



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

March 2010

VOLUME 30 • NUMBER 3

APCUG Regional Conference – April 30th – May 1st

by Doug Gorrie

If you have been present at our 3rd Saturday Business Meetings, or have read the past couple of monthly newsletters, you are already aware of the upcoming conference being jointly hosted by NTPCUG and the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG.org) on the dates above.

This is a 1 ½ day event being held at SMU's facility in Plano, aptly called SMU-In-Plano. This event will include a number of in-town and out-of-town speakers representing APCUG, NTPCUG and several nationally known firms that enjoy participating in events such as this.

An overview of topics and presenters has been developed and appears on Page 6 below. Full details of the event are being posted on NTPCUG's web site, and a registration link appears at the end of this article.

Yes – we are running behind, something all-too-common in volunteer groups such as ours. But we plan to get the word out quickly, and there is plenty of time to register.

Most topics for the event are organized in “tracks” – a series of presentations that have a common theme. In our case, the tracks focus on Linux topics, Windows topics and APCUG/Other topics. Here's your chance to “streeetch” your boundaries and learn more about topics not normally available to you.

Examples? Have you ever heard of Joomla? It's an open source content management system (CMS), which enables you to build Web sites and powerful online applications. It comes in both Unix and Windows flavors. Functionality not built-in to Joomla is typically available from a community of users and developers – just download, install and use.

How about Windows Live Meeting? It's a great tool for making presentations online to others and sharing meeting content. We will also have a first look at Office 2010, info on deploying Windows 7 from an IT perspective, a look at Visual Studio 2010, protecting and configuring your home network, and more.

Also on the Linux side, how about an overview of Ubuntu? Or, learn how to integrate Windows and Linux together – the best of both worlds. And on the “Other” track, here is where you can learn the difference between HyperV and VMware, (*cont'd on Page 9*)

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On Saturday, March 6th and 13th, Alan Lummus (www.bookmatestore.com) gave two full-day classes on Making Money on the Internet at Lee Lowrie's Jefferson Street Bed & Breakfast in Irving (www.jeffersonstreetbnb.com). This is an extension of Alan's regular NTPCUG SIG presented on the third Saturday of each month.

I have to confess that although programming has made me a comfortable living for 45 years, I have always been amazed at the things people want to do with computers. Living at the cutting edge of one region of technology did not prepare me for the amazing things Alan taught us.

His principal thrust in the first class was "affiliates." There are two kinds -- affiliate publishers and affiliate merchants. An example we're all familiar with is Amazon.com. We've all been to web pages that featured a button that would take us off to Amazon.com. People who put such buttons on their web pages are affiliate publishers. People who answer the buttons and actually sell things to others, like Amazon.com, are called affiliate merchants. The merchants are happy to pay a (small) commission to affiliate publishers as payment for their having forwarded a willing buyer to their site -- a buyer they may not have found otherwise.

How do merchants find publishers? How does a publisher find merchants? Who makes sure the merchants pay the commissions? To fill this need, entrepreneurs have built affiliate networks such as Commission Junction (www.cj.com). Ten minutes of exploring this extraordinary website was an eye-opener to me. I never had any idea of the opportunities this technology offers.

Many times during the session, Alan made the point that publishers and small organizations that want to be merchants must first IDENTIFY DEMAND. There's a strong sense in which people desiring to serve their own interests by making a profit must first find a way to serve the needs of their fellow man. He showed how Google searches could help identify demand. Then statistics at www.cj.com could be used to suggest how one might pull such demand to his own website and what sort of merchants might be suitable for linking to.

Our thanks to Alan and Lee for these eye-opening classes. This is just one example of the many things taught in our many SIGs, and of the value that our members receive by joining the North Texas PC Users Group.

Drismak – Yet Another Keyboard Arrangement

Many years ago, I followed the blog of a man who experimented with keyboard layouts. He had written a program that would take a kb layout and a body of text and compute how long it took to type the text by simulating finger motions. He also did extensive typing with each of his candidate layouts.

Now, get this: He worked all day as a programmer on Qwerty kb then came home at night and typed on this or that experimental layout. He says he had no problem moving from one to another. Just like being able to drive a manual transmission or an automatic. I found that awfully hard to believe.

Some of his keyboards were very interesting. Main reasons for slowing down:

- * Two adjacent text letters on the same finger prevented pre-positioning for the second letter
- * Two adjacent letters on the same hand often slowed or inhibited pre-positioning
- * Frequently used letters not under the rest positions or not on the home row
- * Long reaches by the little finger

The Qwerty keyboard was designed to slow typists down so the keys of early typewriters wouldn't jam. It also enabled salesmen to type the word, "typewriter" all on one row. In 1936, August Dvorak and William Dealey patented a keyboard arrangement they had designed based on a number of principles. See the article at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dvorak_keyboard for a thorough explanation.

The Colemak keyboard, designed by Shai Coleman, is not so radical a change from but rather a refinement of the Qwerty keyboard. You can see its arrangement at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colemak#Colemak>. This weekend (2010/3/13), I decided to try my hand at a keyboard arrangement.

(Continued on page 12 - See "Keyboard")

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



This session on jQuery will focus on the add-on features of jQuery, such as Tabs, Modal Dialogs, and Datepicker. We will also look at how you can create your own jQuery functions.

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



The 3rd Saturday in March will wrap up the two “Extended SIGs events” happening on the 1st and 2nd Saturdays of March, providing everyone an opportunity for a quick overview of the previous weeks’ activities, successes, and challenges. We’ll examine how each site’s appearance and function has been “tweaked”, both for Alan’s sites and for all

those sites created by SIG participants. This will be the time to get any follow up questions answered and your ongoing plan for site development clearly defined.

Digital Photography — 10:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



Compact digital cameras can be easier to use than ever, but presently have so many easy features we cannot find the ones we need. This also confuses the buyer who is just getting started, as he wants something great for his needs but marketing and available literature make the task difficult. We will discuss which issues are important to note in selecting your first and subsequent digicams.

We may also have a short video presentation on lighting.

Anyone who has prepared any Camtasia, video clips, or other items of note for our SIG, let’s have them. Bring your tools, toys, problems, and solutions. Enjoy!

Digital Photo Editing Software — 11:00 am

Spike Smith, NCE
harold.smith@ntpcug.org



Preparation for publication is similar to making a photo album. Making a photo album for the Internet is different from composing for a newsletter or a magazine. There are several tools designed to accomplish the tasks involved, but overall compatibility is rare.

We may not have all the specific tools required to directly access our publisher, but otherwise, we must ensure that digital images we provide have the quality as well as the intent for any articles in question.

Bring your examples, questions, and answers. Let’s share our wealth of information - after all - our objective is to make better images.

Internet — 11:00 am

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org



Microsoft Outlook Overview

In March, we’ll begin a series of monthly discussions focused squarely on Outlook with occasional mention of Microsoft Exchange server. Many people know how to use Outlook for sending and receiving e-mail, but seldom venture

into the calendar, notes, and tasklist. We'll dig into each of those features, and also share power tips on how to manage e-mail.

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

Open Q&A session in March. Bring your questions and we'll try to answer them.

Making Money on the Internet — 9:00 am

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



The 3rd Saturday in March will wrap up the two "Extended SIGs events" happening on the 1st and 2nd Saturdays of the month, providing everyone an opportunity for a quick overview of the previous weeks' activities, successes, and challenges. We'll examine how each site is performing and analyze why, both for Alan's sites and for all those sites created by SIG participants. This is the time to get any follow up questions answered and to clearly define your plan for monetizing your site and defining exactly how you'll increase both traffic and conversions.

Microsoft Access SIG — 11:00 am



Larry Linson
larry.linson2@ntpcug.org

Jim Wehe
jimwehe@gmail.com



In March, "Introduction to PowerPoint" will be presented by Access SIG Co-Leader **Larry Linson**. Larry will use *PowerPoint 2003* to introduce the basic features of this key component of the Microsoft Office suite of software. *PowerPoint* is useful for creating on-screen presentations both for personal use, and for business presentations. And, though it's not a sophisticated drawing and graphics program, you can use it to create simple graphics and drawings. (See "Look Ahead: Meetings Planned" for more.)

Our February meeting had two parts: (1) Access SIG Co-Leader **Larry Linson** presented "Dashboard Forms", originally planned for January. This on-screen user interface approach is often used for displaying data that changes in real-time. We looked at a database application for retrieving your e-mail addresses, self-contained and useable with any

mail-reader software. (2) Access SIG Co-Leaders **Jim Wehe and Larry Linson** led additional discussion on topics of interest" (to our attendees, and to others, in the next few months, even if not directly related to Access). We arrived at a plan for what President-Elect **Chuck Fiedler** has called "*Frolic and Detour*"—presentations on other Microsoft Office software and, maybe, even on other database software.

Look Ahead: Meetings Planned in 2010

We will divert our focus from Access for a few meetings to talk about PowerPoint, Microsoft Office's presentation software. This month's introductory session is the first of three sessions on the subject.

At the April 17 meeting, Access SIG Co-Leader **Jim Wehe** will present the second, "Power Point for Personal Use." Jim will talk about using PowerPoint for keeping personal records, preparing slide shows of family gatherings or other meetings, showing text and photographs of personal, family, or a small business' business history. Jim's planning to use PowerPoint 2003 for this session, also.

In May you'll see the third, "*Power Point for Group Use*". This session will use preparing a presentation for an NTPCUG meeting as the example. You might use it as a guide for preparing a meeting (our goal is to "take the scary out of doing a presentation" by helping you structure Power Point slides that not only clarify what you are saying but trigger your memory of what you planned to say). We seek an experienced SIG leader as a guest speaker, but, if no one volunteers, Access SIG co-Leaders **Jim Wehe and Larry Linson** will lead this session.

Not yet scheduled, but great nonetheless, former Word SIG Leader and former *NTPCUG Board Member Diane Bentley* will present an overview of Microsoft Word 2010, emphasizing new features in this soon-to-be released version.

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

A continuing call for presenters: We want you to show us an Access database you created and use, a tutorial on an Access-related topic, other Access-related material, or to contact a friend of yours who'd be a good guest speaker. If you need help constructing the presentation, see **Jim** or **Larry** – and be sure to look at the notices in Topics for Future Meetings, *Introduction to Power Point* and *Power Point for Group Use*.

Valuable Prizes: We will have some goodies from the **Microsoft-sponsored User Group Support**

Services kit, and even though there was no “Office Developer” kit to choose, we will have some **XBox** games – if you are not an **XBox** gamer, maybe you have a son, daughter, grandson, or granddaughter who’d really appreciate them.

Microsoft Certification SIG - 1:30 pm

Tom Perkins
tomperki@gmail.com

Last month, the august CertSIG group discussed concepts associated with the use of a Data Access Layer and viewed a video presented by Chris Morgan on the ObjectDataSource and the FormView control.

This month we’ll look at some of the fundamentals of Data Binding and examine a FormView control used in our ongoing St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store project. We’ll also have a discussion about the current state of the project, and a few things we’ve learned to avoid.

Questions or comments?

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

Microsoft Expression Web — 10:00 am

Chris Morgan
chris.morgan@ntpcug.org



In February, we looked at video editing. In March, we will continue looking at producing video by utilizing Camtasia Studio. Even if you don’t have the product, this session will be instructive in showing how videos can be recorded and edited for web site display.

Mobile Computing — 10:00 am

No meeting this month. See you in April.

Powershell – 10:00 - 11:00 am

Larry Weiss
lfw@airmail.net

Gil Brand
gbrand@ntpcug.org



Join us this month for the “Top 25 Things You Need To Know About Powershell”. Larry Weiss and I have been compiling this list for a few weeks and are ready to present OUR version. But, we also want to hear YOUR thoughts. Start drafting your list today! Email it to me if you like and we can compare notes.

Windows Inside Out — 12:30 pm

Glynn Brooks
glynn.brooks@ntpcug.org



Windows 7 File Management

At the March meeting, we’ll have a deep discussion of 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



Chuck Stark
chuck.stark@ntpcug.org

Gil Brand
gb1@ntpcug.org



We will have a general Q&A session on all things related to Windows and PCs. 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.

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 this important job:

Information Desk — Charles Rem

crem@ntpcug.org

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

Association of PC User Groups
Dallas Regional Conference
 SMU in Plano, 5236 Tennyson Parkway, Plano, Texas
 April 30 - May 1, 2010
 Co-Sponsored by the North Texas PC Users Group, Dallas , Tx

Friday, April 30, 2010

< ===== TRACKS ===== >				
Main Presentations	Windows	Open Source	APCUG/Other	
Noon Registration Begins				
1:15 PM	What does the future hold for IT workers and technology consumers (Dwight Silverman)			
2:45 PM	<i>Afternoon Break (Snacks & Beverages Provided)</i>			
3:00 PM	Windows 7 Mobile (Jay Ferron)	File Format Conversions (Bill Drissel)	Joomla (Richard Sharon)	
4:00 PM	Live Meeting (Mitch Garvis)	Open DNS or Google DNS (John Abbot)	APCUG Workshop - Building a User Group	
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM	<i>Social Gathering - Beverages and Snacks Provided</i> Come meet and mingle with other attendees.			

Saturday, May 1, 2010

< ===== TRACKS ===== >				
Main Presentations	Windows	Open Source	APCUG/Other	
<i>7:30 AM - 8:30 AM. Full Breakfast for Attendees/Volunteers</i>				
8:00 AM	Microsoft - 5 & 10 Years Into The Future (John Weston)			
9:00 AM	Home Network Security (Charles Rem)	Ubuntu 10.4 (John Abbott)	Networking to a New Job (Jeri Steele)	
10:00 AM	Visual Studio 2010 (Chris Koenig)	Open Source (Bill Drissel)	Windows 7 (Glynn Brooks)	
11:00 AM	Office 2010 (John Weston)	TBA	Hyper V vs. VMware	
12:00 PM	Who is APCUG (Jay Ferron)	<i>Lunch - Meals & Beverages Provided</i>		
1:00 PM	TBA (Glynn Brooks)	Windows & Linux Integration (Chris Cox)	Ai Squared	
2:00 PM	Build a Web Page in an hour (Chris Morgan)	IBM - Small Bus. Server (Mitch Garvis)	OpenStreetMap Project (Thea Clay)	
3:00 PM	<i>Afternoon Break (Snacks & Beverages Provided)</i>			
3:15 PM	IT Deployment of Windows 7 (Jay Ferron)	Linux as a Desktop	Digital Photography (Spike Smith)	
4:15 PM	Home Server	Google Ninjas (John Abbott)	Social Networking Security (Karen Hart)	
5:15 PM	<i>Closing Remarks & Evaluation</i>			

[Register at](#)

[More Info? Go to www.NTPCUG.org](http://www.NTPCUG.org) <https://registration.apcug.net/dallas>

News from the Northwest

By Teresa Hennig

NOTICES and Events:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Microsoft Answers -- (Feb 2010)

Have a question about Office or Windows? You may be able to find the solution or get personalized assistance at Microsoft Answers, a collection of community-based forums that put you in touch with others

who have shared and/or solved similar challenges. You can get direct assistance and search databases of questions, answers, scenarios and discussion. <http://us1.office2010beta.microsoft.com/>

The New Office Blog -- (Feb 2010)

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

Microsoft Access Blog (Feb 2010)

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

Brunch n Learn – Access 2010/SharePoint 2010-Better Together, Advanced Topics -- Saturday Sessions 9 AM PST (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, 9 AM -10:30 PST, (Jan 2010)

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

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

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

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

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

Microsoft Security Essentials provides real-time protection for your home PC that guards against viruses, spyware, and other malicious software. It

works with Windows XP (Service Packs 2 or 3), Windows Vista and Windows 7. Download from: www.microsoft.com/security_essentials

Employment and Marketing Leads

Elance -- Marketing Opportunity for Access Developers (May 2009)

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

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

DOWNLOADS and Other New Stuff:

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

Windows Live Movie Maker (Sept 2009)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Developer Resource Tab for Word 2007 Ribbon (Aug 2009)

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

Office 2007 Ribbon and Toolbar Overview - (Aug 2009)

Learn about the ribbon and how to create custom groups, controls and toolbars. Regretfully, this Microsoft tutorial only covers Word, Excel and Pow-

erPoint. But, you can always ask for an autographed copy of our book, "RibbonX, Customizing the Office 2007 Ribbon," if you want instructions and examples for Access.

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

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

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

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

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

Access 2003 Solution Center --- (August 2008)

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

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.msp> for a comprehensive display topics. You may also find what you are looking for by using <http://groups.google.com> or try www.google.com/microsoft.html for Microsoft related pages or by

setting multiple search criteria at www.google.com/advanced_search?hl=en.

Access Blog – by the Access Team

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

Get Help When You Need It – Office Online

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

Database Issue Checker

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

Theresa is a Microsoft MVP for Access, Leader of the Seattle Access Group and Pacific Northwest Access Developers, INETA Community Champion, and member of the North Texas PC User Group

APCUG Regional Conference

(Cont'd from Page 1)

key items in the world of virtualization.

Rather than listing all the topics here, take a look at the proposed agenda on Page 6 in this newsletter, and on our web site at www.ntpcug.org.

Given that we are renting the professional facilities at SMU-in-Plano, serving meals and hosting a reception, it shouldn't be a surprise that there is a fee, currently \$70. While I wish I could say it's all free as part of your NTPCUG membership, that's just not feasible. But \$70 is a great deal for all you can learn, and expect a goodly number of freebies to be given out as well.

For those interested in volunteering, we can waive the fee for at least one day if you will agree to help us staff and manage the event. A minimum number of hours will be needed to get you a free pass, but even if you don't plan to attend, we will still need able bodies to help give directions, pass out handouts and free goodies, register folks as they arrive on Friday and Saturday, help stuff the "welcome bags", and other items still being compiled. If you are interested in helping, just e-mail chris.morgan@ntpcug.org, or plan to provide your information at the Noon business meetings on March 20 and April 17. There will be a finite number of volunteers needed, and it's the usual first-come—first served.

More details will arrive in separate e-mails to our membership – be watching for that. Details are also being posted on our website at www.ntpcug.org.

To register, go to <https://registration.apcug.net/dallas>.

Digital Photography – Tips and Tricks

Buying New Digicams is not simple

Buying a New Digicam is Strange. Aunt Agnes asks me this twice a year, “There are so many models – where do I start?”

Remember Auntie, when your dad gave you a Brownie box camera by Kodak? The most difficult thing to do was to load the film. You actually had to open the box, point the film into a slot, and twist this makeshift handle (while viewing for dots and numbers to be seen through a small hole. Yes, you used to jam the film, turn past the dots and then the numbers... Whoops! Too far – Again!).

Well dear, it is easier now, and just about everything you can buy is infinitely easier than that old point-and-shoot. It does not appear that Auntie believes me when I tell her this, but she does remind me that she has heard it all before.

Well, first, Aggie (sometimes she prefers Aggie rather than the Aunt Agnes handle), we just select a modest price tag - this is the best way for you to get started. Just check inside your kitchen cookie jar and determine which amount between \$150 and \$275 you'll need to remove from your turkey fund. Also dear, decide if your knitting group, Euchre group, and Bunco group will allow you to take their pictures while they are in their house coats, old slacks, and just downright weird clothes they drop in with.

Personally, I'd go for the \$200 to \$250 because... But wait! If I'd tell her more details now, she'll get confused... Again!

Just like we did before with Aggie, I convince her that 'digital' means no film is required in the new camera. “But, you said...” “Yes,” I said, ‘There is an SD digital data flash memory card that is easy as making a custard or Jell-O pudding to put in place.’ I knew I made a mistake here and spent an hour stating that a simple little SD Card just plugs in. I'm sure glad that she will have bought it before I show her where that hidden slot for battery, memory card, and (ugh!) cables plug in.

When I talk with Auntie about plumbing, electrical wiring and the quickest route to the Winn-Dixie supermarket, we don't really communicate. Likewise, when she discusses proper eye shadow, lipstick color, and that plaids do not go with even plaids, we don't really communicate. Now, when we discuss sauté, blend, sear,

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blanch, whip, and things such as that there kitchen-talk, we communicate divinely. I think this time, when she goes to buy the digicam, she should have her daughter Angel come along. After all, we need to keep that aggressive sales guy that's on sales commission at least at arm's length.

It seems like only a short time ago that digicams were all quite simple to understand and use. Yep, they still are easy, except when you're told about the partially developed features:

- Face detection
- Eye detection
- Smile detection
- Red-eye mitigation
- 18 to 30 environmental choices.

We can live without all of the above features. What we really need are options for:

- Aperture priority
- Time (shutter) priority
- Manual exposure settings

Yeah! The brochures, salesman, and TV commercials – will all give their spiel on these features rather than how nice it is to just point and shoot and not have to load film. Okay, Auntie and Angel will be primed for this, realizing that beginners love to obtain nice images simply by using the “auto” setting that the camera should always start off with. Gosh, as simple as the Brownie!

Really now, I plan to get Aunt Agnes going again using the auto (default) setting and let her enjoy like the dickens all those dozens of pictures. Will they be great? Nope! But they will be pleasing.

We'll also discuss techniques for viewing and framing, as well as the things to avoid, all of which will improve Auntie's shots by a magnitude. Then we will move into less forbidding techniques like not framing subjects with a bright window background surrounding the center point of interest and playing havoc with automatic exposure settings.

Let's go to the store now and look at these following basic styles while selecting the “getting started” digicam. Let's also define our camera:

- **Digicam** - The generic name for digital camera
- **Compact** - A small inexpensive camera having a nearly full-featured operation
- A **zoom lens** and **enough exposure** speed to get by

- **dSLR**
 - o (digital) single lens reflex
 - o interchangeable lenses
- Prosumer
 - o semi-professional, typically \$1,000 and up
 - o for high-end amateurs and general professional use
- Professional
 - o Thousands of \$\$ with several lenses.

To further prime my niece Angel and Auntie from counter-attacks from sales personnel, they may need some more trivia. Let's add some here.

Optics do not use electricity, but EVF (Electronic View Finders) (LCD) do. Besides, they take away valuable real time making and scanning while we pan the image. They might even let the seller get enlightened about their optic knowledge, i.e., optics are the glass that works like an efficient pin-hole on steroids with its magnificent amplification and image control.

Aunt Agnes will want the option to take videos even though her friends have (real) camcorders. She may even let that sales guy know that she knows that...

Her friend's survey of over 2,000 photographers who regularly use digicam pictures for business and pleasure stated their propensity for making video clips or movies, as follows

USES VIDEO	Percentage
Yes	14%
Seldom	42%
No	44%

The above estimates do not consider that professional videographers seldom use still photography. Similarly, wedding and portrait photographers seldom shoot video. Consumers might shoot either one. (Sorry, Cheney – this one just slipped out.)

RAW

After going through a four-hour introductory training session on RAW formats, presented by her Kitchen Tools and Beautification Social Club, Aunt Agnes says, "I now understand. RAW is the image before it is made readable, and I should want it because it is just like making a meat loaf." Auntie continues with, "I can buy a prepared package from the market and pop it in the oven, but this isn't the real thing. RAW is like I want my flavors -- grandma's recipe -- and if I spend my time doing it exactly as described, I will like the results. So be it. Although it may take awhile as you teach me more about editing and then it will even be looking super."

Well, for long-winded Auntie, I tell her she can buy this feature so she can tell her friends she has it, although, she won't have to tell them she doesn't use it. One more caveat – her daughter might use it when they have big parties and want to create something for their genealogy club's admiration. What I really told Auntie was she can use many more millions of colors using RAW and no one will ever know this while they share images over the Internet. She quickly conceded, "But I don't need hundreds of millions of colors as, after all, when I wear my red dress – I want it to look red and not faded."

Bridge Digicam (Not restricted to card games)

Bridge – Shares high-end features of the dSLR, however uses a fixed lens and perhaps smaller image sensor. This digicam style is for those not desiring interchangeable lenses, but still be able to entertain many of the high-end features as more manual controls.

Sizing (Not starch or wallpaper aid)

Yes, everyone learned all about the popular 35 millimeter-sized film cans. After so many years, we just completely accepted it and then along came those cost-reduction fellows who wanted to re-invent the can and make this smaller one called APC. Micro-miniaturization has been clicking its heels for fifty years, and is considered a better invention tool than toilet paper. Gee! So the other side of the conglomerate vs. standardization fellows got caught unprepared. So, we now lack a universal standard as full-sized digital means 35mm and this was our fine starting point. This new kid on the block size matching APC film size leaped ahead of 4/3 and (unfortunately) many more sizes and now the APC size is the most popular for the majority of low-end through prosumer.

Formats – full-format, 4/3, APC, 4x5 (8x10), 4x6, no universal standard.

Most small digicams will have a lens smaller than the APC size. This reduces overall performance but is required due to the small overall and lens sizes.

What really confuses Aunt Agnes more than anything else is that there is no 'one size fits all.' She knows that bigger is better but she hesitates to fully adopt this notion as she looks at her waistline whenever she approaches any mirror. She says she should be a size 8 or 10 while those 32's and such would be gross for her. There are just so many sizes in defining digicams as with that there megapixel stuff, weighs only 8 ounces, fits and hides itself in bottom of purse. Should I even dare tell her that 'full-frame' is absolute best for optimum results?

Buy at a store. Brick and mortar is the name of the game. Why? You need to see it, feel it, prove that it exists; it's comfortable, it's made for North American standards, has a valid warranty, and how about someone to answer your questions?

When I tell Auntie that she should buy a camera to keep, I'm not sure she is listening. A throw-away item is not the best way for a beginner to learn, yet neither are the ultimate high-priced mega-feature, mega-specifications, and mega-dollar cameras. Gosh! After laying out \$10,000 for the multi-mega special, you may readily discover that this isn't for you.

The other "isn't for you" approach doesn't work, as the throw-away models are lacking in comfort, features, ease of use, provide little to learn from, and possibly just plain ole "I don't like it". My preference is to buy a camera that one can learn from, serves several purposes, is enjoyable, and one you can be proud of. Yeah! I advised Aunt Agnes of this when she bought one for her granddaughter. This was a real camera – not a cheap toy. Little Miss Agnes learned the digicam, enjoyed it, and produced great work for her school's newsletter. (Canon A590 IS)

The most expensive camera may be that throw-away. You buy it because of price, but you don't want to spend more just for learning. This is bad, because a throw-away is a total loss as you or others cannot learn from or enjoy it. Buy a nearly full-featured model that meets specifications and requirements for general usage. When it comes time to upgrade to meet your more concise photography needs, the good beginner's camera can still remain as a backup or supplementary camera for years to come.

Avoid the inferior and/or cheap camera that denigrates initiative, thus weakening the value as a gift.

Keyboard *(Con't from Page 2)*

Here are my principles:

- * assume letter frequencies in English are ordered: ETAOIN SHDLRU
- * try to move the eight ETAOIN SH to the rest positions on the home row
- * try to move the ten ETAOIN SHDL to the home row
- * try to position any keys moved onto the home row to the same finger as Qwerty
- * try to position any keys moved off the home row to the same finger as Qwerty
- * try to leave Qwerty keys in place (especially the least used bottom row)
- * try to keep the same right / left hand division as

Colemak at least on the home row

Here's my result, the Drismak keyboard:

Q W ; F G Y U K L P
A S D T R H N I O E
Z X C V B J M , . /

- * Seven of ETAOIN SH are in the rest positions
- * Nine of ETAOIN SHDL are on the home row (L is not, R is instead)
- * ALL keys, except E and ; , are on the same finger as Qwerty! (This amazed me)
- * Six keys were moved to the home row; six were moved off; eighteen were unmoved!
- * HNIOE are located in the right hand home row like the Colemak keyboard (under different fingers)
- * ASDTR are located in the left hand home row like Colemak (under different fingers)
- * The only change to the bottom row was to move hi frequency N off and lo freq J on.
- * As in the Colemak, Control-ZXCVC are in the same position as Qwerty.
- * Of the ten most frequent digraphs, only three are on the same hand. (Two of the exceptions are on the rest keys.)

Because all the keys except E and ; are on the same finger as Qwerty, it should be easy for people to learn. I wrote AutoHotKey scripts to map Qwerty to Drismak and to restore Qwerty. The new kb is congenial if I don't try to type fast. Of course, I haven't yet learned "chords" like "the", "and", "ing" etc. on the new arrangement.

The name "Drismak" was selected following Coleman's idea in:

http://colemak.com/FAQ#Why_is_it_called_Colemak.3F . It is intended to acknowledge my debt to the ideas of August Dvorak and Shai Coleman.

To try the Drismak keyboard, first download and install AutoHotKey from <http://www.autohotkey.com/>.

Then, request files QWERTY to Drismak.ahk and QWERTYrestore.ahk from our Sharepoint site at <http://sp.ntpcug.org/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx> and place into a CONVENIENT folder. Open a file manager window on that folder.

Put a picture of the Drismak KB where you can see it. Open an editor.

Double-Click on QWERTY to Drismak.ahk. AutoHotKey will convert your KB. When you want your Qwerty back, dbl click on QWERTYrestore.ahk. If all else fails, rebooting will restore your KB.

This Month in Our History

Here we are in March, looking forward to the coming of Spring in Texas. Meanwhile, the Yankees are only looking for two more months of winter. Dontcha just **love Texas!**

So, let's move on to a review of the happenings recorded in the March 1985 and 1990 issues of *PC News*, looking for comparisons between then and now.

March of 1985 *PC News* carried an article on STARTEXT, a service then offered by the *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*. For a mere \$9.95 per month, one could access a variety of *Star-Telegram* features (news, classifieds, stock prices, etc.) over a 300 or 1200 baud connection from any PC with communication capabilities. A reported 1,500 Metroplex citizens made use of this service. Today, we can access nearly any newspaper's website for free and get the same result and at a lot higher speed. Oh yeah, and for FREE.

Dick Gall wrote a software report on Micrografx Quick Draw Artist, a \$50 program intended to let IBM monochrome display users create a variety of visuals using the block graphics characters available in extended ASCII. It is noted that the program required DOS 2.0 or higher and a generous 128K of RAM.

Dick went on to review TAXPAD, a \$45 federal income tax package, a package of templates for any spreadsheet program. The printed result was a ready-to-sign-and-mail tax filing for the 1984 tax year.

Carrington Dixon wrote of a bug in DOS 3.0's backup utility where the function would appear to run properly but would result in a backup file of zero length and, obviously, no possibility of restoration. All one had to do to fix this was to use a program that allows the editing of sector information (the writer used Norton Utilities) and then perform some fairly simple editing of the directory information. This process was made to sound almost simple, but I think I'll pass, thanks. Fortunately, DOS 3.1 came along fairly quickly, fixing this bug.

Fred Williams wrote an extensive overview of the IBM PC Network.

The Disk of the Month offerings included a couple of programs designed to assist the user in preparing annual IRS tax filings and a genealogy program. All were noted as being double-sided 5¼" diskettes available for \$6 each.

The monthly Swap Shop primarily had offerings

by Chuck Fiedler
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of support and training services, but one ad offered an Apple II+ for a mere \$1,500. I wonder what that sucker must have cost new!

The March 1990 issue announced three vendor presentations. Videotex Systems presented their color video capture application. Ashton-Tate demonstrated their Multimate 4.0 word processing application. And Microsoft demonstrated their new Word for Windows, the new application designed to use the Graphical User Interface (GUI) of Windows.

Douglas Scott, the SIG leader of the UNIX/ZENIX SIG, reported that 20 people attended the inaugural meeting of the SIG in February. Today, many more people than that attend the LINUX SIG meetings.

Jim Hoisington wrote the 37th installment of his column, On Complexity. In this installment, Jim noted the emergence of peer-to-peer networking in replacement of the former "slave" to "host" networks, previously the office standard. Jim noted the emergence of "groupware", specifically Lotus Notes, which facilitated user-to-user interfaces in the workplace. The last I knew, Lotus Notes was still a powerful workplace application.

In an article titled *DOS Environment Trick*, **Fred Williams** wrote of the procedure he used to increase his DOS environment space and a method to modify the DOS path variable. He used a small batch file to accomplish these tasks and went on to explain what each line of the batch file did. Granted, it's been 20 years since I used to do this sort of thing and I've forgotten how I used to do so, but I'm glad we no longer need to worry about such things.

Reagan Andrews had his monthly *The Variety Store* column, the first place I always went when my copy of *PC News* arrived. He reported that CPU speeds were moving ahead to a full 25 MHz if you installed a non-Intel chip to add math processing to the Intel 386SX. Gee, why would anyone need all that speed in a PC?

Reagan later wrote of the 640K RAM limit that had existed since the beginning of the IBM/Microsoft PC standard. While many users had installed LIM (Lotus-Intel-Microsoft) RAM extenders to accommodate true "memory hog" applications, most applications still operated happily within the 640K limit. But the future was coming. Do you have but 640K of RAM today?

An article by **Alan Lintel** titled Q&A – Windows dealt with the rivalry between Microsoft Windows and IBM's OS/2. I remember the engineers where I worked raving about the capabilities of OS/2 vs. the then-current Windows 3.0. Lintel opined that Windows would never have the multitasking and multi-threading capabilities of OS/2 and Unix. As history has proven, the business community didn't agree with his opinion. Remember that it is the corporate customer who ultimately decides what will be adopted and what will wither on the vine.

Our then-Volunteer Coordinator, **Connie Andrews**, gave recognition to fully 68 member volunteers. These good folks gave freely of their time to the good of the Group. And that was before we had TechSoup where volunteers can get the incredible software deals we have today. Have I mentioned that this is a significant benefit to being a member and volunteering time for the Group? OK, I will. Reread the current paragraph and then add your name to the list of volunteers.

Good advice, both then and now, came from **Robert Perrenot** in an article titled Don't Throw Away That Toner Cartridge. Perrenot was noted as the owner of Tiger Paw of Dallas, a rebuilder of laser printer cartridges, so he probably knew of which he wrote. He noted that some cartridge recyclers take the easy way out and simply refill the spent cartridge, whereas true rebuilders disassemble the spent cartridge, thoroughly clean the body and use a nine-step process to remanufacture and test the resultant product. He noted that, if you have a bad experience with one refiller, don't abandon the process. Find a new refiller who uses the proper methodology. You're sure to save money.

The Disk of the Month column featured fully 22 disks available for purchase at \$2 per disk. Shareware fees, if any, were to be sent to the author of the software. Not surprisingly, several of the offerings were for tax filing packages.

In 1990, we met at the InfoMart and had a total of 26 SIGs meeting between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. With as many as six SIGs meeting at the same time, it was always a conflict to decide which SIG to attend. I guess that hasn't changed much although we certainly don't have as many competing SIGs for any given time slot.

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 March flyer?

Emeritus Members

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

Thank you!

from your 2010

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Calendar

March	April	May
13 9:00 am—Noon 2nd Saturday at Microsoft	10 9:00 am—Noon 2nd Saturday at Microsoft	8 9:00 am—Noon 2nd Saturday at Microsoft
20 8:00 am—2:30 pm 3rd Saturday at King of Glory	17 8:00 am—2:30 pm 3rd Saturday at King of Glory	15 8:00 am—2:30 pm 3rd Saturday at King of Glory

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