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# 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

March 2008

VOLUME 27 • NUMBER 3



**Jim Brian**  
won *Microsoft Office Ultimate 2007* at the 2008 Annual Business Meeting. And what did Jim do as a result of winning? Read about it on page 11.

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## Members Emeritus (Life Members)

John Pribyl (1924 - 1993)

Phil Chamberlain

David McGehee

Tom Prickett

Kathryn Loafman

Fred Williams

Andy Oliver

Alex Lilley

Doug Gorrie

Jim Hoisington

Stuart Yarus

Connie Andrews

Reagan Andrews ( - 2006)

Timothy Carmichael

Mark Gruner

Claude McClure

Robert McNeil

by Chris Morgan, President  
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday meeting this month will be unlike any we have had in quite a while. In March **and** April, we are hosting the North Texas Linux User Group. They typically have almost as many attendees as we have, and will be taking two of our rooms for the morning.

Will this be a disruption? Probably. But I don't see that as necessarily a bad thing. I think it will be a stimulating experience and stretch us some. It will certainly be an opportunity for many of us to see something other than a Microsoft operating system.

Linux is a powerful force in the marketplace of PC software. It is basically free, although there are some companies that offer Linux bundled with their own utilities. And these products are very inexpensive, not to mention first class. While Linux represents an alternative to Windows as a base operating system, there are some interesting ways in which it can co-exist with Windows.

I have a friend, Mike, who develops PC software; specifically Dataflex database programs. Since Dataflex works on both Linux and Windows, he has developed a hybrid system for a company. He has taken the best of both worlds and merged them into a very effective, speedy, and productive network system.

The company has a Dallas office that serves as the IT hub for their company, which has offices in Houston and Beaumont. The other offices commu-

nicate over a VPN (Virtual Private Network) to Dallas. The database is on a Linux server and the users run on Windows XP client machines.

In testing, Mike found that the database was over 20 times faster using Linux rather than a Windows 2003 Server. It's just a very speedy file server system. He has developed Windows programs that run on the XP client workstations that access the database residing on the Linux server. It is a marvel of using a "best of both worlds" type thinking.

So, we may all learn a thing or two from our friends in the Linux world. I know I'm excited.

So how is it that we are hosting these people? Recently, the Linux group found themselves without a home when the company who had been hosting them decided to end the relationship. They weren't paying anything for the meeting space, so these things can happen. (It can happen even if you are paying too, as we well know.) So they came to us looking for a temporary place to meet while they secure a new home.

If it seems too wild and disruptive, remember it is only for two meetings. If it turns out to be a fun collaboration, maybe we work something out for a longer term. We'll see. Please join me in welcoming them on 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, and be prepared for a different (and hopefully not too chaotic) meeting.

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## Family History SIG — **New!**

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The Family History SIG will meet in March at 12:30 in Room 13. The current six-month plan includes (*individual work schedules permitting*):

**March — *Why Family History***  
by Jim Wehe

**April — *Dallas area and internet sources*** by a Plano  
Genealogy Librarian

**May — *PAF computer program***  
by Jim Wehe

**June — *Legacy computer program***  
by a Brookhaven  
College Instructor

**July — *TMG computer program***  
by a friend

**August — *Family Tree Maker computer***

Each computer program discussion will address the current version cost, look and feel, data entry, use of photos, and available reports including recording of health issues, sources, and family stories.

Handouts to keep and some displays will be provided for your examination.

Jim Wehe, SIG Leader  
jimwehe@gmail.com

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# Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

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## 2nd Saturday

Read a comprehensive report on **Second Saturday Events for March**, by Tuc Goodwin, page 18.

### Visual Basic .NET — 9:00 am

Tuc Goodwin  
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

Our topic this month is *What's New in Visual Studio 2008*, by Dave Stark.

### Design Patterns— 10:00 am

Tuc Goodwin  
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

Design Patterns is a general reusable solution to a commonly occurring problem in software design. If this is a topic of interest to you, come join Tuc and his co-leaders as he initiates this new, ongoing SIG.

Tuc also provided some “homework” to get all his attendees up to speed. A good overview of Design Patterns is on Wikipedia at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design\\_pattern\\_\(computer\\_science\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design_pattern_(computer_science)). In addition, the Microsoft Architecture site is at <http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/architecture/default.aspx>, and a starting point for their use with Microsoft Technologies is at <http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms998572.aspx>.

### SharePoint — 11:30 am

Ram Yadav  
ram\_yadav@hotmail.com

Ram Yadav has 12+ years of experience in the IT industry (*10+ Microsoft Env*). He has been working on Sharepoint for 5+ years (*including Frontpage server extension and Sharepoint team services, WSS v2, SPS 2003, WSS v3 and MOSS 2007*).

### Microsoft Certification SIG — 2:00 pm Saturday at Nerdbooks

Tom Perkins  
tomperki@gmail.com

Meets at Nerdbooks, 1681 Firman Dr, in Richardson. Continuing examination of XML: XPath, DOM, XML methods available on the Dataset object; review of XML, real-world example, and exam-type questions, discussion regarding 2008 certification.

## 3rd Saturday

*Alphabetically*

### Adobe Photoshop — 12:30 pm

presented by Hillary Morgan Ferrer

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

We are not meeting this month. See you in April!

### Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

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

We'll complete our DAI template, select and insert images and create a SSI simple menu. We will also create another page or two, including a page to accept contributions through credit cards or a PayPal account, and upload to a server.

### Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE  
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

We have moved from 11:00 am to 10:00 am beginning in March. We welcome beginners through advanced photographers in our seminars.

**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

We have moved from 10:00 am to 11:00 am beginning in March. We welcome beginners through advanced photographers in our seminars.

### Excel— 8:00 am

Frank Tubbs  
ftubbs@sbcglobal.net

#### 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

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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  
jim.wehe@ntpcug.org*

#### **Why Family History?**

In the first of a six-month plan to review genealogy software, Jim will discuss the reasons for studying family history.

### **Internet — 10:00 am**

*Glynn Brooks  
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org*

#### **5 Easy Ways to Host Your Blog**

Got an old PC you want to run a web server on? Want to host your own blog? In this session I'll show you how to set up and use free hosting software to make it all happen. We'll also look at some popular blogging sites and how to use them.

### **IT Professional — 9:00 am**

*Doug Gorrie  
doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org*

The new IT PRO SIG is proud to have Bryan York and Brad Carter, account executives at New Horizons Computer Learning Centers, to present on computer certification training. They will review the training programs at New Horizons Learning Centers. New Horizons is a Gold Certified Microsoft Partner.

### **Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am**

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

We'll look at the simplest manner of integrating a commercial or non-profit's website with PayPal to

accept payments or contributions. We'll also review researching keywords on WordTracker.com, the most useful keyword research tool.

### **Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am**

*Larry Linson  
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org*

#### **This Month's Agenda**

- **All:** topic suggestions for future meetings.
- Co-Sig Leader **Jim Wehe** - Drawing for valuable prizes
- Co-SIG Leader **Larry Linson** - "Search Multiple Fields in Your Database"

**On March 15, 2008:** Co-SIG Leader **Larry Linson** will cover multiple ways to "**Search Multiple Fields in Your Database**" – the presentation originally intended for February. Microsoft Access is very flexible in this area: we'll discuss searching in datasheet view, creating ad hoc and saved queries, and querying data displayed in Forms in a "developed application." This is a user-requested topic that has been on our list for some time.

#### *Last Month*

**In February, 2008:** Many thanks to SIG Co-Leader **Jim Wehe** for stepping in and covering closely-related topics, including sorting data in various views, when **Larry** was absent due to illness. **Jim** also collected names for our drawing.

#### *Look Ahead*

#### **A BIG DEAL!**

Yes, **Fifteen Years** for a SIG is, indeed, a **Really Big Deal!** On Saturday, April 17, 1993 at the InfoMart on Stemmons Freeway, we held the first meeting of the NTPCUG Microsoft Access Special Interest Group... Saturday, April 19, 2008 will be our Fifteenth Anniversary Meeting! We have tried, during those fifteen years, to make the Access SIG useful, informative, and entertaining; we hope that we have largely been successful in our efforts; and we don't have any intention of stopping now!

**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.

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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.

- Event Management Template (Access 2003, Access 2007)
- Templates, in general
- Searching multiple fields (being presented today, February 16, 2008)
- Calendar Forms and Reports in Access
- 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

**Special Note:** Co-SIG Leader **Jim Wehe** is founding another SIG – a Family History SIG. It is tentatively scheduled for 12:30PM on Third Saturday in the same room where the Access SIG meets. I'll be there to help Jim get started, and we invite you to attend and take a look at plans for the next few months! See you there!

#### Valuable Prizes

**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 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 January**, we started over accumulating the names of attendees so that regular attendance gives you additional chances.

**In February**, we collected names for a drawing for a copy of Microsoft Expression Web, the enhanced successor to Microsoft Front Page, and for a Microsoft Wireless Keyboard and Mouse Set but because of Larry's absence, we did not have the prizes at the meeting.

**In March**, we will draw for those February prizes and two more "major prizes". And, we will draw (sepa-

rately, for just the current day's attendees) for several lesser but not necessarily inconsequential prizes, too.

**In April**, to celebrate the Fifteenth Anniversary of the first meeting of the Access SIG, we'll be drawing for a full retail copy of Microsoft Office 2007 Ultimate Edition (Office as we've known and loved it, and several other products related to Office).

#### On Our Access SIG SharePoint Site

<http://sp.ntpcug.org/accesssig/default.aspx>

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 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.

#### Many Thanks for the Following Items

**Teresa Hennig** is Leader of both the **Pacific Northwest Access User Group** and of the **Pacific Northwest Access Developers Group**, 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

**Download the SQL Server 2008 Express November CTP (February 2008):** SQL Server 2008 Express is a free, easy-to-use, lightweight, and embeddable version of SQL Server 2008. Download the Express CTP to explore the new enhancements available and provide the product team your feedback. <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=3BF4C5CA-B905-4EBC-8901-1D4C1D1DA884&displaylang=en>

**Download SQL Server Compact 3.5 Beta (February 2008):** SQL Server Compact 3.5 Beta 2 introduces a host of new features including LINQ to SQL support, Microsoft Synchronization Services for ADO.NET, plus enhanced support for T-SQL statements that lets developers rapidly develop and deploy applications using Visual Studio 2008. <http://www.microsoft.com/sql/editions/compact/default.mspx>

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**Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Learning Portal (February 2008):** Access is the world's leading database program, and sometimes it's even better when partnered with SQL Server. So, even if you haven't used SQL server in the past, you can benefit by finding out what it can do and when it might be a good fit in your projects. Learn about the versions and features of SQL Server 2008, enjoy free online clinics, and sign up for free eBook(s). <http://www.microsoft.com/learning/sql/2008/default.aspx>

**Patch for Office 2003 SP 3 (February 2008):** Be watching for a patch for Office 2003 SP3. Service Pack 3 for Office 2003 created issues for many users – many of which are listed in the materials for SP3. Microsoft will be releasing a patch that will mitigate several of the known issues. When the patch is available, you will need to install SP3 and then install the patch. For more info about SP3, visit <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/ork2003/HA102446321033.aspx>

**Office 2007 Service Pack 1, Release Candidate (January 2008):** SP1 delivers improved performance, stability and security enhancements. The SP includes updates released prior to December 2007. Information and download from, <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=9EC51594-992C-4165-A997-25DA01F388F5&displaylang=en>

**Windows Vista Service Pack 1, Release Candidate (January 2008):** In addition to providing improved performance and reliability, SP1 provides support for additional hardware and technologies. It also addresses some challenges with support, management and deployment. For more information visit, <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/windowsvista/bb738089.aspx>

**Free Directions via Text Message to Cell Phones (November 2007):** OK, so this isn't about Access, but it might help you get to a client, meeting or networking opportunity. For the cost of the text message you can get directions point to point driving directions just by calling DIR-ECT-IONS (347-328-4667) and responding to questions about the start and end points and if you know the way to the highway. Text message(s) will be sent to your phone to give you directions. Visit their website; read the article from the Wall Street Journal <http://www.dialdirections.com/The%20Mossberg%20Solution.html>

**Spice up your PowerPoint Presentations with Custom Images (November 2007):** PowerPoint

(2002+) allows you to use gradients and even picture in picture to customize images. See how easy it can be to make it YOUR presentation — without resorting to photo manipulation software. <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/powerpoint/HA101995971033.aspx>

**Microsoft Office 2008 calendar templates – Free (November 2007):** It's time to personalize your 2008 calendar. Microsoft offers a variety of free templates that you can download. <http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=7738393>

#### Resource Tips

A couple of good sites to search for information and programming assistance are [www.mvps.org](http://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.aspx> 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](http://www.google.com/microsoft.html) for Microsoft related pages or by setting multiple search criteria at [www.google.com/advanced\\_search?hl=en](http://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/ApplIssueChecker.html>

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**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/](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](http://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/her a membership.

### See You Real Soon!

We're looking forward to seeing you at the **Microsoft Access SIG**, 11:00AM (check the Info Desk for room assignment and any last-minute changes) on Third Saturday, March 15, 2007 at the **King of Glory Lutheran Church**, 6411 LBJ Freeway, Dallas.

### Thanks for reading

*Jim Wehe and Larry Linson, SIG Leaders*

## Microsoft Certification

— 2:15 pm at Nerdbooks

*Tom Perkins  
tomperki@gmail.com*

Yet more XML, focusing on the XMLData Document and synchronizing with the Dataset; exam-type questions

## Microsoft Expression Studio — 10:00 am

*Chris Morgan  
Interim SIG Leader  
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org*

In March, we will look at an important feature of any good website – Menus. In particular, we will examine flyout type menus. These are menus that start out as a single bar across the top of the webpage. Then, when you position the mouse over a choice, a submenu pops up with yet more choices. The menu we have built so far in our class project has a simple menu with a set of button choices, but no flyout submenus. This next step requires several steps to get it to work, but Expression Web simplifies a lot of the coding for us.

I'll have a handout listing the steps required to create this type of menu at the meeting. I'll also have another handout I'm working on that is a quick reference for Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) elements and properties. We will continue to discuss CSS, since it is at the heart of constructing any good website.

In April, we'll have another drawing for a full version of Expression Web. Just to make it interesting, you can get a ticket for the drawing at both the March **and** April meetings, **doubling** your chances of winning.

## Mobile Computing — 11:00 am

*Larry Copeland  
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org*

The new MOBILE SIG will be lead by SIG Leader Larry Copeland who will be discussing the differences in new popular Smartphones. This will include Blackberry, Apple iPhone, and new offerings from Sprint, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon.

## Visual Basic for Applications — 9:00 am

*Dave MacKenzie  
bigmack9@verizon.net*

The SIG will be split into very basic computer concepts and VB. The basic part will cover computer languages and going from a high-level language to hardware. The VB part will cover “User Defined Types” and reading and writing to the hard drive.

## **Windows Tips & Tricks — 8:00 - 9:00 am**

*Gil Brand — gb1@ntpcug.org*  
*Chuck Stark — chuck.stark@ntpcug.org*

We will discuss how to use and navigate the Dell website to select, configure and purchase a new desktop or laptop PC. Recommended features and options.



## **Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm**

*Glynn Brooks*  
*glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org*

### **What to Look for in a New Windows PC**

In this session I'll give you my shopping checklist and discuss what are the most important options. This session is focused squarely on getting the most computer and software for the money!

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For 2008, I'm changing the name and broadening the direction for the 12:30 SIG meeting. I think we should cover all aspects of the Windows® operating system rather than focus on Vista™.

Although Vista has been available to the public for over a year now, marketplace acceptance of it has been lukewarm. Upgrading old PCs to Vista minimum requirements does not make good economic sense, so consumers and businesses have stayed away from it. It looks to me like XP will be in the mainstream for the next few years at least, so I don't think we should turn our backs on it in our monthly meetings. Thus, the new name for the SIG

will be "Windows Inside/Out", and its scope will expand to include the best material I can find on how Windows works, and how to make your computer work the way you want it to.

Here are the topics for the next few months:

- ◆ *March* – **What to look for in a new computer**
- ◆ *April* – **a review of Laplink's PCmover software**
- ◆ *May* – **Securing your Windows computer**

If you have suggestions or want to make a presentation, please let me know.

## **Wireless Communications — 11:00 am**

*Birl Smith*  
*birl.smith@ntpcug.org*

Analog cellphone service ended in February. Has it affected you? We will discuss CDMA, TDMA and GSM and what you should know. What cellphone provider will you chose for the future?

## **Word — 9:00 - 11:00 am**

*Diane Bentley*  
*diane.bentley@ntpcug.org*

### **Mail Merge Straight to E-Mail**

Rather than mail merge to the screen or to printed documents, Dick Guckel will show us how to mail merge direct to e-mail.

## **WordPerfect — 11:00 am**

*Diane Bentley*  
*diane.bentley@ntpcug.org*

### **WordPerfect Specials**

Let's look at some of the unique features of WordPerfect ... PDF (around since version 8), QuickMacros, QuickFonts, Save without Metadata, and maybe a few more.

Originally, I had planned to present QuickCorrect, QuickWords, Headers & footers, tables, etc. They will be presented over the next few months. Beginning in May, we will develop several types of documents to be used for demonstrating features for the remainder of the year — and maybe longer. Documents such as: letterhead template, gift card, legal documents, and others.

# This Month in Our History

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by Chuck Fiedler  
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

As I sit here listening to **Garrison Keillor** whom I listened to over 35 years ago, I'm tempted to say "It's been a quiet week in Lake Wobegon" but once again it's time to review the happenings reported in the March 1988 and 1993 issues of *PC News*, a mere 15 and 20 years ago.

By way of confession, I used to live up north until one year it froze solid and I left there for the great state of Texas in 1981. That's how I heard Keillor before KERA offered him. But I have already digressed.

In 1988, then president **Reagan Andrews** said in *Prez Sez*: "Reports of DOS's death are greatly exaggerated. Whispers of change, however, are stalking the PC user." He went on to recount the Fall COMDEX87 showings of OS/2, Windows 2.0 and variants of Unix V, Xenix and others. He noted the resource requirements of these new systems and how they left those of us with 8088-powered systems behind. For instance: "Don't forget memory – OS/2 likes lots of memory, with 4M (\$\$\$s) estimated as necessary to do real work." Wanna try running XP (or heaven forbid, Vista) on that kind of memory?

In a column titled *On Complexity*, member **Jim Hoisington** also cited the rise in costs of memory noting, "The 256K bit DRAMs have doubled and doubled again in price. And you may not find any to buy at any price... Most of the chip manufacturers have stopped making the 256K bit chips. They are switching over their manufacturing facilities to the 1 million bit [1Meg] chips. That's good for the future but bad for those of us that still have empty sockets in our memory expansion boards that use the 256K bit chips." I recall going to the First Saturday sidewalk sale and purchasing four 256K RAM chips for a total of \$400 back then. Most recently I bought 2G of RAM for my laptop for \$49. Don'tcha *love* them "good old days"?

Much of the March '88 issue was devoted to keeping your 8088 or 80286 alive without having to buy a new machine. We all fought that battle back then. I finally succumbed and went to a now-defunct reseller in Allen and bought a newer machine after making a couple of hardware upgrades to my old IBM PC/XT. BTW, are there still folks selling used hardware and software in the DFW area? I used to enjoy looking

(NOT shopping – women do that, men "look" or "hunt" <G>) through what the sellers had made available on consignment and I, too, sold old stuff there.

In March of '93, then president, **Doug Gorrie** reported the results of the annual elections coming from "the largest number [of ballots] in NTPCUG's history." He went on to declare March as Membership Drive month. We are again on a campaign to increase membership some 15 years later. What have **you** done to bring a friend or family member to our meetings? There is much we can do to "*Share what you know, learn what you don't.*"

In an item in the *Prez Sez* column, Doug noted our involvement in the Dallas Computer Literacy Program. Today we have the Users Group involvement with the Texas Center for the Physically Impaired (TCPI). Over all these years we have provided services to our community and the less fortunate. Last month's *PC News* made a call for old hardware to be refurbished for the blind. Let me restate that your old equipment is worth a tax deduction when you bring it to the TCPI project. Bring it to the monthly meeting and we'll take care of the details. See any Board member or SIG leader to get things going.

In *NTPCUG On-Line*, then BBS sysop **Fred Williams** noted the updates to the Group's bulletin board system (BBS). Changes had been made to enable quicker downloads and uploads given that we were all using dial-up access. Weren't dial-up modems fun?

*The Variety Store* column by **Reagan Andrews** covered the then-ongoing FTC lawsuit against Microsoft for monopoly practices. Well now, lemme see, Microsoft created an operating system that was fairly intuitive and worked on nearly everything and created a system whereby others could make their applications compatible with Microsoft OSs and we're supposed to slap them for doing this? I know, Microsoft is the company we all love to hate but, were it not for Microsoft where would we be? (Apologies to the Apple and Linux folks.)

Speaking of Apple, Reagan noted that **Steve Jobs** had said he would focus entirely on the *Nextstep* OS. Gee, I'm not a propeller head and don't pay attention to Apple stuff, but what is this *Nextstep* thing? As Reagan reported, "*Next* never achieved the penetration Jobs desired in spite of venture capital support

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described as very impressive by the PC media and design innovations praised by the same sources. *Next* will sell its hardware design center to Canon Inc. and close its Fremont, CA, manufacturing facility.”

With reference to COMDEX/Fall '92, Reagan noted that “Small cooling fans mounted on 486 form-factor heatsinks were almost universal at the Las Vegas show this year. Sure wouldn't want a CPU without a heatsink and fan today, that's for sure, but it all started 15 years ago. Have you noted that liquid-cooled units are available today?

Reagan later reported on the then-new ink jet printers demonstrated at COMDEX. “Output quality actually surpassed some of the laser printers shown this year.” And this was at a reported 360 x 360 dpi (dots per inch). I have both a laser and an ink jet printer and I'm hard pressed to tell the difference between the two. Granted the \$79 laser printer is monochrome and the \$79 ink jet multi-function is color, but the output quality of either FAR exceeds what we commonly had 15 years ago (remember the dot-matrix printers of that time?)

Reagan noted that “Hard drives continue shrinking in size while expanding data capacity to realms undreamed of a few years ago. Two drive makers were showing 3.5”, 1+ Gigabyte at Comdex this year...” He went on to cite Micropolis and Quantum as having such drives. According to Wikipedia, “Micropolis was one of the many hard drive manufacturers in the 1980s and 1990s that went out of business, merged, or closed their hard drive divisions; as a result of capacities and demand for products increased, and profits became hard to find. While Micropolis was able to hold on longer than many of the others, it ultimately sold its hard drive business to Singapore Technologies (now Temasek Holdings), who has ceased to market the brand. Guess that explains why we can't find Micropolis drives anymore.

In 1993, the Word SIG was reported as dealing with the issue of whether to cover DOS or Windows versions of the program. It was suggested that one month they would focus on DOS Word and the next month it would be the Windows version. And all this without donuts. Somehow they soldiered on.

The DOM (Disk of the Month) Squad report featured eight new disks. Some noted the system requirements as “hard disk drive recommended” or “mouse optional” or “Not for Tandy 1000, Tandy 2000, or IBM PCJr.”

Especially timely at this time of the year were two tax programs. One, Share-TAX/1040, had a

shareware fee of \$15. The other, AM-TAX 1992, cost \$40 for the “Personal-1” version, \$65 for the “Personal-2” version or \$125 for the “Professional” version. And each had “support for printing a ‘fileable’ dot-matrix 1040... and laser printer support... with the \$65 and \$125 packages.” Betcha I could find a current tax program for a whole lot less than ANY of those.

What does much of this say? We are extremely fortunate to have hardware and software available for prices FAR below those of 15 or 20 years ago; to have the resources of the Internet and user-friendly, relatively intuitive 'net browsers. And don't overlook the benefits of broad-band wired and wireless Internet access.

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

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## And the Winner is ...

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### Mobile SIG

The New Mobile SIG lead by Larry Copeland got started on a rainy and cold Saturday February 16 with an outstanding speaker — **Clinton Fitch**, Microsoft Mobile MVP.

Even though it was raining cats and dogs outside, room LL25 was full and Clinton kept our attention with his Windows Mobile device security presentation.

He talked about the importance of password protection, data card encryption, wallet applications, and “Remote detonation” – wiping a device remotely. Many questions were raised regarding mobile devices and expertly handled.

We also had a raffle and the following people won the Ilium software eWallet that was presented — **Gil Brand, Jim Freeman, Joe Wolf, Bob Kirby, and Leo Astrup.**

The NTPCUG wants to thank Clinton Fitch for his presentation and for Ilium for their software. We are sure to want Clinton back to give another super presentation on Windows Mobile devices.

# Be a Member — Win a Prize(s)

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Doug Gorrie  
doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org

NTPCUG keeps talking about all the prize giveaways that are of benefit to members. Of late, we've come to realize what that **really** means.

In looking for articles for this newsletter, it became apparent that we are giving out LOTS of prizes in our various SIG meetings, as well as at the Business meetings at Noon on 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday. The same thing happens at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday meetings at Microsoft. Apparently, our various SIG Leaders and Board members have sources that are very generous, and they very quietly and secretively get a lot of items donated for giveaways.

We're about to make that public so everyone can enjoy the benefits.

The Microsoft Expression SIG is fairly new, yet seems to have software available at most meetings. Member Pete Mitchell won a copy of Microsoft Expression Web in the Expression Studio SIG drawing at the February 16th meeting. Pete said it was the first time he ever won anything! We think that's great.

At February's new "Mobile Computing" SIG, led by Larry Copeland, six (6) copies of Illium Software's eWallet product were given out. The winners in that

SIG were Jim Freeman, Joe Wolf, Bob Kirby, Leo Astrup and Gil Brand. Not a bad deal for a brand new SIG meeting for the first time. Imagine what Larry can bring to the table in subsequent months !!

In January, things got confusing. Longtime member Jim Brian won a copy of MS 2007 Office Ultimate at the noon Business Meeting, but was concerned when we "erroneously" noted in the newsletter that the winner was actually Chrystin Pleasants. But it turned out that they **both** won the "Ultimate" product in January – just in different places. Chrystin won hers in Larry Linson's MS Access SIG just prior to Jim's big "win" at the Business Meeting..

As with most members, Jim was very appreciative to have won such a marvelous prize **just for being a member and attending**. But Jim went a step further – he has **donated** an NTPCUG membership to some lucky visitor. In other words, he wrote NTPCUG a check for \$36 and asked us to award a membership to a non-member that is visiting NTPCUG.

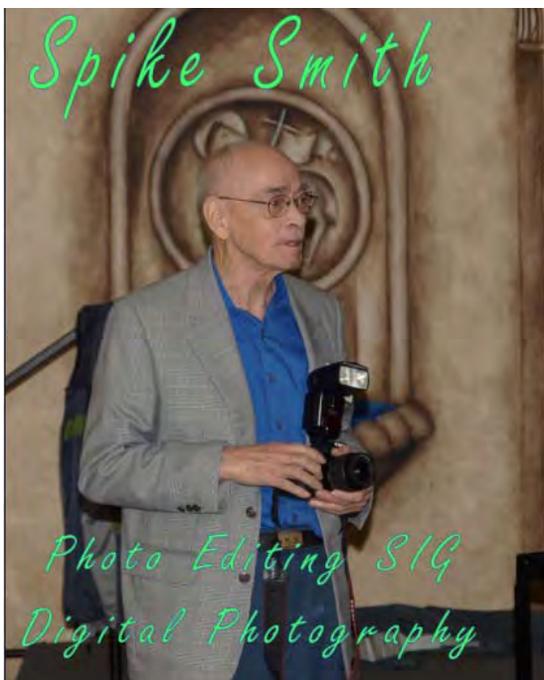
In Jim's words, "maybe someone else can be helped from my success from before!!!! This can even be considered as a help back to the group!!!!" 😊 Our thanks to Jim for being so generous. We're working out the details of providing the "free" membership to some lucky visitor.

By the way, do you know how much MS Office 2007 Ultimate goes for in the stores? Fry's sells the "upgrade" for \$540. "Academic" sites ask around \$235. Jim **and** Chrystin got theirs for the price of membership, and have 11 more months to go to win more items. Membership **is** a bargain.

We plan to cover more of our member's winnings in upcoming newsletters. We hope you are one of them.

One last tip: When our 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday meetings fall on days when the weather is bad, do you just stay home? Big mistake!! Your chances of winning a prize are better on such days when your fellow members elect to avoid the weather. As attendee numbers drop due to bad weather, your chances of winning go up dramatically.

Next time it rains, grab an umbrella and attend your favorite SIGs !!



# Lessons From The Real World

Dick Guckel  
captaindick@verizon.net

## MagicJack – worth the purchase?

Back in December 2007, I saw an advertisement for a product named MagicJack. It sounded interesting, and I thought that it might address my requirements to have a portable VOIP system. Their website is <http://www.magicjack.com>

**Laptop** magazine had this to say about MagicJack:

“If you’ve pondered ditching your landline because of exorbitant phone bills, magicJack just may be for you. It’s an unassuming cigarette lighter-sized plug-and-play USB telephony device that offers unlimited local and long distance calling within the U.S. and Canada (international dialing expected by the end of the year). We were pleasantly surprised with how easy it is to use and the quality it provides for less than \$40.

Installation was simple: We plugged the 0.9-ounce magicJack into a USB port on a Windows-powered PC (Mac OS X drivers will be available by the end of the year), and about 30 seconds later the bundled software automatically loaded. After registering the device and receiving a personal magicJack

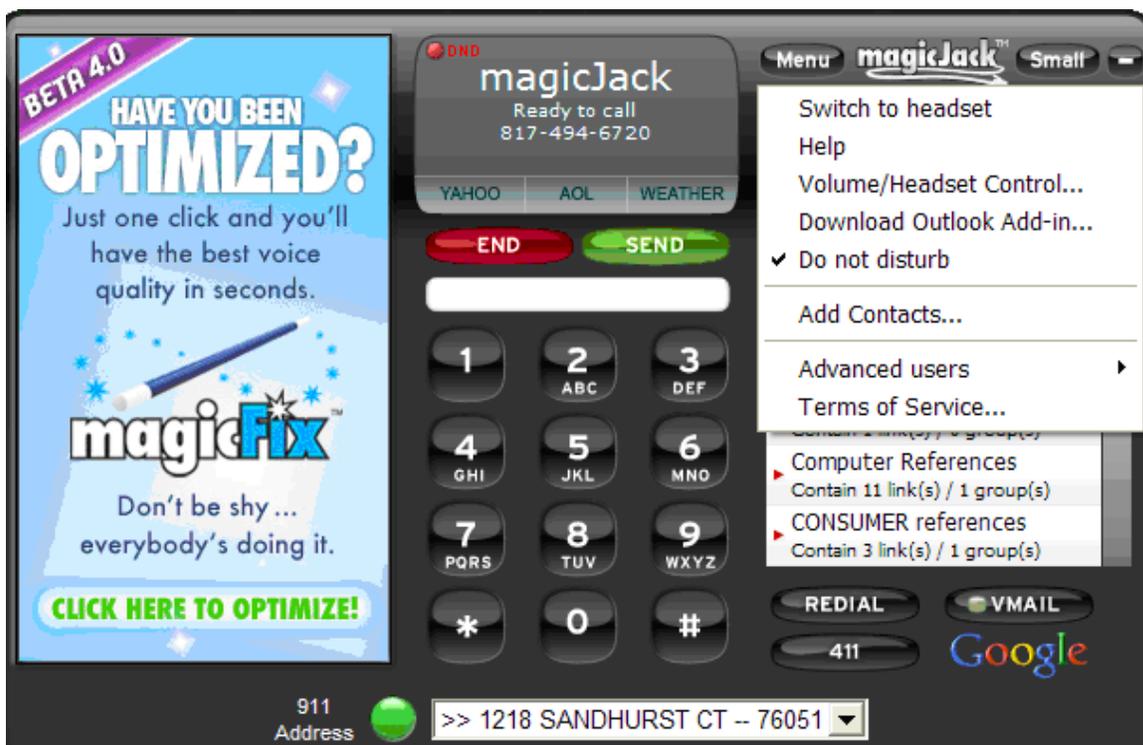
phone number (users will be able to port their existing numbers to the service before the end of the year), we plugged a standard landline phone into the device’s phone jack and began making calls. Users who wish to forgo a traditional handset can opt to use a cordless phone.

You can also use the magicJack to make calls using your PC, whether you’re at home or on the road. Dial using the keyboard or an onscreen keypad, and you can talk using either a headset or your computer’s built-in microphone and speaker.”

This is what MagicJack advertises:

Free telephone number (I obtained one with the local 817 area code)

- ◆ Free calls to the U.S. from other countries
- ◆ Free voice mail
- ◆ Free Caller ID
- ◆ Free Call Waiting
- ◆ Three way calling



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So, having done some research, I decided to try it, especially since they advertise a 30 day free trial.

I ordered the product online and within a few days it arrived. The cost of \$39.95 includes the product and a one-year subscription providing unlimited long distance telephone calls within the United States or to Canada. Each year, the subscription requires renewal at a cost of approximately \$20.

After unwrapping the “dongle”, I plugged it into my USB port and it automatically loaded and installed software. I then plugged my telephone into the dongle.

The installation of software was a surprise to me, as I had understood that it did not require installation. Maybe I had not read all of the literature on the Internet. When I travel, I need a way to make telephone calls using someone else’s computer; this is not practical with MagicJack due to it installing software on each system I plug into.

MagicJack allows me to use my normal telephone via VOIP. The setup was very simple, asking me for an area code so that it could assign me a telephone number. As I understand it, the telephone number would be used for people to reach me, rather than for me to “dial out”.

Once set up, this is what my display looked like after entering George Washington’s telephone number into its telephone directory:

As you can see on page 10, the screen is quite simple to use: you may either dial by using your telephone handset or the keypad on the screen, or by selecting from your “Contacts” list. It kept a history list of telephone calls made and the duration of the calls. I liked it after only a few minutes.

If you look at the top right of the display, you will see “Favorites” listed; it copied this from Internet Explorer.

By clicking on the “Menu” it displays the following menu:

Was I sold? In a word, NO!

Although it was very easy to use, there were a number of things about the product that I did not like:

- The quality of the telephone calls was not as good as Skype, which I have been using for about two years.

- I was surprised that it installed software on my computer, but I guess I missed that bit of documentation. By the way, documentation was a bit thin, and none arrived with the product.

- If the dongle was left plugged into the USB port, the program was always running. You could not click on “CLOSE” to terminate the software — It refused to come to an end. I could find no way to stop it from running other than unplugging the dongle and rebooting.

When I used Process Explorer to see what impact it had on the system, Process Explorer showed that, even though the program had been running 30 minutes or so, it used quite a bit of resources.

Based upon the above, I decided that MagicJack was not for me. So, I decided to uninstall the software. NOT POSSIBLE! Going to “Add or Remove Programs” the MagicJack software was not listed.

What to do?

Fortunately, Chuck Stark’s backup advice had been used, and my full system had been backed up with Norton Ghost to an external hard drive prior to the installation of MagicJack. I merely restored it and was back in business.

As the dongle had to be returned to get credit, I again went to their website and looked for directions to obtain an RMA. There were no objections from the vendor, and I ended up with a chat, asking how to return it by providing my e-mail address. I subsequently received an e-mail providing the RMA.

By the way, my VISA card was never charged when the dongle was shipped to me, and to date has *still* not been charged.

Since this experience, I have been using Skype on a flash drive, and it works very well without the need to install software on other computers.

Another evaluation on MajicJack may be found on:

[http://etech.eweek.com/content/voip/magicjack\\_fails\\_to\\_cast\\_a\\_voip\\_spell.html](http://etech.eweek.com/content/voip/magicjack_fails_to_cast_a_voip_spell.html)

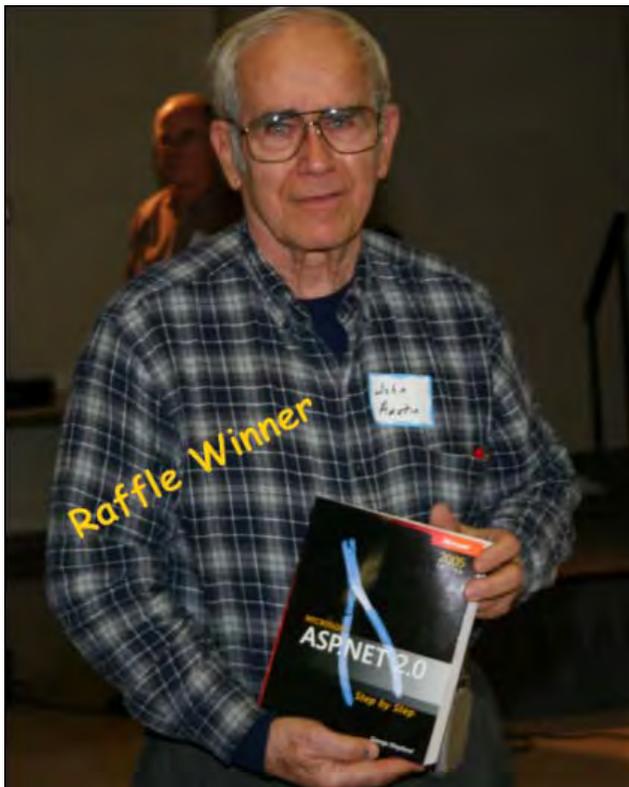
# NTPCUG Election Results — 2008

Doug Gorrie  
doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org

At the February 16<sup>th</sup> user group meeting, our membership turned out in record numbers to cast ballots for the 2008 Board of Directors. Our thanks to all members for working with the previous Board during a difficult time.

As most of you know, the original elections for 2008 took place in January, but after identifying some concerns in the way the ballot had been prepared, the Board voted *not* to certify the results of that election. Instead, to be as open and fair as possible, the Board voted to reperform the 2008 elections using a more accurate ballot format. Details of the problems identified and the need for new elections were e-mailed to all members on January 24<sup>th</sup>.

The results of February's elections were affirmed by the Board immediately following the Business Meeting. The vote tally is noted below, with the winners of the open positions noted in italics.



*John Austin won ASP.NET 2.0 at the 2008 Business Meeting*

## President Elect

<i>Chuck Fiedler</i>	49
Larry Linson (write-in)	1

## Directors at Large

<i>Doug Gorrie</i>	50
<i>Jesse Hastcoat</i>	49
<i>Elva Roy</i>	49
<i>Bill Parker</i>	47
<i>Arnold Krusemark</i>	43
Diane Bentley (write-in)	1

The larger-than-usual volume of ballots cast was attributed in part to the ballot format prepared by Chrystin Pleasants, a member of the nominating committee. Chrystin provided a method to note your choices on the ballot itself, then click a box to e-mail the completed ballot to the User Group for counting. The entire process could be done in less than 5 minutes, and made the job of tallying vote counts much easier than in the past. Our thanks to Chrystin for coming up with this unique approach.

At the usual monthly Board meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup>, Chris Morgan assumed his role as 2008 President, and Chuck Fiedler was elected as the Board's Chairman. We're finally on our way to another great year.

Again, special thanks to our nominating committee, Chris Morgan, Chrystin Pleasants and Dick Guckel for doing all the legwork for the elections. This year's election has obviously had some difficulties, and the Board is already working on some revisions to the Bylaws to smooth out the election process in the future.

## Membership

Individual — \$36 per year  
Family — \$60 per year

# When It Says ...

*From the Usenet news group, rec.humor.funny  
This was posted to a Sun-local newsgroup. Apparently it originated at HP.*

When It Says...	It Really Means...
<b>Available Now!</b>	We overstocked /We can't sell any. (Alternative: We have a really hot item at an outrageous price)
<b>State-of-the-Art Design</b>	We can't get the chips yet but we hope to before manufacturing starts.
<b>Proven reliability</b>	Antiquated technology and obsolete parts.
<b>Compatible with most systems</b>	Favor us with a big enough order and we'll start designing an interface.
<b>Tremendous expandability</b>	The unbundled "bare-bones" system with the low advertised price is virtually useless.
<b>User-friendly</b>	Slow, eats memory for lunch, and probably won't meet your specific needs (but for a fat consulting fee, we'll be happy to customize it for you).
<b>Advanced features</b>	We couldn't get rid of the quirks/bugs in the system, so we're pretending we planned them all along.
<b>Competitively priced</b>	Costs less than IBM's.

## 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.

Please consider volunteering for one of these important jobs:

### Secretary

Attend Board Meetings on the Monday after the 3rd Saturday meeting and record the minutes of the meeting.

### 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.

### Program Director

Identify and arrange program topics for our vendor presentations.

### Discount Coordinator

Communicate with vendors offering discounts on their products.

### Volunteer Coordinator

Coordinate permanent and temporary volunteer participation.

### Information Desk — Charles Rem

*crem@ntpcug.org*

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

### 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.

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# New Member Signup Incentive – The Contest Continues

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We are now entering our 3<sup>rd</sup> month of our six-month contest, trying our best to give you **free software** of your choice!! As noted in January, the contest is simple, has an increasing reward for every participant, and a Grand Prize for the top two finishers.

In a nutshell, the contest is to see who can sign up the most new NTPCUG members. Included in the “new” category are previous members whose membership has been expired for six months or more.

We have always found that word of mouth is the most effective marketing tool that we have, so we want to give all current members an incentive to help us help ourselves. Remember, the more participants we have at meetings, the better the information exchange is for all of us. More members will also translate into more and different SIG opportunities.

**Want to know what you are playing for?** For each new member that you sponsor, two free months will be added to your membership. The more members you sponsor, the more free months are added to your membership! But wait! There is more! The two members recruiting the most new members will be able to “purchase” a software product of their choice at an unbelievable price. For example, the last time the club was able to do this, Microsoft Windows XP was \$7.00 and Microsoft Office Professional

was \$20. There should be about six titles to choose from. The titles are not finalized yet, but will be announced as soon as we know – and well before the end of the contest. While it is great to win a free prize at one of our meetings, it is even better to get something that you really need and will use!

Don't feel that some go-getter will sign up a boat load of people, so there is no way you have a chance for the Grand Prize. With two Grand Prizes, everyone should have a realistic chance.

The contest goes for six months, starting in January. However, the Grand Prizes may be awarded before the end of the full six months. (Details are still being worked out.)

**NOTE:** When the new member signs up, they must give the name or member number of the current member that is sponsoring them. The membership desk will ask this question, to make sure that credit is given where due, but be sure that **you** get the credit you deserve.

**So to recap** – you get a great incentive for each new member that you sign up – everybody is a winner. And you have a good chance at a Grand Prize that you get to choose yourself. Help us grow the club, and help yourself at the same time.



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# Monthly NTPCUG Meeting Flyer – Can You Help Distribute?

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Board member, Chuck Fiedler, along with Chris Morgan, has implemented a monthly flyer that members can distribute to friends, family members, colleagues, etc.

The flyer will contain as much information as possible regarding the topics to be covered in each month's SIG meetings. With your help, we hope to generate interest in User Group activities, thereby helping us grow.

Chuck Fiedler will repeat the process each month, soliciting input from SIG Leaders, formatting the information into something easily read by others, then getting the final product out to all members well before the subsequent meeting.

The result of Chuck's initial effort has already been forwarded to our members by e-mail. However, the project is far from over, because getting the flyer to our members is only half the battle. Chuck is relying

on members, SIG Leaders, Board members and volunteers to share the information with others. We also need to you to consider new options beyond the obvious – bulletin boards, etc.

But this process will only be effective if we all work together. We're asking SIG Leaders to provide him information about the upcoming month's activities as expeditiously as possible if we are to get the word out early enough to be useful. Then, our membership needs to think of a couple of places they can post it, or e-mail it to anyone who may be interested. In other words, make it a regular thing when it first arrives.

Our thanks to Chuck for taking on the recurring effort of creating our monthly flyer.

***Where have you  
sent the March flyer?***

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## URGENT — Computer Raffle!

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We need a volunteer to coordinate the next raffle of this great system.

Will you assist with this project?

Call Gil Brand at 214-282-2581

### Hardware

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Toshiba Satellite Pro 6100  
P4-1700 MHz, 768MB, 38GB.  
DVD-ROM / CD-RW  
2 USB, network & modem PORTS  
PS/2 mouse

### Software

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WinXP-pro (OEM)  
Windows Defender Anti-spyware  
AVG Anti-virus & Anti-Rootkit  
Open Office v2.0 (free open source alternatives to Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access)  
Deep Burner CD-writer  
Firefox Browser  
Irfanview Graphics Editor  
Adobe Flash Player & Acrobat Reader  
WinDirStat hard disk usage monitor  
CCleaner Registry Cleaner  
Belarc System Profiler

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# Microsoft Gives Students Access to Technical Software at No Charge to Inspire Success and Make a Difference

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*DreamSpark offers millions of students access to professional-grade software developer and designer tools.*

**PALO ALTO, Calif. — Feb. 19, 2008** — Microsoft Corp. Chairman Bill Gates today will unveil a software giveaway that will ultimately provide millions of college and high school students around the world with access to the latest Microsoft developer and designer tools at no charge to unlock their creative potential and set them on the path to academic and career success.

The Microsoft DreamSpark student program (<http://channel8.msdn.com>) makes available, at no charge, a broad range of development and design software for download. The program is now available to more than 35 million college students in Belgium, China, Finland, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the U.K. and the U.S. Broad global coverage, as well as an expansion of the program to high school students around the world, potentially reaching up to 1 billion students worldwide, will continue throughout the next year. Gates will share details with students and faculty at Stanford University as part of a U.S. and Canada college tour that kicks off today.

“We want to do everything we can to equip a new generation of technology leaders with the knowledge and tools they need to harness the magic of software to improve lives, solve problems and catalyze economic growth,” Gates said. “Microsoft DreamSpark provides professional-level tools that we hope will inspire students to explore the power of software and encourage them to forge the next wave of software-driven breakthroughs.”

## Priming the Talent Pipeline

Microsoft DreamSpark is available to all students whose studies touch on technology, design, math, science and engineering. Students of today are more technical in their everyday lives than ever — representing both their personal interests and what is expected of them when they arrive in the workplace for the first time. The following cutting-edge software will be available to empower students to unlock their ingenuity by building critical skills:

## Microsoft Developer Tools

Visual Studio is the Swiss Army knife of computer programming. These professional-grade products provide a security-enhanced and reliable environment, enabling students to program everything from a cell phone to a robot or to create their own Web page. Students will also be able to invent compelling new gaming content and make their dream game a reality by porting their creations to their Xbox 360 console.

- Visual Studio 2005 Professional Edition
- Visual Studio 2008 Professional Edition
- XNA Game Studio 2.0
- 12-month free Academic membership in the XNA Creators Club

## Microsoft Designer Tools

This ultra-versatile suite of tools will enable students to vividly bring their creative visions to life in vibrant new Web site designs and more effective digital content, including animation, imagery and photography.

Expression Studio, including

- Expression Web
- Expression Blend
- Expression Design
- Expression Media

## Microsoft Platform Resources

The foundation for development and design platforms, these products deliver a security-enhanced, reliable and manageable environment for students to more quickly turn ideas into reality.

- SQL Server 2005 Developer Edition
- Windows Server, Standard Edition

“The opportunity, as a student, to use the same professional tools that I can expect to use after I graduate gives me a real head start in my career,” said Nathan Murith, a computer science student at the University of Geneva in Switzerland, who tested the service in a pilot before today’s launch. “I’m already getting more out of my studies, applying my learning to try out new ideas, and gaining new insights into careers in software design and development.”

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# Second Saturday Events for March

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by Tuc Goodwin  
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

Gang,

This is a reminder that this coming Saturday, **March 8<sup>th</sup>** is our regular monthly meeting. Be sure to read this entire e-mail, because I'm always trying something new and changing up this reminder... This month's schedule will be at the very bottom of this e-mail.

## Tuc is travelling

Well, I am gone from home a couple days a week for the next couple of months, so if I don't get back to your e-mails promptly, please forgive me. I'm trying to keep everything moving forward. (Hence the 5:30 AM wake up today.) Also be prepared to start hearing some news about the Visual Studio 2008 / SQL Server 2008 launch scheduled for our May meeting.

## Join the NTPCUG

Not a member? Well then, it's time to join! For anyone joining or renewing on Saturday, I'll give not one, but **two** extra tickets for the drawings. So let's see — if you join, you'd get one ticket for attending, two tickets for renewing, and if you brought two guests then you'd get another two tickets, and if they joined, then they would get tickets, and .... A guy could go crazy thinking about this... fortunately, as everyone already knows, I'm already insane, so that is not an issue with me...

**DON'T FORGET TO BRING A FRIEND!!! WE WANT OUR USER GROUP TO GROW!!!**

## Lessons from the Real World...

I know that some of you have heard me talk about Joel Spolsky, and that some of you wanted to know about what blogs I read. Well, Joel's blog is at <http://joelonsoftware.com/>. He is the CEO of Fog Creek Software and makes **FogBugz** (a bug tracking system) and **Fog Creek Copilot** (a remote control system that's pretty cool). He also writes a column in INC. Magazine. He has also written three books: *User Interface Design for Programmers*, *Joel on Software*, and *Smart and Gets Things Done*. If you are involved in IT, then I highly recommend that you check out these titles. (Of course I'll tell you to go to [www.nerdbooks.com](http://www.nerdbooks.com) for the best prices on the Internet, bar none!)

Now if you have any "Lessons from the Real World" that you would want to share with your other User Group members, be sure to send them to me at [tgoodwin@ntpcug.org](mailto:tgoodwin@ntpcug.org) and I'll add them to the next reminder email.

## Recommendations from the Real World

If you haven't checked out CodePlex, Microsoft's open source solution center, then you are depriving yourself of a vast selection of code and solutions. Point your browser to <http://www.codeplex.com/> and search on what kind of solution you are looking for. Chances are very good (and getting better all the time) that you will find *something* to assist you. Whether it is the answer to your current technical dilemma or just a cool add-in to Visual Studio, there is a lot of cool stuff to be found here!

Now if you have any "Recommendations from the Real World" that you want to share... well, you know what to do...

As promised, here's the schedule for this month's meeting:

## March Meeting: March 8<sup>th</sup>

**09:00 – 10:00** — .NET Developer Topics – Dave Stark – What's new in Visual Studio 2008

**10:00 – 11:30** — **New group!!! Design Patterns - (note: I'm working with a new crew on this and I have a schedule. For those on my e-mail list, look for a follow up message Thursday evening!)**

**11:30 – 12:30** — SharePoint – Ram Yadav

I look forward to seeing everyone there!

**Excelsior!!!**

**Tuc**

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# Upcoming Microsoft Events – South Central District

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## **Heroes Happen Here: Join the Launch – Multiple Dates and Cities**

The Heroes Happen Here (Windows Server 2008, Visual Studio 2008 and SQL Server 2008) launch registration is now open! Invite your customers to Microsoft's largest server launch event to date.

- March 20, 2008 (*Houston, TX*)
- March 27, 2008 (*Tulsa, OK*)
- April 8, 2008 (*Dallas, TX*)
- Date TBD (*Baton Rouge, LA*)

## **Data Protection Manager 2007 – A Better Path to Backup and Recovery – March 12, 2008 (Dallas, TX)**

Does your company rely on key business applications like Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft Exchange or SQL Server? If so, who should you trust to maximize protection and recovery? Learn how System Center Data Protection Manager 2007 (DPM 2007), has been designed specifically to help IT Professionals manage this important component of their infrastructure with powerful wizards and workflows delivering continuous data protection to either secondary disk or tape-based long term archival storage. We will end the session with a DPM 2007 Demo and an Ask the Experts lunch – Event ID 1032368864 <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

## **Directory and Identity Road Show with NetPro – Multiple Dates and Cities**

Learn how to simplify managing and auditing multiple identities across your distributed Windows infrastructure in a one-day, in-depth technical seminar. Learn how to reduce downtime and IT costs while boosting productivity and all without sacrificing system security. We will focus on these features in Windows Server 2008 and include demos.

- March 12, 2008 (*Houston*)
- March 14, 2008 (*Dallas*)

## **Harness the Power of High Performance Computing – March 13-14, 2008 (Houston, TX)**

We invite you to attend this exclusive deep dive on technology that is used to solve computationally intensive problems. Learn how High Performance Computing with Windows® Compute Cluster Server 2003 (CCS) can create and enable a faster time to

insight when executing computational or data-intensive applications. CCS represents a significant step forward in reducing the barriers to deployment for organizations and individuals who want to take advantage of the power of a HPC solution. With CCS, customers gain an out-of-the-box deployment experience, an integrated software stack to simplify setup and support from leading HPC applications in a range of industries. Join us to learn more about how to take advantage of the benefits of deploying a simplified and integrated HPC infrastructure – Event ID 1032363347 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

## **Microsoft Global Energy Forum – March 25, 2008 (Houston, TX)**

There is a source of energy on this planet greater than all other. It can be found deep within your people. And if it is intelligently retrieved and utilized, this energy never runs out. Come to Microsoft's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Global Energy Forum and discover how the most successful companies are running strong on the power of their people.

## **Upgrade SQL Now Series: Table Partitioning – March 11, 2008 (Live Meeting)**

Partitioning in the form of partitioned views has been part of SQL Server for years. While this approach is very helpful in solving the problems of separating data, it is not very easy to setup and maintain. True Table Partitioning is now part of SQL Server 2005 and allows better control of data placement on disks as well as enabling new data management scenarios. Join us to discuss this new feature that makes managing large tables easier. Event ID 1032363751

## **Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 Ignite Tour – March 17-18, 2008 (Houston, TX)**

We would like to extend to you an invitation to an Office Communications Server 2007 Ignite event! This 2-day hands-on technical workshop is intended to provide you with key information regarding Office Communications Server 2007. Ignite is the best way for you to get an early look at Office Communications Server 2007. During the event, you'll have the opportunity to walk through guided hands-on labs with OCS 2007, and to hear about the technical details behind the features and deployment steps for OCS – Event ID 1032363862 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

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### **Accounts Payable Automation – Far More Than Just Imaging – Multiple Dates and Cities**

AP automation encompasses far more than just imaging. A true invoice solution improves the entire invoice receipt to pay cycle by streamlining how organizations receive, manage, and approve invoices. This session will cover today's best practices in invoice automation and also what's on the horizon in the future. Come see this pre-built, out of the box, AP automation application that is more than just an archiving or imaging platform that you have to build yourself. This specialized turnkey solution provides true end-to-end invoice scanning, processing, analyzing, verification, and storage. Case study material will be presented including the challenges they faced, the selection process they used, the invoice automation solution they selected, the ROI and benefits they've achieved and their seamless integration to Microsoft Dynamics.

- March 26, 2008 (*Houston*) – Event ID 1032369055
- March 27, 2008 (*Dallas*) – Event ID 1032369056  
<http://msevents.microsoft.com>

### **Exchange Server 2007 Hands-On Lab – April 1, 2008 (*Houston, TX*)**

During this hands-on-lab event, students will get to try out the new capabilities and features of Exchange Server 2007. The labs will cover the three investment pillars (Built-in Protection, Anywhere Access and Improved Operational Efficiency) and will show the benefits and how the new technology can help to support and address real problems – Event ID 103235063 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

### **SQL Server 2005 High Availability “Always-On” Technologies Hands-on-Lab – April 1, 2008 (*Houston, TX*)**

High availability or “always on” technologies support mission critical applications that demand the highest level of availability. This 1 day hands-on-lab provides an introduction and opportunity for you to “try out” the SQL Server 2005 High Availability Enterprise Features – Event ID 1032350634 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

### **Business Intelligence Hands-On Lab – April 2, 2008 (*Houston, TX*)**

Learn how you can implement a Business Intelligence solution using Microsoft SQL Server 2005, PerformancePoint Server 2007, and the Office suite of products in this one day hands-on lab – Event ID 1032350631 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

### **Security and Management Hands-On Lab – April 3, 2008 (*Houston, TX*)**

This hands-on-lab event will give you a chance to “try out” the Forefront and System Center portfolio of products, designed to maximize productivity, simplify administration, and integrate with existing infrastructure so that you can reduce costs, empower your business, and maintain control. Through Forefront and System Center, companies at all stages of infrastructure maturity can create an IT environment that is more secure and well managed – Event ID 1032350633 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

### **Microsoft Power Finance Event – Multiple Dates and Cities**

This is the 4th consecutive year of our Power Finance Series and we are bringing back Professor Wayne Winston. This year the Series kicked off early November with the Business Intelligence Launch and it continues with two great sessions in the spring. We bring you fresh topics, an industry expert, and you can earn CPE credits at the same time. Even if you don't need accreditation, you'll learn more about Office Excel 2007 than you ever imagined!

### **Excel Functions from A-Z**

In this course we will cover the most important functions in EXCEL. You can't cook a good meal without knowing a lot about special spices or secret ingredients. Similarly, you will have trouble solving many spreadsheet problems without an extensive knowledge of Excel 2007's wonderful functions.

- April 3, 2008 (*Houston, TX*) - Event ID 1032356920
- April 4, 2008 (*Dallas, TX*) - Event ID 1032356921  
<http://msevents.microsoft.com>

### **Upgrade SQL Now Series: Analysis Services – April 8, 2008 (*Live Meeting*)**

The Unified Data Model (UDM) is a new model used in Analysis Services. This feature combined with proactive caching makes it possible to have timely information available to make better decisions. Join us to discuss the benefits of this new feature set. Event ID 1032363769

### **Upgrade SQL Now Series: Overview: OLTP 2005 vs. 2008 – May 13, 2008 (*Live Meeting*)**

How does SQL Server 2008, the next release of SQL Server, compare to SQL Server 2005 for transactional workloads. We'll look at enhancements made in both the optimizer as well as the syntax that can enhance the performance of SQL Server 2008 applications. Event ID 1032363771

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# "BSOD - Unmountable Boot Device" — Now What?

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*Gil Brand  
gb1@ntpcug*

This was the on-screen message in the BSOD (Blue Screen of Death) received by my latest client.

I naturally attempted the old "tried & true" step of a total power-off and disconnect of the power cord – no luck.

Next was an attempt of Safe Mode – same result.

I was fairly certain that this was yet another Windows file system corruption. I have seen a few lately. So I took the system home with me, pulled hard drive and attached it as a slave on my computer, hoping that I could copy her data (NO backup, don't you know).

To my surprise, Windows XP detected the bad file system and AUTOMATICALLY fixed all eight of the errors! I browsed the drive to see that everything seemed fine, and just to be sure copied all her data to my computer.

When I re-installed the drive in her computer, it booted perfectly! And had her back on the Internet in less than 45 minutes!

I suspect an improper shutdown, but was "assured" that didn't happen.

Nevertheless, I am pleased to know that windows can recover from SOME data corruption error. I'll try letting it do just that in future BSODs.

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## **Office SharePoint Server 2007 Hands-On Lab – May 6, 2008 (Dallas, TX)**

Make better decisions, faster. Share information, search and manage data, documents, and web content across your organization with Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007. Join us for this one-day hands-on lab to learn about: Features Overview, User Experience and Interface Design, Record Management, and Search – Event ID 1032349923 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>.

## **Windows Server 2008 Hands-On Lab – May 7, 2008 (Dallas, TX)**

Windows Server 2008, with built-in Web and virtualization technologies, helps enable you to increase the reliability and flexibility of your server infrastructure. New virtualization tools, Web resources, and security enhancements help you save time, reduce costs, and provide a platform for a dynamic and optimized datacenter. Advanced security and reliability enhancements help to harden the operating system and help protect your server environment to work to ensure you have a solid foundation on which to build your business – Event ID 1032349924 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>.

## **Windows Vista Hands-On Lab – May 8, 2008 (Dallas, TX)**

Windows Vista advancements in security and reliability, along with its cost and operational efficiencies, give you and your user's confidence in your company PCs. From the perspective of an IT professional, Windows Vista is easier to deploy and less expensive to maintain than any earlier version of Windows. Join us for this one-day hands-on lab and see the new features for yourself – Event ID 1032349925 - <http://msevents.microsoft.com>

## **Meet fellow coding enthusiasts at MSDN Events. Free Admittance. Complimentary Resource Kit.**

Meet your fellow coding fanatics at MSDN Events. Join us for these free, half-day presentations delivered by some of the most seasoned developers in the business. Explore the latest tools and technologies you need to build cutting-edge applications, with lots of time to network and ask questions. Visit [www.msdnevents.com](http://www.msdnevents.com).

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**Share valuable IT solutions at TechNet Events. Free Admission. Complimentary Resource Kit.**

Learn IT solutions that can really save the day at TechNet Events. These free, half-day presentations deliver hands-on technical content, insider tips, and valuable tools you can implement today Prepare for lively, interactive sessions with lots of time to talk shop and connect with your peers. Register now at [www.technetevents.com](http://www.technetevents.com).

**Industry Events**

**Well Master Data: Moving Toward the Information Consumer's Nirvana – March 11, 2008 (Webcast)**

Details coming soon - Sponsored by Stonebridge and Microsoft

**Well Workflow: Jumpstarting Well-Centric Business Process Management and Collaboration – March 25, 2008 (Webcast)**

Details coming soon - Sponsored by Stonebridge and Microsoft

**Thank you!**

from your 2008

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## Calendar

March	April	May
8 9:00 am—Noon <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday</b> at Microsoft 2:00 pm <b>Certification SIG</b> at Nerdbooks	12 9:00 am—fNoon <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday</b> at Microsoft 2:00 pm <b>Certification SIG</b> at Nerdbooks	10 9:00 am—Noon <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday</b> at Microsoft 2:00 pm <b>Certification SIG</b> at Nerdbooks
15 8:00 am—2:00 pm <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday</b> at King of Glory 2:15 pm <b>Certification SIG</b> at Nerdbooks	19 8:00 am—2:00 pm <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday</b> at King of Glory 2:15 pm <b>Certification SIG</b> at Nerdbooks	17 8:00 am—2:00 pm <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday</b> at King of Glory 2:15 pm <b>Certification SIG</b> at Nerdbooks

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