North Texas PC News

Election Results – 2010 Board of Directors

Our thanks to all those that took a few minutes to vote during NTPCUG's 2010 elections. The process went very smoothly thanks to the efforts of our Nominating Committee – **Chrystin Pleasants**, **Timothy Carmichael** and **Diane Bentley**. The final results were announced at the Business Meeting on January 16th.

For those unable to attend, the results as summarized by the Nominating Committee are as follows:

President-elect
• Chuck Fiedler - 44 votes

Directors-at-large (5 positions open):
• Doug Gorrie - 44 votes
• Jesse Hastcoat – 44 votes
• Spike Smith – 43 votes
• Chris Morgan – 42 votes
• Arnold Krusemark – 35 votes

• Larry Linson – 1 vote (write-in)
• Bill Parker – 1 vote (write-in)
• Charles Rem – 1 vote (write-in)
• Tom Sweet – 1 vote (write-in)

As a reminder, the President-elect serves one year in that capacity, then automatically becomes President in the following year. Hence, Bill Drissel, President-elect in 2009, became President for the 2010 year.

Should you have any questions regarding the election process or these results, please e-mail President@ntpcug.org.

In This Issue ...

Prez Sez

by Bill Drissel

Thank you for electing me President-elect in 2009, and therefore as President for 2010. Our thrust for this year is to increase our membership, so I nvite your friends and coworkers. I think we have a lot to offer.

If you have something to offer, please consider starting a new Special Interest Group or helping with an established SIG. There is no cost to form a SIG. Meeting space, A/V equipment, and Internet access are provided. SIG leaders generally find it most convenient to use their own laptop computers for presentations, but other arrangements may be possible.

The requirements for starting a new SIG are easy:

•   Leadership - at least one individual willing to lead the SIG, and an assistant.

•   Membership - at least eight individuals willing to attend the SIG fairly consistently.

If you have a group that meets these qualifications or would like help in finding others who might share your interests, please contact SIG Coordinator Glynn Brooks at sig_coordinator@ntpcug.org .

"Share what you know, learn what you don't"

If you belong to a business, professional or social organization that would like brochures and a five minute presentation on NTPCUG, please contact me at Bill.Drissel@NTPCUG.org. We will facilitate making it happen.

Over the weekend January 15-17, Microsoft sponsored a Charity Challenge Weekend. MS and several other software providers helped volunteers to provide applications for 20 non-profits. The weekend began at 3 pm on Friday and lasted until Sunday evening. Many programmers camped at the site.

The team from NTPCUG were tasked with building a mini-personnel (including volunteers) system for the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store. The Microsoft leader on-site was Chris Koenig. Mainspring was Toi Wright, leader of local ASP.NET Developers Group. Tom Perkins led the group from NTPCUG. Read more about this special event elsewhere in the newsletter, written by Tom Perkins

Each Third Saturday meeting, there are always unglamorous ways to help the Users Group. Key functions are to set-up in the morning, takedown in the afternoon, and help for an hour at the Information Desk. If any of these interest you, please contact Charles Rem at crem@NTPCUG.org .

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
davef81@gmail.com

Prepare, contribute to and distribute the monthly newsletter.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

Sessions with presentations, discussion, and exchanges of information

2nd Saturday

February 13th meeting cancelled due to weather
Alphabetically

jQuery– 10:15 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

We'll explore adding jQuery to an ASP.NET web site as well as how to create custom jQuery functions.

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

The SharePoint 2010 subject to be determined.

.NET Developers – 9:00 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

We will continue with a Windows Workflow Foundation Introduction (Part 2 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

Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

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

February's SIG will be dedicated to answering any questions you have, so bring 'em on. We'll also prepare for our next "Extended SIG" sessions, March 6 and March 13, from 9:30 am until 5:30 pm each day.

March 6th will be a reprise of the workshop we did last November, so anyone who didn't attend can catch up, and those who did attend can review the material again if they wish.

March 13th will complete the session. The two days, scheduled close together, will allow us to comprehensively address what would take more than a year to accomplish with only a one-hour each month. If you want to learn how to build a website that performs, and get it up and running in short order, you should attend these two very special days. More details at the February SIG meeting.

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

Our December and January meetings were more examples for troubleshooting A/V equipment than for exploring digicams and related hardware. Nevertheless, our SIG goals have not changed. We continue to strive to take better photographs.

If an Internet example works for our cause, we may try to display it. If a DVD is appropriate, we may show it. If our club's projector isn't working, I bring my personal one. If wireless doesn't pick up a signal, we try a wired LAN.

I prepare my reports in Word and WordPerfect as well as PDF and HTML. However, my latest disasters occurred because I had purchased training material that required a connection to a site on the Internet, and unfortunately, the connection from our room was too slow to allow data to load and properly function.

I do want all who witnessed these recent malfunctions to know – I always troubleshoot and verify all equipment and material make sure they properly functioning before placing it in boxes and containers the night before. I always maintain two hours of material for each hour of presentation – just to be sure. If the purgatorial pathways are paved with good intentions, the results of late have only reaped severe exasperation.

Please believe, if you will, that I will prepare not one, not two, but three alternatives for each presentation for February – trust me. Even though I brought two notebook computers last month, I am going to gamble upon one new WIN7, 64 bit version. With

this material, paper handouts, human memory, and trusting physical components – we will continue a regimented program wherein new, advanced, and inventive components of digital photography hardware will be broken down into methods we can understand, as well as appreciate just how these will add fun, excitement, and quality results to our photography.

Bring your professional friends, newbie friends, and everyone wishing to participate and share at our meetings.

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

We had busy meetings in several areas last month, elections, etc. However, those of you who attended the Digital Photography SIG maybe left our area in a hurry, resulting in a nearly empty room (read the other SIG's Notes). If all of the audio and visual aids break down and/or my computer crashes – do not abort. I know what I wrote, I have a handout, and we can bond and share with one another.

For the next few sessions, we are going to continue analyzing new techniques that are showing up in advanced software; learn how we can make these tools work with what we have; or perhaps by buying the new products.

As our newbie friends appreciate improving their already good images, we appreciate intermediate and professionals sharing their advanced techniques, as well as any work flow, to better enjoy those wonderful tools that the digital imaging world has brought to us.

Internet — 10:00 am

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

Internet File Sharing Services

It seems like we have more and more data to share with one another every day, and the size of the files keeps growing, too. E-mail service is straining to keep up, and large attachments can cause real performance problems. In this session we'll look at some of the new ways you can share files and folders with others.

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

More Server 2008 Q&A for the February session.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

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

Bill Parker

February's SIG will be dedicated to answering any questions you have, so bring 'em on. We'll also prepare for our next "Extended SIG" sessions, March 6 and March 13, from 9:30 am until 5:30 pm each day.

March 6th will be a reprise of the workshop we did last November, so anyone who didn't attend can catch up, and those who did attend can review the material again if they wish.

March 13th will complete the session. The two days, scheduled close together, will allow us to comprehensively address what would take more than a year to accomplish with only a one-hour each month. If you want to learn how to build a website that performs, and get it up and running in short order, you should attend these two very special days. More details at the February SIG meeting.

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am

Larry Linson
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com
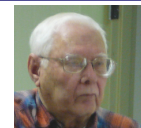
Special Note for All NTPCUG SIG Leaders and Presenters – see the "Topics for Future Meetings", later in the article.

On February 20, 2010 *Access SIG* Co-Leader **Larry Linson** will present *"Dashboard Forms"*, originally planned for January. Our brief little review of Forms turned into a series. You may find this one interesting… there's an on-screen user interface approach commonly called a "dashboard". It is often used for displaying data that changes in real-time, and it is very convenient for that purpose, but that's not the only use for it. We will demonstrate with a database application for retrieving your e-mail addresses – it can be used with any mail-reader software because it is self-contained and transfers the addresses via the clipboard.

Topics for Future Meetings In January 2010, Co-Leaders *Jim Wehe* and **Larry Linson** led a discussion about what we might productively pursue in 2010, even if that means taking a brief detour from our normal path of covering Access. One topic discussed was to divert our focus from *Access* for a few meetings to talk about *PowerPoint, Microsoft Office's presentation software*. We are now thinking three

sessions: First, an *Introduction to Power Point*, covering the basics of using Power Point; second, *Power Point for Personal Use*, in which SIG Co-Leader **Jim Wehe** will talk about using PowerPoint for keeping personal records, showing text and photographs of personal, family, or a small business' business history, third, *Power Point for Group Use*, such as preparing a presentation for a NTPCUG meeting presentation, or your genealogical society meeting (our goal is to "take the scary out of doing a presentation" by helping you structure Power Point slides that not only clarify what you are saying but trigger your memory of what you planned to say). SIG co-Leaders **Jim Wehe** and **Larry Linson** will lead this session.

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** or **Larry**.

A continuing 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 constructing the presentation, see **Jim** or **Larry** – and be sure to look at the notices in Topics for Future Meetings, *Introduction to Power Point* and *Power Point for Group Use*.

Valuable Prizes: We will have some goodies from the *Microsoft-sponsored User Group Support Services* kit, and even though there was no "Office Developer" kit to choose, we will have some *XBox* games – if you are not an *XBox* gamer, maybe you have a son, daughter, grandson, or granddaughter who'd really appreciate them.

Microsoft Certification SIG - 1:30 pm

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

We will begin a new series in February. Our 3rd Saturday hands-on seminar will be on Web Architecture: The Data Layer.

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

In February, we'll do a demo of Camtasia Studio 6 and publish the saved video to a web site.

Mobile Computing — 10:00 am

No meeting this month. See you in March.

Powershell – 10:00 - 11:00 am

Larry Weiss
lfw@airmail.net

Gil Brand
gbrand@ntpcug.org

PowerShell as preinstalled on Windows 7 will be demonstrated. Ideas will be solicited for what presentations or structure you want for the rest of the year.

Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

Windows 7 Backup, Restore, and Recovery

Wow! The backup software that comes with Windows just keeps getting better and better. In this session we'll talk about all the new capabilities and space-saving features in the Windows 7 Backup program and the types of system recovery that are possible.

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

Gil Brand
gb1@ntpcug.org

Chuck Stark
chuck.stark@ntpcug.org

We will have an open Q&A session. Bring your questions and we'll try to answer them. Possible 'live, no net' troubleshooting session on a member's PC.

Wireless Communications — 11:00 am

Birl Smith
birl.smith@ntpcug.org

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.

CertSIG Participates in Community Service

by Tom Perkins

During the weekend of January 15-17, members of the NTPCUG CertSIG (Certification SIG) participated in what was somewhere between "Programmers' Heaven" and a "death march". We were involved in the *We Are Microsoft Charity Challenge Weekend*, an event sponsored by Microsoft in which twenty area charities were selected to have web site development done by teams of local programmers and developers. Our intrepid team, consisting of Jeff Frauenheim, Chris Morgan, Jesse Hastcoat, John Whitecar, Gil Brand and myself (Tom Perkins), spent the weekend developing a site for our selected charity, the Saint Vincent de Paul Thrift Store.

The Thrift Store, which is much more than a "store", provides assistance to needy families in the form of furniture, household goods, clothing, and education. Our project was to create a web site for the store to track some of the 4,000 volunteers at the store. Many of these volunteers are clients from local churches or other Partner Agencies. As a person works at the store, their volunteer hours are converted into "Ozanam dollars", which are applied to reduce the rates at which the agency is charged for the Thrift Store's services. Our project was to develop a site which would track new volunteer applications and time cards submitted by the volunteers, all of which were being done using Excel spreadsheets.

We met Friday afternoon, Jan 17th, at BravoTech on LBJ and the Tollway -- possibly some 60-80 developers and about half that many representatives from the charities. Jeff Frauenheim and I had met earlier with Dorothy Hoel, the Executive Director of the Thrift Store, to get some preliminary specifications, but we were joined by C.C. Rodriguez and Genaro Saenz from the Thrift Store for some last minute questions and answers. Then our team's work commenced.

The teams were given workspace in BravoTech's 10th floor offices, and we spread out in several adjoining office carrels with plans for working through most of the weekend. Our team's objective was to get the volunteer, partner agency, and time card data converted from the Excel spreadsheets into a MS SQL database, get that database installed on a hosted website provided by DiscountASP.NET, then produce some preliminary data entry forms for volunteer applications and time cards.

The team set to work: Jesse and Gil worked on getting the domain name and access to the hosting site, Chris worked on the site's home page, John Whitecar looked into data objects for a data layer, Jeff served as a primary coordinator and data entry form developer, and I worked on converting data from the spreadsheets to MS Access to a SQL database. Jesse also produced a web page to capture time card information.

This was indeed a programmer's heaven: when anyone encountered a problem, there was someone else on the team to bounce ideas off of, as well as people from other teams and some free-floating subject experts roaming around between the teams.

There was plenty of good food brought in at regular intervals and two perpetual crock pots of fabulous chili con queso available in the break room – lots of coffee, soft drinks (including ice-cold cans of Jolt), and a wonderful assortment of snacks. There was lots of good conversation, a few war stories from earlier efforts, questions about how to proceed on a coding problem, but most of all there was tremendous cooperation on getting things done – it was a real team effort.

Although our group was somewhat "more mature" than some of the other groups of somewhat younger developers, we gave a good showing. Many of us worked until past midnight on Friday – Jesse stayed all night there at BravoTech, sleeping on the floor in a somewhat secluded area -- and we were all back at it early on Saturday. We worked all day Saturday and into the night, Jesse again getting in the most "time on the ground" (although some of it was literally "on the floor" again). Chris, Jeff, and I worked either until the wee hours or throughout Saturday night – and were still going strong on Sunday afternoon.

Sure enough, there were the last minute glitches to be patched up before our presentation on Sunday afternoon, but we managed to demonstrate a database of converted volunteer and time card information on the hosted DiscountASP.NET site, a home page for the site complete with a jQuery carousel of pictures taken during the event, and several volunteer input forms.

Although we didn't win a top prize for our development efforts, what we accomplished was very much appreciated by the Thrift Store personnel – and it was a great experience for us as developers. Many thanks to all the members of the team for your extraordinary efforts. And as for the prizes – maybe next year, maybe not.

For our NTPCUG members, look here to see our

final presentation and a demo of the final website that was created: http://www.blip.tv/file/3124923

Also, the final site (which is actually still under construction) can be accessed at www.svdpvolunteer.org. See what you think, and thanks to all our participating volunteers.
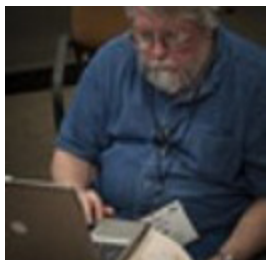
Microsoft Access Small Business Solutions Announcement

by Larry Linson

Microsoft Access Small Business Solutions to be available in March

NTPCUG Members Teresa Hennig (Lead Author), Larry Linson (Co-Author), and Kathy Lee Brown (Reviewer and Editor of Larry's chapters) participated in development of the book, Microsoft Access Small Business Solutions: State-of-the-Art Database Models for Sales, Marketing, Customer Management, and More Key Business Activities, which will be available in March 2010 from Wiley Publishing.

Other Co-Authors include Microsoft Access MVPs Truitt Bradly, Leigh Purvis, and Brent Spaulding. For details, visit the web page

http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470525746.html .

Tech Support

== ==============

Call to Tech Support:

Customer: can't get on the Internet.

Tech support: Are you sure you used the right password?

Customer: Yes, I'm sure. I saw my colleague do it.

Tech support: Can you tell me what the password was?

Customer: Five stars.

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Customer: Hi, this is Celine. I can't get my diskette out.

Tech support: Have you tried pushing the Button?

Customer: Yes, sure, it's really stuck.

Tech support: That doesn't sound good; I'll make a note.

Customer: No, wait a minute.. I hadn't inserted it yet... it's still on my desk... sorry....

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Tech support: Click on the 'my computer' icon on to the left of the screen.

Customer: Your left or my left?

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Tech support: Good day. How may I help you?

Male customer: Hello... I can't print.

Tech support: Would you click on "start" for me and...

Customer: Listen pal; don't start getting technical on me! I'm not Bill Gates.

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Customer: Hi, good afternoon, this is Martha, I can't print. Every time I try, it says 'Can't find printer'. I've even lifted the printer and placed it in front of the monitor, but the computer still says he can't find it...

=============== =

Call to Tech Support:

Customer: I have problems printing in red..

Tech support: Do you have a color printer?

Customer: Aaaah...................thank you.

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Tech support: What's on your monitor now, ma'am?

Customer: A teddy bear my boyfriend bought for me at the 7-11.

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Customer: My keyboard is not working anymore.

Tech support: Are you sure it's plugged into the computer?

Customer: No. I can't get behind the computer.

Tech support: Pick up your keyboard and walk 10 paces back.

Customer:! OK

Tech support: Did the keyboard come with you?

Customer: Yes

Tech support: That means the keyboard is not plugged in. Is there another keyboard?

Customer: Yes, there's another one here. Ah.. that one does work...

===============

NTPCUG Co-Sponsoring APCUG Regional Conference

by Doug Gorrie

By now, you may have heard that NTPCUG is co-sponsoring the next regional conference of the Association of PC Users Groups (APCUG). The event is scheduled to begin around Noon on Friday, April 30th, through Saturday, May 1st, and is being held on the campus of SMU in Plano.

Registration fees have not yet been set, but we should have those shortly. Early registration may be in the area of $70 - $80 for the two-day event, and will cover facilities at SMU, meals, handouts, with hopefully some "extra" to be split between APCUG and NTPCUG.

We have toured multiple facilities and found SMU best able to meet our educational and facility requirements. In addition, SMU and the nearby hotel we anticipate utilizing are close to the Shops at Legacy, an entertainment area near Legacy and the Toll Road. Anyone attending should have the full gamut of restaurants and shops to work with in their spare time.

But the real purpose for attending will be the topics and presenters, the details of which are currently being developed, as well as allowing User Group volunteers to learn from each other and hobnob.

Many of the topics will occur as part of three side-by-side tracks, so there should always be something of interest in progress to attend. At present, we expect at least the following topics:

- Windows 7
- Windows Server 2008 R2
- Windows Mobile
- Office 2010
- Social Networking options
- Windows installation
- Linux installation
- Open Source options
- A "PC Build" option
- NetMeeting
- Digital Photography
- Build a Web Page in an hour
- Ai Squared

.. and probably more.

A number of presentations will be provided by our current SIG Leaders, but it doesn't stop there. Several presenters will be from nationally recognized firms such as Corel and Microsoft, but the full list isn't yet known, so expect more next month. And, because this is an APCUG event, there will be a number of presentations intended to assist User Groups in educating their members and helping to meet their needs.

APCUG conferences have already been held in various areas of the country, so to give you a better idea of what we plan to do, take a look at the events hosted by these other User Groups. Ours, of course, needs to be better – we are in Texas, of course.

Ohio - http://ohiomidwest.apcug.org/

Florida - http://www.facug.org/Conference-Spring/conference-s.asp

Chicago - http://mwug.apcug.org/

As we get closer to the event, you will hear more about our need for lots of volunteers to help facilitate such issues as stuffing Welcome Bags, attendee registration/check-in, checking credentials at event doors, providing directions between event rooms, passing out door prizes, providing advice on nearby shopping and such, coordinating hotel shuttles, assisting presenters in handing out materials to attendees, handling door prizes, etc. While several Board members and SIG Leaders have already volunteered to assist, we will need more volunteers.

Years back, many will recall that we were involved in big events pretty regularly, and we always had a series of volunteers to share the load. We are hoping for similar volunteerism this time as well. Please commit to assist as early as possible. Just talk with or e-mail any Board member, or just e-mail postmaster@ntpcug.org. We will need help on both Friday and Saturday of the event.

===============

And One More **Call to Tech Support:**

Tech support: Your password is the small letter "a" as in apple, a capital letter V as in Victor, the number 7.

Customer: Is that 7 in capital letters ?

===============

News from the Northwest

By Teresa Hennig

NOTICES and Events:

Microsoft Office 2010 Public Beta - and Release Candidate!!! (Feb 2010)

Did you join Connect? — Then you may already be using the RELEASE CANDIDATE!! Otherwise ... you can still use the 2010 Beta! Watch the videos to learn more about the great new features provided in Office 2010. Stay up to date with release information. All that and more at http://us1.office2010beta.microsoft.com

Free EBook - First Look Microsoft Office 2010 (Feb 2010)

This book's 14 chapters introduce some of the new features and benefits of Office 2010. Available in PDF and XPS formats.

http://blogs.msdn.com/microsoft_press/archive/2010/01/20/free-ebook-first-look-microsoft-office-2010.aspx

Office 2010 Tool: Office Environment Assessment Tool (Jan 2010)

Is your system or network ready for Office 2010? Use the Office 2010 Environment Assessment tool to find learn about your current configuration and what steps you may need to consider when preparing to migrate to Office 2010.

www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?displaylang=en&FamilyID=ea33f615-188d-464e-bc64-3ab06aa43961

Then get the companion, Application Compatibility Assessment and Remediation Guide for Office 2010, from

http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ee819096(office.14).aspx

Database Design Forum - NEW GROUP on the MSDN Community Website (Jan 2010)

Under the SQL Server group, this forum is focused on the database design. The discussions include Access database design. Several of the authors and editors from Teresa's upcoming book on database design are among the founding moderators and contributors to the forum; including Doug Yudovich, George Hepworth, Jerry Dennison, and me. http://social.msdn.microsoft.com/Forums/en-US/category/sqlserver

Microsoft Answers – (Feb 2010)

Have a question about Office or Windows? You may be able to find the solution or get personalized assistance at Microsoft Answers, a collection of community-based forums that put you in touch with others who have shared and/or solved similar challenges. You can get direct assistance and search databases of questions, answers, scenarios and discussion. http://us1.office2010beta.microsoft.com/

The New Office Blog – (Feb 2010)

Providing everything from announcements, videos, community tips and even contests! http://blogs.office.com/

Microsoft Access Blog (Feb 2010)

The Official Blog of the Microsoft Access product team! A great source for tips and current issues, including postings from guest writers. Check out the archives and recent posts for an excellent source of ideas and techniques to incorporate into your solutions! http://blogs.msdn.com/access/

Brunch n Learn – Access 2010/SharePoint 2010-Better Together, Advanced Topics – Saturdays 1200-1400 EST (Jan 2010)

Topics will be proposed by the attendees. It is assumed that all attendees are familiar with the topics presented at the SharePoint Conference, although as time allows, we will provide a "quick intro" to those topics.

These sessions are for the "hard core" dedicated to delving into the depths of the new capabilities, and for those who can't get away during the week. Saturday Brunch n Learns are scheduled weekly through July 10, 2010! https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/usergroups/join?id=6GM7CN&role=attend Dial-in number: 218-862-1000; Access code: 537996#

Lunch n Learn - Access 2010 and SharePoint 2010 Better Together – Tuesdays 1130-130 EST, (Jan 2010)

Through the beginning of January, Kathy Malone is conducting Access 2010/SharePoint 2010-Better Together Lunch n Learns from 1130-130 Eastern, every Tuesday. Sessions share the content that was presented at the SharePoint Conference to a wider group of people, and an active working group has sprung up as a result. https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/usergroups/join?id=6PK6JB&role=attend Dial-in number: 218-862-1000; Access code: 537996#

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

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

Employment and Marketing Leads

Elance – 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.

Ed. Note: There has been less-than-complimentary feedback from some users of Elance. Specifically, they say that no one checks qualifications and that unqualified overseas participants bid impossibly low rates.

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 Live Movie Maker (Sept 2009)

FREE ... turn photos into movies, create training and documentation for your solutions!

How about using this and doing a demo for the groups? www.moviemakerpreview.com

Tips and Techniques for Queries in Access 2007 (Sept 2009)

From the basics to advanced topics, Luke provides insights and discusses some of the subtleties that will really make a difference. http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/dd638587.aspx

The Basics of Writing and Testing VBA Code Part 1 and Part 1 (Sept 2009)

Learn about code modules, write and call procedures, use variables and even learn the benefits of documenting your code. http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/dd897495.aspx

Developer Resource Tab for Word 2007 Ribbon (Aug 2009)

A custom tab for Word 2007 that provides one-click links to articles, videos, code samples, SDK's and more – created by Frank Rice; visit http://code.msdn.microsoft.com/OfficeDevResourceTab

Office 2007 Ribbon and Toolbar Overview - (Aug 2009)

Learn about the ribbon and how to create custom groups, controls and toolbars. Regretfully, this Microsoft tutorial only covers Word, Excel and PowerPoint. But, you can always ask for an autographed copy of our book, "RibbonX, Customizing the Office 2007 Ribbon," if you want instructions and examples for Access.

http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/products/FX102774021033.aspx?ION_CL=4048

SecureAble - What can Your Processor do? (July 2009)

This great tool identifies some key features and capabilities of your processor chip, such as the bit length, if the memory can store non-executable files, and how it will support hardware virtualization. Did I mention it is free? Learn more and get the free download at www.grc.com/securable.htm

Community Clips – Find and Create Help Videos (April 2009)

"Just show me HOW to do it!" How much time would you save if someone would just "show you how" whenever you need just a little help to get on the right path? Community Clips is a great venue for tapping into the vast wealth of expertise and experiences of fellow developers and users. Not only that, but you can SHARE YOUR tips with others by creating and submitting videos. Everything you need for getting started is available through the Community Clips site. http://communityclips.officelabs.com/

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

RESOURCE Tips:

A couple of good sites to search for information and programming assistance are www.mvps.org and Office Developer Center on MSDN. And, we've been mentioning the newsgroups. You can search and drill through thousands of threads. Check out http://www.microsoft.com/office/community/en-us/FlyoutOverview.mspx for a comprehensive display topics. You may also find what you are looking for by using http://groups.

google.com or try www.google.com/microsoft.html for Microsoft related pages or by setting multiple search criteria at www.google.com/advanced_search?hl=en.

Access Blog – by the Access Team

Stay tuned to the community … The team shares insights into their schedule, their favorite features, new features and how to use them. This is also an ideal avenue for the team to talk about issues that are of interest to the Access community. You'll learn about the people and some of the factors that are helping to shape the future of Access. Whether you're a seasoned developer or just learning about Access, you'll find invaluable information and techniques. From creating a database template to getting help when you need it, The Access Blog covers the gamut. http://blogs.msdn.com/access/default.aspx

Get Help When You Need It – Office Online

Available 24/7 on the Web! The Office Online Web site offers dynamically updated Help and on-line 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

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

OpenStreetMap Project Assists Haiti

by Larry Weiss

Last July, the OpenStreetMap project made a presentation to NTPCUG membership. After the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the OpenStreetMap project used satellite imagery and project volunteers to build a complete digital map of Haiti's roads, buildings and Port-au-Prince refugee camps in a time frame that enabled its use by several organizations providing relief aid.

For details about how this extremely valuable effort was performed, go to http://crisiscommons.org/Haiti-Open-Street-Map.

Additional links that describe the Haiti project and OpenStreetMap in general are:

• http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenStreetMap#Haiti_earthquake

• http://gadgetwise.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/01/27/digital-help-for-haiti/

• http://www.openstreetmap.org/

Digital Photography – Tips and Tricks

One size fits all

Commercial Camera Marketing Departments' desires are to monopolize their dream camera product, wherein all desirable features are covered and the profit-margin is super high, like having a shoe design where one size fits all. Of course, today's socks are sort of sized that way. (Gosh! I trust this simple metaphor doesn't come into being, as it would create a non-competitive situation and stifle advancement.)

Let's take a look at known bits and pieces to strive for this quasi-goal and perhaps help us decide what we will buy.

The lens. From the non-contractile iris as a pin-hole thru 35mm lenses to the Hubble telescope in space...the lens design dictates a certain amount of knowledge behind its designs, improvements, uses, care, etc. As long as we are obligated to use lenses in our cameras; we will follow procedures; live somewhat in the past as we get started; learn, care, discover failings of design, etc. and just plain learn to live with it.

We can define goals easier than achieve them. Taking the earliest camera using the pin-hole to allow image elements to be captured and distributed upon a plane -- the tinier the hole and way down to the pixel-sized element gives us the distortion-free image. However, using this detail-perfect technique, we find ourselves in the dilemma that we need more light to get thru to sensitize our photography media for the capture. This means we must simulate a tiny hole to be distortion free and simulate a large hole to allow more light to modify and activate our image capture device. Can we have our cake and eat it too? Well, along comes the light modifier called the lens to the rescue. We simply tell the lens designers about wanting to have light captured as small as a pixel yet amplified as if it were an image gone thru a telescope.

Designing all lenses is a complicated field requiring highly-knowledgeable teams with physicists, mechanics, chemists, and industrial engineering to provide a great unified product.

Thirty-five millimeter lenses have evolved through greater symmetry, more power, less distortion, less loss, and seemingly done quite well to simulate their original goals.

As we fast-forward along the path we come to television as an electronics forerunner for nearing our impossible goals. TV lenses with a

by Spike Smith
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

slant towards video standards being written to utilize available lens designs to yet perform as well regardless of their unnatural goals of maximum contrast. As lenses were made more perfect in the B & W limited era, the advent of color film brought about new sets of problems. Since lenses have finite losses through their media, (glass) and more optical enlargements requiring more glass and exactingly controlled shapes of lens elements, different wavelengths (color, hues) of visible light were attenuated (increased losses) more or less than others, requiring corrections in shapes and makeup of purity and the tinting of glass. (Our marketer likens this to a motion picture losing lip sync with aural components.)

As we advance our techniques for minimizing distortions, reducing weight, broadening user characteristics, we are still using lenses for diffracting light and focusing this energy onto a usable media such as photographic film or digital image sensors which sit in the position of the film plane and usually contain CCDs (charge coupled diodes) as sensors of light. The image sensor miraculously converts a matrix of pixel-like data for reconstruction by in-camera computers into usable (RAW) more refined data.

This means we have added another device to our digital photography chain with the photo sensitive solid-state electronics devices. Observe that we still do not really have a one-sized shoe fits all as with photo film. There are still several makers (Kodak, Fujifilm, and still a few others) and these people make general purpose, portrait, infra-red, and several special purpose types that work best as selected for their intended purpose. Digital camera sensors too have several different suppliers of these proprietary microelectronic wafers.

With digital photography, the nuisances of selecting one or more types of film are however minimized with digital sensors. These electronic marvels are remarkable devices used for simulating film in our digital cameras. They obtain their (light) signals from lenses and therefore keep us with the I/O technology of lens devices. Now, just as film is proprietary in that each maker uses special manufacturing to enhance the product, the makers of digital photo sensors use proprietary techniques, not only for converting selected light and defining their basic pixels (picture elements), but require further proprietary techniques to convert this raw data into the best usable form allowing the next stages of processing images to use semi-industry standards to allow you a standard digital file of your chosen image.

A mere user of an inexpensive point-and-shoot or compact digicam may wonder if knowing of all these problem and concern areas is worthy of knowing. They probably are, as in one sense, it shouldn't be taken for granted that improvements to these devices comes cheap, that there are wonderful new innovations in the wings, and, of course, marketing is responsible for moving product and making profit to continue this chain of progress (and sometimes recession) also we can benefit continual development. Don't forget -- COST! Remember, thee and them utilize a necessary and sometimes evil nuance called COMPROMISE!

So we continue to have different devices to select from and...No, they are not 100% standardized. We listen, read, observe photographers in action, and take pleasure in observing high quality magazines with colorful images that tell a story. We also appreciate those spur-of-the-moment snapshots from neighbors, relatives, on-line blogs, and those taken by ourselves.

So, what makes it easier with our digital photographer as it has rapidly supplanted film and the ability to switch from one scene's light characteristics to another without having to stop and change film. Instead, for most occasions, we select (or have the digicam select) the quality of light. One of these tools is white balance whereby we select indoor-outdoor, shady, sunlit, noon, etc. You surely have seen this image before in my papers.
Unfortunately, this may become a legacy item.

Yep! I loved this sized digicam as it can easily be held and operated withjust one hand. A three-fingered camera as I would call it.

Note the lens of the camera shown is large as it is sized of quality glass for fine detail plus a zoom to range from wide angle view to a long shot. If this lens were physically smaller, it could not produce the same quality. The ease of use is not enough for marketing to retain this valuable feature. Marketing has said thinness is more im-portant than functionality as their emphasis has been (reduce costs to increase profit margin) the flatter the better is what people want. [We often lose a great product. Remember the videotape issues? Betamax the superior fidelity product fell in to VHS Videotape although won out as having an increased recording time.

The 35mm film package for a camera was ideal for conversion of the film pack portion with the light sensitive electronic packs. This was a great package for quality systems and using existing designed lenses. Great, as new lenses, new case designs, lots of parts were ready to serve the new methodology. Whoops! A complete image quality standard didn't materialize as instead of making better solid-state sensors for 35mm packages, the market shifted to ASC sized and 4/3 sized, and just too many different sizes. Darn! I kinda like to finish (or come closer) one standard before tossing around several more. (Remember those older styled Fords, Chevrolets, and Plymouths that just got better and more reliable and more value for the buck each year? There were just two basic models, standard and deluxe.) Well, we now have oodles (a strange commonplace name for too doggone many) skinny-sized cameras that compete with cell phones (or vice versa) and having a great number of pixels but never competes in making framing sized images of quality. Well, even though the flat pack cameras are popular with few standards we will just have to use our best guesses for sensor sized with compact digicams and dSLRs too.

We will find the 'market says' cheaper and lighter is necessary and the makers comply with tiny lenses, tiny sensors, and plastic lenses. All of these seem to come in several case colors though.

If you desire one of those plastic lenses, light weight, flat as a flapjack, two-handed devices - be sure you get a color that matches your: complexion, eyes, lipstick, automobile, but beware; Matching (your) her shoes can be quite expensive as I know of no gal with 'one size fits all' and only owns a single pair!

I'll present more information on features and quality later, but right now - if you need a compact digicam, there are still a few on the market. Albeit, fewer nice parts. These finer devices though with their lesser demand do have higher costs.

This Month in Our History

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Good grief! It's February already and that fat rodent up north has predicted six more weeks of winter. So what's that – mid-March? Good luck finding signs of Spring up there at that time.

For us here in Texas, it's time to examine the February 1985 and 1990 issues of *PC News*, looking for comparisons between then and now in the rapidly changing world of computing.

The front page of the February 1985 *PC News* announced the results of the January election: President – Stuart Yarus; President-elect – Jim Graham; Board Members – Chris Morgan, Mike Durbin and John Pribyl. There were only three at-large Board members at that time.

Member **John Keohane** gave his impressions of the then newly-released IBM PC-AT noting that it's Intel 80286 processor was two to three times faster than the PC or XT.

John Pribyl wrote on *Basic Development System* (BDS) from Betatool Systems. John found BDS to be a great productivity enhancement when programming in IBM BASIC. BDS retailed for a mere $125, with User Group members getting a discount at $99. Does *anyone* program in BASIC anymore?

The **DOM Squad** had eight new Disks of the Month, all of which were offered as double sided 5¼"diskettes for $6 each (except for applications requiring two-diskette packs which were $8 per set.)

There were a number of classified ads in this issue, most of which lead me to better appreciate today's computer and component pricing.

The February, 1990 issue had a review by **Bruce Lutz** of the *Plus Passport*, a removable hard drive from Plus Development Corp. The *Passport* came with its own case so it could be used externally on a variety of machines. While Bruce did not state the cost or capacity of this unit, he did say the manufacturer indicated that the system was too expensive to use for mere backups. Today, I suspect most of us have an external drive for backups.

One more installment (#36) of *On Complexity* by **Jim Hoisington**. He opined that 1990 would be known as the year of connectivity. Jim mentioned computer-to-computer communication he worked with in 1964, consisting of payroll records being punched to Hollerith cards at company remote locations, then electronically transmitted to the home office where they were recreated to ultimately be fed to the corporate mainframe. He noted the nascent phenomenon of LANs (Local Area Networks) and even newer WANs (Wide Area Networks). A great many of our members now have a home LAN permitting resource sharing among computers in the home - quite a change from 20 years ago.

The Variety Store column by **Reagan Andrews** noted another in the continuing series of lawsuits between computer makers, this time a $150 million suit by Xerox against Apple for stealing the Graphical User Interface Xerox used at its Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) to incorporate in the Mac. General consensus seemed to be that right was on the side of Xerox.

You may recall that in 1990, there was a great deal of uncertainty over which operating system would survive; OS/2, Windows or DOS but even then there was a noticeable shift toward Windows. I remember how many of the engineers at my employer were avid fans of OS/2, touting its greater capabilities over Windows. At the time, IBM was betting heavily on OS/2 even giving out large numbers of form letters at COMDEX announcing that the holder had won a copy of OS/2 1.2 to be sent in the next month. The letter ended by saying that the retail value of the software was $340 and hinted that a 1099 had been sent to the IRS indicating such. I guess it wasn't a gift after all.

Robert Monaghan wrote an article titled *Aids to Writing Well* in which he reviewed two commercial grammar checkers/analyzers, GRAMMATIK III and RightWriter. He also looked at eight shareware products as well as a number of similar programs offered in the Disk of the Month selections. It looks like there were a great number of useful programs in each category, the user being constrained only by his pocketbook.

Making Your Word Processor Work for You by **Leroy Tennison** contained a number of good tips on using the built-in functions of your word processor to increase productivity and simplify your experience. You are probably familiar with most of the tips he offered, but it doesn't hurt to be reminded of what we might once have known and since forgot.

A catalog of the Disk of the Month offerings covered fully five pages in rather small type. Obviously, these disks were of benefit to the members, sufficient to keep the effort ongoing. Of course, today a simple Google search will yield many of the same results as those then available through the DOM offerings, unless you were *extremely* patient and

downloaded programs over a dial-up connection.

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 February flyer?

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Tech support: What anti-virus program do you use?

Customer: Netscape.

Tech support: That's not an anti-virus program

Customer: Oh, sorry...Internet Explorer.

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Customer: I have a huge problem. A friend has placed a screen saver on my computer, but every time I move the mouse, it disappears.

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Tech support: How may I help you?

Customer: I'm writing my first e-mail.

Tech support: OK, and what seems to be the problem?

Customer: Well, I have the letter 'a' in the address, but how do I get the circle around it?

===============

Call to Tech Support:

A woman customer called the Canon help desk with a problem with her printer.

Tech support: Are you running it under windows?

Customer: "No, my desk is next to the door, but that is a good point. The man sitting in the cubicle next to me is under a window, and his printer is working fine."

===============

Call to Tech Support:

Tech support: "Okay Bob, let's press the control and escape keys at the same time. That brings up a task list in the middle of the screen. Now type the letter "P" to bring up the Program Manager."

Customer: I don't have a P.

Tech support: On your keyboard, Bob.

Customer: What do you mean?

Tech support: "P".....on your keyboard, Bob.

Customer: I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT

=================

Call to Tech Support:

Tech support: What kind of computer do you have?

Customer: A white one...

===============

Calendar

February	March	April
13 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**13** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**10** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft
20 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**20** 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**17** 8:00 am—2:00 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory
1:30 pm *Certification SIG* at King of Glory	1:30 pm *Certification SIG* at King of Glory	1:30 pm *Certification SIG* at King of Glory