



www.ntpcug.org

North Texas PC News

2ND SATURDAY
Microsoft Las Colinas
7000 Highway 161
Irving, Texas

3RD SATURDAY
King of Glory Lutheran Church
6411 Lyndon B. Johnson Freeway
Dallas, Texas

January 2010

VOLUME 30 • NUMBER 1

2010 Elections

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

Previously, we asked for volunteers that could join the Board as Directors and a President-Elect. All those that volunteered were put on the ballot and the ballot has been emailed to all members. If you haven't seen your ballot, please advise Chrystin Pleasants (Chrystinp@yahoo.com) or Doug Gorrie (doug.gorrie@ntpcug.org) and we'll get you on track.

Instructions for handling your ballot were included in the email. You can email, postal mail, fax or hand deliver the ballot at the Jan 16th meeting. Please be sure and vote.

Results of the elections will be confirmed and announced at the Business Meeting at Noon on Jan 16th. Immediately thereafter, the 2009 Board will accept the vote tally and transfer the gavel to the new 2010 Board.

For reference, our Bylaws state the following regarding the Board of Directors.

Section 5.2 NUMBER, TENURE AND QUALIFICATIONS

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

Regarding the President-Elect, the Bylaws state:

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

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Prez Sez



My term as your president now draws to a close. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve. As of our January business meeting, Bill Drissel becomes our new president. In addition, new Board members will be elected to serve for 2010.

I would like to thank all the 2009 Board members and all the others who have served as SIG leaders, check-in desk volunteers (especially Charles Rem who makes the whole check-in process run smoothly), raffle ticket sellers, and myriad others who volunteer in ways large and small.

2009 was a year of accomplishments which I am proud to report.

Thanks to the efforts of Diane Bentley, Elva Roy and Doug Gorrie, our newsletter history is now on our website. Our paper history is now digitally preserved. Thanks also go to all the folks who provided their copies of PC News from years past.

Two new SIGs, Investors and PowerShell, were added to our list of offerings. Unfortunately, the Word, WordPerfect and Family History SIGs have been suspended pending new leaders. So here is an opportunity for YOU to volunteer.

Thanks to Cornell Derry, Chuck Stark, Bill Drissel, Doug Gorrie, Mike Boley and Birl Smith, NTPCUG was represented at the AITP (Association of IT Professionals) convention at UTD.

Thanks to Gil Brand and all the volunteers at TCPI, our computer refurbishment project, for making "broken" computers available for the AITP competition.

Due to the involvement of Birl Smith, Doug Gorrie and Chuck Stark, we have selected a site for the 2010 Association of PC User Groups (APCUG) regional conference at SMU in Plano (formerly, SMU in Legacy). We have been well supported by the Plano Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) in obtaining bids for a conference site and for hotel accommodations. It appears that the cost to attend the APCUG conference will be very attractive to attendees.

But the work for this conference is not over. We need volunteers to help plan the program and assist with the many background tasks that make such an event work smoothly.

As I step down as your president, I wish you all a happy and healthy 2010 and encourage you to spread the word about the best place in the Metroplex to *Share What You Know and Learn What You Don't*.

[Comments from Editor] From my perch, Chuck Fiedler has proven to be a guiding force throughout

his year as President. His Prez Sez above gives appropriate recognition to our many volunteers, but fails to properly recognize his own. So as you re-read his comments above, just mentally add Chuck's name into most of the activities he writes about.

Chuck was heavily involved in getting our old newsletters digitized, in coordinating and manning the AITP conference, and in coordinating discussions with the Plano Convection and Visitors bureau (CVB) regarding our hosting the upcoming APCUG event in April. So give Chuck your applause at the next and subsequent meetings - I'm sure he will continue to support the User group in the future in multiple ways.

Volunteering

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

Please consider volunteering for one of these important jobs:

Information Desk — Charles Rem

crem@ntpcug.org

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

Program Director

Identify and arrange program topics for our vendor presentations.

Mentoring — Tom Sweet

tom.sweet@ntpcug.org

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

Newsletter — Doug Gorrie, Chuck Fiedler, David Franke

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

Prepare, contribute to and distribute the monthly newsletter.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) ...

Sessions with presentations, discussion, and exchanges of information

2nd Saturday

Alphabetically

jQuery— 10:15 am

Tuc Goodwin
tgoodwin@ntpcug.org



In this third of four installments on jQuery, we will focus on JQuery Plugin Libraries. We will continue with developing event driven jQuery web pages.

Microsoft Certification SIG — 2:00 pm Saturday at Nerdbooks

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

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

SharePoint – 11:00 am

Ram Yadav
ram_yadav@hotmail.com



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, beginning in the next column

Building Web Sites — 8:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

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



In January we will focus on configuring and installing the open source Ecwid

shopping cart on a website running WordPress. As time permits, we'll also look at convenient add-ons for WordPress.

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



Our January meeting for this year should be a good time for reviews and personal requests for topics for the upcoming year. The December meeting had low attendance, most likely due to holiday commitments, therefore we will present the same agenda for preparing for the new year and new product innovations. We will be including some comments on upgrading to more advanced cameras.

As always, we will continue supporting beginners thru advanced users while keeping abreast of new innovations within the marketplace. This is a call for volunteers to show and explain what their super camera has done and for those with compact digicams to let us see how the many special features have performed well in spite of lower cost units. We will not shy away from those important peripherals, ancillaries, and scanners as our other tools.

Our goal remains for each of us to take better pictures. (How would Ansel Adams have done this?) Let's share our wealth of experiences, enjoy, and bring our friends.

Our Digital Photography SIG and Digital Photo Editing SIG will be making use of TechSmith, Camtasia Studio screen recording and Snagit screen capture in program presentations. We will have free demo and trial software available for those members wishing to add these features to their systems.

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



We had a low attendance meeting last month and also some application software malfunctions. For those no longer celebrating the Holiday Season, we will prepare to repeat this program for our January meeting, less the errors and malfunctions. This will include a demo of Anthropics' Portrait Studio 9, which can be a Photoshop plug in or a stand-alone package. This is a portrait only tool -- and will do nothing for landscape.

As our SIG includes software editing programs, we

do spend much of our time with basics and generics so that when we look at new products, we can all benefit by what it does, how ours can do that, and should we buy the new product. Usually, Adobe's Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, and Corel's Paint Shop Pro will get the most use along with those packages that come with our hardware.

We should see, as we have progressed throughout past years, that photo correction and enhancements will never replace good photography, but will assuredly condition the image for the best use for specific applications. Granted, we can take a damaged photo or otherwise bad photograph and salvage some details and use – we need proper images to make great finished products.

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

How many members are interested in using our NTPCUG SharePoint site to increase our benefits?

The SharePoint software will allow us:

- dialogue sharing
- picture sharing
- instructions
- tips
- new product availability
- questions
- and more.

Please consider the benefits of using the SharePoint site and experiment with it.

Excel— 8:00 am

*Frank Tubbs
ftubbs@sbcglobal.net*

In December, it seems everyone was too busy to attend the Excel session. So the first meeting in the new year will be the open forum I wanted in December. I also want to know what topics are of interest to the members in general. I am looking at going toward some training ideas, but I need to know what might work for our User Group members.

Internet — 10:00 am

*Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org*



How to Optimize Router Security and Performance

Home broadband routers are complex devices that few people ever take the time to truly understand. Wireless channels, security modes, and port forwarding can be frustrating concepts for those without a networking background, but are absolutely critical to understanding how to optimize your home network. In this session, we'll teach you the finer

points of security, as well as give you surefire ways to boost your router's wireless range and optimize its performance.

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

IT Pro will have a Q&A on Server 2008.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

presented by Alan Lummus

Bill Parker, SIG Leader

bill.parker@ntpcug.org



January 2010 will focus on a variety of methods to monetize any website. We'll also begin an in-depth look at keyword research and how to do it most efficiently.

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 January 16, 2010 Access SIG Co-Leader Larry Linson will present “**Dashboard Forms**”. Our brief little review of Forms has 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.

“Why”, you may ask, “would I want to do that since all the e-mail readers, online or on my own machine, include features for that same function?”

The answer is: if a virus or worm infects your computer, where do you think is the first place it goes to get addresses of your friends, colleagues, and customers on whom to work its further mischief? Right, you get a gold star on your bulletin board... the address book of your mail readers. Now, I'll ask the next question: if your online mail server is penetrated, where do you think they'll go first? You know where!

In December 2009, Co-Leader Larry Linson re-

peated our earlier basic review on the subject of forms, and pursued some “mainstream” forms topics, such as: why use them, what types are there, and other aspects – in January, we are moving into “advanced topics”.

Topics for Future Meetings – Coming soon: A diversion from Access for a couple of meetings: First, an **Introduction to Powerpoint** and then another session **Creating a SIG Presentation with Powerpoint**. Our goal is to “take the ‘scary’ out of doing a presentation” by helping you structure the Power Point slides that you can lean on to trigger your memory of what you planned to say. Co-leaders Jim Wehe and Larry Linson will conduct the presentations.

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**.

Microsoft Certification SIG - 1:30 pm

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

There will be no regular meeting at the CertSIG at KOG during January. Instead, members of the intrepid Gang of 8 will be representing NTPCUG over the weekend at the We Are Microsoft Charity Weekend, an event sponsored by Microsoft to aid local charities with application and website development.

Our assigned project is for the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Center, a non-profit resale store located near Bachman Lake which has served clothing, furniture, and household goods to over 110,000 customers since 2007. The thrift store relies heavily on a volunteer base from partner agencies. The volunteers earn “Ozanam Dollars” for their agency, which allows the agency to purchase merchandise at reduced prices for their clients. All volunteer tracking is currently done on Excel spreadsheets. The CertSIG project is to develop a database of the tracking information, and create a web application to allow volunteers to apply online prior to entering the store. The web app will also track volunteer time records, calculate “Ozanam credits”, and report volunteer information both to the store and to the partner agencies.

The CertSIG project grew out of Jeff Frauenheim’s agreement to “look into” the computer side of the store’s operation for a friend. Jeff then contacted me, and out of our discussions came the idea of providing a portion of what the store needed by CertSIG’s working with the Microsoft Charity Weekend. This would give us a “real life” opportunity to put into practice some of the .NET coding techniques we’ve been looking into.

A number of members of the CertSIG Gang of 8

group have volunteered to work on the project during the weekend of January 15-17. We’re currently developing specs and doing data conversion to be ready for a code-intensive weekend. Stay tuned for a report next month.

Questions or comments?

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

Microsoft Expression Web — 10:00 am

Chris Morgan
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org

This month, there is more on adding video to a web page – converting your movie files to flash.



Mobile Computing — 10:00 am

No meeting this month. See you next month.

Powershell – 10:00 - 11:00 am

Larry Weiss
lfw@airmail.net

Gil Brand
gbrand@ntpcug.org



We will have an open Q&A session on all things PowerShell

Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org



Windows 7 File Management

I think we should start the new year with a deep discussion of all the changes to the NTFS file system and library management in Windows 7. I like what I’ve discovered, and there are some really powerful features I want to tell you about.

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

Gil Brand
gb1@ntpcug.org

Chuck Stark
chuck.stark@ntpcug.org



Open Q&A. If you have a ‘troubled’ system, please contact Chuck or Gil for a possible ‘live, no net’ troubleshooting session.

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.

Tech Support

*This ought to make you feel better about your computer skills! *

*Tech support: *What kind of computer do you have?

*Customer: *A white one...

*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...

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

*Customer: *Your left or my left?

*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.

*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.

*Customer: *I have problems printing in red..

*Tech support: *Do you have a color printer?

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

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

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

*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!

*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?

*Customer: *I 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 dots.

*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.

*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.

=====

*Tech support: *How may I help you?

*Customer: *I'm writing my first email.

*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 little circle around it?

=====

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.'

=====

If I have any complaint with OO.o, it's that you can't just load *Writer* or *Calc* or *Presentation* or *Database* – you have to load the whole suite. Also, if you're in an application and want to close it, the entire suite goes away and you get to start all over again. Picky? Maybe, but in Microsoft Office, I open Word, Excel, PowerPoint or Access and I get that application, period. I close it down and that application is gone – fair enough, but score one for Microsoft.

So what are the big differences? There are actually two – hard drive foot print and load time. Microsoft Office consumes 524 MB on disk while OO.o consumes 375MB of disk space. Score another one for OO.o.

For a load time test, I used my primary machine, a single core Pentium 4 3GHz machine with 1.5GB of RAM running XP Home SP3 with a Seagate 160 GB drive about 25% occupied. I was able to load *Word*, *Excel*, *PowerPoint* and *Access* in three to five seconds each. OO.o took significantly more time on average to load. Score another one for Microsoft.

So far, it seems a pretty even game but when you consider the matter of cost and license restrictions, it sure looks to me like OO.o just wrapped up the game.



Two Different Office Suite Products

by Chuck Fiedler

Like many other NTPCUG volunteers, I got Microsoft Office 2007 through TechSoup as an "employee" of NTPCUG, at a ridiculously low price.

You may also have read that I am a believer in OpenOffice.org (OO.o), an open source office suite with similar functionality to Microsoft Office. The big difference is that OO.o is FREE unless you want to make a voluntary contribution to the project. This fact is leading many to at least give OO.o a trial run. It seems that educational institutions especially are getting on the OO.o bandwagon to avoid the relatively high cost of Microsoft Office.

Finally, as I reported recently, I teach OO.o to 5th and 6th graders at a parochial school in Dallas. This experience is forcing me to learn more and more about OO.o just to stay ahead of the students.

I like the fact that OO.o documents (the term as used here includes *Calc* spreadsheets, presentations, *Writer* documents and *Database* databases) can be saved in more formats than in Microsoft Office. Also, if I'm not mistaken, OO.o was first to offer the ability to save as PDF format, a capability that was not in Microsoft Office 2003 but is in Office 2007. Score one for OO.o.

*Stupid computer
Keeps saying
"you got mail"*



The Droid

by Mark Phelps

The Droid is the latest iPhone competitor to enter the market. Verizon provides two models of the Droid: HTC and Motorola. The HTC (called the Eris) is lightweight and slim, with a touch keyboard. The Motorola has a slide-out keyboard and is heavier than the HTC.

New Terminology – Widget is an application that streams information from the Internet to the Droid desktop. Shortcuts are applications that run on the Droid. Both can be displayed on the Droid desktop or “home” screen.

The Droid runs the Google Operating System. Version 2.0 of the OS is on the Motorola, while version 1.6 is currently on the HTC (although slated to move to version 2.0 in 1st quarter 2010).

The Motorola version contains a 5 MP camera with built-in night flash and has an image correcting ultra high-resolution screen. It can shoot video that resembles HD DVD quality. (I'm not sure about the Eris - sorry.) The Eris has seven home screens that can be customized, while the Motorola has only three home screens. (How many do you need anyway?)

Google 2.0 will interface with corporate e-mail, whereas the Eris will NOT until it is upgraded to 2.0 of the OS. HTC's Eris also contains HTC software apps of some sort, and has maps, although it does not support navigation. The Motorola, however, gives you free GPS.

So, which do I prefer? I prefer the Eris, although I plan to wait for the Google 2.0 OS. The Eris is lighter, easier to carry, completely touch-screen and is more like the iPhone. Anything that can out-do anything from Apple is better, in my humble opinion. Well, ok, maybe some tongue-in-cheek.

HTC Features

- HTML Web Browser
- 3.2" Touch Screen
- 5.0 Megapixel Camera
- 8 GB microSD™ Card Pre-installed
- Bluetooth®* Stereo Support
- TTY Compatible
- Hearing Aid Compatibility = M3/T3

*The DROID ERIS by HTC supports Bluetooth Profiles for wireless headsets, hands-free accessories, stereo and phonebook access. It does not support all object exchange (OBEX) profiles.

Motorola Features

- HTML Web Browser
- 3.7" Touch Screen
- 5.0 Megapixel Camera

- 16 GB microSD™ Card Pre-installed
- Slide-out QWERTY Keyboard
- Bluetooth®* Stereo Support
- TTY Compatible
- Hearing Aid Compatibility = M3/T3

For details on Hearing Aid Compatibility, see About Us — Accessibility.

*The DROID by Motorola supports Bluetooth Profiles for wireless headsets, hands-free accessories, stereo and phonebook access. It does not support all object exchange (OBEX) profiles.

Exchange 2010

by Mark Phelps

The 2010 version of Exchange has a number of new features and enhancements, although the look and feel is not that much different from Exchange 2007. But if you are still running Exchange 2003, there are significant differences.

Two new features in 2010 are Database Availability Groups (DAG) and online mailbox moves. A DAG can contain up to 16 mailbox servers. Any server in a DAG can host a copy of a mailbox database from any other server in the DAG. When a server is added to a DAG, it works with the other servers in the DAG to provide automatic recovery from failures that affect mailbox databases, such as a disk failure or server failure.

Here is an excerpt from the Microsoft website on Exchange:

Top Reasons to Try Microsoft Exchange Server 2010

Reduced deployment cost

Exchange Server 2010 helps you reduce costs by addressing common infrastructure requirements such as backup, [e-mail archiving](#), [mobile e-mail access](#), and [voice mail](#) with no need for third-party tools.

Simplified high availability and disaster recovery

Exchange Server 2010 introduces a simplified approach to [high availability](#) and disaster recovery to help you achieve new levels of reliability and reduce the complexity of delivering business continuity.

Easier administration and decreased dependence on the help desk

Exchange Server 2010 provides [new self-service capabilities](#) to help users perform common tasks without calling the help desk.

Greater mobility and flexible access

Exchange Server 2010 offers an enhanced universal inbox experience, which provides your users

with access to all of their business communications from a single location.

- **Decreased inbox overload and increased productivity**

Exchange Server 2010 adds new productivity features which help your users organize and prioritize the communications in their inboxes efficiently.

- **Transformed voice mail**

With Exchange Server 2010, users can receive their [voice mail](#) messages in their inbox with text preview.

- **Simplified compliance**

Exchange Server 2010 delivers new integrated [archiving functionality](#) to help simplify compliance and discovery.

- **Safeguards for sensitive information**

With centrally managed and enforced [information protection and control](#) capabilities, Exchange Server 2010 makes it easy to encrypt, control, and moderate your company's communications.

- **Reduced risk of malware and spam**

Exchange Server 2010 actively helps protect your communications through built-in defenses against junk e-mail and support for an array of third party security products.

For more information on Exchange Server 2010 capabilities, see technologies section.

Twitter

by Larry Weiss

Glynn Brooks and I were enjoying each other's company at lunch during the week between Christmas and New Years, and the topic of Twitter came up in conversation. We both have started a Twitter presence in the past year, and we remarked as to how we were having a hard time appreciating the value of interacting with that online resource.

As a result of that conversation, I've decided to look into what Twitter has to offer that I may be missing.

For anyone wanting an overview of what Twitter is, I'll point you to the introductory paragraphs of the Wikipedia article at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter> and the main home page at <http://twitter.com>

I have benefitted from searching the database of "tweets" using Twitter Search at <http://search.twitter.com>, but I knew that others use Twitter in a more interactive fashion.

I started looking at the list of tweets that display on my main Twitter page and seeing how others are using Twitter. The podcasters I "follow" are posting notices of their newest creations. The lifecasters are doing a similar thing to let you know they are online. Some of my online friends are posting the names of the businesses where their travels are taking them during the day.

I'm neither a podcaster, lifecaster nor interested in broadcasting my location. But I can generalize this to the areas of wanting to promote certain establishments that one might frequent and adding value to a service one might be providing to an audience that is open to an enrollment not easily accessed via email. So far I'm not seeing a reason to generate a tweet myself.

I know from personal experience that conferences use Twitter to allow the attendees to communicate and organize activities associated with an event. For example, the South by Southwest convergent media conference in Austin TX uses the Twitter name #SXSW. Browse <http://sxsw.com> for more information on that conference. Browse <http://twitter.com/sxsw> to see the tweets related to it and perhaps start following it from your own Twitter page.

The next time I attend a conference, I'll try to get added value by using Twitter. That seems like a promising use of Twitter as circumstances present themselves.

One new development is that Google has integrated tweets into its search results if you use the "Latest" option when searching. With "Latest" on, you get a dynamically updated screen with the most recent search results on top and the Twitter contributions clearly delineated. The tweets with links in them usually carry some sort of message as the quality or relevance of the resource usually from people not directly benefiting from the linked website. So you get a benefit of Google's thoroughness and the Twitter community's commentary. I now often find myself turning on that "Latest" option and benefitting from the active Twitter community. I might get motivated to tweet myself on a topic just from seeing how others are doing it that way.

Leo Laporte has said that Twitter is becoming the Internet's nervous system, where everybody plugs in to find out what is going on in the world. Leo says "It is the beginning of the nervous system – the zeitgeist. Twitter is best not when you tweet 'I had toast for breakfast' but when you tweet 'Have you read this article.?'"

In a New York Times article "Why Twitter Will Endure" at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/03/weekinreview/03carr.html?pagewanted=all>, I find the observation that "the real value of the service is listening to a wired collective voice".

A day or so before the next NTPCUG meeting, I plan to tweet about our club hoping that will attract new attendees. I'll use #NTPCUG as a tag. If it does gain us new attendees, there just might be something to this Twitter thing after all!

News from the Northwest

By Teresa Hennig

Spotlight Item!

Office 2010 Public Beta - Available NOW (Dec 2009)

Don't JUST rely on meeting presentations ... get involved! Sign up for the public 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://www.microsoft.com/office/2010/en/default.aspx>

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#

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>.

DOWNLOADS and Other New Stuff:

For past postings and links, please check [www.SeattleAccess.org](http://SeattleAccess.org).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Microsoft Security Essentials provides real-time protection for your home PC that guards against viruses, spyware, and other malicious software. It works with Windows XP (Service Packs 2 or 3), Windows Vista and Windows 7. Download from: www.microsoft.com/security_essentials

Virtualization, easier than the bunny slope (Sept 2009)

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

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

Share Your Expertise -- Microsoft Access Blog Power Tips

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

RESOURCE Tips:

A couple of good sites to search for information

and programming assistance are www.mvps.org and Office Developer Center on MSDN. And, we've been mentioning the newsgroups. You can search and drill through thousands of threads. Check out <http://www.microsoft.com/office/community/en-us/FlyoutOverview.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/ac>

cessjunkie.html

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

A Redneck's Guide to Technological Terminology

Log On:	Makin' the stove hotter.
Log Off:	Coolin' 'er down.
Monitor:	Keepin' an eye on 'er.
Download:	Gittin' the farwood off'n the truck.
Megahertz:	When yer not keerful gittin' the farwood.
Floppy disk:	Wutchu git from totin' too much farwood.
RAM:	That metal thang what splits the farwood.
Hard Drive:	Gittin' home in the winter time.
Windows:	Watcha shut when it's winter time.
Screen:	Watcha shut when it's 'skeeter time.
Byte:	What them dang 'skeeters do.
Chip:	Munchies for the Texas/OU game.
Microchip:	Them little bits in the bottom of the Chip bag.
Modem:	Watcha did to the front yard.
Dot Matrix:	Dot Com's name after she got hitched ta Dan Matrix.
Laptop:	Whar the kitty sleeps.
Keyboard:	Whar ya hang the truck keys when yer in the house.
Software:	Them dang plastic forks and knifes they give ya at the barbecue.
Mouse:	Whut eats the grain in the barn.
Mouse pad:	Hippie talk fer whar the mouse lives.
Mainframe:	Whut holds up the roof of the barn.
Port:	Highfalutin' yankee wine.
Enter:	How ya git into the house.
Click:	Whut ya hear when ya cocks yer pistol.
Double click:	Whut ya hear when ya REALLY mean bizness and cock the shotgun.
Reboot:	Whut ya hafta do before bedtime when ya wanna go to the outhouse.

Digital Photography – Tips and Tricks

Digicam Features – Revisited

The newest digicam special features are as abundant as flies in a cow pasture. This does not mean we may soon see any slowdown with this tide of gimmicks and marketing gadgets -- not for a while anyway, as features are still popping up faster than they are technically required or can be interpreted.

I have just gone through some specifications on a new digicam model where one key feature allows this provocative option: Do it manually, or, select one of twelve actions from an array of 40+ feature option clicks. This latter choice will provide the user with its automatic guessing games to determine a probable solution. Gee! I know for sure that I can quickly take the manual approach and set the controls to capture a good image. Now, if we select a feature from 40+ available and then select one of these compromises from the dozen sub features, will we (maybe) get our good resultant image?

I think great cameras today should have some typical guessing games going on inside their camera's computer but please, do not compound a simple problem with forty to 200 possible clicks that might just work. How about this?

1. Go shoot from the Auto mode when in complete doubt or a hurry;
2. Use the Program mode which puts you in the ball park to select some auto exposures and such; or finally
3. Use Manual settings and do it right (given that you have the time to accomplish the task).

I know there is valid reasoning behind getting satisfactory attempts to find a single ideal setting for the perfect image. However, I believe these considerations have already been incorporated into the digicam's computer as macros that we adore for the catchall AUTO setting. For beginners and our varied candid shots, this setting shows us how wonderful some cameras really are — simple, sweet, and efficient. For the user of new digicams selling between \$150 and \$300, the race is on for marketing philosophies and quality hardware. Following are basic concerns where now we have more solutions than problems.

About Those (Too) Many Presets

During our regular user group meetings, some members stated they have had great luck

by Spike Smith
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with their use of those prolific single feature option buttons that just do-it-all as they select -- just find the right button to push. It will be interesting when these user group SIG members bring in their examples of highly successful one-button feature shots. I am very interested to find the ratio between success and failure they have found while using these feature buttons. How about it guys and gals?

Shortcomings of One-Button Typical Feature Operations

Image Stabilization

When your camera manual states it mechanically adjusts film sensor or lens elements for image stabilization (IS) or anti-shake correction then some improvement should be noticed when it's needed. However, when improvement is made by increasing the ISO speed, you may likely see a definite reduction in quality by increased noise and poorer color definition. Whether it is electronically minimized or mechanically corrected within a lens, adverse effects are noticed when leaving the devices enabled.

Exposure With Low Light Settings

While auto exposing for low light corrections, if the camera then automatically increases the lens opening to max, this will make focus critical and depth of field critical. Most auto low light settings also utilize ISO increases for compensation.

Other Feature Controls

There are ways other than exposure control that digicams may use to gain your instant approval and these are to exercise the camera's computer's poetic license with hue, contrast, saturation, and attempts to sharpen details and improve the appearance of the image. When these gimmicks are applied, you may believe you've done a great job. When these gimmicks fail, you wonder what in the world has happened. Your monitor may even reflect visual improvements but they may not be incorporated within the image file itself. Perhaps this is to show you that after editing, your image can be improved at least to this extent.

Face Recognition

Face recognition now goes beyond the basic recognition of a face but continues with: is there a smile; are all eyes open; measure and set exposure compatibility (of one of several face/s)

What might happen if you go for a large family reunion shoot with a new fully-featured digicam that will be looking for the following constrictions?

- Insist upon all eyes open,
- Everyone smiling,
- Each person has same light on face,
- Whose complexion gets to set the standard for all other faces?

Yes, this is quite a challenge for the camera to select the best of all parameters and after it is satisfied -- will the delay involved between metering and calculating and a 'go' then allow someone to blink as the shutter opens?

Simplified Solutions

Natural sunlight is the best quality light that all other sources and filters are based upon.

When we find that we are ready to extend our learning beyond the basic point-and-shoot, we can be more proud of our results by using the "P" (program) features of our digicam where we preset our AWB for the light source available. Limit the ISO rating to 200 for portraits and possibly limiting all other shots to 400 unless that extra speed is necessary for your action shots and speed may dominate all other quality characteristics.

While learning and worrying about the pre-sets, lighting, colors, fill-in, and digicam characteristics - never let it be said that you are none other than the very best when composing your subject material and timing your conditions.

Capturing Internet Streaming Audio

by Chuck Fiedler

I listen to a great deal of internet radio. I love to listen to WCPE (TheClassicalStation.org) out of Raleigh, NC when nothing interests me locally. I even listen to local radio over the 'net because it's easier than getting up and retuning the radio on the far side of my printers.

I have often wondered how I could capture this content in a low- or no-cost manner. I mean, it's nice to hear stuff over the computer but sometimes you want to preserve the output.

I googled for a free audio recorder and stumbled upon Free Sound Recorder. As its name states, it's FREE and it records anything that passes through your sound card.

Using Free Sound Recorder is pretty intuitive. Load the recorder, place an icon on your desktop, listen to something through your sound card, trigger the icon and then hit the little red Record icon on the recorder's screen.

When you first fire up Free Sound Recorder, it

shows Microphone as the "Recording Mixer." Change this to Stereo Mix and you're set to go.



As the above panel shows, you can adjust volume and balance and there are those little meter bars indicating the recorded volume. Make sure the screen shows "Recording" as noted above.

By default, results go to My Documents > My Music but you can elect to send it to a file of your choice. You can also save recordings as WAV, MP3 or WMA files.

To play back your recording, go to where it is stored and DO NOT double click the file – when I tried that, I got sent off to the iTunes store. Instead, right click on the file and select Play with Windows Media Player. Works like a charm.

When you download Free Sound Recorder, you are also sent a desktop icon link to Cool Record Edit Pro, a \$29.99 editing software which is crippleware. It allows you to edit but not save your results without paying for it. I haven't found a need for it yet but then life is a continuing learning process so who knows if I find a need for it.

All told, I think Free Sound Recorder is well worth the download and the small amount of time needed to learn its features.

This Month in Our History

Well, here it is January and the calendar has turned over to a new year. I hope everyone had a good and safe Christmas and New Years, and may you have a healthy and prosperous 2010.

This time, we will examine the January 1985 and 1990 issues of PC News and see how the world of computing has changed in this comparatively short time.

Well, I set out to review the January 1985 issue only to find that the file on the website is somehow defective and won't load. No problem, I'll just go to the original CD from which this issue was loaded to the website. I'm glad I put the original CDs in a safe place so any website problems can be readily corrected.

In January 1985, editor **John Pribyl** noted something that's still true today: getting the newsletter together is certainly a LOT easier if you have enough material to draw from. Unlike 1985, we today offer a free one-year extension of membership to members who submit at least three articles in a year. As John wrote, "Someone asked what they should write about! Well, we all read a lot of computer material during the course of a month. Certainly the type articles we like should give some clue to what would be interesting to others."

Ricky Burke wrote a brief review of the then-new HP 110 laptop computer, a 13" x 10" x 3", nine pound machine with a 5.7MHz, 80C186 processor and 656KB of RAM. Ricky noted that 384K of memory was devoted to ROM storage of DOS, Lotus 123, Memo Maker (a word processor with Wordstar-compatible files), and an electronic disk emulator. As no mention was made of a hard drive -- I assume the ROM was intended to accomplish the same end result. All this for a list price of \$2,995

Dick Gall wrote a review of STARTEXT, a \$9.95/month news and information service of the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram. New at the time of the review was the ability to use a 1200 baud modem rather than having to use the old 300 baud service. Ah, the good old days!

As today, January was election month in 1985. I note with interest that the President-Elect did not step up automatically to the office of President – Both were found on the ballot. And there were six nominees for what I believe were three At Large Directors.

Just as now, January, 1990 was the beginning of a new decade, one in which truly awe-inspiring

by Chuck Fiedler
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things happened in the computer world.

Zack Porterfield, the 1990 President, noted that we then had over 1,300 members, heading to 1,400.

In an article titled *Cipher Lore*, **John K. Taber** wrote of his experiences with the federal government. It seems Taber had written a program named *CRYPT*, designed to solve newspaper cryptograms. This program was made available to members as a Disk of the Month in 1989.

It seems the government determined that this program was a prohibited item under ITAR (International Trade in Arms Regulations). Yup, his simple program was viewed as equivalent to exporting a weapon to another country. Taber advised purchasers of *CRYPT* to be very careful not to take it out of the US or Canada. Bureaucratic idiocy continues in force a full ten years later.

Reagan Andrews reported on COMDEX/Fall '89, noting that more than 120,000 folks had gone to Las Vegas for the show. He noted in his five-page report that this event seemed to lack a true theme unlike previous shows, although it was clear that a Graphical User Interface (GUI) was certainly the trend of the future. It also appears that notebook PCs were beginning to impact the marketplace.

Another installment of *On Complexity* by **Jim Hoisington**, the 35th in the series, noted how some nefarious person had made information available to car equipment thieves resulting in newly-installed equipment being stolen in an apparent steal-to-order scheme. He noted that 1) we are collecting an increasing amount of information (even ten years ago), and 2) this information is sometimes too easily made available. I would argue that we have learned certain lessons in recent years and, hopefully, data security is becoming more important to those who collect the data.

On the other hand, you and I are among those who collect data. If you do so on a laptop, have you encrypted the sensitive data? Have you perhaps encrypted your entire drive? Laptops are highly desirable items for thieves and easily stolen. As you take your laptop out of the house or office, be mindful of the above immutable facts.

My favorite column *The Variety Store* by **Reagan Andrews** featured the conversion board by Cumulus Corporation which converted 286 machines to a 386 16 MHz machine and all this improvement

for a mere \$400!

If you wanted to transfer older-formatted files to a new machine, you could get *XenoCopy PC* for a mere \$80 from XenoSoft to accomplish your goal. It would even transfer data from 8" disks if your source had such a drive.

The 1990 *PC News* ended with the ballot for that year's elections. Stay tuned for next month to see who was elected.

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.

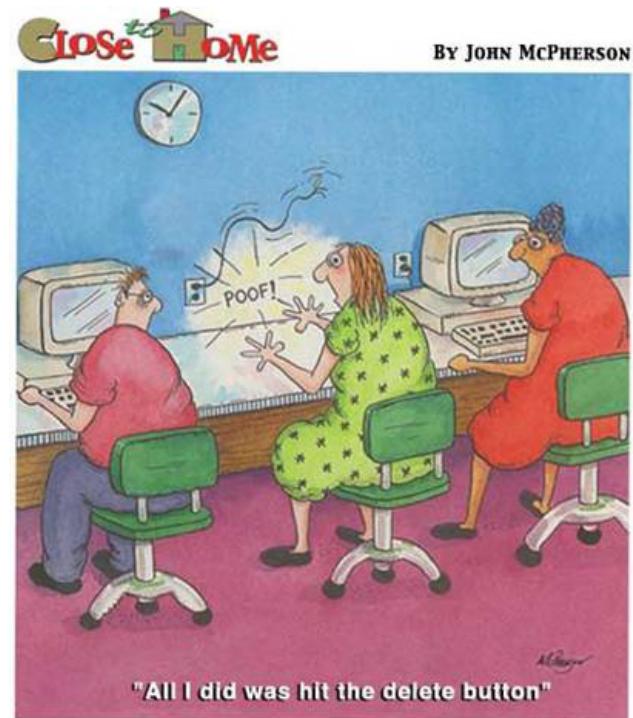
With your help we hope to generate increased interest in User Group activities, thereby helping us grow. We rely on members, SIG leaders, Board members and volunteers to share this information with others. We also need you to consider new options beyond the obvious – bulletin boards, etc.

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 January flyer?**



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Emeritus Members

John Pribyl (1924 – 1993)
Reagan Andrews (- 2006)
Connie Andrews (- 2008)
Phil Chamberlain
Jim Hoisington
Guy Andrews
Stuart Yarus
Timothy Carmichael
Mark Gruner
David McGehee
Tom Prickett
Kathryn Loafman
Fred Williams
Andy Oliver
Alex Lilly
Doug Gorrie
Claude McClure
Robert McNeil
Gil Brand
Bill Parker
Diane Bentley

Thank you!

from your 2009

Board of Directors and Officers

President: Chuck Fiedler
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President-Elect: Bill Drissel
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Directors: Doug Gorrie
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Chris Morgan
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Spike Smith
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Bill Parker
bill.parker@ntpcug.org

Secretary: Kathy Lee Brown

Treasurer: Chuck Stark
chuck.stark@ntpcug.org

Calendar

January

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

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

February

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

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

March

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

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

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