North Texas PC News

PC Raffle- July & August

At our July 17th and August 21st meetings, we will begin another two-month-long raffle for the next great PC, lovingly built by one of our resident gurus, Chuck Stark. This is one way our User Group and the Texas Center for the Visually Challenged (TCVC) work together to offer our members a chance to win a great machine, while utilizing computer parts donated to TCVC. We split the raffle proceeds, and one lucky member will take home a great prize at the noontime drawing on August 21st. Raffle tickets go for $3 each, or get four chances for $10.

But, for both July 17th and August 21st meetings, we need volunteers to work an hour (or more) to help sell raffle tickets at our Information Booth. Simply put, if we don't get a few volunteers, we can't do the raffle. The work is easy, and the need is there.

Your 2010 NTPCUG President and a loooong-time member, Bill Drissel, plans to facilitate the raffle process by soliciting and coordinating volunteers to sell raffle tickets. He's not averse to going door-to-door, member by member, but he'd prefer that you just contact him directly at (bill @ drissel.us) to arrange to help. Be expecting a separate e-mail on this issue soon as a reminder.

So are you ready to take a chance on the next PC raffle? Interested in what you will be taking home when you win? Here are the specifics:

- HP Pavilion Desktop a1630n
- 2 x 1 GB DDR2 (4 x 1 Gb Max)
- AMD Athlon 64 X2 Dual Core 2.4 Ghz, 1 Mb L2 Cache
- 250 GB SATA II, 8Mb Cache, 7200 RPM Hard Drive
- CDRW / DVDRW Drive with LightScribe
- USB 2.0, Firewire
- nVidia GeForce 6150LE on-board graphics
- nVidia nForce on-board Network Controller
- Realtek on-board audio
- 3 x 1 PCI slots, 1 PCI Express x16 slot
- Multi-format Memory Card Reader
- HP Pocket Media Drive Slot
- DUAL BOOT - Windows Media Center & Windows 7 Ultimate
- Acrobat Reader, Java, AVG Free v9, iTunes, Quicktime
- VLC Media Player, MalwareBytes, CutePDF Maker

In This Issue ...

Prez Sez

by Bill Drissel

Have a kid that hates school but wants to learn? Listen to the first coupla minutes of

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlJ20s5d9To&feature=channel

Then go to: http://www.khanacademy.org/. Page down until you see four columns. Prepare to be amazed. Before you is a list of 1600 brief lectures on Arithmetic, Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Current Economics, Banking and Money, Finance, Trigonometry, Precalculus, Statistics, Probability, Calculus, Differential Equations, History, Linear Algebra, Physics and a couple dozen lectures on the meltdown, bailouts etc. (These last reflect Salman Khan's background in the financial services industry.)

They range in technical maturity from second grade Basic Addition to "Convolution and the Laplace Transform" (covered in my junior year in Engineering school fifty years ago).

People who aren't interested in "school work" might find his lecture on Ponzi Schemes interesting or his lectures on the meltdown and bailout.

His history lectures cover Europe from the French Revolution to the banishment of Napoleon to Elba.

All of these lectures are produced by one man with a webcam and some graphics software. What an enormous resource for children who want to work on their own or adults who want to "brush up" on things they have forgotten or maybe never learned!

MIT has a lot of free courses. Look at http://ocw.mit.edu/index.htm then click on Engineering| Electical Engineering and Computer Science. Then click on 6.00 Introduction to Computer Science and Programming . This will lead you to a set of video lectures (actually given at MIT in the Fall of 2008), the exams for the course and solutions and the assignments for the course. This is typical of a hundred or so of courses taught at what is arguably the foremost technical school in the US.

If you go to http://webcast.berkeley.edu/courses.php you will find a list of video lectures (no exams, no solutions, no assignments). Fewer than MIT but a wider ranging set of subjects.

Stanford.edu leads to an iTunes site. I don't have iTunes on my laptop so I couldn't dig any deeper.

I spent some time looking over courses at Open University (open.ac.uk). I thought they were more suitable for HS age children reading for interest than university students studying for examinations.

Carnegie Mellon explicitly addresses individual learners at http://oli.web.cmu.edu/openlearning/ . I drilled down to their engineering statics materials. I thought they were equivalent to my undergraduate introduction to the subject (fifty years ago).

Leaving the arena of free coursework, we have on-line degree programs. One that I know of (my son graduated with a computer science degree) is the Univ. of Phoenix. We attended his graduation. The school put hundreds of faculty members on stage. At that time, they were teaching in 35 languages and over 100 countries.

The internet has opened college to everyone it reaches.

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

These meetings occur at the Microsoft facility at 7000 State Hwy 161, Building 1. See map at http://www.ntpcug.org/LocationMapsMicrosoft.html.

Alphabetically

jQuery– 10:15 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org

The jQuery subject to be determined.

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

Expression Blend 4 and Silverlight.

Join us as Teresa Burger shows us how to use Expression Blend 4 to take a standard Silverlight video player and modify the template and styles to give it a custom look and feel. By reusing the standard player we get all of the built-in functionality without having to re-write all of that code. In this discussion, we will also cover some style ideas and best practices to allow for greatest flexibility in look and feel.

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

Alan's back from vacation and focusing on themes, search engine optimization, contact, and other general plug-ins for WordPress. If you're wondering how to install or set-up various plug-ins, this is the SIG for you. Alan will also share a list of plug-ins that are his favorites, and another list of those which fall short.

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

I have a physical problem with my hip and back and have to take it easy for a while. I also cannot sit at a computer keyboard long enough to compose an article or two. Therefore, I'd like for someone to take over this SIG either temporarily or even permanently.

I'd love to see more items covered within the Digital Photography SIG programs. Perhaps some of you can lead discussions concerning those newer cameras which not only take still pictures with phenomenal quality; they now create (with your help) good HDTV format movies.

Many of us have already found that taking movies requires several alternative techniques than movie making – we even have to change our thoughts and setups while using these hybrid cameras, different from those basic single use devices.

Let me know if you are willing to assist, want my help, or take it over.

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org

Please see my notes for Digital Photo SIG.

Since I have to cut back on my efforts within the SIGs and cannot outguess when my strength will improve, I wish to offer some challenges for our members to continue this SIG or even permanently take it over if they so desire.

Due to the new makeup of digital cameras, one of our larger challenges is the need to explore and make good use of photo editing of movies. Today's hardware, low priced hard drives, and large low-priced flash drives encourage wide-scale inclusion of these abilities. Most new cameras shooting high quality stills will also allow one to create good movies for selling personal products, and great ones for HDTV format quality movies. Our editing SIG should help us work out these details and discover programs that make our movies easier to create, and of quality that our Aunt Agnes will appreciate.

How about it? Jump right up and volunteer. You'll

love it and so will all of our members. Sharing and working together as a society makes us all feel great.

Internet — 11:00 am

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

Instructor Glynn Brooks will be unavailable this Saturday due to the passing of his Dad. Our hearts go out to Glynn & Carol and all family members.

In Glynn's place, Chuck Stark may stand-in for a Q&A on your favorite Windows topics, or whatever comes to mind.

Investors - 1:30 pm

Gil Brand
gbrand@ntpcug.org

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

IT Professional — 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Larry Copeland, Co-SIG leader
Lacopeland2000@yahoo.com
Mark Phelps, Co-SIG leader
eytukan@gmail.com

In July, Larry Copeland returns to the IT Pro SIG, with Mark Phelps joining him as co-SIG leader . This will be largely an organizational meeting, along with an open forum and a question-answer session on topics of interest. Please join us in welcoming Larry back, and Mark as co-leader of the IT Pro SIG.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

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

Alan's back from vacation and focusing upon shopping cart, email distribution list management, and other e-commerce related plug-ins for WordPress. Alan will share a list of those he's found particularly helpful and a list of the "others". Bring your questions and experiences to share.

Bill Parker

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am

Larry Linson
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org
Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com

On July 17, there will be a special treat for attendees at the Access SIG! Our guest speaker will be Diane Bentley, one of NTPCUG's all-time favorite SIG Leaders (she led the Microsoft Word SIG for several years) and a former member of our NTP-CUG Board of Directors. Diane describes her presentation as follows:

"Word 2010 has several enhancements you must see at our meeting Saturday! We'll take a quick tour of the main Word screen, where we can now customize the Ribbon! You'll want to know what happened to "File" in this version. Find out about the mysterious Backstage View, as well as formatting text and images together, graphic enhancements, new numbering formats, mini translator, and more as time permits. It's been awhile since the Word SIG so be there to catch up on the latest!"

Thanks to Access SIG Co-Leader Jim Wehe for his presentation in June, covering both Access and PowerPoint topics, using saved information and pictures from a trip that he and Daisy recently made.

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.

For a little more detail on the Access SIG, visit our Share-Point page at http://sp.ntpcug.org/accesssig/.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting, 11:00 AM, Third Saturday, July 17.

Microsoft Certification SIG - 1:30 pm

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

This month, the CertSIG group will continue to explore the use of .NET TableAdapters as a means for rapid development of web sites. Our discussion will investigate the use of Typed Data Sets and their use as a Data Access Layer. We'll also look at the use of the ObjectDataSource control in our presentation layer for our class web site.

We are doing some more work on the St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) site, primarily rearranging our large SQL tables into a cohesive set of smaller tables. This effort will make it easier to incorporate the TableAdapters we've been studying into our live project. Jeff Frauenheim has scheduled a meeting on Friday preceding our Saturday meeting.   We'll be posting more information about the Friday meeting soon.

Hope to see you at either our Friday meeting at SVDP or at the 1:30 pm meeting Saturday in conjunction with the

NTPCUG 3rd Saturday meeting.

Questions or comments?

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

Microsoft Excel – 8:00 am

Frank Tubbs, SIG leader
ftubbs@sbcglobal.net

We'll take a look at the changes to Excel 2010 compared to Excel 2007 (and earlier). We will be doing a general review now, and be prepared to do more in August.

I am also looking at an on-line course which is geared to teaching Excel from the ground up. I will also be looking for items of interest to SIG members that will hopefully increase individual capabilities in the newer versions.

Microsoft Expression Web — 10:00 am

Chris Morgan
chris.morgan @ntpcug.org
No meeting in July. See you in August.

Mobile Computing — 10:00 am

No meeting this month. See you in August.

Powershell – 10:00 - 11:00 am

Larry Weiss
lfw@airmail.net

Gil Brand
gbrand@ntpcug.org

Join us this month to discuss a PowerShell script that facilitates doing PowerShell demos.

The source for that PowerShell script is available as a Shared Document named "Start-Demo.ps1".

Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org

Instructor Glynn Brooks will be unavailable this Saturday due to the passing of his Dad. Our hearts go out to Glynn & Carol and all family members. In Glynn's place, Chuck Stark may stand-in for a Q&A on your favorite Windows topics, or whatever comes to mind.

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. As always, if you have a 'troubled' PC, please contact us ASAP. It may qualify for a 'live, no net' trouble shooting session!

Wireless Communications — 11:00 am

Birl Smith
birl.smith@ntpcug.org

Word — 9:00 - 11:00 am

This SIG has been suspended pending the 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.

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 July flyer?

Monthly Tips for MS Word and MS Excel

As a non-profit group, we get a number of requests from firms that want to "partner" with us. In my opinion, the majority of offers are just attempts to increase their market share, with minimal direct value to NTPCUG and its members.

So it's nice when we receive an offer of something worthwhile, with no unrealistic conditions. Such is the case with Sharon Parq Associates, who provide a multitude of MS Word and Excel tips online at http://word.tips.net and http://excel.tips.net. They have offered to send us a couple tips each month – some very basic, and some more advanced. As they arrive each month, we'll post them in out newsletter, and hopefully they will prove useful. For other tips, just go to the websites above.

Counting Cells with Specific Characters (Excel)

Let's say that you have a Microsoft Excel worksheet that contains all the people who have ever worked in your department. Each name is prefaced by a single character that indicates the status of the person. For instance, if Fred Davis were retired, his name might show up as "RFred Davis". With quite a lot of these names in the worksheet, you may need a way to count those people with a specific status character.

The easiest way to accomplish this is to use the COUNTIF function. If, for instance, the status character is the letter R (for "retired"), and your range of names is in cells A5:A52, then you could use the following to determine which cells begin with the letter R:

=COUNTIF(A5:A52,"R*")

The formula works because the comparison value is R*, which means "the letter R followed by any other characters." Excel dutifully returns the count. To search for a different status character, simply replace R with the desired status character.

Obviously, if the asterisk has a special meaning in this usage, you can't search directly for an asterisk. Actually, there are three characters you cannot search for directly: the asterisk (*), the question mark (?) and the tilde (~). If you want to search for any of these characters, you must precede the character with the tilde. Thus, if you wanted to determine a count of names that had a question mark as a status code, you could use the following:

=COUNTIF(A5:A52,"~?*")

An alternative to using COUNTIF is to create an array formula that is applied to every cell in the range. The following will do the trick very nicely:
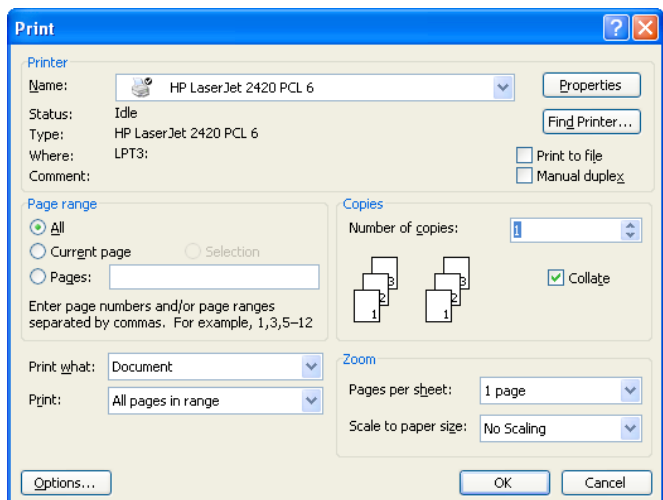
=SUM((LEFT(A5:A52,1)="R")*1)

This must, of course, be entered as an array formula. This means that instead of pressing ENTER at the end of the formula, you would press SHIFT+CTRL+ENTER. The formula checks the left-most character of a cell, returning the value TRUE if it is R or FALSE if it is not. The multiplication is done to convert the TRUE/FALSE value to a number, either 1 for TRUE or 0 for FALSE. The SUM function returns the sum, or count, of all the cells that meet the criteria.

Printing More Than One Copy (Word)

Microsoft Word gives you complete control over how it prints your document. If desired, you can print more than one copy of your document. To print to a file, follow these steps:

1.   Choose Print from the File menu. You will see the Print dialog box. (To display the Print dialog box in Word 2007, click the Office button and then click Print.) A really quick way to display the Print dialog box is to simply press Ctrl+P.

The Print dialog box.

2.   In the Copies box, indicate the number of copies you want to print.

3.   In the Range box, specify what you want to print.

4.   Check the status of the Collate option. (Select or clear the option based on whether you want the pages of each copy printed in order or not.)

5.   Click on OK.

Our thanks to Sharon Parq Associates for passing these along. Both are Copyright © 2010 by Sharon Parq Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission. Thousands of free Microsoft Word tips can be found online at http://word.tips.net, and free Microsoft Excel tips can be found online at http://excel.tips.net.

Kraken botnet re-emerges

by Doug Gorrie

A June 30th article in SC Magazine notes that Kraken, a large and difficult-to-detect botnet that peaked in 2008 and was dismantled by early 2009, has returned, and according to researchers at Georgia Tech Information Security Center, anti-virus providers are having little luck detecting, preventing and/or removing it.

The Kraken bot malware uses a common technique to avoid detection, known as obfuscation or packing, whereby the malicious portion of the program code has been made to appear as seemingly benign data. The technique, used by most modern malware today, is intended to prevent traditional AV from being able to recognize the malicious portion of the code or detect the threat. This effort appears to be working successfully.

As of last June, the Kraken bot malware is reported to be poorly detected by the top three AV companies (Symantec, McAfee, Trend Micro) , which hold at least 70 percent of the AV market, meaning the majority of users are not protected from this threat even with up-to-date AV software.

However, Paul Royal, research scientist at the Georgia Tech center, said that in late June, he ran a sample of the malware through VirusTotal's online virus and malware online scanner and it was not detected by either McAfee or Symantec.

"McAfee and Symantec probably detect older versions of Kraken, but the VirusTotal results clearly indicate a dearth of detections for recent Kraken samples," Royal said.

Symantec's Talbot added that Kraken relies on a large numbers of unique malicious files to evade detection, and is a "prime example" of why traditional signature-based solutions are no longer enough to catch all threats.

According to the Georgia Tech center, the botnet reappeared in April and as of late June, was made up of more than 318,000 unique IP addresses, or about half its 650,000 maximum size in 2008.

Machines infected by Kraken malware primarily are being used to send spam, and a single member of the botnet is capable of sending more than 600,000 unwanted emails in a 24-hour period, he said. All of the spam is promoting male enhancement or erectile dysfunction products.

We assume that AV providers will eventually get a handle on this, so it's another reason to keep your AV up-to-date.

For a complete review of the article, containing more info about bots, go to http://www.scmagazineus.com/kraken-botnet-re-emerges-318000-nodes-strong/article/173611/.

Microsoft sees jump in XP attacks

Computerworld noted on Wednesday that Microsoft had seen more than 25,000 attacks leveraging one of the critical bugs fixed in July's monthly security patches. Successful attacks secretly install malicious software on the victim's machine, often a program called Obitel. Once Obitel is on a PC, it enables other malware to be loaded, such as malware that can log keystrokes, send spam, or perform other nefarious task.

To protect themselves from these attacks, Windows XP users need to install the MS10-042 update, released Tuesday, July 13th. More-recent versions of Windows such as Vista, Server 2008 and Windows 7 are not affected.

Another Neat Site - Electronic House

There are more neat sites out there than we could ever peruse or review, but here is one that's pretty neat – ElectronicHouse.com.   If you are into home theater, multi-room audio/visual gear, neat TVs, DIY projects, and reviews of newer electronic gear out there, this is worth checking out. Topics range from 3D televisions to wireless outdoor speakers to Powerline Ethernet. If you can't get wireless to go where you need it TO, powerline ethernet can be used to carry your home network around the house using your existing electric wiring. It sure beats running a CAT5 cable across the house.

Check out the site and see what you think.

News from the Northwest

By Teresa Hennig

NOTICES and Events:

Windows 7 Test Drive -- and chance to win Toshiba T115 Notebook (July 2010)

Virtual labs let you experience the features of Windows 7 directly through your browser. Videos with step-by-step instructions become a guide and learning tool. Return weekly for additional chances to win a laptop! www.microsoft.com/click/windowstestdrive/itpro

Microsoft Office 2010 Test Drive and Trials (June 2010)

Learn about the new features and benefits in Microsoft Office 2010; watch demos, review some deployment strategies, take a test drive, download trial versions of Office, SharePoint, Visio and SharePoint. http://www.microsoft.com/click/businessproductivity/it_professional/

Microsoft Deployment Toolkit 2010 (MDT 2010) - (June 2010)

A console, tools and guidance to efficiently deploy Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 R2. Downloads, training, videos and other resources to help you successfully automate deployments and create HyperV environments. http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/solutionaccelerators/dd407791.aspx

Windows 7 Web Seminars on Demand -- Windows 7 (July 2010)

Get tips from the experts, best practices and discussions about common questions.

Upgrading to Windows 7: Why and How? www.vconferenceonline.com/shows/spring10/upgrading-windows7/register/multireg.asp?newmem=1&cid=EPDedHPApr2010WS02_Part5Promo

Windows 7 Migration: Quick Start to the Optimized Desktop www.vconferenceonline.com/shows/spring10/migratingwindows7/register/multireg.asp?newmem=1&cid=EPDedHPApr10WS03_Part5Promo

Hands-On with Windows InTune -- Article from Windows IT Pro (July 2010)

Learn about Microsoft's Windows InTune and how easy it can be to manage PCs via a hosted online service. www.windowsitpro.com/article/commentary/Hands-On-with-Windows-InTune.aspx

Hyper-V Live Migration: a Step-by-Step Guide -- (article from Windows IT Pro)

www.windowsitpro.com/article/windows-server/Hyper-V-Live-Migration-Step-by-Step.aspx

SP 1 for Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 R2 -- this fall (June 2010)

Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 R2 are both on the same code base, but the service packs may differ. SP1 for the server version will include some new features. But, we still have a while to wait as the first SP is typically about one year after the product release, so we may be looking at October. Until then, keep up with the product updates.

SQL Server 2008 R2 RTM (May 2010)

SQL Server 2008 R2 takes data management to "the next generation of computing." Learn about the new and enhanced features from multi-server management to end-user reporting, watch a video, get links to training and other resources by visiting: www.microsoft.com/sqlserver/tour/en/default.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

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/

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.

TLG Learning offers Free Seminars on Office 2010 (May 2010)

Learn about the new features in Office 2010 during 1 1/2 hour instructor lead seminars offered in Seattle and Bellevue. For more information visit: www.tlglearning.com/Courses/SearchResults.aspx?catlist=7.36

For complete list of their free seminars and other training, visit: www.tlglearning.com/Courses/FullSchedule.aspx

Six Free Apps from Microsoft (April 2010)

Visit www.SeattleAccess.org for listing and links.

Paste as Text -- Free Customizable Tool (April 2010)

PureText, developed by Steve Miller, removes rich formatting from text, including the font and paragraph formatting. It does not modify the actual text, remove or fix new-lines, carriage returns, tabs, or other white-space. It is not intended to fix word-wrap or clean up your paragraphs. It is an easy tool to install and to use it just switch from CTRL+V to Windows+V. For more information and the download, please visit http://SteveMiller.net/PureText

Data Encryption on the Fly with TrueCrypt (April 2010)

Free open-source encryption software that is easy to use to provide real-time, transparent data encryption. To learn more and download the documentation and software, visit TrueCrypt.org.

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 which goes on sale Oct. 22. Download from: www.microsoft.com/security_essentials

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 pro-

vides 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

Front Runner SQL Server 2008 & Windows Server 2008 R2 - for Developers and Early Adapters (Update April 2010)

Need to ensure that your programs are compatible with Windows Server 2008 R2 and/or Windows 7? Want to learn more about SQL Server 2008? Check out Front Runner -- the early adapter program. Maybe you are or should become a Microsoft Partner ... learn more and sign up at http://frontrunner.msdev.com/home.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 oth-

ers 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

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

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

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

Database Issue Checker

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

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

This Month in Our History

by Chuck Fiedler
chuck.fiedler@ntpcug.org

Just where does time go? This column is now three years old. It's hard to believe that I started this column in 2007. In that time, I have had the pleasure of reviewing the issues and concerns of our Group over the years since our inception. I only hope that you have had the same pleasure reviewing this history as I have had guiding you through it.

Since this column began, a very important thing happened: thanks to the efforts of members Diane Bentley, Elva Roy and Doug Gorrie, all paper copies of the *PC News* since 1982 were scanned and uploaded to our website. This means that if I say something here that interests you, you can go to the website and view the original copy of the referenced newsletter.

So let's begin our examination of the July 1985 and 1990 issues of *PC News*.

The July 1985 issue reported an overwhelming success of our first meeting at the InfoMart. Nearly 300 members attended the eleven SIGs. It was reported that nearly 70 new members were received this month.

Announcement was made of plans to establish a bulletin board system (BBS) for the group. This eventually happened and was a very popular benefit amongst the members.

Jim Janeway wrote an article named *Lotus Tips, Ltd* in which he gave several useful tips to establishing a spreadsheet, not only in Lotus, but in any other application. First, determine what your input is going to be: which numbers are constants, which are variables and which are assumptions. Finally, plan what your output should look like. Good advice in many life situations, but especially when building business spreadsheets.

By 1990, we had two or three monthly corporate presentations thanks to the efforts of **Timothy Carmichael**. Ashton-Tate made a presentation of d-Base IV version 1.1, Worldwide Technologies Inc. discussed the use of modems by PC users and IBM made a presentation titled *A new DOS Hardware/Software Product*. In each session, free product and discounts were given at member drawings.

In Prez Sez, President **Zack Porterfield** noted that we had 1,375 members at that time.

Reagan Andrews wrote a four-page comparison of graphics editors; *Arts and Letters*, *GEM Artline* and *Corel Draw 1.1*. For those with limited computing power, he recommended *GEM Artline*. A web search reveals nothing about this extinct product. For those with greater computing power, *Arts and Letters* was recommended for a fast 386 or 486 machine.

In *The Variety Store* by **Reagan Andrews**, the big talk was about the May, 1990 release of *Windows 3.0* and a variety of applications designed to work with the new Windows release.

Jim Hoisington wrote the 41st installment of his series *On Complexity* in which he noted that PC support was becoming a significant need as companies began to implement PCs throughout their operations. He noted that the PC support role had been projected to be filled by PC consultants working out of their home. Of course, this did occur and is still true today. Many of our members serve in this capacity and several of them serve as SIG leaders, sharing their expertise with the rest of us. Major corporations, on the other hand, have generally chosen to have their own in-house cadre of IT support personnel. In addition to hardware and software troubleshooting, these personnel may attend to legacy business-critical systems.

A reprinted article from the February, 1990 National Association of Catering Executives' *NACE News* had some worthwhile advice for us today. It read:

10 Sure-fire ways to sabotage your Association

No one purposely sabotages a group which he or she has joined. But a glance at this lest reveals ways to work against an organization without being aware of it:

1. Don't come to meetings.
2. If you attend, find fault with the work of others.
3. If you are ever asked your opinion, say nothing; afterwards tell everyone how things should have been.
4. Do no more than necessary. If a few persons work tirelessly, complain that the group is run by a clique.
5. Don't bother to help get new members.
6. Don't tell the leaders how the group can help you or achieve certain goals… but if it doesn't, quit coming.
7. When you attend a meeting, vote for one thing then forget about it after you go home.
8. Get all the benefits your organization provides… but don't make a personal contribution.
9. Agree to everything at the meeting, disagree later.
10. Talk about contribution but don't practice it.

There were over five pages of shareware and freeware reviewed by various members in the *Disk of the Month* entry. In most cases, DOS 2.0 or higher was required and some programs were beginning to require 386 hardware.

Mike Firth wrote an interesting review of *Microsoft Works*. At the time, *Works* could be bought for about $100, much less than major competing office suites. While he found many reasons to dislike Works, he concluded that it was worth the $100 street price.

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.

Calendar

July	August	September
10 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**14** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft	**11** 9:00 am—Noon **2nd Saturday** at Microsoft
17 8:00 am—2:30 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**21** 8:00 am—2:30 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory	**18** 8:00 am—2:30 pm **3rd Saturday** at King of Glory

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