martin's small-town newspaper, the *Sedan (Kansas) Times Star*, has a section on the CDs, at their Web site, <http://www.sedantimestar.com>. But, if you want the NTPCUG member discount, contact Martin directly at martinh7@gower.net. Martin provided a copy of the Access 97 CD so for a change the prize in our drawing for "Valuable Prizes" was more than demo code and free-ware accumulated on a diskette. In addition, Microsoft donated enough 6-CD sets from Developer Days that we were able to give one to every attendee (at Access and Advanced VB, as well!). Finally, Larry's daughter donated several exhibit passes to Comdex (Las Vegas, mid-November – if you are serious about attending Comdex, attend the October meeting – there are a few left.

Access 2.0 Y2K News: Not too long ago, we were pleasantly surprised to hear that Microsoft had released a Y2K patch for Access 2.0, implementing a form of date windowing. I'm sad to say that patch has been withdrawn. If you need it for your Access 2.0 applications, keep checking the Microsoft Web site, <http://support.microsoft.com>, to see if it has been corrected and re-released.

Misc. & Etc.: Look for the Members Area on our Web site, <http://www.ntpcug.org>. Join the Members e-mail list (instructions are in the February and April issues of the *North Texas PC News*). We are still seeking volunteers: volunteers to speak to the SIG, volunteers to help with administrative duties, and volunteers to contact SIG members to remind them of

meetings. We earnestly solicit your participation – with enough help, the workload will be light for all of us. Come join us in October and we'll try to both inform and entertain you.

Larry Linson

ActiveX Application Developers

In October: Co-SIG-Leader Larry Linson will present "More on ActiveX Data Objects and OLEDB," Microsoft's chosen successor for both Data Access Objects (DAO) programming and Open Database Connection (ODBC). Microsoft Access will be used as the vehicle for running the ADO code, but ADO code is the same in Visual Basic, other applications using VBA or VBScript, as well as Active Server Pages Web applications. If you are developing applications in any of these, you'll be using ADO in the not-too-distant future. The presentation will be based on sections of Rick Dobson's book *Programming MS Access 2000* from Microsoft Press – see the review in the September issue of the *North Texas PC News* for more on that book. For a preview of the material to be covered, visit <http://www.programmingmsaccess.com> and download the sample section of the book. Even better, get yourself a copy at your favorite local or online bookstore and you'll have some of, much of, or all of the sample code to be shown. Dan will be away in October, but will resume his Office 2000 presentations in November see below.

In September: SIG Leader Dan Ogden almost completed the Access 2000 portion of his Office 2000 presentation. He briefly reviewed some areas covered in August and proceeded apace through his

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 Diane Bentley



nearly-200-PowerPoint-slide presentation. As he discussed salient points, he'd change to the Access window and demonstrate the what-is and how-to.

Coming in November: Dan Ogden will cover the last few new features of Access 2000 and move on to the Office 2000 Developer Tools. Developer Tools include the runtime and setup Wizard for Access, but this release has a bit more for other Office software components, too. Although Access 2000, with its database and Web development enhancements has stolen a lion's share of the press coverage, there are enhancements to every software component of Microsoft Office 2000. One of the newsworthy ones is that Microsoft has "frozen" the file formats for Word and Excel, so that a Word document or an Excel spreadsheet created in Word 2000 or Excel 2000 can be read and used in Word 97 or Excel 97 - they say they will continue this in the future, but warn that you may lose some features of a new release when using the files with the older releases.

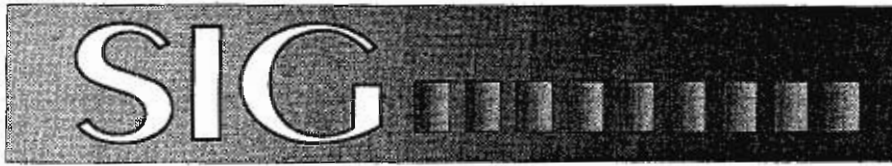
Likely future topics: Here are some topics we've considered: (1) More on Office 2000 (seems it is an inexhaustible subject), (2) Reviews of a book pertinent to the interests of the SIG, or two or three, as time permits, by Dan or Larry or both, and (3) A tutorial on Microsoft Front Page 2000 or detail review of a sample chapter or two of one of the Microsoft Press self-study books on Front Page. If you have topic ideas or especially if you will volunteer to speak at a future SIG meeting, send an e-mail to lmilinson@yahoo.com or dogden@gte.net.

The ActiveX Application Developers SIG addresses issues of developing applications under the Com-

ponent 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 Office and VBA issues. But, don't forget, ActiveX components and VBA are not at all limited to Microsoft products - there's a long list of products now using VBA as their programming (that used to be called "macro") language. Visio was the first to do so. A surprising addition to that list was Corel's Word Perfect. We still ask and answer a few questions about Open Database Connection (ODBC) technology, too, but the questions now are concentrating on ActiveX Data Objects (ADO) because it is new and because Microsoft is touting it as the replacement for all previous data access methods. 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 as in Internet applications. That's one of the attractive features: one type of control, usable in many environments. Many of the topics we cover are of interest to developers using other tools, working in other environments - for example, some such subjects we have covered in the past were "Pros and Cons of Different Types of Contract," "Documenting System Specifica-

NOTICE TO SIG LEADERS

We would like to be sure the information we list for you in the SIG Leader listing is current. Please take a minute to review your listing/s and let us know if there are any corrections or additions that need to be made. Please send changes to: newsletter@ntpcug.org.



tions," and "Structured Analysis and System Specification."

Come join us in October, if you're interested in computer application development, whether it's with ActiveX or COM Components or not. We'll do the best we can to make it an interesting and productive hour.

Larry Linson

Alpha 5

In the September meeting we discussed implementing an xbasic function that lets you optionally accept a duplicate record into a table, when the duplicate is based on multiple fields. We did not discuss the xbasic code for this function in any detail. So, this month we will talk about coding in xbasic, and the flexibility it can bring to your projects. Even if you don't know anything about xbasic, Alpha Five automatically generates xbasic code as you use genies, such as the button genie. You can accept this code as it is, or use it as a starting point in developing more customized actions. Also, with the script recorder in A5 v4, you can perform any functions in the user interface, and those actions will also be recorded as code level xbasic. All, or any part, of this code can then be reused.

By default, Alpha's genies will display any xbasic code they create in "action script" format. This format shows icons in a flowchart. Icons could be a vcr button for fetch next record, or a "Y" street sign for a branch operation. A property inspector shows the details behind each icon. This is often the easiest way to begin using xbasic.

To provide flexibility, code level xbasic can be included in an action script, under the inline xbasic icon. Also, an action script can be converted to code level xbasic. It is a

good learning path to let the genies create action scripts, and then look at the code level xbasic that A5 maintains behind the scenes.

To be more specific about this month's meeting, we will talk in detail about using the xbasic debugging tools. These can be used for both action scripts and code level xbasic. Unfortunately, I have a lot of experience in using these tools!

Bill Parker

ASSEMBLER

After a two-month hiatus caused by out-of-town travel requirements, the Assembler SIG will meet in October at 8 AM. The topic of the meeting will be Fast Software Encryption.

Our November presentation, should attendance in October warrant it, will be on hooking DLL function calls.

Please note - the handouts for most prior presentations, as well as additional material, such as complete source code, executables, etc, are available by e-mail. Simply message me at fcava1@swbell.net (that is the number 1 in the e-mail address), letting me know which prior presentation(s) you are interested in.

Join us in October. As usual, suggestions for presentation topics are welcome.

Frank Cavallito

COMMUNICATIONS

V.90 Troubleshooting Goes Well

Last month's Communication SIG meeting was a roaring success. We discussed many new and exciting topics. We started with our favor-

ites like DSL, cable modem, and the newcomer theBEAM. We also discussed V.90 troubleshooting and why 56k modem connections were sluggish or not working at all. Our very own Alan Brosz presented a "V.90 Troubleshooting" paper where problems like poor Telco line quality, session drop-outs, and low throughput were very real factors. Alan discussed how to analyze these factors using your telephone and Win 95/98. The discussion went well with a lot of great participation from our members. Thanks Alan for a great job. You can view this paper on our WEB site if you go to www.ntpcug.org.

For those of you who may not know, theBeam service is actually installed at the NTPCUG Meeting Hall. This "wireless cable" service offers direct delivery of Broadband services using line-of-site microwave. The NTPCUG has received this service (yes it's true!) free of charge and is using it for Internet access when we meet on Saturdays. We have wired each classroom with LAN drops so SIG leaders can teach "live". The Comm SIG group demonstrated this service last month and let me tell you "it's slick". A simple connection to the port establishes your session via DHCP and the return Telco circuit to the Beam. I connected and measured download speeds in the range of 550kbps. This is 10x faster than dial-up 56k modems and appears as another choice to the home user or small business. More on this later as we continue to develop ways to demonstrate its capability for our club.

Our next meeting will probably be a Q/A although I have contacted the Beam for a possible presentation. We are open to more suggestions on new topics so EMAIL me or Birl and we will get you scheduled. See you at our next meeting on October 16th and thanks for being "connected with the NTPCUG".

Alan Brosz and Birl Smith

Dallas COREL

October 1999

Filters and Plugins in PHOTO-PAINT

Have you ever tried out every last one of those exciting filters and plugins for PHOTO-PAINT? Neither has anyone else I know, except David Huss, who makes it his business to test them. He's the esteemed Austin, Texas author of *Corel Photo-Paint, The Official Guide* for 7 and 8 and 9 and, well, you get the picture. In October, Susan Biggs, Maria Whitworth and Marsha Drebelbis will each explore several cool filters and third party plugins, share their findings and demonstrate them for Dallas Corel SIG. Look out, you may win a valuable door prize if you are a NTPCUG member. Don't miss it.

September in Review

Wes and Judy Loper, of Art Design & Sign, generously shared their years of valuable entrepreneurial experience with Dallas Corel SIG in September. Using various Corel and other graphic



software to efficiently create and produce hundreds of business graphics over the years, they brought us numerous examples to see. At a time when we in graphics can get overwhelmed by all the new options, they focused on practical uses. Forms, templates, business cards, logo and sign design start the list. Their work also graces banners, large format posters, vehicle graphics and municipal water towers. The sky is literally the limit for the Lopers. Their creative enjoyment and enthusiasm glowed as they described unusual client requests and resourceful solutions that produce repeat business. From the printed page to artist's canvas to Web site design, their talent is truly multimedia. Even their on-screen presentation for us was made using Corel. We each donned 3-D glasses to view their fascinating 3-D artwork too. Trained as art educators and fine artists, they continue to exhibit their personal artwork in area art shows as well. Judy and Wes bring inspiration to us all. Thanks for the encouraging words and pictures! For more information and to view their work online, visit <http://www.artdesign.com>.

- ❖ Jun/99 – Member Showcase
- ❖ Jul/99 – Virtual Corel Training on CD
- ❖ Aug/99 – Corel Large-Output at Service Bureaus
- ❖ Sep/99 – Corel and the Entrepreneur

Marsha Drebelbis

DOS / OPERATING SYSTEMS

Are we ready for GigaHertz? Maybe not, even if AMD is really pushing the envelope with their new, 700 MHz Athlon CPU's. The K6 2 400+ MHz series showed us a problem when it was initially installed in Win95 and discovered timing problems that required a patch.

Consequences of increased CPU/mainboard speed on system software will be topic for the October DOS/ Operating Systems session. Focus will be on the impact in daily PC operations

What will we "find" when CPU speeds reach 1 GHz? I'm certain AMD will get there sometime in 2000. They are hitting 700 MHz now on 0.25-micron technology and the planned move to 0.17-micron technology should allow somewhat faster operation. Intel won't be far behind if not producing even faster chips.

If Windows keeps getting larger and more bloated, we'll need the speed.

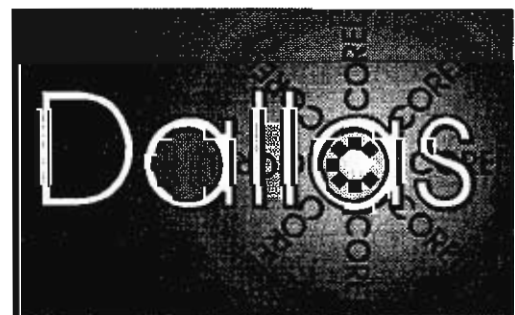
Recent Programs at Dallas Corel SIG

- ❖ Sep/98 – Ventura 8
- ❖ Oct/98 – Fine Tuning Your Web Page
- ❖ Nov/98 – Trademark Law for the New Millenium
- ❖ Dec/98 – PHOTO-PAINT 8 Effects
- ❖ Feb/99 – Paper for Successful Inkjet Printer Output
- ❖ Mar/99 – DRAW & PAINT Q & A
- ❖ Apr/99 – Scanning For Success

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- ❖ Technical Support Representatives..... 888-267-3548
- ❖ 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



Dallas Corel is A SIG Of North Texas PC Users Group



But, I'm concerned that there may be more "speed traps" ahead, particularly in "older" applications software (operating systems software isn't the only source of timing loops). It may be CPU speed that finally forces us to replace the older products, if not Y2K.

Remember memory in all this. Although I'm accustomed to using "generic" SDRAM, there's a reason for the premium prices on "branded" memory products. Since memory deficits are often random or sporadic and very difficult to troubleshoot unless the PC crashes on booting with the familiar beeping, OS/application software are often blamed for mystery "mini-crashes" when it is really "marginal" DRAM that's to blame.

Come to the October DOS/Operating Systems SIG and share your experiences with us.

Reagan Andrews

EXCEL/SPREADSHEET

Michael Bodner, Assistant SIG leader, gave a presentation on the use of drop-down list boxes. The presentation was very informative. His presentation started with an overview on the possible uses of a drop-down list box and finished with details on the setup and implementation of list boxes. His demonstration included a spreadsheet application that he developed at his place of employment. An interesting sideline to the demo was that the application was designed in such a way that the user interface did not look like a spreadsheet. Michael explained how to



format the Excel application to give it that look.

If you have an interesting application that you want to share with the group, give me a call and I will schedule you at a future meeting.

Next month we will discuss the various lookup functions and the Offset function.

Eb Foerster

GAMES

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SIG Asst. Leader: Timothy Carmichael, timothy.carmichael@ntpcug.org, W 972-566-4626

This newly-formed SIG will focus on computer games and how to play them, whether role-playing games (RPG), action games, or educational games. We will review current and upcoming games, discuss strategies for specific games, and share opinions and learning experiences. Bring games to swap with others, and bring PC game magazines to add to the library. If you want to learn more about what games you and your parents would like to buy, come join us. In August we will be gathering suggestions for which vendors to invite to the November main meeting, when we will have our annual PC/Apple Games Show.

Chris Carmichael

GENEALOGY - THE MASTER GENEALOGIST

We meet off-site on a different day than on our User Group meeting day. Check the Web page for the TMG Users Group meeting time,

date and location at www.pioneer-info.com/tmg/.

Jeri Steele

Help CENTER

Purpose of the Help SIG

The Help Center is an effort to reach out to users in the Vendor Area who are having problems with their PC's and to let them know about the users groups across the way. It is not a structured SIG with defined programs, but is based on the "Help Desk" model and aimed at answering basic PC-related questions — and then pointing the users to the appropriate NTPCUG or Apple Corps SIG's where further information and assistance will be available to them. We hope it will generate both goodwill and user interest in joining our respective users groups in the process.

We still need volunteers.

Since most of us — *and you* — will "cruise" the vendor area at some time during the meeting, why not volunteer for 30 minutes during the morning? Most of the questions received from perplexed users are usually simple and straightforward — and those that aren't can be pointed in the direction of NTPCUG experts at one or more of the SIGs at the new SIG meeting area. We will welcome any NTPCUG or Apple Corps member who would like to volunteer in this effort. Help SIG's hours are 8:30 a.m. until Noon.

Reagan Andrews

INTERNET - BEGINNING & ADVANCED

Our September meeting gave us an opportunity to demonstrate the high speed Internet connection given to us by The Beam. Using their service, our effective download speed over the airwaves is 10 Mbs. A more detailed article is in-

cluded in the October newsletter, but suffice it to say, The Beam is FAST !!

Our Beginning Internet session focused both on The Beam, and on Newsgroups as used by NTPCUG. Being able to demonstrate newsgroups over a live connection was a big plus. Did I mention that our room, Room B, was the only one wired for The Beam's service? Of course, all rooms will have it in October.

The Advanced Internet SIG was a Q&A session, led by Tom O'Keefe. Tom did a great job as usual explaining Internet concepts on a variety of subjects. If you have an Advanced question, Tom can answer it !!

Our October meeting will be a combined session, beginning around 11:30 AM and lasting for about 1.5 hours. The reason is that Microsoft will be doing a major presentation in Room C beginning at 10:00 AM on Windows 2000, and we really don't want to force our members to choose. Plus, your SIG Leaders want to be there as well. Their presentation is expected to last 1.5 hours, so we will start when they are finished.

See you October 16th !!

Doug Gorrie, and Tom O'Keefe

INTRODUCTION TO THE PC

The Introduction to the PC SIG is an ongoing program to introduce PC users to the different equipment, systems, and applications available. This SIG is particularly useful for those never having used a computer before as well as PC users desiring an overview or introduction to new applications.

Our September meeting discussed the early approach of printers for the PC through today's dot matrix, laser printers, ink jet, and dry ink cartridges for permanent color prints. The second program cov-



ered the needs for networking for large systems down to the home users and Internet connections. I added a new presentation for showing the BEAM super high speed downloads for Internet connections and the hub presently under construction for our facilities. Our third program discussed neat and interesting software one may wish to use with their PC such as: Quicken/Money, Snag-It, ftp programs, text editors, Acrobat Reader, and others.

To see an overview of all fifteen classes in this series, be sure to

visit our Web page: http://www.ntpcug/sigs/intro_pc/ and click on the SIG overview as well as for each individual class presentation.

The October classes wind up this fifteen-class series with these subjects:

Multimedia Software and Hardware. Multimedia may mean exciting games for some, but don't be misled that this is all there is to it. Multimedia has allowed sounds for alerting PC operators, background music from your CD

Introduction to the PC Class Schedule

Class #	Date	Time	Subject
13	Oct. 16	10:00 A.M.	Multimedia Software & Hardware
14		Noon	Virus Protection & Utilities
15		1:00 P.M.	PCs Into The 21st Century
	Nov. 13	10:00 AM	"Review"
		Noon	Bring in all your
		1:00 P.M.	"Intro" questions
1	Dec. 18	10:00 A.M.	Introduction to the PC
2		Noon	A Lot About Files and Directories
3		1:00 P.M.	(DOS) Disk Operating Systems
4	Jan.	10:00 AM	Microsoft Windows
5		Noon	PC Graphics
6		1:00 P.M.	Word Processing
7	Feb.	10:00 A.M.	Spreadsheets and Databases
8		Noon	Modems/Telecommunications
9		1:00 P.M.	PC Hardware
10	Mar.	10:00 A.M.	PC Printers
11		Noon	Networks and Such
12		1:00 P.M.	Neat & Necessary Software



Multimedia Software and Hardware. Multimedia may mean exciting games for some, but don't be misled that this is all there is to it. Multimedia has allowed sounds for alerting PC operators, background music from your CD player while you work, movie clips over the Internet, and much more. Much improved GUI (graphic user interface), cute animations, picture telephone, Net Meeting, any many more under way.

Virus Protection & Utilities. We will discuss origins of simple virii and their potentially devastating problems to your computer, simple and easy ways to protect against infection, and a few of the virus immunization and eradicator programs. Utilities are useful programs used for making computer operating easier and simpler. Norton and PC Tools are familiar names for many popular utilities and other programs for back up and restore.

PCs Into the 21st Century. This is a popular program with the NTPCUG. We may use a crystal ball, newsletters, magazines, entrepreneurs' new dreams, and our own imaginations as well as learned experience to show what is:

- ❖ on the way
- ❖ in the wings
- ❖ hopefuls
- ❖ possibles
- ❖ likelies
- ❖ futuristics

Bring your friends and co-workers and enjoy a few hours sharing, learning, and socializing.

Harold (Spike) Smith

INVESTORS

What do you use to pick your investments? CANSLIM, Motley Fool, throwing darts at a board or hiding your money under your mattress? In October we want to talk about strategies and systems. Please come and tell us what you use that has worked and warn us about what hasn't. There will be a general discussion of where this stock market is going. Investors is a group to discuss different investment and money management ideas, everybody is welcome - we have all levels of investors.

*Dick Richtman and Kathryn
(Kathy) Kirby*

JAVA

We did not have much of a turnout for the September SIG but did get a few good ideas on group projects from the people there. I will have a presentation on Java on Linux for the October meeting. I have Java 116 running fairly well and have a number of applications running. If you have any Java applications or applets that you want to see how they look on Linux, send them to me and I will try to get them on the box. Linux does not generally support swing yet, so hold off on your swing applications and applets. It does seem to support most other 1.1 features including events.

We still have a presentation by NuMega Tools planned for November.



Don Benish

<http://www.megaconverter.com>

<http://web2.airmail.net/dbenish>

MICROGRAFX

While it is still not 100% confirmed, in October the Micorgrafx SIG will have a GRAND REOPENING. Micrografx is now settled into their new building and we plan to check it out with a guided tour, info on the latest happenings at the company, and our usual question and answer session.

Will the SIG move to Big Town, will we move to the new building in Allen, what Saturday of the month will we officially and unofficially meet?

For the answers to this and other pressing issues, come to the SIG or drop the SIG leader, Neal Berkowitz, an e-mail message at nberk@misresource.com.

Neal Berkowitz

MICROSOFT NETWORKING

Next Meeting: October 16, 1999, 8 AM

In September, SIG member Rodney Loos gave a presentation on using Win98 Internet Connection Sharing (ICS) with a cable modem. See the SIG area on our Web site (www.ntpcug.org) for a copy of the presentation.

Here are the suggestions for the next few meetings. We are still looking for volunteers to assist with future presentations.

Upcoming Schedule:

- ❖ **October** - 'Choosing the Right Operation System' by Allen Childress of Microsoft
- ❖ **November** - NT Resource Kit
- ❖ **December** - Y2K Check List
- ❖ **January** - Open for suggestions (email gil.brand@ntpcug.org): NT Security, Win2K, NT Monitoring, etc.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

August 1999

Doug Curran of Microsoft gave a presentation and demo of MS Proxy Server. See the SIG area on our Web site (www.ntpcug.org) for a copy of the presentation. Also, look for the Microsoft Internet Information Server (IIS) presentation. Doug presented this topic and demo on Wednesday, 8/25, at the MS Technical Mixer at the Westin Park Central Hotel.

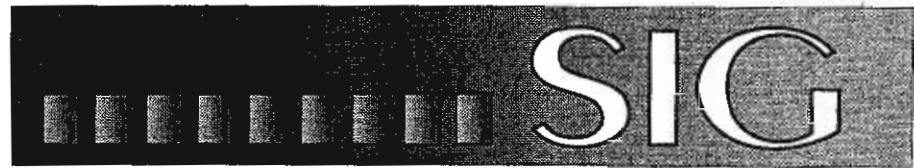
July 1999: No formal presentation this month; only Q&A. We also discussed the need for volunteers to assist with developing future presentations and some NT technical tasks that need to be addressed on the User Group NT server. If you have some experience maintaining an NT server and would like to help, send e-mail to gil.brand@ntpcug.org.

May 1999: Several die-hards stopped by even though there was no official SIG meeting in May. Suggested topics for future meetings were: Windows 2000; High speed Internet connections: DSL, cable, satellite; NT security; NT Resource Kit tools; SMS; MTS; NT performance monitoring.

Purpose of the SIG:

To technically showcase Microsoft Networking products, including Windows NT Server, Windows NT Workstation, Systems Management Server, Exchange, SNA Server, Internet Information Server, and Windows 95/98.

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 administrators. 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.

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.

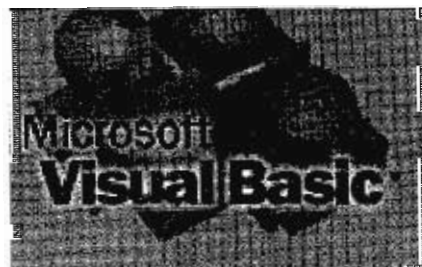
Gil Brand

PROFESSIONAL MIDI & Audio

SIG Leader: Alan Lummus, alummus@airmail.net, W&H 972-733-4141

SIG Asst. Leader: Timothy Carmichael, timothy.carmichael@ntpcug.org, W 972-566-4626

MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) has been around since before the IBM PC software started supporting it, and is used by many musicians to control and synchronize multi-instrument performances. The home PC can use MIDI, connected to electronic keyboards and other instruments, to teach students how to play keyboards as



well as compose and produce music. We will discuss MIDI features, interfaces, controllers, instruments and software from amateur to professional levels. Come share your experiences and learn more about MIDI.

Timothy Carmichael

Visual Basic - BEGINNING

The Beginning Visual Basic SIG was formed within the North Texas PC User Group in May of 1993 to serve the needs of those members that were just beginning in Visual Basic. We often have members attend our SIG meetings that have not purchased Visual Basic yet. They want to find out what it is about before they take the plunge. Our purpose is to provide a forum where Beginning Visual Basic programmers can ask questions without feeling intimidated. Our goal is to help them learn enough to participate in the Advanced Visual Basic SIG. A number of advanced Visual Basic programmers attend the Beginning Visual Basic SIG for the specific purpose of helping the beginners with their programming problems

Bring your questions on Beginning Visual Basic to our meeting beginning at 9:00 AM on Saturday, October 16, 1999 at the Big Town. It seems pretty certain we will be meeting in Room F for the foreseeable future. Check the NTPCUG Web site for any changes in meeting time or place. I look forward to seeing you at this month's meeting.

Jim Carter

Visual Basic - ADVANCED

The Advanced Visual Basic SIG was formed in the North Texas PC User Group (NTPCUG) in the sum-



mer of 1992 and has made the transition from the Infomart to Big Town with the NTPCUG. The SIG membership contains a mixture of new, intermediate and highly skilled Visual Basic programmers who meet monthly to exchange ideas on Visual Basic programming. The meeting generally includes introductions, question and answer session, and a presentation on a particular subject of interest to the group. The main purpose of the SIG is to provide a forum for Visual Basic programmers to exchange views and share experiences

Future meetings will include a presentation by **Thomas Lewis** on his latest book on Visual Basic and COM+. Thomas will be glad to autograph your copy of his book. As most of you know, Thomas was the leader of the Advanced Visual Basic SIG until recently. In November, the presentation will be on Nu-Mega Tools by Todd Fessler of Compuware Corporation. There should definitely be door prizes at these meetings, so bring your proof of NTPCUG membership!

Tom and I are actively seeking presenters for the Advanced Visual Basic SIG meetings. If you have some experiences with Visual Basic that you would like to share with the SIG members, please contact



me and I will make the necessary arrangements. Give me a call at (972) 235-5968 or you may e-mail me at jim_carter@msn.com.

Bring your questions on Visual Basic to our meeting beginning at 10:00 AM on Saturday, October 16, 1999 at the Big Town meeting rooms. Check the NTPCUG Web site for directions to Big Town and this newsletter for location of the meeting rooms. I look forward to meeting you there.

Jim Carter

Word for Windows

NEW Meeting time and place:
9:00-9:55 in Room B

Whether your documents consist of a few lines of text or they are complex productions with graphics and tables, you're sure to learn some tips and skills in the Microsoft Word SIG.

Although we're an informal group, we usually present a planned program with handouts. We're always happy to cover any questions and topics you want covered, as well as share your knowledge and good ideas. Word often provides several methods of achieving the same end result, and we'll all discover different ways of doing things in Word from each other.

We want this SIG to help you solve your Word problems and discover how to do things you didn't know you wanted to do.

Michele Wood
(mwood@flash.net) & *Sherry Covert*
(shervinc@ix.net-com.com)

WordPerfect / Windows

I have some GREAT news! We've expanded! And no, I am not referring to my upcoming forth child – but we are going to be able to meet for two hours starting this month! We will start the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and continue until 11:00 a.m. with a short break in there too. This is something we have talked about accomplishing for quite some time and now it is here. So, **BRING YOUR FRIENDS THIS MONTH!!!** We have plenty of time to discuss WordPerfect!

I want to send thanks to all who were able to make the meeting in September where we discussed and discovered several new "cool" features of WordPerfect 9. Since we were only able to meet for an hour, we were not able to discuss all the new bells and whistles. So, this month we are going to continue that discussion with a focus on CorelCentral, the address book and how it integrates with the rest of your system. We will also be looking at a few other enhanced features. Hope you can make it as we have A LOT to show you!

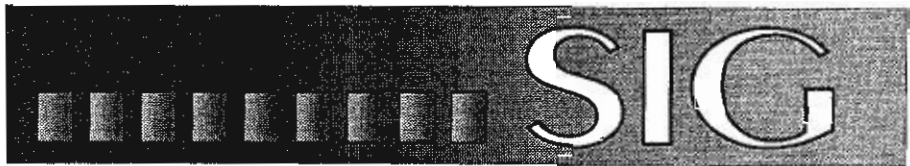
Tip of the Month – Installations

For those of you who were unable to be at the meeting in September, let me share with you a tip that **Putt Shaw** shared with us concerning installations. Everyone has seen the prompt "Close all programs before installing" or something to that effect, right? How many of us truly do that? Not



many. What Windows is speaking about are all the "little programs" that load when Windows starts. What you need to do is press {Ctrl}+{Alt}+{Del} ONE TIME. This brings up a dialog box which has several programs listed. Examples would be CorelCentral, Dad9, Sage, Nprotect, etc. Close each and every one of these programs EXCEPT Systray and Explorer. These must remain open. You do have to close (or "End Task") each program individually unfortunately. After all are closed, you can continue to install. What is the benefit of doing this? A truly clean install. Your program will install cleaner and will run more efficiently if this is done! Good luck and we'll see you next month!

Cindy Adams



FOR SIG LEADERS - HOW TO ACCESS THE INTERNET AT MEETINGS . . .

Continued from Page 8

... Options, Connection(s) tab. In IE4, click on "Connect to the Internet using a local area network" and make sure Proxy is off. But if using IE5, click on LAN Settings and ensure that all boxes are unchecked.

If you are a Netscape users, my apologies. I don't use it enough to

provide any written directions here. But I am open to including someone else's instructions if you will forward them to me (see address below).

There is not much more to this Setup process. At the September meeting, we noticed that machines already configured for DHCP at work came up without difficulty when first connected to our LAN. Browser downloads began almost immediately, as they hopefully will for you. But as usual, if in doubt, a machine Restart may eliminate any connection problems.

Patch cords to connect your machine to the LAN should be available at the meeting, but we suggest that you bring your own if available "just in case".

If anyone discovers errors in the directions above, please bring them to my attention:

(doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org).

Good luck !!

Doug Gorrie

[Editor's Note: Doug makes installation sound pretty easy and it sometimes is just that. However, members planning to install a 10Base T Ethernet card should check their PC carefully before starting. You will need an "open" PCI or ISA slot (on a desktop PC) and an available IRQ and port address for the card. Plug 'n Pray can help—or make the situation much worse.

If in doubt about your ability to handle the installation per Doug's directions, consider contacting one of the Networking SIG leaders for assistance.]

North Texas PC

Membership

Users Group, Inc

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: _____

E-mailAddress _____

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.

INSIDE THE NORTH TEXAS PC USERS GROUP COMMUNITY
VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION  *by Claude McClure*

Show Me the Money:

That time of year is coming around when my annual membership dues are payable. I thought I might try to talk the club Treasurer, **Eb Foerster**, into a semiannual so as to lighten the hit. That might be difficult for him to present in one of those spreadsheets he is demonstrating at the Excel SIG in Room F of the Meeting Hall. Then I started thinking about what it would cost to hold this meeting if we had to pay for everything we get at the NTPCUG. I calculated we get this meeting for less than the cost of a Big Mac every month.

SIG Leaders and Assistant Leaders are the heart of the organization; the cost of their total hours of service for the weekend would be similar in cost to one of those traveling seminars. I'm sure you get the brochures at work with prices that require a corporate budget. Another benefit is the newsletter produced by Publisher, **Reagan Andrews**,

and his faithful staff, who produce a complete and new product every thirty days. The value of that service is enormous. I have trouble visualizing the many steps that are required to go from E-mail SIG notes to distribution of the 24 to 32-page miracle in a gray cover that hits my mailbox.

My membership dues also give me a cadre of workers who open and check the facility, manage and staff the offices and provide services like information, special presentations, and administration of schedules, rosters, and events. Every one of those functions is critical to the Saturday meeting. Even paper forms like coupons, bulletins, tickets, and membership cards have to be created, produced and delivered to the correct distribution point for my convenience. Hey, I'm already starting to feel better about the value of my membership. To find out how every dues dollar can pack such a wallop; to learn the secret

every corporate guru wishes to be able to use; read on. The answer will be unfolded for your eyes only.

The power of volunteers is the answer to the wonderful success of the North Texas PC Users Group. A lot of us get together once each month to learn more about our computers and the programs that come with them. Many volunteers donate their valuable and free service to the group so others might have greater enjoyment in computing. Volunteers' names are mentioned throughout this newsletter. They are a special group of people. They give knowledge and instruction. They keep us informed. They give us a structured meeting and an organization for learning new skills. Volunteers help us retain our identity as a group of Special Interest Groups. No commercial organization can duplicate the effectiveness of a group of volunteers. The names of some of those volunteers are listed at the right.

Big Town Liaison

Andy Reese
Mark Mills

Vendor Setup/Breakdown

Anchors:

David Slavik
Dick Abbott
James Hope

Crew:

Kenneth Berg
Dennis Brininger
Lester Foley
Larry Matzek
James Webb

Auditorium Presentations

Timothy Carmichael
Christopher Carmichael

Information/Registration Booth

Statistician:

Connie Andrews
Ralph Beaver (Assistant)

Scheduler:

Bob Wuller

Anchors:

Roger Bopp
Vernon Cates
Cinda Lovil
David Martin

Bob McNeil (Double)

Raymond Reyes
Ken Sauter
Fred Toulmin

Booth Crew:

Jo Francis Byrd
Randy Durham
Jim Eubank
Tim Foster (Double)
Joe Hopkins
Neil Jochelson
John McNeil (Double)
Martin Moomaw
Linda Moore
Oscar Tyler
Thomas Ward
Don Wolfe

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

1. Via the Internet: Send me an E-mail at **CMcC1248@aol.com** and make the subject matter your area of interest.

2. Meeting day: Sign up at the Information Booth to work that area in a coming month.

3. By phone:

Auditorium Presentations

Timothy Carmichael (972) 661-4626 (w)

Information Booth and General Information

Claude McClure (972) 867-0978 (h)

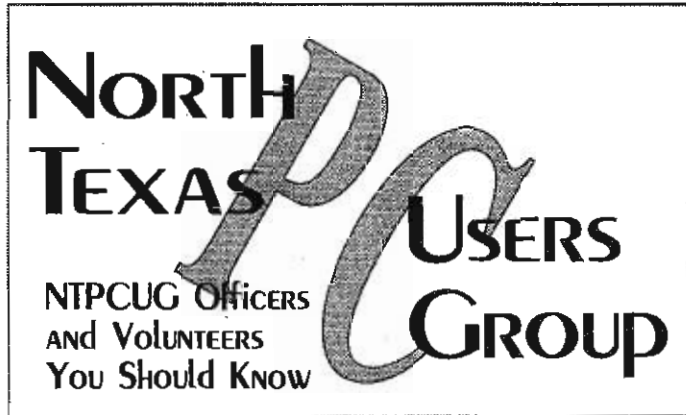
North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

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

Phone (214) 327-6455 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*
Marsha Drebelbis **Timothy Carmichael**
Alex Lilley **Andy Oliver**
Andy Reese

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

NTPCUG Web Addresses

Home Page: ntpcug.org

Click on: *How to Contact Us* and you will see a link to:

- ♣ President
- ♣ Advertising
- ♣ Newsletter
- ♣ Auditorium Presentations
- ♣ Special Interest Group (SIG) Coordinator
- ♣ Publicity
- ♣ Webmaster

To e-mail officers and directors: bod@ntpcug.org

To e-mail the *PC News* and submit articles: newsletter@ntpcug.org

To e-mail all members who have joined the Members mailing list: members@ntpcug.org

To enroll in NTPCUG Newsgroups, send e-mail to: postmaster@ntpcug.org

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	(Open)	
Program Chairman	Timothy Carmichael	(972) 566-4626 w
Treasurer	Eb Foerster	(214) 357-7602 h
Secretary	Wade Emmert	(214) 740-3164 w
Membership Dir.	Jim Hoisington	(972) 416-3101h
Advertising Dir. (Acting)	Connie Andrews	(214) 828-0699h
Publicity	Rob Alschbaeh	(214) 368-4979 b
Volunteer Coord.	Claude McClure	(972) 867-0978 h

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**



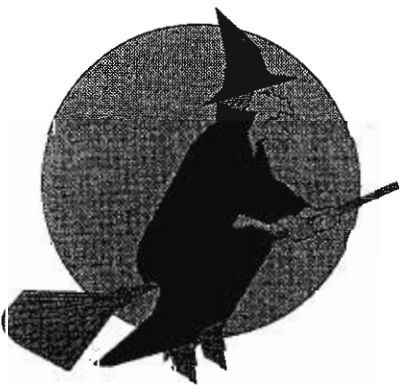
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North Texas PC Users Group



Downtown Dallas

Next Meeting:
16 October 1999

