



www.ntpcug.org

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

November 2008

VOLUME 27 • NUMBER 11

Raffle Drawing in November

This month we will again be selling tickets for a great new laptop. The winner will be drawn at the November business meeting.

Specifics of the computer are:

Dell Inspiron 1100 laptop with Celeron 2GHz processor, 1GB of RAM, 18GB hard drive, and a built-in DVD/CD-RW drive.

Software includes:

- Windows XP Home Edition with SP2;
- Windows Defender anti-spyware;
- Microsoft Office XP Professional (2002);
- Microsoft Project 2000;
- AVG anti-virus & anti-spyware;
- Adobe Flash player;
- CCleaner registry tool,
- Foxit PDF reader;
- Java Runtime 6.0.7.
- WinDitStat folder size pictorial display;
- RoboForm password manager.

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Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

Sessions with presentations, discussion, and exchanges of information

2nd Saturday

Alphabetically

Design Patterns – 10:00 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

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

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

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

The Microsoft Architecture site is at:

<http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/architecture/default.aspx>

Date	Chapter	Topic
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

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

<http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms998572.aspx>

The site for the Design Patterns Study Group is:

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

The main SharePoint site for the Design Patterns SIG is:

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

Microsoft Certification SIG — 2:00 pm Saturday at Nerdbooks

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

Starting in June we began a new Visual Studio 2008 Certification Series. 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 is a great way to start. We will cover 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.

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

Our past experiences have shown that with developers, one of the most fun ways to learn stuff in a group is have a volunteer "walk through" some code, line by line, and have other members review and comment (sharp-shoot) on the code. Each month a volunteer prepares the code for a given Lesson Lab and do a walkthrough of that code in front of the group, using the group's projector and a laptop. We cover the lessons in two chapters each meeting. We have to see how it goes. Admittedly, the proposed study is fast-paced and covers a lot in a short period of time.

Questions or comments?

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

SharePoint – 11:30 am

Ram Yadav
ram_yadav@hotmail.com

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

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

.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/dot-NetDev/default.aspx>

Date	Topic	Speaker
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

Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

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

For websites that are selling goods or services, you'll likely need a shopping cart. There are seemingly a million shopping cart solutions available on the web, but which one is right for you? In this and the following SIG, we'll help you answer that question. This hour we'll help you build a list of features you need for whatever you're selling and whatever payment types you'll be accepting. Then, stick around for the 9 o'clock SIG, "Making Money on the Internet", where we'll take the feature lists developed in this hour and examine specific commercially available shopping cart solutions and how well each might fit your specific needs.

Digital Photography - 10 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



In her small house, seventeen persons of all ages, sizes, and shapes were present and four had already left. What do you do? Well, how about thinking collage?

In our digital world of photography, this can be used to satisfy Auntie's desires and everyone can be included.

We will solve this dilemma and other situations in this month's digital photography SIGs programs.

Feel free to bring your questions and comments for us to learn and share.

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



Continuing from the digital photography SIG on the construction of a collage.

Excel— 8:00 am

Frank Tubbs
ftubbs@sbcglobal.net

The Excel group covered a basic element last month concerning Paste Special. After seeing the interest in such a subject I thought we might start taking looks at more elements that are generally passed over. For November I thought it might be useful for us to take a look at the Shortcut Keys. They are used by many to move faster around the application. Editing, reviewing, or just looking around a workbook is faster when you know how.

Family History — 12:30 pm

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com



We will review lessons learned this year from four invited guests, from members demonstrating free and inexpensive genealogy computer programs and from the study of six reference books.

I have been attending the Legacy User Group at the Plano Hagard Library this year and have enjoyed Joanne's presentations. At the last meeting one subject of interest to me concerned storage of census records. I have created my own method which I will share this month.

A summary of this year's Family History meetings will be available to attendees of the November NTPCUG meeting.

Internet — 10:00 am

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

Making the Switch from Microsoft Office to Web Apps

We need to step back and take a fresh look at what the web has to offer as suitable replacements for the Microsoft Office suite of programs. There are some interesting free alternatives you should know

about, and I'll demo them in this session.

IT Professional — 9:00 am

Larry Copeland
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org

Doug Gorrie
doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org

In November, the IT PRO and MOBILE sigs will have a guest speaker, Lenel Hawkins, for a combined meeting. Mr. Hawkins is an account manager for Kforce Technology Staffing in the Dallas/Fort Worth region and he will give us tips on getting an IT job in these times. Also there will be time for a question and answer session.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

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



Bill Parker

One of the most effective ways of making money on the Internet is selling a product or service. For most, a shopping cart will be a necessity. Bring a list of all the features you need in a cart, and we'll review a number of available options. If you need help creating your "feature" set, attend the 8 o'clock SIG, "Building Websites", and we'll help you create a list that can make your life really easy, at least as a webmaster taking orders and accepting payments.

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am



Larry Linson
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com



Basics Review: Tables, Queries, Sorting, and Indexing

Last Month

Many thanks to NTPCUG Board Member and Leader of the Alpha Five SIG Bill Parker for kicking 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 spoke in September. Kathy has committed to speak later, when her schedule permits, 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
- Queries for end-users and developers
- Using other Microsoft Office software from Access via COM automation
- Server databases you can use with Access: Oracle

Valuable Prizes

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

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

In July, we requested drawing prizes for the next quarter. We expect our gifts of Microsoft products

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

Elsewhere — Our Access SIG SharePoint Site:

In addition to a very abbreviated form of this, our meeting announcement (note that it can be, and is, updated with any last-minute changes, corrections, or adjustments.), you will also find a list of links to some very valuable resource sites, announcements, and other information pertinent to Access and our SIG.

Breaking news! The NTPCUG Share Point Team continues to progress on completing the installation, testing, and tuning the new SharePoint 3.0. It will be much improved and more flexible than the current version. Target Date: Real Soon Now! (Larry’s Comment: I certainly hope so and hope that it has *compelling* features.)

Many Thanks for the Following

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

Thank you very much, **Teresa**.

Downloads and Other New Stuff

In **Teresa’s** most recent newsletter, she included the following:

Try SQL Server 2008 Today RELEASE CANDIDATE (September 2008)

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

Download SQL Server 2008 Feature Pack (September 2008)

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

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

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

Run IT on a Virtual Hard Disk (September 2008)

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

Access 2003 Solution Center — (August 2008)

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

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

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

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

PrimoPDF offers both a free and professional version that will work with Windows 98 through Windows

Vista and can work with over 300 file types. Willie really likes PrimoPDF for client installations because it is remarkably simple and leaves a VERY SMALL footprint. Check it out and let me know what you think. www.primopdf.com

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

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

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

Windows Live Search (August 2008)

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

Create Help Videos with Community Clips (August 2008)

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

101 Fabulous Freebies (August 2008)

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

Office Live Workspace (August 2008)

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

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

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

Keyboard shortcuts for Microsoft Office (August 2008)

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

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

Sending the same document or e-mail to a group of people can be fast and easy. By using mail merge, all you have to do is create one document with your information and add placeholders for unique information, such as a name or address. Microsoft Office Word takes care of the rest! <http://office.microsoft.com/training/training.aspx?AssetID=RC011205671033>

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

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

Product Key – Lost and Found

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

KB811224 <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/811224>

Tips & Tricks – Webcasts and Podcasts from the Experts

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

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

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

Windows Live SkyDrive - Online File Storage (March 2008)

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

RESOURCE Tips:

A couple of good sites to search for information and programming assistance are www.mvps.org and [Office Developer Center on MSDN](http://www.office-developer.com). 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.msp#> for a comprehensive display topics. You may also find what you are looking for by using <http://groups.google.com> or try www.google.com/microsoft.html for Microsoft related pages or by setting multiple search criteria at www.google.com/advanced_search?hl=en.

Access Blog – by the Access Team

Stay tuned to the community ... The team shares insights into their schedule, their favorite features, new features and how to use them. This is also an ideal avenue for the team to talk about issues that are of interest to the Access community. You'll learn about the people and some of the factors that are helping to shape the future of Access. Whether you're a seasoned developer or just learning about Access, you'll find invaluable information and techniques.

From creating a database template to getting help when you need it, The Access Blog covers the gamut. <http://blogs.msdn.com/access/default.aspx>

Get Help When You Need It – Office Online

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

Database Issue Checker

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

Access 2007 Product Guide

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

MSDN magazine is available online

An excellent, searchable resource. You can check out back issues, download articles and source code. Check it out at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/msdnmag>

A compilation of links to Access Resources

This site provides an impressive array of links to a variety of resources for Access developers and

users. www.cbel.com/ms_access/

Conrad Systems Development — CSD Tools Version 2.0

Jeff Conrad, former Access MVP, and one of the newest members of the Access Test Team, offers an Access Add-In for documenting your database objects.

<http://www.accessmvp.com/JConrad/accessjunkie.html>

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

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

Microsoft Expression Web — 10:00 am

*Chris Morgan
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org*

Last month we took a quick tour of the “Membership” feature of ASP.NET 2.0. This is the set of controls for creating users (members) of a web site and controlling access to certain pages, based on the rights given these users and groups of users. Since this was such a quick tour, we will continue looking at this in October and see a demonstration on how to set up a web site to use this functionality. The discussion of AJAX will be held off for a future meeting.

Mobile Computing — 10:00 am

*Larry Copeland
larry.copeland@ntpcug.org*

For November, the IT PRO and MOBILE SIG will have a combined meeting in the real world topic of “How to get a job in IT”. Lenel Hawkins from K-force



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

will do a presentation and be available for one-on-one discussion.

Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

How to Reinstall Windows Without Losing Your Data

If you use a computer for more than a few years, at some point you'll probably have to reinstall Windows from scratch. But contrary to popular belief, you won't have to reformat your hard drive. In this session we'll discuss the options that will get you back on your feet with the least amount of pain.

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

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

Tips N Ticks will hold an open Q & A session. You got Windows/PC questions, we got answers !

Wireless Communications — 11:00 am

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

In November we will talk about using public Wi-Fi access points and securing your own network. We will talk about the ways to secure your network and what you should know when using a public access point.

Word — 9:00 - 11:00 am

Diane Bentley
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

Continuing with features and options new to Word 2002 and 2003, we'll look at some new options in Find & Replace, Go To, Send Fax from Word, and Insert Pictures or Hyperlinks, Watermarks.

WordPerfect — 11:00am - 12:00 pm

Diane Bentley
diane.bentley@ntpcug.org

Moving on from October, we're ready to easily create stationery and an envelope by applying the name, address and logo from QuickWords. Once the basic document has been created, and our preferred formatting applied, we'll save it as a template. In the future, we can retrieve this template, complete with our stationery and envelope, and format it with fonts, margins and spacing.

Volunteering

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

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

Please consider volunteering for one of these important jobs:

Program Director

Identify and arrange program topics for our vendor presentations.

Volunteer Coordinator

Coordinate permanent and temporary volunteer participation.

Discount Coordinator

Communicate with vendors offering discounts on our products.

Mentoring — Tom Sweet

tom.sweet@ntpcug.org

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

Newsletter —

Doug Gorrie, Chuck Fiedler, David Franke, and Diane Bentley

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

Prepare, contribute to and distribute the monthly newsletter.

Information Desk — Charles Rem

crem@ntpcug.org

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

Digital Photography — Tips and Tricks

Do you take enough pictures?

Of course, with digital photography still relatively new we often relate our imaging techniques to 35mm film photography. Shucks, even when we use medium-format cameras today we compare and refer in terms of 35mm film. Large format though retained its sacred ground and remains sized in inches. With the high price of film processing and long time lag from capture until seeing our film 'proofs' our habits had become established for how many pictures we took.

With well-planned portraiture we still take one or more extras just in case. When we shoot sports, we try hard just capturing any action shots. What about that one-in-a-thousand (unplanned extra) shot that is fantastic? With our high speed digital cameras (the 35mm equivalent replacement) we can now shoot candid images and be affordable while shooting nearly the same shots as a fashion photographer with high-priced model. Should we? An important factor in our favor is massively fast memory. The answer is yes, we should but just as we used to conserve time and costs, we now need to establish a different set of self-imposed rules.

We (should) take many more pictures than we were used to with film. We have been told this and partially believe this and as we now amass multitudes of both good and worthless data. Let's be careful though to not create new problem areas.

Develop and maintain certain limits in all your albums and mass storage. Commercial photographers/teachers offer us good advice. A master photographer will tell you that the difference between an amateur and a professional is that the pro never keeps bad pictures. Now this is very good advice for commercial photographers as well as amateurs keeping Aunt Agnes satisfied. You know that perception is an almighty tool and first-impressions are extremely difficult to alter or flush. If a client or friend spots just one bad image - this will reduce your credibility unfairly and immensely.

This means that continuing to take extra images is healthy, you sort your good photos for display, your lesser photos for only possible use, and then those bad photos are to get destroyed. Why? Aunt Agnes is thinking the same as your client that when she

Spike Smith
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



sees a bad photo of yours, wonders why ever take bad pictures and perhaps thinks of Uncle Joe and of never having a bad picture for you to see. Yes, I know Aunt Agnes will beg, plead, and say, "Let me see all you have." Don't give in. It's good, better, and best. That's all she gets to see. Period!

Your goals are now to be sure you set out to take all you need, possible extras, backups, and show no one (other than a trusted student) anything but good pictures.

A good friend of mine and quite a different photographer too was Mr. Bob. When I approach a photo task I usually give a quick analysis, establish a plan, and then go for it -- perhaps modifying a bit as the task goes on. Not Mr. Bob as he was super meticulous. His attitude for a picture was always perfection. He would quickly notice an opportunity but that was the last perception of swiftness as his meticulousness took charge. He would gather up his faithful Olympus, decide upon a lens, and determine best exposure by extensive use of zone system ifs and maybes. He was rather emphatic with use of zones and if anyone ever takes a good picture, he assumes they really must have used this great system.

Exposing with the zone system goes back to knowing the characteristics of developing silver halides with differing effect upon the silver versus exposure to light on the negatives and prints. Ansel Adams was a genius in use of these techniques with his great poster-sized prints. Knowing the zone system is an attribute toward your selection of proper exposure even with today's digital imaging and processing. This all relates to tolerances and limitations that everything is subject too. It may begin to sound like - You can't have your cake and eat it too. But, when we listen to Virgil, a lawyer who says, "mitigate, mitigate, mitigate."

How do we mitigate the problem of either too bright with some objects and too dark with other objects? Without too much thought, you might think:

1. take the middle of the road

2. select highlights and ignore shadows
3. select shadows and ignore highlights.

If we use the film zone system, we may expose for the shadows and then develop for the highlights. If this is not enough, use your photo editor for burn and dodge as necessary but start with your perfect exposure of mid-tones. When I speak of exposure for mid-tones, I am referring to your selection of image – not what is automatically selected by the camera.

Lighting Ratios

When we see a unique and beautiful image that we just must capture – let's hope there is time to analyze it. If it has areas with important detail that is extra light and also more areas extra dark, we may have difficulty keeping all of the detail together within one shot. What say you? You mean we didn't bring our spot exposure meter? Well, we can try checking the range required for the exposure with our camera in a non-auto mode.

Most mid- to high-range cameras have a metering system which can be set for multiple points to a single point for checking exposure. For instance, if you adjusted your camera to use the single region center metering and then aim the camera at a dark spot you wish to maintain, the surrounding details, and again while aiming at a highlight. Your built-in metering may be selective enough to do spot metering to aid in your creation of zone technology.

Is your metering accurate?

How often do you get a freebie? This is not like the proverbial free lunch as it has to do with solar power. Several of us have exposure meters and almost all of us with modern 35mm cameras and new digital cameras have built-in metering.

Have you gone to several camera shows and had various vendors offer to check your meter calibration against their standard? And, after two or more do this, you find different values? Let me share a technique that remains an accurate standard.

First off, we determine the standards that determine the baseline we will check. The old exposure standard is ASA and has a European equivalent DIN, and these are now called ISO. This is a fixed standard used for determining a reference for judging the exposure speed for photographic film. You will find a reference to ISO speed ratings for digital cameras and settings that are supposed to relate the

digital photo sensor to film speed.

Sunlight is a constant value with a full spectrum of color. If it is not covered by overcast or thick clouds, it will always give you an ISO value that meets the following criteria:

ISO = 100 = 1/100 second at aperture of f11.

Procedure:

1. Set your auto-focus off and adjust distance to infinity (this is to keep the auto-focus from not finding anything in the sky to focus on)
2. Set shutter speed (t) to 100 (1/100th second)
3. Set ISO to 100
4. Point lens toward clear blue sky (not directly into sun)
5. Depress shutter
6. Aperture (a) should indicate f11

Any difference between f11 and meter reading is be used to determine the correction factor for you to use. The speed and aperture is adjustable in 1/3 f-stop increments.

Since digital cameras have come into widespread use, the ISO standard has been revised to incorporate differences between film speed and digital photo sensor speed. This is not straightforward nor does it have rigid fixed values. Next month's Photo Tips and Tricks in The Newsletter will contain a brief description on ISO as determined by newer standards.

This Month in Our History

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Once again it's time to stop and review the happenings reported in the November 1983 and 1988 issues of PC News, 20 and 25 years ago. Get those bifocals or reading glasses on and let's go!

The November 1983 issue has got to be the briefest PC News ever issued, at only seven pages and that included a full-page, a half-page and a quarter-page ad!

The announcement was made of a change of venue from SMU to Jesuit College Prep School on Inwood. Meetings began at 9:45 and apparently continued until 2:00 pm. This was the site where the Apple Corps met and seems to be the beginning of a formal relationship between NTPCUG and the Apple Corps.

Editor **John Pribyl** noted: "Beginning with this issue of PC News our Group will begin exchanging newsletters with other IBM PC User Groups around the country... there are over a hundred groups listed in the current magazines and the number is growing rapidly." I would be surprised if there are even 100 groups today.

The DOM Squad began their column by saying "Games Return!" and highlighted a flight simulator, 747.BAS, along with four other games and five utilities. Each of these was available for \$5.00 for a 5¼" DSD disk formatted single-sided. (?)

The Swap Shop had three REAL values: "FOR SALE: Used Amdek 300 B&W monitor for sale. Asking \$150..."; "FOR SALE: 10 Megabyte Shugart hard disk drives for the IBM PC. New, one year warranty. \$1200..."; and FOR SALE: EasyWriter II: 3-Pack with EasySpeller II and EasyMailer II for DOS 1.1 and 2.0 with manuals. Price: \$203..."

November 1988 was a full 25-page newsletter beginning with Prez Sez by president **Reagan Andrews**. His first appeal, valid today as throughout our history, was for more volunteers to give a little time for the benefit of the Group. He went on to comment on the much-hyped upcoming Lotus 1-2-3 release 3.0 and Ashton-Tate's Dbase IV. Lotus was trying to stay ahead of Microsoft's Excel and Borland's Quattro.

On complexity by member **Jim Hoisington** commented on a class he had attended and the instructor said that computers were so "smart" that they could diagnose their own problems and order repair parts

as needed. Jim referred to a series of lectures by Dr. John Von Neumann at the University of Illinois about **1948**. Jim said, "The founding premise of the lectures was that computers would become increasingly complex. As an outgrowth of this complexity, he theorized that their problems could only be diagnosed and repaired by another computer." So computers made it into cars and what do you think your mechanic (automotive technician) does when diagnosing problems but attach a computer to the OBD port and read the failure codes. So the world envisioned by Von Neumann 60 YEARS AGO has finally come to pass.

In "Part One of Three Parts", **Tom Krieg** had a recurrent column titled The Family Tree of Personal Computers. He began in 600 BC and brought us up to the present time. It appears the start of this saga was in China with the development of the abacus calculating "machine". Interestingly, there were two versions, one with reeds and the one we recognize, with beads. Next came the Arabic number system about 800 AD.

Logarithms were developed between 1614 and 1624 by Napier, Burgi and Briggs, followed quickly by the development of a working adding machine by Pascal. Ten years later came the slide rule. I actually used a "slip stick" when I was in college and when I worked in compensation in my early jobs. Only when I went back to grad school did I learn about desktop electronic calculators. But I digress.

Many other developments happened in the intervening time but we proceed to 1945 when MIT professors John Mauchly and J. Presper Eckert developed the ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer) designed and built to calculate artillery firing tables for the U.S. Army's Ballistic Research Laboratory. ENIAC was a very large, vacuum tube, card-fed machine using Hollerith cards, a concept developed about 1900.

By 1960, IBM, Univac, Control Data and RCA were all competing in the mainframe computer market – all were card fed machines. The author closed with an extended commentary on the contribution of radio to computing, leading to ever smaller, better vacuum tubes and, ultimately, the development of the transistor and the integrated circuit.

This column will continue in December and I look forward to following this subject then.

In an article titled Fear and Loathing in Armonk, **Reagan Andrews** wrote of the newly-released EISA bus supported by Tandy Corp, Zenith Data Systems, Epson America, NEC Info Systems, AST Research, Hewlett-Packard, Ing C. Olivetti, Wyse Technology and an unidentified Houston-based clone maker. This bus was developed to get around IBM's restrictions on the use of the ISA bus by others than IBM. The ISA (Industry Standard Architecture) bus was being replaced by IBM with the MCA (Micro Channel Architecture) bus, similarly protected by IBM patent.

The EISA (Extended Industry Standard Architecture) got around these restrictions while having the advantage of much faster communication between the processor and other devices within the computer such as input/output, disk drives, ports, etc. Making full use of the then-new 80386 required a full 32-bit bus capable of supporting higher-speed operations, larger memory access and faster data transfer. The EISA bus, being fairly expensive to implement, was ultimately replaced by the VESA bus and today's PCI bus architectures which offered high speeds at reduced costs.

I look forward to talking with you again next month.

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

WANTED:

More good tips, articles, product reviews and special web sites for our next newsletter. Please think about what you would like to see that hasn't been included yet, and send it to us now, at:

newsletter@ntpcug.org

*Let us know if you win a drawing, and we'll put it into next month's newsletter. **Your input counts.***

October Drawing Winners

Periodically, the Users Group receives a variety of Microsoft branded merchandise for us to use as we see fit. October was one of those times when Microsoft's generosity made it possible to hold a drawing for this merchandise.

At the October 18 business meeting, all those in attendance received a free ticket for the drawing.

Winners of the drawings were:

- **John Austin** – A copy of Microsoft Vista Ultimate software,
- **Bob Campbell** – A copy of Build a Program Now! Visual C#2008, and
- **J. Whitaker** – Microsoft t-shirt.

In addition to the Microsoft product, Gil Brand donated a copy of Gizmo's 46 Best-Ever Utilities which was won by **Larry Stehno**.

Our thanks to Microsoft and to Gil Brand for making these drawings possible.

Be sure to attend the monthly business meeting at 12:30. We have pizza before, discuss various business matters of the Users Group and occasionally have drawings for valuable prizes.

Upcoming Revisions to NTPCUG Bylaws

NTPCUG has a set of Bylaws in place that help govern the organization. Periodically, issues arise that prompt some Bylaws changes, either at the suggestion of members or of the Board. In all cases, the membership determines by vote which change will become "law".

The Board has been working throughout 2008 to determine the best way to address some issues that appeared during the 2008 elections in January. Other issues relate to how a Director can be removed, and how their replacement should be installed. This is sometimes boring work, but necessary if we are to function as a group.

Proposed Bylaws will be distributed to all members by e-mail in the latter half of November. The e-mail will contain a link to our web site where the proposed Bylaws can be reviewed and commented on. If possible, we will try to provide an explanation as to why the changes are being made. This is your "heads-up" to be looking for those, and to plan to cast your ballot in December or January (yet to be determined).

If you have any questions, please contact Chris Morgan at President@ntpcug.org, or any Board member.

Upcoming Election for Board Members and President-Elect

It's that time again. We would like to secure some resources from our membership in helping the organization prosper, in the form of one of our five Directors-at-Large. For only a one-year commitment, you can have the time of your life helping to lead the largest PC User Group in the DFW area.

Anyone stepping forward will be permitted to run – we're not proud, but we do ask that that you be a serious candidate. Just contact Elva Roy (Elva.Roy@ntpcug.org), Chrystin Pleasants (chrystinp@yahoo.com) or Timothy Carmicheal (shamanie@gmail.com) and advise that "I am ready". It's a great way to learn the innards of the User Group.

This year, our nomination procedure has a tongue-in-cheek approach to acquiring candidates. We start with the assumption that ALL members are interested in being Board members. However, for the few that don't, simply send an e-mail to postmaster@ntpcug.org and describe the medical condition that prevents you from running, or that your spouse gave you strict orders NOT to volunteer (as mine does every year, but I run anyway). Military service on the Texas border will get you off, and maybe a couple of new ones. But if you don't contact us, we will add you to the ballot.

Seriously, just give it a try for a single year. You will actually enjoy being part of the team that makes things work month to month. "Volunteers meet new people and gain new respect from their peers", or so I hear.

Thanks for volunteering.

Doug Gorrie

A lifetime computer battery?

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Road warriors on flights from one US coast to the other and those on trans-Atlantic flights may yearn for a laptop battery that lasts six to eight, even ten hours. Those of us who make more modest trips often experience layovers where, again, this kind of battery life would be appreciated.

But there is a new developing technology which may render all this concern irrelevant. In work funded by the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory, researchers are looking into a technology invented 50 years ago called betavoltaics. Recent developments in technology have made this approach far more efficient. The proponents of betavoltaics speak of a battery operating continuously without recharge for up to 30 years.

The applications to satellites, pacemakers and other battery-operated medical devices, mobile phones and even electric automobiles are myriad.

Recently, developers have been hinting at a 30-year laptop battery available in the next 2-3 years. This could open up whole new horizons for laptop producers. Obviously, 30 years vastly exceeds the useful lifetime of current computers but it is quite possible that manufacturers could develop readily upgradable computers where everything is easily (possibly over the web) brought to then-current standards. Hard to imagine given today's standards but where were we thirty years ago (1978)? In 1978 there was no laptop computer. Even the 23 pound (and NO battery) Osborne 1 had to wait until 1981. But I digress.

Betavoltaics in the new configuration consist of semiconductors interfacing with radioisotopes as the energy source. "WHOA, big fella! How many of us need to be dragging around radioactive devices and disposing of them when we're finished?" Well, there's good news – betavoltaic batteries neither use fission or fusion or chemical processes to produce energy. Ergo, there's no radioactive exposure nor nuclear waste.

When the cell eventually runs out of power, it is totally inert and non-toxic.

Betavoltaics generate power when an electron strikes a particular interface between the two layers of semiconductor material – similar in some respects to the operation of a solar cell.

The profile of the battery is nearly infinitely variable, from very small and thin to as large as useful. As the process is non-thermal, devices using betavoltaic batteries run much cooler than with lithium-ion batteries.

It seems to me that betavoltaic batteries are but one of many exciting new developments yet to come in the technology arena. I, for one, welcome these future developments.

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It seems to me that betavoltaic batteries are but one of many exciting new developments yet to come in the technology arena. I, for one, welcome these future developments.



Terry Witt,
former Visual Basic .NET SIG Leader

NTPCUG Email Account Problems

By Chuck Fiedler

Perhaps you are one of those caught up in the recent problem with the NTPCUG email system. If you use a mail client like Outlook, Outlook Express or Thunderbird, to name a few, you may not have known that there is a problem.

However, if you're like me, you may have been accessing email directly from the Web using your browser like Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc. In this case you have experienced a period where the email page cannot be accessed. This problem is due to a problem with the Outlook Web Access (OWA) portion of the Group's Exchange Server email system. Our System Administrator, Doug Gorrie, has been trying to fix the problem but so far has been unsuccessful isolating the cause.

OWA can be used from any location that provides connectivity to the Web so it can be desirable for those who travel and use various computers to access the Web. If this is the only way you access User Group email, you have been out of luck for some time. My efforts to assemble the monthly flyer and the monthly SIG Notes seems to indicate that I am one of many who use OWA for Group email.

There is a way to fix this problem and that is to use an email client on your favorite computer for User Group email. It's really easy to configure Outlook Express for this purpose as was pointed out to me by Doug. When the current email system was activated, Larry Copeland, leader of the IT Pro SIG wrote easily-followed instructions to configure Outlook Express to access Group email. These instructions can be found at sp.ntpcug.org in the Shared Documents section. There is also a set of instructions for configuring Thunderbird with the Exchange server.

If you are one of those who has multiple email accounts, these instructions lay out the procedure by which you can add some or all of your email accounts into Outlook Express. In establishing your email settings you can elect to download messages to your machine AND leave those messages on the server where they will be available over the Web.

We thank Larry for his excellent instructions.

URGENT! TCPI Needs Computer Memory! And Volunteers!

The Texas Center for the Physically Impaired has received several very good laptops, but they all need additional memory to support the memory-intensive software for blind users.

Specifically, we need DDR (PC-2100,2700,3200) and DDR2 (PC2-4200, 5300,6400) in sizes 256MB, 512MB & 1GB.

If you have memory to donate, call Gil Brand at 214-282-2581. We also need DDR & DDR2 for desktop PCs.

We also need additional volunteers to help refurbish old computers on Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1-5PM at King of Glory Lutheran Church, 6411 LBJ. Hope you can join us next week!



Joel Fleming, Design Patterns SIG Presenter

Thank you!

from your 2008

Board of Directors and Officers

President: Chris Morgan
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org

President-Elect: Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Directors: Doug Gorrie
doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org
Jesse Hastcoat
jesse.hastcoat@ntpcug.org
Arnold Krusemark
arnoldk1@juno.com
Bill Parker
bill.parker@ntpcug.org
Elva Roy
elva.roy@ntpcug.org

Secretary: Spike Smith
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

Treasurer: Chuck Stark
chuck.stark@ntpcug.org

Calendar

November

- 8** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday**
at Microsoft
2:15 pm **Certification SIG** at
Nerdbooks
- 15** 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Satur-
day** at King of Glory
2:00 pm **Certification SIG** at
King of Glory

December

- 13** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday**
at Microsoft
2:15 pm **Certification SIG** at
Nerdbooks
- 20** 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Satur-
day** at King of Glory
2:00 pm **Certification SIG** at
King of Glory

January

- 10** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday**
at Microsoft
2:15 pm **Certification SIG** at
Nerdbooks
- 17** 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Satur-
day** at King of Glory
2:00 pm **Certification SIG** at
King of Glory

North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.
P.O. Box 700055
Dallas, TX 75370-0055

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