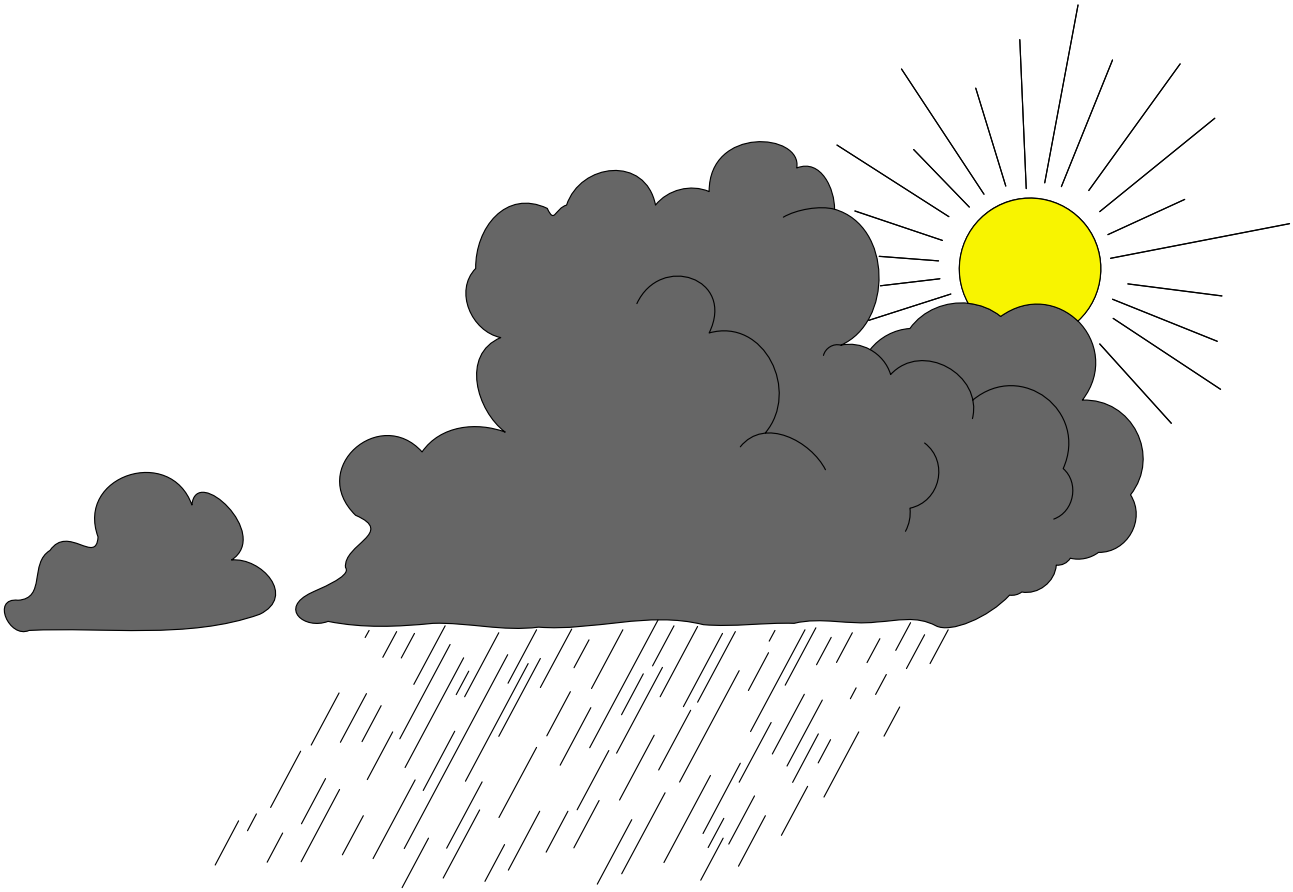
North Texas PC NEWS



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North Texas PC NEWS

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D E A D L I N E

Copy deadline for the May ***North Texas PC NEWS:*** Friday, May 6, 2005

Meeting Dates: 2005

May 14, 2nd Saturday
May 21, 3rd Saturday

June 11, 2nd Saturday
June 18, 3rd Saturday

July 9, 2nd Saturday
July 16, 3rd Saturday

NTPCUG
NORTH TEXAS PC USERS GROUP, INC

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Submit Newsletter articles to: ***newsletter@ntpcug.org***

Visit the North Texas PC Users Group Web page: http:/www.ntpcug.org

The North Texas PC NEWS is now 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.

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

Reagan Andrews

PROGRAMS & PRESENTATIONS . . . *LINDA MOORE*

Main Meeting Presentation
May 21, 2005

Microsoft - Active Directory

Deploying Active Directory

NTPCUG members will be eligible for raffle prizes.
Come join us for a great presentation

MAY 21, 2005

Prez Sez

User Groups all over are having difficulty attracting and retaining members. Many User Groups were founded to support a particular product or technology.

When a product or technology matures these User Groups fade away.

Many considered User Group members to be hobbyist. Our User Group is attracting more Information Technology professionals. Many of our members that are not employed as Information Technology professionals but, they have strong technical abilities and knowledge.

User Group members meet to exchange ideas, converse about current events and grow their personal knowledge. Less people are joining because they want to learn about computers. Computers are sold with software installed and hardware pre-configured.

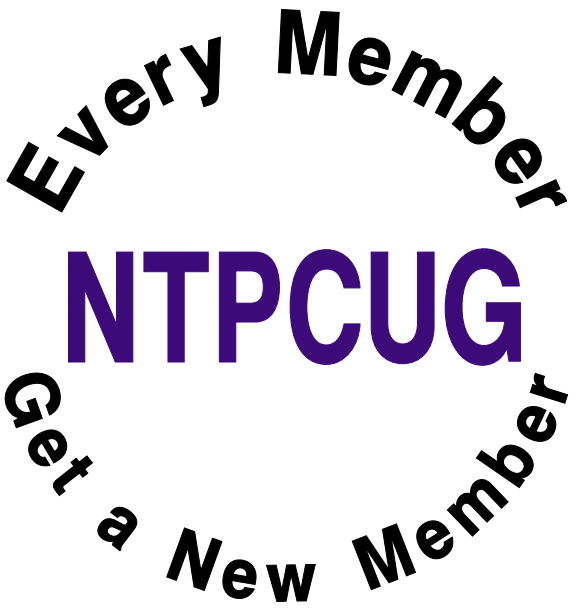
There are many benefits to being a member of The North Texas PC Users Group. Members are eligible to participate in drawings for prizes and we have vendor presentations for new products. NTPCUG has discounts for the purchase of hardware and software.

Writing a product review is another way of obtaining a free copy of expensive software. NTPCUG has hands-on labs and assistance with computer certifications. This year we will establish a forum for job postings. We do receive request for people with general PC skills and technical knowledge of Microsoft products.

The User Group needs more volunteers and not just for Saturday.

I wish to congratulate **Spike Smith, Diane Bentley, Mary McWilliams Johnson** and **Linda Moore** who were honored for outstanding service to NTPCUG. **Gil Brand** has resigned from the BOD and **Glynn Brooks** was appointed to the NTPCUG board of directors. **Birl Smith** is now the SIG Coordinator. We want to thank **Bill Parker** for his many years of service as SIG Coordinator.

We will be having a computer raffle for the benefit of NTPCUG. Raffle tickets will be sold at the May and June 2nd Saturday & 3rd Saturday meetings. You must be an NTPCUG member in good standing to be eligible to purchase raffle tickets.



Every member needs to bring in one new member within the next 90 days. Every member, who does this, will be recognized by NTPCUG. Members will need to send an email to with the name of the person that joined.

The Plano Internet Security Conference was held in April. There were some very interesting technical speakers. If you

missed this conference ITEC will be held June 15 and 16. We will e-mail the details to our members at a later date.

We wish to recognize our new members **Foluke Adejokun**, Arlington, **Robert Alschbach**, Burleson, **Jerry Jackson** of Plano and **Jo Ann Jackson** of Plano.

Our 3rd Saturday raffle prize winners were: **Jesse Hastcoat** -- Book on Exchange 2003, **Art Yasui** -- Book on Exchange 2003, **Bob Webber** -- Wireless Notebook Optical Mouse, **Gregory Liban** -- Virtual PC software, **Bob Campbell** -- Virtual PC software, and **Jerry Jackson** -- Digital Image Suite version 10. Jerry Jackson just joined this month.

What a great way to welcome a new member.

Members may be interested in the **AntiSpyware from Microsoft** And it's free! From the Microsoft website: "Microsoft Windows AntiSpyware (Beta) is a security technology that helps protect Windows users from spyware and other potentially unwanted software. Known spyware on your PC can be detected and removed. This helps reduce negative effects caused by spyware, including slow PC performance, annoying pop-up ads, unwanted changes to Internet settings, and unauthorized use of your private information."

http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.mspx

Happy computing,

Birl Smith
birl.smith@ntpcug.org

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Member Communication through WebBoard

WebBoard is a messaging system that the club began using in September 2000. The purpose is to let members ask questions and share information between monthly meetings. This article is to remind you of the value of WebBoard and request your participation, both in asking and answering questions in the 50 different forums.

WebBoard activity has steadily grown over the years. Recently the SIG related posts have represented about 25% of the total posts (the other posts being general news and information).

The top five forums for posts in 2005 are General News & Information, Internet, Operating Systems, Members, and MS Word.

This is good, but it would benefit all of us to have more activity on WebBoard. Benefits of more activity include

- 1 Questions would likely be answered faster since experts would know to expect activity.
- 2 "Lurkers" would have more content to read.
- 3 More activity breeds more activity. It should become routine for us to post to WebBoard.
- 4 It is a great way to gauge the interests of the membership.

There are many sources of information on the web, but our local WebBoard provides unique benefits. When you ask a question, it is probably being answered by someone you know, and hopefully trust. It also may involve local resources, such as where to buy something. Or it may be that a member can point you to a resource on the web without your having to spend a lot of time "Googling".

One alternative is to just email a member directly. However, then there is no chance for multiple answers, and other members do not get to benefit from the answer.

Currently there are 471 WebBoard users. Of those, 158 are active members. (WebBoard is open to non-members as well.) That means that about half the membership has opened a WebBoard account. It also means we need to work so the other 50% realize what WebBoard can do for them.

So far this year 13 people have posted either a question or answer, and 38 people have logged in at least once. The top five posters in 2005 are **Mary Johnson, Glynn Brooks, Chuck Stark, Bill Parker,** and **Gil Brand.** We certainly need to have more people actively posting.

Mary Johnson scours various email newsletters daily and posts in the General News and Information forum links to articles she finds interesting. For those that want a sampling of industry news and commentary, this is the forum to read.

Year	Total Posts	Times Viewed	SIG Related Posts	Times Viewed
2000	77	7,171	77	7,171
2001	190	10,532	182	10,300
2002	490	9,801	243	7,576
2003	1,659	13,056	405	9,609
2004	2,017	11,234	502	7,367
2005	570	1,724	68	672

Degunking Windows & Degunking Your PC

by Glynn Brooks

I've recently read two of the Paraglyph Press books devoted to "degunking": *Degunking Windows*, and *Degunking Your PC.* Both books are co-written by Joli Ballew and Jeff Duntemann.

Gunk is anything that affects your efficient use of a PC. Some gunk is on the PC when it comes out of the box (*e.g.* AOL and antivirus offers, media player and photo management software). But most PC gunk accumulates over time, usually through neglect, inattention, or lack of planning. Gunk is the molasses that builds up and makes PCs run slower over time.

So what is "degunking"? Here's how it is described in *Degunking Your PC*:

[The degunking] mindset isn't about just technical issues. We call it a mindset because it involves how you think about the technology you use, how you get organized, and how you maintain your equipment. The mindset isn't something you adopt for a little while and then forget all about. It requires a little discipline but the results you'll get are well worth the effort. [Chapter 2]

Degunking is good housekeeping: removing what you don't need, organizing what you keep, and preventing future problems through planning and a disciplined approach. There are lots of PC books that tell you how to do things. What makes these books unique is that they also tell you why things are important, and when you should carry out the recommended procedures.

Degunking Windows is about cleaning up a PC from the inside out – deleting unnecessary files, uninstalling extraneous programs, scrubbing the registry, organizing desktop items, cleaning up and organizing email and attachments, optimizing and tweaking software settings, and removing spyware. The emphasis is on regaining control of your PC and keeping Windows and your applications lean and smooth.

Degunking Your PC is about cleaning up a PC from the outside in – physically cleaning the PC and components, disposing of obsolete hardware, organizing and labeling cables, optimizing the performance of disk drives, setting up networks, and moving to high speed Internet service. There is also some good information about USB and Firewire compatibility that should help you avoid frustration if you upgrade your external hardware. It has lots of pictures to help you do things right.

Both books have a chapter on email management, but other than that they do not overlap.

If you have been reluctant to work on a computer yourself, these books should give you the confidence you have been lacking. And even if you have someone else handle upgrades and re-

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Following posts on WebBoard is easy. They can be delivered directly to your email inbox. After logging into WebBoard, just select Options and Mailing Lists, then check each forum you want delivered to your "door". You can also reply to these emails and they will be sent back to WebBoard. (With recent server changes this reply feature stopped working and we are working to restore it.) Creating a WebBoard account is also easy. Just go to and click Support, WebBoard Forums, and follow the instructions. If you have questions you can email to or .

Bill Parker

Keeping Defaults is Stupid If You are Working Wireless

Reagan's Paranoia gets a touch out of hand these days with concerns over "wireless" LAN's, e-mail and Internet hackers. This is added to existing emotional, but irrational, feelings that the phones are tapped, the house may be bugged and somebody may be reading his mail.

My Paranoia came from several years in USAF Security Service—and, no, I wasn't a policeman. Everything we worked on was very highly classified and we were "assured" that our telephones were tapped, our conversations monitored and mail probably read by either East German or Russian intelligence groups.

Wireless LANs Brought it all back.

Is everybody going wireless for home/ small business networking? Granted, wireless equipment prices are dropping rapidly and going wireless is a lot easier than stringing Cat 5 cables if the PC's are in different rooms. But, I still worry about the security issues even though I know there are some quite powerful firewalls and encryption tools available.

Why?

It's the same issue as the "typical" VCR blinking "12:00" in a lot of homes because setting or resetting the VCR clock can be a major pain. Most wireless home users and probably a lot of small business users just won't go to the trouble of configuring the units' encryption capabilities for that reason. Some of the blame does belong to wireless vendors who have made security re-configuration both unintuitive and often quite difficult for the "typical" home user to understand.

This security problem, by the way, doesn't belong solely to home and small business systems. IT-oriented media continue to report major network systems with significant vulnerabilities as a result of unprotected wireless nodes.

Same thing applies to configuration of the Cable/DSL routers' firewalls or installing a good firewall on a single PC endowed with broadband Internet access. Many users are either to lazy to bother, or don't know how important making their systems secure is.

Not making security important in a home or business system can easily lead to data and identity theft.

There are receivers available that allow detection of unprotected wireless LANs while driving past businesses or down neighborhood streets.

Anybody for free Internet access?

Reagan

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pairs, you'll understand what they are doing and know that the work is done right. Both books are highly recommended!

Glynn Brooks

End of an Era On Ross Ave.

"First Saturday" isn't gone, it's just moving in June. Two top photos on the next page demonstrate why.

Peyton Weaver acquired 1st Saturday and is moving it to his West End location under the Woodall-Rogers Freeway. Because of its new location, it will be covered and provide some protection from the weather.

Bottom photo was taken at Peyton's 1st Saturday location and was only crowded area there last August.

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Benefits of Volunteering

So what's the benefit of volunteering to help recycle old PCs?

Outside of knowing that your efforts on this project will help a visually-impaired person lead a more productive and richer life, there is the camaraderie among volunteers and opportunity to really learn the internal workings of PCs.

You don't need to be a technically sophisticated user to volunteer. There are lots of tasks in this project that don't require such knowledge depth, but do require some physical effort such as cleaning PCs and monitors, preparing the refurbished PCs for shipping, etc.

If you are interested in learning how to assemble, troubleshoot balky hardware and install operating systems and software, this is a magnificent opportunity to learn from (now) experts. Acquiring such knowledge and skills can be accomplished in other, usually expensive venues, but the process won't be nearly as much fun or personally rewarding.

1,500+ & Counting

NTPCUG Volunteer Effort Report

by Gil Brand

Status of the computer refurbishing project?

NTPCUG Volunteers have assembled, tested and shipped their **1,500th** PC since the project began. Currently, the volunteers are averaging 500 refurbished PC's for impaired users per year.

For new members, NTPCUG sponsors a volunteer program to refurbish "old" PC's using NTPCUG volunteers with the finished computers going to visually impaired individuals via the Texas Center for the Physically Impaired (TCPI), ***http://www.handicapability.org***. All of the equipment goes to blind or visually-impaired persons in America and in several foreign countries.

If you have basic hardware skills, or just want to learn, contact me at ***gb1@ntpcug.org*** We only have 12 work stations, so please request a place. Don't just arrive expecting to find a station available.

We have regular sessions every Tuesday and Thursday, 1-4PM, at King of Glory Lutheran Church, 6411 LBJ Freeway (West bound service road from the Hillcrest exit). Our workroom is in the basement level of the church. Ring the outside bell for entry into the building.

If you, your employer, or a friend, have older computers (Pentium II-300Mhz or better) and/or components (56k-modems, hard drives, sound/video cards, 72 & 168-pin memory, monitors, keyboards, mice) that are just gathering dust, please contact me about donating them to this tax-deductible effort. We have received several corporate donations in the last few months; PLEASE keep checking with your company about donations.

We are also in need of a couple of volunteers to assemble some donated shelving, if you can't or don't want to work on computer hardware.

And last, but not least, we need a volunteer to: determine the proper driver for various donated sound/video/modem cards; download and test the drivers; and save the drivers to floppy disks.

So you can see that we need volunteers with different skills, and have a continuing need for additional computer refurbishing help. Let me know if you can assist.

[For those of you who have requested weekend sessions, these do occur on occasion and if you let Gil Brand know of your interest, he'll get in touch to let you know the date and times.]

Gil...

!!! Mark Your Calendar !!!

Future Newsletter Deadlines and Meeting Dates: Please Note: The May meeting will be on May 21 at 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.

Newsletter Deadline	Meeting Dates
May 6	May 14, 2nd Sat. May 21, 3rd Sat.
June 3	June 11, 2nd Sat. June 18, 3rd Sat.
July 1	July 9, 2nd Sat. July 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 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

Driving in Dallas

From: Vincent Gaines, NTPCUG Past President

First you must learn to pronounce the city name. It is DAL-LUS, or DAA-LIS depending on if you live inside or outside LBJ Freeway.

Forget the traffic rules you learned elsewhere. Dallas has its own version of traffic rules..."Hold on and pray."

There is no such thing as a dangerous high-speed chase in Dallas. We all drive like that.

All directions start with, "Get on Beltline"...which has no beginning and no end.

The morning rush hour is from 6 to 10. The evening rush hour is from 3 to 7. Friday's rush hour starts Thursday morning.

If you actually stop at a yellow light, you will be rear ended, cussed out and possibly shot. When you are the first one on the starting line, count to five when the light turns green before going to avoid crashing with all the drivers running the red light in cross-traffic.

Construction on Central Expressway is a way of life and a permanent form of entertainment. We had had so much fun with that we have added George Bush freeway and the High Five to the mix.

All unexplained sights are explained by the phrase, "Oh, we're in Fort Worth!"

If someone actually has their turn signal on, it is probably a factory defect.

All old ladies with blue hair in Mercedes have the right of way. Period.

Inwood Road, Plano Road, NW Highway, East Grand, Garland Road, Marsh Lane, Josey Lane, 15th Street, Preston Road... all mysteriously change names as you cross intersections (these are only a FEW examples)! The perfect example of this is what is MOSTLY known as Plano Road. On the south end it is known as Lake Highlands Drive, cross Northwest Highway and it becomes Plano Road, go about 8 miles and it is briefly Greenville Ave, Ave K, and highway 5. This road ends in Sherman.

If asking directions in Irving or SE Dallas, you must have knowledge of Spanish. If in central Richardson or on Harry Hines, Japanese or Chinese will be your best bet. If you stop to ask directions on Gaston or Live Oak, you better be armed.

A trip across town (east to west) will take a minimum of four hours, although many north/south freeways have unposted minimum speeds of 75.

The minimum acceptable speed on the Dallas North Toll Road is 85. Anything less is considered downright SISSY!

The wrought iron on windows near Oak Cliff and Fair Park are not ornamental.

It is possible to be driving WEST in the Northbound lane of EAST NORTHWEST Highway. Don't let this confuse you.

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 is BACK! Back, that is, with the main meetings of the North Texas PC User Group SIGs on the third Saturday of the month at North Lake College. We are happy to be meeting along with the other *NTPCUG Microsoft Office SIGs*: *Microsoft Excel* spreadsheet and *Microsoft Word* word processor. Barring some unusual event, we will meet at 11:00 AM, so as to avoid meeting time conflict with the other Office SIGs... you can start at 8:00 AM with Excel and spend the whole morning learning about Microsoft Office software.

And, until further notice, we will meet jointly with the *Microsoft Access Fundamentals SIG*. Regular attendees will get a good grounding in *Microsoft Access*, with perhaps an occasional diversion of product demonstrations or advanced topics -- it will be great introduction if you are just starting or a great review of topics for the more experienced user. No matter how long we use this great database software product, there is always more to learn about using it effectively, efficiently, and easily.

On May 21, 2005 we will again have a joint meeting of the *Microsoft Access SIG* and the *Microsoft Access Fundamentals SIG* at North Lake College. We will continue with our review of the fundamental operations and features of Microsoft Access -- this month's topic will be *Access SELECT Queries*, presented by Microsoft Access Fundamentals SIG Leader **Jim Wehe**. See the Access Fundamentals SIG Notes for details.

In April, 2005, after a one-month hiatus due to meeting place scheduling problems, we resumed our normal meeting of the *Microsoft Access SIG* and *Microsoft Access Fundamentals SIG* at North Lake College. Microsoft Access Fundamentals SIG Leader Jim Wehe completed his series of tutorial sessions on *Access Tables and Data Storage*. We held a drawing for the first of our monthly giveaways of full, retail copies of *Microsoft Office System 2003 Professional*, for which thanks are due to *Microsoft's South Central Developer Guidance Council, Brian Moore, Coordinator*. The lucky winner was NTPCUG member **Cynthia Burtch.**

***Valuable Prizes*:**

Again this month, we will continue our monthly giveaways, for *NTPCUG members only*, of a full, retail copy of *Microsoft Office 2003 System Professional*. We will continue to give a copy at each meeting of the SIG for the rest of the year, courtesy of *Microsoft's South Central Developer Guidance Council*. If a member wins a copy, that member cannot win another later in the year. However, tickets will be retained from meeting to meeting, increasing your chances each month you participate. The first round of tickets were collected in February and will be used, along with all tickets collected since, in the current month's drawing. If you join the morning of the meeting, your membership receipt will provide proof of eligibility; if you forget to bring your valid membership card, the membership list at the sign-in table can be your backup proof of eligibility.

Jack Atkinson

SIG Meeting Schedule

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

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

10:00
Alpha Five Data Base
Microsoft Word (Continued)
Personal Digital Assistants
Rhino 3D

11:00
Access/ Access Fundamentals
Internet
WordPerfect for Windows
Digital Photography

12:00
NTPCUG Business Meeting

12:30
Investors
The Master Genealogist
Linux

1:30
The Master Genealogist (continued)

SIG meetings are listed by time for the January 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 05/14
SharePoint
ASP.net
Visual BASIC - Advanced
Visual BASIC - Beginning

The following SIG meets at other times, and are not included in the schedule above. Check the SIG notes for time and location.

DSDA

. . . . SIGs

Access Fundamentals

In May, we will discuss Lookup Tables, setting Relationships, and begin studying Queries; specifically Select and Parameter Queries.

As usual we will distribute a summary of the subject matter, complete a sign-in sheet, and collect questions to be answered at the meeting or, if necessary, in a later meeting.

We will also have our second drawing for a significant prize provided by Microsoft's South Central Developer Guidance Council through Larry Linson. Cynthia Burtch won the copy of Office Pro 2003 in April.

In June, we will continue with Queries.

We will make every effort to work in the public domain and avoid commercial or copyrighted applications.

Jim Wehe

Alpha Five

Several SIG members, including me and the assistant leader, will be attending the Alpha User Conference May 19-22. Since this coincides with the May SIG meeting we will not have a meeting in May.

In June we will continue with our development of the web application for storing and reporting SIG notes.

The basic features of the completed system are

- Password login
- Update a database with user text
- Format a static html page from the database
- FTP the new page to another server

Come see how the Alpha web server works and add your thoughts to the development of the new system.

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.

Our meeting place has changed; Instead of meeting on the fourth floor of the Microsoft building, we now meet on the first floor. Our new meeting space is gorgeous!

An End-to-End Application: Month 7 - Exception Management

Last November, we started an exciting new series on developing a web application from beginning to end. The application that I will be building over the next 10 months will demonstrate best practices and it will use a number of the application blocks provided by Microsoft.

Upcoming Meetings

- June 2005 - Toi B. Wright, speaking on Tech Ed

Toi B Wright

Communications

Should VOIP be your only phone service? VOIP has made its debut as a low cost phone and long distance service. The availability of 911 service on VOIP has become a public service issue. VOIP companies do not have the state and local regulation and oversight a telephone endures. For now, VOIP 911 emergency services might be available, but are not required.

There are some VOIP scenarios that could cause some concern. You dial 911 for a fire emergency, and the com-

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Security SIG
Adam Rose

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munication is routed through Hong Kong. Or you dial the operator and the operator doesn't understand your request. With VOIP, you need to have the phone numbers for local emergency services readily available for use.

For the homeowner, an item to consider should be emergency power. The telephone company provides the electricity for your phone service. With VOIP, you are responsible for powering your equipment. The 2003 power blackout in the Northeast is a reminder that one hour of power backup is not sufficient.

The cell phone companies plan for an electrical outage lasting for two to four hours, but again, the 2003 Northeast electric service outage lasted for one to three weeks. Local thunderstorms have interrupted electrical service for one to three days. The capacity to operate for three days should be considered if VOIP will be your only service.

The third consideration is promptness of repair services. Telephone companies have always been responsive to service disruptions that affect public safety. If someone needs phone service because of medical problems, they get priority. An Internet provider may not be prepared to respond to a request for priority repair service for medical reasons, yet a severed backbone Internet connection will get priority repair.

If your VOIP or Internet service is interrupted, how fast will the response be? We will discuss the practically of VOIP in our May SIG.

Birl Smith

Dallas Corel

May is Members' Showcase!

May is your chance to share what you've done. We need lots of show and tell to make the Members' Showcase a real gallery. It doesn't have to be something big, it doesn't have to be fancy just needs to be your idea, your way of using Corel.

April In Review

April's Feature Presentation was using Corel Graphics Suite for the layout and production process in the creation of small accordion-folded booklets. The synergy between CorelDRAW and Photo-paint make this an easy, edit-as-you-go-event. The booklet tutorial is online at *http://www.protechstudio.com/CorelSIG/BookletTutorial.html*.

April's Quick Tip was a short review of the Virtual Segment Delete Tool. With this tool it was easy to make lines appear to weave in and out of objects by removing parts of them. Although the line appeared to have been cut, it remained as one element and its attributes could be edited as one unit.

2005 Program Schedule

January Business Card Design (Cynthia Burtch)

February Portraits With Pizzazz (Cynthia Burtch)

March Tricks with Text

April Handmade Books

May Members' Showcase

SIG of North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

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June Clipping Masks and Photo Collages

July The Strengths of the Image Sprayer

August The Secrets of the S-curve Revealed

September Bitmap to Vector Victory

October Engaging Envelopes

November Card Tricks

December Dressing Up the Ordinary

For past program information Access Dallas Corel's full Web site and archives at ***http://mail.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.***

Cynthia Burtch

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

Dallas Software Developers Assn.

Our May 2005 meeting will be held at North Lake College 12:30-2:30 PM. This will be a double-barreled hands-on tutorial session for Members. In the first hour **Glenn Ford** will talk us through "binding objects to a database". This is a continuation of his class design discussion in February.

The second hour will be led by **Tom Perkins**. He will lead us through a simple example of using Web Forms and Web Services. This is a continuing practice of trying to actually use Tuc Goodwin's second Saturday subject in a piece of code.

Dallas Software Developers Association Meeting Minutes
Saturday, April 16, 2005
North Lake College

Present:
Tom Perkins, Jeff Frauenheim, Martin Hellar, Bob Webber, Art Yasui, Rick King

Dr. Tom Perkins led a hands-on session in exploring the code used in error and exception handling. This is a kind of practice of what Tuc Goodwin's second Saturday session contained. Tom supplied each member present with a seven page document covering in detail the steps to set up a test project. The instructions also contained screen shots that made the process quite painless. It was our method of "Not leaving any student behind".

For those of you that have an interest in this subject, Bob Webber posted the handout on or web site. You can view it at *http://www.dsda.org/presentations/16apr2005-ntpcug/exercise.htm*

Meeting adjourned @ 2:30PM

Submitted by: **Martin Hellar**

Dallas Software Developers Association Meeting Minutes
Saturday, February 19, 2005
North Lake College

Present:
Glenn Ford, Jeff Frauenheim, Martin Hellar, Bob Webber

Glenn led the class in writing code using data binding in a Windows form. With very little coding, Visual Basic.NET permits data from an object to be displayed in, say, a textbox. Furthermore, the same code is bi-directional: changes the user makes, such as filling in a textbox, updates the data in the object. This was quite a nice session as it was hands on by all present.

To review February's class, Google the article 'Windows Forms Data Binding and Objects' by **Rockford Lhotka**. The article includes downloadable code.

Meeting adjourned @ 2:30PM

Submitted by: **Jeff Frauenheim**

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SIGs . . . .

Dallas Software Developers Association Meeting Minutes
Saturday, January 15, 2005
North Lake College

Present:
Sharron Bell, Glenn Ford, Jeff Frauenheim, Martin Hellar, Bob Webber, Art Yasui

Glenn Ford presented a training session in VB.NET.

In VS.NET, Glenn demonstrated how to open a new project. He built some controls and added class 'test data'. He added properties (private, hidden and public). He explained how to use GET and SET and data binding.

He placed and event within an object to update the object. Assigning properties to a class has value because the object can be used in a Web-based or Windows-based form.

Resources suggested by Glenn:
-MSDN
-Webcasts for online training opportunities
-Validator Controls for Windows Forms, **Billy Hollis**. Drag-and-drop controls with built-in validation of data in text boxes.

Books
-*Expert One-on-One VB.NET Business Objects*, Rockford Lhotka
-see other .NET books by Lhotka and Billy S. Hollis, some available at 75% Off Books
-Windows forms data binding and objects
http://sourceforge.net
- NDOC 1.3. This free download comments .NET code and includes samples.
- NUnit 2.2.2 tests programs piece by piece.

Meeting adjourned @ 2:30PM

Submitted by: Jeff Frauenheim

Glenn Ford

Digital Photography

It's been some time since I did a general Q&A session. So in May bring all your questions about digital photography and we'll see about getting them answered. I will also have another book give-away.

James Dunn

Investors

The next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2005.

Always check the room location at each meeting.

The Investors SIG has looked at two web sites in particular:
http://www.barchart.com and
http://www.moneycentral.msn.com

We have picked out a total of 12 stocks, six from each site, and we are going to track their performance.

I need someone to lead the SIG meeting in July.

Kathryn (Kathy) Troxell

Microsoft Networking

We will have a Q&A session again this month.

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

MAY — Character Formatting, Part II
Continuing with Character formatting, here are some of the features we will look at: What's This?, Three Ways to Remove Character Formatting, Change Case, Format Painter, Symbols and Drop Caps.

JUNE — Paragraph Formatting, Part I
Do you know the secret that the paragraph symbol at the end of each paragraph holds? Is indenting text a trial-or-error event? Want to know a shortcut for changing line spacing to double space or space-and-a-half? Understanding Word's logic about paragraph formatting is one of the most important aspects of Word.

JULY — Paragraph Formatting, Part II
Line spacing *within* paragraphs is usually single- and double-spacing. You can, however, change it to any amount of spacing. Spacing *between* paragraphs is normally one line. This, too, can be changed to have it added automatically when you end a paragraph! Indenting and keeping paragraphs together will no longer be confusing to you after Paragraph Formatting, Part II.

ADVANCED - 10-11 am

MAY — Table of Contents
This is another feature where Word excels. Creating a table of contents may seem difficult, but it really isn't — if you'll just use styles. But even if you don't use styles, I'll show you how to

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mark the text so it will be automatically included in the Table of Contents.

JUNE — Create an Index
The most valuable help within any reference book is the index. Creating an index may be more than you have been willing to tackle alone. You will leave this session with the confidence to index your own documents, as well as an introduction to one of Word's field codes. Sounds scary, but it isn't.

JULY — Table of Captions *for* Figures, Tables, Graphs & Equations
If your document contains numerous figures, you may also want to have a list of those figures at the end of the document. When you create a Table of Figures, the captions are selected, sorted, and placed in a table. We will create captions for the figures, and then create the Table of Figures.

W O W! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

sTOP tHIS mESS
Way back in Word 97, a most helpful feature was added. You may not even be aware that it exists because is has been turned on by default by Microsoft. I'm referring to the cAPS lOCK problem ... where the letters you capitalize show up as lowercase and the letters you type in lowercase show up as capitals.

If you have problems with this happening, it is possible that this feature is turned off on your computer. Here's how to turn it on:

- Tools | AutoCorrect | AutoCorrect tab
- Mark: Correct accidental usage of cAPS lOCK key

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 @ MICROSOFT?

'Microsoft Plans New Browser Version' "Microsoft Corp. will release a new version of Internet Explorer, the world's most widely used Internet browsing software, with new, built-in security features," Chairman Bill Gates said Tuesday. "We have decided to do a new version of Internet Explorer, this is IE 7," Gates said at the RSA Security Conference being held in San Francisco.

The world's largest software maker had not previously indicated whether it planned to release a new version of IE.

Recently, however, Microsoft's browser has been facing competition for the first time in years from the Firefox browser, a free Web browser developed by a network of software programmers.

Diane Bentley

Operating Systems

Occasionally, when members describe system problems in the Operating Systems SIG, either Chuck Stark or myself will suggest possibility that these problems may originate in the PC's BIOS setup settings. That may not be such great advice unless the user with the problem(s) is fairly knowledgeable about their system.

Reason is that most PC users now purchase their systems with the operating system installed and configured and have never seen the BIOS setup routines. If the BIOS routines were mostly "hard-wired" this really wouldn't be a problem, but that's not the case anymore. These programs are contained on an EPROM (electronically-programmable, read-only memory) chip on the motherboard and (now) contain hundreds of lines of code.

In the past, BIOS setup routines could only be reached before the operating system loaded or via special programs on a bootable floppy disk. Many of the new BIOS set routines can now be reached from Windows, and that may, or may not, be a good thing.

Although we may think of the BIOS setup as being just hardware oriented, its settings can greatly affect how the OS and software programs perform. And, the settings can change over time without user input. A "bad" (dead) backup battery on the motherboard can cause the BIOS setup to revert to "default" settings that may not reflect how the system was originally configured.

An example of BIOS defaults that can kill operation is found in some ASUS motherboards that had the hard disk in a default read-only configuration. Just try and install Win XP on this system before changing that default!

Spring Cleaning Time

Glynn Brooks, Internet SIG Leader, has a review of two books, ***Degunking Windows*** and ***Degunking Your PC*** published by Paraglyph Press (***http://www.paraglyphpress.com***). I've mentioned *Degunking Windows* in the past and continue to see it as a valuable resource for both new and experienced users in performing their semi-annual system spring cleaning.

Reagan Andrews & Chuck Stark

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PC Concepts

Concept SIG Updates

During our January SIG meeting, I asked attendees which categories of software and hardware they wished to discuss during upcoming meetings.

Following is the summary of current preferences:

1. Digital Cameras
   - ❖ point and shoot
   - ❖ low to medium price
   - ❖ prosumer
2. Discard or Retire Computer
3. Building a PC
4. Installing The Operating System
   - ❖ partitioning
   - ❖ back-up (system, file)
5. E-mail, Web Pages
   - ❖ adding pictures
   - ❖ enhancing (HTML)
6. Sound Recording
7. How to Buy
   - ❖ select by function
   - ❖ select by economics
8. Enhancing digital pictures
   - ❖ improving
   - ❖ preparing for e-mail
   - ❖ preparing for Web Pages
9. Memory
   - ❖ removable hard drives
   - ❖ removable (flash) drives
   - ❖ need or use of drivers for memory

For this month's SIG meeting, we will proceed through the listed topics in order as long as time permits. The following month's meetings will then take up where we leave off. This material has topics previously covered and these have all been updated for our use. Hopefully, there will be adequate supplies of handouts for your reference and for taking home.

During February, we covered, "What is VOIP and How Do We Use It." Copies of this presentation will be distributed discussing some of the pros and cons of telephone service using VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). These systems may save money on long distance and also have several unique advantages that might be a real bargain.

Tips on Software Installation

To get the most out of your Operating System and other applications, one must find and select a number of options that may be beneficial. We will look into identifying these features and options that are available but seldom get turned on.

When you install the operating system and applications yourself, then you can ensure that desirable features are available. What if your system came with these already installed? Also, when you select the 'Recommended' installation from an install wizard, you seldom get even those features that are highly touted as desirable by the manufacturer.

We will demonstrate how to eliminate these problems whether you are installing new or you need to correct and update your existing software.

Harold (Spike) Smith

Personal Digital Assistants (PDA)

In May, we will be discussing Bluetooth headsets. . Prices for Bluetooth headsets have decreased in cost and more phones include Bluetooth capability. Bluetooth headsets provide a way to enter, leave and answer your phone without the restraint of a cord. Corded headsets do get tangled with the seat belts.

Bluetooth devices can be powered by replaceable AAA battery or internal non-replaceable battery. Manufacturers claims for talk and standby time for Bluetooth headsets does not come close to the product specifications. The AAA batteries can be alkaline or rechargeable. Neither of these are an inexpensive way to power a headset. Alkaline batteries usually last one week. The internal batteries usually charge fast but you need to recharge in a few days.

Bluetooth headsets communicate via a flashing LED's and audible tones. Most functions are standard for all Bluetooth headsets. There are functions that are unique to each headset and smartphone. To enable functions, there is a sequence of pressing and holding buttons to enable features and pairing (establishing communication with your smartphone). . When you look at the instruction books the directions are clear, but manipulating functions while driving or in a meeting is difficult.

When a smartphone rings, the Bluetooth headset will also have its own ring tone to indicate something needs attention. A Bluetooth headset can operate two phones simultaneously.

The audio quality of Bluetooth headsets is good when used in an enclosed area such as an auto or a room. Audio quality decreases when used outside, in a large area or when there a strong wind. The degradation in audio quality is not due to the electronics in the headset -- Bluetooth headsets generally have shorter microphones. The headset microphones extend to the side of the jaw and are not placed in front of the mouth as with corded headsets.

One other consideration is how the microphone cancels noise. An extended

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microphone helps. The quality noise canceling electronics varies depending on model and manufacturer. Bluetooth headsets are generally short and there is no noise canceling foam surrounding the microphone.

Another consideration of purchasing a Bluetooth headset is the fit of the headset. The Bluetooth headsets generally hang on top of the ear. These headsets may fall off if you reach down to pick up something or reach for something above your head. The corded headsets have a better fit on the ear and are more stable. The body of the device hangs on the side of the ear or behind the ear. When the body of the device is behind the ear the headset is more physically stable.

There are other considerations for a Bluetooth headset. On a smartphone, you can turn off Bluetooth. If you are traveling or in proximity to a large group of people, disabling Bluetooth may be good security. Disabling Bluetooth will not affect the operation of the phone. When Bluetooth is disabled there is no concern about viruses or eavesdropping on your personal conversation.

Bluetooth has 8 channels for communication, so there may some places Bluetooth may not function properly. Bluetooth is another 2.4 MHz device which may interfere or receive interference from microwave ovens, cordless phones, and X10 cameras. WiFi is also on the 2.4 MHz with Bluetooth but there are no interference problems.

Pairing is the process of establishing communication between the Bluetooth headset and a phone. Some headsets automatically power off if there is no phone activity. If your headset is off but the phone rings and Bluetooth is connected, you won't be able to talk using the phone until you disable Bluetooth.

Also, Bluetooth headsets go into paring mode when you insert a battery or remove the headset from a charger. You will receive messages on the display that your phone has lost communication with your headset. And, there are phone display messages asking if you would like to reestablish communication with your headset.

There are more advantages and disadvantages of wireless headsets. We will discuss these Bluetooth headsets in our May SIG.

Birl Smith
Craig Winder
David Martin

MISSING SIG'S?

If you don't see your favorite Special Interest Group's SIG Notes here, take a few minutes to remind your SIG Leader that *The PC News* will be glad to report what your SIG is doing — if the SIG Leader will send us your SIG news.

Deadline for SIG news is usually the 1st Friday of the month preceding publication. We are anxious to report what your SIG is doing.

Reagan Andrews

Professional MIDI and Audio

Our Professional MIDI/Audio SIG will meet on a "to be announced" basis for the foreseeable future. Alan has started the "NEW TECHNOLOGY" SIG, which will be meeting at the same time this SIG regularly met and which will focus on new, emerging digital technology. Should you wish e-mail notification when there will be another meeting of the Professional MIDI/Audio SIG, be sure to sign up for the appropriate e-mail notice as provided below.

J. Alan Lummus

SharePoint

Starting in December 2004, 2nd Saturday will include a SharePoint SIG. This SIG will cover all things SharePoint, including Windows SharePoint Services, SharePoint Portal Server, etc.

Here is the topic schedule for the next few months. This schedule is subject to change based on the interests of the SIG participants.

May 14th 2005: Discussion will be on the Data View web Part using XML data. and on How to migrate an existing website to SharePoint

Future topics

- How to deploy backend SQL Server databases to SharePoint
- Security – Using ISA 2004, VPN plus an anti-virus plug-in to protect your SharePoint Extranet
- Changing the appearance of the entire SharePoint site using Cascading Style Sheets, etc.
- Security (using different types)

Please send email, if you like to see some particular topic presented.

Ram Yadav

Visual Basic - Beginning

We will be meeting at 9:00 AM on Saturday, May 14th at the Las Colinas campus of Microsoft Corporation.

For the May Meeting, Tuc Goodwin continues with the 'Learn VB.NET from Scratch' sessions. This month's

presentation is titled Web Forms and XML Web Services. This Presentation explains how to create a Web Forms application and how to invoke a simple XML Web service.

Below is the schedule for the Beginning Visual Basic.NET SIG for the remainder of the year. We are going to start Visual Basic.NET from the beginning and go all the way to the end...

We will have free magazines for all attendees. There will also be a raffle for software, T-Shirts, the March issue of Computer User newspaper, and some books to give away to NTPCUG Members!!! .

So come on Saturday, and don't forget to bring a Friend along!!!

Upcoming Meeting Information:

Beginning VB.NET Schedule for 2004 - 2005

Date, Title & Synopsis

5/14/2005 Web Forms and XML Web Services
This Presentation explains how to create a Web Forms application and how to invoke a simple XML Web service.

6/11/2005 Using ADO.NET
This Presentation explains how to use ADO.NET with a Windows Forms application to create, read, update, and delete records in Access and SQL Server databases.

7/9/2005 Deploying Applications
This Presentation explains how to deploy applications by using Visual Studio .NET. The Presentation also describes deployment options available in Visual Basic .NET, and how to create and configure a setup project for a Windows-based application.

8/13/2005+ To Be Determined (TBD)

Tuc Goodwin

SIGs . . . .

WordPerfect

WordPerfect SIG Meeting Topics

May — WP11 — Keeping Text Together
June — WP11 — Text Formatting
July — WP11 — Headers & Footers

These topics are tentative and may change at any time.

M A Y
Keeping text from separating at the end of lines and pages is often a concern. There are several excellent choices for controlling where your document text separates. There are also ways to ensure that words will always be hyphenated at certain places within the word. Be prepared to take control of these issues after this meeting.

J U N E
Font, Line, Paragraph, Page, Justification ... you have probably used all these types of formatting in your documents. As usual, there are many more options that you may not have tried, and may not even realize are available.

J U L Y
You can have up to two Headers and two Footers in a document simultaneously. In my 20-some years of using WordPerfect, I have never needed more than this. Yet, you can replace any of them with a different one as many times as your document requires. And, discontinuing them is only three clicks away.

W O W ! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

Add the Current Date to Your Document

Is one click enough?

On the Application Bar, click the date button. It may appear spelled out or as an icon with the number 10 on it.

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?

WordPerfect Office 12 Small Business Edition — with *WordPerfect Mail?*

WordPerfect 12

- Open, edit and save Microsoft Office files, including Microsoft® Office 2003
- Publish your documents and presentations to PDF without needing to purchase Adobe® Acrobat® Distiller so anyone with the free Adobe Acrobat reader can review them
- Using the Compatibility Toolbar, save your documents to Mi-

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crosoft Office, PDF, XML or HTML with an easy click

- ❖ Customize your work environment using the Workspace Manager—choose from WordPerfect, classic WordPerfect 5.1 or Microsoft® Word modes
- ❖ Launch applications, recent documents, special templates and help resources with a click using the Task Manager
- ❖ Open, edit and save Microsoft Word files, including version 2003

Quattro Pro 12

- ❖ Customize your work environment using the Workspace Manager—choose from Quattro Pro, Microsoft Excel or Lotus 1-2-3 modes
- ❖ Open, edit and save Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, including version 2003

Presentations 12

- ❖ Includes more than 20 beautiful new backgrounds
- ❖ Open, edit and save Microsoft PowerPoint files
- ❖ Customize your work environment using the Workspace Manager—choose from Presentations or PowerPoint modes
- ❖ Publish your slide shows to PDF with the click of a button Paint Shop Pro® 9 ($129 value)
- ❖ Enhance your documents, marketing collateral and presentations with digital pictures and edited easily

Enhance digital images

- ❖ Add illustrations to reports and get your point across using photos
- ❖ Exceptional features for touching up, enhancing and sharing images from digital cameras

WordPerfect® Mail

- ❖ Includes a calendar, contact manager, spam protection and much more
- ❖ Find any email message, attachment or contact with exceptional speed ... whether you use folders or not
- ❖ Eliminate the hassle of managing online mailing lists, subscriptions and newsletters. RSS feeds are delivered to your inbox automatically, providing you with the latest headlines and news at your fingertips.
- ❖ Organize, search and store your emails with unparalleled efficiency

WordPerfect® OfficeReady® – Business Essentials ($49.95 value)

- ❖ Create impressive-looking documents, including newsletters, contracts, proposals and more
- ❖ Easily create calendars, budgets, stationary, marketing materials, slide shows, reports and more with fantastic templates

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- ❖ Sample business plans provide examples on how to create your own effective plan

Norton® Internet Security 2005*

- ❖ This special edition of Norton Internet Security 2005 includes – Norton AntiVirus, Norton Personal Firewall, Norton Privacy Control, Norton AntiSpam, Norton Parental Control, and a complimentary 90-day subscription to protection updates

Task Manager

- ❖ Start projects, launch applications and improve productivity with a few easy clicks
- ❖ Create special projects, work on recent documents or launch applications

Cindy Adams

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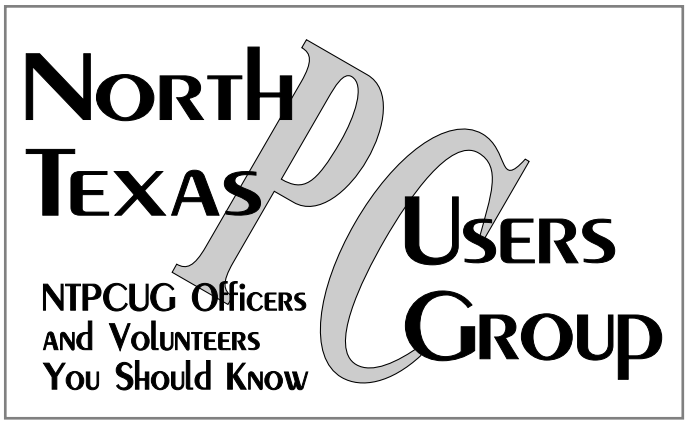
The North Texas PC Users Group, Inc., is a non-profit, independent group, not associated with any corporation. Membership is open to PC users and others interested in exchanging ideas, information, hardware, predictions, and other items related to computers, digital communications and software. To join the Group, complete the application blank found on the NTPCUG Web site, ***http://www.ntpcug.org,*** and send with $40 membership dues to the Membership Director — address shown below. Subscription to the newsletter is included with each membership.

The Group meets twice each month, usually on the second and third Saturdays. See inside front cover for date, time and place of the next North Texas PC Users Group meeting.



North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.
Board of Directors, 2005

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Linda Moore **Bill Parker**

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