North Texas

North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

NTPCUG

PC NEWS

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

DEC. 6, 1924 — 5cts. THE COPY

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CHRISTMAS

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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CHRISTMAS

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
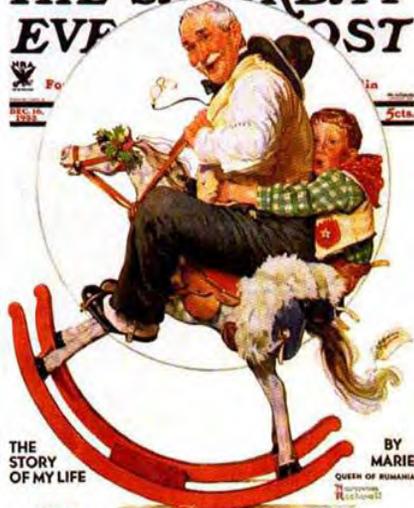
THE STORY OF MY LIFE

BY MARIE
QUEEN OF RUMANIA

Merry Christmas

Online Edition

December 2001

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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 9.0, Arts & Letters Express 6.01, Adobe Photoshop 4.01, Microsoft Publisher 2000* and *Adobe Acrobat 4.01* Principal typefaces include: Times, Palatino, Helvetica, A&L Cafe, French Vogue, and Lithos.

D E A D L I N E
Copy deadline for December
North Texas PC NEWS:
Friday, November 30, 2001

Meeting Dates:

December 15, 3rd Saturday

2002
January 19, 3rd Saturday
February 16, 3rd Saturday

NT ✦ PCUG
NORTH TEXAS PC USERS GROUP, INC

In This Issue...

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

DECEMBER 15 MAIN PROGRAM

NORTH LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BUILDING A

10:00 AM

"Meet the "Xbox Video Game System"

Heard about Xbox? Want to find out what makes it unique? Explore the amazing new world of Xbox through this interactive presentation to be held in December. So just what can you do with the Xbox gaming system? Look below and click on the links to view some of the games that are available now!

Amped *http://www.xboxgamers.com/games/a/amped/* Freestyle Snowboarding..
Madden NFL 2002 *http://www.xboxgamers.com/games/m/madden/index.shtml*
Test A Fuzzle *http://www.vykkerslabs.com/*
Project Gotham Racing *http://www.xboxgamers.com/games/g/gotham/*
Shrek *http://www.xboxgaming.com/exclusives/SHR20OCT/index.asp*
ProSkater. *http://www.xboxgaming.com/previews/tonyhawk2/*

December Focus SIG is Web Design – Advanced which will have a formative meeting in December. This new SIG is a follow-on to the previous JAVA SIG

DECEMBER 15

SIGs SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP MEETING SCHEDULE

Time	SIG
8:00	Microsoft Networking
	Hardware Solutions
	Excel/Spreadsheets
	The Master Genealogist (8:30)
9:00	Communications
	DOS/Disk Operating Systems
	Introduction to the PC
	Alpha Five
	Dallas Corel
	Microsoft Word
	The Master Genealogist (continued)
10:00	Main Presentation – Microsoft XBox Gameing System
	Internet - Beginning
	Professional MIDI & Audio
	Introduction to the PC
	Web Content Committee
	Dallas Corel (continued)
	WordPerfect for Windows
	The Master Genealogist (continued)

Time	SIG
11:00	Internet – Advanced
	Web Design - Basics
	Professional MIDI & Audio (continued)
	Introduction to the PC
	Quicken
	Linux
	WordPerfect for Windows (continued)
12:00	NTPCUG Business Meeting
	Investors
	Microsoft FrontPage
	Web Design - Advanced (New SIG)
1:00	e-Commerce

SIG meetings are listed by time for the December 15 meeting. Times may change, and members are advised to check the NTPCUG Web site for latest listings. Room locations will be posted on the day of the meeting.

The following SIGs are meeting at separate locations, and are not included in the schedule above. Check the SIG notes for time and location.

Meets on 12/08
 Access
 Application Developers Issues
 Visual BASIC - Advanced
 Visual BASIC - Beginning

Swap Meet a Success

Our first Swap Meet had great participation, and the bidding for some items created a good deal of excitement. The most hotly-contested item, a 21" IBM monitor, ended up going to **Neil Cotten** for about ^1,600,000 UG's! This was a great way to 'redistribute' quite a bit of computer gear, and provide an opportunity for more social interaction among Club members. Interest has been expressed in the Club having more social functions. We will be on the lookout for good opportunities, and welcome suggestions from all of you.

The Swap Meet was also a good opportunity to reintroduce the Club to former members that had become inactive. With our postcard mailing to 1,600 former members and extra emails to current members, both member and visitor atten-

Prez Sez
Bill Parker

dance was up quite a bit. I hope that trend continues.

New Web SIG

This month the Web Design – Advanced SIG is being added to complement the other Web development SIGs. This SIG will expand on the topics covered by the previous Java SIG, and be a great resource for those that want to create more dynamic Web sites.

The NTPCUG Web site is a dynamic Web site, with content that is updated by SIG leaders and others whenever they want. In the past, members of the Java SIG were a big help in building the advanced parts of the User Group Web site. Hopefully the Web Design – Advanced SIG can help make our site even better!

As a side note, the Web site is always evolving. Pictures of most of the officers have just been added to the Contact Us page. If you don't know some of the officers, you can now see a picture of them. Take a moment at the meetings to speak to one of the officers and give your feedback and suggestions for improving the Club.

Elections

Elections for the NTPCUG Board of Directors will be held at the January meeting. Anyone that is interested in being on the ballot for the board should contact President-Elect **Vincent Gaines**,

Prez Sez... Ctd.

vincent.gaines@ntpcug.org. The January newsletter will contain the slate of candidates, and ballots will be cast at the January meeting. These are the people that guide the Club through the year. It is certainly a time commitment, but if you feel the Club has been of benefit to you over the years, consider giving something back by participating in a leadership capacity.

There are also many jobs that do not require running for office. Areas like membership, publicity, Web site, SIGs, etc. can always use help from those willing to improve the quality of the User Group. Please help us grow and improve the Club, for the benefit of all of us.

See you at the meeting!

Bill.

Whew -The 2001 Swap Meet Is History

NTPCUG
& Special Events

Well our first annual Swap Meet went off pretty well. I want to thank all of you that participated either as a Donor or a Bidder or both. I also want to thank all of the members that volunteered their assistance in the Swap Meet. My 'Volunteer of Mention' for the 2001 Swap Meet is **Art Brunson**. Art showed up right after 8 AM and offered to help out for a couple of hours. Next thing I knew, he showed up in the halls while I was handing out Ugs with the navigation signs. He said he figured they ought to be put out. And guess what, he was still there helping at the closing. He thought he should pick up the navigation signs, since he knew where they all were. Another great big thanks to Art. Your board members all were there to help out and greatly appreciated by me.

If you attended the Meet but didn't stay till the last dog was hung, you missed the most heated moments of the bidding. There were several hot contests during the show, but the best was last in the bidding for the 21 inch monitor that was donated by the NTPCUG. When the bidding got down at the end it was **John McNeil** and **Neil Cotton** going head to head. The final winner was Neil Cotton.

My biggest disappointment was that we didn't have as many visitors as I'd hoped for. The Board of Directors critiqued oour performance and are documenting our results for reference at the 2002 Swap Meet. One of the areas of concern the closing procedures. We were just understaffed. That will be different next year. Another concerns is that while we got a fair set of numbers, it could be improved on. We know that at least 100 members got Ugs. We know that we passed out less than 1000 packets of Ugs. We were prepared to hand out 2000 packets and 500 treasury notes worth a packet of Ugs. We know that at least 15 different Donors made contributions. And finally, we know that all of

the contributions found a new home. We did not have to haul away anything.

Let's plan on making the 2002 Swap Meet even bigger and more fun than ever.

Martin Hellar

Newsletter Exchange

Sixteen additional newsletters were received at the November meeting. Some are dated September, some October, and some December. These have been indexed and are available for checkout by members at the December meeting.

In the past when all newsletters were bound into a book for each month, normal practice was to make the bound books available two months late to allow receipt of all newsletters for that month. Now you can check out books within one week of receipt.

Articles within the most recent newsletters of possible interest include:

1) Phoenix, AZ, 10-2001
   a. Page 16, Digital Cameras, Part 2
   b. Page 22One Email Address for Life

2) Los Angeles, CA, 11-2002
   a. Page 7, Product Review of Flip Album 4.0

3) Brookeville, MD, 11-2001
   a. Page 7, APCUG Fall Conference
   b. Page 12, Section 508 Compliance (Web
          Page Design)

4) Tacoma, WA, 11-2001
   a. Page 2, Personalizing Quicken

If a separate table can be set up for resources, we will use the honor system for members to log any newsletters they check out. The newest newsletters will be spread out on the table.

In addition, those who arrive early may take a copy of an index of articles published this year. The list will be arranged by subject, user group, month, and article page number.

Jim Wehe

The Best Kept Secret...

How many of you discovered the Users Group quite by accident?

One member happened onto Infomart during one of our Saturday meetings and stopped by the Information Booth to find out what was going on. That was some years ago and he has enjoyed his membership ever since. He lives in both Dallas and New York, but plans his schedule around our meeting dates as he says there is nothing like it in New York. He has followed the NTPCUG to BigTown, LHFC and to NorthLake Community College.

That's a compliment we can be proud of!

Learning and sharing information about computers is fun and enriching. Tell your friends, family and co-workers about us. Stop by the Information Booth and pick up some brochures to pass along to those interested.

NTPCUG Members are really anxious to see the latest Newsletter Exchange issues...

Spam Sucks, and what to do about it !!

(Part 3 of 3)

Over the last two months, I have provided my own perspective about spam. Avoiding and dealing with it demands a level of understanding, especially if you are wanting to report the spammer to his provider.

In October, I talked about SPAM in general – what it is, how it finds its way to you, ways to reduce the amount you get, and more. I even talked about how you *may* have to change your e-mail address to get rid if it.

In November, after deciding we would rather fight than have to switch our e-mail address, we examined how to extract and analyze e-mail headers. The headers show you the flow of the e-mail from originator (spammer) to recipient (you). One factor to remember is that spammers will frequently forge some of the header information, so your analysis has to consider the validity of header data as well.

Our goal here is to forward a copy of the spam AND its headers to the originating ISP. If we are not certain about whether lines in the headers are forged, we will send the spam report to *multiple* ISPs and Postmasters, and let them sort it out who is responsible. But the closer we are to the correct source, the more useful our time in making the report.

NTPCUG INTERNET TIPS
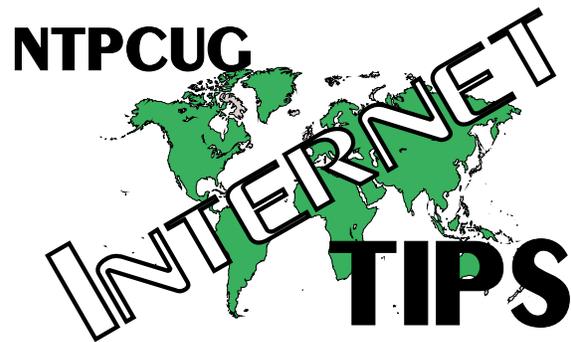
This month, we will address how to find the originating ISP and send him a spam complaint. We will also examine a service called SpamCop that does all this leg work for you, and in greater detail and in a much shorter time than you and I can.

A Review

Last month, we examined the headers within a couple of messages. We found the headers in a spam message and copied them into the Windows clipboard. We tested the "oldest" IP addresses in the headers using NSLOOKUP to determine who the owning host server is. This also helped us discard header entries that were forged, and get to the REAL detail.

As we left off in November, we had analyzed the headers of a message, run NSLOOKUP on

Spam Sucks!... Ctd.

several IP addresses to (hopefully) determine the originating host address and IP address, and are now ready to create our spam report to the ISP.

Domain & IP Registration

Before we continue, I should point out that NSLOOKUP may not always give you a useful answer. Not every IP address will resolve to a host name. In such circumstances, you may have to run the IP address through the appropriate name registration service.

There are three different organizations that administer the IP address space. These are:

- ❦ ARIN *http://www.arin.net/*– American Registry for Internet Numbers
- ❦ RIPE *http://www.ripe.net/* - Réseaux IP Européens (Europe, Middle East, and parts of Africa and Asia)
- ❦ APNIC *http://www.apnic.com/* - Asia Pacific Network Information Centre

An IP search at ARIN will show you information about the organization owning the IP, and a reference to its coordinator. If the IP is outside North America, ARIN may refer you to RIPE or APNIC. In such cases, RIPE or APNIC will give you the most complete results.

Clicking on the link at the Coordinator portion of the display may yield additional information. In any case, you are looking for the owner's domain, and if available, a contact e-mail address. Record this information.

There are additional tools that can make the above searches easier. Two that receive good reports are , and the Whois function at . With these, you do not have to be concerned about which IP administrator to use (ARIN,

RIPE, APNIC). The tool does the work for you.

Time to Complain

Using the domain name(s) discovered above, it is time to complain.

There are two items that need to be e-mailed to the spam originator's domain – the spam message itself, and the headers from within the e-mail you originally received. The easiest way to start is by opening the spam message, find the headers as described last month, and copy them into the Windows clipboard. Now, back out of the headers, and click "Forward" to put the spam message into a new outgoing message. Now, use the Paste command (or Ctrl-V) to insert the headers from the Clipboard *at the beginning of the message*, prior to the spam itself. It is important to leave a single blank line between the headers and the spam.

Each domain processing e-mail SHOULD establish an ABUSE mailbox to receive spam complaints. If there is no ABUSE box, there should be one for POSTMASTER. Since it is not obvious which one is present, I send to both, just to be sure. As a last resort, you can use any coordinator e-mail addresses you secured in the searches above. Whatever addresses you use, enter them in the TO line and send it on its way. With luck, the ISP hosting the spammer will receive your complaint and act on it.

You may consider placing a short comment at the beginning of the message before pressing the SEND button. That message may indicate that you are sending spam that you *believe* originated from one of their clients. However, remember that you *really don't know for a fact* that the originator started there. Forged headers and IP addresses can make anyone look guilty. Your

e-mail is requesting *assistance*, so be polite.

SpamCop

Going through the above process for every spam can be time consuming, and can be daunting to the beginner and expert alike. One site that eases this chore is , at spamcop.net. SpamCop provides a window into which you insert the headers and the spam, then it does the analyzation for you. Once complete, a quick click sends the complaint on its way to the one or more ISPs considered as the likely hosts. It even masks your own e-mail address to better ensure you do not get *new* spam as a result of your complaint.

SpamCop is free to use, but a short delay is built-in for non-members as a minor incentive to join. Joining does cost a little bit of money (less than $2.00), but speeds up the process. It also pays the owner a few bucks for a job well done.

The analysis that SpamCop employs can be reviewed before sending the complaint. I believe you will find this detail interesting and educational. Even if you send the e-mails yourself, I suggest trying SpamCop just to see if your results match up to theirs.

In Closing

Having covered spam in significant detail in these past three issues, I have to say that my own spam has increased recently to about 8 per day. While SpamCop speeds up my complaints, I have to wonder if spammers can determine my address from any of them. Complaining may have its drawbacks.

NTPCUG INTERNET TIPS
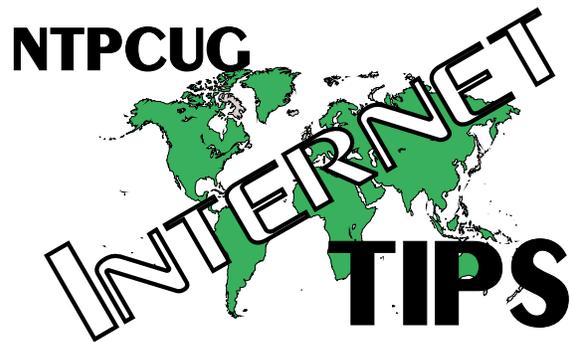
I have noted that several spam e-mails contain what appear to be extraneous characters in the subject line, to the far right. Do these characters identify me personally? If these remain in a spam complaint, does their presence signify that I am a "good" prospect? I honestly don't know, but I now remove those characters from any spam report.

Lastly, I no longer send out spam complaints if the spam originated in Taiwan, Korea or China. Simply put, I view these countries as spam havens, and no one there (in my opinion) will take my name *off* a spam list. I can only hurt myself by complaining there. I suggest you consider doing the same.

Good luck avoiding spam.

Doug Gorrie

!!! Mark Your Calendar !!!

Future Newsletter Deadlines and Meeting Dates

Please Note: The November meeting will be on November 17at Northlake.

Our November and December main meeting [presentations) and most SIGs] will be at North Lake on the **third Saturday** of each month.

The **newsletter deadline** each month will be **fifteen days before** the main meeting. See the schedule below for a listing of those dates.

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

High Speed Wireless Internet!

Newsletter Deadline	Meeting Date
November 30	December 15 3rd Sat.)
January 4	January 19 3rd Sat.)
February 1	February 16 3rd Sat.)

Off-Site SIGs

The North Texas Microsoft Developers SIGs Beginning Visual Basic, Advanced Visual Basic, Access, and Application Developers Issues SIGs) will meet the second Saturday of each month at Microsoft Corporation's South Central District office at 5080 Spectrum Drive, Suite 115E in Dallas.

Up-to-date Information

Make it a habit to check our Web site at *ntpcug.org* for any last minute changes. Keep informed through our Web site and newsletter for all current developments.

Every Member
NTPCUG
Get a New Member

Safari So Goody

A wealthy man decided to go on a safari in Africa. He took his faithful pet dog along for company. One day the dog starts chasing butterflies and before long he discovers that he is lost. So, wandering about he notices a leopard heading rapidly in his direction with the obvious intention of having lunch.

The dog thinks, "Boyo, I'm in deep doo doo now." (He was an Irish setter).... Then he noticed some bones on the ground close by, and immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat.

Just as the leopard is about to leap, the dog exclaims loudly, "Man, that was one delicious leopard. I wonder if there are any more around here?" Hearing this the leopard halts his attack in mid stride, as a look of terror comes over him, and slinks away into the trees. "Whew", says the leopard. "That was close. That dog nearly had me."

Meanwhile, a monkey who had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the leopard. So, off he goes. But the dog saw him heading after the leopard with great speed, and figured that something must be up. The monkey soon catches up with the leopard, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the leopard. The cat is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Here monkey, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine."

Now the dog sees the leopard coming with the monkey on his back, and thinks," What am I going to do now?" But instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers pretending he hasn't seen them yet.

And just when they get close enough to hear, the dog says, "Where's that monkey. I just can never trust him. I sent him off half an hour ago to bring me another leopard, and he's still not back!!"

****

Idiots in Food Service

My daughter went to a local Taco Bell and ordered a taco. She asked the individual behind the counter for "minimal lettuce." He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg.

Idiots at the Airport

I was at the airport, checking in at the gate, when the airport employee asked, "Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?" I said, "If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?" He smiled and nodded knowingly, "That's why we ask."

Idiots in Management

At a good-bye lunch for an old and dear co-worker who is leaving the company due to "downsizing" our manager spoke up and said, "This is fun. We should have lunch like this more often." Not another word was spoken. We just looked at each other like deer staring into the headlights of an approaching truck.

Humor Line

The Other Side of the Gates—or 'No Good Deed Ever Goes Long Unpunished'

While we are all used to descriptions of Microsoft and Bill Gates, et al, as harbingers of the *Evil Empire* and despicable predators poised to consume, ravish and otherwise abuse the unwary and defenseless personal computer users (mostly media hype by ignorant, but pretty 'reporters' with perfect teeth and hair), there's another side the media pretty well ignores. Bill and Melinda (a Dallas native) Gates are major contributors to a number of charitable efforts.

'Major' here means in excess of $10 billion, more than 10% of their net worth and a figure that is usually approached only on death of the donors.

Media typically only reports this when there's some controversy involved in the charitable foundation founded by Bill Gates and his wife. Latest episode has to do with the foundation's efforts to increase availability and effectiveness of immunizations for children in extremely poor, third world countries. Recent (today, Monday, December 3, 2001) article in *The Wall Street Journal* was an excellent example of this tendency on the part of *other* media.

Critics are decrying the foundation's "hard-ball" practice of demanding accountability on the part of the receiving countries/nations concerning how the money is actually spent. Implication is that the foundation is 'cold and heartless.'

Granted, there are two sides to this issue. Many of the coun-

tries involved are simply not accustomed to the concept of accountability and not terribly familiar with the process the foundation requests in return for their grants. However, I feel the Gates Foundation is showing appropriate concern with the use of the monies they disperse and should be encouraged to continue to do so.

A really interesting parallel is an article in the same *WSJ* issue describing how Sudan "ripped-off" terror-master Osama bin Laden in the 1990's with a vivid depiction of how large sums of money could 'vanish' in such a bureaucratic maze. I would assume the Gates Foundation is well aware of such manipulations and is guarding against siphoning off the funds to the point that the intended targets are left without benefits.

The Variety Store

A personal view of the PC industry, new hardware operating systems, software and applications

by Reagan Andrews

Microsoft Has Same Problem Good Settlement Draws Fire

Microsoft, while attempting to arrive at some reasonable settlement with a number of states' suits, acquired some very strident and ill-directed criticism instead. Crux of the proposed settlement was approximately $1 billion in software, refurbished computers, support and training for students and instructors in 12,500 impoverished schools around the nation.

When I read about this effort, I applauded the proposed settlement for a number of reasons. Even some of the suing attorneys felt this was a good deal for both the kids and the country. Several remarked that disbursement from a similar settlement with users would amount to checks from Microsoft for $10 or less to users.

My feelings were that 'refurbished' PC's and software would be ideal—refurbished PC's wouldn't end up in a landfill, would be more than adequate for teaching purposes (what kid needs a 2GHz CPU machine to learn the rudiments of computer use?) and, combined with support and teaching would pose a 'Win-Win' solution for the states involved.

Boy! Was I wrong.

First to scream in agony was Apple. Steve Jobs, Apple's 'Messiah,' was apparently enraged that Apple's near *monopoly* (that's probably past tense since I've seen a pretty even mix in local schools) in the school rooms around the country might be threatened by this deal. I guess it's 'OK' for Apple to have a near monopoly, but not Microsoft?

Jobs was barely ahead of a number of AG's (attorneys general) in condemnation of the proposed settlement. The AG's are understandable—since they are all politicians, elected officials, mostly looking forward to good publicity from a "hard-ball" Microsoft settlement that will boost their chances for election to even higher, more profitable offices.

My problem is with Jobs and Apple. (I've tried to lay off of Apple in the last several columns, but this foray cannot be ignored.) Apple acts just as if they were a 'monopoly.' I was somewhat surprised when Apple was allowed to 'pull-the-plug' on competing machines by refusing to license Apple's OS. This fell after assuring users there would be competing hardware after the IBM/Motorola *Power PC* CPU was developed and really fast Macintoshes were available from non-Apple vendors.

DOJ ignored this move, but I remembered when the Macintosh was originally released. One of the reasons I discounted the Mac when it was introduced (with really terrific commercials at the Super Bowl extravaganza) in 1984 was Apple's 'new' policy stating that opening the Macintosh case would void the machine's warranty. Even IBM didn't have this kind of chutzpah when the PC was introduced.

The original Mac was delivered with just enough memory (DRAM) to run the operating system and not much else. Mac users knew this, but were faced with a dilemma—they could go to an authorized dealer and pay approximately three times the street price for memory, or could void their warranty and save several $100's by adding the memory themselves. Was this 'policy' somewhat self-serving? You bet.

It also caused a lot of former Apple fans to reconsider the PC which was quite a bit less expensive than the Macintosh and 'vote' with their pocketbooks.

Meanwhile, Proposed Microsoft - DOJ Settlement is on Back Burner as MS Foes Decry the DOJ Failure to Punish Microsoft

This thing may take more years to settle than I have to write this column. I won't go into details of the proposed settlement of the Microsoft antitrust case since it has been more than adequately described in all sorts of media with all the 'pros & cons' over the past month.

Important aspect here is the players—and how their political plans hinge on public perceptions of the agreement. Here's a small tip: Look at the announced political races at the state and national level in the next four years and see how many of the state AG's are running for higher offices on the basis of the 'punishment' of Microsoft for their 'dastardly deeds' until reigned in by (them) and the DOJ.

I still feel that any state suit brought will have much difficulty at the 'harm' level, i.e., proving that MS actually caused the state's citizens financial harm as a result of the Windows 'monopoly.' However, you never can tell what a 'jury of peers' (folks who don't have anything better to do with their lives than listen to weeks or months of the

The Variety Store

driest testimony I can imagine) will decide, especially given that the average citizen has only a very sketchy idea of the reality of the OS software business.

It should be interesting to watch unfold—with bets that the 'Lie Quotient' on the part of 'expert witnesses' called by at least one or both sides will be firmly based on guesses and fantasies of some sort of ideal economic universe.

Back to CPU basics as AMD rolls out the 'XP' —Shades of Cyrix

AMD played another card in the heated CPU race last month and brought me back to memories of a similar move by Cyrix in their battle with Intel over CPU speeds in the 1990's. Although I agree with AMD's logic, I'm not too sure the 'XP' campaign will be successful.

It all boils down to how the user interprets "speed" at the CPU level. I'll use the IBM/ Motorola *Power PC* CPU as an example—which does a lot of work per CPU cycle and is usually "faster" in graphical manipulations than the competing Intel *Pentium 4* CPU's even though the Pentiums "look" at least twice as "fast" as the Power PC CPU's. That's the crux of the real logic, the amount of work the CPU does per cycle, not the raw CPU cycle speed, and one of the reasons that the Macintosh 'G' series are a preferred platform for graphical designers.

In this case, the AMD 'XP' CPU's actually do somewhat

more work per cycle than the Intel Pentium 4 CPU's. Intel touts the raw speed of their CPU's, i.e., the 2 GHz CPU's that are (currently) top of the Intel CPU line. AMD also downplays the actual speed comparisons, calling their top of the line (today) the 'XP 1900' while the CPU itself is actually somewhat "faster" than the Intel CPU's rated at 2 GHz in a number of real world test suites. Fact that the AMD CPU's are selling for much less than the Intel CPU's is another powerful factor here as well.

Cyrix, former Richardson, TX, -based CPU design house attempted the same bit of reality in the 1990's, with less than stellar success. This column, by the way, is being typed on a '300 MHz Cyrix M II' powered machine that actually clocks at 266 MHz. It's still much faster than I type and a bit of 'overkill' for simple word processing. Cyrix is now owned by VIA Technologies (Taiwan) who purchased Cyrix from National Semiconductor some time ago and is doing quite well with the line in Europe and Asia.

Speaking of Transistors & CPU's IBM, Intel and AMD All will be Smaller, Faster and less 'Hungry'

Moore's Law may hold for another decade in spite of claims to the contrary in the recent past. Gordon Moore, Intel's co-founder stated that CPU's would double in density (and power) every 18 months 1965. What that means is that transistors have to become increasingly smaller and faster. That's both good and bad.

It's good because smaller transistors will/should consume less current to operate and therefore produce less waste heat (the great CPU killer) thus allowing faster clock rates. It was seen as 'bad' because folks believed that CPU trace widths necessary to produce smaller transistors were approaching a physical limit.

Currently, CPU vendors have been designing units for much lower operating voltages than were traditional (five volts) in the past in order to reduce heating. This works well until the voltage becomes so low that "noise" is increasingly difficult to distinguish from valid signal states. Part of the problem is the silicone substrate and the 0.7 volt barrier inherent to this material. Germanium with a 0.3 volt barrier was better, but Germanium was dropped from (most) use because it doesn't tolerate heat nearly as well as silicone.

Don't even think about gallium arsenide which is highly toxic and both very difficult and brutally expensive to work with at this point.

All three major CPU vendors, IBM, Intel and AMD announced process advancements in the last two months that will allow smaller, faster and less power-hungry transistors as a result of architectural or materials improvement. What we'll see, hopefully, will be much more powerful and less energy consuming CPU's that may allow some long-awaited program advancements, i.e., really good speech recognition software, pattern recognition software, etc.

Learnout & Hauspie is Dead!
Long Live Scan Soft, Inc. and
Speech Recognition software

Those of us who have Dragon's *Naturally Speaking* should rejoice. The Learnout & Hauspie (L&H) debacle is finally settled in bankruptcy proceedings and ScanSoft, Inc., emerged as the successful bidder for the bulk of L&H assets.

Although the L&H business imbroglio was interesting if somewhat Byzantine and shrouded with mystery, it did leave one of the more successful speech recognition products begging for more attention than was provided. I saw Naturally Speak-

ing programs for sale at 1st Saturday for less than $50 with many prospective buyers unaware that there would be little if any support for the product as a result of L&H's business problems. If Scan-Soft follows through, that may have been the deal of the century, though.

I may even upgrade my copy, which was a Christmas present from Connie some time ago

Where is Roxio Going?
Adaptec's Spin-off Company
Acquires MGI Software in Dec.

Remember that really neat demo of MGI's *Photo-Suite v. 4.0 Platinum* and my subsequent review of the software last month? Roxio just announced intention to buy MGI.

Roxio is the leading player on the CD recording software business. Originally an integral part of Adaptec (the stellar SCSI folks) Roxio has been given responsibility for the rapidly growing CD/W/RW software domain founded by Adaptec several years ago. If you buy a CD burner, nine times out of ten it will come equipped with Roxio software. They are that dominant.

Acquisition of MGI is another step forward in achieving Roxio's goal of becoming as dominant in digital-media software as Intuit is financial software, according to a quote by Roxio's CEO, Chris Gorog, in a recent *WSJ* article. He does foresee some MGI workforce reductions if the transaction is approved by MGI's shareholders and Canadian regulators.

Reagan

Selected SIG Reports . . .

News and meeting notes of Special Interest Groups
Further background information about a SIG is available from the SIG's
Web page at www.ntpcug.org

Access

We will be meeting at 12:00 Noon on Saturday, December 8, 2001, with the North Texas Microsoft Developers SIGs (of the North Texas PC User Group) at Microsoft's Las Colinas facilities, in the Marketing conference room on the 4th Floor:

Microsoft Las Colinas, Building 1
Microsoft Product Support Services
7000 N. State Highway 161
Irving, TX 75039

Directions: The Microsoft campus area is located approximately 15 minutes from the DFW International Airport off US Hwy 114 & State Highway 161.

To reach the campus from DFW or Ft. Worth, take the North airport exit or

.

Hwy 121 North to Hwy 114, go east on Hwy 114 toward Dallas SH 161 exit (also known as Valley View). Turn left at the light (north) onto Hwy. 161, (going over Hwy 114 bridge) about 1 mile and there are two red brick buildings on your right just before you come to MacArthur.

To reach the campus from Dallas, take Interstate 35 north or south to Hwy 114, go west on Hwy 114 toward the airport and Fort Worth to the SH 161 exit. Turn right at the light (north onto SH 161), go approximately 1 mile and it is the red brick buildings on your right just before you come to MacArthur. LC-1 is our first red brick building located at 7000 SH 161, Irving, TX 75039 and LC-2 is our second red brick building located at 7100 SH 161, Irving, TX 75039.

FROM BILL PARKER, PRESIDENT

The following are changes/additions/needs for the SIG's. Please update SIG contact information through the SIG Leaders' administrative area on the Web.

Groups Looking for Help Leading their SIGs:

VB-Beginning — Contact Larry Linson, *larry.linson@ntpcug.org*
FrontPage — Contact Alan Lummus, *alan.lummus@ntpcug.org*, 972-733-4141.

SIGS no longer meeting:

—JAVA – A new leader has not come forward for this group

Volunteer Needs:

SIG Coordinator — not too tough a job, and you are part of the inner workings of the Club. See the newsletter and Volunteer Section of Web site for more details.

The requirements for forming a SIG are:

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

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

If you have a group that meets these qualifications or would like help in finding others who might share your interests, please contact me at (972) 381-9963 (h), or e-mail to *sig_coordinator@ntpcug.org.*

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ACT !
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    .... (214) 525-5750 w
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    Eb Foerster
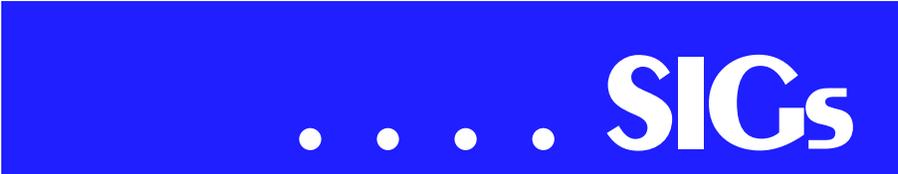
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We'll be meeting along with Beginning Visual Basic SIG, Advanced Visual Basic SIG, and the Application Developer Issues SIG (formerly ActiveX Application Developers). Meeting times are:

09:00 AM -- Beginning Visual Basic
10:00 AM -- Advanced Visual Basic
11:00 AM -- Application Developer Issues
12:00 Noon -- Microsoft Access Database

For more information, visit *http://members.tripod.com/ntaccess/*. You'll find a schedule, be able to click-through to a zoomable map, get driving directions, and a link to the Developer SIG's 'portal.'

On December 8, 2001: We are having a theme meeting, a tutorial on "Reading and Writing Files in Visual Basic and Visual Basic for Applications!" Beginning Visual Basic SIG Leader **Tuc Goodwin** will continue his discussion of Sequential (Text) Files and Advanced VB SIG Leader **Stephen Johnson** will show some VB classes in which he encapsulated Sequential File I/O and some Binary File I/O.

Please Note: The VB code for File I/O discussed by Tuc and Stephen is directly usable in VBA as well, so if Access is your exclusive interest, come early for the VB presentations. And, in the Access SIG, all the VBA File I/O code will be directly usable in VB as well, so if VB is your exclusive interest, stay for the Access discussion.

SIG Leader **Larry Linson** will follow up with a discussion and examples of using Random Access Files. Random Access provides for different data types to be combined in a fixed length record, so that the record can be read directly without having to read through preceding records as you do in sequential and without having to know the byte address where it resides as you would in Binary. Along with the File

I/O statements that accomplish the reading and writing, we will cover the VB/VBA TYPE structure, used to define a record. Time permitting, we may briefly discuss Binary File I/O, too.

In November, 2001: Thanks to Co-SIG Leader of Application Developer Issues, **Dan Ogden**, who took over at the 'eleventh hour' because Larry was ill and unable to attend. Dan reviewed some items from Microsoft Press and, I am told, did his usual great job with much enthusiasm.

For December, you can again expect us to have valuable prizes, too, at the end of the Access meeting. *Come for the meeting! Stay for the drawing for valuable prizes!* Just remember that value, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

Coming soon to the Access SIG:

In January, 2002: SIG Leader Larry Linson will speak on "Reviewing Some Basic Features," illustrated with an *Information Keeper Example (IKE)* database that can be used for keeping track of different types and categories of information, searching for saved information, and reporting. Over time, we will talk about structuring the data tables, creating forms and using different types of controls, creating useful reports, searching, using the Windows Common Dialog, creating a new empty database, relinking tables, and other subjects of interest in using Access and in creating Access database applications. Expect this tutorial to be continued in February, and possibly beyond, because there's no way we can complete it in one session.

Strategies for Access Security -- how to secure an Access application for various needs, with information on available resources, and perhaps a demonstration. Access security can be very good if properly employed, but care is needed. Different approaches are

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needed to secure a database used by a small circle of trusted employees, one distributed to clients, or one sold as a product to the general public. We will look at ways to prevent easy 'cracking' with available 'password recovery' shareware, methods for preventing the administrator from doing anything but adding users and assigning them to groups, and giving users access to the data but not giving them access to the data tables.

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SIGs . . . .

More on Generating Test Data: The second segment on test data will briefly review capturing, cleaning, reading, and storing raw data, including overviews of the *File System Object* of the Windows Scripting Runtime and the new, built-in *Split* function. We will demonstrate and explain combining saved raw test data to create realistic-looking test data for public view and demonstration of your application. The process will include use of the pseudo-random number generation features of VBA.

Access Data Projects (ADP): ADPs use ADO to provide access via OLE DB or ADO Data Providers directly to Microsoft SQL Server. This eliminates the overhead of linking through Jet and translation by ODBC drivers. The drawbacks include no Access security on your application and no provision for local tables.

Simple Web Interface: What's the hot database topic these days? It's Web interfaces to databases. One of the easiest tools for creating simple Web sites, Microsoft Front Page, can interact with Access (and also some server databases) to provide a user-friendly and inexpensive 'web database interface'. We will cover at least two approaches to using Front Page with Access. Why do I call it inexpensive? Street price is under $150, and it is included with some editions of Microsoft Office 2000 and Office XP.

Reserved: This space is reserved for *your* presentation. Won't you volunteer to talk to us about something interesting that you've done or some interesting Access subject that you've learned?

Larry Linson

Alpha Five

What kind of menu structure do you provide for your database applications? If there is more than one table, one

form, and one user, providing gentle guidance to users with a custom menu can save a lot of headaches.

This month we will look at three different levels of providing menu access to users of a database application.

Alpha provides a 'control panel' that shows all the forms, browses, reports, scripts, etc. Some people think this is enough because they can easily get to all their database objects. This is fine for the people that developed the application, but not for most users that just want to get to a particular function, like Accounts Payable. This control panel approach is certainly not acceptable when some users must be limited in the functions they can access.

For that reason, most of us developers spend time developing user login procedures, permission schemes, and menu structures that provide needed security and control to the application. I find that the requirements of each application are different enough that I only reuse my basic framework, and do quite a bit of new menu coding for each application. Putting together these menus is pretty simple, but it does take time.

A while back there was an article on *www.learnalpha.com* that described an easy framework for showing each user only the menu items for which they had security privileges. Assistant SIG leader **Dan Blank** implemented this himself and did a presentation for us. This technique required a medium amount of coding to set up the menu structure, but the beauty was that user permissions could be assigned without any additional coding, and menus would dynamically generate for each different user. In the long run, this did save a lot of coding.

Since I do quite a few different applications for clients, even this medium amount of coding was more than I

. . . . . SIGs

wanted. For the third level of menu creation, I'll show a dynamic menu generator that can be added to your application just by copying in three tables. For me, this seems to be the right combination of ease of use and user level security access. Now any application administrator can easily adjust the menu choices that appear to each user, without any coding.

Come take a look and see if an Alpha database is what you should be using!

Bill Parker

Application Developers Issues

The Application Developer Issues SIG focuses on providing information to developers that assists them in (1) developing applications that use Microsoft tools and technologies, (2) engineering applications through various design methodologies, and (3) staying abreast of legal developments and industry trends that affect developers. We are one of the four NTPCUG SIGs that make up the North Texas Microsoft Developer SIGs (along with the Beginning Visual Basic SIG, the Advanced Visual Basic SIG, and the Microsoft Access SIG), which meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Las Colinas campus of Microsoft Corporation in the 4th Floor MPR Room, Building LC-1, (7000 State Highway 161, Irving, Texas). Our SIG meets at 11:00 AM. For directions, please go to appdevissues.tripod.com/location/htm, where you may also download a print-

able map to the Microsoft Las Colinas campus.

For more information on our SIG in general, including meeting updates, details on past meetings, and directions, please visit our Web site, *appdevissues.tripod.com/*. You may download presentations, freeware apps, and sample code at *appdevissues.tripod.com/downloads.htm.*

Come join us in November as we seek to provide pertinent information on issues important to application developers.

Daniel Ogden

Communications

The communications SIG will discuss "Virtual Private Networks or VPN's" at our December meeting. A Virtual Private Network uses the Internet for network connections between people and information sites. VPN's have several cost advantages over remote access methods. VPN's don't require modem banks, no dedicated lines are required and an employee may take advantage of high-speed access. The VPN includes stringent security mechanisms so that sending and receiving private or confidential information is as secure as a closed network system.

Virtual Private Networks may be implemented through operating systems, software or hardware. Support for VPN's was initially provided in Windows 98 and NT operating systems. A firewall should be used for a home VPN because its use creates a security hole a hacker could slip through. The limitations of an operating system VPN include a fixed, non-updated encryption and open access to authorized users. The software implementation of a VPN has all of the re-

strictions and resources an employee would have on a corporate network. In the server closet hardware devices are called concentrators. Hardware devices range from five to unlimited users. The cost of hardware VPN's range from $1,000 to $22,000. VPN's have been available to us for a few years but the greatest application will allow access to work resources from home.

Birl Smith

Dallas Corel

December Program TBA

November in Review

Corel KnockOut 1.5 was our November topic, presented by Dallas Corel SIG member **Gene Brown**. As a professional photographer and proprietor of Gene's Photos in Gainsville, TX, his unique experience and perspective are always appreciated. Contact him at (940) 665-4642. Gene demonstrated with examples from his professional portfolio and files. His generously shared tips and techniques proved quite
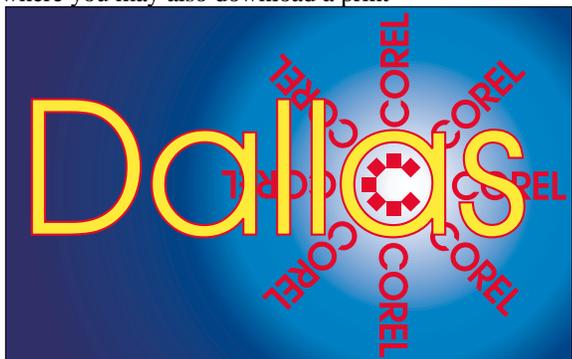
SIG of North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

SIGs . . . .

valuable. He also challenged us in class to use a loop to see the difference between the tiny dot pattern of an ink jet printed photo example and the continuous tones of a sublimation print example. Even the untrained eye could see the latter is virtually indistinguishable from a professional lab-printed color photo.

Anyone with Corel PHOTO-PAINT experience knows that a mask is an isolated area in a bitmap image that is protected from changes. Using masks allows us to create objects and to affect changes just to portions of that image. Conventionally, a mask defines an edge between the foreground and the background. Even with edge feathering, however, images with wispy edges or objects with multi-colored complex backgrounds are tricky. And transparent objects made of glass are impossible. Now comes Corel KnockOut to save the day. This powerful application lets you isolate and separate a detailed foreground object from an RGB image, while preserving edge detail such as hair, transparencies, blurred edges and shadows. You export the resulting knocked-out image as a .PPT and place it on a background image in PHOTO-PAINT. Gene believes version 1.5 is a credible early software version, but looks forward to advanced features in the upcoming version 2.0. Several of us had a good time later that day, donating items and spending our "UG's" at the NTPCUG Swap Meet. Thanks to **Mar-**

Gene Brown presenting at the Dallas Corel SIG meeting in November

tin Hellar and all who worked to make it successful.

October in Review

An informative Question & Answer session relied on several of our Dallas Corel SIG members' expertise at the October 13 meeting. **Marsha Drebelbis** demonstrated the unique RomCat utility. The world's greatest CorelDRAW utility program, **RomCat version 4.2**, supports more functions, more capability, and more of Corel's applications. RomCAT builds databases of the Corel clip art (vector) libraries and provides you with complete keyword-search capability. Say goodbye to rummaging through the printed guide. Instead, type a word or phrase to give RomCAT an idea of what you're looking for, and it delivers any and all matches. RomCAT also shows you thumbnails of each image. Best of all, when you find one you want, just press Enter—RomCAT automatically starts DRAW if it isn't already running and imports the graphic. RomCAT works with all versions of DRAW from the present back to 3.0 and probably earlier. You can also use it to build catalogs of your own libraries of CDR and CMX files, provided that you have saved your drawings with keywords. This little zip file (114k) is download-friendly, and as a free utility, represents the best value imaginable for Corel users. Download it from *http://www.altman.com/resources/software.htm*. Foster D. Coburn III prebuilt catalogs for all versions of CorelDRAW clipart CDs, going back to version 6, and also CGM (Corel Gallery Magic library of 200,000 images). They are available for you to download FREE via *http://www.unleash.com*.

September in Review

Many Dallas Corel SIG attendees September 15 wore red,

white and blue in honor of the victims and survivors of last Tuesday's Attack on America. Our SIG's morning session of Graphics Questions and Answers relied on our own members' broad expertise to guide and direct each other to practical solutions in their graphic imaging work. Again our members proved to be a rich resource. Subjects ranged from layout programs like Ventura to output formats like .PDF. The best scanners to OCR software. Photo-PAINT to KnockOut. New desktop printer options to current digital camera choices. A valuable Web site, with many links, for anyone working with digital images is *www.digitalsecrets.net*. **Shhh!**

August in Review

Accomplished natural-history and wildlife artist **Karen Carr** showed us how to digitally simulate natural-media with **Corel Painter 6** at Dallas Corel SIG's August meeting. Her enthusiasm for Corel Painter 6 was contagious for the large audience turnout, who snapped up her dinosaur-illustrated 2002 calendars at the session's end. She is a fourth-generation Texas native who lives near Dallas. Karen's work, in both traditional and electronic format, graces a variety of scientific and editorial venues, including *Scientific American*, *Earth*, and *Natural History* magazines, the book *Lone Star Dinosaurs* by Dr. Louis Jacobs, and the traveling exhibit "The Dinosaurs of Jurassic Park." Her murals are in the Dallas Zoo, Dallas Museum of Natural History, Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, Oklahoma Museum of Natural History and numerous parks in the United States, Japan and Europe. In case you missed her presentation, you can learn more and purchase prints at *http://www.karencarr.com* and at *http://www.thefernleaf.com*. Corel Painter 6 and a Wacom stylus with tablet are Karen's digital painting tools of choice. Go to *http://www.wacom.com*. You need not endure oil painting's smelly turpentine

. . . . . SIGs

or watercolor's messy water jar. Painter is the ultimate natural-media painting tool. It delivers hundreds of brushes and creative materials, opening new horizons in high-quality output for print and the Web. Karen good-naturedly shared her work with examples projected on-screen. She also took us online, using North Lake Community College's Internet connection, so we could see more of her work. She masterfully demonstrated Painter's tools as well as her own customized brushes. Karen's creativity encourages professional artists and novices alike. This was the unique highlight program of the year!

KnockOut 2.0 Now Available

Corel has released the newest version to KnockOut. Here's a list of new features added to KO2: KnockOut 2 is not a stand-alone application, but a plug-in that you can use with one or more bitmap-editing applications. This improves the workflow and saves time.

KnockOut 2 supports CMYK images. The Touchup tools let you fine-tune the knocked-out image you create. You can restore foreground colors that were removed after processing, and you can erase leftover background colors. You can easily correct mistakes by undoing single or multiple actions. You can set the number of undo levels. The newly added property bar displays selection tools associated with the selection tool that's active in the toolbox, bringing forward some of the hidden features in Corel® KnockOut 1.5. The Revert File feature lets you revert to an image's earlier or original state if you are not satisfied with the outcome. Learn more at *http://www.procreate.com/go/knockout*.

New KPT effects Now Available

Corel has released the newest KPT® effects, another powerhouse in the procreate line of graphics software, giving professional designers an extraordinary set of creative filters. It's a natural addition to Corel PHOTO-PAINT, Adobe®

Photoshop®, and other image applications for both Windows and Mac platforms. It dramatically extends the boundaries of image editing. KPT effects includes the following nine new special effect plug-ins: KPT® Hyper Tiling tiles your images into geometrical shapes and allows you to transform them through four-dimensional space. KPT® Lightning delivers a new level of realism by letting you control every aspect of a lightning bolt and its path. KPT® Scatter lets you spread particles over an image to create intricate patterns and textures. Others are KPT Pyramid Paint; KPT Fluid; KPT Channel Surfing; KPT Ink Dropper; KPT FraxFlameII and KPT Gradient Lab. It conquers what would be practically impossible or too time-consuming with other imaging methods. The whole collection makes a significant impact on your creativity and your productivity. KPT effects hit store shelves at the end of October for $199 retail. Find it at PC Connection for $159. For more information go to *www.procreate.com*.

Ventura Publisher Summit May 17-20

CorelWORLD announces the return of the Ventura Publisher Summit, a three-day event, to be held in Kansas City, dedicated exclusively to the upcoming new version of the program. The new Ventura is in active development now. **Rick Altman** gives us the following Summit highlights:

"We will dedicate two and a half days and two tracks of seminars to every new feature and capability. You will get the opportunity to drive the software yourself. You will be able to buy the new Ventura at the very best price we can offer. You will learn from the team of experts who helped shape the program and were asked to test the new features. You would be one of just 150 users to get this unique opportu-

nity to learn the program inside and out. You will be reminded why Ventura Publisher is the most powerful program on the planet, and why its users would rather wait four years for a new release than consider using anything else."

Location will be Embassy Suites Hotel at the Kansas City Airport. 816-891-7788. Call 1.888.DRAW.NOW or 1.408.252.5448 for more information.

Recent Programs at Dallas Corel SIG

- ❖ Oct/00 - QuickTimeVR and PHOTO-PAINT
- ❖ Nov/00 - Motion Graphics in Corel
- ❖ Dec/00 - DRAW 10 Introduction
- ❖ Jan/01 - PHOTO-PAINT Tips
- ❖ Feb/01 - Graphics Utilities
- ❖ Mar/01 - Scanning Tips and Techniques
- ❖ Apr/01 – PHOTO-PAINT Effects
- ❖ May/01 - Member Showcase
- ❖ Jun/01 - RAVE Moves!
- ❖ Jul/01 - Corel Bryce 3D Worlds
- ❖ Aug/01 - Corel Painter 6
- ❖ Sep/01 - Graphics Q & A
- ❖ Oct/01 – Q & A / RomCat
- ❖ Nov/01 – KnockOut
  Marsha Drebelbis

DOS/ Operating Systems

Talking about MS DOS again? We will be at the December DOS/Operating Systems SIG meeting for a change. Seems strange to begin a meeting usually consumed by *Win 9.x, ME, 2000* and *XP* (and occasionally *Linux*) with a focus on the almost-forgotten, antique disk operating system.

There's a good reason for the shift—data security. Folks who attended the November presentation by TLSI's **John Weichman** probably heard him refer to problems users encounter in attempting to "really" delete sensitive data from their systems. He did recommend one program from OnTrack Systems (*http://www.ontrack.com*) *DataEraser* that is available as a download from the OnTrack Site for $29.95.

This was in response to my question about HIPAA compliance in the future, but wasn't entirely accurate. DataEraser has two versions, the "standard" version for $29.95 and a "professional" version available for $500. It's the latter that can handle SCSI disks and apply the DOD endorsed three-pass erasure, not the $29.95 version. For $500, it would be cheaper for me to take the four or five drives that need erasure, disassemble them and reduce the drive platters to an unreadable state with my 16-pound sledge or with a really hot blow torch—then purchase several used drives to give away.

Other solutions available

I was able to find two other cleaning programs that also meet DOD specifications and can handle SCSI drives. One is from NTPCUG's old friends at PowerQuest (who will be presenting at the January NTPCUG meeting) *DataGone,* but is only available in an "enterprise" package and not sold to individual users. An e-mail to PowerQuest's PCUG representative **Gene Barlow**, in an attempt to obtain a single copy of DataGone, resulted in a third discovery—Access Data's (*http://www.access-data.com*) *CleanDrive*, which also meets DOD specs and will work with SCSI disks.

CleanDrive is also available at a somewhat lower cost ($39.95) than the two "professional" programs mentioned above. NTPCUG members can obtain a copy for even less—$20 plus $5 shipping and handling—from a Web site offering discounts to PC user group members (*http://www.ugr.com/order*) with the appropriate order code (**UG-DEC01.)**

A search for ShareWare or FreeWare cleaning programs on the Web didn't reveal any others that met my criteria, i.e., meet DOD specs and work with SCSI drives. They may be out there, but I didn't find them. Several I ran across wouldn't even work with FAT32 or disks larger than 2.1 GB.

Working from DOS

A common factor here is that all of these programs work from DOS, not Windows. Working from DOS means booting from DOS in this instance. That's why we'll be addressing DOS at the December SIG meeting with a look at some of the ramifications involved, i.e., need for MS DOS 7.1 (OSR-2.1 or 2.5) or DR DOS 7.03 or higher to address "large" disks beyond the limitations imposed by DOS 6.x and earlier.

Users with Win 98 SE, ME or XP may find there's an unanticipated problem here in that producing a real DOS boot disk under these Win versions can be very tricky. The DOS SIG meeting will attempt to address these issues in December.

Reagan Andrews

e-Commerce

At our December meeting we will continue exploring various methods of promoting traffic to an e-commerce Web site, including search engine placement, banner ads, ad exchange programs, targeted e-mail, and a host of different promotional programs, with special emphasis focusing upon building and managing an affiliate network and promoting your e-commerce Web site as a fund raising opportunity. Bring your experience, questions and ideas.

For this month and the foreseeable future, we will be meeting at North Lake College in Irving. Check the NTPCUG Web site for the exact address, driving directions and maps, and be sure to check the room assignments and time when you sign in at the front door.

Check out past and current topics and discussions on our Web site at: *www.imageworks.net/ecommerce*. See you at the meeting.

Alan Lummus

Excel

Preview of Saturday, December 15

- ❖ We will review 3-D consolidation and how it fits into the broad topic of ranges.

- ❖ If you have identical information from (a) more than one location or (b) more than one time period, 3-D consolidation is for you.

- ❖ We will also begin looking at formulas. Formulas are a logical next step from ranges. What we learned using ranges will allow us to build English-like formula statements. We can begin to build worksheets which maintain themselves! (well, almost)

We have a lively group early Saturday morning, and we would love to have you. Come give us a try!

Art Babb

Internet – Beginning & Advanced

Our Internet sessions in November began with several questions, with answers by both SIG leaders and audience. Then we rolled into our topic for the day – "Time".

SIG leader **Tom O'Keefe** skipped details on Prehistoric time at the request of attendees (Tom was prepared for anything !!), and jumped into the International Earth Rotation Service. IERS is the organization responsible for adding those "leap seconds" to Universal

. . . . SIGs
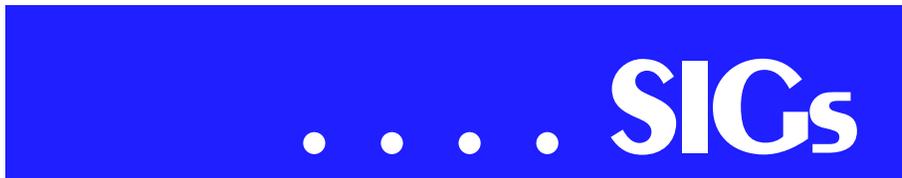
Coordinated Time (UTC) every few years, always at the end of June or December. Being a detailed group, we all want to reset the time on our computers whenever this occurs – right? For reference, the last such "leap" was the morning of January 1, 1999.

We next delved into atomic clocks, which improve continually. We discovered that monitoring time based on cesium clocks (NIST-F1) may be too inaccurate, as cesium works at only 9 billion cycles per second. That can cause the gain or loss of one second over 20 million years. Newer optical technology under development operates at about 1 quadrillion cycles per second. I know I sleep better with the knowledge that "time" will soon be more accurate!!

In truth, we didn't get to this level of detail. But why do we care so much about time in the realm of computers and networks? For one, it helps us in troubleshooting. When we are going through all those logs from different systems, we can compare the "ins" and "outs" of the various transactions much easier and more reliably if they are all set to the same time. Accurate time also helps ensure that McDonalds doesn't quit serving breakfast before 10:30 !

Where do you get the correct time – the *really* correct time?

There are multiple ways. By ham radio, you can tune to high frequency radio stations WWV (Colorado) or WWVH (Hawaii). By phone, you can call 303-499-7111, and hear the same detail as WWV/WWVH. From either service, you can manually set your watch or computer and be "close enough".

To reduce the manual aspect, there is software available that lets you set your computer's clock automatically, without manual intervention. Such software utilizes Internet protocols such as NTP (Network Time Protocol) and SNTP (Simple NTP). See *www.eecis.udel.edu/~ntp/software/win9x.html* for a list of several software programs that use this functionality.

We talked a lot more about time standards and equipment, but can't cover it all here. But the following sites will get you up to speed:

www.boulder.nist.gov/timefreq/
tycho.usno.navy.mil/frtime.html
www.timeticker.com/main.htm
www.time.gov
www.ntp.org

In **December**, our primary topic will be NNTP (Network News Transport Protocol). NNTP is synonymous with Usenet Newsgroups, and can be useful if you are searching for or want to exchange information. Usenet is a gigantic bulletin board system. We will talk about different ways to use it.

Do you have any requests? If so, please send an e-mail to *dsg@ntpcug.org*.

See you on December 15th !!

Doug Gorrie
Tom O'Keefe

Introduction to the PC

Come join our session.

What did we do in November?

Exactly as planned, we leaped into why one may select e-commerce as a vehicle to buy product while using our credit card number transmitted over the network. When we were finished discussing how transactions sent over an encrypted media and ending in a secure server, a lot of the anxiety, fear, and apprehension went away and we were left with - yes, the transmission of information can be secure. However, what people do at the far end always depends upon your selection of them. This is true whether you buy over the Internet or a closely located brick and mortar store.

Shortly after our presentation, I read an *InfoWorld* magazine report by Brian Livingston (11/19/2001) explaining integrity of Microsoft's security using their **'Passport'** system was breached. Well, so much for soothing our home buyer's fears. It still remains though, that illegal hackers will be busy trying to make it to big time by entering large organizational data banks rather than spending hours on end hitting individuals one-at-a-time.

Your worst e-commerce enemies are not those hackers but those thieves posing as your friends and whose staff may be corrupt or contain personnel weak in morals. Your protection is getting to know those businesses before you place them in your trust. Those preying on corporate databases are beyond our reach. But please, do not leave your credit card or drivers license lying around.

What will we discuss in December?

1. **Back to the basics**

   What are the advantages for having

   Clipboard

   Notepad

   Word Pad

   When is enough

Introduction to the PC Class		
Time	Activity	Breakdown
9:00 A.M.	Introduction	introductions, prerequisites, needs, uses
10:00 A.M.	Concepts	typical uses, examples, formats
11:00 A.M.	Applications	products, set-ups, applications, techniques

Files in folder

Icons on Desktop

Open files

2. Standard HTML (for your e-mail and Web site)

What are common desirable features

What features to avoid

Content vs. Pizzazz

3. Courtesy (Being kind to your)

SIG Leader

Webmaster

Those offering excellent free advice

4. Year End Q & A

Digital cameras

Scanners

New PC

Updating your operating system

We will learn how to salute those individuals and organizations who make our technology information gathering even better.

Come on in, relax, and enjoy.

Have a very happy holiday season.

Harold (Spike) Smith

INVESTORS

The December meeting will be at the North Lake Community College in Irving.

I am suggesting that it is time to do a year end tax review.

Some topics that you might consider are:

❖ Calculating Taxes on Stock Sales

SIGs . . . .
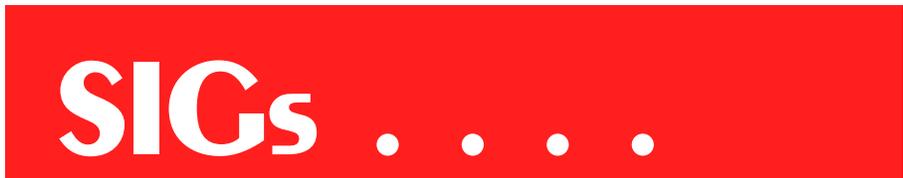
❖ Calculating Taxes on Fund Sales

❖ Understanding the Wash Sale Rules

❖ Figuring Out Your Cost Basis When You've Lost the Statements

❖ Taxes on Investments Received as a Gift or Inheritance

❖ Options: Should I Exercise?

❖ Taxes on Options -- Puts and Calls

❖ Writing Off Your Investment Costs

❖ Taxes on Day Trading

Several general investing sites like *www.quicken.com* and *www.smartmoney.com* have tax calculators of many kinds. These can help you figure out your tax liability and to do some future tax planning for next year.

Kathryn (Kathy) Kirby

LINUX

meeting notes. Updated on: Friday, November 30, 2001

John McNeil

MICROSOFT FRONTPAGE

Our December meeting will begin with an actual hands-on demonstration of creating an actual Web site and continue by focusing upon whatever questions you choose to bring to the SIG. Regardless of your experience or lack thereof with FrontPage, come and learn how FrontPage can make your Web development efforts easier and more fun.

For this month and the foreseeable future, we will be meeting at North Lake College in Irving. Be sure to check the NTPCUG main page for exact location, times, and driving instructions. Then be sure to check room and time assignments when you check in at the meeting.

Checkout our main Web site for information on the SIG and special topics covered in previous meetings.

Alan Lummus

MICROSOFT NETWORKING

In December, We will continue the discussion of real world networking/security problems. **Bill Rogers** has recently completed a Windows NT/Windows 2000 network user security implementation for mid-size company. He will discuss his approach and the challenges he faced.

*Gil Brand
(gil.brand@ntpcug.org)*

MICROSOFT WORD

Upcoming Microsoft Word SIG Meeting Topics:

December

Document Scraps could be the answer to "*Now, where did I put that?*"-- because you will always find them in the same place -- YES! Do you get tired of the same ole copy-paste, copy-paste, copy-paste routine when you need to move several sections of text? Microsoft has a secret weapon for you.

January

There is more to Viewing and Navigating than simply looking at the screen and moving the mouse. Viewing encompasses scrolling, Views, Split Screen, Print Preview, Zoom, Full Screen and probably more. Navigating includes scrolling, Browse button, keyboard navigation, Go To, Find, Document Map, and probably more.

WOW, I did NOT **know that!**

Spelling

To locate the *next* misspelled word (from the current location of the Insertion Point):

❖ **Keyboard: Alt+F7**

❖ **Mouse:** Double-click the **Spelling and Grammar** icon on the Status Bar (it looks like a book with a red X on it)

What is *your* problem?

Got a problem *with **Word**? Describe the problem to me in an E-mail. I will do my best to provide a satisfactory answer. I will also post the question and answer on this Web page, as well as in the next newsletter.*

Diane Bentley

Professional MIDI and Audio

At our December meeting, **Jim** and **Gary Carter** will initiate us into more of MIDI's mysteries. Bring your questions and your answers! If we're lucky, we'll be back in the choir room in Building P, which has a really cool sound system that will greatly enhance our enjoyment. See you there!

For the foreseeable future, we will be meeting at North Lake College in Irving. Check the NTPCUG Web site home page for meeting location and times, maps and driving instructions. Then, be sure to check on room and time assignments again when you check in at the front desk the day of the meeting.

J. Alan Lummus

Quicken

Quicken 2002 Deluxe contains a new menu for creating budgets. We will create several sample budgets to become familiar with the revised process.

In November we created a sample household inventory, editing locations (room names) and categories (types of furnishings), and adding new ones. We looked at the reports that can be printed for a safe deposit file. One question concerned whether to include cars in the household inventory. It was the consensus of the group that this is better left as an asset file which can be updated from year to year using Quicken's market survey as a source. Another question was should the household inventory be used to inventory books. Quicken instructions recommend that the inventory list only major items. We demonstrated an MS Access database that contained some 600 books which can be searched by Subject, Title, Author, or date of publication. The total value of books could be a single item in the household inventory.

Phil Faulkner, Co-SIG leader
Jim Wehe, Co-SIG leader

Visual Basic - Beginning

The SIG is still looking for one or more new co-SIG leaders. If you are interested, see the SIG Leaders at the meeting or please contact Bill Parker. The Beginning Visual Basic SIG meets on the second Saturday, of each month at 9:00 AM in the Microsoft facilities. For further information on the facilities and a map, please visit the Web site. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

On December 8, 2001: New Co-SIG-Leader **Tuc Goodwin** will finish the tutorial on "Writing Visual Basic Code," covering procedures, subs, functions, arguments, parameters, and code within the procedures.
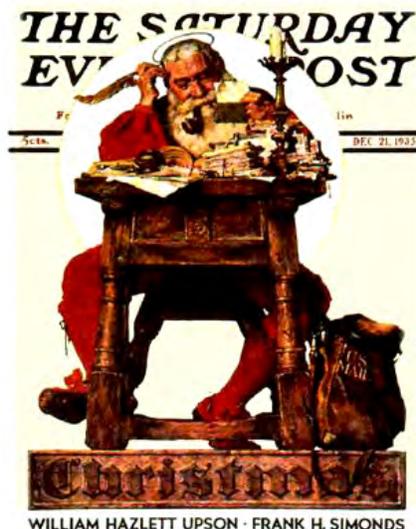
WILLIAM HAZLETT UPSON · FRANK H. SIMONDS

December is **File I/O Month!** Tuc will start things off showing the differences between reading and writing sequential text files using the Visual Basic *internal commands* versus *the File System Object*. This will be followed by other File I/O discussions in the other SIGs.

Billy Carpenter

Web Design - Advanced

The new Web Design - Advanced SIG is the next generation of what was previously the Java SIG. This will be a formative session to get feedback from attendees on topics of interest. **Steve Shanafelt** is the SIG leader and is interested in a broad range of topics including Java, ASP, database, .net, C#. This will be a great SIG for those of you that are ready to move past the basics and into more application-oriented Web sites.

Come to the first meeting, give us your feedback, and learn something as well!

Steve Shanafelt

WordPerfect

Meeting Topics

December

We are ready for our first direct mail promotion. We will design a flyer to promote *SticStor*. Do you have ideas as to what information should go into the flyer, or some design ideas? Tell us what you have in mind; we would like to incorporate your ideas into this project!

January

Before planning meetings for next year, we would like to know if you would like to continue with the development of *SticStor* (Stuffed in the Closet, personal storage business) or if you would like to return to the format we used prior to this last year.

We would also like to know what features you would like to have presented. Please let us know by e-mail (our ad-

dresses are listed below), by phone, or in person at one of the meetings.

W O W ! I did NOT know that!

Convert a WordPerfect Document to an HTML Web Document

Need to convert a WordPerfect document to an HTML Web document quickly? Internet Publisher will quickly convert your WordPerfect document to an HTML, Web-ready format.

1) With your document open in WordPerfect: File | Internet Publisher | Format As Web Document (if prompted with a warning about Web-compatible features, click OK)

The elements of your document are now in an HTML-compatible form that can be used on the Web.

2) Continue editing your document from the Web view, using the features of Internet Publisher

3) When you're ready to save your file to HTML format: Publish To HTML (on the Internet Publisher toolbar) and save your file

What is *your* problem?

Got a problem with WordPerfect? Describe the problem to me in an e-mail. I will do my best to provide *a satisfactory answer. The question and answer will also be posted on this web page, as well as in the next newsletter.*

What Is New With WordPerfect?

Corel Migration Manager

The Corel Migration Manager is a standalone utility designed to facilitate the migration from earlier versions of WordPerfect (versions 6.1 through 9) to the most current version, WordPerfect Office 2002. The Migration Manager will provide WordPerfect users with a greater level of comfort and security when backing up files and during the migration process.

SIGs . . . .

The Migration Manager will enable users to back up and migrate important files and registry settings, as default templates, customized toolbars, macros, address books, user word lists and QuickWords.

The Corel Migration Manager wizard, when activated, will recognize the existence of previous versions of WordPerfect Office suite applications (versions 6.1 to 9) on a system. Customers will be given the choice of files created in earlier versions to backup and/or migrate to WordPerfect Office 2002.

The Corel Migration Manager is available now on *Corel.com*.

Note: I tried locating this on their site and cannot find it. However, when I returned to their November newsletter and clicked on the link, it took me right to the correct page. Here is the link: http://www.corel.com/support/ftpsite/pub/wordperfect/wpwin/office2002/index.htm. It appears as though it is a download; I do not know yet if there is any cost associated with it. I have requested that information, as well as how to get to it from their Web site.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary

Upgrade your WordPerfect Office 2002 Pocket Oxford Dictionary to include 70,000 words. Until December 31, you will save 25% off the suggested retail price when you purchase The Concise Oxford Dictionary from the Corel Store (North America only).
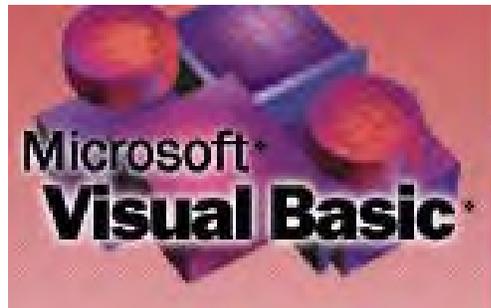
To take advantage of this great offer, visit the Corel Store.

Note: The Download Price is $19.99. I did not see any way to order it on disk, although I may have overlooked it.

www.officecommunity.com

Visit OfficeCommunity.com for the latest on the WordPerfect Office family of products. Featuring tips, downloads and articles for beginners and experts alike, OfficeCommunity.com is a completely free resource for the WordPerfect community.

WordPerfect Office 2002 Continues to Be the Number One Suite for Legal Professionals

The results of the seventh annual Readers Choice Awards appeared in the August/September 2001 issue of Law Office Computing, and WordPerfect Office 2002 was a big winner! The newest version of the award-winning office suite was chosen by law firms as their top technology choice in both the Office Suite and Word Processing categories, beating out Microsoft Office and Microsoft Word. Pick up the latest issue of Law Office Computing for all the details.

www.linux.corel.com

Visit Linux.Corel.com for Tips & Tricks to help you get the most out of WordPerfect Office 2000 for Linux. Learn to add comments to documents, customize spreadsheets and keep track of important meetings ... all on the Linux platform!

From Corel eNewsletter
November 2001 issue
*www.corel.com/enewsletter*

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: *http://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 found on the NTPCUG Web site, *http://www.ntpcug.org,* 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 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

NTPCUG Officers
And Volunteers
You Should Know
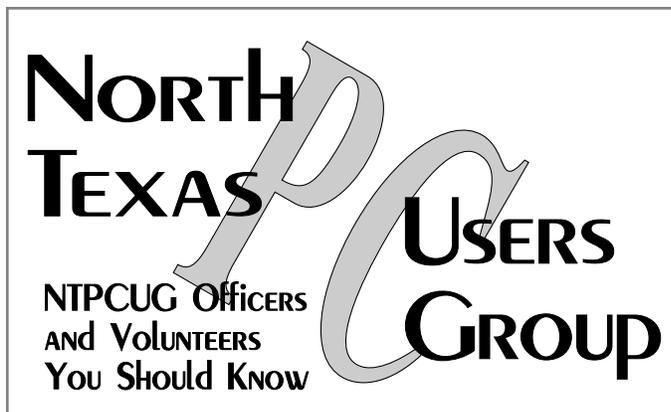
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Vincent Gaines	**Bob Russell**
Martin Hellar	**David Williams**

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		(972) 721-2770 w
Treasurer	Martin Mills	(972) 991-4270 h
Secretary	Vincent Gaines	(972) 234-3231 h
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Publicity	Bob Russell	(972) 422-4269 h
SIG Coordinator	(Open)	
Volunteer Coord.	Claude McClure	(972) 867-0978 h

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John Pribyl (1924 - 1993)

Phil Chamberlain	**Jim Hoisington**
David McGehee	**Stuart Yarus**
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Kathryn Loafman	**Reagan Andrews**
Fred Williams	**Timothy Carmichael**
Andy Oliver	**Mark Gruner**
Alex Lilley	**Claude McClure**

E-mail Password problems?
   Call Doug Gorrie at............. (972) 618-8002

NTPCUG Web Addresses

Home Page: ntpcug.org

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

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♠ Auditorium Presentations

♠ Special Interest Group (SIG) Coorinator

♠ Publicity

♠ Webmaster

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

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