

Mother Board

***This Month
At NOPC
Flea
Market
Saturday
July 13th
10-1
J.D. Meisler
School***

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It's Here

**NOPC
Flea Market
Saturday
July 13, 2002
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
J.D. Meisler**

Be There!

President's message for July 2002

Hello everyone, I hope you all are managing to stay cool as we enter the dog days of summer. Although this is a computer club, please allow me to indulge in a brief off-topic piece of advice: Please perform the required maintenance on your air conditioning units! This is the worst time of the year for this type of equipment to go down.

I would like to remind everyone that our Computer Flea Market is Saturday July 13th, from 10A to 1P with one hour of setup and take down. If you want to have a table, please drop me an email at my president's address so we can get an accurate count of the number of tables we will need. I will be going around and trying to get as many vendors as I can to participate in this as possible; if you have a particular favorite, please let me know and I will visit them to deliver the "NOPC pitch". ☺ Once again, since we will have our hands full with this event, there will be **no** meeting on July 3! Remember, buyers will be asked for a \$2 entrance donation; it costs \$15 to have a table (members) and \$50 for non-members (includes \$35/year membership fee). I have submitted an article for the News section of our website which is up right now that explains what will be available at this event; we are hoping that this will pull in some additions to the membership roster. If anyone has any questions that might not have been covered yet concerning the flea market, please feel free to email myself or another board member for clarification.

As usual, we will have membership brochures, extra newsletters, and business cards at the door; feel free to pass these along to friends and acquaintances that might be able to use the benefits of the New Orleans Personal Computer Club.

I'll see you there with my table,
Ray

We have a Winner!

The winner of last month's meeting "Best Ideas Contest" is **William A. Jackey** for his on PCPitStop.com. This free site will allow you to check you PC for viruses and perform other useful tests.

For this winning suggestion, Bill wins a \$50 gift certificate from Best Buy. Congratulations, Bill.

NEW COMPUTER USERS SIG

by Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.

Our SIG meeting had a nice turnout of eleven members. Thanks for all that attended. A number of questions were answered and we did a general review of what we have covered in the past along with a quiz to help reinforce what was learned. Some people found out they knew more than they thought and others found out they need to practice more on their computer to help better understand the concepts covered in our class like meeting.

The exam covered the desktop, icons, windows, and the taskbar. The channel bar, which is no longer used by Microsoft, was covered in passing. We did a mini review before taking the exam and this helped all remember some of the items and subjects covered in previous meetings. Each exam help bring about more questions that were answered in detail. This allowed for actual demonstrations on the computer to give a better visual answer for all present.

This meeting was a little less formal and more open. We all had a good time with seeing what we knew and where we needed to improve. We will continue the next SIG meeting in the same way and than go back to learning more basic information about how to use the computer.

Some more questions were answered and given individual attention and we were able to close the meeting a little earlier than usual.

If you have any questions on using your computer, now is the best time to attend this SIG. We will be covering all aspects of computer usage during the year. If you call ahead of time, we can better prepare for your specific question and have an answer for you at the meeting. Tell your friends and help get some new members into the club by coming to this very informative program. The e-mail for this SIG will be newusers@nopc.org. Any communications outside of SIG meeting time is accomplish by e-mail or though phone calls (Ashton C. Mouton, Jr. at 246-7759). There will be samples of work, problem solving, and a question and answer session at each meeting.

Hope to see you there.
Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.

Suites 2000 SIG

by Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.

Looks like we are down to only two people for this SIG since only two people came to the June SIG meeting. I will try to get in contact with the other participants for this SIG and will try to see if they want this SIG to continue.

We covered a number of subjects in our June SIG meeting and all got something from attending this session. How to organize and best save a presentation on a storage device was how the SIG began. From master folder creation to naming text, graphic, sound, clip art, photo, and logo files were covered. Backing up the presentation and what type of storage devices one should use or not use were mentioned. Of course one must always remember to "BACK UP" their work especially if they leave their computer for any length of time.

The beginnings of how to create a presentation were covered in some detail. We talk about Auto Content Wizard, Design Template, and using a Blank Presentation. The Auto Content Wizard is best used when one does not have their thoughts fully developed or want a way to get their presentation completed quickly. It rarely meets all of your needs exactly. It is best used when one needs help with organizing their thoughts or ideas.

If your thoughts for your presentation are already fully developed it might be best if one started with the Design Template. Here you will provide the foundation for your visual presentation with the use of AutoLayout. The Design Template is nothing more than a group of predefined backgrounds and designs. These templates allow for a unified look between your slides especially for bullets, fonts, and graphics.

Almost all professional presenters who use visuals will almost always do their presentation with some type of back ground design. They do this because it helps create a specific type of impression upon their audience and will set a desired mood for the audience. One big problem with using the Design Template involves the many choices available for the presenter. There are also a number of vendors be-

side Microsoft that provide other possibilities for a presenter's use.

The Slide Master was mentioned in this meeting but not covered in detail. We will cover this device in greater detail at a later meeting. This master helps make general changes easier to handle because it involves all the slides in your presentation. Using the Slide Master makes your slides like a little more professional and are a little easier to handle.

From this point we show how everyone how to use and edit their text in their presentation. Various items such as using placeholders, entering text, selecting text fonts and colors, using the Drawing Toolbar for editing text were all covered in detail. Deleting, moving, pasting, and enhancing text with Wordart were covered in detail. How best to make columns and lists, along with the different dialogue boxes were also discussed.

Since no one brought his or her homework assignment in we did not go over any of their work.

If you have any questions on how to give a visual presentation, talk to the moderator and he will try to help at the general membership meeting with your questions. If you call ahead of time he can better prepare for your question and make sure he has an answer for you at the SIG meeting.

The e-mail for this SIG will be suites2000@nopc.org. Any communications outside of SIG meeting time is accomplish by e-mail or though phone calls (Ashton C. Mouton, Jr. at 246-7759). There will be samples of work, problem solving, and a question and answer session at each meeting.



A moment of silence in memory of Bill Elliot.

Hard Drive Tips Part V

by Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.

The bulk of this material was taken from an article titled NOT HARD AT ALL written by Jeff Dodd in a magazine called *SMART COMPUTING LEARNING SERIES: PC Tips* published by Sandhills Publishing Company, copyright 2002. Their website is at <http://www.smartcomputing.com>.

Hope that these last four articles have been informative and useful for all our readers. If you have any questions regarding the information in this article please feel free to write the author at acmoutonjr@cs.com.

Tip 11- Reduce power consumption

What we are talking about is the need to reduce the need for consuming power when not needed. This is not as important for desktop units as it is for portables running on a self contain energy source. If you work solely on a desktop unit, power consumption is only important when the unit is not in use for extended periods of time. For portable units saving as much power as possible is a major concern.

If you are using a desk top unit and find that you are away from that unit for fifteen minutes or more at a time than you should set your computer so that the hard drive becomes inactive. This is especially important if you keep your computer on twenty-four hours seven days a week. Not only do you save on electricity but you also save on the hard drive bearings. This could help extend the life of your computer by a few months or years.

For laptops saving the amount of battery life available is all-important when you are running on battery power. Some portable computers will eat up a battery's power in as little as two hours or less. The major power consumer for a laptop is the hard drive. The more the hard drive is in use the more power consumed from the battery pack. Controlling how long the hard drive stays on when not in use helps cut down the unnecessary use of battery power and can extend the time you have for working on your computer.

You can conserve power by shutting down the hard drive during periods of inactivity or lack of use. If you are using Windows 9x click on "My Computer" than click on the Control Panel icon and than double-click on the Power Management icon. The Property Management style sheet will appear. Click on the Power Schemes tab if not already showing. At the bottom of the style sheet you will see some dialogue boxes where you can set the time to turn off the monitor and the hard drive. You will

see two columns one where you are running on AC power (Plugged in) and the other is for battery power (Running on batteries). It is this authors suggestion that if you are using AC power to pick between one half hour and one hour to shut your devices down when not in use. When on battery power, pick between three and five minutes to shut your devices down when not in use. If you are using Windows XP, click on Start, than My Computer, than click on Control Panel, than double-click on Power Options icon. The Power Management style sheet will appear. Click on the Power Schemes tab if not already showing. Near the bottom of the style sheet you will see two rows of dialogue boxes where you can set the time to turn off the monitor and the hard drive. It is this authors suggestion that you pick an appropriate time for the type computer you are using. See my suggestions above for what times to use.

Tip 12 – Avoid viruses

Hard drive performance can be seriously hampered if you get one or more viruses on your system. The best way to avoid getting a virus on your system is by using some form of protection or inoculating your hard drive. There are many vendors that make anti-viruses software that will help you keep from getting infected. The two most popular brands are Symantec's Norton AntiVirus and McAfee's VirusScan.

If you run a good antivirus application at all times on your hard drive you should have protection against most if not all viruses. Once you are inoculated you will need to update your protection on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to maintain your protection. Everyday new viruses are generated and the only way to keep your hard drive protected from infection is to maintain your hard drive's protection by keeping the antivirus application up-to-date.

Tip 13 – Check for a lag in system performance

If your computer system is not functioning correctly it can affect the performance of the hard drive. Bottlenecks in various paths such as the motherboard, operating system, CPU, registers or other external devices can affect how your hard drive will perform. When a hard drive is maintained properly and kept in good working order it should operate at or near its optimum characteristics. When this happens you computer system should not operate poorly or slow down its performance. Slowed computer operations may not be due to a hard drive's performance, so you may need to check other system areas to find the correct culprit. Only replace your hard drive as a last resort to improve performance.

(Continued on page 5)

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Tip 14 – Adding another hard drive

In the old days of expensive memory, replacing a hard drive was a major decision. Today with memory and drive systems relatively cheap the decision to get a bigger hard drive or a better hard drive is not much of a choice. Still one needs to know when it is best to upgrade to a better hard drive, or if it is better to add a second drive to the system. It is not always an easy choice to make because it will all depend on how you use your system.

First it is best to have two hard drives than to replace an old smaller hard drive with one, single, larger unit. Probable the biggest problem you will encounter by having a replacement drive is determining how you will transfer the information from the old smaller drive to the new larger drive. Second you may encounter registration conflicts with application programs and this may be more trouble than it is worth. Therefore, if possible, try to add a second drive and slave the second drive to the first.

In today's market and computer systems it is easier than ever to add a second hard drive. The best situation is to match manufacture of the second drive with that of the old hard drive. If that is not a viable alternative that match the type of drive with each other such as SCSI to SCSI, IDE to IDE, EIDE to EIDE, and so on. Next, if room is available, purchase the second drive as an internal unit to take advantage of prices and bus usage.

If you cannot get an internal unit for your second drive than you will have to use an external connection for your hard drive. Here you want to get the best connection possible. Primary is IEEE 1394 or FireWire, next in line is an USB port, next try for a PCI type of connection if possible, and last is a parallel or serial port connection.

Tip 15 - Back up

Back up, back up, back up. You have heard this over and over, again and again, so we know the mantra well. The question is do you back up? Backing up ones hard drive is probably the best way to protect your productivity from possible future hard drive problems. Backing up is second in importance only to saving your information. Just think, what would you do if you lost all your important information right now? Would you loose all that hard work with no ability to recapture any of it? This would mean a big loss in productivity if all your work had to be done over again.

There are a number of ways you can back up such as using floppy disks, zip drives, tape drives, but the best

method today for backing up data is with CD-RW. Good back up software is necessary to make the back up process easy and fluid. There are some good programs on the market beside the one packaged with your operating system.

Probably the biggest problem with backing up data is when to do the back up and how. For most home users and small businesses backing up once weekly is all that is necessary unless the data is of a very sensitive nature. If that is the case than daily or every-other day back-ups are necessary. For mid-size and large companies daily and hourly back up are necessary due to the nature of the business and the importance of the changes in data that happen in the business.

For the most part the only information that needs backing up is all of your data files with some incremental backing up of data files that have undergone some type of change. Incremental backing up is easy since all that is backed up is those files that have changes since the last time a back up was performed. This can save you time if only a few of your files need backing up.

The key here is to remember to back up often and to keep the back up information stored away from the information in use. It is best to store your backed up files at another site for maximum protection.

Hope all of the tips you have been given are useful. This is the last article in the series.

(Continued from page 6)

he was involved in and successfully resolved, but noted that future problems on the system would cause the tech support personnel to be blamed.

Idea #5-Jerry: Believes that having access to you bank account thru the internet is the way to go. Allows you easy access to questions about your account at any time, day or night. Most banks offer this service.

Idea #6-Arthur: Expanding on the ideas #3 & 4, he noted that if you watch the sales, you can often buy a whole new UPS cheaper than a replacement battery. However, his main idea was to remind us to tune in to Gerry McCann's on Saturday. (See the NOPC event calendar on page 8).

Idea #7- Bill: The winning idea! www.pcpitstop.com PC Pitstop runs diagnostics on your PC to identify things that might help improve performance. The process is fully automated, private and safe. Best of all, the service is free! *(more to come next month)*

THE FUN OF VOLUNTEERING

by Virginia Kieran

Webster says that a volunteer is “one who gives of his own free will.”

Long before Owen and I joined the NOPCC we learned that computer users are great volunteers - they will share their time, expertise, equipment, and advice. We also learned that no organization can exist without dedicated members who volunteer whatever they can contribute. Since we do not have a lot of computer knowledge to share, and since I have a Big Mouth, someone volunteered me to make telephone calls alerting members it was time to pay their dues. Along the way we transported a member who does not drive, sold soft drinks to help defray expenses. (I was shocked to learn how much it costs to use the school for meetings).

While our publicity chairman had more pressing concerns, we sent information to the news outlets. NOPCC had a chance at exposure working the Microsoft Extreme Event, and many of you volunteered to help. That rewarded us with some freebies from MS. Most of the time the only reward is knowing you are doing a bit to help the organization function.

You do get to know your fellow members better; realize how much previous officers have done and how the current ones are attempting to carry on the tradition; and there's always the extra exposure to the gurus when you have a computer problem!!!!

Each of you has something to contribute - knowledge, time, energy, ideas, suggestions, criticisms, or friends who might become members, or transport for someone who cannot drive at night.

Best Ideas Contest

By Edward Jahncke, Editor

Gerri McCann's suggestion to hold a Best Idea's Contest at last month's meeting was met with great enthusiasm by all in attendance. Gerri was exposed to this concept at a business meeting and found the idea stimulating. (It should be noted that his was the winning idea at that meeting.) After an explanation

of the rules and a list of computer related items to stimulate the mind, the program began. Presentation of one's idea was to be limited to 1 minute, and most of those making suggestions did follow this rule, however, there were one or two that presented their life's story.

There were 25 ideas presented to the membership and thanks to Gerri's wife (who took readable notes) we can now offer them to you. (However, being there was so much better...

Idea #1—John: Recommended Google as his Search Engine of choice. Free; powerful, no Ads.

Idea #2— A.J.: His idea expanded on the use of Google. There is a new Beta section (www.ans.google.com) which allows you to input a question you need answered and then assign a \$ value that you would be willing to pay for the answer. As the answers come back to you, you then have the option of rejecting the initial answer and requesting a better one. Once the answer is accepted, payment is made by credit card.

Idea #3—Edward: This idea reminded the members that UPS batteries go bad. One should unplug the UPS every so often and see if the UPS picks up the load. If not, then the battery is probably bad. While replacement batteries can be purchased online, one local source for many suitable batteries is Southern Radio on Tulane Ave.

Idea #4-Ray: Any UPS is better than none. APC is one of the better UPS manufacturers. Good warranty and customer support.

Ray gave an anecdote about a tech support problem that

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NOPCC Directory

Elected Officers

President	Ray Paternostrro	president@nopcc.org	737-9099
Vice President	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	vp@nopcc.org	246-7759
Secretary	Curtis Duhe'	secretary@nopcc.org	
Treasurer	Don Herrmann	treasurer@nopcc.org	831-1284
Director At Large	Bob Gordon	director1@nopcc.org	469-4686
Director At Large	Carl Henderson	director2@nopcc.org	466-3954
Director At Large	Albert Fox	director3@nopcc.org	269-5786

Standing Committees

BBS SysOp	Lanny Goldfinch	sysop@nopcc.org	482-5066
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Publicity	Jackie Elliott	publicity@nopcc.org	455-6203
Webmaster	Manuel Dennis III	webmaster@nopcc.org	835-7656

Special Interest Groups

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N O C K	Albert Fox	albertnm@bellsouth.net	269-5786
New Users	Zeke Zimmerman	new-user-m@nopcc.org	456-2991
Suites 2000	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	suites2000@nopcc.org	246-7759
VBLG	Manuel Dennis III	vblg-owner@listbot.com	835-7656
WADSIG	Manuel Dennis III	wadsig-owner@listbot.com	835-7656

Other Important Numbers / Addresses

Club Hotline	Recorded messages. Meeting Information. Open 24 Hours	454-6166
NOPCC BBS	Bulletin Board System for members. The original way to PC communicate.	486-7261
NOPCC Web Site	On the World Wide Web. Our own home page and club information.	www.nopcc.org



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July 2002

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Visual Basic Learner's Group McCann's 6:30	2	3 No Meeting. See you at the Flea Market	4	5	6 Living with Home Electronics 690 AM 10A-11A
7 Computer Solutions 1350AM 11A-12P	8 Visual Basic Learner's Group McCann's 6:30	9 Genealogy SIG @ McCann's 7:00 PM	10 Board of Directors (BOD) McCann's 6:30P	11 ACT! SIG McCann's 6:30PM	12	13 NOPC Flea Market 10:00-1:00
14 Computer Solutions 1350AM 11A-12P	15 Visual Basic Learner's Group McCann's 6:30	16	17	18 Internet SIG McCann's 7:00 PM	19	20 Living with Home Electronics 690 AM 10A-11A
21 Computer Solutions 1350AM 11A-12P	22 Visual Basic Learner's Group McCann's 6:30	23	24 Office Suites SIG McCann's 6:00 PM	25 New User's SIG McCann's 6:30PM	26	27 Living with Home Electronics 690 AM 10A-11A
28 Computer Solutions 1350AM 11A-12P	29 Visual Basic Learner's Group McCann's 6:30	30	31			

The New Orleans Personal Computer Club (NOPCC) is a private non-profit organization chartered under the State of Louisiana. Its purpose is to provide an open forum for discussion and education of the membership in the use and application of PCs, peripheral equipment and software. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author (s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the NOPCC, its members or its officers. The club does not verify for accuracy the articles in this newsletter and leaves verification of accuracy to its readers. Articles in this newsletter may be duplicated as long as credit is given to the author (s) and the NOPCC. Annual Dues Schedule: Regular Member, \$40/yr.; Family Membership, \$60/yr.; and Students (under 21), \$20/yr. Meetings are held at 6:30 on the 1st Wednesday of each month at J.D. Meisler Jr. High School on Cleary Avenue in Metairie, Louisiana.

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