



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

December 2009

VOLUME 29 • NUMBER 12

2010 Elections - Next Month

As we have said many times, our organization exists only because members volunteer their time to contribute to Group activities.

Our Bylaws call for annual elections in January of each year. This is a call for those who are interested in serving the Users Group.

Anyone wishing to serve as President-elect (two-year commitment) or as a Director-at-Large (one-year commitment) is invited to come forward, and we will include you on the 2010 ballot. It's as simple as that.

Our Bylaws state the following regarding the Board of Directors:

Section 5.2 NUMBER, TENURE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Board of Directors will consist of seven (7) members, including the President, President-elect and five (5) members elected at large by the members at the annual members' meeting. Each of the five (5) at large Directors shall hold office until the next annual meeting of members and until his or her successor shall have been elected and qualified.

Regarding the President-Elect, the Bylaws state:

PRESIDENT-ELECT. It shall be the duty of the President-Elect to perform such duties as the President may delegate in the event the President is temporarily disabled or absent from meetings. The President-Elect shall coordinate all committee activities. The President-Elect shall become President at the completion of his or her term of office.

To nominate yourself or another member you have confirmed as willing to run, please contact BOD10@ntpcug.org by December 31, 2009.

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Prez Sez

by Chuck Fiedler



Planning for the 2010 Association of PC User Groups (APCUG) regional conference is continuing. Based on the results of the site visits, the Board approved having this conference at SMU in Plano (formerly, SMU in Legacy). We have been working with the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) of Plano to obtain bids for both a conference site and hotel accommodations for attendees. CVB is still pursuing hotel bids, but what we have seen so far, they are quite attractive.

Now, we need to move ahead in planning the program and publicity. Again, I think this is an excellent opportunity for NTPCUG to broaden its exposure in the Metroplex. I anticipate CVB will also help us publicize this first-ever APCUG conference in Plano.

Come join us on the APCUG conference planning committee. If you have a suggested topic or an available speaker, or can give some time to planning and publicity, contact me at chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org or any Board member.

November's third Saturday meeting featured a last-minute visit by Mark Shuttleworth, who among other things is the founder of the Ubuntu Project. Elsewhere in this newsletter, President-elect Bill Drissel has written a review of this fascinating presentation.

It was felt by many that this was the best attended meeting in some time for NTPCUG. Thanks go to Mark Shuttleworth and to NTPCUG member Ralph Green of the Linux SIG for arranging this meeting, and to the PowerShell SIG for agreeing to move their meeting to another room to allow the big room to be used for this presentation.

If you were not in attendance at the Shuttleworth presentation, a biography of Mark is presented elsewhere in this newsletter.

On a sadder note, as you will see in the SIG Notes, Diane Bentley and Jim Wehe have decided to suspend their respective SIGs. Diane decided she needed to devote more time to work, family and other NTPCUG activities, suspending the Word and WordPerfect SIGs. Jim decided that the relatively low attendance at the Family History SIG did not justify the effort that he and Daisy put into preparing and presenting.

Fortunately, we will see both of these folks in other activities within the Group. We should all thank them for the extra efforts they have put forth in their SIG activities. Those who have attended these SIGs have

certainly learned alot.

Finally, if you were at the November business meeting, you saw that the Board has reluctantly raised the price of pizza to \$1.50 per slice. We were losing money on pizza every month, and that's not good. We tried getting smaller slices, but consider this: cutting a pie in eight slices and getting a degree of uniformity is fairly simple. Cutting it into ten slices just doesn't work too well, so that experiment was abandoned.

We hope members are not unduly inconvenienced by the increase in price, but we still think it's a good value even after the necessary increase.



Volunteering

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

Please consider volunteering for one of these important jobs:

Information Desk — Charles Rem

crem@ntpcug.org

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

Program Director

Identify and arrange program topics for our vendor presentations.

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

doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org

chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

dave.f81@gmail.com

Prepare, contribute to and distribute the monthly newsletter.



Get Your Christmas Present Early – Win the December Raffle

Whether for you or for a loved one at Christmas, the November/ December raffle PC is a pretty sweet deal — maybe a chance for someone to upgrade from that old 286-20MHz machine. <G>

This PC will be awarded in December to some lucky raffle ticket purchaser. Tickets will be available at the check-in desk and the noon business meeting. Tickets are \$3 each, or for a real bargain, four for \$10. You don't have to be present to win – we'll hold it for you.

So where does the money go? Since most of the parts come from the TCPI project (Texas Center for the Physically Impaired), the proceeds are split between NTPCUG and TCPI. Either way, there is a good cause involved.

Take a look at these specifications:

- Shuttle X100 XPC
- Intel Core 2 Duo 2.00, Virtualization Technology enabled
- 2 Gb DDR2 Ram (2x1Gn) 4 Gb max
- 250 GB HDD, CDRW/DVD +-RW Slot Feed
- ATI Mobility Radeon X1400 Video - not Aero capable - with DVI output/ VGA adapter
- On-board Gigabit NIC, Audio, Intel Wireless Adapter, S-Video, Firewire and five USB 2.0 ports
- Gyration GP65M Wireless Go Pro Air Mouse
- Monitor not included
- Dual-Boot: Windows Media Center Edition and Windows 7 — all professionally installed, of course.



Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

Sessions with presentations, discussion, and exchanges of information

2nd Saturday

Alphabetically

jQuery– 10:15 am

*Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org*



In this second of four installments on jQuery, we will focus on adding events and animation to a web page. A number of examples will be demonstrated and explained, showing how to hide and display page elements, animate this by setting the speed of how things are hidden and shown, apply clever ways to hide and show (like sliding up and down, gradually changing size, and changing opacity), and tying these effects to mouse clicks and movement. We will also continue looking at how to use the powerful jQuery selector model to pick elements on a web page to apply these styles and special effects.

Flash effects aren't the only way to animate your web pages. See how jQuery can use JavaScript and the DOM (Document Object Model) to enliven ordinary web pages.

Microsoft Certification SIG — 2:00 pm Saturday at Nerdbooks

*Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com*

No more meetings for now on 2nd Saturday, but see details of our 3rd Saturday meeting.

SharePoint – 11:00 am

*Ram Yadav
ram_yadav@hotmail.com*



This presentation will feature the Introduction to SharePoint 2010.

.NET Developers – 9:00 am

*Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org*



We will start with a Windows Workflow Foundation Introduction (Part 1 of 4).

3rd Saturday

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

Alphabetically, beginning in the next column

Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

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



In December, we're going to party a bit and take a look at two great resources. First, WordPress, the open source software that's not just for Blogs anymore. As time allows, we'll also begin looking at the new, free shopping cart widget named Eckwid. From the developers of X-Cart, Eckwid is a new open source cart, with data hosted on Google's servers, that can be integrated with virtually any type of website, whether static html, a template based PHP system like WordPress or Joomla!, or any kind of dynamic system. We'll also set a blueprint for upcoming SIGs in the early months of 2010.

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

*Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org*



Our final meeting for this year should be a good time for reviews and personal desires for material for the upcoming year.

We will continue supporting beginners thru advanced photographers while keeping abreast of new innovations within the marketplace. This is a call for volunteers to show and explain what their super camera has done and for those with compact digicams to let us see how many special features have performed well for them. We shouldn't forget those peripherals, ancillaries, and scanners as our tools.

Our goal is for all to take better pictures. (How would Ansel Adams have done it?) Share your wealth of experiences, enjoy, and bring your friends.

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

*Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org*



As our SIG topics include software, we spend much of our time with basics and

generics so that when we do look at a new products, we can all benefit by what they do -- how can ours do that, and should we buy the new product. Usually, Adobe's Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, and Corel's Paint Shop Pro will get most use along with those packages coming with our hardware.

I will briefly demonstrate Anthropics, Portrait Professional 9 as a stand alone or add-on tool for portrait enhancement. This software is portrait-only tools.

As we have progressed throughout the past years, we have seen that photo corrections and enhancements will never replace good photography, but will assuredly condition the image for the best use for specific applications. Granted, we can take a damaged photo or otherwise bad photograph and salvage some details and use them -- we just need a proper image to create a great finished product.

A call from our SIG members, to show and demonstrate some of their images from correcting hue, cropping, mood changes, and other techniques -- to make even better images would be welcome.

How many members are interested in using our NTPCUG SharePoint site to increase our SIG benefits? The SharePoint software will allow us dialogue sharing, picture sharing, instruction, tips, new product availability, questions, and more. Please consider the benefits, and let me know your thoughts.

Excel— 8:00 am

*Frank Tubbs
ftubbs@sbcglobal.net*

In December, the Excel SIG will have an open forum concerning anything Excel-related. PivotTables, functions, formulas, or problem solving techniques are fair game. Also, have you mastered the Microsoft Ribbon used in Microsoft Office 2007? Hadn't we better get on the ball since Microsoft will be bring out version 2010 in a few months? Give yourself a present by learning more Excel so you can be more productive in 2010.

Family History — 12:30 pm

This SIG has been cancelled.

Internet — 10:00 am

*Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org*



Setting Up a Small Office Network

The end of the year seems like a good time for us to look at the evolution of Windows networking and how it got changed (again) in Windows 7. We'll also look at some of the new networking hardware that was shown at the CES and discuss

how long it will be before the prices come down.

Investors - 1:30 pm

*Gil Brand
gbrand@ntpcug.org*



We will have an open Q&A session. Bring your investing questions and we'll try to answer them.

IT Professional — 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Glynn Brooks and Gil Brand will be doing a "Live, No Net" diagnosis of a Server 2008 networking problem. In the words of Chuck Stark, this will simply be a cheap imitation of what he does in the Windows Tips and Tricks SIG at 8:00.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

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



In December, we're going to party a bit and review the results of two recent projects Bill Parker we undertook together. First, we examine the "work from home" website we created and posted online in October, and the product of the Extended November SIG session created on November 28th. We'll take a look at Google analytics for both of these, as well as how our monetizing and promotion strategies are coming along. We'll also plan out our SIG's agenda for the first few months of 2010.

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am



*Larry Linson
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org*

*Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com*



On December 19, 2009, **Access SIG** Co-Leader **Larry Linson** will present "**More About Forms in Access**". In November, we were only able to get started on the subject of forms. As initially scheduled for November, Larry plans to deal with some issues which may be of interest: why use forms instead of datasheets and how to get the best of both worlds, single form and continuous forms view, using unbound controls in continuous forms view, embedding forms in Subform controls, Subform controls in forms in Subform controls, and forms that look like a "dashboard".

In November 2009, we had a diversion to look at a better solution to one of the issues we'd covered in October -- they say "third time's the charm" but the best solution to that issue didn't come until the "fifth time", but it was a dandy, enforceable by the database engine. Co-Leader Larry Linson only had time for some basic review on the subject of forms.

Special call for presenters: We want you to show us an Access database you created and use, a tutorial on an Access-related topic, other Access-related material, or to contact a friend of yours who'd be a good guest speaker. If you need help, see Jim or Larry.

Topics for Future Meetings – We still need suggestions: We need to know what topics you'd like to hear, see, and learn. Write some down, add your contact information so we can explore details if what you want isn't clear to us, and give it to Jim.

Valuable Prizes: A box of goodies from the Microsoft-sponsored User Group Support Services is on the way, and should arrive before the meeting. When it arrives, we'll have to see what is included; there was no category for Office Developer or Office End-User, so we are getting a "Developer Package" that is targeted for DotNet developers.

Microsoft Certification SIG - 1:30 pm

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

This month, CertSIG will digress a bit from the Paul Sheriff series and do a hands-on tutorial of a small, end-to-end Windows Presentation Application (WPF).

Up to this point, our WPF examinations have dealt with individual components and features of WPF; this month, we'll look at putting this altogether in a simple application of an expense report project. We'll create XAML for the application's appearance and apply code to govern its behaviors, add controls and layout, create styles for a consistent experience, and bind the UI to data to keep it all in sync. Most of the tutorial will involve cutting and pasting; however, each component will be discussed as we add it to the project.

Bring your laptops and nimble fingers to get some real WPF experience and understanding. I'll have one laptop (VS2005) that several can share if necessary.

Also, thanks to the munificence of Microsoft, we'll have some door prizes to be given away.

Questions or comments?

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

Microsoft Expression Web — 10:00 am

Chris Morgan
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org

This month, we will start on how to add video clips to web sites. There are several ways to add clips. We will review a few of these at this SIG session.



Mobile Computing — 10:00 am

No meeting this month. See you next year.

Powershell – 10:00 - 11:00 am

Larry Weiss
lfw@airmail.net

Gil Brand
gbrand@ntpcug.org

David Kulwin, CTO & Quamrul Mina, CEO of Pragma Systems, will be presenting their solutions for secure server management.



Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org



Windows Live Programs and Services

Microsoft has unbundled several of the programs that used to be included in the OS. In this session we'll look at what's available for download from the Live site, and I'll show you a few of the gems that I think everyone will want to get.

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

Gil Brand
gb1@ntpcug.org



Chuck Stark
chuck.stark@ntpcug.org



Open Q&A. If you have a troubled system, please contact Gil Brand before the meeting. It may qualify for a 'live, no net' troubleshooting session.

Wireless Communications — 11:00 am

Birl Smith
birl.smith@ntpcug.org



In the December Wireless Communications SIG, will have a demo of the CLEAR home/mobile WiMAX service that is available in North Texas. CLEAR WiMAX delivers a average download speed of 3Mbps to 6Mbps with burst up to 10Mbps. WiMAX is the fourth generation wireless available for home and/or mobile use. WiMAX is the first all IP mobile Internet solution enabling efficient and scalable networks for data, video, and voice.

Word — 9:00 - 11:00 am

This SIG has been suspended pending location of a new SIG leader. Please volunteer to lead.

WordPerfect — 11:00am - 12:00 pm

This SIG has been suspended pending a new SIG leader. Please volunteer to lead.

Mark Shuttleworth

Biography

Mark is founder of the Ubuntu Project, an enterprise Linux distribution that is freely available worldwide. It has both cutting-edge desktop and enterprise server editions, and has become very popular.

Mark studied finance and information technology at the University of Cape Town, and went on to found Thawte, a company specializing in digital certificates and cryptography. He sold Thawte to US company VeriSign in 1999, and founded HBD Venture Capital and The Shuttleworth Foundation. He moved to London in 2001, and began preparing for the First African in Space mission, training in Star City, Russia, and Khazakstan. In April 2002, Mark flew into space as a cosmonaut member of the crew of Soyuz mission TM34 to the International Space Station. In early 2004, he founded the Ubuntu project, which aims to produce a free, high quality desktop OS for everybody.

The Long Version

Mark Shuttleworth is an African entrepreneur with a love of technology, innovation, change and space flight.

He currently lives in London, where he is an active member of the Ubuntu community – working to create a universal, freely available high quality desktop software environment for everyone. He funds HBD Venture Capital, an investment company based in South Africa, along with The Shuttleworth Foundation, a non-profit organization that accelerates social innovation in Africa with a particular focus on education.

Mark was born in the dusty gold-mining town of Welkom in South Africa, and grew up in beautiful Cape Town. His passion for technology first showed up as a love of computer games. While studying towards a Business Science degree in Finance and Information Systems at the University of Cape Town (UCT) he first encountered the Internet, and quickly became intrigued by the changes it would bring in business and society.

In 1995, his final year at UCT, Mark founded Thawte as an Internet consulting business. The focus of the company quickly shifted to Internet security for electronic commerce. Thawte became the first company to produce a full-security encrypted e-commerce web server that was com-

mercially available outside the United States. This brought Thawte to the world of public key infrastructure, which is the basis for all encrypted and authenticated Internet transactions. Thawte was one of the first companies to be recognized by both Netscape and Microsoft as a trusted third party for web site certification, and it quickly established a leadership position helping businesses around the world accept secure transactions over the web. By 1999, when it was acquired by VeriSign, Thawte was the fastest-growing internet certificate authority worldwide, and was the leading certificate authority outside of the USA.

Believing that entrepreneurs in South Africa have the potential to start businesses with global impact, Mark formed a new venture capital team called HBD. The name is a reference to the phrase “Here Be Dragons”, which legend has it was used to describe uncharted territory on early maps. HBD seeks to invest in innovative companies that are based in South Africa but that have the potential to serve a global marketplace. HBD has invested in several South African companies in a variety of sectors, such as software, pharmaceutical services, electronics and mobile phone services.

In the hope that risk capital can be as important for social development as it is for the economy, Mark has also created a non-profit organization that supports social innovation in education in Africa. The Shuttleworth Foundation funds projects that have the potential to bring about dramatic improvements to some aspect of the education system and hopes to improve both the quality and the reach of education in Africa. The Foundation has worked in all 9 provinces of South Africa, funding initiatives from teachers, small businesses and private individuals. The Foundation is a catalyst for accelerated change in civil society. It seeks to identify ideas that have the potential to create tremendous change for good in civil society, and funds them for implementation in South Africa. The ideas can be South African in origin, but the Foundation also seeks to identify global trends and to bring new ideas to South Africa that are working well in other countries.

In April 2002 Mark realized a lifelong dream to fly in space. He spent a year working on the project, including seven months of formal training at Star City in Russia, and almost as much time in medical testing, science program development and negotiations. The First African in Space project was without doubt the most challenging and exciting project any geek could wish for. He was

a member of the crew of Soyuz TM-34, launched from Baikonur in Kazakhstan and docked with the International Space Station two days later. The mission included 8 days working on the ISS, conducting a program of South African science experiments and enjoying the extraordinary environment of weightlessness before coming back to earth with a bump. Since then, he has worked on a road show to share that experience as well as his excitement about science, mathematics and technology with pupils across South Africa. The science and math show has been seen by more than 100,000 pupils from nearly 2,000 schools. It has spawned a plethora of initiatives under the Hip2B-Square brand, which aim to make mathematics and science sexy to pupils who are choosing their subjects for high school.

In between projects, Mark tends to focus on catching up with the world of technology, particularly software and the web, in the search for new ideas and opportunities.

In early 2004, Mark founded the Ubuntu project, which aims to produce a high quality desktop and server operating system that is freely available all over the world. The project brings together the very best of the free software stack, with cutting-edge desktop and handheld innovation and very solid server-side infrastructure. As a spinoff the project has resulted in the creation of a number of unique tools for free software developers, such as the Bazaar version control system and Launchpad.net. Sub-projects include specialized desktop environments for schools, and for the needs of people in specific countries or industries, such as Edubuntu and Kubuntu.

Likes: spring, cesaria evora, Sashdot, Chelsea, finally seeing something obvious for the first time, daydreaming, coming home, Sinatra, Sundowners, Durbanville, flirting, string theory, particle physics, Linux, Python, mp3s, reincarnation, snow, MIG-29s, travel, lime marmalade, Mozilla, body shots, leopards, the African bush, Rajasthan, Russian saunas, weightlessness, broadband, Alastair Reynolds, skinny-dipping, fancy dress, flashes of insight, inexplicable happinesses, post-adrenaline euphoria, convertibles, country roads, Clifton, the International Space Station, artificial intelligence, Wikipedia.

Dislikes: admin, legalese, running, wet grey winters, salary negotiations, public speaking.

Reference:

<http://www.markshuttleworth.com/biography>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Shuttleworth

Is a Netbook a Good Low-cost Alternative Part Deux

by Chuck Fiedler

If you read my article in the September newsletter, *Is a Netbook a Good Low-cost Alternative*, you read how a friend was looking for a low-cost machine for his college freshman son. He was debating between a netbook and a notebook. The deliberations were ended when my periodic email from MicroCenter offered a full-featured 15" Acer notebook for \$299.

A recent article in *Tech Republic* (www.techrepublic.com) by Jason Hiner titled *Netbooks are dead. Long live the notebook*, gave some insight to this matter.

Hiner calls netbooks underpowered mini-laptops with 7-inch screens and unusable tiny keyboards, and states that they are a dying fad. But the legacy of netbooks is that inexpensive notebook computers are here to stay -- lighter and thinner than ever.

You may not know that the netbook had its origins in the OLPC (One Laptop per Child) program which envisioned \$100 computers for children throughout the world. In addition, the ASUS Eee PC pursued this same market. These little computers were designed for children in the developing world (small keyboards worked pretty well for tiny fingers). These machines cut corners so as to create laptop PCs costing between \$100 and \$300.

Well, adults in Europe, Japan and North America started ordering netbooks that they thought might make sense for their laptop needs. The Eee PC became quite popular among North American consumers. This phenomenon led to a race by such manufacturers as Acer, Dell, Hewlett-Packard and Lenovo to deliver their own netbooks.

Many netbook purchasers looked at netbooks thinking them to be simply another flavor of real laptops, believing them to be simply cheap and portable. But many found these PCs had screens so small that they didn't work well with many applications and websites. In addition, the miniaturized keyboards weren't meant for extended use with adult fingers. Additionally, netbook storage was generally on solid-state drives, surprisingly prone to premature failure. Finally, netbook CPUs just couldn't handle normal multi-tasking or anything other than standard web or maybe productivity applications.

A recent consumer satisfaction report showed

that consumers had a significantly lower opinion of netbooks than standard notebooks. According to Biz360's "Net advocacy" rating (based on more than 20,000 online consumer opinions), netbooks scored 40 percentage points lower than regular notebooks.

But we all, my friend concluded, have potentially benefitted from the netbook phenomenon – true notebook prices have fallen in response to netbook pricing. Also, Intel has developed new CULV chips which enable PC makers to build highly portable laptops with full size keyboards and screens, but with very thin and light designs like a netbook but with prices only a little more expensive, AND with much better battery life (up to 6-8 hours, in some cases).

Mark Spoonauer, editor in chief of Laptop Magazine, recently wrote that these CULV-powered notebooks are taking away the incentives to buy netbooks.

Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft, and Michael Dell, CEO of Dell, have mentioned the poor user experience with netbooks. Ballmer is especially enthusiastic about CULV systems, even though Microsoft only makes a little bit more money on CULV machines than netbooks.

Recently, another friend now in Oregon called to say that his wife had spilled coffee on his laptop and it quit working. I told him that I have seen many instances where bourbon caused friends to quit working and coffee solved the problem. Maybe he should pour bourbon on the keyboard to counteract the coffee. But I digress.

I told him of a recent Fry's ad offering a 15.6" HP laptop with 3GB memory and a 250GB hard drive for a price, after mail-in rebate, of \$399.

Score one more for notebooks. BTW, do you really realize how blessed we are to live in the Dallas area? Many years ago, I used to build machines and ship them to buyers in other cities simply because prices were so much lower here that I could make a profit on the deal. While the 'Net has made it nearly impossible to do this anymore, Dallas prices make it possible for me to get hardware for friends and relatives across the country at savings not found on the 'Net.

Ah, the Wonders of Technology

by Chuck Fiedler

If you were at the September business meeting, you know that I won a Microsoft Livecam in the drawing. I immediately installed it on my main machine and fired it up. I got to see myownself on the screen – interesting, but sorta useless.

My father speaks highly of Skype for free video phone calling and conferencing, so I recently installed it. See www.skype.com.

I fired up the Livecam, started Skype and made a call. The machine locked up. So I hit what we used to call the BRS (Big Red Switch) and killed the machine. I refired the machine, repeated the above steps and Surprise, Surprise, I got the same result.

So I then refired and looked at the options in Skype. Maybe someday I'll learn to RTFM (Read the *Fine* Manual) before trying new software or hardware). There, I found that I could designate the Livecam as my video input.

This time, I fired up Skype and everything worked well. When Skype came up, it activated the Livecam and proceeded to call. I called my father and we had a good chat. I saw and heard him and he saw and heard me – really cool.

If you have parents, children or grandchildren elsewhere in the country (or the world), you might want to give them a webcam and microphone for Christmas. They can download Skype for free and then you can see and talk to them any time you desire. Note: for this technology to work, both you and the callee need high speed Net access.

Webcams run about \$30 and up. Good microphones run about the same. However, for about \$40 you can get a USB webcam with built-in mike and you're set to go. I recommend either Logitech or Microsoft brand webcams. I haven't tried other brands, but have had good results with these.

While this technology isn't perfect, it's pretty good and can only get better. I highly recommend it.

News from the Northwest

By Teresa Hennig

Spotlight Item!

Test YOUR Apps with the Office 2010 Beta (Dec 2009)

It's HERE!!! Download the beta and find out what we can all look forward to. Test out your applications and let the Access team know how it goes. Share your experiences, good and bad!!

<http://www.microsoft.com/office/2010/en/default.aspx>

Employment and Marketing Leads

E lance -- Marketing Opportunity for Access Developers (May 2009)

Microsoft partners with Elance. Expand your reach and opportunities by joining Elance -- the freelance marketplace. Microsoft is providing Access consultants another way to connect with people seeking help with Access projects. Learn more on the **Access blog** <http://blogs.msdn.com/access/archive/2009/03/19/interested-in-making-money-consulting-on-access-jobs-get-started-today-for-free.aspx>.

DOWNLOADS and Other New Stuff:

For past postings and links, please check www.SeattleAccess.org. In addition to the links posted on the site, you can download previous newsletters and find additional information about events, resources and opportunities.

Windows 7 -- Learning Snacks -- (Nov 2009)

A growing library of short videos makes it easy to learn about new features and capabilities of Windows 7 and other Microsoft products.

<http://www.microsoft.com/learning/en/us/training/format-learning-snacks.aspx#win7>

Infrastructure Planning -- Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 R2 connect securely without VPN (Nov 2009)

From an IT standpoint, one of the great new capabilities of Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 R2 is the ability to securely connect clients to the corporate network without going through a VPN. Learn about features, benefits and options for planning and updating your networks. <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/solutionaccelerators/ee382254.aspx>

Microsoft Security Essentials -- FREE Anti-Virus software - Great Reviews (Oct 2009)

Microsoft Security Essentials provides real-time protection for your home PC that guards against viruses, spyware, and other malicious software. It works with Windows XP (Service Packs 2 or 3), Win-

dows Vista and Windows 7. Download from: www.microsoft.com/security_essentials

Virtualization, easier than the bunny slope (Sept 2009)

White paper from Windows IT Pro, sponsored by AMD and HP - registration form required.

http://windowsitpro.com/Whitepapers/Index.cfm?fuseaction=ShowWP&WPID=0d35bc42-eb89-4faa-b4d2-0e7bf0fa2c26&code=EUEWAHPAMDQ309MicroWP01_082509

Share Your Expertise -- Microsoft Access Blog Power Tips

User groups are all about helping others in the community. Microsoft has made it easy to extend your reach -- your local talents will have a global audience on the Access blog on MSDN! And no excuses about not knowing how to prepare your materials, they thought too -- there's a free toolkit to help you out --- the Contributors Toolkit (download from MS and from the SAG site). Check out <http://blogs.msdn.com/access/> ... if you want more information about sharing your stories and tips, contact Chris and Mike at accpower@microsoft.com ... and be sure to tell them that Teresa sent you ;-) oh ... and don't forget about Community Clips!! See the opportunities below ;~

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.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/ApplIssueChecker.html>

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.cbcl.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

A Special November Presentation

by Bill Drissel

Mark Shuttleworth is a South African who sold a four year-old company to Verisign for half a billion USD. With that he has bought himself an eight day trip on the International Space Station and funded a Linux distribution, Ubuntu.

On November's third Saturday, he spoke to the North Texas Linux Users Group and the North Texas PC Users Group. This is a summary of his remarks about software.

He is an enthusiast of open software. He wants to exert three emphases: cadence, quality and design on the future of free and open software.

Cadence or pace forces progress. Ubuntu has two releases per year, scheduled in advance forever. Every two years, his company, Canonical, makes the regularly scheduled release for long-term support.

Shuttleworth believes every free software project should adopt a release schedule. He believes that this isn't possible for proprietary software.

Quality: Ubuntu is moving to test-driven development - the first thing the programmers write is the test suite. When the software passes all the tests, it IS! Ubuntu maintains a repository whose trunk is ALWAYS ready for release... always as bug-free as we know how. All features, etc are built on feature branches - later to be merged with the trunk. His organization uses Bazaar because it works like ALL the alternatives rolled into one. That means developers who are used to another repository system simply use Bazaar as if it were their favorite - no need to learn a new way (I'll believe that when I see it.)

A brief note on Code review: It is not used much in free software. Usual industrial code review is frequently resented by the kind of free-wheeling techies who do open projects. Shuttleworth says it's a valuable way of introducing newbies to a project (and it's another pair of eyes).

Design: Techies build what's interesting and may have little user experience. Some people in the world have little interest in software development except user experience, customer demands, use cases, and stories. Shuttleworth mentioned Jokosher, a multi-track audio editor that was built around a user interface so artists and musicians could see and operate something they were used to rather than something built around technical tasks. He wants to attract more designers into free software and find some way to incorporate their ideas

In sum, this was a very well-received presentation. Our thanks go to the folks of the Linux Group for sharing this fascinating presentation with us.



*Casual Friday for the
Telecommuter*

Digital Photography – Tips and Tricks

by Spike Smith
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



What were some of the worst pictures I have ever taken? Was this while I was younger and dumber? Well, no! This was after having a few years experience and enjoying what I was doing.

When you are traveling and visiting fantastic places like the rain forest leeward of Honolulu or the exceptionally rainy area on Molokai, then over to The Grand Canyon with its gosh, what peaks! And good golly, what a tremendous gulch! As I enjoyed the popular spots, there were people around. What does this mean? It should mean avoiding all those strangers, of course. Do you want to get sued? Beat up? Or even laughed at when you bring your contaminated scenery images back to friends and relatives for viewing.

Well, I just figured that these people were there and were part of my trip. Interesting too! You know when you see a travelogue posted by a travel agency, you see stars and beautiful ladies and rugged he-men. Here I was snapping rare flowers that bloom once every twenty-five to a hundred years, as well as the people in the path in front of me with faded blouses that do not fit, some with ill-fitted, ugly, faded blue jeans that thankfully didn't smell like they looked. Yep! I took pictures of common ordinary people as they were there in my path.

Would someone really do that? Those tourists in front and behind were not snapping pictures of someone looking possibly like those living next door and others you may be glad they were not those living next to you. Mind you now, I did see more than that common stock but some rather attractive well-dressed figures with well-done hairdos. Yes and when I show my trip's shots to other persons than myself, these beauties can join in with presentation of the glorious show of landscape.

When I show my Grand Canyon pictures to others who have their own Grand Canyon pictures, I keep my rare non-beauties far away from those slide projector trays. After all, I'm trying to win in that game of can-you-top-this.

To be really serious about why you and I both might take some of these no-no non-commercial pictures is to maintain a part of history. Just like my really old Sears Roebuck and Company catalogues that are 25 to 70 years old. Yep, it shows that people actually wore some of the stuff

that you youngsters only see in old movies. I can relive some of the old times and actually show some of this stuff without a model release. I am not being commercial, but newsworthy or educational. Oh, yes! I can show old pictures of wonderful spots and current generation people might say, "Golly, there is hardly anyone around when you took those." Yes, population explosions do hamper vacationing and getting those private and rare shots. When I took pictures the rain forest on Oahu, I only saw five people over a four hour wandering amongst the marvelous scenery.

Did I forget something? Oh, yes. I have these digital photography and software programs to discuss. I can see myself going back to several of these old familiar spots and retaking pictures as it is done now. I would not need one camera loaded with positive film and another identical camera loaded with negative film. Instead, I now would bring a super dSLR with a couple of zoom lenses and just snap pictures by the dozens. You know the game, so you now don't have to worry about processing expensive film just to throw it away. Our new cameras have erasable film by the push of a button – just after you verify shots as bad or redundant.

Okay, now that we are in the digital world, we soon learn to take less shots just because they are cheaply erasable; we learn that when we return to home base, we harbor hundreds of shots to sort and cull with our good, better, and best ratings. When I would shoot 80 to 100 shots a day and now going through the same area – I'd better not bring back 400 to 800 shots as we now practice another form of work measurement (workflow) and wasteful hours sorting, guessing, and placing a thousand images. This doesn't create happy times nor is it productive if you are trying to make pay-as-you-go economic valuations of your resources. When it comes to projecting and printing, we use digital projectors, digital printers, digital sorting, digital storage, and – well, it's a digital image world. You know what to do – spend more time being productive, artful, or both.

While you shoot away at most poplar locales, you realize that conceivably all great images have already been captured amass and are commercially available everywhere. Go ahead. Take a minimal shoot of the famous structures. Why? When I visited Goat Island Overlook at the American side of Niagara Falls, the guide says, "Stand over here and look down." This was a truly panicky experience. He said, "Don't worry; this overlook will be here hundreds to thousands of years from now. It has been recently re-inspected." Wow! Would you believe

that one week later (a mere seven days) that that structure collapsed crashing down around a hundred and fifty feet below (I didn't yet have my Brownie in those early days but a nice shot of all these people cautiously looking down and also shots of the lack of structure underneath their feet would have made a keepsake set of images.

With digital capture and processing, we can find more time to enjoy. And please remember – working on that workflow carefully, you may learn that work may not be one of those dreaded four letter words. Enjoy!

Intel pays AMD \$1.25B legal settlement

by Chuck Fiedler

For a great many years, PC chip makers Intel and Advanced Micro Devices have been involved in a long-running legal battle, but have now agreed on a \$1.25 billion settlement which will resolve multiple lawsuits around the world. This was recently reported by the Washington Post.

The move comes as antitrust agencies in the U.S., Europe and Asia have increased scrutiny of Intel business practices in the highly concentrated chip-making market. AMD argued that Intel illegally used its dominance to overcome competition through pressure tactics and large rebates to computer makers to use Intel chips. Recently, the New York attorney general filed a lawsuit against Intel for similar allegations, revealing emails where Intel apparently agreed to billions of dollars in rebates to computer makers like Dell to stop them from using AMD's chips.

Intel CEO Paul S. Otellini played down the role of regulatory reviews on the settlement, saying Intel and AMD have been talking since last April on an agreement. Though he said the settlement "should provide some degree of comfort for regulators" to allay concerns of anticompetitive practices.

The peace worked out between the rival companies will be considered by regulatory agencies. But the settlement won't put an end to regulatory reviews, the Federal Trade Commission and European Union officials said.

"Certainly we plan to review the settlement between AMD in their private litigation," said FTC Chairman Jon Leibowitz. "The FTC has an ongoing independent investigation of Intel's practices, so we cannot comment further at this time."

E.U. spokesman Jonathan Todd said that the Euro-

pean Commission "takes note" of Intel's settlement with AMD but that it does not change Intel's duty to comply with European antitrust law. The E.U.'s competition bureau fined Intel a record \$1.45 billion for anticompetitive practices.

Intel said it has agreed to pay AMD \$1.25 billion, and in return, AMD agreed to drop antitrust and patent licensing lawsuits, including one in the U.S. District Court of Delaware and two cases that are pending in Japan. AMD will also drop its complaints to regulatory agencies, including the FTC, the company said.

In a joint statement, the two companies commented that, while the relationship between the two companies has been difficult in the past, this agreement ends the legal disputes and enables the companies to focus all of our efforts on product innovation and development.

As part of the settlement, Intel and AMD agreed to new five-year, cross-license agreement and will abandon claims of breach from the previous agreement. Intel also agreed to abide by a set of business-practice provisions.

The legal battles began nearly five years ago when AMD sued Intel in Delaware, saying Intel tried to maintain its dominance for microprocessors by providing discounts to customers that avoid AMD's products. Intel had 82 percent of the market for personal-computer processors at the end of the third quarter, AMD had 18 percent.

Antitrust lawyer David Balto said regulators shouldn't drop their reviews and suits because of a private settlement.

"This job is not done," Balto said. "Although the settlement may eliminate some barriers, FTC action is necessary to assure long-term relief in this market, that competition is fully restored."

So Intel and AMD have reached agreement. One wonders how much the lawyers made on this one.

This Month in Our History

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Gee, it's December already. Where **did** this year go? It's time for family gatherings and food and fun.

Today we will look at the December 1984 and 1989 issues of *PC News*.

On page 1 of the ten-page December 1984 issue was an article titled *Christmas Suggestions*, which offered some good advice even for today. While we wouldn't want to give someone a box of diskettes or printer paper, the suggestion of giving a PC magazine subscription or extension might still make sense today if you don't know what the person specifically wants. An additional thumb drive isn't a bad idea, or a pack of CDs or DVDs isn't bad either.

If you know what the person wants, a software package might be appropriate. However, just because **you** favor a particular piece of software, do not assume that your giftee will do anything more than give it a trial run and then set it on the shelf, never to be used again.

In 1984, the User Group met jointly with the Apple Corps at Jesuit College Prep School. According to the schedule, there were eight PC meetings and 20 Apple meetings. Reviewing the current Apple Corps website, <http://www.applecorps.org>, leads one to wonder what is going on there today. Their website seems a good five years out of date, but they **do** mention a June 2009 issue of their newsletter. Strange.

Also on page 1 was an uncommon ad which read:

"WANTED: Accounts of computer trials and tribulations, or constructive articles that others might find of interest. Articles to be published in the North Texas PC News. Hard work, no pay, but somebody's got to do it... why not you?"

As you try new system hardware and software received for Christmas, consider writing a recount of your experiences to share with our readers. Remember that for three articles in a year, you get a FREE one-year extension of your membership.

Featured in the *Disk of the Month* column were six double-sided 5¼" disks for \$6 each. Some disks required a shareware fee if you wanted to continue using what you saw.

The *Swap Shop* seemed particularly active in that issue, with 18 ads offering hardware for what we can view today and laugh at, but at the time, they represented pretty good values versus paying full retail for new items.

In 1989, then-President **Jim Hoisington** noted that NTPCUG had fully 1,400 members, having grown by twice its number only four years earlier. Jim noted that the Group had started with twelve members originally.

Why not give it a shot to bring in new friends, office mates and children and see if we can reach 1,400 members again. Gee, maybe we'd have to seek out a new place to meet so as to accommodate so many members.

I think we all agree that King of Glory Lutheran Church has been most accommodating to us, providing us the ability to consistently schedule meetings on the third Saturday, a matter that was a bit of a problem at other venues.

The late Emeritus member **Reagan Andrews** had an extensive article praising the virtues of *Corel Draw*. Now, I've never tried this program, but judging by his review, I probably should have. Version 1.1 came with a two-hour video tutorial for the program as well as real printed manuals and **eight** 5¼" installation disks. If you wanted it on 3½" 720K disks, you got **thirteen** disks! No wonder software has gotten cheaper – *everything* is on one CD or DVD and one oversized box.

Member **Kathryn Loafman**, head of the Disk Of the Month (DOM) committee, went to some length to show how much work went into obtaining, reviewing and duplicating shareware and freeware offered by the DOM folks, not then called the DOM Squad.

Six disks were reviewed by various members of the DOM committee. All of the reviewed programs filled needs now incorporated in commercial and open-source software.

An article titled *Fifty Yards of Computer Books* spoke of the resources available at the SMU Science Library. In 1989, the Library even let smokers do their thing while reading. How times have changed, I believe much for the better.

As a US Government depository library, a great many government publications were reported as available, including NASA publications, NOAA maps and many other things we all pay for in our taxes. I'm going to have to block out some time and go see if everything is still as described 20 years ago.

Emeritus member **Jim Hoisington** had his 34th installment of *On Complexity* in which he wrote of the importance of doing hard drive backups, still good practice today. Jim noted that one should

take the additional time to verify the backup to ensure you have what you think you have. While Jim spoke of backing up to diskettes, today CD and USB external drives make this necessary process nearly effortless.

BTW, are you aware that hard drives are rated in MTBF (Mean Time Between FAILURE)? In due course, your drive *WILL* fail, and if you don't have a backup of your data, you're hosed. With a proper periodic image of your drive, you can simply install a new drive, restore the image and bash on just like nothing happened.

Emeritus member **Andy Oliver** wrote an article titled *INVOLUTION – The act of Involving or Being Involved* in which he noted that “In order for a volunteer organization to continue to function, we must have volunteers.” True then, true today. Then as now, Board members, SIG leaders, newsletter personnel and reception desk volunteers all put in many hours fulfilling their duties. In many cases, the same folks are involved in multiple activities. And I assure you **NOBODY** would refuse your volunteering of even a small amount of time each month.

There was a four-page article titled *What's Happening on the BBS*, repeating a number of messages posted to the Bulletin Board System (BBS) that we had at the time. Today, we have replaced that with the discussion area on the SharePoint site, sp.ntpcug.org.

Here, members can post their miscellaneous musings or raise questions and receive answers from those who have previously travelled the same road – an excellent example of our motto: *Share What You Know, Learn What You Don't*.

The Variety Store by **Reagan Andrews** covered a tad over two full pages of information that I still find of interest.

Commenting on then-prevalent, often violent swings in DRAM prices, Reagan noted that the Pacific Stock Exchange (PSE) had applied to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to begin trading in 256K and 1MB DRAMs. He asked “Does this mean we'll have to go to our broker now instead of 1st Saturday when we want to upgrade?”

Under the heading *Word for Windows Arrives*, Reagan noted that Microsoft had surprised many observers by releasing this product prior to the release of Windows 3.0. Instead, the word processor ran under Windows 2.11. Reagan said,

“This monster gobbles up more than five megabytes of disk space with... tutorials and practice files. Lots and lots of features here, improved graphics handling, formatting, etc., but still hobbled with the

terrible Windows ‘video-game’ interface.”

So I guess I wasn't the only one who resisted the implementation of Windows. As for Microsoft Word, I, like a great many corporate users at the time, used WordPerfect. In fact, it wasn't until the Department of Defense (DOD) mandated MS Word format for proposals that my employer (a DOD contractor) switched to the Microsoft product line.

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.

Monthly NTPCUG Meeting Flyer – Can You Help Distribute?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Emeritus Members

John Pribyl (1924 – 1993)

Reagan Andrews (- 2006)

Connie Andrews (- 2008)

Phil Chamberlain

Jim Hoisington

Guy Andrews

Stuart Yarus

Timothy Carmichael

Mark Gruner

David McGehee

Tom Prickett

Kathryn Loafman

Fred Williams

Andy Oliver

Alex Lilly

Doug Gorrie

Claude McClure

Robert McNeil

Gil Brand

Bill Parker

Diane Bentley

Thank you!

from your 2009

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Calendar

December

12 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday**
at Microsoft
2:15 pm **No 2nd Saturday**
SIG this month

19 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Satur-**
day at King of Glory
2:00 pm **Certification SIG** at
King of Glory

January

9 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday**
at Microsoft
2:15 pm **No 2nd Saturday**
SIG this month.

16 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Satur-**
day at King of Glory
2:00 pm **Certification SIG** at
King of Glory

February

13 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday**
at Microsoft
2:15 pm **No 2nd Saturday**
SIG this month

20 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Satur-**
day at King of Glory
2:00 pm **Certification SIG** at
King of Glory

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