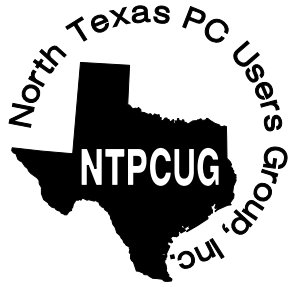


North Texas



PC NEWS



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Member distribution was 900; 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 May
North Texas PC NEWS:
May, 4, 2000

Meeting Dates:

April 15 – 3rd Saturday
May 20 - 3rd Saturday



Articles and Announcements:

President's Message 2 - 4
Timothy Carmichael

My Job Search 4 - 7
Jim Hoisington

Flying Can Be Taxing 7 - 8
Connie Andrews

The Variety Store 9 - 12
Reagan Andrews

Special Items:

Vendor Presentations 1

SIG Meetings 1
Rooms & Times

SIG Reports 13-24

Officers & People You
should know 25

Submit Newsletter articles to: newsletter@ntpcug.org
Visit the North Texas PC Users Group Web page:
<http://www.ntpcug.org>

Submitting Articles and Stories to the Newsletter

The North Texas PC NEWS is going online—and it's more important than ever that the NTPCUG newsletter contain timely and informative content of interest to our members. We will welcome pertinent "How to do it" articles, book reviews, software reviews and other materials that would be helpful and interesting to NTPCUG members.

For prospective authors, there are a few, but very important, "Do's and Don'ts" involved in article submission to the newsletter, first of which is accuracy. Be sure of your facts (unless you report them as "rumors") and always remember to report the source(s) as well.

Please don't submit articles that are taken from another source without crediting the source in your article, i.e., if you excerpt something from the Microsoft (or other) Web site, please state that in the article.

Remember to "sign" your article/story at the bottom. A simple "by Your Name" will be quite helpful,

particularly if the editors have questions or suggestions about the story.

Please don't submit the article or story in HTM or .PDF format. It can make editing and formatting quite time consuming and difficult.

We can accept MS Word 97, most WordPerfect files and ASCII .TXT files. The absolutely latest version of any word processor may not convert gracefully to our format and may have to be rejected as a result.

Graphics should be submitted in one of the "standard" formats, i.e., .TIF, .EPS, .GIF, .PCX or .JPG files. While "native" CorelDraw (CDR) files are also OK, other graphics editor native formats may not be convertible.

Again, we want your articles and thank you in advance for your input and cooperation.

Reagan Andrews

PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS . . . VINCENT GAINES

April Main Presentations

10 – 10:55 AM

Title: Free Internet services

Vincent Gaines and other soon to be drafted individuals.

Company: Freenet, free inet, snap.com and more will be shown and a panel of experienced users will answer your questions about the pro and con's of using these Internet service providers.

11-11:55 AM

The second hour we get a lesson and demonstration of creating a home page. Our own Webmaster Mary will be leading this discussion for the groups' benefit. She will answer questions that you have and demonstrate how easy it is to prepare your own right at home.

12 - 12:30 PM

NTPCUG Main Business Meeting

There will be drawings for prizes*

April 15

SIGs SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP MEETING SCHEDULE

Time	Room	SIG
8:00	A	-
	B	Microsoft Networking
	C	-
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Hardware Solutions
	F	-
	G	-
	H	-
9:00	A	WordPerfect for Windows
	B	Word for Windows
	C	DOS/Operating Systems
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Quicken
	F	Excel/Spreadsheets
	G	Alpha 5
	H	Dallas Corel
10:00	A	WordPerfect for Windows (continued)
	B	Communications
	C	Main Presentation – “Free Internet Services”
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Introduction to the PC
	F	-

Time	Room	SIG
10:00	-	Ctd.
	G	-
	H	Dallas Corel (continued)
11:00	A	Investors
	B	Internet – Beginning
	C	Main Presentatin – “Creating a Home Page”
	D	AppleCorps
	E	Java
	F	MacromediaFLASH-ACT!
	H	Professional MIDI & Audio
12:00	A	AppleCorps/ClarisWorks
	B	Internet – Advanced
	C	NTPCUG Business Meeting-
	D	AppleCorps/FileMaker
	E	Introduction to the PC
	F	-
	G	AppleCorps/Beginners
	H	Games

Time	Room	SIG
1:00	A	Lotus Notes & Domino
	B	FrontPage
	C	-
	D	-
	E	Introduction to the PC
	F	-
	G	AppleCorps/Beginners
	H	-Web Content Committee

SIG meetings are listed by time and location for the April 15 meeting. Times and locations may change and members are advised to check the NTPCUG Web site for latest listings.

AT LAST - A NEW MEETING LOCATION!

On March 31 we finalized the contract with Richardson Independent School District (RISD) allowing us to rent monthly meeting rooms at the Lake Highlands Freshman Center for the rest of this year. This arrangement promises to be a long-term solution which will benefit our members and the school students, parents and faculty. The Freshman Center is a very attractive building about two years old, has plenty of free parking, a large auditorium, and LAN connections in every room with Internet access. It is located in Dallas (near the junction of Royal Lane and Skillman Avenue) at 10220 White Rock Trail, just north of Church Street. All our meeting dates there will be on the third Saturday of each month, and **our first meeting date there will be May 20.**

The Freshman Center is a much better facility in a superior location than the Big Town Mall and will cost us less to rent. The praise for locating



this site and negotiating a contract goes mainly to **Gil Brand**, who has been leading our Site Search Committee for over a year. Gil, along with **Michelle Wood** and **Bill Parker** have donated many hours of their time to this task, and we owe them a big **THANKS** for all their hard work. I also want to thank all of you who have suggested other possible meeting sites.

SIG MEETINGS

Four of the NTPCUG SIGs will start meeting at a new location starting in April. The North Texas Microsoft Developers SIGs, comprised of the Beginning Visual Basic, Advanced Visual Basic, Access, and Application Development Issues (formerly ActiveX) SIGs will be meeting at the Microsoft facilities in Addison. Their first meeting there will be on April 15, and starting in May they will meet there on the second Saturday of each month. This schedule will allow NTPCUG developer members to attend the Developers SIGs as well as our regular SIG meetings at the Freshman Center.

All of our SIG Leaders and active members should voice their opinions of the SIG scheduling and content now, since their views will influence changes we are making in preparation for meeting at the Freshman Center. A SIG Leader meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 20. **Bill Parker**, SIG Coordinator, has been putting in a lot of time and effort into evaluating and improving our SIG schedule and A/V resources, and your feedback and support is needed.

NEWSLETTER

Our monthly newsletter, the *North Texas PC News*, was first published exclusively online in March, with good success. Our publisher, Rea-



Formerly OnRamp, National Knowledge Networks and Signet Partners

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PREZ SEZ... CONTINUED

gan Andrews, has done an outstanding job in changing over to the online Acrobat PDF format, and is working hard to improve it further, including more color content and reducing download file size. You can help Reagan and the editor, Connie Andrews, by contributing more articles for publication. Have you just purchased and installed a new piece of hardware or software? Have you worked out a solution for a difficult task in a software application program? Share your learning experience and opinions with the rest of our members by writing a short or long article for the newsletter!

NTPCUG Web Site

All of our members should check for the latest news and schedules at the NTPCUG Web Site at . Our Webmaster, Mary McWilliams Johnson, has done a great job of building the site along with our Web Content Team. We are seeking ideas and volunteers for expanding this valuable online resource, and your

contributions will be an important part of the development process.

Volunteers Needed

Those of you who can contribute some time to help out with the NTPCUG are needed more than ever. We are in the process of evaluating and improving how our user group can be more useful to our members, and your suggestions are an integral part of this process. Making those suggestions actually happen also requires additional volunteer time and effort. Your contributions will help all members, and you can benefit from being an active part of NTPCUG.

One project in April where we need help is moving NTPCUG equipment from Big Town Mall to the Freshman Center. Tentatively set for April 22, the move will go smoothly and quickly if enough people and several pickup trucks are available. Other volunteers are needed for helping with setup for the meeting on May 20. Additional help is needed for other projects which are on hold until we have the manpower to start them. Anyone willing to help out should

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My Job SEARCH

by Jim Hoisington

As some of you know, I'm looking for a new job. This article summarizes some of the things that I have learned in my journey. While my search is specific to Information Technology (IT) jobs, much of the information applies to other professions.

The jobs ARE NOT in the Newspaper

Most IT jobs are no longer listed in the newspaper, they are to be found at Job Fairs or on the Internet. My guess is that the newspaper no longer reaches the target audience and it is much more expensive than posting the jobs on the Internet.

I CONCENTRATE ON THE INTERNET.

Internet Job Sites are Overwhelming

Many sites on the Internet link job seekers with job listings. The first thing that a prospective job



seeker has to do is to decide which job sites are best for him.

There are good job sites and there are bad job sites. The best strategy is to find two or three sites that attract job postings of interest to you and to monitor those sites on a regular basis. Otherwise, you will suffer from information overload and you will miss some really good position postings.

As an example, I recently searched a job site that I monitor regularly. I asked to see:

1. Jobs posted to the site in the last ten days,
2. Serviced by telephone area code 214 or 972,
3. With a position description containing the two key words that are used to describe the

type of position I am seeking.

The search engine returned 1,483 postings! There is no way you can review that many postings every ten days.

A Good Job Site

The first and foremost characteristic of a job site is that you should *not* have to post your resume and make it available for everyone to see. (By keeping your resume private, you avoid putting it in the hands of resume collectors. More on them later.)

I'm also suspicious of sites that let you post your resume but tell you it is private. On one Web site that had a private posting area, I found my resume marked public after the Web site went through a major redesign.

The second characteristic of a good job site is that the search engine lets you fine-tune your search. If the smallest geographical area that you can specify is Texas and you are only interested in Dallas, you will be overwhelmed by all the jobs in Houston and Austin.

The third characteristic of a good job site is that it should have a link from the job posting to the posting company's Web page. And, it should give you an e-mail address at the posting com-

PREZ SEZ... CONTINUED

contact me or Claude McClure (Volunteer Coordinator).

MICROSOFT eXTREME

We/ I also need volunteers to assist at the April 8 Microsoft eXtreme demonstration to be held between 12 and 2 p.m., at the UA Plaza 8 theater complex off the intersection of North Central Expy and Park Lane. It's located behind Caruth Plaza near to CompUSA and Best Buy. Volunteering to help NTPCUG at this is one way of getting in if you've forgotten to register with Microsoft. There will be drawings for software and other door prizes, as usual. Call me if you can help.

Timothy

pany so that you can ask for additional questions.

Finally, a nice but not necessary feature is an automated search engine that sends you an e-mail when a job gets posted that matches your search criteria.

Job CATEGORIES

Ok, this section is going to get me in trouble with a lot of my friends. Web Job sites contain three kinds of jobs: jobs posted by companies, jobs posted by recruiters, and jobs posted by consulting companies. And most of the jobs posted either don't exist or have already been filled.

I have gotten jobs through recruiters and I have worked through consulting companies. But, I'm going to say that if you see a job in which you are interested and it is posted by the company that has the position, apply directly to that company. Why? Because recruiters charge a fee for placing candidates and if you apply directly to a company and a recruiter presents someone equally qualified, the person presented by the recruiter comes with a \$10,000 or more disadvantage.

Good RECRUITERS / Bad RECRUITERS

So, why do I sometimes go through recruiters? Because, recruiters have access to positions within the company that are not available to you and me. The smart companies use recruiters who are technical specialists in the company's industry to pre-screen the candidates. The recruiter gets to know the company and the company culture so he can find candidates that

My Job SEARCH... Ctd.

have the skills required and personality and that match the company's position requirements and culture.

Companies are willing to pay the recruiter's fee because it will not be wasting their time sorting through the resumes of several hundred candidates that are not qualified for the position or who is a misfit for their corporate culture.

How do you find these recruiters? If you apply for a position listed by a recruiter, ask him what it's like to work for this company. If the recruiter comes back with some vague answer like, "They've got great benefits," chances are the recruiter is just trying to match a resume to a posting; he doesn't know the company.

I look for things in a posting that discourage me from applying for a job through a recruiter. If a recruiter not located in the Dallas / Fort Worth area or your geographical area of interest, that is almost always a reason to disqualify him. If a recruiter's e-mail address is an AOL or Hotmail account or if the recruiter does not have a corporate Web site, that tells me that he is a very small operation and is probably trouble. If they have no phone number, disqualify them. Otherwise, call the phone number during business hours and hear how employees answer the phone.

Here's why I don't apply for positions with these recruiters. Many of these recruiters create non-existent positions to collect resumes. Then, when they see a posting for a job, they quickly

submit your resume. If you come along the next day and see the posting, even though you apply directly, the posting company is still obligated to pay the recruiter's fee if they were to hire you. But, the posting company probably won't hire you because these *resume gatherers* hardly ever take time to get to know



High Speed Wireless Internet!

you and to present you to the hiring company. They just FAX over your resume with their cover page.

Keep this in mind, most of the positions listed on the Web sites by recruiters, good and bad, *do not exist*. They only way that recruiters can get their company name presented on a job site is to post a position. So, they post a position, over and over and over so that the position posting always shows up as a new posting.



High Speed Wireless Internet!

CONSULTING / CONTRACT PROGRAMMING COMPANIES - Good and Bad

Ten years ago there were five big IT contract programming companies and about ten smaller ones. They varied in quality from good to very bad. That's no longer the case.

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.

Doug Gorrie

More and more companies use contract programmers as a source of permanent hires. This has pushed the contracting companies into doing more contract-to-hire and permanent placement recruiting. The big five companies have merged, changed corporate names, and changed directions and markets. If you apply for a position with one of these companies, investigate them thoroughly. Ask lots of questions and try to talk with some of the people currently working for the company. Some of them are good to work for; others are not. None of them is similar to what they were five years ago; they've all changed.

A lot of Consulting Companies don't exist

The Internet has created a new problem where consulting or contract programming companies are concerned. A lot of the companies that post jobs on job sites *don't really exist!* Let me rephrase that -- non-existent companies are posting non-existent jobs on job sites.

There are people out there that want to make *big bucks on the Internet*. They present themselves as consulting companies specializing in the latest Internet technology. Right now, that technology is *Business to Business Commerce* or *E-Commerce*. To be successful in the consulting business, they need to have clients and consultants. And, since clients want to see resumes of the consultants of a consulting firm before signing a contract, these consulting companies need resumes.

Guess what they do? They post consulting positions with great benefits and good pay in the hope that you will send them a resume. A re-

My Job SEARCH... Ctd.

sume that they will then show to prospective clients claiming that you are one of their valued consultants.

Just like the recruiters, if they don't have a telephone number, a corporate Web site or their e-mail address is on AOL or HotMail, the consulting company and the positions listed probably exist only as a concept.

So why bother?

If most of the jobs posted don't exist and contact with many of the companies posting jobs will hurt rather than help your job search, why bother?

The reason to bother is that amongst all the non-existent stuff are real jobs and good recruiters and good consulting companies. I'm convinced that the Internet is where the good positions get posted first because it is so easy to post positions there and it is so much cheaper than the other methods of advertising positions.

It's just a game and once you know the rules, it's not only fun to play but it can also be very profitable. With a little practice, you'll start to see the patterns as you look at the position postings and to be able to filter through 200 to 300 jobs at one sitting.

So, Happy Hunting! And the next time you read one of those articles about how many IT job openings are going unfilled, you can guess where the writer of the article got his numbers. He counted job postings on Web sites.

Jim...

[Editor's Note: Since I will also be looking into the job market after I retire from the VA, Jim's article seemed particularly timely. For newer NTPCUG members, Jim Hoisington is a many-times President, President-Elect, Pst President and long-term Membership Chairman of the North Texas PC Users Group since he became a member in 1981.

Reagan.



Hmmm... That's the 12th time today I've seen that strange blue screen with all the funny, white letters and numbers. Does that mean Service Patch 269 failed?

Flying CAN BE TAXING...

[Ed. Note: Here's a little humor from the Internet for those of us who brave the airways from time to time. The source is unknown since I got this as an E-mail, probably 10th or 15th hand...]

Occasionally, airline attendants make an effort to make the "in-flight safety lecture" and their other announcements a bit more entertaining. Here are some real examples that have been heard or reported:

1. From a Southwest Airlines employee.... "There may be 50 ways to leave your lover, but there are only 4 ways out of this airplane..."
2. Pilot - "Folks, we have reached our cruising altitude now, so I am going to switch the seat belt sign off. Feel free to move about as you wish, but please stay inside the plane till we land...it's a bit cold outside, and if you walk on the wings it affects the flight pattern."
3. After landing: "Thank you for flying Delta Business Express. We hope you enjoyed giving us the business as much as we enjoyed taking you for a ride."

Flying CAN BE TAXING... Ctd.

4. As the plane landed and was coming to a stop at Washington National, a lone voice comes over the loudspeaker: "Whoa, big fella. WHOA!"
5. After a particularly rough landing during thunderstorms in Memphis, a flight attendant on a Northwest flight announced: "Please take care when opening the overhead compartments because, after a landing like that, sure as hell everything has shifted."
6. From a Southwest Airlines employee.... "Welcome aboard Southwest Flight XXX to YYY. To operate your seatbelt, insert the metal tab into the buckle, and pull tight. It works just like every other seatbelt and if you don't know how to operate one, you probably shouldn't be out in public unsupervised. In the event of a sudden loss of cabin pressure, oxygen masks will descend from the ceiling. Stop screaming, grab the mask, and pull it over your face. If you have a small child traveling with you, secure your mask before assisting with theirs. If you are traveling with two small children, decide now which one you love more."
7. "Weather at our destination is 50 degrees with some broken clouds, but they'll try to have them fixed before we arrive. Thank you, and remember, nobody loves you or your money more than Southwest Airlines."
8. "Your seat cushions can be used for flotation and in the event of an emergency water landing, please take them with our compliments."
9. "As you exit the plane, please make sure to gather all of your belongings. Anything left behind will be distributed evenly among the flight attendants. Please do not leave children or spouses."
10. "Last one off the plane must clean it."
11. From the pilot during his welcome message: "We are pleased to have some of the best flight attendants in the industry... Unfortunately none of them are on this flight...!"
12. Overheard on an American Airlines flight into Amarillo, Texas, on a particularly windy and bumpy day. During the final approach, the Captain was really having to fight it. After an extremely hard landing, the Flight Attendant came on the PA and announced, "Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Amarillo. Please remain in your seats with your seatbelts fastened while the Captain taxis what's left of our airplane to the gate!"
13. Another flight Attendant's comment on a less than perfect landing: "We ask you to please remain seated as Captain Kangaroo bounces us to the terminal."
14. An airline pilot wrote that on this particular flight he had hammered his ship into the runway really hard. The airline had a policy which required the first officer to stand at the door while the passengers exited, smile, and give them a "Thanks for flying XYZ airline." He said that in light of his bad landing, he had a hard time looking the passengers in the eye, thinking that someone would have a smart comment. Finally, everyone had gotten off except for this little old lady walking with a cane. She said, "Sonny, mind if I ask you a question?" "Why no, Ma'am," said the pilot, "what is it?" The little old lady said, "Did we land or were we shot down?"
15. After a real crusher of a landing in Phoenix, the Flight Attendant came on with, "Ladies and Gentlemen, please remain in your seats until Captain Crash and the Crew have brought the aircraft to a screeching halt up against the gate. And, once the tire smoke has cleared and the warning bells are silenced, we'll open the door and you can pick your way through the wreckage to the terminal."
16. Part of a Flight Attendant's arrival announcement: "We'd like to thank you folks for flying with us today. And, the next time you get the insane urge to go blasting through the skies in a pressurized metal tube, we hope you'll think of us here at US Airways."

No April Fool Joke –The 'Fat Lady' Didn't Sing as We Thought in March, Intel & AMD Tout 1GHz+ CPU's and LINUX May be Going Down the Old, UNIX – Non-compatible Aps Road

MS v. Everybody just keeps churning ...

Guess again. The fat lady definitely didn't sing last month, it seems. And, it's back to the races in the Microsoft v. the DOJ and "The entire Known Universe" antitrust, etc., case. Looked like MS was about to reach a settlement with the adversaries above, but the combined DOJ and states attorneys general(s) managed to snatch a solid defeat from the jaws of victory March 31, 2000.

At least, that's what a blurb from the *Wall Street Journal* Interactive Edition seemed to indicate in an April 1 announcement. Unfortunately, either they were having some trouble on their Web site, or I was hoist by the IE 5.0 petard since I was never able to get on the site April 2 to checkout the story.

Did find a little verification on the CNET.COM Web site though.

Judge Richard Posner, mediator appointed by US District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson who is overseeing the Microsoft v. "Everybody" case, announced the "end of his efforts to mediate the Microsoft antitrust case." CNET's story was dated 5:40 p.m., PT, April 1, 2000. CNET quoted Posner as saying "Unfortunately the quest has proved fruitless."

GATES, BALLMER & Klein QUOTED IN CNET Suit Article on April 1, 2000

Quotes from Bill Gates, Microsoft founder, Steve Ballmer, Microsoft CEO, and Assistant Attorney General Joel Klein (DOJ) proliferated the media Saturday, April 1, and Sunday, April 2. Apparently, Ballmer had sent an E-mail to Microsoft's 33,000 employees stating a profound wish to reach a settlement in the case.

This appeared to be thwarted by presence of the 19 states' attorneys general in the matter if the CNET story is accurate.

I've felt that inclusion of this bunch would make any rational settlement effort very, very difficult and evidently that was the case in terms of Posner's admission of defeat in his attempt to mediate the issue.

According to the CNET article, Posner "Praised the efforts of the DOJ and Microsoft," but made no mention of the states. This statement was mentioned by Microsoft's William Neukom, Microsoft Executive Vice President and General Counsel, "As indicative as to why the talks collapsed."



Bill Gates was also quoted as attributing problems in the negotiations to the failure of the DOJ and states to work together in the matter. CNET reported Gates as saying "There were divisions and extreme views on the other side that brought us to the point that mediation wasn't going to be successful."

All this follows several weeks of media stories hinting that Microsoft had, indeed, softened their approach and was seriously trying to reach some settlement in the case. I have slightly more than a ream (500 sheets) of printout from various media Web sites' exposition of the settlement talks, al-



most all of which gave the impression that both sides appeared closer together than apparently they were.

My hunch is that MS and the DOJ may have been close, but demands for intense involvement by the states, i.e., rights to supervision of Microsoft by 19 different regulatory agencies within the states, probably torpedoed the talks. I don't blame Microsoft for balking at this idea and have some compassion for their efforts to make some sort of agreement with DOJ only to be thwarted by the economic/political ambitions of the various attorneys general who all wanted a piece of the action.

How did THE STATES ACT?

Poorly, it would seem. According to CNET, the states (attorneys general) decided to sabotage the settlement talks with "new demands" which CNET said directly led to the collapse of the negotiations. They were likened by a law school professor, Bill Kovacic, George Washington University, as "Kids who want to sit at the table with the adults." He added, "But, these are no ordinary kids. They have nuclear bombs, and that makes them very dangerous."

So, where does this leave MS v. Everybody?

Depends on what Judge Jackson rules and that ruling/decision is expected by Friday, April 6, 2000. Media sources don't feel this will be pleasing to Microsoft in light of the judge's earlier rulings in the case. William Neukom made it very clear that Microsoft is prepared to take the matter to the US Supreme Court and that could take as little as 24 months to decide.

Guess this means I'll have Microsoft on the palette for another two years. I'd like to be upbeat about this turn, but I am getting somewhat bored by this whole thing and would welcome another subject for inspection/discussion.

ARE WE PARANOID YET? YAHOO! Admits FTC PROBING PRIVACY ISSUES

Ahhhh Another "Privacy" issue on the Web. Yahoo! Inc., admitted in March that FTC (Federal Trade Commission) investigators were probing the portal/search engine company for information on what data they gather about users and what they were doing with it.

This was reported in *The Wall Street Journal* on March 31, and is the latest in a series of FTC investigations concerning privacy issues on the Web. Yahoo! finds themselves in an unusual position in regard to

such inquiries as a result of their May, 1999, acquisition of the GeoCities unit which is described as an "Online community." GeoCities does host a number of veteran-oriented Web pages, which is how this blurb caught my eye in the first place.

This goes into the realm of "cookies" and the tracking efforts that might be possible with any of the Web search engines or portals. The extent to which such information might be made available to various advertisers is a significant question for both state and federal regulators and is subject to considerable debate in the legislative branch of the government at present.

Ouch! CA EXECS HURT BIG-TIME IN SHAREHOLDER CA Stock Awards Suit

This has got to be really painful in light of the recent flurry of high-tech millionaires in the media. Computer Associates International Inc., according to *The Wall Street Journal* "Agreed to settle a high-profile lawsuit stemming from large stock grants to key executives."

Result was that three top execs, including Chairman and CEO Charles Wang, President Sinjay Kumar and Executive VP Russess Artzt, will have to return 4.5 million shares of CA stock to the company. That's a loss (to them) of approximately \$263 million. "Ouch" is probably a mild description of the actual language uttered at the decision handed down

by the Delaware Chancery Court ordering the executives to return the stock to CA.

Suit revolved on a technicality the *WSJ* article said. According to the story, the CA shareholders "Never voted to adjust the number of shares to be awarded in the event of stock splits." Outcome, for the executives was return of 9.5 million of the 20.25 million shares awarded in a special incentive grant.

S3 Selling Chip Business? Talks with Taiwan's VIA May Shift Another Unit

Maybe Intel's CEO Andy Grove has reason to be paranoid with latest rumors that Taiwan's VIA Technologies is in pursuit of S3's chip operations. Paranoid with good reason since VIA appears bound to go head to head with Intel.

Last year, VIA acquired Richardson-based Cyrix and rumors are flying in the CPU media about a VIA-Cyrix MIII series of microprocessors to fuel the flames of competition with Intel. VIA had also pur-



THE VARIETY STORE

chased another x86 CPU concern, IDT, giving them another line of CPU development technology.

This foray into the graphics end of the PC chip follows somewhat poor reviews of the Intel 740 line of graphics processors. S3 has a very good reputation in the graphics arena at both the high and low ends of the business. It is unclear whether such a merger would also include the Diamond Multimedia Division acquired by S3 last year.

On an interesting note (for graphics card aficionados) Nvidia Corporation of Santa Clara, CA, was also mentioned as a contender for acquisition of S3, but refused to comment on such rumors in March.

LINUX AT THE CORE? MANY VERSIONS NOW UNIX CURSE AT HAND?

LINUX has undoubtedly arrived, at least on the Web server milieu. It's also being touted as a possible competitor to Microsoft on the desktop. Lots of people are working hard to assure a real competitive position viz Windows and I'm cheering in the background—while looking at the latest versions of Windows, Win2000 and WinME in the foreground.

I'm fearful that LINUX may trod down the same sordid path forged by Unix of yore. Let me explain. Unix began life as a "university hack" and was the darling of college and university students in the 60's and 70's—just look at the names of most Unix utilities for verification of this history. Problem with Unix was its many, many faces brought forth by a variety of developers/publishers.

It was fast, stable and free (in many cases) for users. It was also easily and quickly modifiable by skilled programmers/hackers to do some truly wonderful tasks. This same flexibility had a price. With each iteration of the OS, it became more "different" than its parents, and more unable to handle applications programs written for other versions of the Unix OS. I remember being told this wasn't really a problem since all you had to do was "recompile the program code for the current system and everything would be fine."

That was the problem—applications program publishers were highly reluctant to release their source code for recompilation, and instead opted for "porting" their programs to the various and sundry Unix platforms at (to PC users) exorbitant prices. Granted, the publishers were looking at a multi-user milieu



and felt that \$5,000 for 10-20 use operation really wasn't that exorbitant when figured on the basis of cost/user.

WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH LINUX?

A lot. LINUX is available from a number of different vendors, each with a different user shell (most to mimic Windows) and each slightly different than the existing peers in the LINUX community. I am already hearing about applications that are LINUX-version specific and this is quite worrisome at this stage. Will LINUX develop itself into the same trap that enveloped Unix? It's a genuine concern from the outside if LINUX is to become a true competitor to Windows at the desktop level.

Old Roads Re-Travelled COREL ANNOUNCES LINUX THAT RUNS Windows Aps

How many of you remember WABI? That was Sun's approach to running Windows applications under Solaris (Sun's version of Unix.) I do remember WABI and sitting in the Sun pavillion at a long-ago Comdex in Las Vegas, NV, playing with the program on a Sun system. It wasn't that impressive, even on a very high speed (then) system.

Corel, a new power in the LINUX community, has announced *GraphOn Bridges* to allow running Windows application software under LINUX. According to Corel, who re-

cently (also) acquired Inprise/Borland, a LINUX server could run native LINUX applications software at the same time users could remotely access "most windows applications" from a Windows NT server via the Corel LINUX OS desktop.

Reagan Andrews

EDITING STANDARDS FOR SUBMISSION TO THE NEWSLETTER OR WEB SITE

These guidelines are provided so that there will be uniformity to our newsletter and Web site. We pride ourselves on our professional appearance and appreciate your contributions to this effort.

Do's

- ☛ Articles and Presentations - in "quotes".
- ☛ Books - *italicize*.
- ☛ Company name - generally not bold or italic.
- ☛ e-mail - should be spelled e-mail, not email or Email.
- ☛ Web - should be spelled Web, not web; same for Web site.
- ☛ Internet should be spelled Internet, not internet. (When in doubt about usage of a particular word or product name, look at PC publications and newsprint for guide.)
- ☛ Menu command sequence - vertical bar separated, not bold or italic, e.g. File | Send To | Mail.

- ☛ Names of presenters and members - **bold**, e.g. SIG Leader **Larry Linson**.
- ☛ Paragraph emphasis - optional bold, e.g. **Coming in April:** We will
- ☛ Product name - generally not bold or italic.
- ☛ url or e-mail address - hyperlink it so that members can click on the link from the newsletter or Web content and go directly to that link. For the newsletter, this applies only to SIG notes. For the remainder of newsletter content, please italicize the address.

Grammar - make us proud.

DON'TS

- ☛ Oversized text. Newsletter will print in Times Roman 11, with subheads in Arial 14.
- ☛ Excessive use of colored text.
- ☛ Excessive use of bold, italics or uppercase for emphasis.

Selected SIG Reports . . .

News and meeting notes of Special Interest Groups
*(Material for this column should be sent to Bill Parker at Error!
 Bookmark not defined. before the PC News monthly deadline listed
 on the inside cover.)*

Access SIG

Updated on: Tuesday, March 28, 2000

Big News! April 15 will be the first meeting of the Microsoft Developers SIGs of the North Texas PC User Group at Microsoft's Addison facility at 5080 Spectrum Drive, Suite 115E, Dallas, TX 75248. Park in the East parking garage and take the Central Elevators to the First floor. We'll be meeting along with Beginning Visual Basic SIG, Advanced Visual Basic SIG, and the newly renamed Application Developer Issues SIG (formerly ActiveX Application Developers). *This meeting on a third Saturday is a one-time deviation – future meetings will be on the second Saturday to avoid conflict with the date of NTPCUG's other SIG meetings.* Please note the change in time: Application Developer Issues will meet at 11:15AM and Access will meet at 12:15PM. If you're a regular in the Microsoft Developers SIGs, you'll appreciate the newfound opportunity to attend some other SIGs that you've missed because they meet at the same time as these.

FROM BILL PARKER, SIG COORDINATOR

The following are changes/additions/needs that the NTPCUG has made to the SIG's. Please notify me of any changes in contact information for existing SIG Leaders.

New SIGs:

- Macromedia Flash** will hold a formative session.
- Application Development Issues** was formerly ActiveX Developers.

New meeting location:

The following SIGs are meeting at a location different from the main NTPCUG site. Check SIG notes for details: **Access, Visual Basic – Beginning, Visual Basic – Advanced, Application Development Issues** (formerly ActiveX).

Groups Looking for Help in Leading their SIGs:

- **Excel/Spreadsheets SIG** [Contact Eb Foerster (214) 357-7602 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 (214) 369-5889 (H), or e-mail to sig_coordinator@ntpcug.org.

SIG LEADER LISTINGS

SIG Coordinator
Bill Parker at: (214) 369-5889 h
sig_coordinator@ntpcug.org

Access

- Larry Linson (817) 481-2350 hM
larry.linson@ntpcug.org
- Tom Browning (214) 692-9784 h
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ACT !

- Jim Thompson..... (817) 261-6159 h
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- Bill Parker..... (214) 369-5889 h
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SIGs

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Genealogist - The Master

Jeri Steele (972) 927-6289 w
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Hardware Solutions

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 Ralph Beaver..... (817) 624-9530 h
 Dennis Wardell (972) 727-3350

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Internet-Advanced

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 Pat Hykkonen (972) 939-9872
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Introduction to the PC

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 John Randall
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Investors

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 Kathryn (Kathy) Kirby
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find yourself doing regularly but infrequently. We'll have a giveaway of valuable prizes in the SIG meeting, as well as a joint drawing for door prizes after all four SIG meetings.

In March: Many thanks to regular attendee and NTPCUG member **Jim Wehe** who discussed how food service ordering and purchasing requirements differ from those of a restaurant or other food vendor, the specifications for a food service application he built for the Richardson Independent School District, first in DOS dBase, but converted to Access 2.0 and, later, to Access 97, and their experiences using that application. Jim's professionally done presentation of a real-world application confirmed what we have often said, that you can point and click your way to a stable, solid application in Access, without writing much, if any, Visual Basic code.

Service Releases from Microsoft: Visit Microsoft's site, <http://support.microsoft.com>, for the final form of Service Release 2B for Access 97 and the Y2K patch for Access 2.0, implementing a form of date windowing. Just in time for this article, Microsoft has released Service Release 1 for Office 2000. You can find information at the same address. Look for Office Update downloads.

It's been a while since we published the Resource information in the *North Texas PC News*, and there are some revisions, so here it is again.

Access Resources: On the Internet, the Access 'meeting place' is the <http://comp.databases.ms-access> newsgroup. It's like an enormous SIG meeting every day for questions and answers. Just like our SIG, there's something for every level of Access user and very knowledgeable participants from all over the world. Some names you might recognize from books, articles, and conferences include Andy Baron, Allen Browne, Ken Getz, and Michael Kaplan, but there are a number of other regulars who donate a great deal of time to providing answers. Visit the newsgroup and you'll soon learn who they are. If I sound a bit proprietary about the newsgroup, maybe it's because, representing a local BBS, I cast one of the affirmative votes for its founding in 1993 and have been participating there ever since it was established.

Strong Suggestion: Read before you post, and, especially, read the daily post with the subject line '!! New Users Look Here First FAQ...' and the date – it tells you about the netiquette, purpose, and topicality of the newsgroup. Particularly don't post or respond to any employment solicitations – you'll hear about it if you do. It also lists some Web sites that are chock-full of Access information. Just in case you don't get to participate in the newsgroup, here's that list:

Available on the Web: Our own North Texas PC User Group Microsoft Access Database SIG now has a Web presence: <http://www.ntmsdevsigs.homestead.com/access/>. It'll have SIG notes, a description of the SIG's purpose and direction, a list of SIG Leaders, and other meeting information. We may add a history of presentations,

SIGs . . .

later, along with example code from SIG meetings. In the meanwhile, you'll continue to find the Images in Access examples now available for both Access 97 and Access 2000, and copies of Larry's reviews of *Programming Microsoft Access 2000*, by Rick Dobson, and *Designing Relational Database Systems*, by Rebecca Riordan, to his Web site at <http://homestead.deja.com/user.accdevel>. Both reviews were originally published here in the *North Texas PC News*. You must have script execution enabled in your browser to view the site and download the material. Look for additional samples and examples in the near future.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Sites:

<http://www.mvps.org/access> -- Dev Ashish's Access Web, the Frequently Asked Questions site for the comp.databases.ms-access newsgroup.

<http://www.hammerdata.com/Newsgrp> -- Erika Yoxall's Access FAQ site

<http://www.trevor.easynet.co.uk/AccFAQ/> -- Trevor Best's Access FAQ site

Other Sources of Access Information:

<http://www.wa.apana.org.au/~abrowne> Alan Browne's site

<http://www.cabinc.net> Rick Dobson's CAB, Inc. site

<http://www.helptalk.com/access> Access assistance

<http://members.ricochet.net/~jfooster/> Joe Foster's Access and VB home page

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/attac-cg/acgsoft.htm> Attac Computer Group's site (Steve Arbaugh)

<http://www.programmingmsaccess.com> Rick Dobson's site for the book "Programming Microsoft Access 2000"

<http://www.ssw.com.au/AccessUG> The Sydney, Australia Microsoft Access User Group

<http://support.microsoft.com/support/> Microsoft's support site

<http://www.trigeminal.com> Michael Kaplan's company, Trigeminal Systems' site, with examples and soapbox

Job Seeker's Sites: In any major search engine, search on "jobs computers database" and you'll find many, many sites. Some will, of course, be more useful to you than others. Three sites of note: <http://www.developerscoop.com> is a site recently brought online by Abbot Cooper, a regular on the comp.databases.ms-access newsgroup, as a service to the developer community – there's no fee either for job seekers or employers. <http://www.wji.com> has an area specializing in with a 'matching service application' to match

JAVA

Don Benish..... (972) 705-9512
dbenish@airmail.net

Lotus Notes & Domino

B.J. Shultz
bjshultz@juno.com

Micrografx (Graphics)

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Microsoft Networking

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Professional MIDI & Audio

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Visual Basic-Beginning

Jim Carter..... (972) 235-5968 h
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Visual Basic- Advanced

Stephen Johnson ... (214) 532-9788
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Michele Wood
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 Sherry Covert
shervinc@ix.netcom.com

WordPerfect / Windows

Cindy Adams..... (817) 481-1300 wM
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 Diane Bentley

SIGs

employer's needs with registered Access people's skills -- free to potential employees or contractors, but there's a fee for recruiters or employers. Another site, suggested to me by Rick Dobson, Access speaker and writer, is <http://www.dmoz.org/computers/consultants/databases> – it is free to both job seekers and those offering jobs. [Ed. Note: See **Jim Hoisington**'s article in this April issue for further insight into job searches via the Internet v. traditional ways.]

Reviews of Selected Sites: Just as a sample, Larry revisited a couple of the "other source" sites. <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/attac-cg/acgsoft.htm>, the Web site of ATTAC Computer Group, has freeware files and code, including an article explaining a previously undocumented method to 'make class modules in library databases visible to other databases'. Steve Arbaugh of ATTAC is a frequent participant in the newsgroup. <http://members.ricochet.net/~jfoster> is the homepage of Joe Foster, who's answered just about as many questions in the newsgroup as anyone. There are sample databases and example code for a number of common, and some not-so-common, tasks that one might want to accomplish with Access. (Joe recently told me he's made some changes and added some information about Visual Basic, too.) Drop in at the newsgroup's Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) site <http://www.mvps.org/access> – the new home of the 'Grandfather of Access FAQ Sites' and you'll find, among many much more impressive entries, an article by Larry on using images in an Access database. Check out the extensive information at Allen Browne's <http://www.wa.apana.org.au/~abrowne> Web site – it is great. Another new addition to our list is the Sydney Australia Access User Group, led by Adam Cogan (whose presentation was extremely well-received on the Office 2000 introductory tour in Australia, according to Allen Browne) at <http://www.ssw.com.au/AccessUG>.

As a bonus, when you enter most any of these sites, you'll find a symbol for the *Access webring* – a webring is a group of sites linked together because of a common interest. You can move to the next site in the ring, skip a site or five, or move backward in the same way. Every site will be different, but all have a strong Access flavor. No, I can't tell you how many sites are in that ring, because it only takes a point-and-click to add another site.

Local Sister Organization: The Metroplex Access Developers (MAD) is a user group of developers, some independent, some contractors, some employees, and some just developing Access applications for their personal use. The group is not associated with the NTPCUG, but there is a great deal of overlap in our membership. MAD meets every second Tuesday, currently meeting at the offices of Bravo Technical Resources at 5550 LBJ Freeway, Suite 420. That's the Southwest corner of LBJ and Montfort – the building name is Auto One. If you are coming from the West, exit at the Dallas Parkway/Tollway exit, stay in the middle lane and stay on the LBJ service road. Meetings begin at 6:00PM for networking, light supper, and socializing, and continue at 7:00PM or thereabouts with a business meeting and presentation on a topic of interest. The MAD Web site is currently in process of being relocated to a new home. If you are definitely going to attend, please drop a note by e-mail, a couple of days in advance, to dbean@webbcooley.com.

Larry Linson

Alpha Five SIG

Updated on: Thursday, March 30, 2000

In April, we will continue with the several month process of building a contact management application from the ground up. Even though many such applications exist, and one comes standard with Alpha Five, this type of application shows many of the design issues that will arise in other applications. This month we will design the tables, and relational structures, for our application. The design issues will include whether to represent multiple people at the same company in a flat or relational structure, how to store and search on multiple "categories" for a contact, and whether to add the capability to show chronological notes for an individual person and also for the company as a whole.

Toward the end of the meeting, we will discuss the business rules (field rules) that should be included in the application. Implementing these rules will be the subject of the May meeting. May will also be the first meeting at the new Freshmen Center location.

Bill Parker

SIGs . . .

Application Development Issues SIG (formerly ActiveX Application Developers)

Updated on: Tuesday, March 28, 2000

First Big News! To better describe the focus of our SIG, we're changing the name. We'll still address ActiveX features, OLE, and ODBC as the occasion arises, but we find we are dealing with a broader set of topics of interest to developers, and we think especially those using Microsoft software tools and technologies. We extend an invitation to all developers to sit in and participate, whatever your choice of tools.

More Big News! The location of our meetings is changing. See the notice under the Access SIG for details.

In April: Plans aren't finalized at the time of writing, but expect an interesting and informative session of interest to developers, presented by Co-Leader **Dan Ogden**.

In March: SIG Leader **Larry Linson** presented Part II and concluded "Introduction to Relational Database". This session covered the practical rules and considerations in implementing a relational database --particularly emphasizing normalization, usually implemented only through Third Normal Form. Again, we used Rebecca Riordan's book, *Designing Relational Database Systems*, as our primary resource. Larry reviewed and recommended it in the *North Texas PC News*. It's published by Microsoft Press and available at well-stocked local bookstores and most of the online booksellers.

The Application Developers Issues SIG addresses issues of developing applications that are of interest to developers using Microsoft software tools and technologies. Many of the topics we cover are of interest to developers using other tools, working in other environments, as well - for example, some such subjects we have covered in the past were "Pros and Cons of Different Types of Contract," "Documenting System Specifications," and Structured "Analysis and System Specification."

Come join us in April, if you're interested in computer application development. We have a great new meeting place, a revised schedule, and a change

of focus for this SIG. We'll do the best we can to make it an interesting and productive hour.

Larry Linson

Dallas Corel SIG

Updated on: Thursday, March 30, 2000

"Presentations that Perform" will be our April meeting's topic, using Corel Presentations 9. **Rose Anne Ellison** will address a joint meeting of Dallas Corel SIG and WordPerfect SIG. As a longtime CorelDRAW user and professional Presentations designer, Rose Anne will bring us new tips and demonstrate how to make effective on-screen presentations with Corel software, including DRAW, PHOTO-PAINT, and PRESENTATIONS. To learn more about the exciting possibilities now available in Presentations 9 (a module found in the Corel WordPerfect 2000 Suite), join us in April.

March in Review

On March 17 we enjoyed a return visit from **Dick Clampitt** of Red River Paper Company. Dick always brings us exciting presentations. He discussed the various papers his company carries. Each attendee received a folder with the new paper samples now available. Dick described each of the samples included, gave us details about the construction of the various papers, and told how paper's weight is determined. He also discussed the latest supplies and equipment available to successfully print your computer files on your desktop color printers. New papers, archival inks, and latest technology printers make lasting photographic results a reality today... no longer just a dream. Can you say "giclee"? Dick told us about many paper industry refinements and advances in the past year. As usual, his presentation proved to be one of our more popular sessions, with many of us staying for up to an hour after his presentation to talk further with him. You can learn more by visiting <http://www.redriverpaper.com>. Dick brought exciting door prizes for the drawing. The lucky winner of the Epson Photo 750 color inkjet printer is **Jim Wehe. Jo Eubank** won the Premier 30-inch Trimmer.

Susan Biggs

Corel Rep Visits Dallas Corel SIG April 12

A special FREE learning session will be offered to Dallas Corel SIG members Wednesday, April 12 in

SIGs

the evening. It will be presented by a Corel Corp. representative. This learning session is part of a tour of User Groups in the Southwest region and Dallas is lucky to be part of it. This session is in addition to our regular April 15 NTPCUG SIG meeting. Starting at 7:00 p.m., it will last one and a half hours. The first hour is presentation; the last half hour is Q & A. The location will be at New Horizons Computer Learning Center, 5151 Beltline Rd, Suite 550, Dallas, TX. CorelDRAW and PHOTO-PAINT will be covered. Send your reservation request to mdreb@litigraph.com. The first 25 will get reservations to attend.

Corel Seminar In Dallas May 2-3

Rick Altman will bring his popular seminar for CorelDRAW users to us in Dallas, TX May 2-3, 2000. Referred to as an off-season traveling seminar, this event is smaller (reservation seating for 45 people) than the full Conference, but packed with information and learning opportunities. Geared for CorelDRAW users low-intermediate and up, it features two days of engaging topics and presentations. For full details and reservations, visit <http://www.altman.com/seminars>. We who have attended his seminars in the past give them rave reviews. Remember when he made a surprise visit to our SIG meeting a few years ago?

CorelWORLD 2000

CorelWORLD 2000 Conference is scheduled for September 10-15, 2000 in San Diego, CA. **Rick Altman** and many additional Corel graphics luminaries will be featured presenters. This conference offers the Corel graphics software user a full course of learning options. Find details at <http://www.altman.com/corelworld>.

Recent Programs at Dallas Corel SIG

Apr/99 – Scanning For Success
 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
 Oct/99 – Filters and Plugins, Part I
 Nov/99 – Photographic editing Plugins
 Dec/99 – Filters and Plugins, Part III

Jan/00 – Masks in PHOTO-PAINT
 Feb/00 – Web Site Design/Development Tips
 Mar/00 - Paper for Inkjet Printer Output

Marsha Drebelbis

DOS / Operating Systems SIG

April will be the last DOS/Operating Systems SIG meeting at BigTown. Gosh I'll be glad to get out of the "Cave." It almost worked OK, but all the background noise and people coming and going were quite distracting.

WindowsME?

That's correct, *Windows Millennium Edition* which is said to be nearing "RC" status as I write this note. According to various media, this will be aimed squarely at the home PC user market and will be the "last" Windows based on the Win9x kernel. It's supposed to be released sometime later—May or June are widely mentioned—this year. If you are interested in seeing a late beta version, be sure to make the Saturday, April 8, MicrosoftXtreme show at the UA Plaza 8 off North Central at Park Lane. (It's actually behind Caruth Plaza and close to CompUSA and Best Buy)

Rumor has it that there's a strong possibility that Microsoft will be handing out *beta 3* versions of WinME at the demonstration. Web chatter is that MS is having difficulty with (some) games which may have delayed the introduction. It will be interesting to hear early reports from members since they will have had a week to install WinME before the April SIG meeting.

Reagan Andrews

Excel / Spreadsheet SIG

Updated on: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

For the April meeting we will try to have a questions only session. So dig up all your unanswered puzzles and bring them to the meeting. I even have a problem for the group. If no questions are forthcoming from the group, I will have some miscellaneous demos.

Watch the Web Site for a possible change in time for the SIG meeting.

SIGs . . .

At the March meeting we discussed Data Consolidation. We covered basic use of the consolidation command found on the Data menu and reviewed a specific example from a SIG member.

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.

Whether you are a beginning or experienced user, bring your problems to the next meeting and we will try to find a solution to your problem. I say 'we' because SIG attendees answer most questions. If your problem is not easy to explain in words at the meeting send me an example of your .xls file to eb.foerster@ntpcug.org. This will give me a chance to work on the problem ahead of time and make for a smoother presentation.

Because of a need to cut back my activities with the NTPCUG, I am looking for someone to take over the leadership of the Excel/Spreadsheet SIG. Please call me or e-mail me at eb.foerster@ntpcug.org if you are interested. I will still be around and am willing to be the assistant leader.

Eb Foerster

Games SIG

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SIG Asst. Leader: Timothy Carmichael,
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This SIG will focus on computer games and how to play them, whether role-playing games (RPG), action games, or educational games. We 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.

Chris Carmichael

The Master Genealogist SIG

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.pioneerinfo.com/tmg/.

Jeri Steele

Internet - Advanced SIG

Updated on: Thursday, March 23, 2000

Our **March 2000** meeting became a two hour Q&A session. **Doug Gorrie, Tom O'Keefe and Pat Hykkonen** managed to keep a good-sized audience throughout the allotted time, talking about Internet security, file associations in Windows,

From month to month, we find ourselves regularly talking about Internet security. This is a BIG deal, and in our March SIG Haps for the Beginning Internet SIG, we talked about two products that do a great job in protecting you from "hackers". These are **ZoneAlarm** (www.zonelabs.com) and **BlackICE** (www.networkice.com). ZoneAlarm is a free product, while BlackIce can be downloaded for \$40. Both are excellent products, easy to install, and we recommend that one of these, or a similar product, be used.

With the advent of higher speed Internet connectivity using **ISDN, ADSL and cable**, users are online and accessible much more of the time. The "Always On" aspect of these connections is like leaving your front door open for long periods, and you may not be close by to review who comes in !!

Curious about how open your system is to access by others? Go to www.grc.com, and follow the links to have your system tested remotely. The results should get your attention!!

If you have specific issues you wish to see presented in our Internet SIGs, please send e-mail to doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org and we will try to cover it.

See you on April 15th !!

Tom O'Keefe, Pat Hykkonen & Doug Gorrie

Introduction to the PC SIG

Updated on: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Our three programs in March were centered around: **PC printers** - their costs, their qualities, the outputs primarily based upon dot imagery; **Networking** - definitions, how they are configured, relationship to you and the Internet; **Neat Software** - useful items we

SIGs

already have, useful software to make things work better, nifty software for fun and relaxing.

As usual, we made use of the Internet through our club's LAN which connects all rooms to **The Beam**, a very high-speed ISP.

The April programs synopsis:

Class 13, 10:00 AM

Multi-Media Software and Hardware

It all starts with a CD player and a little bit of music.

- add a *sound blaster* for cleaner sound
- larger speakers for *boom-boom* base
- add a little *animated images* here and there
- exciting games in 3D imaging
- how about a speakerphone?
- (my video camcorder is already attached)
- do we want a DVD Kit yet?

I was shocked the other day when I entered an ultra-conservative electric power company's Web site and their prompts requested me to add - the 'Shockwave' plug-in.

Our ISPs and their affiliates are all ready to inundate us with weather, news, previews - all in video style.

Class 14, 12:00 Noon

Virus Protection and Utilities

- What is it?
- How bad can it be?
- Can we fix or prevent it?

First we learn and use proper caution. Then investigate

Norton AntiVirus - automatically detects and removes computer virii. Use it to eliminate any known virus from Internet downloads, floppy disks, e-mail attachments, shared files, and more.

McAfee's VirusScan - one of the original protectors from the dreaded bad virus guys.

We have a handful of suppliers and various choices for virus protection software.

Norton Utilities provides problem solvers and controllers. The Norton package typically includes: Norton AntiVirus - automatically detects and removes computer virii, Norton Disk Doctor (NDD), Norton Diagnostics, Rescue, and Unerase. These are fine maintenance and repair tools and for fine-tuning for maximum performance.

Norton Utilities Windows 95 is a valuable aid for correcting Registry problems.

Class 15, 1:00 PM

PCs Into the Next Century

We have witnessed many remarkable achievements in the computer industry during the last three decades. There is little reason to believe that this dynamic evolution in innovative software and hardware will not continue and for a very long time.

Bring your own ideas along with your crystal ball and share your forecast into the future of personal computer and related technologies.

Enjoy.

Your SIG leader would like your help. Would you like to participate in presenting one or more of these programs? How about taking attendance and distributing handouts? Assisting in setting up the first class always requires assistance as we have only five minutes allocated time and an entire computer, additional monitors, and LAN to get ready. Your time and efforts will be appreciated.

Looking forward to our new location and a hefty increase in attendance.

Harold (Spike) Smith

Investors SIG

Updated on: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

The Investors SIG is a general discussion group about different strategies and investing theories with focus on using the computer as a tool to research.

SIGs . . .

In April we plan to discuss standard indicators and Web sites explaining or using technical indicators. There will be a list of Web sites for technical analysis available at the meeting. If you have favorites, please share them with us.

We would like more input on topics anyone would like to hear about!

Dick Richtman and Kathryn (Kathy) Kirby

Java SIG

Updated on: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

We had a good turn out again for my presentation of the Java calculator I created a few years back. I presented the initial incarnation of the 1.0 version that I created originally, showing the graphic portion and the 1.0 event model to those who were not familiar with it. I then showed the later 1.1 reincarnation and the differences to the original model. I also showed the back end classes that actually do the work for the calculator

Next month will be our last at the BigTown facility, as we are moving to Lake Highlands High School in North Dallas. I plan to show the 1.2 reincarnation of the calculator and describe swing functions that were added to it. If there is time we may try to present explanation of the PATH and CLASSPATH settings for various OS platforms. I suspect that we will not have time and that will be the first meeting in the new facility in May.

Don Benish

Macromedia Flash SIG

Updated on: Thursday, March 30, 2000

Have you been 'FLASH'ed on the Web lately?

Macromedia 'FLASH'ed, that is...

Come and see why FLASH is considered by all who have experienced it to be the best interactive and the most dynamic Web animation tool out on the market today!

What is Flash, you ask

Answer 1: (Techno Geek Version 1.0a)
FLASH is a vector-based, time-sinked, self-calibrating, auto-scaling, music integrating, auto-'tween'-ing, animation development tool geared toward producing dynamic 'kick-ass' Web content

that can be transmitted from server to ANY platform the end user may be using, without bottle-necking the bandwidth on the Internet.

Answer 2: (Everyman[woman]'s Version)

FLASH is THE solution for producing and delivering high-impact Web sites.

Who Uses Flash?

Answer 1: (Blunt and Straightup)

Professional Web developers and true webmasters.

Answer2: (Truthfully)

Anyone who is not put off by an application tool with a learning curve as steep as a vertical cliff. If that scares you, do not despair... That is why this SIG is developed to introduce to you the simplified steps of learning how to use FLASH. So, you too can create butt-kicking, name-taking, "you-can-stop-drooling-on-my-browser" type of Web sites!

Therefore, if you are interested in learning about Macromedia FLASH, come join us for a formative meeting of the group. We will discuss (in general) the expectations and what can be gained for creating this special SIG.

David Chien

Microsoft Networking SIG

Updated on: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

In April, SIG co-leader **Paul Sloane** will give a presentation on his experience implementing Microsoft Proxy Server for his home office network.

Don't forget to arrive early to be eligible for the software freebies!

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

Upcoming Schedule:

- May - Presentation on Black Ice for home PC security
- June - Win2K demo and discussion
- July - Continuation of Win2K demos and discussions

SIGs

- August - Open for suggestions (email gil.brand@ntpcug.org):

NT Security, NT Monitoring, etc.

Previous meetings:

March, 2000

In March, we postponed the Microsoft Proxy Server presentation to devote much of the meeting to discussions on the upcoming move of the User Group to a new facility, the Freshman Center at Lake Highlands High School. The remainder of the time was given to Q&A. See the Usr Group Web site, <http://www.ntpcug.org> for more information on the new facility.

February, 2000

In February, SIG member Jim Thompson gave a demo of a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection. We connected the demo system in Room 'B' (running W98) to the server at one of his clients (running NT4 Server) located on the Internet.

Our connection was via the high-speed satellite link provided by the Beam, one of our User Group sponsors. Check out their products at www.TheBeam.com.

January, 2000

Paul Sloane gave a presentation on the relative advantages and disadvantages of 'Upgrading from WinNT to Win2K, or Clean Install Win2K'.

Click [here](#) to view the related handouts. [Ed. Note: Seem to be experiencing technical difficulties on this one. Please check out the SIG site for a direct link.]

December, 1999

We held a round table discussion on 'Windows PC Vulnerability Assessment and Patch Implementation'. Many of the attendees have had no significant problems with viruses or system attacks, and therefore take little or no preventive action.

The most commonly mentioned steps were:

Keep virus definitions updated (at least twice a week);

Subscribe to security newsletters (such as Microsoft, NT BugTraq);

Obtain software to detect a port-scanning attack on your system (e.g., Black Ice).

November, 1999

Kathy Schmitt and Michael Bentley of JC Penney gave a presentation on the Windows NT Resource Kit. Now that you know everything about these handy tools, you can really cause problems for your company NT administrator! Click [here](#) to see the presentation.

October 1999

At the October meeting, Allen Childress of Microsoft gave a presentation on 'Choosing the Right Operating System', a comparison of Windows 98, Windows 2000, and Windows CE operating systems. See the SIG area on our Web site (www.ntpcug.org) for a copy of the presentation.

September 1999

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.

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 email to

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

SIGs . . .

security; NT Resource Kit tools; SMS; MTS; NT performance monitoring.

January-April 1999: No meetings

Purpose of the SIG:

To technically showcase Microsoft Networking products, including Windows 2000, Windows NT Server/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

Our SIG focuses on the variety of uses of computers by both professional and amateur musicians and recording engineers.

MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) has been around since before the IBM PC started supporting it, and is used by many musicians to control and synchronize multi-instrument musical performances. The PC can use MIDI, connected to electronic keyboards, synthesizers and a host of other devices, to compose and play music, produce musical scores, and teach students how to play keyboards and other musical instruments.

Audio engineers use computers to record and edit live musical performances, restore, clean up, and improve the sonics of older recording such as LPs, cassettes, 8-track, reel to reel, and wire recorders; compile and arrange different recordings, and record live or edited performances and transcriptions onto CD, DAT, or DVD. We examine the entire range of audio engineering from microphone selection and placement through the entire chain of recording to DAT or computer hard drive, transcription to computer hard drive from other recording formats, digital editing, and CD or DVD burning or mastering for commercial production.

We discuss hardware, software, interfaces, interconnects, signal cabling, controllers, instruments, synthesizers, and all related devices, from amateur to professional levels. Come and share your experiences and learn more about these two interrelated fields of MIDI and Professional Audio.

J. Alan Lummus

Visual Basic - Advanced SIG

Updated on: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Big News! The location of our meetings is changing. See the notice under the Access SIG for details.

During the **March** meeting of the Advanced Visual Basic SIG, I continued with my discussion on Class Modules. In the **January** meeting I showed several reasons why you would want to use a Class Module. In **February** I showed you several ways of creating and

SIGs

maintaining then. I discussed the manual method, the Class Builder Wizard, and my own wizard implemented as a Visual Basic Add-in.

Last month I had the third (but not last) installment of Class Modules. I demonstrated several real world uses for Class Modules. I showed several applications that I have written and how Class Modules were used in those applications.

Some Class Modules are universal (used in several, if not all, applications), and some are specific to an application, and I addressed the differences. I also demonstrated the use of a Class Library (DLL).

At the April meeting we will have a guest speaker, Clint Carter the President of **CodeAvionics Software Corporation** (<http://www.CodeAvionics>) will have a presentation on an add-in that his company has for Visual Basic. I have previewed the add-in and it has some interesting features. He will be giving away two (2) copies of the add-in as prizes.

You can e-mail me at stephenj@flash.net. If you have an immediate problem, you can call me at 214-532-9788; however, your best bet is via e-mail. You can get access to my Web site by entering the address www.flash.net/~stephenj/ntpcug from your browser.

I am looking forward to seeing you at the meetings.

Stephen Johnson

Visual Basic - Beginning SIG

Updated on: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Big News! The location of our meetings is changing. See the notice under the Access SIG for details.

The April 15, 2000 meeting of the Beginning Visual Basic SIG will be held at a new location as announced at our March 2000 meeting. For the foreseeable future, we will be meeting at the facilities of Microsoft located at 5080 Spectrum Drive in Addison, Texas. For further information on the facilities and a map to get to these facilities, please visit the www.ntmsdevsigs.homestead.com Web site.

The topic for this month's meeting will be "An Introduction to Class Modules." Stephen Johnson, Leader of the Advanced Visual Basic SIG, has been having some great sessions on Class Modules since January and I thought a discussion of Class modules from the beginning would be helpful. I will be using

the sample code from Gary Cornell's book, *Visual Basic 6 from the Ground Up*, starting on page 486 and going through page 494.

Last month we had our semi-annual session on "Visual Basic for Beginners Only." It was very well attended. We will repeat this session in August 2000.

Bring your questions on Beginning Visual Basic to our meeting beginning at 9:00 AM on Saturday, April 15, 2000 at the Microsoft facilities. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Jim Carter

Word for Windows

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.netcom.com)

WordPerfect for Windows SIG

See Dallas Corel SIG notes for details of the April meeting.

Cindy Adams

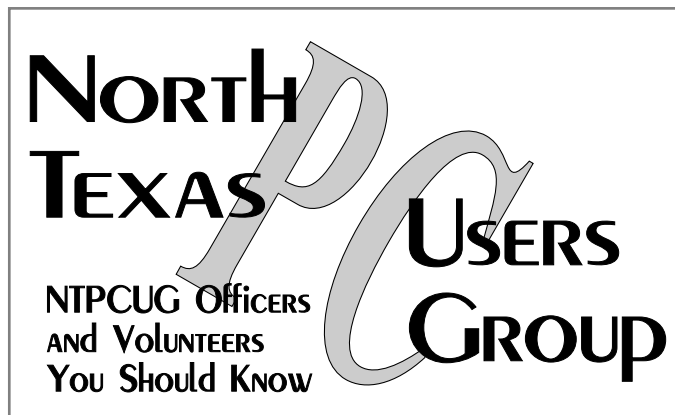
North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

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.



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www.dfwxchange.com

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Password problems?

Call Doug Gorrie at..... (214) 464-4568

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Home Page: ntpcug.org

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