North Texas PC News

It's still summer
in Texas!

In This Issue ...

Thanks to a dedicated volunteer — Pete Guild

As has been true of our Users Group since inception over 25 years ago, we exist only because some members are not afraid to volunteer a little time, or a little extra time for the furtherance of the Group. Some of these members are highly visible like the folks who staff the check-in desk, those who run SIGs, perhaps the officers and Board members.

Some member efforts are not quite so visible, such as working on the computer refurbishing project for the Texas Center for the Physically Impaired which NTPCUG members and others do every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.

One such member is such a volunteer but also one who has greatly enhanced the smooth working of our third Saturday meetings. That member is **Pete Guild** who put forth the effort to organize and set out the network and video cables for the SIGs. I know the SIG leaders are especially thankful for this effort. It is even my understanding that he did this well before the July third Saturday meeting as he was to be on vacation when the meeting occurred.

At its July 21 meeting, the Board discussed this major improvement in our set-up and wants to publicly express the Group's thanks to Pete for yet another job well done.

Prez Sez

by Chris Morgan

Sometimes we just get used to what we have. It works, it does the job we want it to do, and we don't think about why it can't be better.

Over time, we have seen a lot of evolution in the way we use computers. At first, there was just a green screen; not too big, but it was big enough. It seemed like it would be nice if it was in color and could do graphics. So, pretty early on, we got color and graphics and, yes, it got a little bigger. For quite a while, our monitors hovered in the 14-15" range. A few expensive models were 17", but that was a luxury.

Along the way, and also pretty early on, we got annoyed that we could only do one thing on the computer at a time. And, if we wanted to print something big, we had to wait until it was over before we moved on to the next task. Remember those days? I remember when I started trying out programs like Deskview and OS/2 to be able to have more than one program loaded at a time. That seemed like wonderful stuff. Windows 3.0 finally came along and we were really off and running. Wasn't it great to have those multiple windows going and to send a job to the printer, and still be able to keep doing our other tasks while the printing worked away?

So now we have the ability to really clutter up a desktop and have all the programs we want running at the same time. Just a mouse click (Oh yeah, the mouse — but that's another story) and we bring the program of our choice to the forefront to do our bidding. Isn't it great! Also, we have monitors that have gotten bigger and better and thinner. No more giant CRT cluttering up our physical desk anymore. Now what…

Without really asking, I arrived at work one Monday morning to discover there were now two 19" monitors on my desk. I hadn't done this before — what would I do with two monitors?? Those of you who have such a luxury already know, but I was soon to learn how great this dual monitor thing could be. As a programmer, there are lots of things you need to have access to while doing your job. You are looking at source code, sometimes from multiple programs. You are testing the programs to see what

they do. So it is quite natural these days to have one monitor showing the running program while the other one displays the source code for it. In addition, there are other windows needed to do things like running the compiler, configuring database parameters, and keeping track of email from the boss.

One really fun thing you can do with dual monitors is to stretch an Excel spreadsheet across the two monitors. That's a *lot* of columns visible at the same time! Just remember to line up the line between two columns on the edge of the two screens. That worked better than I was expecting. That way, there's no part of the spreadsheet that gets lost in between.

With two monitors, you just drag a window over from one monitor to the other, just like they were one big screen. The first time I tried it, it was like magic. The mouse just popped from one screen to the other and didn't miss a beat. I hadn't known what I was missing. I never really thought of having two monitors before that. Now (and you could probably see this coming), I couldn't do without them.

Dual monitors. Life is now complete. Have it all…see it all.
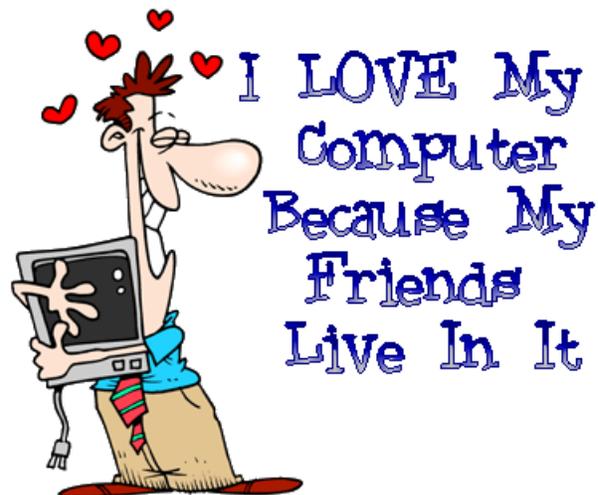
Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

Sessions with presentations, discussion, and exchanges of information

2nd Saturday

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

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

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

Design Patterns – 10:00 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

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

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

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

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

The Microsoft Architecture site is at:

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

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

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

The site for the Design Patterns Study Group is:

http://www.dotnetarchitecture.net/default.aspx

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

The main SharePoint site for the Design Patterns SIG is:

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

Microsoft Certification SIG — 2:15 pm Saturday at Nerdbooks

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

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

CertSIG Starts a New Certification Series

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

Why might you be interested?

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

How it works

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

Will the group be using a study book?

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

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

How are the study sessions conducted?

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

Isn't that a lot of material to present?

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

If I'm interested, what should I do?

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

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

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

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

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

Finally, show up on Saturday, August 9th at 2:00 pm at Nerdbooks, 1681 Firman Drive, Richardson, TX 75081. Use the side door, not the front door. Don't be put off by Dave's roaming Labrador Retrievers – they're just part of the atmosphere at Nerdbooks.

What's the near-term schedule?

August 9ᵗʰ is Chapters 6 and 9

- Drawing Graphics, Working with Images, Formatting Text

- Configuration and Installation

August 16ᵗʰ is Chapter 10 and 11

- Logging events, Debugging, Monitoring Performance, and Detecting Mgmt Events

- Code Access Security, Declarative Security, Protecting Methods

What if I can't make all the sessions?

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

Questions or comments?

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

SharePoint – 11:30 am

Ram Yadav
ram_yadav@hotmail.com

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

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

.NET Developers – 9:00 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

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

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

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

Date	Chapter	Speaker
August 9, 2008	What's New in Visual Studio 2008	David Stark
September 13, 2008	Lessons Learned	Panel
October 11, 2008	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 1	TBD
November 8, 2008	Beginning ASP.NET – Part 2	TBD
December 13, 2008	New Product Presentation	Chuck Clark

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

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

Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

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

In August we'll continue our "return to basics" theme by turning from deciding our site's "most wanted response" to designing our site's infrastructure to best achieve our MWR.

Two volunteers will bring in their site design checklists and we'll go through each to discuss specific solutions to each function needed. If you'd like yours included for review and discussion, just bring yours to the August meeting.

In September, we'll take an in depth look at a content management software (CMS) solution called *Joomla.*

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

Did you read your manuals when you bought your new camera? Yes, I'll bet you went for that *Get Started* booklet to learn to put in the batteries and shortly take those first pictures. Perhaps, one reads a mite from the larger manual for specific details of your special task of interest. Can there be something else that will enhance our ability to capture and enjoy better pictures? Let's explore those possibilities and read on to an enlightened and more enjoyable photo shoot.

Bring your camera to our seminars if you like.

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

Our earlier SIG (Digital Photography) also highlighted features possibly overlooked while browsing the instruction manuals. With photo capturing, as well as post-processing, an enormous amount of information is available for us to become competent and efficient. We just need to know where to find it.

When you use Windows Vista or XP computers and have heard a lot about Photoshop processing — you might wish to look at Corel, Paint Shop Pro which has the price of Photoshop Elements but with the processing power of Photoshop. Now that you've gotten a good start at what photo editing can do for you with the various beginner's imaging software (provided with your cameras, scanner, bargain priced purchases) we may appreciate more intricate and involved techniques.

Come on in, share, and enjoy our photography SIGs.

We welcome beginners through advanced photographers in our seminars.

Excel— 8:00 am

Frank Tubbs
ftubbs@sbcglobal.net

Excel will have a guest speaker as Frank will be out of town. Those of you familiar with the VBA Sig know Dave McKenzie and he will show you a spreadsheet he developed to do Income Tax. He has put a lot of work into this spreadsheet and I think you will be amazed at how it works. The key to understanding will be your questions. He has a great example and you can learn a lot if you simply look at his example and ask questions.

Our Priorities

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

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

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

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

Family History — 12:30 pm

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com

The seven genealogy books displayed in July will be available for one-month check out by members at the August meeting.

The August 16 meeting will be lead by Jackie Brink who will demonstrate **Family Tree Maker**. She has used this program for a number of years and has recently upgraded to the current version. Family Tree Maker is given a good report in the book *"How to do Everything with Your Genealogy"* by George C. Morgan.

The current version allows the user to attach photos, audio, and video files. It also provides interactive maps to explore places your ancestors lived. Timelines that can highlight personal, family, and

world events can be created. Finally, it can import data from PAF, TMG, and **Legacy Family Tree**. The program costs $39.95 and is described as the top-selling program for 15 years.

Inernet — 10:00 am

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

Glynn will explain the attacks coming from the internet and why a firewall is needed. He'll cover the types of firewalls, how a firewall works, and recommend the best firewalls for small offices and home.

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

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

IT Professional — 9:00 am

Larry Copeland
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org

Doug Gorrie
doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org

Special Two Hour Presentation

From the wires to your web browser. Learn the parts in between. Ask questions, get help reviewing your existing network. Plan your move to higher speeds. Design your network to support streaming audio, video, or security cameras. Detect common mistakes that can cause trouble later. This is a unique opportunity to ask that complicated question or hear the long answer that more time limited sessions don't have.

Q&A, Presentation, and working out a small design or two. Three parts to the presentation, physical, MAC, and IP layer:

- covering the difference between stranded and solid core cables,
- minimums necessary for Gigabit ethernet,
- recommended wiring patterns,
- wireless networking radio bands, and other devices
- Gigabit Ethernet and jumbo frames
- wireless ethernet roaming
- difference between hubs and switches
- Public addresses, private addresses, Automatic Private Addressing
- Address acquisition: static, dynamic,, and dhcp reservations
- simple single office and/or home routing
- Simple VLAN example: Home or office with support for guest wireless access
- wireless roaming in a routed environment: use of central wireless controllers (if Q&A shows there's a need)
- Brief VPN overview of what they are useful for

Q&A to find out what people need and their environments. Do the presentation. Ask for design problems, let the audience decide which are interesting, Do one or two designs. Some people are dealing with wireless cameras or wirelessly streaming audio/video. Isolating those high traffic devices on their own switch and/or radio channel illustrates collision domains quite well.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

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

In August, we'll continue our review of the wide variety of methods for monetizing a website, online newsletter, or other online presence. The ways to make money on the Internet are limited only by your imagination, so come and join us as together we spark our creativity by examining what others have done and extrapolating from there.

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am

Larry Linson
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com

On August 16, 2008 — SIG Co-Leader **Larry Linson** will present ***Access' Misc & Etc*** demonstrating ***Calendar Examples***, some ***Useful Tools*** (free-or-inexpensive-but-worth-more) and where to get

those tools, and, if there's any time left, ***Other Odds and Ends*** that don't warrant an entire presentation.

Last Month

In July 2008 — SIG Co-Leader **Larry Linson**, after about half the presentation time, finally got the projector working just enough to rush through the pages not shown in June because of even worse projector problems, and then take a brief tour in ***The Access Web***, full of goodies, examples, and information (often considered the #1 ***Access*** site).

Previews of Coming Attractions:

On September 20, 2008: NTPCUG ***Board Member*** and Leader of the ***Alpha Five SIG*** **Bill Parker** will kick off our ***"What is the competition to Access?"*** presentations with ***"An overview of Alpha Five"***. Did you know our NTPCUG meeting check-in database is one that Bill created in ***Alpha Five***?

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

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.

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

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 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. If that order has not arrived for the August meeting, as it likely will not, do not fear, because there will be prizes in August. 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 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. Target Date: Real Soon Now!

Many Thanks for the Following

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

Thank you very much, **Teresa**.

Downloads and Other New Stuff

In **Teresa**'s most recent newsletter, she included the following links for online Access training materials from Microsoft (note that a few of the links are for .NET and Microsoft Visual Studio items):

- 2007 training catalog page http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/CR101582831033.aspx
- 2007 training roadmap http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/HA102744471033.aspx
- 2003 training catalog page http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/CR061829401033.aspx
- 2003 training roadmap http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/access/HA011189511033.aspx

Access 2003 Solution Center — (July 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

Microsoft Virtual Labs – (July 2008)

Talk about going the extra mile, Microsoft has created virtual labs so that people can try out the code in MSDN magazine without installing files on their computers. 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! Check it out at http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/magazine/cc511327.aspx?pr=flas

Access and Excel 2003 – Lab and demo for creating a database from Excel (July 2008)

This demo may provide Access developers with invaluable insights, if for no other reasons than the opportunity to see things from someone else's perspective may lead to a better solution Check out Microsoft's demo on how to create an Access database from an Excel spreadsheet. http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/HA012013211033.aspx?WT.mc_id=ION

Outlook 2007/2003/2002 Add-in: Personal Folders Backup (July 2008)

The Personal Folders Backup download creates backup copies of your .PST files at regular intervals, in Outlook 2002 and later versions, making it easy to keep all of your Outlook folders safely backed up.

www.microsoft.com/downloadsinfo.aspx?na=22&p=7&srcdisplaylang=en&srccategoryid=&srcfamilyid=&u=%2fdownloads%2fdetails.aspx%3ffamilyid%3d8b081f3a-b7d0-4b16-b8af-5a6322f4fd01%26displaylang%3den

Keyboard shortcuts for Microsoft Office (July 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! (July 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? (July 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

Optimizing Windows Vista for Better Performance (July 2008)

Computers, like people, can get bogged down by extra baggage. But, if you're running Vista, there are some easy to follow steps to help combat the drain and regain the faster performance. Visit http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/help/83EC0FFE-EE04-4D53-8B87-25D1F05C954E1033.mspx

Product Key – Lost and Found (July 2008)

Finally, we have guidance on how to minimize the pain and frustration from loosing 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 (July 2008)

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

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Access 2003 SP3 Hot Fix Link (March 2008) : For every action, there is an equal reaction. And, sometimes it is not as desirable as we would like. This is certainly the case with Office 2003 SP3, which provided some valuable fixes and updates, but also wreaked havoc on other features. To that end, Microsoft has provided a hotfix for some of the problems created specific to Access — such as losing combo box functionality; http://support.microsoft.com/kb/945674

Allen Browne, Microsoft MVP, shares some info about reviewing some of the Access bugs introduced by SP 3. http://support.microsoft.com/kb/945674

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

Office 2007 Service Pack 1 (April 2008): The 2007 Microsoft Office suite Service Pack 1 delivers important customer-requested stability and performance improvements, while incorporating further enhancements to user security. Includes all of the updates released for the 2007 Office suite prior to December of 2007. You can get a more complete description of SP1, including a list of issues that were fixed, in the Microsoft Knowledge Base article 936982: Description of the 2007 Microsoft Office suite Service Pack 1. Service Pack 1 will install even if a publicly available update has already been installed on your computer. SP1 also includes stability improvements developed as a result of user input

from the Microsoft Online Crash Analysis and from Microsoft Product Support feedback. Information and download from, http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=9EC51594-992C-4165-A997-25DA01F388F5&displaylang=en

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 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 offer dynamically updated Help and online training as well as downloads, templates, and clip art-for new and previous versions of Office. Check this out at: http://office.microsoft.com/

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

Access 2007 Product Guide: Read about the new features and see how you can use them to leverage your time and data. After that, download the Office beta and ENJOY! http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/access/FX100487571033.aspx

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

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

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

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

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

Microsoft Certification — 2:00 pm

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

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

Microsoft Expression Web — 10:00 am

Chris Morgan
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org

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

Mobile Computing — 10:00 am

Larry Copeland
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org

No meeting this month to make time for the special presentation for IT Pro SIG, beginning at 9:00 am.

Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

We'll look at Windows' built-in support for digital media and what happens when you put a CD or DVD into the drive. We'll discuss the 5 types of information that Windows has to handle when playing back a DVD movie and discuss where you can get additional free software that will help you edit and manage your digital media.

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

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

This month's session will be an open question and answer period on things of interest to those in attendance.

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

We're still on vacation in August and will get together in September.

Word's Outline Numbering can be difficult ...

... the trick is to format all your numbering through the first style level (ie Heading 1).

In Word 2002 and 2003:

1 Open the *Styles and Formatting Task pane:* **Format | Styles and Formatting**

2 Point to Heading 1 and click the down arrow that appears to the right of the name | **Modify**

   The Modify Style dialog box will open

3 At the bottom: **Format** | **Numbering**

4 **Outline Numbering** tab

5 Select one of the displayed options that best fits what you want to do | **Customize**

6 In the *Customize Outline Numbered List* dialog box: **MORE** *(button on the right, if necessary)*

7 On the left side of the screen, select: **1**

    a Select your *number format* and your *indentations* for Heading 1

    b Be sure to set the *LInk Level to Style* to: **Heading 1**

8 On the left side of the screen, select: **2**

    a Select your *number format* and your *indentaions*

    b This time be sure to set the *LInk Level to Style* to: **Heading 2**

9 Continue with each level and linking then to the appropriate heading style

10 Once you have them all set: **OK** ... to close all dialog boxes

11 **CAUTION!** If you need to go back and *modify a number,* be sure to go back to: **Heading 1** | **Modify** | **Format** | **Numbering**

12 **CAUTION!** If you need to *change the font formatting* you can do that in each individual style, but don't change the indentations anywhere except by going back to:
Heading 1 | **Modify** | **Format** | **Numbering**

WordPerfect — 11:00 - 12:00 noon

Diane Bentley
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

We're still on vacatio in August and get together in September.

A Quick Line

Create a line from margin to margin: **F11**

Edit a Line

1 Right-click the line to select it | **Edit Horizontal Line...**

2 Choose from the many editing options
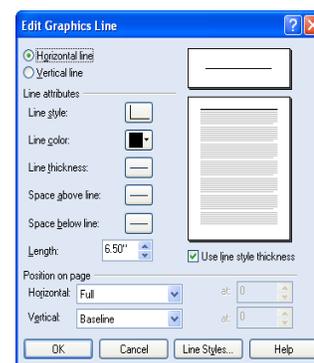
After editing the line, it now moves indepent of the text it was originally below

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Volunteering

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

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

Please consider volunteering for one of these important jobs:

Program Director

Identify and arrange program topics for our vendor presentations.

Volunteer Coordinator

Coordinate permanent and temporary volunteer participation.

Discount Coordinator

Communicate with vendors offering discounts on their products.

Mentoring — Tom Sweet

tom.sweet@ntpcug.org

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

Newsletter — Doug Gorrie, Chuck Fiedler and Diane Bentley

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

Prepare, contribute to and distribute the monthly newsletter.

Information Desk — Charles Rem

crem@ntpcug.org

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

Digital Photography — Tips and Tricks

Spike Smith
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

Just Portrait Tips for: Aunt Agnes

Determine whether she is *left-faced* or *right faced*

Finding her good side

- check curvature of smile
    - use side that curls up most
    - avoid sides that turn down
- while checking eyeballs
    - use the roundest one
- shoot with hair part on far side
    - unless you are looking for scalp instead of hair
- don't let her wear black jacket
    - unless she just used Head'n'Shoulders
- About those ears

Her friends work graphic puzzles in Sunday's newspaper. Therefore:

- use side where hair covers those irregular swirls of intricate patterns
- unless – she is wearing Motorola hearing aid with those bat wings for a logo.

You know she is a fussy one.

She knows you took exquisite pictures of those lovely models and now Aunty expects you to capture her smile, her inward glow, her $400.00 hair do, and that relaxed and confident look – just like the models showed.

Okay! You've got your orders. Can you do it? We know Aunt Agnes is going to do as all her friends, your relatives, and neighbors all do. They are going to pose with their face contorted as if you requested them to not say 'cheese' or not 'clean sheets' but more like a grinning 'whoops' to the nth degree.

Here is what you do in order to get that relaxed, natural smile. Get out your fastest telephoto lens (or use longest position with your zoom lens) and then capture the real shots from a distance while she doesn't notice. After you have a few great shots, then

you put on your normal or wide lens and tell Aunty you are ready for her to start posing.

When you return to your workplace, balance the color, crop out the best images and print Aunt Agnes's normal smile. She'll love it.

Now for Aunt Agnes's Great Grandpa Picture Restoration

I didn't find a one-button-does-it-all to push or click on in my photo software editor but did find dust removers and scratch removers that take away more than the scratches and tiny spots but act as if they were partial removers of anything with fine detail that appears foreground or background. Now, about that there clone tool...

When I set my brush size for covering a scratch and select clone sample slightly off direction of scratch or particles to be removed, I can rapidly clone away while using mouse and find it easy to change sample color and brush size and strength.

Working with the expert

I assisted an accomplished expert for around three years as a volunteer in a nursing home. She was an excellent social worker with handicapped and she related well with all. We would share stories amongst ourselves and with the residents. She had a well-kept secret.

When this lady retired, a surprise party was organized in her behalf and I photographed the event for her and the staff. This became a wonderful turnout indeed. I shot a lot of candid images in the lively and crowded room – there just wasn't time to create studio looking shots.

Whoops! When I opened my files and began organizing for a memorabilia brochure – her carefully kept secret was discovered. There were some large voids discovered on one side while she openly smiled.

I didn't have a graphics tablet then and was doing poorly while attempting to draw a respectable tooth or two with a mouse. Ugh!

An easy way to solve this dilemma would to have the reverse of the blemish remover. The blemish

remover is just a modification of the clone tool. So I quickly reconstructed a couple of teeth from several parts of cloned teeth and also covered over the rough edges with cloned gum line.

Photo Imaging Editors at large

Using your photo editors should be a love-hate relationship.

There are several editors available and two of the more popular ones are Adobe's Photoshop and Corel's Paint Shop Pro. Love is when these most valuable tools are tweaking and placing final touches upon your finest captured images. When your photo editor regularly takes over the duties of cleaning up for poor photography, you will hate spending disproportional time that should better be spent for productivity and creativity. Save time by ensuring your creations are as fine as they can be prior to editing and these better images will also provide enhanced enjoyment.

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

Photo Editing SIG
11:00 AM until Noon

Spike

What to do with Old CDs and DVDs

By Chuck Fiedler

In June I wrote about the matter of discarding CDs and DVDs with personal data. I suggested a neat little device to score personal data disks so there is no way they can be read again (unless you're the CIA or NSA and do you *really* think they care about your personal files?).

I noted that, while the disk can be rendered unreadable, there is no local source for discarding the result, short of sending it to a landfill.

I recently learned of a source that will take these disks and properly recycle them. To quote from the article I read:

> "According to the *CD Recycling Center of America*, CDs and DVDs are made from different materials, each of which has its own separate lifecycle involving energy use and waste that includes:
>
> - Aluminum — the most abundant metal element
> - Polycarbonate — a type of plastic, which is made from crude oil and natural gas
> - Lacquer — made of acrylic, a type of plastic
> - Dyes — chemicals made partially from petroleum products

> - Other materials such as water, glass, silver, and nickel

> "… *CD Recycling Central* takes them at no cost; except for any you incur to ship them. They also have a *no landfill* policy and materials are separated and the disks themselves are ground and shipped to manufacturing companies that process them into new CDs or other plastic goods. The jewel cases are cleaned and reused if possible."

If you have old backup CDs (or even a collection of old AOL disks), if your office has a stockpile of old disks, or if you want to start a disk collection program at your organization, go for it and bring the collection to us for recycling. A collection box will be available near the registration desk at the monthly third Saturday meetings.

If you have disks you want to discard, bring them to the third Saturday meeting and put them in the box to ship. We can even score the disk if you let us know that's what you want. Then we'll put it in the box. Just write something on the disk telling us to kill the data and we'll do it.

Sounds pretty neat to me – and "green".

This Month in Our History

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Hey kids, it's time to don your propeller beanie and put your secret decoder ring on as we review the happenings reported in the August 1988 and 1993 issues of *PC News,* 15 and 20 years ago.

Before I begin this review, I would like to report that we now have EVERYTHING in our archives except for the 1982 issues. I fear we may never be able to retrieve this volume as some landfill somewhere has the earliest records. For what we have, we are indebted to **Tom Browning, Emily Seay**, **Jim Ryan**, **Connie Andrews** and **Chris Morgan**. Without their contributions this column and the coming addition to our website archive would not be possible. Without the work of **Diane Bentley** and **Elva Roy**, the scanning and saving of our archive would not have happened — more examples of folks stepping forward and saying "I can help with that." Have YOU said that lately?

August 1988 was full of discussion on the latest upcoming version of MS-DOS. Version 4.0 was anticipated "any time now." If memory serves, while DOS went on to Version 7, the follow-on to the venerable DOS 3.3 was the first release of the Windows overlay on the underlying DOS kernel. President, **Reagan Andrews**, said: "I'm not ready emotionally to begin the task of exploring another multi-disk software package and associated documentation… MS-DOS 3.3 manual is 370 pages long… all of which demands close study."

Remember software manuals? For that matter, remember 15+ disk software releases – the later ones done in a strange MS formatting which packed more data onto each disk. I'm surprised they even include a box anymore. Why not just sell an envelope which has the CD – oh, yeah, those can be easily shoplifted. Well then, why not put it in a plastic pack that only God can open without the risk of serious personal injury? (I'm kidding, folks.) OTOH, MicroCenter at least has some neat durable plastic containers which they open at the check-out and re-use. I haven't seen those elsewhere but that may be a fault of where I look.

Still in 1988, August's meeting had two special presentations in the Infomart auditorium in addition to the business meeting. At 9:00 Financial Services

Publications, Inc's **Lane Kramer** presented a demonstration of a financial analysis and projection package. At 10:00, IBM ("Speaker to be announced") did "An Overview of IBM PS/2 Hardware and OS/2 Software." I wonder whether the speaker foresaw the cliff coming up but in 1988, these were still viable if not fairly well accepted options. I never played with OS/2 but I was once issued a PS/2 machine by my employer — funny little machine with strange innards.

In his continuing series, *On Complexity*, then-President Elect, **Jim Hoisington**, wrote an article *I* interpret as praising the multi-tasking abilities of OS/2. Compared to the DOS system, his words were certainly true but today Windows can apparently do anything OS/2 could do or we wouldn't all be Windows converts (apologies to the Linux folks who meet with us.)

Matt Mathews wrote an article titled *Simple Batch Files Reduce Keystrokes* giving some useful information on the value of writing batch files from the command line. Most users today have no idea what a "command line" or a "batch file" is so I won't go further.

Reagan Andrews had a two page article titled *Survival Guide for Hard Disk Users…* in which he noted that hard disks are mechanical devices and will eventually fail (true today as in 1988). He recommended making a diskette with the version of DOS in use, including COMMAND.COM and DEBUG.COM so as to be able to retrieve valuable data. Of course, in 1988 there were no CD/DVD or USB external backup devices available. If you haven't heard it before, **BACKUP YOUR DATA FREQUENTLY!!** I recently saw a **1TB** USB external drive for $149 – pretty cheap way to do backups. Your drive may not fail until the Second Coming but other stuff happens which demands the need for data retrieval – don't ask how I know. <G>

The DOM Squad highlighted another fifteen disks among the total of some 200+ still available on Super Saturday. At the end they noted they were having an inventory reduction sale on some 26 disks for only $1.00 each (no mention of the disk format).

In 1993, some guy named **Doug Gorrie** was the author of *Prez Sez.* He wrote "As with much in life, it

is easy to take people for granted, especially when their efforts occur beyond our immediate field of vision." He went on to name several folks who made major contributions at that time. Today, also, many people make contributions which make it possible for the group to exist, — they might serve on the Board, run a SIG, man the check-in desk and associated record maintenance, make the monthly newsletter possible by writing articles, formatting the results, distributing the results, etc. All these actions take place because someone stepped up and said, "I can do that." Why not volunteer a small part of your time to make the Group a success?

The member survey in 1993 reported that members first planned to add a CD drive (37%), add a larger hard disk (37%), add memory (32%), add a faster modem (27%), even get a laser printer (23%). Several other upgrades were also planned by 20% each or fewer of the members. Sure was a time of members "cracking the case" and dealing with all the components before PNP and USB made life so simple for the user. Remember the days when PCs came with little stickers which said, in essence, "You open this sucker and your warranty is *kaput*"? I saw one of those recently on a machine we were triaging for TCPI. Needless to say, it was old enough that its only use was to be recycled.

The Variety Store by **Reagan Andrews** ran for some three pages at the end of which he wrote about *MS Word 6.0 for DOS* saying, "I haven't had a chance to play with *WordPerfect 6.0 for* DOS – yet I'd imagine it's just as innovative and will have no difficulty holding on to Word Perfect Corp.'s almost absolute domination of the DOS-based word-processing market." He went on to note that "… the business swing is to Windows-based products and 6.0 may be too late to make a real difference." Yup, not only for DOS-based MS products but, not to be mean, whatever REALLY became of Word Perfect? (Ducking and running from the rocks of Diane and the WP SIG.) Wanna bet I won't be allowed a donut this month? <G>

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.

RTFM (Read The (um, Fine) Manual)

By Chuck Fiedler

Recently my son in North Carolina called me with a computer problem. It seems his machine worked fine yesterday but today when he turned it on, Windows booted, his desktop background came up but with no icons and no task bar or start button.

He's a 21 year veteran of Army Special Forces who retired and now needs the adrenalin rush of gaming and has a custom-built game machine with dual GeForce 8600GT video cards that give incredibly fast output.

He had been running through a 17" analog CRT and decided to upgrade to a 22" widescreen digital LCD monitor. So he ordered a Samsung unit online and waited with his customary patience (!) for it to arrive.

The monitor arrived and had a manual ("written for a third grader" by someone not fluent in the English language). So he removes the analog monitor, sets up the digital monitor, reads enough of the manual to find how the DVI cable connects and fires everything up – doesn't work. "Well", says he, "I have this analog cable and there **are** analog connectors on the video card and the monitor so I'll hook that up too. Now the system works fine but, while it's larger, it's not really better than the old setup. So he finishes the day's activities and shuts down the system.

That brings us to today where the icons and everything else are missing. I thought maybe he needed to reload Windows or maybe his registry was fouled and told him to do a Windows repair from the CD he had.

He calls back – he tried to reload Windows but it asked for the administrator password. He didn't know so he quit the reinstall and just restarted Windows in safe mode. He had the icons and taskbar. I'm bumfuzzled and tell him I will do some research and let him know. We hang up.

He calls back. He reconnected the old monitor and everything was fine. THEN he says he has this driver CD that came with the Samsung and what would happen if he loaded the drivers while using the old analog monitor. Fairly sure he wouldn't "let the smoke out of the wires" I advised him to do so. We hang up.

He calls back (we both have "free" long distance). He had loaded the drivers, reinstalled the new monitor with JUST the DVI cable and *Voila!,* the monitor worked like a champ and was light years better than it had been yesterday.

I sincerely wonder whether the "third grade" Fine Manual had said to load the drivers, then disconnect your old monitor, connect the new monitor with DVI and bash on. Anyway, this was an interesting journey.

Backup, Backup, Backup

By Chuck Fiedler

If you have attended any of a number of our SIGs, or maybe elsewhere, you have heard of the necessity to back up your precious data. Hard disks are incredibly reliable, cheap and long-lived but it's only a matter of time before they WILL fail — hence the need to back up.

You may be using a LARGE number of 3½ inch floppies or maybe even a CD or DVD drive.

You may be relying on Windows' backup utility.

If you use Vista, this is found under the System > Maintenance control panel. There is a tab named Back Up Your Computer. If you're using XP Pro, look in Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools.

If you have XP Home, find your original install disk and install the backup tool which is included but, alas, not installed by default. If, like me, your computer came installed with XP Home and you don't have an install disk, try something different.

There is an alternative which is reasonably affordable and scary fast. Get an external USB hard drive. I recently bought a 500 GB drive for $150. Prices vary over time so wait for a sale and get the drive then. A recent ad showed a 1 TB drive for $149.

External drives generally come with their own backup program so you will want to load that to your hard disk and then bash on.

External drives are faster than CD or DVD backups and a LOT less time-and-space consuming than floppies.

You can also use a Zip drive which comes in several capacities. I once had two Zip drives and one got what is called the "click of death". I got some sound of running followed by a click and running followed by a click, etc. I disconnected the drive and attached the other – no click but the disk was trashed. Iomega used to replace these for free but not by the time I had my failure. Result? Two discarded drives and maybe 50 discarded disks —worse, the loss of my precious data.

I can't too strongly emphasize the necessity of backing up data. There is even much to be said about doing a complete backup including your operating system and desktop settings. There may be other programs but I have found that Acronis (www.acronis.com) has a program called *True Image* that does this, is very handy and is reasonably quick with an external drive. The first time it does a complete backup and thereafter it does incrementals.

It has been said that there are two kinds of computer users; those who back up their data and those who WILL back up their data. Be one of the former before you sadly learn to be one of the latter.

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 August flyer?***

My heart sank as I read the spam that began, "By opening this email you have activated the Amish computer virus." Then I realized that not only was my computer in jeopardy, so was my reputation, as it continued, "Since the Amish don't have computers, this works on the honor system. Please delete all your files. Thank you.

*From the **Readers' Digest***

Calendar

August	September	October
9 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**13** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**11** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft
2:15 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks	2:15 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks	2:15 pm *Certification SIG* at Nerdbooks
16 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**20** 8:00 am—2:0 0 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**18** 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory
2:00 pm *Certification SIG* at King of Glory	2:00 pm *Certification SIG* at King of Glory	2:00 pm *Certification SIG* at King of Glory

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