North Texas PC News

2ND SATURDAY
Microsoft Las Colinas
7000 Highway 161
Irving, Texas

3RD SATURDAY
King of Glory Lutheran Church
6411 Lyndon B. Johnson Freeway
Dallas, Texas
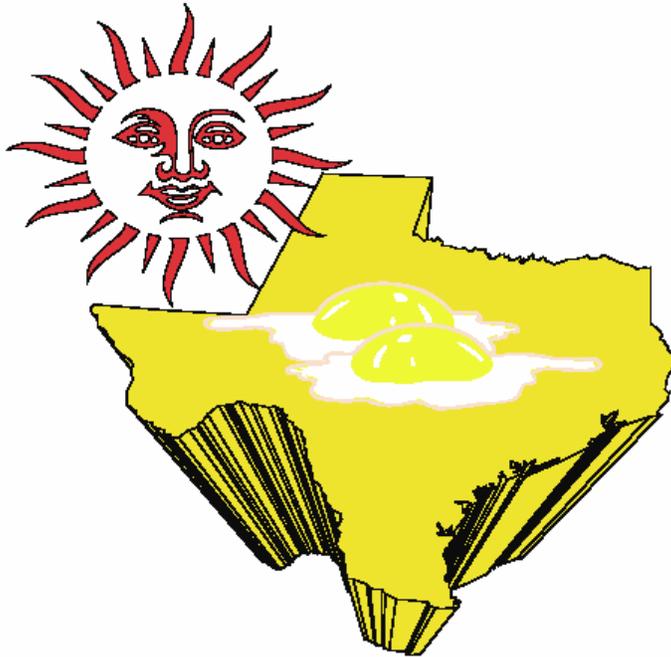
And the Winners are...
Charles Rem ☆ Joe Wolf

Our six-month contest, to see how many new members our current membership could bring in, ended in June. As you will recall, we gave two free months of membership each time an existing member brought a new member into the fold. In addition, we offered almost-free software to the top TWO members that brought in more new members than anyone else during the contest.

The votes are in! The winners of the software are **Charles Rem** and **Joe Wolf**. Our congratulations to both, and we're making arrangements now to get them their software.

As a reminder to everyone else, please continue bringing in new members. The success of our User Group depends on such efforts, and we thank you for your ongoing support.

In This Issue ...

Prez Sez

by Chris Morgan

As I was pondering what to talk about in this month's column, the subject of which PC technologies have been truly useful and a pleasant experience came to mind. A lot of programs are in the utility area and make life a little easier when using the PC. Some software is useful in the workplace (or personally) like word processing and spreadsheet software. There are many classifications of software apps and a wide range of prices to go along with them. But one program came to mind as being unique, very useful, and free.

During summer travel season, we can find ourselves in far-off places, but wanting to stay in touch with the folks back home. A cell phone call can be a costly alternative at several dollars per minute, but is very good for quick checks back to the home front. If you want to spend some time chatting, however (and you have a computer and Internet access) there is a better alternative – Skype (www.skype.com).

A missionary friend of my wife got us into using Skype a few years ago and it has been quite a good experience. It is like making a telephone call from one computer to another. Once you register with the Skype service center, you can access anyone in the world who is also registered with Skype (registering costs nothing). You can talk with them over your computer for free as long as you wish! My wife's friend is in central Brazil, in a little town far up the Amazon River. They frequently get together over Skype to chat about their favorite topic — horses.

Over the last year or so, Skype has added video phone service. So with a webcam, you can see your caller as well as talk with them. Having a daughter who recently moved to Denver, we don't get to see our grandsons as much as we used to. Skype is one way we are staying in touch to see as well as hear from the little fellas.

In addition to the free computer-to-computer service over the internet, Skype can dial any regular phone number in the world. While not a free service, it is a cost effective way to make long-distance calls. In addition, Skype has lots of other services too, like conference calling and "Skypecasts". Skype also sells cordless handsets so you can make landline calls like dialing a regular phone (like having VoIP). According to Wikipedia: "Skype was created by entrepreneurs Niklas Zennstrom, Janus Friis, and a team of software developers based in Tallinn, Estonia. The Skype Group has its headquarters in Luxembourg, with offices in London, Tallinn, Tartu, Prague, and San Jose, CA. Skype has experienced rapid growth in popular usage since the launch of its services. It was acquired by eBay in September 2005 for $2.6 billion." Skype was founded about 5 years ago and offers service via PCs, Macs, and (just recently) Linux computers.

Stay cool and see you 3rd Saturday.

I HAVE NO LIFE - JUST e-MAIL.
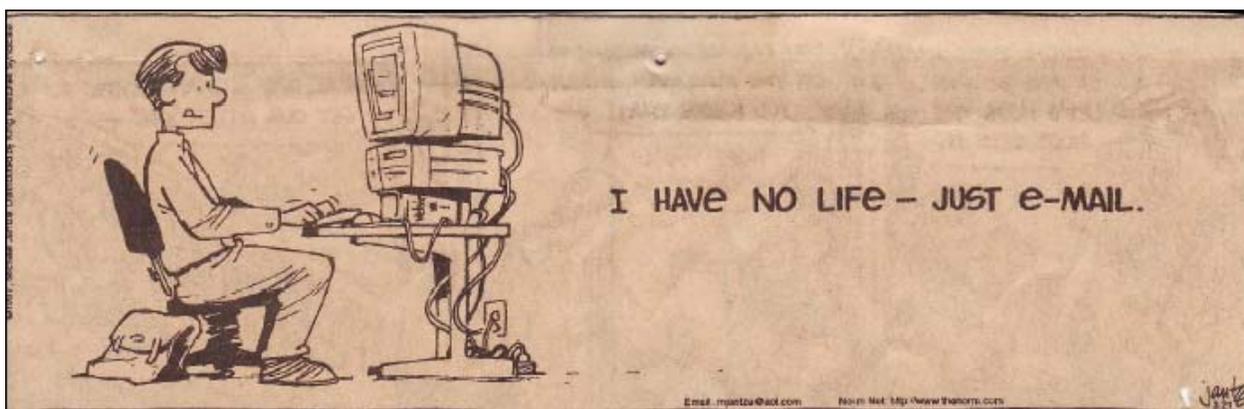
Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

Sessions with presentations, discussion, and exchanges of information

2nd Saturday

Second Saturday is primarily devoted to Microsoft developer technologies. This is the place to *"Share what you know… Learn what you don't".* We meet the second Saturday of each month at the Microsoft offices in Irving.

Over the past few years as member needs and interest change, the second Saturday SIGs evolved and changed. The original four groups were: Beginning Visual Basic, Advanced Visual Basic, Microsoft Application Development, and Access Development. When .NET was introduced we evolved to Visual Basic NET, ASP.NET and SharePoint. Last year we had a "series" based on the Head First Object Oriented Analysis & Design book. This was well received by the membership. This year we have continued to evolve. We have three "main" groups: .NET Development, Design Patterns, and SharePoint.

The main SharePoint site for the 2nd Saturday SIG is: http://sptest.ntpcug.org/2ndSat/default.aspx

Design Patterns – 10:00 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

The Design Patterns SIG started in March of 2008. This is a series SIG, that is to say it will run as a set series of presentations and then it will end. It is the follow up to the Object Oriented Analysis and Design SIG that finished in February of 2008.

They are using the *Head First Design Patterns* book (ISBN: 0596007124) which can be obtained from **Nerdbooks.**

For more information about the purpose and use of design patterns, Wikipedia has a short description at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/
Design_pattern_(computer_science)

The Microsoft Architecture site is at:

http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/architecture/
default.aspx

and a starting point for their use with Microsoft Technologies is at

http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/
ms998572.aspx.

Date	Chapter	Topic
July 12, 2008	Chapter Four – Baking with OO Goodness	Factory Pattern
August 9, 2008	Chapter Five – One of a Kind Objects	Singleton Pattern
September 13, 2008	Chapter Six – Encapsulating Invocation	Command Pattern
October 11, 2008	Chapter Seven – Being Adaptive	Adapter and Façade Patterns
November 8, 2008	Chapter Eight – Encapsulating Algorithms	Template Method Pattern
December 13, 2008	Chapter Nine – Well-managed Collections	Iterator and Composite Patterns
January 10, 2009	Chapter Ten – The State of Things	State Pattern
February 14, 2009	Chapter Eleven – Controlling Object Access	Proxy Pattern
March 14, 2009	Chapter 12 – Patterns of Patterns	Compound Patterns
April 11, 2009	Chapter 13 – Patterns in the Real World	Better Living with Patterns
May 9, 2009	Chapter 14 – Appendix	Leftover Patterns

The site for the Design Patterns Study Group is http://www.dotnetarchitecture.net/default.aspx

The main SharePoint site for the Design Patterns SIG is:

http://sptest.ntpcug.org/2ndSat/
DesignPattern/default.aspx

Microsoft Certification SIG — 2:15 pm Saturday at Nerdbooks

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

Meets at Nerdbooks, 1681 Firman Drive, in Richardson, Texas 75081.

CertSIG Starts a New Certification Series

Starting in June we began a new Visual Studio 2008 Certification Series. The first exam we will prepare for is the 70-735 exam: Microsoft .NET Framework 2.0 Application Development Foundation, required for all 2008 Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist exams. Although this first exam is based on Framework 2.0, the remainder of the exams in the series will be focused on Framework 3.5.

Why might you be interested?

First, if you're interested in obtaining Visual Studio 2008 Certifications, this is a good way to actually get going on the exams. Second, if you're interested in learning the basics of .NET programming, this exam is a great place to start. It covers the real fundamentals of .NET, starting with "types", "classes", "objects", and so on – then moving into more advanced topics such as Collections, Generics, Threading, and more. Third, the class will go on through the summer into September, and it's a good place to learn these topics while working through exercises with fellow developers. I can almost guarantee you'll have fun doing it.

How it works

We meet every 2nd Saturday at 2:00 pm at Nerdbooks on 1681 Firman Drive in Richardson. On 3rd Saturdays we meet at the NTPCUG meeting site, King of Glory Lutheran Church. The sessions last between 2 and 2½ hours each Saturday

Will the group be using a study book?

We are using the recommended Study Kit (read *book*) for this exam: MCTS .NET Framework 2.0 Application Development Foundation, Microsoft Press ISBN 978-0-7356-2277-7, by Tony Northrup and Shawn Wildermuth. This book is a great introduction to .NET programming, quite comprehensive, and filled with code examples and hand-on exercises.

The book consists of 16 chapters. Each chapter contains 2 to 4 Lessons, and each lesson has a Lab Exercise associated with it. The (Microsoft) estimated study time for an individual lesson ranges from 20 minutes up to an hour.

How are the study sessions conducted?

What our past experiences have shown is that with developers, one of the most fun ways to learn stuff in a group is have a volunteer "walk through" some code, line by line, and have other members review and comment (sharp-shoot) on the code. Each month a volunteer prepares the code for a given Lesson Lab and do a walkthrough of that code in front of the group, using the group's projector and a laptop. Our plan is to cover the lessons in two chapters each meeting, so that could be up to eight presentations per Saturday. (No problem if you just don't feel good about making a presentation – just let us know and we won't badger you.)

Isn't that a lot of material to present?

Yes. And we have to see how it goes. Admittedly, the proposed study is fast-paced and covers a lot in a hurry. One problem is that there is so much material (16 chapters) and we want to set a time limit (end of September) on the class so it won't run on forever. We also want to avoid burnout – having one person do all the class preparation for a topic doesn't work well at all. Sharing the presentation load might just be one way to avoid this problem. And past experience has shown that these presentations are just downright fun to be a part of.

If I'm interested, what should I do?

First, become a member of NTPCUG. Dues are only $36.00 per year and have all sorts of other benefits (see www.ntpcug.org for info about joining and benefits). Although visitors are encouraged, the class is set up as a benefit for members of NTPCUG.

Second, get a book (ISBN 978-0-7356-2277-7). You can order one from Nerdbooks www.nerdbooks.com (Dave at Nerdbooks has been a wonderful host, has these books on order, and would appreciate your support.)

Third, get a copy of Visual Studio .NET. If you're serious about continuing the 2008 MCTS exam series, you would probably want to purchase a full copy of VS 2008. However, this first exam is based on the 2.0 Framework, and you can work the class examples and exercises with a version of Visual Studio 2005. Check out an Express Edition at http://www.microsoft.com/express/,

Fourth, read Chapters 5 and 6 for the July 12th meeting and work through the Labs for all Lessons in Chapters 3 and 4 for the July meeting.

Fifth, if one of these labs was particularly interesting to you, contact Tom Perkins (tomperki@gmail.com) to volunteer to present a walkthrough or code review.

Finally, show up on Saturday, July 12th at 2:00 pm at Nerdbooks, 1681 Firman Drive, Richardson, TX 75081. Use the side door, not the front door. Don't be put off by Dave's roaming Labrador Retrievers – they're just part of the atmosphere at Nerdbooks.

What's the near-term schedule?

July 12 – Chapters 5 and 6

- Serializing Objects, XML Serialization, Custom Serialization
- Drawing Graphics, Working with Images, Formatting Text

July 19 – Chapters 7 and 8

- Creating Threads, Sharing Data, Asynchronous Programming Model
- Creating Application Domains, Configuring Application Domains, Creating Windows Services

What if I can't make all the sessions?

If you, unlike most developers, really do "have a life" — no problem. Attend what you can, participate as much as possible – let's try to keep this effort as simple and as easy as possible. The important thing is to have fun whilst learning the material. Work on the session material you miss when you can.

Questions or comments?

Contact Tom Perkins (tomperki@gmail.com) or Chris Morgan (chris.morgan@ntpcug.org)

SharePoint – 11:30 am

Ram Yadav
ram_yadav@hotmail.com

The SharePoint SIG started in 2005. This SIG has already made many presentations on some of the ins and outs of SharePoint, and this past year started us on the education of Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 and Windows SharePoint Services 3.0.

The main NTPCUG SharePoint site for our SIG is: http://sptest.ntpcug.org/2ndSat/SharePoint/Lists/Events%20Calendar/calendar.aspx

Date	Topic	Presenter
July 12, 2008	**Creating Survey:** When you need to quickly gather data or opinions from a group, a fast way to accomplish this is to use a SharePoint survey. SharePoint Surveys are easy to make, easy to distribute, and easy to read. We will walk through the steps to get started with a survey.	Ram Yadav
August 9, 2008	TBD	TBD

.NET Developers – 9:00 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

Building upon the Beginning Visual Basic and Advanced Visual Basic SIG, this SIG now concentrates on any (and all) .NET topics. In the past we have had presentations on ADO.NET, using Code Snippets within the Visual Studio IDE, calling Web Services and introductions to ASP.NET. Going forward we will be starting a new series about building our ASP.NET 2.0 knowledge as well as enhancing our experiences with the .NET 3.0/3.5 Framework enhancements.

Also we will be trying something radically different. The opportunity for our members to give quick 15 minute presentations called "**Lessons Learned**". This is a chance for everyone to sign up and share their experiences with the audience about a technique or a tool that has helped them solve a particular problem or issue. We want to make this a regular type of presentation so we've schedule the first three.

The main SharePoint site for the .NET Developer's SIG is: http://sptest.ntpcug.org/2ndSat/dotNetDev/default.aspx

Date	Chapter	Topic
June 14, 2008	What's new in Visual Studio 2008	Dave Stark
July 12, 2008	SQL Server 2008	Peter Debetta
August 9, 2008	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 1	TBD
September 13, 2008	Lessons Learned	TBD
October 11, 2008	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 2	TBD
November 8, 2008	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 3	TBC
December 13, 2008	New Product Presentation	Chuck Clark
January 10, 2009	Lessons Learned	TBD

3rd Saturday

Alphabetically

Adobe Photoshop — 12:30 pm

presented by Hillary Morgan Ferrer

Chris Morgan, SIG Leader
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org

Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

Bill Parker, SIG Leader
bill.parker@ntpcug.org

In July, the Building Websites SIG will revisit the basics of website design and review a few of the more popular tools for creating web pages.

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

For the July meeting, we will emphasize the merits of the compact digicams with their relationship over the smaller slim lines and the more elaborate dSLR. Our goal will be to define the ultimate camera features which are a must and those that are highly desired.

Ken Ray, a member of our SIG, will show a video clip for us to discuss and learn differences from still shots.

Goal — to capture better pictures.

Whatever the task is, we remind ourselves that better pictures are the **product of the photographer.** As well as knowing the limitations of our camera – we make ourselves aware of framing, working with existing light and modifiers, environment, and having people show their best attributes.

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

This month we will demonstrate several features available in most editing packages. Additionally, we will continue discussions on work flow to increase editing efficiency and reduce editing time in order to improve overall photography.

We welcome beginners through advanced photographers in our seminars.

Excel— 8:00 am

Frank Tubbs
ftubbs@sbcglobal.net

For July I plan to take a look at other ways to use information from lists (some call them databases, others use the term tables, Microsoft's term is lists – they are all the same thing). I will demonstrate the use of functions to pull data from a list. There are several functions available but In June we continued our discussion on Data and concluded the review of the Basics of Filtering. are little known by most users to gather data in ranges or pull specific detail depending on the need. So come by at 8:00 AM on Third Saturday and learn how you can make Excel's versatility work for you.

Our Priorities

First, to learn the common tools within Excel to become broadly skillful in the use of the application. It seems like imagination always provides more opportunity to employ the basics, and so foundation building is always underway.

Second, to become more efficient at using the product. We are at work learning to accomplish more work with fewer keystrokes, or to design our spreadsheets to get the job done faster.

Third, to employ significant tools provided by Excel to do more sophisticated analysis. These tools require little or no development by the user. Filtering, sorting, validation, all come to mind.

Fourth, to employ Visual Basic for Applications (VBA). This powerful subset of MSVisualBasic can be used to further the power built into Excel, as well as allow the spreadsheet to integrate with the rest of the MS Office suite for even further functionality.

Family History — 12:30 pm

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com

This month **Jim Wehe** will have copies of seven reference books for your examination, obtained from a local bookstore. Handouts will consist of a list of those books and separate lists of each book's table of contents. Copies of handouts provided by **Cheryl Smith** in May about local and Internet sources and by **Joanne Corney** in June about the Legacy Family Tree program will also be available.

The books will be available for member checkout for a month starting in August — after Jim finishes reading them all.

Emily Anne Croom is a teacher and genealogist in Houston. Early in her book, "Unpuzzling Your Past", she encourages use of five generation charts, family group sheets, and a chronological profile to record information as you gather it. The information can be recorded either manually or with the aid of a computer. She suggests a modified family group sheet with source numbers on the front and source descriptions on the back. This may solve a problem I have had recording source information.

Join us at 12:30 and learn more about tracing and documenting your family history.

Inernet — 10:00 am

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

In July we will look at The Web's Best Free Stuff. What do you think is the best free stuff on the web? I'll show you mine, but I'll bet you have some good ones, too. Please bring a list of your own favorites so we can all benefit.

For your future planning, in August we will examine Windows Firewall Best Practices — What are the best things you can do to protect and defend your home computers from outside attacks? In this session we'll discuss Internet threats and how to set up defenses.

Do you have questions about Internet telephone service? September's meeting will examine VoIP and Internet Telephone Services. Is it time for you to switch to the Internet for your home phone? In this session, we'll review how the services work, the pros/cons of the services, survey the costs of the services from various vendors, and share our experiences with using things like...

October's meeting will focus on the new release of the latest Firefox, Version 3, and cover Tips and Tricks and Favorite Add-Ons. Firefox 3 has more features than ever, and the Add-Ons give it even more capabilities. In this session, we'll look at power user tips for FF3, and then compare notes on which Add-Ons we use and recommend to others.

IT Professional — 9:00 am

Larry Copeland
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org

As announced under Windows Tips and Tricks, below, In July the Tips and Tricks and IT PRO SIGS will have a special combined meeting to allow for a 2 hour presentation from Chris Koenig from Microsoft on an Introduction to Powershell, Microsoft's new scripting language.

See the Windows Tips and Tricks note for complete details.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus
Bill Parker, SIG Leader
bill.parker@ntpcug.org

The Making Money on the internet SIG in July will focus on ways to maximize (1) traffic and (2) conversion of the traffic you have to people who take your most wanted action.

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am

Larry Linson
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com

*In July, guest speaker **Kathy Lee Brown**, will present "**Access Reports from Word – with Mail Merge**" to continue our Reporting focus. Kathy, a regular attendee and experienced Access user, uses this technique often when the output needs more formatting than is feasible or convenient in Access. If you have felt intimidated by the prospect of inter-application communication, take heart, because Kathy is going to show us how to make it easy.*

In June, Co-SIG Leader **Larry Linson's** presentation "**Reports — Fit to Print**" ran afoul of our not being able to properly control the projector. We discussed the main points and passed around samples of the USPS Renewal Reminder Report for NTPCUG Membership, semi-personalized letters on half-fold sheets and envelopes from another application, and sample output from an in-development Report to produce NTPCUG Membership Cards.

Our giveaways continue, thanks to Microsoft's *CodeZone* operation (see below for more). **Neel Cotten** won the major prize, a full retail copy of *Microsoft Office 2007 Ultimate Edition*.

Larry has requested that members volunteer to present at meetings. **Kathy** also committed to speak in October, on a subject to be announced. We would like to hear from you: a demonstration of an Access database you created and use, a tutorial on an Access-related topic, or other Access-related material.

Please continue to think ahead and be ready to express your preferences about topics that are of interest and useful. In January, we identified an interest in these topics.

- Event Management Template (Access 2003, Access 2007)
- Templates, in general
- Review and make available the Address Book and Information Keeper database
- Other database software: Alpha 5 (NTPCUG Alpha 5 Sig Leader Bill Parker)
- Server databases you can use with Access: Oracle

Microsoft, creators and vendors of our favorite database and office software, through their sponsorship of the *CodeZone* organization to support user groups, has enabled us to resume monthly giveaways. Larry extends his thanks for the software and other gifts to *Microsoft*, and especially to **Chris Koenig**, South Central District Developer Evangelist, and sponsor of the South Central Developer Guidance Council, of which Larry is a member.

Elsewhere on Our
Access SIG SharePoint Site:

In addition to this, our meeting announcement (note that it's usually published before the newsletter comes out, and updated with any last-minute changes, corrections, or adjustments), you will also find a list of links to some very valuable resource sites, announcements, and other information pertinent to Access and our SIG.

Breaking news! The NTPCUG Share Point Team continues progress in completing the installation, testing, and tuning of the new SharePoint 3.0. It will be much improved and more flexible than the current version. Target Date: Real Soon Now!

Many Thanks for the Following
Teresa Hennig is Leader of both the Pacific Northwest Access User Group and of the Pacific Northwest Access Developers Group and a Microsoft Access MVP, as well as a personal friend. She has graciously consented to let us use the following information that she has, at great personal expenditure of time and effort, gathered on the subjects of *Downloads* and *Resources*. Thank you very much, **Teresa**.

Downloads and Other New Stuff
In **Teresa**'s most recent newsletter, she included the following links for online Access training materials from Microsoft:

- 2007 training catalog page http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/CR101582831033.aspx

- 2007 training roadmap http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/HA102744471033.aspx

- 2003 training catalog page http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/CR061829401033.aspx

- 2003 training roadmap http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/access/HA011189511033.aspx

Resource Tips

A couple of good sites to search for information and programming assistance are www.mvps.org and Office Developer Center on MSDN. And, we've been mentioning the newsgroups. You can search and drill through thousands of threads. Check out http://www.microsoft.com/office/community/en-us/FlyoutOverview.mspx for a comprehensive display topics. You may also find what you are looking for by using http://groups.google.com or try www.google.com/microsoft.html for Microsoft related pages or by setting multiple search criteria at www.google.com/advanced_search?hl=en.

Access Blog – by the Access Team: Stay tuned to the community … The team shares insights into their schedule, their favorite features, new features and how to use them. This is also an ideal avenue for the team to talk about issues that are of interest to the Access community. You'll learn about the people and some of the factors that are helping to shape the future of Access. Whether you're a seasoned developer or just learning about Access, you'll find invaluable information and techniques.from creating a database template to getting help when you need it, The Access Blog covers the gamut. http://blogs.msdn.com/access/default.aspx

Get Help When You Need It – Office Online: Available 24/7 on the Web! The Office Online Web site offers dynamically updated Help and online training as well as downloads, templates, and clip art for new and previous versions of Office. Check this out at: http://office.microsoft.com/

Database Issue Checker: Access MVP Allen Browne offer tips and utilities for casual users through expert developers. The Issue Checker can be used during development or to trouble shoot legacy files. Allen's site provides a host of other tips and resources, including a compilation of reserved words. http://allenbrowne.com/AppIssueChecker.html

Access 2007 Product Guide: Read about the new features and see how you can use them to

leverage your time and data. After that, download the Office beta and ENJOY! http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/access/FX100487571033.aspx

MSDN magazine is available online: An excellent, searchable resource. You can check out back issues, download articles and source code. Check it out at http://msdn.microsoft.com/msdnmag

A compilation of links to Access Resources: This site provides an impressive array of links to a variety of resources for Access developers and users. http://www.cbel.com/ms_access/

Conrad Systems Development — CSD Tools Version 2.0: **Jeff Conrad**, former Access MVP, and one of the newest members of the Access Test Team, offers an Access Add-In for documenting your database objects. http://www.accessmvp.com/JConrad/accessjunkie.html

The Seattle Access site: You will also want to check the Links and Downloads pages at www.SeattleAccess.org

Thanks again, **Teresa**, for the extremely useful links and tips!

Membership Reminder:

If you are not a member, but you find the NTPCUG meetings and contacts to be useful, consider joining NTPCUG to help financially support, and volunteering to help physically expedite and support NTPCUG activities.If you have a friend who would benefit from NTPCUG, consider giving him or her a membership. If your membership is expiring soon, renew. Join or renew online at http://www.ntpcug.org/join.html.

Microsoft Certification — 2:00 pm
Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

tomperki@gmail.com

See the second Saturday note for the CertSIG for a complete description of what we will be doing for the next several months.

Microsoft Expression Web — 10:00 am
Chris Morgan
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org

Over the next several months the Expression Web SIG will investigate more of the features of ASP.NET. We will focus on web sites that are based on databases. With databases you can do a lot of interesting things including showing lists of things like people or products or books or whatever. Databases also allow visitors to your site to register themselves, set up accounts, place orders, create emails, sign a guest book and more. We will investigate these types of activities.

In July we will show how to do some customizations of the GridView control by substituting the normal textbox type of cell on a grid with a dropdown list of options. This is a great way to let a user see a complete list of options to enter that is based on your database. We will talk about templates in the grid and how this powerful feature allows for smart data entry into grid or form views.

Mobile Computing — 10:00 am
Larry Copeland
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org

The Mobile Computing SIG will have a discussion on the different versions of Windows Mobile. We'll talk about Windows Mobile 5, Windows Mobile 6, and speculate on the upcoming Windows Mobile 7.

Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm
Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

July's topic is Supercharging Your Context Menu.

What happens when you click that right mouse button? You see the "context menu" which is a list of things that you can do with a single click. At this session we'll talk about how the Windows context menu operates and how you can modify it.

In August we will examine Digital Media Files and Codecs

More and more people are using computers to download, manage, and playback movies, TV shows, and music. In this session, we'll look at media file types, and how to find the codecs you need to play them. What's a codec? Come to the meeting and I'll demonstrate just what they are and how/where to find the right one.

Windows Tips & Tricks — 8:00 - 9:00 am
Gil Brand — gb1@ntpcug.org
Chuck Stark — chuck.stark@ntpcug.org

In July the Tips and Tricks and IT PRO SIGS will have a special combined meeting to allow for a 2-hour presentation from Chris Koenig from Microsoft on an Introduction to Powershell, Microsoft's new scripting language. This software will be useful for

individual users and to systems administrators. If you are involved with automating your computer processes, you MUST attend this seminar.

Wireless Communications — 11:00 am

Birl Smith
birl.smith@ntpcug.org
birlhtml@swbell.net

In July the Wireless Communications SIG will be talking about identity theft. How many ways are you susceptible? And how good is identity theft protection?

## Word — 9:00 - 11:00 am

Diane Bentley
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

We're taking a vacation in July and August and will see you in September, refreshed and with renewed vigor and new tricks.

Positioning a Word Table

If your table doesn't fill the page, you can place it against the left or right margin or center it between the margins. You can also wrap text around the table. Follow these steps to do so:

1 Click anywhere in the table | Table | Table Properties

2 From the Table tab, choose an Alignment option: Left, Center, *-or-* Right

   If you choose Left, you can enter a measurement in the Indent from Left box to indent the table from the left margin.
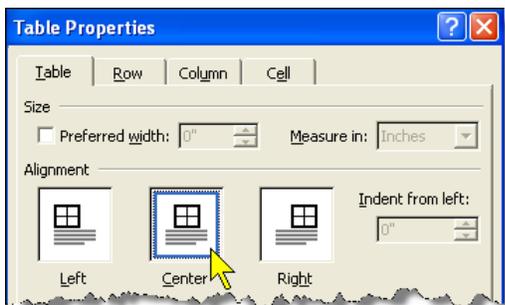
Center will place the table equally distance from the left and right margins

3 To wrap text around the table: Around

4 OK
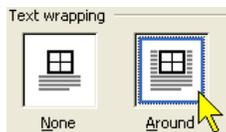
Around wraps text around the table

WordPerfect — 11:00 - 12:00 noon

Diane Bentley
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

We're taking a vacation in July and August and will see you in September, refreshed and with renewed vigor and new tricks.

Corel® RealTime Preview™

WordPerfect users have had the benefit of Corel® RealTime Preview™ for years! RealTime Preview lets you view the effects of a proposed change to text before you apply the change.

RealTime Preview should be on by default. If you need to turn it on:

1 Tools | Settings | Display | Document tab

2 Mark: ☑ RealTime Preview | OK

To change a font using RealTime Preview

1 Click in the document where you want to change to take effect
   -or-
   Select specific text to be changed

2 On the Property Bar, from the Font Face list box, move the insertion point through the list
   *-or-*
   Arrow-through the list of fonts

3 Click the font you want to use

   The list box closes, and your text is now formatted with that font
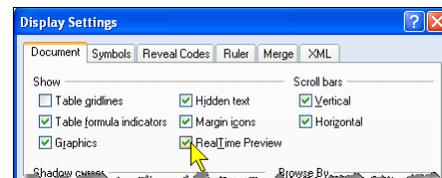
Verify RealTime Preview is active
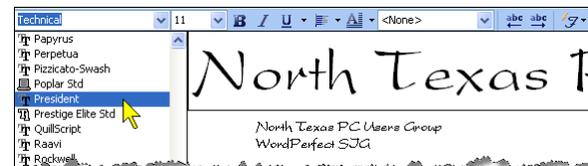
The insertion point was placed ahead of the first line prior to moving through the Font Face list box
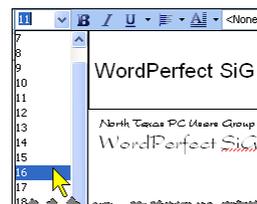
WordPerfect SiG was selected prior to moving through the Font Size list box

Digital Photography - Tips and Tricks

Spike Smith
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In-Camera Image Editing

Should the photographer make it right while the picture is taken, or —

- Wait and use popular photo editors (Adobe Photoshop, Corel Paint Shop Pro, or other) with their personal computer?

- Use new features built into cameras that edit on-the-spot or even before you see the preview?

Several of these new *in-the-camera gimmicks* and innovations are time saving as well as providing you with another tool for getting better pictures.

Auto Focus – accurate and quick focusing and under difficult conditions has been a proven tool for extra merit. Long-time photographers scoffed at this feature as it first became popular but soon found out that even before middle aging affected them, persons may not see everything they should while squinting through their viewfinder. When this auto tool does a better job – then we should use it. However, the tool is not infallible (especially with multiple objects in the foreground). We must learn when to not trust it. [I learned this the easy way when one of the most egotistical photography teachers I have known just volunteered his failure from having ultra-perfect sight when he had approached 40 years of age. He explained that when he discovered that this machine could be more accurate than his personal manual focusing – he was awed – under total disbelief – shocked – and then recovered as reality sank in.]

Auto Exposure – one of the early assist tools built into modern cameras was the ability to sense reflected light from areas of subject; compare this to ISO values (film speed), and adjust (or suggest) light values to provide shutter speed and lens opening. This has been a boon for point-and-shoot picture takers but should always be rechecked for known lighting situations that vary from the calculated average. Typically, an experienced photographer shoots candid outdoor shots with manual camera settings for exposure and adjusted from the photographer's personal experience. We do not flatly reject auto exposure but we do not fully trust it either.

Peoples' skin tone, shadows, subjects colors, and desired effects are seldom corrected with average approximations – but definitely are by using the photographer's skill.

Other Controls – a few of the newest high-level digital cameras are initiating programs which attempt camera settings including: tone, saturation, brightness, and sharpening. This is a huge step and a lot of tasks placed on an onboard computer for trying to assume what your image needs. If it is controlled to the extent that it will not hurt your preferences and just allow a more versatile platform for your image – then, fine. Meanwhile, we must continue to learn how to do all tasks right (best we can with and without the editors). This way, we will continue to grow, learning – what new features we want to use and those we will allow the new onboard program. We need to insist upon on-off switches so our images end up as our art and not just rubber stamping which have become so popular in industry.

Face Recognition – differentiating faces from a matrix of many objects has been in development for well over a decade. Face recognition has now developed into a usable system for low-end cameras with a high degree of success. Aim your equipped camera and watch it recognize faces in a crowd. It will then input data into the onboard computer to assist with proper exposure and format for a compromise focus. This works fairly well but will not replace a photographer having the time to do his own careful analysis before moving on. Observe, this feature does have an on-off switch.

Faces Smiling – smile or no smile is a variation of face detection. I think this is a bit more gimmickry than I want cluttering an already packed menu of: select and try this! I would rather just shoot and cull later as digital images do not cost much to make and can be deleted in an instant. If there are half a dozen subjects in view – do we constantly walk away if only one (or more) is not smiling?

Stitch – stitch as an aid to creating a panoramic shot appears to work well when incorporated as a part of the onboard software. In-camera stitching allows you to see what you have done before leaving the site.

Scene Recognition – as a scene varies in background, highlights, shadows, detail, color, brightness, contrast – with all of these elements combined it becomes an extremely complex job for algorithms to properly select the mood for the final image. The system will do what it can to decipher and approximate.

One of the methods that some camera software use divides the scenes into twelve to twenty scene categories. The camera user then must understand each of these scenarios in order to tell the camera which of its algorithms to use. [An instance might be a snow scene so that you can tell the recognition package to lay off the 18% gray averaging stuff and make the overall average white. Other choices could be select night or sports.] Assuredly, this is not making it easier for the user.

If we, the user, were to properly select a category or otherwise find a method to limit the onboard computer to go to the wrong extremes, the system could have some limited usefulness. Consider, a proper selection from us may guide the onboard computer into algorithms which will limit exposures to avoid blowing out the highlights from a scene. This would have similar effects if we were to use an editor, select curves, and prevent shades of white to become lost.

These changes which would take over from selected algorithms would go into effect prior to creating the JPEG image so that we may see the end results and accept or alter conditions.

Remember – you are the photographer and you are the artist. If *marketing* presets in your camera or in your photo editor take you over with "**you wanted it that way**" – your output may become just another *look alike* and possibly reduced to a low common denominator. Learn your camera, learn your auxiliary tools, keep building and growing and *enjoy*!

Please join our SIGs where we can share, learn, and keep up with what is going on.

Check Photo Tips and Tricks each month for commentary on digital photography – hardware, software, and user techniques in general.

Please visit our SIGs on third Saturdays

Digital Photography SIG
10:00 am until 11:00 am

Photo Editing SIG
11:00 AM until Noon

Spike Smith, SIG Leader
Spike
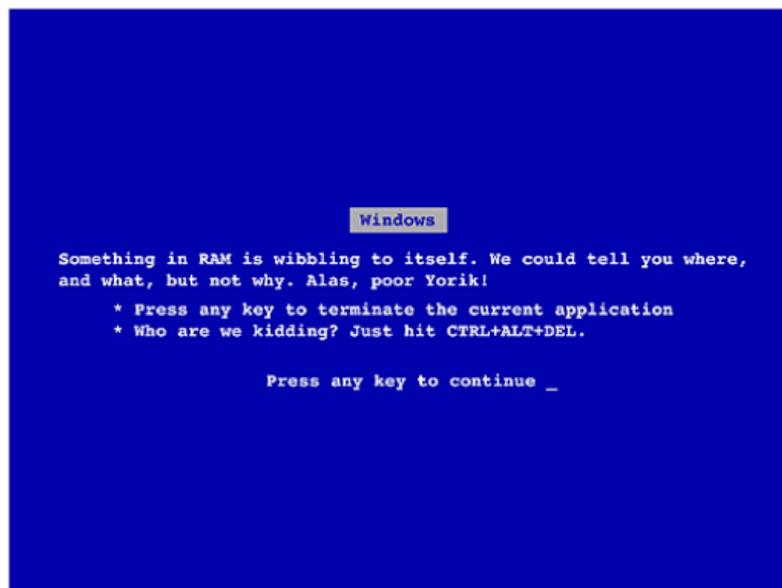
This Month in Our History

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Hey kids, it's time to don your propeller beanie and review the happenings reported in the July 1988 and 1993 issues of *PC News,* 15 and 20 years ago.

In July, 1988, then President **Reagan Andrews** noted that we were one of the ten largest user groups in the US and growing. He said we're "here because we are the best and/or only source available for the information and/or guidance needed to make their computers more effective, productive and enjoyable." These words were certainly true before the advent of the internet but even today, our SIG leaders present information not available to the casual user or not easily found by the individual.

Then President-Elect, **Jim Hoisington**, had what was noted as the 17th installment in the series titled *On Complexity*. He noted that "People who were using ProDOS 1.1.1 on their personal computers started the new year with a bad surprise. Their operating system would not accept a date beyond December 31, 1987… Fortunately, this didn't happen to IBM and compatible PC users, but software upgrades are unavoidable for all computer users." Might this have been a foreshadowing of the Y2K "crisis"?

Jim went on to explain how and why a software release is inevitably flawed. "It is almost certain that any piece of software that contains more than a couple of lines of code will contain errors." So the programmers turn their attention to the most serious flaws and send out an update. Turns out the update introduces its own problems only discovered by those who have installed the update. I'm afraid this problem will continue until the Second Coming when we move to Human Existence 2.0. <G>

Looks like 1988 was a truly different world. In an article titled *Virus Lore*, **K. A. Crawford** and **Kenneth Loafman** said, "… I hadn't talked with anyone in the Metroplex that had a computer virus. I should have said 'anyone with a PC,' because the Metroplex Macintosh community has been hit." Hmm. Whatever happened to those halcyon days? Today, viruses seem to be nearly exclusively targeted at the PC.

The DOM Squad had their monthly article noting that members would pay $2.00 per disk and non-members would pay $3.00 per disk. These had to be 5¼ disks since the note is made that "3.5 inch disks: $3.00 per disk."

The July, 1993 *PC News* had a full-page lead article noting the death of our long-term publisher **John Pribyl**. He was the original publisher when we started publishing a newsletter in 1982 for over eleven years. It was noted that he died on May 21, 1993, in Arlington at the age of 68. It was noted that "… John held a patent for a water fountain synchronized to music."

In *Prez Sez*, then President, **Doug Gorrie,** said, "With the unexpected loss of John Pribyl, we are also searching out persons experienced in desktop publishing to assume the role of NTPCUG Publisher. **Doug McQuaid** and **Reagan Andrews** have agreed to assume this role during the interim, but cannot continue this additional volunteer load beyond the August issue." So, the highly-devoted and energetic **Reagan Andrews** held the post of editor and publisher until his passing in July of 2006. And this he did in addition to having a full-time job with the Veterans Administration, serving on the Board, filling various offices, writing at least one monthly *PC News* article or monthly column and leading the DOS SIG.

May this serve as an inspiration to all of us to give just a portion of our discretionary time to contribute to the Group. As from the beginning, we exist only because SOME give their time to: staff the check-in desk, lead a SIG, publish the monthly newsletter, set up and take down at the monthly meetings and do many other behind-the-scenes tasks that make our group run smoothly.

Doug noted that our membership stood in 1993 at 2,165 members and went on to say, "In other board news, SIG leaders now have a 'power' machine at their disposal. The board recently approved the purchase of a system for SIG use. The new SIG computer has a 486DX-33 processor with 16 Meg RAM and a 245 Meg hard drive." Wanna bet this unit long ago went to the recycler?

In his monthly column (my first place to check every month) titled *The Variety Store*, **Reagan Andrews** wrote, "I've been quoted $335 for a new Maxtor IDE 340MB drive. I've seen similarly low pricing on Western Digital IDE 300MB drives as well."

This was noted as an example of how hard disk prices were falling! More fodder for the recycler today.

Reagan's column went on for fully FOUR PAGES, all fascinating reflections on the world of computing in 1993 when we were all beginning to migrate to Windows from DOS.

He noted that, "PC pioneer Tandy Corp, announced in late May that it would sell its PC manufacturing business to AST Research… The Fort Worth, TX concern was one of the earliest makers of PCs for individual use which were sold through Tandy's Radio Shack stores in the 1970s." This he noted as boosting AST "into the fourth-largest U.S. PC manufacturer slot formerly held by Austin, TX, Dell Computer Corporation."

AST? Wikipedia says: "In 1991 AST became a Fortune 500 company.

"The failure of AST to recognize the movement towards the commoditization of the PC, contributed to its downturn. AST insisted on developing and using its own components in the PCs it produced, instead of those of specialized OEM's. One oft-used saying at AST, in an attempt to dismiss competitors who did so was, "the best technology they have (i.e. Dell, Compaq, etc.) is a screwdriver."

"AST Research was acquired by **Samsung** on August 11, 1996."

In 1993 there were fully seven pages of articles under the heading *SIG Happenings*. There were three full-page ads from software maker, Lotus, two of them for *Freelance Graphics 2.0* and one for *Symphony 3*. Those were the days when manufacturers spent much time and money on user groups.

The DOM Squad had two pages of featured listings. One of these, *ShareWare Book*, "is a 'Whole Earth Catalog' for software developers… packed with hard-to-find tips, tools and techniques for successful shareware marketing and development." Noted as a 190-page how-to manual on disk, this was available for the usual $2.00 and carried a $19.95 shareware fee for those who liked what they saw. By 1993, both the 5¼ and 3½ disks were offered for the same $2.00 per disk charge.

The final article in July was the column *NTPCUG On-Line* edited by BBS sysop, **Fred Williams**. He notes that the BBS was in the process of obtaining yet another 14.4k modem so fully all THREE of the BBS lines would have this advanced "high-speed" capability.

Fred noted the frequent problems at the time with connecting at 14.4k with on-line services, opining that, "I think that the modem manufacturers are pushing just a bit too hard on the telephone systems' switched voice grade lines. Things just don't work as smoothly and consistently as they did back there at 2400 baud. I'm really going to take a hands-off approach when the modem manufacturers ratchet up to the next (28.8kb) speed notch."

I hope you have found this information of interest. If you have reflections to offer, contact chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org and we will consider them for future issues.

Free Microsoft System Posters on Active Directory and Exchange 2007

Larry Copeland
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org

Microsoft has free posters available:

If you're interested in the Active Directory Component Jigsaw poster (published in in the March/April 2006 issue on Technet magazine), send your name and preferred mailing address to posters@microsoft.com. Requests will be serviced on a first come-first serve basis. An electronic version of this poster is available at go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkID=80428.

Electronic versions of Microsoft's Windows Server 2008 Feature Component posters (July 2007 issue) are available at go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=98654.

An electronic version of the Exchange Server 2007 Component Architecture poster (December 2007 issue) is available at go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=106274.

A New FREE Alternative to Microsoft Office

By Chuck Fiedler

In the April *PC News* I wrote about OpenOffice.org, a FREE alternative to Microsoft Office with no restrictions on how many machines you can load it to, unlike MS Office which has a license limit of two machines.

OpenOffice.org works much like Microsoft applications for word processing, spreadsheets and presentations and has the menu bars I recognize from my experience with Microsoft products.

I recently read in the *Dallas Morning News* Business section that IBM is now offering yet another FREE alternative suite of word processing, spreadsheet and presentation applications.

I downloaded it from http://symphony.lotus.com/software/lotus/symphony as instructed. The executable install file is 210 MB and downloads pretty quickly over DSL or cable. Save it to your desktop and install it. The installed file is 320MB for which nearly any relatively recent hard drive should have space.

Using the Symphony applications is fairly intuitive, although being accustomed to Microsoft menu bars; these are not something which I am used to seeing. I can navigate through them but they're just not familiar. (Of course, *I* complained when I had to move from DOS to Windows so don't go by my reaction.) I would ask those familiar with either Corel products or previous versions of Lotus products to comment on this matter.

I have spent a small amount of time playing with this product and find it quite capable and it *is* FREE. As such, those on limited incomes should look into this. Also, those with limited drive space will find this suite less consumptive of precious space that OpenOffice.org at 717MB and about equal to MS Office at 245MB but both these alternatives are FREE, both in cost and in licensing for multiple machines.

Since I have a legal copy of MS Office, I won't be moving soon to either of these FREE products but when MS decides they are no longer supporting Office 2003, I think I know what I'll do.

Monthly NTPCUG Meeting Flyer –
Can You Help Distribute?

Each month we send members a flyer listing the upcoming second and third Saturday SIG meeting information. We work to fit it all on one page so it can be easily printed and posted in offices and public areas. It can also be sent by email to family members, friends, colleagues, etc.

With your help we hope to generate increased interest in User Group activities, thereby helping us grow. We rely on members, SIG leaders, Board members and volunteers to share this information with others. We also need you to consider new options beyond the obvious – bulletin boards, etc.

We ask you, our members, to think of places where you can post the monthly flyer and to e-mail it to anyone you know who may be interested.

We try mightily to get this out before the weekend preceding the second Saturday of each month so you have time to "do your thing".

With your help we can grow our Group and reach others who can "*Share what you know, learn what you don't.*"

> ***Where have you sent the July flyer?***

Show Your Pride in NTPCUG

By Chuck Fiedler

Are you proud to be a member of the Users group? Have you learned something? Shared something? Would you like to see the Group grow? Is there something you can do?

The embroidered hats are all gone or pre-ordered. We still have a supply of printed T-shirts with the NTPCUG logo and our website printed on them. We will have these shirts available again this third Saturday.

Most sizes (M-XL) are $10 and XXL are $11.

See me next to the registration desk at the meeting.

Volunteering

Every board member, officer, chairman, and SIG leader is a volunteer. No one in this organization receives any payment for their work. Without our volunteers, NTPCUG would not exist.

Thanks to **Spike Smith** for volunteering to serve as Secretary at the Board Meetings.

Please consider volunteering for one of these important jobs:

Program Director

Identify and arrange program topics for our vendor presentations.

Volunteer Coordinator

Coordinate permanent and temporary volunteer participation.

Discount Coordinator

Communicate with vendors offering discounts on their products.

Mentoring — Tom Sweet

tom.sweet@ntpcug.org

Communicate with new members to ensure they are aware of the benefits, SIG opportunities and help them in numerous ways to feel welcome and to know that we care about them.

Newsletter —
Doug Gorrie, Chuck Fiedler
and Diane Bentley

doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

Prepare, contribute to and distribute the monthly newsletter.

Information Desk — Charles Rem

crem@ntpcug.org

Assist with check-in process at 3rd Saturday. One or more hours will make a difference.

ID Ten T

I was having trouble with my computer, so I called Richard, the 11 year-old next door whose bedroom looks like 'Mission Control,' and asked him to come over.

Richard clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem.

As he was walking away, I called after him, "So, what was wrong?"

He replied, "It was an ID ten T error."

I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired, "An, ID ten T error? What's that in case I need to fix it again?"

Richard grinned... "Haven't you ever heard of ID ten T errors before?"

"No," I replied.

"Write it down," he said, "and I think you'll figure it out."

So I wrote down: I D 1 0 T...

I used to like the little snot.

Calendar

July	August	September
12 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**9** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**13** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft
2:00 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks	2:00 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks	2:00 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks
19 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**16** 8:00 am—2:0 0 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**20** 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory
2:15 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks	2:15 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks	2:15 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks

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