

# MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP

## March 2001 Newsletter



## Quips N' Tips

by Rick Howell

First, let me apologize for not submitting an article for the past couple of months. I have a tendency to go into techno-shock on occasion and just can't stand to go home and look at another computer screen. This has happened to me two or three times before and it usually doesn't take me this long to get over it. Kinda like a hangover...hmmmm, but that's another story.

I was thumbing through the November issue of *MSDN Magazine* and happened to run across a column where people write in and tell funny stories about things that have happened to them while dealing with computers. It tended to jog my memory about a couple of things that have happened to me in the past and I

thought it might be fun to share some of that with my cyber friends.

Back in 1974, I was working at Newport News Shipbuilding as a loftman. A loftman is a guy who provides patterns for fabricating metal into the various shapes and contours necessary to construct a ship, airplane or automobile. Anyway, rather than to get into technical oblivion, my job at this time was NC (numerical control) programming. This involved mathematically defining a two-dimensional pattern to a computer which would output a punched paper tape which would control a machine which would cut steel plates into the shapes we defined. This involved writing many lines of code on a form which was sent to a keypunch girl who punched out cards that could be fed into a card reader on the computer. The huge stacks of cards, usually about 300 per job, were fed into the card reader and the input went to the computer. The computer would crunch our programs and we would get results the next day, that is, if there were no syntax errors on the cards. The programmer's office was located about 200 feet away from the computer room, so the computer operator would make about four or five trips a day to the programmers' office to pick up cards and return printouts and paper tapes.

I know this is getting a little long, but bear with me. One of our computer operators was named Jimmy Thomas. Now Jimmy was a real likeable, friendly sort of guy who got along with just about everybody.

But, Jimmy had a nervous condition. He was real jumpy and real ticklish. Of course, all the programmers, being the fun-loving young wild bunch we were knew about Jimmy's condition and had no remorse about taking advantage of it and tormenting poor Jimmy to no end.

Jimmy was coming out of the computer room one day with a cafeteria tray loaded down with printouts and about six large decks of cards which had been run the night before. It just so happened that Mike, one of Jimmy's greatest tormentors, saw Jimmy leaving the computer room and hid in the lumber racks that Jimmy would have to pass on his way to the programmers' office. After Jimmy passed Mike without seeing him, Mike sneaked up behind Jimmy and goosed him. Man, it looked like it was snowing punch cards. He must have thrown that tray twenty feet up in the air and every card deck on that tray got jumbled up and scattered all over the loft floor. Of course our boss was furious. The cards would have to be re-punched and re-checked for syntax errors, and after that we were required to put a sequence number on every card as well. But, it was worth it.

Some years later, I was doing computer repair work on the side, and an older lady who was a member of our club called me and indicated she was having problems with her computer. I had done some repairs and upgrades on her computer before and she lived pretty close by, so I went over to her house to see if I could help her out. She told me the computer just shut off.

### MEETING NOTICE

by: George Miner

**When:** Tuesday, March 13th at 7:15 PM

**Where:** Old Bedford School (in 1800 block of Bedford Road)

**Program:** There will be an open forum for this meeting. Members will be discussing programs that they use and their pros & cons. George Miner will talk about two new programs he has tried out. They are Photo Wizard & Print Screen Deluxe.



# Tips for Microsoft Word Users

*Submitted by Geri Combs*

*The following tips and tricks were submitted by Office users just like you.*

**Edit Text in Print Preview**  
*From Michael Hernandez, Loma Linda, California*

Sometimes when you view a Microsoft Word document in **Print Preview** mode, you notice adjustments or edits you'd like to make to graphics and text. Did you know you can make those changes while you're still in **Print Preview** mode? Here's how you do it:

- 1) Click **Print Preview** on the **File** menu.
- 2) Click the text in the area you want to edit. Word zooms in on the area.
- 3) Click **Magnifier** on the **Print Preview** toolbar. When the pointer changes from a magnifying glass to an I-beam, you can begin making your changes to the document.
- 4) To exit **Print Preview** and return to the previous view of the document, click **Close**.

**Add a calculator to Excel Tool bar**  
*From Mark Cross, The Villages, Florida*

Did you know that you could add a calculator to your Microsoft Excel toolbar? Here's how:

- 1) On the **View** menu, click **Toolbars**, and then click **Customize**.
- 2) Click the **Commands** tab.
- 3) In the Categories list, click **Tools**, and in the Commands list, click **Custom** (the one with the gray calculator graphic).
- 3) Drag the selected command from the Commands list to a toolbar. (Lift your finger from the mouse when you see a plus sign next to your pointer.)
- 4) Click **Close**.

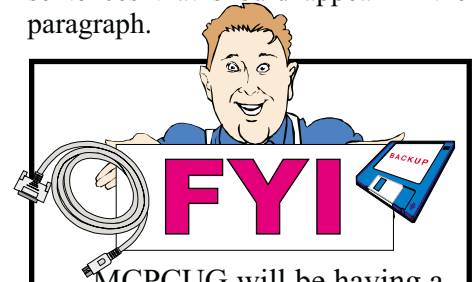
Now click the button you just added to run the calculator.

**Add Fake Text to a Word Document**  
*From Sheri Pulis, Sacramento, California*

Here's a handy function you can use whenever you need to fill a page with fake text—for example, to demonstrate a feature in Word or to work with page layout and design.

In a Word document, type `=rand(4,5)` and then press ENTER.

The numbers in parentheses correspond to the number of paragraphs (4) and the number of sentences per paragraph (5). You can change the numbers in parentheses to put more or less text on the page. Or if you want one long paragraph, just place one number in the parentheses, which will designate the number of sentences that should appear in the paragraph.



MCPCUG will be having a **Hardware SIG** some time later this month. Check our web page for details.

This group will focus on current trends and problems that have shown up on Pentium 4, USB ports, and other types of new hardware. **Steve Turner, Rick Howell** and several other knowledgeable club members will lead the discussions. Prior Hardware SIGS have focused on building your own PC. This SIG will be different, but if there is an interest we will have another "Build Your Own" shortly.

MCPCUG will also have a **Web SIG** on March 27th at the home of **Earl Drake**. We will be discussing our web page and making plans for updating and redesigning our pages. All members are welcome.

## *Quips N' Tips Continued from Page 1*

The screen went blank and the CPU shut down. She was really in a tizzy because she was doing secretarial work at home and had some work that had to be finished. Suspecting power supply problems, I first checked to make sure there was power in the wall socket, and that the computer was plugged into the wall, which checked out ok. Next, I looked at the back of the computer, and noticed the power cord had come unplugged from the power supply. I plugged it back in and fired up the computer. I didn't have the heart to charge her for a repair call, but I made sure she knew how to fix the problem in the future.

There are some great truths in life that we all have to learn. Some of us learn them, some of us don't. Somebody sent me an email recently about lessons learned in various stages

of life, and I especially got a kick out of some of the lessons young children learn. It may have something to do with second childhood, but I haven't gotten out of my first one yet.

- \* If your Mom is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
- \* Never hold a dust-buster and a cat at the same time.
- \* You can't trust dogs to watch your food.
- \* You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
- \* No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize a cat.

If any of you have some humorous stories you would like to share, send me an email at [rhowell@ticnet.com](mailto:rhowell@ticnet.com) and I will see that it gets included in the newsletter. It is nice to occasionally have a little fun in what we do, and to share the lighter moments with others.

# Some Great Card Sites!

*Submitted by Sheryllynn Roberts*

Getting a card in the mail can lift spirits, brighten a child's day, remind a loved one how much they mean to you, pass a giggle to a friend, and spark conversation. Sending a card can be a chore, though. Shopping for a print card can mean lots of time in multiple card isles reading things that don't quite mean what you want to say. Remembering to look for a card has its own time honored pitfall: the belated greeting. Just sending a card on a whim, because someone passed through your thoughts may be a nice idea, but how many of us really do that?

An easy answer to turn the chore into something fun is to send an ecard. An ecard is a free Internet greeting composed of pictures and verses. The sender goes to an ecard site, picks a card, adds a personal note if desired, and enters the recipient's email address. The ecard site then sends an email to the recipient that includes an announcement that they have been sent a greeting, and displays a link to the greeting. The recipient can click the link and be delivered to the webpage displaying the ecard. Some ecard sites have calendars so

you can keep track of special days and events, and some allow you to save favorite ecards. Some allow the recipient to send a return greeting or to forward one. As you peruse the list below you will see well known print card makers as well as pure online services. Remember that as some have sign-ups or registration to open an "account", you have the right to privacy, and should only enter information that you feel comfortable with. You may want to use an Internet email address, such as hotmail or yahoo, rather than your ISP address, for privacy or for anti-spam insurance.

Try sending ecards, and lift someone's spirits, as well as your own!

<http://www.netscape.americangreetings.com/>  
<http://net.simplenet.com/love/choose.htm>  
<http://www2.mybc.com/bc/ecards/>  
<http://postcards.www.media.mit.edu/Postcards/>  
<http://www.wbwebcards.com/>  
<http://www.iluvyou.com/>  
[\[magic.com/digital/\]\(http://magic.com/digital/\)  
<http://WWW.TravelTex.COM/postcards/postcards.asp>  
<http://www.regards.com>  
<http://www.kodak.com/digitalImaging/pictureThis/picThisHome.jhtml>  
<http://cartalk.com/Postcards/>  
<http://www.123greetings.com/>  
<http://cards.amazon.com/>  
<http://www.geocities.com/bowwowmeeow/main.html>  
<http://classicals.com/gthoughts/shakespearethoughts.html>  
<http://www.mainquad.com/flash/>  
<http://www.hallmark.com> \(undergoing maintenance\)  
<http://www.hotwheels.com/collectors/postcards/>  
<http://www.palmgreetings.com/>  
<http://www.postcard.com>  
<http://www.sillycards.com/>  
<http://www.virtualdrawing.com>  
\[Http://www.absolutepostcards.com\]\(http://www.absolutepostcards.com\)  
<http://www.cardsmyth.com/>  
<http://www.all4love.net/fmg/fmg1.html>  
<http://www.baby-angel.com/send.html>  
<http://www.freegreetingcards.com.au/e.htm>  
<http://www.virtual-cards.com/>](http://www.media-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

## GOLDSTAR SITES

*Continued from last month's article from Yahoo Internet Life Magazine*

[Http://www.zdnet.com/yil/content/mag/0005/goldstar.html](http://www.zdnet.com/yil/content/mag/0005/goldstar.html)

(Editor's note: *This web page will link you to several sites that are sure to peak your interest. The following is a sample.*)

### Gold Star Car Buying Sites

Three years ago, the Net was a backseat driver on our trip to buy a car

online, offering some instructions at different points along the way but not being nearly as helpful as we would have liked. Today the Net rides shotgun, providing detailed directions to get us through the twists and turns that lie between points A and B.

### Gold Star Sports Sites

Whatever it is you're looking for--a particular league, insightful writing, or

action-packed clips--we've cut the scrubs, matched up the opponents, and found the most valuable players.

### Gold Star Travel Sites

Whether you want to hop a business shuttle, take the kids on a cross-country tour, or shoot the rapids of the Rio Sarapiquí in Costa Rica, consider this your travel guide to travel sites.

## THE MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP

The Mid-Cities PC Users' Group is a not for-profit organization whose objectives are:

- \* to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and experience,
- \* education in the form of seminars and programs, and
- \* community as pertains to the computer industry.

Annual membership is \$24.00 per family with one vote per membership. Members are encouraged to notify the Membership Chairperson of any change of address as soon as possible to continue receiving their monthly newsletter. Please address any notifications to: Mid-Cities PC Users' Group: Attn. Membership Chair, P.O. Box 54141, Hurst, TX 76054

### 2000/01 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President	Steve Turner	(817)457-7131 president@mcpcug.org
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## THE MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP NEWSLETTER

Published monthly by MCPCUG BOD and created using Corel Draw 8.0, a laser printer, and copied on a photocopier. Comments about the newsletter can be addressed to any officer or board member and constructive criticism is encouraged. Articles may be reproduced with proper credit given to *Mid-Cities PC Users' Group Newsletter*.

### CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES

**Article Style:** Type all copy flush left without justification; use word wrap feature for your paragraphs. This includes headings, by-lines, and the first line of each paragraph. Place a credit by-line (author's name) between the title and first paragraph. Leave no blank lines between paragraphs. Use only one space between sentences.

**File Formats:** MS Word or Word Perfect is preferred. If formatting is crucial and you do not have access to the above programs, send a hard copy to show the layout.

**Submitting Articles:** You may use one of two methods. Uploading the article to Nancy Hester at newsletter@mcpcug.org or you can hand them to her on diskette (3.5" preferred) during the general membership meetings.



Thanks a lot!

**Deadline:** The last Friday of the month prior to intended publication.

### Advertising Rates:

7½ in. x 9 in.	Full Page	\$40.00
7½ in. x 4 in.	Half Page	\$20.00
3¼ in. x 4¼ in.	Quarter Page	\$12.50
3½ in. x 2 in. Business Card		\$5.50

*Discounts: 3 months = 5%; 6 months = 10%. 1st month full price, discount applies to months thereafter.*

*Payment: required with 1st ad copy.*

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