North Texas

North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

NTPCUG

PC NEWS

Online Edition

March 2004
VOLUME 23 • NUMBER 3

North Texas PC NEWS

Circulation:

Member distribution was 500

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 11, Arts & Letters Express 6.01, Adobe Photoshop 6, Microsoft Publisher 2000* and *Adobe Acrobat 5.* Principal typefaces include: Times, Helvetica, A&L Cafe, French Vogue, and Lithos.

D E A D L I N E
Copy deadline for April
North Texas PC NEWS:
Friday, April 2, 2004

Meeting Dates:
March 20, 3rd Saturday
April 17, 3rd Saturday
May 15, 3rd Saturday

In This Issue...
Articles and Announcements:

Special Items:

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 now on-line—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.

Finally, submit as e-mail attachments to: *newsletter@ntpcug.org*, or to *reagana@ntpcug.org*

Reagan Andrews

PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS . . . *Linda Moore*

Hmmmmm....

JANUARY 17, 2004

There's
No Vendor
Presentation This Month!
Why not visit NTPCUG's
Business Meeting @ 12?

Prez Sez

By Linda Moore

Have you moved, changed your phone number or email address lately? If you have, please send an email message to Jeri Steele, NTPCUG Membership Director at *Steele@PioneerInfo.com.* We don't want to lose touch with anyone in the NTPCUG family, but to stay in touch, we need updated contact information. So send those emails to Jeri NOW.

Work has begun on developing a new membership database using VB .NET and SQL Server 2000 database. This is all part of the NTPCUG SharePoint development project, which is currently being developed. We have had 4 new members join, just so they could work on the NTPCUG SharePoint Project.

PowerQuest Discount News:

Members can still purchase PowerQuest end-user products and obtain a 50% discount through May 31, 2004. Gene Barlow is currently in negotiations with Symantec to continue the UG discounts but the discounts would be applicable only to PowerQuest products. The good news is that the PowerQuest Business Unit of Symantec is autonomous enough, so that these discounts may very well continue. But if you are thinking of buying any of the end-user products, it is probably advisable to do that prior to May 31, 2004 to be on the safe side.

Office Pro 2003 Product Reviews:

Spike Smith, NTPCUG Product Review Coordinator, *intro@comcast.net,* has been very successful in getting NTPCUG members to commit to doing product reviews on various modules of the Office Pro 2003 product. These product reviews should start appearing in the May NTPCUG newsletter. Good work, Spike.

NTPCUG Email Accounts:

Have you signed up for your free NTPCUG email account? If not, then send an email message to Doug Gorrie at *Doug.Gorrie@ntpcug.org* requesting that an email account be set up for you. The typical email format is: *FirstName.LastName@ntpcug.org.*

Linda Moore

Prez Sez

There are lots of benefits to having another a NTPCUG email account, not the least of which is that Doug bounces 99% of SPAM. I use my email account, when I need to give out a public email address or when I have to give out an email address to a vendor. Although I have a web email address, I prefer to use my NTPCUG address for vendors and their newsletter subscriptions.

Membership Drive:

Bring a friend or two to the next 2nd Saturday or 3rd Saturday NTPCUG events. Visitors can request to be added to the visitor reminder list but better yet, encourage them to join.

Lots of exciting things are going on, so don't sit (stand) on the sidelines. Ask what you can do to help and join in on the fun. Better yet, send a message to the NTPCUG BOD, telling them what volunteer areas that you would like to work in.

Our volunteer coordinator is Bob McNeil and he does a fantastic job but he is at the Info Desk on 3rd Saturday all day. He could certainly use some help, so if you can volunteer for an hour or two, this would help out a lot. You can volunteer on 3rd Saturday but better yet, send Bob an email at *Bob.McNeil@ntpcug.org.*

Linda Moore
Linda.Moore@ntpcug.org

New Members -- News

NTPCUG is very pleased to extend a warm welcome to our newest members to the NTPCUG family.

- ❖ David Axberg
- ❖ Bob Basemann
- ❖ Mary Love Berryman
- ❖ Robert Ellis
- ❖ Kenneth Martin
- ❖ Rob Stephens

The Master Genealogist presentation by Bob Velke was very well received and drew a huge crowd. In fact, 56 people attended the follow-up hands-on lab in the afternoon. Congratulations to Jeri Steele, TMG SIG leader, on doing an excellent job of planning all of the TMG events. The raffle winners for TMG, version 5 products are as follows:

- ❖ Silver Edition – Dottie Schweinfurth
- ❖ Gold Edition – Don Kreshtool
- ❖ Advanced TMS Video on DVD – Joan Crittenden

David Banks made the VMware Workstation, ESX and GSX product presentation. If anyone has any follow-up questions, please send an email message to Eric Lundgren, VMware System Engineer, at *elundgren@vmware.com* and cc Linda Moore at *Linda.Moore@ntpcug.org.* Copying me on any questions and answers will allow me to get this information posted to the WebBoard, so that all of our members can see it.

The questions that you are asking are probably the same questions that other members (and their associates) are also wanting answers to. So fire away your questions to Eric.

The VMware Workstation 4 raffle winners are:

- ❖ Robert Blackwell
- ❖ Ann Titsworth

Ann Titsworth joined in November 2003 and won a copy of Office Pro 2003. Then at the December business meeting, she won another raffle and now in February, she wins again. Ann must have several 4-leaf clovers that she carries with her at all times because this is quite a winning streak. So spread the word, join NTPCUG and you too may develop a winning streak.

Linda Moore
Linda.Moore@ntpcug.org

Quicken 2004 Premier Home & Business

By Ray Wright

Quicken, offered by Intuit, is one of those must-have personal financial tracking programs that just keeps growing and improving over the years - adding feature after feature. Most of the features are actually useful, rather than just being added just for the sake of adding and advertising.

I started with *Managing Your Money* many years ago, then switched to Quicken back in the DOS days, upgrading periodically. I was previously using Quicken 2002 Deluxe Home & Business before trying the new 2004 "20th Anniversary" offering. The conversion upgrade from 2002 to the 2004 version was extremely quick and flawless. Each year Quicken deems it necessary to change the data file format and will remove the previous program version (asking your permission first) and convert your data to the new format (backups automatically made for you).

The switch to Quicken 2004 was a real eye-opener for me – a whole new color scheme, layout and what seemed to be a full scale rearrangement of the menu system. It has taken some time getting used to the new layout and searching for familiar features. But, as I explore the new layouts, I am discovering several missing features I really liked plus many of the new features that Quicken has added, especially in the area of analyzing investments, multiyear comparisons, Morningstar ratings, and the list goes on. Some of my favorites include the older "Home Inventory" system to track your belongings, which room they are in, cost & purchase information, serial numbers etc for insurance purposes and the "Emergency Records" section for the contacts and locations of wills, medical records etc. I also like the new reports produced for taxes including Schedule A, B and D reports.

For a new user of Quicken, there is a learning curve that will take time. Quicken has eased the burden to help you get started, including a "new improved" Express online account setup function to allow you to download transactions from your checking, brokerage and credit card accounts to ease the data entry
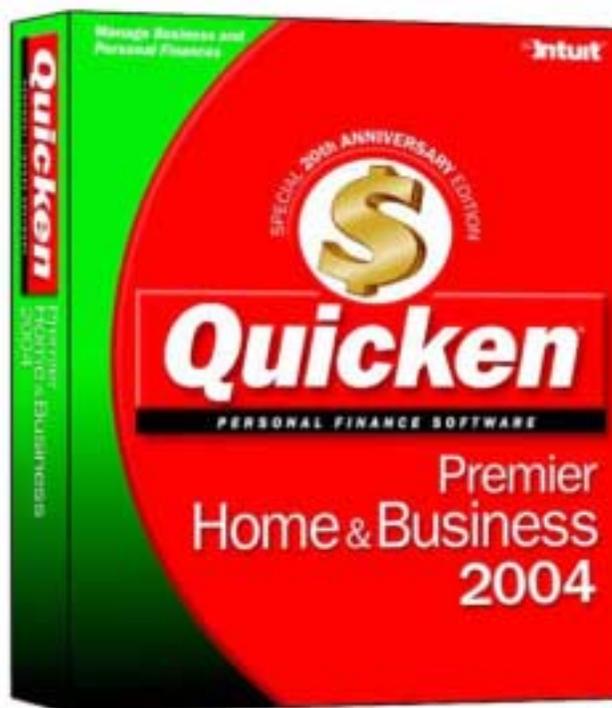
function. You can also take your current brokerage statement, enter the stock or mutual fund positions and the cash balances and see an immediate overview of your financial status. You will, of course, want to go back and enter pertinent cost data to allow you to calculate your gains and losses, and track information for tax purposes. Quicken has added features over the years to make it easy to track your 401Ks and IRAs and other assets such as annuities, rental properties and autos.

Quicken comes in many flavors: Home & Business, Basic, Deluxe, Premier, and Premier H&B. Following is a chart highlighting the features available in each box. Most users will be very pleased with the Deluxe or Premier version. For the small business user, Intuit also offers QuickBooks for more extensive small business reporting and bookkeeping. As I mentioned at the beginning, I am using Home & Business version so that I can generate (using customized templates) customer invoices, estimates, cash flow and P&L statements and other Schedule C expenses.

As with most programs that keep expanding over time, Quicken is not without its faults. The customer support is somewhat lacking - unless you enjoy spending $1.95 per minute to discuss a bug with a technician. An online chat facility is available for a

Gear CD/ DVD Burners Reviewed

By: Alan Lummus,

PRODUCT(S) REVIEWED:

■ GEAR CD-RW Edition, Retail 1 user version, version 6.05

■ GEAR DVD Standard Edition, Retail 1 user version, version 6.05

■ GEAR PRO Professional Edition, Retail 1 user version, version 6.05

■ GEAR PRO Mastering Edition, Retail 1 user version, version 6.05

Publisher: GEAR Software, Inc.

SHORT SUMMARY:

If you're looking for full featured, reliable burning/recording software for your CD or DVD re-

corder, you need look no further than GEAR Software, Inc.'s extensive range of recording solutions. Whether you're working in a Windows, UNIX or Linux environment, as a single user or part of an enterprise department, GEAR provides a cost effective solution.

Conclusion: Highly recommended.

Current Retail Prices for version 6.05:

■ GEAR CD-RW $ 39.95

■ GEAR DVD "Standard Edition"
                                         $ 79.95

■ GEAR PRO "Professional Edition"
                                         $ 149.99

■ GEAR PRO "Mastering Edition"

■ $ 749.00

■ GEAR PRO Linux for DVD/CD-RW/Tape
                                         $ 799.00

■ GEAR PRO for UNIX $1,499.00

REVIEW:

GEAR Software, Inc develops, publishes, and sells CD and DVD burning/recording software that does one thing exceedingly well: it enables its users to control virtually every aspect of recording a CD or DVD, whether for personal or commercial use. GEAR supports virtually every CD or DVD burner on the market, and, without a lot of extraneous bells and whistles, it operates through a straight forward and easy to understand user interface. Each program work exactly as described in GEAR's excellent user manuals and the wide range of GEAR software is

Quicken 2004 PremierHome & Business

limited number of hours on selected days. They seem to have a continuing problem generating color reports on color printers. The installation process scatters useless superfluous icons on your desktop for advertising purposes. While using the program, they provide many opportunities for you to upgrade to the more expensive version of the program to get to a particular feature, and offer to sell you multiple financial services (loans of all types, credit cards, checks, etc.) from the dropdown menu system.

Product prices range from free (for the Basic version when purchasing another Intuit product TurboTax) to $90 for the H&B version, usually accompanied by a rebate form for upgraders – except if you try to purchase from the Quicken web site and the upgrade rebate disappears. The web site: offers additional product descriptions and a FAQ for each product line.

Ray Wright

priced so you can pay only for those capabilities you actually need. Whether you're just burning a few CDs as backups for your important data files, or preparing a premaster tape for sending CD or DVD masters to a commercial pressing plant, GEAR offers a cost effective solution regardless of whether you operate in a Windows, UNIX or Linux environment. For its UNIX users, GEAR even provides support for IDE and SCSI recording hardware most commonly associated with the Windows environment. In short, if you're looking for premastering software to enable you to create and burn CDs or DVDs, you owe it to yourself to explore GEAR's product offerings.

When I first received the Windows versions of the GEAR software for review, I just wasn't very excited. I've been recording CDs and DVDs for more than 10 years, and I typically record 2-4 discs every day, usually for music related to the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Chorus or for backup of my personal or professional data files. I've used a variety of burning software and hardware over the years, most of which get the job done reasonably well. So who needs another piece of software that does the same thing? And how

about the price tag I saw first that lists the "Mastering Edition" at $749.00? Hey, the "bundled" software that came with each of my CD and DVD burners was free! Why would anyone pay that kind of money for recording software?

Suffice it to say, the GEAR software CDs set around for several months before I got around to loading them up. By then, I noticed there were newer versions advertised on GEAR's website, so I called the company and was put in touch with the Product Manager of GEAR's Windows product line, who was most helpful. He provided me with the most recent versions of GEAR's Windows products, and I was ready to begin my testing.

Now, I'm one of those strange birds who always begins by reading, or at least attempting to read, the user manuals for any hardware or software I'll be using for the first time. It usually doesn't help a lot, but I do sometimes pickup handy tidbits. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that instead of the typical cryptic, "techno jargon" translation from some impossible to identify foreign language, I discovered the most straight forward user manuals I've ever encountered! These manuals, clearly written by someone whose native language really was English, not only provide a complete introduction to the software and its use, but also a quite comprehensive guide to the burning process itself and detailed explanations of each step along the way. If you're new to burning CDs or DVD's,

Illustration 1. Screen Shot of GEAR PRO "Mastering Edition" User Interface
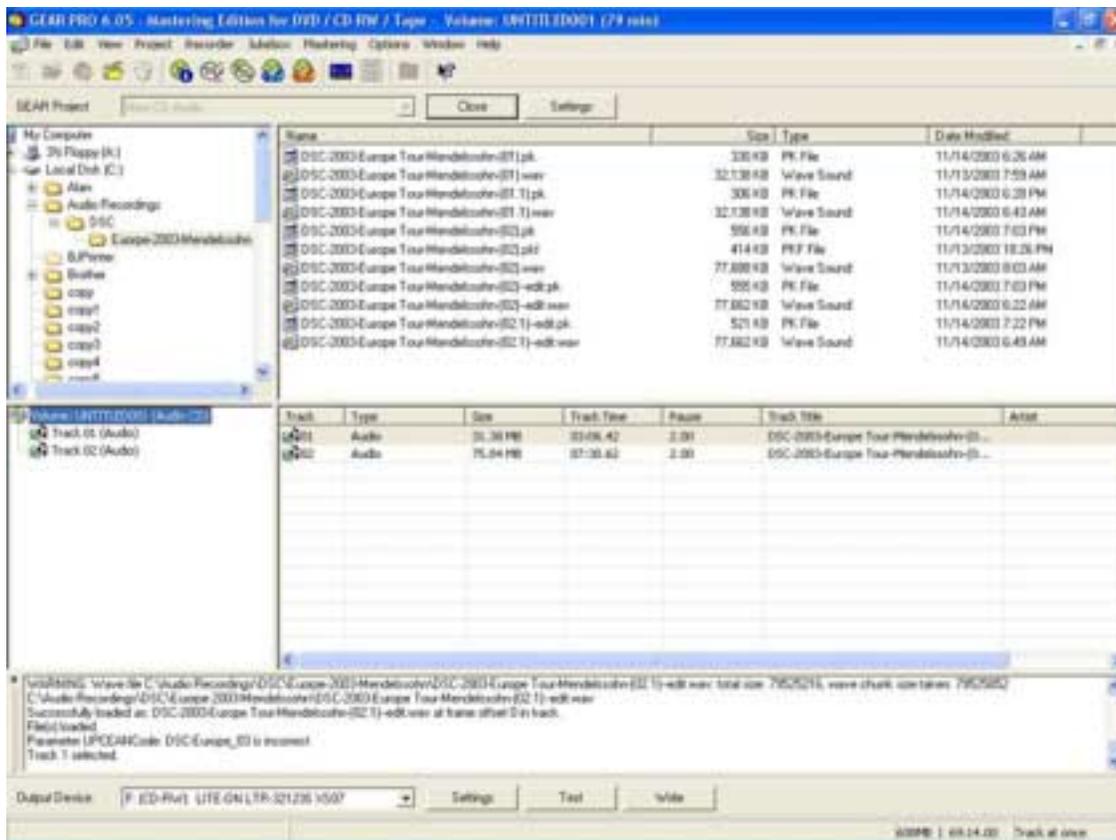
these manuals alone could be worth the price of the product.

With that pleasant surprise behind me, I proceeded to install the least expensive of the GEAR products, "GEAR CD-RW." If you operate in a Windows environment and don't need the capability to burn DVDs, or work in the field of commercial CD duplication, this handy software will provide all the functionality you need to do anything you can imagine with your CD-R/RW recorder, and all for only $39.99! Need to rip a track from an audio CD? How about copy a CD, or create a video CD? Back up data files to CD? Make a standard audio CD, playable in any standard audio CD player, from your collection of MP3 files? No, problem! The program performed flawlessly on all five burners I tried, which included internal and external SCSI, external USB-2, external FireWire (IEEE-1394), and internal IDE. The software ran equally well for me under Windows 98, Windows 2000, and Windows XP Professional and XP Home.

GEAR DVD "Standard Edition" includes all the functionality GEAR CD-RW plus added support for DVD burning. Like the CD-RW version, the Standard Edition omits the ability to create premaster tapes for either CD or DVD mastering, or to output a DDP image to a hard drive or for transfer via FTP to a duplication plant. Unless you're involved with the commercial production of CDs or DVDs, you're not likely to ever need these capabilities. At a retail price of $79.99, this DVD "Standard Edition" provides great functionality, and, like its junior sibling, GEAR's DVD Standard edition performed reliably in the creation of every type if CD and DVD I tried, with each of my various recorders.

GEAR PRO "Professional Edition" is intended for the professional user market, adds more fulsome live technical support to the functionality of DVD "Standard Edition", also adds the capability to use batch files to automate your processing (especially handy for data backup), and is priced at $149.99. If you use your burner for data backup regularly (as we all should), you'll really appreciate this feature. If you could otherwise use the batch file operation capability, or think you may need a lot of hand holding by a real, live person who can actually answer your questions, the seventy extra dollars is money well spent.
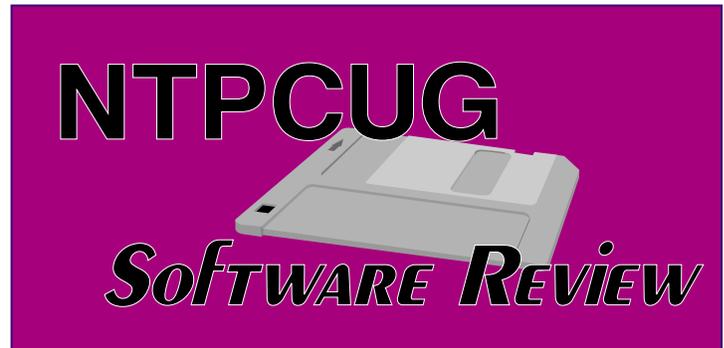
GEAR PRO "Mastering Edition" is designed for commercial users who want ultra-reliable performance while also automating both their work flow and the transfer of their work product to the duplication plant. To all the functionality of the versions listed above, GEAR Mastering Edition adds the ability to create a Disc Description Protocol (DDP) file, to output DDP images from a CD or DVD to your hard drive, to record CD or DVD premaster tapes in virtually any commercially popular format, and even to automatically compress and transfer DDP files via FTP over the Internet to a commercial disc replication facility. It also supports batch processing and even provides jukebox control, which could be especially handy if you're running an IT department with one or more multiple-drive jukeboxes online that you need to support. This product has it all for the professional user working in a Windows environment; and at a price of $749.00, it will earn its keep in short order for anyone who can use these time saving commercial functions. As with each of its less capable siblings, GEAR PRO "Mastering Edition" performed equally well with all the CD/DVD recorders I tested it with. It also worked well with my SCSI DAT tape drive.

Since I don't have a machine currently running either UNIX or Linux, I wasn't able to test GEAR's recording software for those platforms. Judging from each of their Windows products, I suspect they should work equally well. If you're running Linux or UNIX in a professional or commercial environment, be sure to check out GEAR's offerings for those platforms.

For ease of comparison of the capabilities of the various GEAR offerings, I've reproduced below a table from GEAR's website:

	GEAR CD-RW	GEAR DVD "Standard Edition"	GEAR PRO "Professional Edition"	GEAR PRO "Mastering Edition"	GEAR PRO for Unix	GEAR PRO for Linux
					4.12	4.12
Tech-Support			✓	✓	✓	✓
Write CD-R(W)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Erase CD-R(W)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CD-ROM support ISO/Joliet	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CD-Audio support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MP3 support	✓	✓	✓	✓		
CD-ROM XA support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Video CD creation	✓	✓	✓	✓		
CD Copying	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DVD Copying		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ISO/UDF support		✓	✓	✓		
Rock Ridge support				✓	✓	✓
Write DVD-R(W)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Write DVD+RW		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Write DVD+R		✓	✓	✓		
Write DVD-RAM		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DVD-ROM support		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DVD-Video support		✓	✓	✓		
Disc-at-once, track-at-once Writing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Incremental Packet Writing (VPW, FPW)				✓		
Format CD-RW, DVD-RW and DVD+RW discs		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burn-Proof, Just Link, Safe Burn, Write Proof, Seamless Link, Overburning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Verify-after-write	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Write Premaster Tape (CD mastering)				✓	✓	✓
Write Premaster Tape (DVD mastering)				✓		
Convert CD/DVD to Premaster Tape				✓		
Write Disc Description Protocol (DDP)				✓	✓	✓
Output DDP image to hard drive				✓		
Jukebox control				✓	✓	✓
GEAR Command / Batch file support			✓	✓	✓	✓

If you're involved in designing software applications that may need to incorporate the ability to record to CD or DVD, GEAR also offers a license to its recording technology for use by third-party developers. As evidence of the respect with which GEAR technology is regarded by other software developers, you'll find their recording engine presently incorporated in products from Cakewalk, Kodak, Apple, and Symantec-PowerQuest, to name just a few.

GEAR's DVD software is among a very few products which presently supports the creation of dual layer DVD-ROM images. While that isn't of much present use to personal users, the next few years should begin to see the retail availability of both hardware and media that will support that emerging technology, which will effectively double the amount of storage available per side of a DVD. To me, this is just another example of how GEAR is leading the way in disc recording technology, and it could be of significant value to you if you are engaged in commercial DVD production.

As to quite minor nit picking, I was surprised to find that the otherwise most fulsome GEAR user manuals did not provide any information on a term and procedure widely: "ripping" an audio track from a disc and recording it to your hard drive as a WAV file. GEAR refers to ripping as "track copy," and the method for performing this function was not at all intuitive. With an audio CD loaded, to access that capability from the menu one has to click
/ Information, then click on the "Session," then highlight the track or tracks. Finally, an icon appears that stands for "Copy Track," and you can proceed. Alternatively, you could click the "Disk Information" icon in the tool bar, then highlight the Session, then highlight a track or tracks, and the same "Copy Track" icon appears. This really should be more intuitive. There should be a better explanation in the manual that is searchable using the term "ripping." Finally, if you have multiple records connected to your computer and would like to make multiple copies of a project simultaneously, GEAR's software currently doesn't support that feature. If you need that capability, you might want to examine "Nero Burning ROM" from Ahead Software as a possible solution.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention GEAR's great website. There's a comprehensive glossary of DVD and CD related terminology, as well as really well written "how-to" guides for a wide variety of functions and processes. Regardless of your experience level, there's much helpful information there for anyone recording discs, whether personally or commercially.

GEAR's complete range of recording solutions is available for purchase on their website, and it's also available from a limited number of resellers & distributors around the country and in other parts of the world, as detailed on their website; however, you won't find their software in any local D/FW stores. GEAR's online shopping cart is secure and works well, so you shouldn't have any problems purchasing it there. Since GEAR's software is available by Internet download, with file sizes ranging from approximate 10 to 20 MB, you can purchase and download their software to your local computer faster than you could drive to a local store to pick it up anyway. If you insist upon a physical CD, they offer that as well, at an extra charge for shipping and handling, shipped via your choice of FedEx, UPS, or USPS.

In conclusion, each of the GEAR burning/recording products I tested was rock solid in its performance. Each performed exactly as advertised, was a joy to use, and utterly dependable. GEAR offers the widest selection of premastering capabilities and operating platforms of any recording software developer of which I am aware, enabling each user to pay only for those facilities they need. If you spend any time burning CDs or DVDs, check out this great family of software. Oh, and one last thing...if you need "coasters," this product's not for you!

PUBLISHER/MANUFACTURER INFORMATION:

GEAR Software, Inc.
1 Main Street Suite 205
Tequesta, Florida USA 33469

Contact Information:

Sales-

Telephone: +1 561-575-GEAR (4327)
Fax: +1 561-575-9315
Email: *sales.us@gearsoftware.com*

Technical Support-

Phone: +1 561-575-GEAR (4327)
Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm Eastern Standard Time (USA).
Fax: +1 561-575-9315
Email: *support.us@gearsoftware.com*

Website-

http://www.gearsoftware.com

System Requirements:

To run any of the GEAR CD or DVD recording applications reviewed here, you need the following minimum configuration:

- A Pentium 166 or faster CPU

- Windows 98, Windows Millennium Edition, Windows NT 4.0, Windows 2000 or Windows XP

- A supported CD-R(W), DVD-R(W), DVD+R(W) or DVD-RAM drive

- A minimum of 250 Mb free disk space for project management (virtual images)

- Enough space for optional physical images to be written (typically 650 MB for CDROM,

- 800 MB for Audio CD, and 4.7 GB for DVD)

- A fast HDD (12 ms average access or less)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Alan Lummus is a Product Reviewer for NTPCUG. He is also a commercial webmaster, developing and managing several commercial websites and affiliate programs selling a wide range of consumer products. Alan is SIG Leader for three NTPCUG SIGS, including: Professional MIDI/Audio, FrontPage, and e-Commerce. Alan is also a member of, and the audio archivist for, the Dallas Symphony Chorus. Alan began his computer experience using PDP 4's, 8's and 11's, and IBM 360 mainframes during his college education at the University of Texas at Austin in the 1960's, and he's been using mini and micro computers ever since.

Alan Lummus

!!! Mark Your Calendar !!!

Future Newsletter Deadlines and Meeting Dates

Please Note: The March meeting will be on March 20 at Building "C" on the North Lake Community College in Irving, TX.

Our main meeting presentations [and most SIGs] will be on the **third Saturday** of each month. The **newsletter deadline** each month will be **fifteen days before** the main meeting. See the schedule below at right for a listing of those dates.
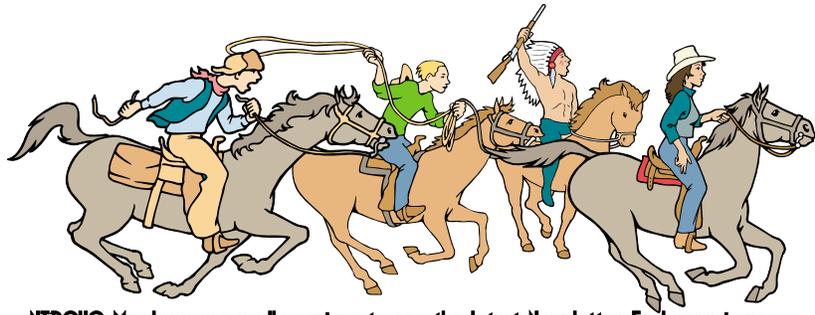
NTPCUG Members are really anxious to see the latest Newsletter Exchange issues...

Newsletter Deadline	Meeting Date
March 5	March 20, 3rd Sat.
April 2	April 17, 3rd Sat.
April 30	May 15, 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 Building #1 located at 7000 State Highway 161 in Irving, Texas.

Up-to-date Information

Make it a habit to check our Web site at *http://www.ntpcug.org* for any last minute changes. Keep informed through our Web site.

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

Every Member
NTPCUG
Get a New Member
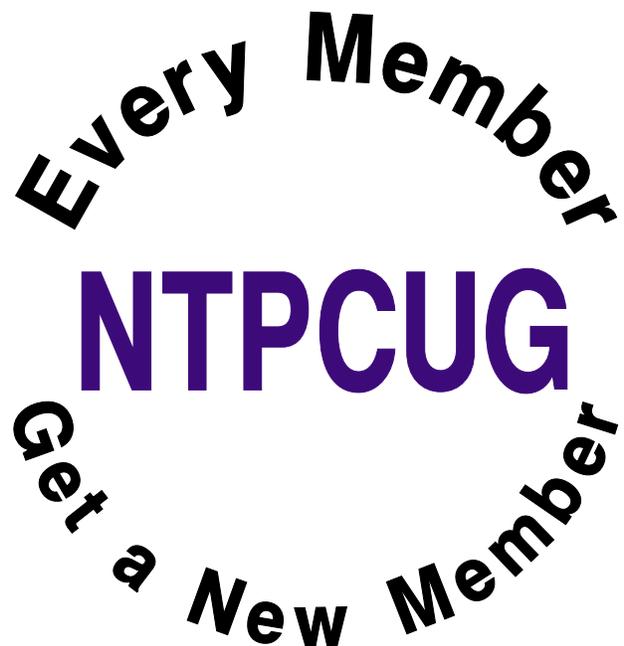
The Joys of IT Work

Employment in the field of technology, and in particular, employment in computer support is filled with incredible joy. Where else can you experience the following?

What a thrill to have people call you all day long, who start their sentences with, "I have a problem..."; "I have a problem..."; "I have a problem...".

You can even have people call you at home at night, who say, "I'm sorry to bother you at home, but... I have a problem."

Sometimes your caller, who thinks they are soooo creative, will tell you instead, "it's not a problem.... it's an opportunity!"

*If you're really lucky, your caller will advise that she just has a "quick question," thus signaling that you're required to put out the fire within 30 seconds and no more.

In order to stay on top of all of those problems, you get to model an attractive beeper from the time you wake up and until you get home, which can erupt at any time like a newborn baby, and will demand your immediate attention.

You can thrill to the thought that everything you have learned so far is 3 years behind the current technology, and you have no hope of ever catching up.

 Checking e-mail every 5 minutes can become a new religious ritual. Your faithfulness to the duty will help establish what level of IT nirvana you'll attain.

You get to learn a whole new language of techno-babble, which includes more acronyms than you can shake a dongle at.

You get to put out more fires than Smokey the Bear.

You get to experience regular and yet unexpected miniature disasters that enrich your existence and enhance your drinking life.

In the legal field, you get the unique privilege of not just having one boss, but having as many bosses as there are egos in the firm, which means you'll have LOTS of bosses.

You're a special species not found anywhere else in the universe. You're not a human, not a technology professional, not a valued colleague, not "my partner in IT" - - noooo, none of those. You're a Computer Person!

Very special and entirely unique, except that you share the privilege with everyone else in the IT field and thus can know that you're all entirely fungible.

Being fungible and at the same time being the Head Computer Person means that you frequently get to observe blank stares when you articulate a brilliant response to the following question or its numerous variations:

"We have four Computer People. Why can't we do this in-house? Why did we hire somebody to be the Help Desk Computer Person if he can't set up a nationwide VPN?"

Humor Line

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 **http://www.ntpcug.org**

Access

The *Microsoft Access SIG* meets with other developer SIGs on the *Second Saturday* of the month, at Microsoft's facility in Irving on the President George Bush Parkway (State Hwy. 161), just North of State Highway 114. If you exit Highway 114 going North, stay on the access road and you'll find the Microsoft entrance before you reach the first tollbooth entrance onto the President George Bush Parkway. The Access SIG website at **http://members.tripod.com/ntaccess/** has directions, a link to a map, and meeting times.

Larry Linson

Alpha Five Database

In the most recent Alpha Software newsletter, our own **Martin Cole** has an article on Networking in Alpha Five. In the article, Martin covers quite a number of topics, including his design strategy for reducing round trips to the server, identifying which user on the network has a record locked, automatically closing forms left in enter/edit mode, forcing users out of Alpha Five if emergency maintenance work is needed, and techniques for working with shadow databases, just to name several.

We won't have time to cover all these topics, but with the newsletter article and Martin's sample files I think you will find a wealth of ideas to help you in networking environments.

Bill Parker

ASP.NET

The ASP.NET SIG is a place that developers that are new to ASP.NET can

come and learn what they need to learn to successfully develop a production quality website using ASP.NET.

Toi B. Wright, President of Microsoft Application Developers, www.madtx.org has taken over as SIG leader.

Controls

Our February meeting was on validation controls. However, due to the weather (snow) we had a very poor turnout. So, although we are scheduled to talk about DataGrids this month, I will do an encore presentation on validation controls if there is enough interest at the meeting. Otherwise, we will discuss DataGrids as planned.

Upcoming Meetings

❖ April - More Datagrids
❖ May - Data Repeaters and Data Lists

Toi B Wright

Communications

THE CASE FOR MOZILLA 1.6

Mozilla has emerged as the number one browser alternative to MS Internet Explorer. Netscape announced another reduction in its Netscape browser development staff in February 2004. And, AOL has signed an agreement to use MS Internet Explorer in future releases of its products.

Netscape is supplying funding and personnel to **Mozilla.org.** Mozilla is a open source browser (the source code is publicly available). Mozilla is free, but they do ask for a donation.

SIG Meeting Schedule

8:00
    Microsoft Networking
    Hardware Solutions
    Excel/Spreadsheets
  e-Commerce

9:00
    Communications
    Operating Systems
    PC Concepts
    Dallas Corel
    Microsoft FrontPage
    Microsoft Word

10:00
    Access – Beginning
    Alpha Five Data Base
    PC Concepts (Continued)
    Microsoft Word (Continued)
    Personal Digital Assistants
    Professional MIDI and Audio
    Rhino 3D

11:00
  Internet
  Web Design
  PC Concepts (Continued)
  WordPerfect for Windows
  Digital Photography
  Perl

12:00
    NTPCUG Business Meeting

12:30
    Investors
    DSDA
    Linux
    The Master Genealogist
    Family Tree Maker

1:30
    DSDA (Continued)
    The Master Genealogist
      (continued)
    Linux (Continued)

SIG meetings are listed by time for the March 20 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 3/13
    Access
    ASP.net
    Visual BASIC - Advanced
    Visual BASIC - Beginning

. . . . SIGs

In most respects, Mozilla functions and operates similar to the Netscape browser. Mozilla is not able to access Netscape mail through the mail client because the AOL protocol is proprietary. Netscape mail can be accessed through web mail in Mozilla. Plugins, cookies, address books, and bookmarks are interchangeable with Netscape browsers. The Mozilla profiles list includes both Mozilla and Netscape profiles. You can use a Netscape profile in Mozilla but you can't receive Netscape Mail in the mail client. Mozilla doesn't include AOL Instant Messenger or ICQ but includes ChatZilla (IRC chat client).

The Mozilla browser includes an advanced e-mail and newsgroup client. Tabbed browsing is included in Mozilla. With tabbed browsing, you can open several pages at once, with one click. Your homage can be multiple tabbed pages. The browser has a built-in popup blocker which can block sites on a per site basis. Junk mail controls are adaptive and get smarter as you use the Internet. E-mail includes customizable Labels (color code e-mail for importance) and Mail Views to speed the review of mail. Finally, there are advanced security settings, Password manager, Download Manager, Cookie Manager, Themes and multi-language support. Mozilla is available for download at *http://www.mozilla.org/start/1.6/* . We will compare the Mozilla browser to other browsers in our March SIG.

Birl Smith

Dallas Corel

March Meeting
Martin Hellar will show a CD produced by Software Cinema. Software Cinema in partnership with Adobe are offering Free CDs each quarter that show in detail certain procedures in Photoshop 7. This will be an opportunity to see what Software Cinema's products are and decide if we want to continue each quarter to talking about Photoshop7's features.

The CD for the winter quarter has six sections, each with a different speaker. The topics covered are Crop Techniques, Liquify Tool, Duplicating Elements, Custom Grayscale, Soft Focus Technique and The Healing Brush.

In addition to the One Hour CD, Software Cinema and Adobe have also given us four different CDs covering Portrait Photographers Basics, Essential Post Production, Retouching Advanced and Advanced Techniques II. These four CDs will be added to our SIG library for check out by our members.

February In Review
Our speaker was **Marsha Drebelbis**, President and founder of a graphic design firm in Dallas called Litigation Graphics. The firm creates trial exhibits for litigation attorneys that help them win in court. As a Demonstrative Evidence Specialist, Ms. Drebelbis provides visual strategy consultation and exhibit design. Deliverables are posters, animations, 3-D models, and videos. The firm also provides multimedia presentations in the courtroom, using today's technology. We peeked into the Litigation Graphics studio at its new location via slide show.

Since CorelDRAW Graphics Suite 12 became available only days ago, naturally we were curious to try a few of its new features. First, after installing the upgrade, we noticed that one's own custom Workspace from DRAW 11 was accessed in 12 as the default Workspace. Very convenient. A new Workspace option is available for MS Word users, joining the Adobe Illustrator users option.

Four CD's come in the box. CD number 4 with the application is an easy-to-use training movie that clearly demonstrates the new features and introduces the basics to new users.

Family Tree Maker
Tresa Tatyrek......(972) 539-7452
genealogy@magnoliamanor-net-work.com

Genealogist - The Master
Jeri Steele...........(214) 567-6289 w
steele@pioneerinfo.com
Bill Dow (972) 306-1596 w
dow@PioneerInfo.com

Hardware Solutions
Charles Miller......(903) 938-4220 h
cbaxter@pobox.com
Ralph Beaver ......(817) 624-9530 h
Gary Johnson......(972) 938-0344 h

Internet
Glynn Brooks ......(214)-228-2831
glynn@rgbtechnical.com

Investors
Kathryn (Kathy) Kirby
infoinvest@aol.com

Linux
John McNeil ....(972) 227-2881
john.mcneil@ntpcug.org
Gil Brand,
gb1@ntpcug.org

Microsoft FrontPage
Alan Lummus......(972) 733-4141 w&h
alan.lummus@ntpcug.org

Microsoft Networking
Gil Brand ....(214) 341-7182 h
g.brand@ntpcug.org
Bill Rodgers.........(972) 690-3507 h
bill@lexonitech.com

Microsoft Word
Diane Bentley......(972) 724-0855 w&h
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org.com

Midi & Audio SIG
Alan Lummus......(972)-733-4141
alan.lummus@ntpcug.org

Operating Systems
Reagan Andrews (214) 828-0699 h
reagan.andrews@ntpcug.org
Chuck Stark ....(972) 985-9176
chuck.stark@attbi.com

PC Concepts
Harold (Spike) Smith
...........................(214) 764-1188 h
intro@comcast.net

SIGs . . . .

In our SIG, we used the new "Smart Drawing Tool", as it recognizes over 20 basic shapes, plus "perfect" shapes. Even when using a mouse instead of a stylus (which would be handy), it was easy.

The enhanced "Eyedropper Tool" fascinated us all when it picked up size, fill, outline, position and effects (such as drop shadow) features from another shape. When adjusting object rotation, the shadow follows it. The tool even transcends the application, allowing you to touch another object on the desktop to get a color. Impressive.

The enhanced ".PDF Publisher" inside DRAW now offers so many more options, you may think you're using Acrobat Distiller. Other new and enhanced features we look forward to exploring another time are "Dynamic Guides", "Export to Office Products", and the "Import Cursor".

Rick Altman, author of many instructional books on Corel graphics products and veteran CorelDRAW seminar producer, will include Dallas on his spring seminar tour. March 23 will focus on CorelDRAW Graphics Suite 12 and March 24 will go in-depth into MS PowerPoint. Now uniquely compatible with each other, these two popular apps are state-of-the-art graphics creation and presentation tools. To learn more and sign up for one or both days at Rick's always-popular seminar, visit *http://www.altman.com*.

January In Review
Gene Brown put on real show all about archiving graphics and data in general on CDs. Basically, Gene said all CDs are not created equal and they don't give equal results. He did quite a bit of research on the subject and shared it with our SIG. How they are made, what makes one better than another,

which are the best to use, and how do you know that you have the best CDs for your application. Well, there is some freeware that Gene showed that will tell you all you need to know about the CD you are planning to use. Gene's choice for all around best CD (for long life) is Mitsui's MAM-A Gold Standard CD-Rs with Gold reflective layer and patented organic Pythalo-cyanine dye. These are available on the web at *http://www.inkjetart.com/mitsui/index.html*.
Gene also told about his experience of having one of his CDs go bad. With a little research, he found a recovery program which can save a lot of the data on a bad CD. This program "isobuster" is a freeware/shareware program and is available on the Internet at (where else) *http://www.isobuster.com*.

December In Review
Since I was not able to make the December meeting, I asked **Cynthia** to not only make the presentation, but to also take charge and give me a summary of what happened. As usual, she did everything up in high style. Her summary follows verbatim. Simply too good for me to mess with it.

"In December we discussed creating calendars in Corel with a VB plugin included in version 11, (also available for use with CD10 as a shareware download from *http://www.oberon-place.com/products/calendarwizard/index.htm* and as a script for versions 7-9 at *http://www.oberon-*

SIG of North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

. . . . SIGs

place.com/draw/drawscripts/index.htm). We discussed the basic steps involved and Viola! just ten seconds till you have a custom-made calendar which can be further designed and decorated in Corel's limitless fashion-traditional calendars, magnetic calendars, weekly planners, scrolling calendars, 3D calendars and in sizes ranging from the whole year on business cards to poster size wall hangings.

Perl SIG
Larry Martin .... (972)-783-4548
larry.martin@acm.org
Gil Brand............. (214)-341-7182
gb1@ntpcug.org

Personal Digital Assistants
Birl Smith **............** (214) 616-6458 w
birl.smith@ntpcug.org
Craig Winder....... (469)-667-6626 w
c.winder@ntpcug.org
David Martin
davidm@attbi.com

Rhino 3D
Bob Campbell ..... (817) 540-1273
bob@campbelldesigns.com

Visual Basic .NET — Beginning
Tuc Goodwin ...... (972) 345-9934
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

Visual Basic .NET — Advanced
Stephen Johnson (214) 532-9788
stephen@rsj-services.com

Web Design - Programming
Steve Shanafeldt (972) 523-4846
steve@developercourses.com

Web Design
Hollis Hutchinson (214) 328-2251
TutorsOnTap@aol.com
John McNeil,
john.mcneil@ntpcug.org

WordPerfect / Windows
Cindy Adams ...... (817) 481-1300 wM
cadams11@earthlink.net
Diane Bentley ..... (972) 724-0855 w&h
diane.bently@ntpcug.org

A calendar is yet another irresistible opportunity to combine basic utilitarian function with creative expression limited only by the scope of your imagination. Don't settle for the generic insert-your-photo-here calendar when you have a tool like Corel waiting to serve your self-expression. It's kind of like taking the bull by the horns--make it your goal for 2004 to master the tool and make it serve you instead of frustrating you because of its vastness. Have a prosperous New Year!"

2004 Program Schedule

March   Martin Hellar

April   Marsha Drebelbis

May – December??

For Support on all Corel Products, access Support at Corel at *http://www.corel.com/support/ftpsite*

For past program information Access Dallas Corel's full Web site and archives at *http://www.ntpcug.org/sigs/corel/new/meet.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/articles/romcat*.

Martin Hellar

Digital Photography

In March, we will finish up Desktop Video with a discussion of editing. We could go on for a long time with editing because there is a lot of video editing software available. I plan to show some simple editing tasks using Nero Vision.

If there is time, I will show something more complex using my preferred software Adobe Premiere. If there is enough interest in Desktop Video then it is possible that the NTPCUG will have to create another SIG.

In April, we need to get back to Digital Photography. For the last month I have been using product from nik Multimedia called Color Efex Pro, which is a collection of PhotoShop compatible plug-in filters. By the time you read this, I believe that my review of this product will be available in the review area of the NTPCUG web site.

I would like to mention that Red River Paper, a local paper company , has recently had six of their inkjet papers tested for longevity and fading. The excellent results of that testing is on-line at *http://www.redrivercatalog.com/infocenter/archivalcopy.html*. In addition, they now supply icc color profiles for their papers when printing on the most popular Epson and Canon printers.

I have been printing on one of their papers recently and am very pleased with it. They have a sampler that you can or-

---

IMPORTANT COREL ADDRESSES & PHONE NUMBERS

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

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

❖G1 Release, CD-Rom only(latest "fixes" and patches for Corel products)
.... 800-772-6735

❖Customer Service Representatives
.... 800-772-6735

❖IVAN (Interactive Voice Answering Network)...................... 613-728-1990

❖24 Hour Automated Fax System
.... 613-728-0826 Ext.3080

❖Technical Support hours are 4AM to 8PM (EST) excluding holidays

❖To obtain our catalogue please request document #2000

der on-line or drop by their showroom in Dallas.

Several new cameras (some up to 8 megapixels) have been released in the last 4 or 5 months. As usual, the new cameras are putting pricing pressure on the old ones. This has upped the quality level and made it easier than ever to get into digital photography.

My e-mail address is jdunn@ImagesBy-JamesDunn.com. As always, please put NTPCUG on the subject line so I don't delete your e-mail thinking it is SPAM.

James Dunn

e-Commerce

At our March 2004 regular meeting on the 3rd Saturday, we will check up on each of your e-commerce activities, including the affiliate marketing efforts commenced last month at our all-day workshop. We will also set out an agenda for the remainder of 2004.

Our Third Saturday meeting begins promptly at 8:00 am. Be sure to check at the sign-in desk for the exact room location.

Alan Lummus

Excel

To enhance the experience for the EX-CEL SIG members, we would like to hear what topics you are most interested in. Please keep these topics general, like formatting cells, custom views, filtering and sorting data, using list, importing data, validating entries, analyzing data, data entry forms, charts, or pivot tables.

If there are specific problems you want to address, list them separately. Send your suggestions by e-mail to *jrjrivero@hotmail.com*.

Art Babb
Jose Rivero

SIGs . . . .

Internet

How do Internet Security Zones work?

Are there some web sites that you trust more than others? At the March meeting, we'll take a look at the way Internet Explorer uses security settings, and how you can modify the settings to surf the Internet more securely. You'll learn how to visit the sites that you trust without getting warning messages, and how you can automatically raise the shields when exploring new web sites.

At the February meeting we discussed how SSL works to provide secure connections with other computers on the Internet. We are grateful that **Bob Webber** allowed us to use his laptop for the demonstrations.

Here are the topics planned for the next few months:

❖ April: Internet Explorer keyboard shortcuts, and ways to organize your Favorites.

❖ May: instant messaging - how to set it up, tools to make it easier to communicate with people using different IM services

❖ June: USENET, user communities, blogging, newsfeeds, finding the news you are interested in.

Glynn Brooks

Investors

The next meeting is Saturday, March 20, 2004. Please double check on the day of the meeting for the room location for that specific day.

Again and very important - I need someone to be my assistant SIG leader. This person can be a back up person or take a more active roll and do presentations that interest them.
E-mail me and we can talk about it.

This is a list of web sites the Vector Vest group is looking at. I thought we would review them also.

http://www.prophet.net
http://www.hotcandlestock.com
http://www.equis.com
http://www.leavittbrothers.com
http://www.chartpatterns.com

The Options Industry Council will have two seminars in the Dallas area. On May 5th in Dallas -- the Intermediate options seminar. It is suggested that you have taken the introductory course or the online course before attending this seminar.

The online course is available at
http://www.888options.com
On May 6th in Dallas -- the Market Directions seminar You register for these seminars at
http://www.888options.com

Kathryn (Kathy) Kirby

Linux

In March, we will have a Q&A session.

If your Linux distro is giving you problems, bring your processor and we will help you debug it. You don't need to bring your monitor, keyboard, mouse, etc.

Gil Brand

. . . . SIGs

Microsoft FrontPage

At our March, 2004, regular 3rd Saturday meeting, we will explore design techniques for webpage templates that can significantly reduce your work in maintaining a website. We will also set our agenda for the remainder of the year.

Our meeting time is 9:00 am, and the SIG immediately follows the e-commerce SIG at 8. Check at the sign in desk for exact room location.

Whether you are a novice or an experienced user of FrontPage, come and share your experience, questions and answers as we explore both the capabilities and limitations of this software, both for personal and commercial websites.

Alan Lummus

Microsoft Networking

In March, we will have a Q&A session.

If you have any specific topics for which you would like to see a demo or presentation, send me a note.

Gil Brand

Microsoft Word

Welcome to the Word SIG — please join us each month for a terrific meeting!

MEETING TOPICS ... *are tentative and may change*

FOUNDATION - 9-10 am

MARCH — **Save and Open Dialog Boxes**
While everyone knows how to save and open a document, do you understand all of the buttons and options in those dialog boxes? In this meeting, each of these will be explained. Do you

like shortcuts? I have some for opening, saving and closing a document.

APRIL — **Folders and Document Properties**
I continually see others' documents stored in one lonnnng *(yes, really long)* list. How do you folks find things? We're going to create folders and subfolders, and then move documents into them. It's time to get things organized! Document Properties provides lots of information that just might be of help to you, and we're going to take a look at it.

MAY — **Navigating**
Yes, we all know how to move throughout our documents. The scroll bars and Browse were covered in the January meeting. But there's more! This meeting we'll take a look at some keyboard shortcuts, Go To, Go Back, and Find/Replace.

ADVANCED - 10-11 am

MARCH — **Tables - Formatting - Part 2** *(continued)***; Tables - Sort & Formulas - Part 3**
We'll take a look at more formatting, then move on to sorting. If your Table is updated periodically, the ability to have it re-sort the new information into the old information may save you time. Although Tables is not a substitute for a spreadsheet, you can perform several mathematical functions. Most likely, we will not be able to cover formulas (there's just not enough time), but information for using formulas will be included in the newsletter.

APRIL — **Columns**
Columns can make documents with lots and lots of text easier to read. Decreasing the length of the line makes it much easier to read.

MAY — **Templates**
Most of us have opened an existing document, deleted the information we didn't want, added new information, then saved it as a new document. By

doing this, we didn't have to set up everything in the document each time we used it. When you use a template to achieve this result, you won't have to waste your time deleting the unwanted information; and, when you save it, it is automatically saved as a new document, thus eliminating the chance of overwriting the original document.

Our newsletter, *The Word*, can now be accessed from here. Follow the links at the end of this Web page.

D R A G O N   N A T U R A L L Y   S P E A K I N G
If you would like to be part of an e-mail group to share information and experiences in learning and using NatSpeak *(as the Pros call it)*, let me know (*diane.bentley@ntpcug.org*)!!

W O W!   I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

Extend Selection Keyboard Shortcut **Bob Lozen** sent me this tip which ties with the EXT key on the Status Bar mentioned at the February meeting. The tip was in a newsletter from *http://www.techrepublic.com*:

While clicking and dragging is useful for selecting blocks of text, it can be cumbersome for finer selections, such as selecting individual characters or text that extends across multiple screens. Word's Extend Selection keyboard shortcut can help you make these selections more efficiently. To activate this feature, follow these steps:

1.   Move the cursor to the beginning of the text you want to select

2.   Press [F8]. (This highlights the EXT button in the status bar)

3.   Use the keyboard or the mouse to move the cursor to the end of the selection

4.   Press [Esc]. (This deselects the EXT button in the status bar)

To select a line, press the up or down arrow keys. To select text to the end of the line, press [End]; press [Home] to select text to the beginning of a line. You can also press [Page Up], [Page

Down], [Ctrl][Home], or [Ctrl][End] to move the cursor to the end of the selection. You can also press [F8] only to select text.

- ❖ To select a word, move the cursor to the word, and press [F8] twice
- ❖ To select a sentence, press [F8] three times
- ❖ To select a paragraph, press [F8] four times
- ❖ To select a section, press [F8] five times
- ❖ To select the entire document, press [F8] six times
- ❖ To shrink a selection, press [Shift][F8]

WHAT'S 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 so others may benefit from the information.

WHAT'S NEW AT MICROSOFT?

Windows XP Tips
The ExpertZone highlights a different tip every day. Below you'll find sites with tips for using Windows XP, including many submitted by users. You can also check out the complete list of user-submitted tips. To access these sites below, go to the ExpertZone at *http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/expertzone/tips/default.asp* where each of these items are linked.

Windows XP Tips from Users

Customize Your Settings
Digital Media
Maintenance and Recovery
Security
Setup and Administration
General
Hardware and Compatibility
Networking and the Web

Third-Party Windows XP Tip Sites

SIGs . . . .

Doug Knox's Tweaks, Fixes, and Tips for Windows XP
Associate Expert and Windows XP MVP Doug Knox is a frequent contributor to the Windows XP newsgroups and maintains this site with Windows XP tips.

Kelly's XP Korner — Windows XP Troubleshooting and Support
Windows XP MVP Kelly Theriot publishes this Windows XP-related site with answers to the problems some users have with Windows XP, and commonly requested tweaks and tips.

Bob Cerelli's Windows Page — Windows XP Tips
Bob Cerelli started his Web site for users before the release of Windows 95 and has tips for every version, including more than 70 tips for Windows XP users.

Tips Resources from Microsoft

Windows XP Professional Tips — Learn quick ways to get the most out of Windows XP Professional.

Windows XP Home Edition Tips — Learn quick ways to get the most out of Windows XP Home Edition.

TechNet Tips and Tricks for Windows XP Professional — Tips for IT Professionals from the Microsoft TechNet Web site.

TechNet Tips for Techies — Tips submitted to TechNet by the IT Pro community.

Windows XP Digital Photography Tips — See these tips to learn more about digital photography and Windows XP.

Diane Bentley

Operating Systems SIG
I received a new Windows XP book shortly before this newsletter's deadline that looks pretty interesting at first blush. It's **Degunking Windows** and was written by a local Windows guru, **Jolie Ballew**, in coordination with **Jeff Duntemann** and is aimed at assisting Windows XP users in general housekeeping efforts. That's a kind way of saying "getting rid of all the garbage in XP that you don't want or need, but Microsoft thought you should have anyway."

Degunking Windows' cover really got my attention—a 50's retro shot of a young lady doing her housework in full dress uniform. No, it's not June Clever (no pearl necklace), but you get the idea. I'll review it next month.

Spring Cleaning

We'll be looking at this issue in March from both software and hardware perspectives. Since Texas weather this time of year tends to feature really impressive thunderstorms and lightning, I'll do my usual admonition concerning surge protection and remind users that simple MOV devices do tend to deteriorate with repeated voltage spikes and may need replacement.

Come to the March SIG meeting and join us in our usual no-holdsbarred Q & A exploration of users' problems with Windows.

Reagan Andrews
& Chuck Stark

. . . . SIGs
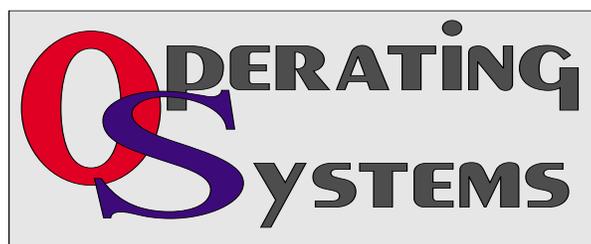
PC Concepts

What do we do when the system is down?

I had ran across this situation so many times when critical networks would go down at an office. How long does it take before backup facilities take over? Do we have an extended lunch or do we cancel all meetings?

During earlier years of product development, we would use our slide rules, calculators, and reams of graticule ruled paper tablets. So many ideas were thought out in our minds, worked over on paper, and then subsequently transferred to computers for documentation and control or perhaps further refinement. My math professor had a chalk board like ours in these classrooms and we learned to write our notes fast and furious as he would start his equations on the left side and continue to the right-most limits; continue from the left again while erasing and writing; four full sweeps of the entire board later gave us an hour's class.

Today, I see too many places of business that shut down their operation while a main computer is out for maintenance or repair. Sometimes, a few persons are left behind to sort paper clips, clean fingerprints from screens, and doodle. Are we still capable of having thoughts and presenting them to our associates? We will see.

Once again, you will find our Concept SIG ready and willing to answer questions about pertinent subjects – even those we cannot see on the large screen because we may not have a projector for group viewing. Just bear in mind – we still have these presentations waiting on the Web for us that I prepared for group viewing. We have pictures on hard drives and USB drives ready for critique. And just in case, once again, our projectors do not show up for duty, we will have a box of chalk

for use with our fine legacy chalkboard which extends through the entire width of the front wall.

It will not make a lot of difference whether I wear my dark jacket and black trousers, from experience, it has been proven that this powdery white chalk we use is washable.

When you come and join us to learn some basics, some advanced, and something new – come on in to the PC Concept SIG, with or without a digital projector, we will be ready for you.

We will be discussing which computer is right for you as a personal user or as a small business. What are the features we need? Why software selection must be matched to computers. When do you discard in favor of upgrading?

As an added feature, we shall discuss principles in making your computering more enjoyable.

PC Concepts – the getting started SIG.

Harold (Spike) Smith

PDA

This Month: Using a PDA to Stay Organized

David is going where no presenter has been before. Yes he's actually going to show us how to stay organized using a PDA. Now before you say dullsville, think about this - there's the built in software, 3rd-party software and even do-it-yourself software. So David is going to show us the best that's out there. We often talk about the more esoteric elements of PDA ownership but this month its down and dirty organizing a calendar and address book to make the best use of your PDA (and time).

Additionally, we'll have the usual news from the PDA Zone and your opportunity to come along and ask the ques-

tions that are bugging you. Quicknews: This month Sony released 3 new PDAs with cameras and wireless connectivity -who wants to buy one?

Last Month: Introduction to Bluetooth

Last month we had a presentation on bluetooth. This is of interest for PDA owners because a number of attachments are now supporting bluetooth (bt) communications. Examples include: connecting to the internet via a bt enabled mobile phone, getting your position from a bt GPS system. Gizmo of last month was an engineering prototype developed by Sony Ericsson - a bt controlled racing car.

We hope to see you at this month's meeting and as always will be happy to answer your questions either at the meeting or via WebBoard.

Birl Smith
Craig Winder
David Martin

Perl Programming

This month the Perl SIG will introduce 'Perl Databases' including flat-file databases, Excel spreadsheets, ODBC databases, and DBI databases.

Larry Martin

Professional MIDI and Audio

At our March, 2004, regular 3rd Saturday meeting, we will complete plans for the all day workshop to be held on the following Saturday. We will also determine the subject matter for upcoming meetings throughout the remainder of 2004.

The all-day workshop on Saturday, March 27, will allow us sufficient time to complete the entire process of digitizing your analog music source such as; an LP or cassette tape, recording it on a computer hard drive, editing the recording (using both Adobe's "Audition" and Diamond Cut's DC FIVE software products) to remove extraneous noise, to enhance the recording according to

various musical tastes, and to create "tracks" for recording onto a digital media such as CD or DVD. Then, we will actually recording the finished product to CD or DVD playable on home audio and video players, using Ahead's *Nero Rom Burner*, GEAR's *Pro Mastering Edition*, and Roxio's *Easy CD Creator Deluxe*. For further details on the workshop, visit: ***http://www.bookmatestore.com/midi-audio.htm***.

Our meeting time is now 10:00 am and will immediately follow the E-commerce and FrontPage SIGs. Come and share your experience, questions and answers about all things audio & MIDI on computer, from recording to editing to composing, arranging and playing music on your system.

J. Alan Lummus

WordPerfect

WordPerfect SIG Meeting Topics

**March — WP11 — Undo/Redo, Repeat & Hotspots (yes, again)
April — WP11 — Save & Open Dialog Boxes
May — WP11 — Folders & Properties**

 These topics are tentative and may change at any time.

Our newsletter, In a WordPerfect Minute..., can now be accessed from here. Follow the links at the end of our NTPCUG web page.

**M A R C H
Projector problems left us with only about 10 minutes of presentation time last meeting, so we're presenting the features this month. Does Undo allow you to go as far back as you need? You can increase the number of Undo's to whatever you want. We'll show you ways to improve your use of Undo and Redo. Have you ever clicked on a Hotspot? Wanna know where they are and what they do?**

A P R I L
If you're like me, I seldom poke around in the Open and Save dialog

SIGs . . . .

boxes. I just name my document, click OK, and I'm outta there. Who has time to look through all the options? We'll take you through all of them, giving you an opportunity to determine which ones will help you in your work. Even if you do not need any of them right now, you will at least be aware of them in case you have a need for them in the future.

M A Y
Are all your documents stored together ... in a long list? Do you waste a lot of time looking for a specific document in that long list? If so, it's time you straightened up and organized your documents into folders. Once that's done, we'll take a look at the Properties dialog to see all the goodies that are there.

D R A G O N   N A T U R A L L Y S P E A K I N G
If you would like to be part of an e-mail group to share information and experiences in learning and using NatSpeak *(as the Pros call it),* let me know at *diane.bentley@ntpcug.org.*

W O W !   I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

Scrolling Without a Mouse Wheel

If your mouse does not have a mouse wheel enabling you to scroll quickly through documents, you have this op-

tion in WordPerfect by using AutoScroll. A few buttons from the far right end of the Toolbar is AutoScroll ... a vertical double-arrow icon.

1. On the toolbar, click: AutoScroll

2. Move the mouse to the center of the document screen where, after a few moments, the screen will start to move slowly

3. To move the mouse faster, move away from the center of the screen in whichever direction you want to scroll

4. Once you have reached your destination, or you simply want to stop scrolling: click the mouse button ... to turn off AutoScroll

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

Got a problem with WordPerfect? Describe the problem in an E-mail. We will do our 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 for the benefit of others who might have the same problem.

WHAT'S NEW WITH WORDPERFECT?

Corel Announces "WordPerfect Is Back!"
Revitalized WordPerfect Office 12 Arrives April 2004

Ottawa, Canada – March 1, 2004 Under new ownership and with a revitalized commitment to one of the world's best-loved office suites, Corel today announced the upcoming availability of WordPerfect® Office 12 — the newest version of its award winning office suite and the leading alternative to Microsoft® Office. Coming in April 2004, WordPerfect Office 12 offers a unique combination of powerful

. . . SIGs

features, suite-wide enhancements to compatibility, and new functionality to increase users' productivity.

WordPerfect Office 12 is a globally recognized name in office productivity — an office suite that's feature-rich, compatible with Microsoft and that offers an outstanding value in terms of price and licensing flexibility. These key benefits, together with Corel's enhanced support options and worldwide availability, make WordPerfect Office 12 the leading alternative to Microsoft Office.

WordPerfect Office 12 boosts productivity with the trusted power of WordPerfect for word processing, Quattro® Pro for spreadsheets and Presentations for multimedia slide shows. The suite also includes an address book for managing contacts, the new WordPerfect

Wireless Office Suite, powered by ZIM, to keep users connected with WordPerfect Office via their mobile phone, and the new WordPerfect OfficeReady template browser, a powerful platform for managing WordPerfect Office templates including the 40 new templates bundled with WordPerfect Office 12.

WordPerfect Office 12 has been developed to meet the needs of small- to medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and consumers, as well as the specific compatibility needs of government and legal customers. Value and compatibility together make WordPerfect Office 12 the clear office suite of choice for consumers and small- to medium-sized businesses seeking low-cost alternatives to Microsoft Office.

"WordPerfect is back!" said **Amish Mehta**, Corel CEO. "No office suite excites more passion than WordPerfect, and Corel is firmly

committed to ensuring WordPerfect Office 12 is a tremendous success. Building on a base of over 18 million users worldwide, Corel will further expand its WordPerfect business to address the growing demand for alternative office suites within the consumer and small-to-medium sized (SMB) market. It's a new day at Corel and a new opportunity for both existing and prospective customers to experience the full benefits of an alternative office suite backed by one of the world's best recognized software developers."

"Today there is a significant number of consumers and small- to medium-sized businesses who are looking for a change," said **Richard Carriere**, Director of Office Productivity at Corel. "With WordPerfect Office 12 we're addressing those customers who feel they've been shut out of a cutting-edge office suite by high costs or restrictive licensing terms. WordPerfect Office 12 offers exceptional value for new customers, but we also know that our enhancements to compatibility give our existing users the reason they need to upgrade. It's a very exciting time for WordPerfect customers."

Cindy Adams

WordPerfect® Office 2002)

STANDARD

North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

P.O. Box 703449, Dallas, TX 75370-3449
Please 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
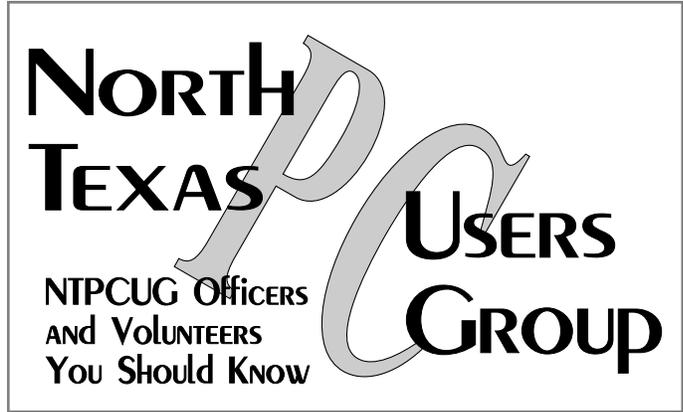
North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.
Board of Directors, 2003

Linda Moore	*Chairman*
Jack Atkinson	**Gil Brand**
James Dunn	**Tuc Goodwin**
Bill Parker	**Birl Smith**

NTPCUG Officers

President	Linda Moore	(214) 342-8833 h
President-Elect	Birl Smith	(214) 616-6458 w
Program Chairman	Linda Moore	(214) 342-8833 h
Treasurer	Martin Mills	(972) 991-4270 h
Secretary	Birl Smith	(214) 616-6458 w
Membership Dir.	Jeri Steele	(214) 567-6289 w
Publicity	Arnold Krusemark	
SIG Coordinator	Bill Parkerr	(972) 381-9963 h
Volunteer Coord.	Robert McNeil	(972) 227-2881 h
Product Review Coord	Spike (Harold) Smith	(214) 764-1188
Vendor Discount Coord	Kathy Lee Brown	(903) 465-6787

Life Members

John Pribyl (1924 - 1993)

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

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

NTPCUG Web Addresses

Home Page: http://www.ntpcug.org

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

♠ **President**

♠ **Advertising**

♠ **Newsletter**

♠ **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