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Member Participation Needed

During 2008, the Bylaws Committee and the Board have been working on updates to clarify some confusing issues and to give the membership more control. In his Prez Sez column this month, Chris Morgan explains the changes proposed by the Board and the reasons for those changes. An annotated copy of the proposed bylaws was sent to members earlier by email for review and further comment. We hope to finalize the changes at the January annual meeting.

Also in January, the annual elections will be held. Ballots for officers and Board members will be sent electronically to all members prior to the January meeting, and ballots will be accepted at the January meeting and electronically up to the meeting date.

There are many ways in which members can participate in the Users Group. We continuously need volunteers for an hour or more per month to fill various functions. We also need you to take the time to participate in the By-Laws review and in the election of directors and officers for 2009.

Congrats to our November Raffle Winner

November ended another two-month raffle, this time for a Dell Inspiron laptop. These raffles are a fun way to help NTPCUG financially, but even more fun when you win. So, congratulations to our newest raffle winner, Cheyrle Senne. We're very pleased you won, and thanks for being an NTPCUG member.

In This Issue ...

Prez Sez

by Chris Morgan

Two years ago, there was significant turmoil in the User Group that resulted in a petition to amend our bylaws. After taking office the following year, the new Board realized that the bylaws needed more work. We have finally completed that revision and offer it now to the membership for consideration. We welcome your feedback and look forward to answering questions at the December business meeting or at any other time via e-mail.

As of this newsletter, you should already have received an e-mail with the revised bylaws attached, provided in PDF format. It clearly shows what changes have been made to the original document.

In addition to looking over the PDF document, I will devote this Prez Sez to explaining all the significant changes. You will probably want to have a copy of the bylaws handy to follow this list of changes.

Sec 4.1 ANNUAL MEETING

Added some notification requirements. There were none before.

Sec 5.5 REGULAR MEETINGS

Removed the word "additional" when referring to when and where meetings are held. It just means the Board decides on the time and place for all meetings, not just "additional" ones.

Also, a sentence has been added stating that Board meetings are open to any member of the Group who wants to attend.

Sec 5.6b SPECIAL MEETINGS

This change is a little trickier. Sometimes it is necessary for the Board to meet quickly to respond to something going on. A two-day notice is currently in the bylaws to allow for calling a meeting on short notice, but we felt this short notification period may be taken advantage of by a leader wanting to exclude certain Board members from attending. So, the two-day notice has been extended to five days. However, if all Directors are in agreement, the meeting can take place sooner.

By making these changes, there is more protection against a leader taking advantage of the situation, while still allowing for a meeting to occur more quickly if everyone agrees. It's not a perfect fix, but it's better.

Sec 5.7 QUORUM

The change here is to ensure the quorum requirement for Board meetings applies to both regular and special meetings.

Sec 5.9 ACTION WITHOUT MEETINGS

This section has been split into two parts: PREREQUISITES and NOTICE.

First, if any Director objects to holding a Board vote without having a formal meeting, then the action must be delayed until the next regular meeting of the Board.

Second, proper notice of the special action vote must be given to all Directors and the result of any vote must be reported to all the Directors immediately after the vote tally is completed and at the next regular Board meeting. This is to prevent any portion of the Board leaving the other Directors out of a vote they aren't even aware of.

Sec 5.10 VACANCIES

Basically, what is being said here is that if the membership removes a Director, the membership has the right to vote for a replacement. Otherwise, an open Director position may be filled by the Board. So, if a Director just voluntarily resigns, then the Board can appoint the replacement. But, if the membership initiated the removal through a petition and subsequent vote, then the new Director has to be voted on by the membership. In this way, adequate flexibility for running the Board is maintained while still respecting the will of the membership.

Sec 5.11 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

One change here allows for communicating with the membership via e-mail, not just through the newsletter. The second change is an added sentence ensuring any member the right to be on the ballot for the annual election, if they so choose.

Sec 5.12 INSUFFICIENT CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION

Sometimes we don't get candidates for the President-Elect position.

We also may not get five or more candidates for the five at-large Director positions. This new section spells out what happens in such circumstances.

Part of the rationale for this section is to eliminate the use of write-in votes for positions where no candidates have volunteered to run. Another reason is to specify what happens if the unfilled position continues into a portion of or all of the subsequent year. For instance, an annual election may result in there not being a President-Elect for the entire year; hence, the vote in the following year would be for a President who then takes office immediately. But, if no one steps forward even then, at least the then-current President can continue in office.

Sec 5.13 REMOVAL OF DIRECTOR

This is basically the special provision 16.8 that was added to the bylaws in the special vote back in December 2006 (one of four sections at that time). It is now being relocated to this point in the bylaws, with some slight wording changes.

Sec 6.4 PRESIDENT

The President can appoint and remove members of committees established either by him/her or the Board. But, the President cannot eliminate the committee once it has been established without the Board's approval.

Sec 8.3 SIG CREATION

This change gives the Board flexibility in changing the minimum attendance requirement for creating a SIG. The current bylaws mandate at least eight participants for each SIG, with no provision for changing this number.

Sec 9.1 and 9.2 CREATING & TERMINATING COMMITTEES

This change specifies that only the Board of Directors can disband a committee, not the President acting alone. There were some abuses of this section in the past under the old wording where the President would dispense with people and committees without board approval or even in contradiction to the wishes of the Board.. The revised wording clearly states that the President has some limits on what he/she can do.

Sec 10.3 FUNDING (of the newsletter)

Since we no longer sell advertising space in the newsletter and we no longer have the printing and postage expenses in sending one out, this section has been removed.

Sec 15.3 NOTIFICATION AND VOTING

A clarification has been made to note that this section applies just to modifying the bylaws.

Sec 16.4 NOTIFICATION

Other publication options, like e-mail, are added to this section to bring us more up to date.

Sec 16.5 COMMUNICATION

This was one of the four sections added to the bylaws in December 2006. It has been reworded and modified somewhat, but the intent still remains. It now provides an orderly way for any member to communicate with the entire membership, as long as the Board of Directors is okay with it. While we want any member to have the ability to speak to the entire membership if they want to, we also recognize that we can't just open this up completely without having some mechanism to limit abuse.

Sec 16.6 This section had to do with committees and has been removed. However, the other sections of the bylaws having to do with committees have been modified to compensate. See sections 6.4, 9.1, and 9.2.

Sec 16.7 This section on write-in votes for President has been removed. See section 5.11 and the new section 5.13, which effectively replaces 16.7.

Sec 16.8 This section on calling for removal of an officer has been reworded somewhat and is now section 5.12.

There were a couple of other minor changes that were made throughout the bylaws. First, we eliminated the word "annually" in sections that had to do with what the Board had the power to do. It was implied that certain things would always be, and could only be done once a year. By eliminating this word in a few places, it still means that the Board makes the same actions, but it allows flexibility on when and how often these things will be done, like appointing people to head up committees, etc.

Additionally, "e-mail" was changed to "electronic message" in several places.

We hope you agree these changes are good ones and may help prevent future abuses and problems. Let us know what you think. E-mail us and/or be at the December business meeting if you want to learn more, ask questions, or make a comment.

Chris Morgan

President@ntpcug.org

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

Sessions with presentations, discussion, and exchanges of information

2nd Saturday

Alphabetically

Design Patterns – 10:00 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

The Design Patterns SIG is using the *Head First Design Patterns* book (ISBN: 0596007124) which can be obtained from Nerdbooks from this url.

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

The Microsoft Architecture site is here and a starting point for their use with Microsoft Technologies is here.

Date	Chapter	Topic
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 — 2:00 pm Saturday at Nerdbooks

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

The Certification SIG is taking December off- See you in January.

Starting in June we began a new Visual Studio 2008 Certification Series. The first exam we are preparing 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.

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.

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

Our past experiences have shown 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. We cover the lessons in two chapters each meeting. We have to see how it goes. Admittedly, the proposed study is fast-paced and covers a lot in a short period of time.

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

During the meeting, Ram is going to do the conversion/upgrade during the 2nd Saturday meetings. Then he will be able to present the results/process as part of his SIG meeting. This includes the capability to change your Active Directory / Exchange password from the SharePoint site. *Many Thanks to Ben Deuerling for doing some extra legwork on the research about this topic. It is very much appreciated!*

.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	Topic	Speaker
December 13, 2008	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 2 OR New Product Presentation	Terry Witt OR Chuck Clark
January 10, 2009	Lessons Learned	TBD
February 14, 2009	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 3	Tuc Goodwin
March 14, 2009	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 4	Tuc Goodwin
April 11, 2009	LINQ	Tuc Goodwin
May 9, 2009	Lessons Learned	TBD
June 13, 2009	Building the Web Layer using ASP.NET AJAX	Tuc Goodwin
July 11, 2009	Building the Data and Business Layers using .NET 3.5 (Part 1)	Tuc Goodwin

3rd Saturday

All meetings at King of Glory Lutheran Church, 6411 LBJ Fwy in Dallas (between Preston & Hillcrest, north side of LBJ).
Alphabetically

Adobe Photoshop — 12:30 pm

presented by Hillary Morgan Ferrer

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

No more meetings for now.

Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

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

How your website is doing in the view of Google Analytics.

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith @ntpcug.org

More on collages, selecting photos for publications, and uses for that mysterious Exif section of digital photo files.

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

Improving collages, newsletters, magazines, and your artistic work with publishing software. Microsoft Office, and Corel Draw work well for beginning tasks and small to medium projects.

Excel— 8:00 am

Frank Tubbs
ftubbs @sbcglobal.net

We hit some highlights of keyboard shortcuts begun last month.

Family History — 12:30 pm

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com

No meeting in December. See you in January.

Internet — 10:00 am

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks @ntpcug.org

Update on Portable Web Applications – new applications you can run from a flash drive.

IT Professional — 9:00 am

Larry Copeland
larry.copeland @ntpcug.org

Doug Gorrie
doug.gorrie @ntpcug.org

Clinton Fitch will present on new smartphones and new software.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

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

How your website is doing in the view of Google Analytics.

Bill Parker

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am

Larry Linson
larry.linson2 @ntpcug.org

Jim Wehe
jimwehe @gmail.com

In December, Jim Wehe will respond to a member request for information about linking and sorting tables using queries. Larry will be in Maryland helping his daughter's family.

Have you ever wanted to print favorite recipes in a more readable format? Do you have a lot of cookbooks to search for a favorite recipe? Access can solve your concern. By rough count, Daisy has over 60 recipe books including one that is a collection of 3x5 inch cards. We will not look at all of them but we will start the search.

A copy of Windows Vista Ultimate has been provided for the December drawing. Each member attendee will be entered into the drawing one time for each month they attended between October and December. In January we will start a new list for additional prizes which are in route thanks again to Larry.

Last Month

In November, Larry Linson presented an overview of Form properties, showing how they can be modified. Kathy Lee Brown won the drawing for the prize software.

Topic Suggestions: We strive to be a user-driven SIG when it comes to subjects to cover. At each meeting, we now will address this topic early (with our enhanced "Valuable Prizes" program, it has been convenient to begin this discussion while Jim is getting set up for the drawing). We want to make sure we don't "shortchange" this vital part of our meeting.

Please continue to think ahead, and be ready to express your preferences, about other topics that will be of interest and useful. In January, we identified an interest in these topics. Caveat: not necessarily listed in the order they will be presented, nor in order of importance, nor necessarily is presentation guaranteed – for some, we have to obtain guest speakers.

Bill Parker

- Event Management Template (Access 2003, Access 2007)
- Templates, in general
- Review and make available the Address Book and Information Keeper database
- Queries for end-users and developers

- Using other Microsoft Office software from Access via COM automation
- Server databases you can use with Access: Oracle

Valuable Prizes

Alpha Software, at Bill Parker's request, provided a very capable edition of Alpha Five for the drawing at our September meeting. Many thanks to Bill and to Alpha.

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 privileged to be a member.

In July, we requested drawing prizes for the next quarter. We expect our gifts of Microsoft products to resume in October. Each quarter, we start over accumulating names to increase your probability of winning if you attend regularly – if you are not present, you can still win a major prize (of which there usually is only one per meeting) but you must be present to win one of the minor prizes

Elsewhere — Our Access SIG SharePoint Site:

In addition to a very abbreviated form of this, our meeting announcement (note that it can be, and is, 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 to progress on completing the installation, testing, and tuning the new SharePoint 3.0. It will be much improved and more flexible than the current version. Target Date: Real Soon Now! (Larry's Comment: I certainly hope so and hope that it has *compelling* features.)

Many Thanks for the Following

Teresa Hennig is Leader of both the *Seattle 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:

Try SQL Server 2008 Today RELEASE CANDIDATE (September 2008)

Download a free, fully functional 180-day trial version of SQL Server 2008 and SQL Server 2008 Feature Pack today. To help make the most of your evaluation, you will receive five e-mails during your evaluation period that, depending on which download option you select, contain resources specifically designed for IT professionals and developers. Before downloading and installing SQL Server 2008 be sure to use the link to evaluate the system requirements – avoid undue complications with your configuration. www.microsoft.com/sqlserver/2008/en/us/trial-software.aspx

Download SQL Server 2008 Feature Pack (September 2008)

The SQL Server 2008 Feature Pack is a separate download from SQL Server software. This collection of stand-alone install packages is designed to provide additional licensed functionality for SQL Server 2008. It contains 17 new redistributable and backward compatibility components and add-on providers. For additional information on each of these components click the download button below www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=C6C3E9EF-BA29-4A43-8D69-A2BED18FE73C&displaylang=en

Browsing with More of What you Want and Need (September 2008)

Internet Explorer 8 offers better protection, connects to more services, and gives you more options and control. See how IE 8 can improve your experience www.microsoft.com/windows/internet-explorer/beta/

Run IT on a Virtual Hard Disk (September 2008)

Using the power of virtualization, you can now quickly evaluate Microsoft and partner solutions through a series of pre-configured Virtual Hard Disks (VHDs). The Microsoft Virtual Software experience gives you full access to a number of server products on a pre-configured virtual machine. You can download the VHDs and evaluate them for free in your own environment without the need for dedicated servers or complex installations. Download the application of your choice and start evaluating the software for your environment immediately, for free. www.microsoft.com/servers/virtualharddrives.mspx

Access 2003 Solution Center — (August

2008)

This is a great starting point to find solutions, downloads, current topics and links to the latest updates. http://support.microsoft.com/?scid=ph;en-us;2509

Top 10 Reasons to use Access WITH Excel (August 2008)

This article explains how to have the best of both worlds and includes demo files and scenarios that make it real in YOUR world. http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/excel/HA102640811033.aspx?pid=CH102094651033

PrimoPDF – The World's #1 free PDF Creator ... (at least according to them) (August 2008)

PrimoPDF offers both a free and professional version that will work with Windows 98 through Windows Vista and can work with over 300 file types. Willie really likes PrimoPDF for client installations because it is remarkably simple and leaves a VERY SMALL footprint. Check it out and let me know what you think. www.primopdf.com

Make a World of Difference with Search and Give (August 2008)

Search and Give is a free and easy way to give back to any cause that is important to you. Whether the organization close to your heart is a local church, school, food bank, wildlife protection group or an organization searching for a cure-your gift is your choice. You can choose from over 800,000 non-profit organizations and 100,000 U.S. public, private, and parochial K-12 schools. The more you search, the more you give.

Here's how it works. Sign up at www.searchand-give.com and then you can start donating one cent for every search you perform using Windows Live Search. If you've earned tickets playing games on Microsoft's Live Search Club (http://club.live.com/Pages/Home/HomePage.aspx), you can also convert those tickets into donations. Who says playing games doesn't pay?

Windows Live Search (August 2008)

Microsoft has launched a new promotion that enables you to get cash back when you shop online using the Live Search Cashback site (http://search.live.com/cashback). Simply go to the Live Search Cashback site and search for the products you want. When you purchase one of the Cashback items, you receive an e-mail notification that the purchase has been added to your Cashback total. The total earned is then paid out in cash to you when a minimum balance is reached.

Create Help Videos with Community Clips (August 2008)

Microsoft Office Labs now offers Community Clips — where you can find myriad how-to videos created by fellow community members. Not only can you get free help, but you can also download the FREE program for creating help videos. This sounds like the perfect compliment to user groups and online forums. Check it out and let me know what you think. I'm looking forward to seeing YOUR videos! http://communityclips.officelabs.com

101 Fabulous Freebies (August 2008)

We thought we'd throw in something else just for fun. MSN Tech & Gadgets has posted a fun article, listing 101 free finds on the Web right now. Click here to check out the list: http://tech.msn.com/products/articlepcw.aspx?cp-documentid=6729042.

Office Live Workspace (August 2008)

Tired of emailing files and trying to keep people on the same version of a document or project? Make your life a lot easier with Microsoft Office Live Workspace. Live Workspace provides an easy and free way to share files and collaborate on multiple projects and activities. There are even demos and videos to get you up to speed quickly. Learn more at http://officeliveworkspacecommunity.com

MSDN – Virtual Labs to Test-drive Code samples (August 2008)

How many times have you seen a code sample but didn't try it out because you didn't have the software configuration or you didn't want to risk unexpected impact to your system? Now there's a simple and convenient solution. MSDN provides virtual labs so that you can try out many of the code samples. Better yet, there's a split window so that people can read the MSDN article in one pane and use a second pane to contain the test environment! http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/magazine/cc511327.aspx?pr=flas

Keyboard shortcuts for Microsoft Office (August 2008)

It is sometimes quicker to accomplish tasks with simple keystrokes rather than by using your mouse. Discover how to get a full list of keyboard shortcuts, and learn and practice ways of using your keyboard rather than your mouse. http://office.microsoft.com/training/training.aspx?AssetID=RC060786531033

Mail merge your way to more time! (August 2008)

Sending the same document or e-mail to a group of people can be fast and easy. By using mail merge, all you have to do is create one document with your information and add placeholders for unique information,

such as a name or address. Microsoft Office Word takes care of the rest! http://office.microsoft.com/training/training.aspx?AssetID=RC011205671033

What's so great about Office Excel PivotTable reports? (August 2008)

Learn about the powerful Microsoft Office Excel 2003 PivotTable(r) feature, which organizes, summarizes, and analyzes your data to reveal its meanings. http://office.microsoft.com/training/training.aspx?AssetID=RC010136191033

Product Key – Lost and Found

Finally, we have guidance on how to minimize the pain and frustration of losing a product key. If you've lost a product key in the past, you may have begrudgingly purchased a replacement program. Well, that doesn't need to be the case, in fact, Microsoft has provided instructions on how to get a replacement key, in KB811224 http://support.microsoft.com/kb/811224

Tips & Tricks – Webcasts and Podcasts from the Experts

Microsoft Webcast Home provides links to valuable resources from the experts. These webcasts and podcasts include great tips, lessons, recommendations and other invaluable tidbits and it's FREE! http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/webcasts/FX102557791033.aspx

Windows Vista Service Pack 1 – Released 2/26/08 (March 2008)

Windows Vista Service Pack 1 contains changes focused on addressing specific reliability and performance issues, supporting new types of hardware, and adding support for several emerging standards. In addition to previously released updates, Windows Vista SP1 also addresses some management, deployment, and support challenges. http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/windowsvista/bb738089.aspx

Windows Live SkyDrive - Online File Storage (March 2008)

Microsoft is now offering 5 GB of FREE, password protected, online file storage! Store your photos and other files so that you can retrieve them from anywhere, share them with friends, or share them with the world. Check out your options at http://skydrive.live.com

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. 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!

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

This month we will look at some basic CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) principles.

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

Clinton Fitch will present Smartphones and software. Get the latest on this technology!

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

Past, Present, and Future; what lies ahead for Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7.

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

We will have an open question and (maybe) answer session on all things Windows.

Wireless Communications — 11:00 am
Birl Smith
birl.smith@ntpcug.org
birlhtml@swbell.net

Word — 9:00 - 11:00 am
Diane Bentley
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

No meeting in December. See you in January.

WordPerfect — 11:00am - 12:00 pm
Diane Bentley
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

No meeting in December. See you in January.

2nd Saturday Meeting at Microsoft — Tom Perkins, Certification SIG

Am I Simply a Troglodyte?

By Chuck Fiedler

(trog•lo•dyte 🔊

Pronunciation: trä-glə-dīt\

Function: noun

Etymology:

Latin troglodytae, plural, from Greek trōglodytai, from trōglē hole, cave (akin to Greek trōgein to gnaw, Armenian aracem I lead to pasture, graze) + dyein to enter

1 : a member of any of various peoples (as in antiquity) who lived or were reputed to live chiefly in caves

2 : a person characterized by reclusive habits or outmoded or reactionary attitudes)

As I have said before, I started out in computing with a TI 99/4A, a then-marvelous machine that permitted one to enter lines of code and make action things happen on the screen. That screen happened to be a small monochrome TV and any code storage was done on a cassette tape recorder connected to the base unit.

When my employer deployed computers, they first used Wang word processors and, later, DOS WordPerfect on IBM PCs and I gladly learned this new technology.

Then along came Windows® in its earlier incarnations. By then I had obtained and upgraded my home computer several times, starting from a genuine 4.77 MHz IBM PC-XT and making upgrades as my interests and finances permitted.

I valiantly resisted Windows pontificating that it was nothing more than a video game approach to computing. While I'm not a technical professional, I found command line computing and batch file writing to be more enticing than point-and-click video gaming.

The engineers with whom I worked at the time tried to convince me of the value of the Windows environment – you could run multiple applications at the same time. Oh yeah, like I'm gonna make inputs to a spreadsheet and a letter at the same time.

Well, I came reluctantly into the world of Windows, multitasking and mousing.

Most recently, the death of my trusty laptop forced me to purchase a new one. This late in the year you only get most computers pre-loaded with Windows Vista. The machine I got has Vista Home Basic on it. While I was waiting for the machine to arrive, I tried to figure out how to undo Vista and load XP with which I am quite happy.

Well, I've been working with the installed Vista operating system and, while things are not necessarily where I have come to expect them to be, Vista isn't wholly abhorrent. Thus far at least (I'm two days into this adventure) I'm pretty satisfied and have decided to leave Vista as the operating system and learn the ins and outs of this new OS.

So maybe I'm not a true troglodyte but I like to find my cheese where I left it last.

Terry Witt,
former Visual Basic .NET SIG Leader

Digital Photography — Tips and Tricks

Spike Smith
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

The Three Finger Rule

Okay, you see my favorite subject on the inset here - the one-handed camera. This concept is and has been my prerequisite for many years. If I go way back to the Kodak Brownie Reflex, it was a one handed operation and built-in waist level viewer. We didn't have a multitude of controls to operate with it but for pointing and shooting one-at-a-time shots – we did it. My later cameras went by the way of the rangefinder models Kodak Retina I and II. Later to a Retina IIIC Reflex (an SLR) model.

When this 35mm was just not quite enough, I added a Busch press camera with tilt and drop bed. It had a frightening flash but big bulbs – not flash powder. You had better believe that in spite of its huge size, its big strap handle allowed one to release the shutter and hold the camera with just the right hand. Granted, it was not as convenient to cock and reload as the Retinas were as this monster definitely took both hands to replace sheet film holders and reset shutter and rack in and out to pre-focus.

If we could shoot 4" x 5" negatives with one hand – then by golly, we should be able to shoot with one hand with today's modern digital photography.

When I needed designs for portraits the Mamiya Pro S medium format weighing in at 1 ½ pounds without a big lens was ready. It was balanced and available with a shutter release to be a genuine one-handed shooter.

The absolute most popular series of cameras today are the not-so-cheap thin shirt-pocket models. I tend to look away from these as you can't see images or instructions on the monitor while in outside light. We have limited controls and quality of image. Worst of all – it takes two doggone hands to shoot a picture.

The next step up in cameras is the digicam. This is where I believe the starting point should be for the newbie. With some reservations, there should be control of almost everything with only one hand holding the camera. Most of these are very light with zoom and shutter controls at a fingertip.

When we advance to the dSLR from the digicam, we want to retain this one-hand operation and perhaps even when requiring the new line of medium-format film replacements.

There are these two things to keep in mind as absolute necessities.

(1) single handed operation

(2) can view while in bright light

Another consideration for the advanced amateur and semi-pro is to have a flash hot shoe and/or PC flash connection.

Nearly all-manual operation allows you to do mostly anything. If you have many of those let me do it for you gimmicks, you can get into trouble even easier. With your manual controls though, you can learn to mimic the auto controls and fix situations the super auto gadgetry does – only better.

Note on the 1, 2, 3 Fingers, you can hold your digicam or dSLR very well and have a thumb left over with the index finger to shoot with.

Remember that slim line popular camera model? It's been obsolete now for some time. Now that you carry your cellular telephone everywhere you go, you have your e-mail, navigation, alarm clock, movies, and much more as well as a 3MP or better camera.

Use the digicam with a 10x to 18x zoom, IS (image stabilization), some cute video stuff, and all around photography even providing quality 8" by 10" glossy work for framing and albums.

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 December flyer?***

Jeff Frauenheim

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 our 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, David Franke, and Diane Bentley

doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org
dave f81@gmail.com
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.

Time Marches On

By Chuck Fiedler

In 1982 a new magazine tailored to the burgeoning ranks of personal computer enthusiasts and technology purchasers hit the newsstands and mailboxes across the country. PC Magazine did a great job of introducing new aspects of PCs, peripheral hardware, and software.

Next month, *PC Magazine* will publish its last print edition. Beginning in February, PC Magazine will go 100% digital at its website, www.pcmag.com.

The *PC Magazine Digital Edition* has been available since 2002 as an adjunct to the print edition but, starting in February it will be the only way to enjoy the features of PC Magazine. The company states that the ever-growing expense of printing and delivery was turning the creation of a physical product into an untenable business proposition. These increasing expenses, coupled with a decrease in advertising by vendors led to the decision to discontinue the print edition.

Once mail-order vendors listed products in ads covering several pages. Today a vendor purchases a one- or two-page ad with a reference to a website. At one time, PC Magazine averaged some 400 pages per issue, with some issues breaking 500+ and even 600+ pages. In the late 1990s, as computer magazines underwent a drastic downsizing, the magazine shrank to 300+, then 200+ and most recently 150 pages.

The company says it will be working hard to enhance the online experience for its readers.

I would predict that we will see progressively more print media moving into the all digital world. In fact, recently the 100 year-old newspaper, the *Christian Science Monitor* and the less venerable *U.S. News and World Report* announced that they would discontinue print editions in favor of fully web-based publications. Today, nearly every print publication has a digital counterpart. As more of the readership becomes web-savvy, the advantages of web-only publication for the publisher become progressively more obvious. For the reader, whether with a laptop or web-enabled cell phone, the constant availability of one's favorite publications – complete with searchability -- are obvious.

I would think that all User Group members have had some experience with web-based publications and have experienced the benefits of that medium that are not available in print media – things like the ability to link to product brochures, manufacturer websites, demonstration videos, etc and to have table of content entries that link directly to the article of interest. Finally, past issues are immediately available without the reader having to build piles of past issues (which my wife frequently reminds me are getting out of control.)

PC Magazine was created by David Bunnell with financing by Tony Gold, former owner of Lifeboat Associates. When the capital necessary to publish the magazine overcame available resources, Gold sold the magazine to Ziff Davis and moved it to New York. Bunnell and his staff then left to form *PC World*. It will be interesting to see whether *PC World* will soon follow suit in the move to digital-only publication.

These are heady times in which we live. Exciting changes lie ahead as technology continues to bring new things for those who embrace them.

Sign In Please

Do you enjoy meeting at King of Glory Church (KoG)? We've heard a lot of positive comments, but don't forget that we are guests as much as clients. KoG has put some restrictions on our use of the church from Day One. They want to ensure that the folks that come for our monthly event are both invited and appropriate. They make it <u>our</u> responsibility to know everyone we let in, and that our attendees wear a name tag.

We also need to track everyone coming in for our purposes, in part to justify the expense of meeting at KoG, but also to identify guests. That's part of the reason we make everyone check in.

I know that everyone is frequently running late but ***please*** stop at the Information Desk each month and check in, and get a name tag issued. That will help us meet our obligations to the Church in exchange for meeting there.

Thank you for your understanding and assistance.

This Month in Our History

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Hey kids, Santa is bringing you a review of the happenings reported in the December 1983 and 1988 issues of PC News, 20 and 25 years ago. (Bet that old Christmas wrapping paper has gotten moldy <G>).

In December, 1983, the big article had 3½ pages of commentary on the IBM PC Jr announced with much fanfare in November, arguably to capture the Christmas home computer buying market. There were fully nine hardware announcements and five software announcements. As it turned out, the strange little machine wasn't released until later in 1984, probably good news as fewer of them were ultimately sold.

In 2006 PC World, in an article titled The 25 Worst Tech Products of All Time said "These products are so bad, they belong in the high-tech hall of shame." Specifically,

"… IBM's attempt to build an inexpensive computer for homes and schools was an orphan almost from the start. The infamous "Chiclet" keyboard on the PCjr. was virtually unusable for typing, and the computer couldn't run much of the software written for its hugely successful parent, the IBM PC.

"The PCjr cost nearly twice as much as competing home systems from Commodore and Atari which didn't improve the situation. Two years after Junior's splashy debut, IBM pulled it from the market."

The Swap Shop continued to carry the offers noted last month (Hmm. Wonder why they hadn't already sold) plus two new wonderful offers: "FOR SALE: Two single sided 5¼"IBM PC drives. We upgraded to double sided. $75 each…" Well, at least I appreciate his honesty.

Second unbeatable offer was, "FOR SALE: GEMINI 15" wide printer in mint condition. Mail order ads in the latest issue of Byte go as high as $599 for this printer. I will sell for best offer over $420…"

1988's December issue had a small Merry Christmas picture on the cover. This marked one of the earlier uses of graphics on the cover of the newsletter.

Then president **Reagan Andrews** wrote in the year's last Prez Sez column that he was signing off as president but would certainly be going to COMDEX/Fall 88 and would include those comments in a forthcoming article. In fact, his December column was written on the day that he subsequently departed for COMDEX.

Members **Ken Loafman** and **Kathryn A. Crawford** had a three-page article titled The Great ARC Quandary. It seems that System Enhancement Associates (SEA) was suing PKWARE (PK) known for PKZIP and PKARC. The DOM Squad disks often used PKARC to keep the total number of disks for a given purpose "reasonable". When data were compacted, PKXARC was included on the disk to restore the file(s). It seems that ARC was a highly successful application both with users and with BBS operators. ARC was one of the early products to be marketed both commercially and as Shareware, a not uncommon practice today.

Anyway, Phil Katz of PK was alleged to have taken SEA's readily-available source code and incorporated it into his PKXARC and PKARC. So long as he played only to the shareware marked, SEA chose to ignore him. However, when an ad for the PK products appeared in PC Tech Journal on the page facing SEA's ad, costing less that the SEA products and making comparisons to "the other archive utility". SEA simply couldn't abide this "stick in the eye" and sent a "cease and desist" order to PK basically saying, "Do what you want in the shareware world, just stay out of the commercial market." Katz refused and got sued as a result.

According to Wikipedia, "Katz lost the lawsuit and was forced to pay $62,500 to SEA to cover their legal fees. It was found during the court case that Katz had used SEA's ARC source code for the majority of the application but had only made code optimizations to increase speed. Primarily he changed the word length used by the algorithm from 12 bits to 13 bits resulting in a higher compression for typical

binary files. As a result of the lawsuit, Katz changed the names of his utilities to PKPAK and PKUNPAK, and then developed PKZIP and PKUNZIP, which were based on new and different file compression techniques."

In his recurrent series On Complexity, **Jim Hoisington** wrote, "Over half the boards going back to memory card makers are not defective. They are in perfect running order… Something's wrong here. When a customer sends back a working board, both the customer and the company that made the board lose… Early personal computer users were expected to get inside their computers to add boards and reset switches… Occasionally we ask the DOS SIG how many of those present are not afraid to open up their computers and to make changes inside. More and more the people in the DOS SIG do not raise their hands. That means that we have a problem."

He went on to recount a recent hard drive purchase which included a floppy disk with a setup program on it. This program automatically analyzed the physical installation and the workings of the drive, returning a code to be reported to Tech Support when calling the manufacturer. On the one hand, it's a shame this approach didn't become more wide-spread, on the other hand, the advent of USB has made it possible for even more people to never "crack the box". This has a disadvantage in that the innards never get dusted out as should be done about once a year.

The DOM (Disk of the Month) Squad featured fifteen new shareware disks with 5¼" disks costing members $2.00 per disk and non-members $3 per disk. 3½" disks were a buck more. Disk 305, ON-SIDE 1.00 was another of many applications designed to print in landscape format on don-matrix printers. Don'tcha miss those days? Disk 313, RamTest 3.0, was a hardware test utility with which the user could analyze on-board memory including extended and expanded memory. Disk 320, PKPAK 3.61 was billed as "the 'legal' version of PKWare's Archive Program."

The Family Tree of Personal Computers by **Tom E. Krieg**, picked up from last month where the article ended with the impact of radio on the development of the personal computer. This month's article spent nearly two pages recounting the historic events in radio's history from 1865 through 1982. The article then proceeded to talk about television.

Television traces its history back to 1878 with the invention of the Crookes tube, forerunner of the television and computer monitor. The Iconoscope was patented in 1923 as a device for taking and transmitting pictures electrically. In 1925 C. F. Jen-

kins used a new device to operate as a camera and send electronic signals. In 1930, the all electronic television receiver was demonstrated. Also in 1930, NBC (The National Broadcasting Company) began operating W2XBS, an experimental TV station in New York City.

In 1940, coaxial cable was laid between New Your City and Philadelphia, permitting TV to be seen in then two cities. The first two commercial TV licenses were granted to WNBT and WCBW on June 24, 1941. Then came WWII when everything was focused on the war effort and television development came to a halt.

In 1948, WBAP became the first Texas station to be issued a license for commercial broadcast. They broadcast a campaign stop by Harry Truman and a total of 400 TVs, many on display in retailers, were able to view this auspicious occasion. In one year WBAP had about 9,000 TV sets listed on their mailing list for program schedules.

The first post-war TV sets had generally a six-inch picture and very large cabinets like the radio consoles of the time. Soon came ever larger screens, 12-inch, 14-inch, 16-inch, and 19-inch, all monochrome and all in massive cabinets. Color television came along in 1953 but was slow to catch on until the development of the transistor.

Finally the article recapped the history of television from the invention of the Crookes tube in 1878 to 1985 when a worldwide audience estimated at 1½ billion people watched the "Live Aid" concert.

The article and this review will conclude next month.

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.

Calendar

December

8 9:00 am—Noon   **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft

The Certification SIG is taking December off- See you in January.

15 8:00 am—2:00 pm   **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory

The Certification SIG is taking December off- See you in January.

January

10 9:00 am—Noon   **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft

2:15 pm   **Certification SIG** at Nerdbooks

17 8:00 am—2:00 pm   **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory

2:00 pm   **Certification SIG** at King of Glory

February

14 9:00 am—Noon   **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft

2:15 pm   **Certification SIG** at Nerdbooks

21 8:00 am—2:00 pm   **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory

2:00 pm   **Certification SIG** at King of Glory

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