

December 1998

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 NOPCC Meeting 6:30 Meisler	3	4	5 Living at Home with Electronics, 1280am At 10:00 AM
6	7 Visual Basic SIG McCann's	8	9 Board Mtg at McCann's 6:30 PM	10	11	12 Living at Home with Electronics, 1280am At 10:00 AM
13	14Visual Basic SIG McCann's 6:30 PM	15	16	17 Internet SIG at McCann's	18 Newsletter Deadline	19 Living at Home with Electronics, 1280am At 10:00 AM
20	21Visual Basic SIG McCann's 6:30 PM	22 FINAL Newsletter Deadline	23 Commu-nications SIG at	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Living at Home with Electronics, 1280am At 10:00 AM
27	28Visual Basic SIG McCann's 6:30 PM	29 Newslet-ter Lick & Stick at	30	31 New Year's Eve.	New Year's Day 1999	

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 and peripheral equipment and software. Annual Dues Schedule: Regular Member, \$40/yr.; Family Membership, \$60/yr.; and Students (under 21) , \$20/yr.

New Orleans Personal Computer Club  
P. O. Box 8364  
Metairie, Louisiana 70011



The New Orleans Personal Computer Club Newsletter

MotherBoard



Volume 15, Issue 12December 2, 1998

This Month at NOPCC

Intuit Corp

Matt McCann will be speaking on :

Quicken for Windows '98

And the Annual

Christmas Party

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President's Monthly Message

'Tis the season to be jolly...and thankful. I am looking forward to the jolly part at our next get-together on December 2nd when "Party" will be the second featured presentation of the evening. Food and beverage to be purveyed by Ed Jatho and Zeke Zimmerman.

And, even though Thanksgiving is behind us, it seems to me that we have a lot left over on this year's plate for which we can still feel mighty thankful. For starters, a big scoop of gratitude for having dodged all the really big ones rolling around in the Gulf this hurricane season.

Closer to home, I still have a fresh memory of the winds of change howling through our club this year. I am personally grateful that the good ship NOPCC has navigated the sturm und drang, righted itself and set sail for bright horizons and fresh directions, ably and enthusiastically crewed by your new Board of Directors, elected just last month (posted elsewhere )

One thing I do know is the crew is having fun. You'd know it, too, if you were to ever show up for one of our lick'em and stick'em gatherings-that's our name for the 8 or so boisterous souls who show up at Gerry McCann's once a month to fold, label and postage-stamp the very newsletter which you are holding, *at this very moment*, before your eyes.

As a long standing member of the club, I am extremely thankful to all these volunteers and the many other club members who have stepped forward to actively make their contributions to the club's continued viability.

Thank you Zeke Zimmerman, Ed Jatho, Tom Ford, Don McCune, Manny Dennis, John Souvestre, Frank Masingill, Rick Demers, Ray Paternostro and Jackie Elliott, to name but a few. And thank you Gary Shurman and Carole Rike for having done so much to get us this far. I would also like to thank so many more of you who have expressed your support and good wishes for the club's well being: Tom Gregory, Gerry McCann, Leonard Bronik, Steve Sabludowky, A. J. Levy, Steve Attaya, Don Herrmann, Ashton Mouton, Jr., Albert Fox, Tom Watkins, Jeff Newman and Jimmy Lightfoot, to name but a few. If I overlooked your name, please put yourself at the top of the list, since the real value of this club is, indeed, "users helping users."

Reminds me of the distinction that was once made between Heaven and Hell. Seems that Hell is a whole bunch of really hungry people sitting around a circular table in the middle of which is a huge tureen of soup. Each person has one arm tied behind his/her back, and the other arm with a long-handled spoon lashed to the forearm in such a way that it is impossible to lift the spoon to one's own mouth. Heaven, on the other hand, is the identical set-up, only in this version, using his/her own overly-long handled spoon, each person feeds the hungry mouth across the table .

Peace to all and goodwill to *everybody* !

David Freedman

A Gist of the Board Meeting

Current membership stands at 258 and the treasury has \$5,596 with a loss of operations for the year 1998 of (\$255).

Motion to fund XMAS Party for December meeting, \$200. Passed.

Motion to fund Awards Ceremonies for December Meeting, \$200. Passed.

Treasury in preparation for the Annual Audit. Any club member who has posses-

sion of NOPCC property must report same to Tom Ford before 10 Jan. 1999.

Check-in procedures for general meetings to be tightened to identify "Guests" and solicit their PAID membership.

SIG Chair awarded up to \$300 matching funds for procurement of 17" Monitor and Signal Splitter for SIG meetings.

Ed Jatho

I Knew That !!!

A computer was something on TV  
>From a science fiction show,  
A window was something you had to clean  
And a ram was a cousin of a goat.

Meg was the name of a girlfriend  
And gig was your middle finger upright,  
Now they mean all different things  
And that really megabytes.

An application was for employment  
A program was a TV show  
A cursor used profanity  
A keyboard was a piano.

Memory was something you lost with age  
A CD was a bank account  
And if you had a 3 1/2 inch floppy  
You hoped nobody found out.

Compress was something you did with the garbage  
Not something you did to a file,  
And if you unzipped anything in public  
You'd be in jail for a while.

Log on was adding wood to a fire  
Hard drive was a long trip on the road  
A mouse pad was where a mouse lived  
And a backup happened to your commode.

Cut you did with a pocket knife  
Paste you did with glue  
A web was a spider's home  
And a virus was the flu.

I guess I will stick to my pad and paper  
And the memory in my head  
I hear nobody's been killed in a computer crash  
But when it happens, they wish they were dead.

~ Anonymous ~

Jackie Elliott

Email to a PC Company President

Dear Sir:  
This is just to let you know that you dealt a pretty low blow to one of your customers. 18 months ago, Ms. XXX bought an PC from (His Company), Serial Number: 2600780179. The first time she tried to use the Resource Kit disk set she got with the machine, she failed miserably. After several days of trying, she decided she was doing something wrong, so she sought professional help.

April had done nothing wrong. Her restore disk set had a corrupt 3.5" disk and it would not initialize. To make matters worse, I called the Tech Support line and just got off the phone with a fellow who was polite, but of no help at all. He informed me that there are 200 sets of these 3.5" diskettes on back order with no date designated as to when they will be shipped. Then he said he wasn't even sure that they (the Company) would make 200 new sets of disks to send out to the people who had requested them!

When I asked why XYZ didn't just load the drivers to the WEB Site like other companies do, he told me the company was afraid that "non XYZ users" would have access to the files. WHAT??? How in the hell can they use the restore disk if they don't have an XYZ PC? WHY WOULD THEY WANT TO USE AN XYZ RESTORE DISK IF THEY HAD ANOTHER BRAND? Are your programmers so stupid that they cannot design an install program that strobes the BIOS for encoded information to render a Hacker unable to steal a

program? We have guys right here in Metairie who can do that.

I hope that you pass this message on to whoever can get some action going for your company. Don't worry about my customer, April. I am sure that her next computer will be a clone without all these stupid encumbrances. Did I mention that I sell clones? I think you guys are just shooting yourselves in the foot by being so closed minded about customer support.

E. W. Jatho, Jr.  
Past President, New Orleans PC Club

The Reply dated 11/11/98

Dear Mr. Jatho:

Thank you for contacting *My Company*. I am sorry to hear about the issue concerning Ms. XXX. I checked the computer and I am showing that the disk shipped on 11/9/98 and received by Ms. XXX on 11/10/98 at 10:09 am. I apologize for any misinformation that might have been given to you. Your message was delayed due to the mail queue it was sent to. If you require assistance with any other technical issues, please complete an online technical support request form on the XYZ web site at <http://www.XYZ.com>

David Zehr  
XYZ Company Technical Support



NOPCC Directory

<i>Job Title</i>	<i>Official E-Mail</i>	<i>Personal E-Mail</i>	<i>Telephone</i>
<b>Elected Officers</b>			
President, David Freedman	president@nopc.org	david@wwoz.com	482-7070
Vice President, Zeke Zimmerman	vp@nopc.org	zim.family@sstar.com	456-2991
Secretary, Donald McCune	secretary@nopc.org	dcm01@gnofn.org	288-1852
Treasurer, Tom Ford	treasurer@nopc.org	103116.550@compuserve.com	643-3172
Dir. At Large, Ed Jatho	editor@nopc.org	ejatho@bellsouth.net	834-4386
Dir. At Large, John Souvestre		johns@sstar.com	888-3348
Dir. At Large, Ray Paternostro		ray.paternostro@sstar.com	737-9099
<b>Standing Committees</b>			
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Web Master, Manuel Dennis III	webmaster@nopc.org	md3@gs.verio.net	835-7656
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Publicity, Jackie Elliott		jte01@gnofn.org	
Public Relations	(Open)		
<b>Special Interest Groups</b>			
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Visual Basic, Manuel Dennis III	md3@nopc.org	md3@gs.verio.net	835-7656
Win.Apps.Dev., M. Dennis III	md3@nopc.org	md3@gs.verio.net	835-7656
NOCK, Albert Fox		albert@sstar.com	861-1630
FoxPro, Gary Shurman		gshurman@sstar.com	838-9999

Computer Jargon

(Continued from page 3)  
**Input/Output.** Information is input from the keyboard as intelligible data and output to the printer as unrecognizable junk.

**Interim Release.** A programmer's feeble attempt at repentance.

**Printer.** A joke in poor taste. A printer consists of three main parts: the case, the jammed paper tray and the blinking red light.

**Programmers.** Computer avengers. Once members of that group of high school nerds who wore tape on their glasses, played Dungeons and Dragons, and memorized Star Trek episodes; now millionaires who create "user-friendly" software to get revenge on whoever gave them noogies.

**Reference Manual.** Object that raises the monitor to eye level. Also used to compensate for that short table leg.

**Scheduled Release Date.** A carefully calculated date determined by estimating the actual shipping date and subtracting six months.

**Users.** Collective term for those who stare vacantly at a monitor. Users are divided into three types: novice, intermediate and expert.  
**Novice Users** are afraid that simply pressing a key might break their computer. **Intermediate Users.** People who don't know how

to fix their computer after they've just pressed a key that broke it.  
**Expert Users.** People who break other people's computers.

Jackie Elliott

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# Software & Books Available for Review

**SOFTWARE**

**Quick Books Professional for '97** – Being reviewed by a nice lady whose name I have forgotten but whom I shall know when I see her.

**Extra Strength, REAL HELP** – Being reviewed by Tom Ford.

**Spell Catcher** – Being reviewed by Jim Lightfoot III.

**Drive Copy** – Being reviewed by Tom Ford.

**Smart Sketch** – Future Ware product. Drag and drop “EasyArt” program for refreshingly simple precision drawing. Microsoft Office compatible.

**Partition Magic & Boot Magic.** Being reviewed by Manny Dennis. The first, in this issue. Check it out.

**BOOKS**

**Java Beans Programming** Being reviewed by Manny Dennis.

**Corel Word Perfect Suite 8** Being reviewed by Tom Stirewalt

**Corel Word Perfect Suite 8** Being reviewed by Jimmy Lightfoot III

*Interested in reviewing software listed here? If you promise to give me an article within 30 days for publication in the **MotherBoard** I'll give you a fully licensed copy to keep and upgrade as you like. That's a deal no real PC user can pass up. E-Mail your preferences to Ed Jatho today at: **[ejatho@bellsouth.net](mailto:ejatho@bellsouth.net)**. **No phone calls, please.***

Ed Jatho

# Results of “Election ‘98’ at NOPCC

President David Freedman, Treasurer Tom Ford and Vice President Zeke Zimmerman ran unopposed and were re-installed in their positions. Also running unopposed, Don McCune opted to step into the Secretary’s Chair instead of his old job as SIG Coordinator. Ed Jatho vacated the Secretary’s Chair to run for a position on the board at Large that allowed him to focus on his new job as newsletter editor of the *MotherBoard*.

The electoral campaign activity of candidates for the Board of Directors “At Large” positions this year was limited to 75 words in the newsletter and 2 minutes in front of the general meeting to pitch his / her candidacy. The results of the election were as follows: Ed Jatho, John Souvestre and Ray Paternostro were elected to the Board by majority votes.

Statistically, we had 85 ballots cast from a membership of 258. That is slightly higher than 33% of the population and puts this election on par with national elections for public office which have similar turnouts. Congratulations to all who ran.

Ed Jatho



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# The Old Rambler



If anybody doubted the continued relevancy of the Club, the November meeting went a long way toward dispelling that errant notion. The meeting was well attended and the program was both interesting and helpful from the announcements and the fielding of questions about problems by a knowledgeable panel, to the presentation of the virtues and limitations of Partition Magic and related software marketed by the Power Quest Corporation. This latter presentation was made by Gene Barlow whose articulation of the procedures for using and profiting from the programs left nothing further to be desired. The company had in effect a program for offering its package at a price far below list to users who wanted to purchase it after the end of the meeting. Members besieged the vendor table to take advantage of the offer.

We induced Lane Holt, who has been a member for three or four years, to share with us some of his thoughts about using computers and enjoying membership in the Club. Lane is an accountant who was initially brought into our midst by Ed Jatho. He values his membership because it keeps him abreast of new developments in the computer world and introduces him to new software and newer versions of existing software in a far more efficient mode than attempting to wade through computer magazines and other literature.

Lane believes that force of habit in doing familiar operations sans computer accounts for the inertia that often causes people to delay turning to the machine that appears now to be so ideal for business operations, spreadsheets, etc.

His wife was using the personal computer for running Word Perfect before he was attracted to its utility in HIS work. She is a medical technician. Like many of us, Lane also likes to surf the net now and then and play computer games for fun and relaxation. Our wish for you Lane is much success and many happy additional years in the NOPCC .

Speaking of Word Perfect, its time to roust out the favorite Word Processor for writing that Christmas letter. The Thanksgiving turkey has become golden bowls of Gumbo and the stores are bulging with potential gifts. Towns all over the U.S., like Natchitoches, Louisiana and Marshall, Texas are already being dressed with brilliant lighting welcoming both home folks and tourists. Locally we'll soon be driving around at night to see the fancy decorations on our neighbors' homes. Children still get that anticipatory thrill and gleam in the eye and Grandpas and Grandmas all over the land now take their hands off of the computer keys to handle the little ones on loving knees. God has given us another year on this beautiful spaceship called "earth" and now we look forward in keen anticipation to 1999.

Here's to the continued growth, health and prosperity of every one of you and to our New Orleans Personal Computer club.

A special thanks to all who will make our Christmas party an enjoyable time of fellowship and a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you fellow computerists.

Frank Masingill

# Understanding Computer Jargon

When I went to college in the 1980's, I heard a lot of words like "data input" and "beta version." They confused me. I wanted desperately to know what people were talking about, what Big Secret resided in the computer industry. Now that I've worked in a computer company for the last few years, I've gained an insider's perspective. I decided to share my knowledge with the uninitiated by creating the following brief, handy glossary:

**Alpha.** Software undergoes alpha testing as a first step in getting user feedback. Alpha is Latin for "doesn't work."

**Beta.** Software undergoes beta testing shortly before it's released. Beta is Latin for "still doesn't work."

**Computer.** Instrument of torture. The first computer was invented by Roger "Duffy" Billingsly, a British scientist. In a plot to overthrow Adolf Hitler, Duffy disguised himself as a German ally and offered his invention as a gift to the surly dictator. The plot

worked. On April 8, 1945, Adolf became enraged at the "Incompatible File Format" error message and shot himself. The war ended soon after his death and Duffy began working for IBM.

**Default Directory.** Black hole. Default directory is where all files that you need disappear to.

**Error message.** Terse, baffling remark used by programmers to place blame on users for the program's shortcomings.

**Hardware.** Collective term for any computer related object that can be kicked or battered.

**Help.** What we all need. Actually, it is the feature that assists in generating more questions. When the help feature is used correctly, users are able to navigate through a series of Help screens and end up where they started from without learning anything.

# “Boot Magic” Software Review

When I decided to review Partition Magic 4.0, someoneE Deliberately suggested that I also review the support application, BootMagic. I saw this as an opportunity to write one small review on BootMagic to see how effective I could be when I wrote a review on PartitionMagic. I would suggest that members of the NOPCC look into reviewing software since it is a relatively easy way to get some cool software and books.

There are a few new support applications that come with Partition Magic 4.0. Among those is BootMagic, a new program that replaces the Boot Manager of PM 3.0. A somewhat quick examination confirmed this program has a lot of the features that are in Norton's System Commander. BootMagic has support for DOS, Windows 95, 98, and NT, among others. BootMagic is basically a Partition Menu with the ability to set the default OS and to choose what timeout. It also comes with an easy Install New OS feature. It even gives you the ability to create a BootMagic rescue disk of sorts for each OS in the menu.

The BootMagic user guide has 60+ pages and comes bundled with the PartitionMagic package and explains in an easy to read fashion the features of BootMagic. The guide includes a nice Troubleshooting appendix. The book takes a quick glance to find out what to do to install it and how to configure BootMagic. The test was to follow the directions to see how this application installed and ran on our test machine.

The test machine is a simple 486DX66 with 20MB RAM running Windows 95 OSR 2 as its main Operating System. The installation of BootMagic went off without a hitch. One minor disturbance is in the creation of the rescue diskette. The application calls the format floppy dialog window then expects the user to press the correct buttons. After the files are copied to the floppy, the installation program fires off a DOS shell that executes the label command to set the label. If you ask me, this was pretty cheesy. Well, anyway, BootMagic is really cool and it even allows you to move the mouse when selecting which boot options you want. After installing Partition Magic 4, we decided to resize our Windows 95 partition and install a new partition for a DOS 6.2 OS install. We created a small 8MB partition for DOS to use. DOS installed fine without complaining about seeing a previous OS like Windows 95 since BootMagic hid the partition. We did try to allow the DOS 6.2 OS to see the Windows 95 partition as a D drive, but it never worked. It warned us a few times about the possibility of messing things up with Windows or OS/2, but it didn't let us see the AT16B partition from DOS 6.2. I don't know if this is a feature or a bug. Maybe I will find out before I complete the PartitionMagic 4 review. So far, PartitionMagic's wizards seem like a vast improvement over Partition-Magic 3 and other partition managers.

Manuel Dennis III

## SIGnificant News

New news: The NOPCC FoxPro SIG, conducted for many years by Gary Shurman, is being reactivated. For details, please contact Gary at Software and Stuff, phone 838-9999, or e-mail: gshurman@software-stuff.com .

Anyone up for a Linux SIG? In the NOPCC Chat echo on NOPCC BBS, we've been discussing the usefulness of starting a Special Interest Group on Linux, which is essentially an open operating system in the public domain.

There is currently a stampede of interest in Linux, spurred by reports of Microsoft's perceived anxiety of the threat to its Windows NT family; and by the present release of RedHat 5.2, with its comparative ease of installation.

Make no bones, however; Linux is not exactly plug and program. It is comparable in difficulty to Windows NT, which means it takes a wonkish talent and geekly determination to tackle this project.

The chief advantage is that the user has the source code to play with, to customize and innovate, and to exchange patches.

Linux is becoming popular with collegians; I've been to university sites who are encouraging their students to download and experiment. This is a very active and fast-moving area, and we think a SIG for NOPC members devoted to "alternative" operating systems such as Linux would be a Good Thing.

We've had requests from SIGs for an upgrade to the display hardware so that attendees could better view onscreen presentations at SIG meetings. At the most recent meeting of the Club's Board of Directors, Manny Dennis and I moved a request that the Board support the SIGs by matching funds raised by them , up to \$300, to be used to purchase a Signal Splitter and a new 17" monitor for use at SIG Meetings.

The Board voted approval, so the SIGs can go to work and dig for the cash. Every dollar raised by the SIGs for a monitor and splitter will be matched by the Board up to three hundred dollars. The Board figures this is the best way to support the SIGs, by a challenge to the SIGs for self-help with matching funds.



# SIGnificant News, continued



Speaking of that, we must remember that our NOPCC SIGs are for the use and advantage of our NOPCC Clubmembers members, and only our members. Our annual Club dues go toward supporting the (rather modest) cost of operating the SIGs, and to be fair to all our members, one must be a dues paying member of NOPCC in order to participate in our SIGs. And certainly, every member is encouraged to attend any and all of our SIGs.

Internet SIGoers, please note that the next meeting will be on Thursday, January 28. With the busy holiday season here, some of the SIGs might join the ISIG in changing their

schedule. Check with your SIG leader or me if you have any doubt. We'll post updates in the NOPC chat echo on NOPC BBS and at our Internet website: [www.nopc.org](http://www.nopc.org) In particular, Marc Lewis has confirmed that the Comm SIG will meet as usual on the fourth Wednesday, December 23. Albert Fox said, “No meetings for December” earlier this week.

Here's to a fulfilling SIG experience for everyone in 1999. Meanwhile, Happy holidays to all and to all a good night!

Donald McCune

## WAD & VBLG SIG News for December

### Windows Application SIG News

Last month, on November 5th, the Windows Application Developers SIG met to see a brief overview of Visual Basic 6. Microsoft graced us with a special demo kit which we tried to use to give the group an overview of some of the neat features in VB6. The slide presentation was quality as always, but, unfortunately for our speaker, the demos needed to be run on Windows NT. So we took an alternate path and tried to field questions pertaining to new features in Visual Basic 6. We did a little piddling with the new Data Environment Designer. It is a cool feature that must be explored in more depth at another time. We had to improvise some cool code examples to answer the many questions our group had. The group hopes to have another excellent demo on Visual Interdev 6 this month on December 3rd. Yu Shen will attempt to give an overview of Visual Interdev 6 with the aid of some samples from the Microsoft user group demo kit. Visual Interdev is Microsoft's flagship Internet/Intranet development environment. It doesn't replace Java or FrontPage, but merely helps developers intergrate components into spectacular web based applications. I hope you will join us and please bring some questions for us to experiment with.

The WADSIG would like to support a new Visual C++ sig. Please come to the next meeting if you are one of those people who contact me every few months about an interest in a C++ sig. I will be happy to kick some meetings off but, first, I need you to come together to generate some speakers and topics. I will dedicate a few minutes of the next WADSIG to discuss this sig. The WADSIG would also like to remind you that we don't target a particular programming language, only the platform. Anyone interested in software development will find the company and discussions worth attending. Remember, the WADSIG meets on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30pm at New Horizons Computer Learning Center and the 3rd Monday following the VBLG at McCann Electronics. I would like to take the time to thank New Horizons and McCann Electronics for allowing us to use their facilities to hold our meetings every month. I would

also like to thank Mike Housey for hosting our WADSIG web-pages at <http://www.banlen.com/wadsig>. We recently moved our website from LanYap to Banlen.

### Visual Basic Learner's Group

The Visual Basic Learner's Group has reached over 35 two hour meetings, over 11 VB Learning tapes, and 2 code reviews. We have been meeting weekly, or nearly so, since February 1998. We are bringing in a close to 1998 and I would like to wish everyone who has attended faithfully Happy Holidays and Seasons Greetings. I look forward another good educational session in 1999. The group will probably have to delay a few sessions nearer to the holidays. The group has changed to manage multiple skill levels. The SIG meets every Monday at 6:15 pm at McCann Electronics. The SIG recently restarted the video series during the first 45 minutes or so. At the same time, the intermediate group or those beginners who already saw the videos, attempt an informal workshop type session. The workshop is geared to get your elbows dirty and up to your ears in code that you might be working on or having problems with. Once 7:00 pm rolls around, both sessions meet up again to watch the second set of videos that come from the advanced level tapes. These tapes cover such topics as Client/Server development, ActiveX controls, ActiveX documents and ActiveX Automation. After about a half hour of completely technical tapes, one of our Visual Basic mentors, "who so graciously dedicates time to help others learn this stuff," comes in to answer any questions the users may have on either the beginner videos, or the more advanced videos, or on any projects they may be currently attempting.

The VBLG is still learning with VB5, but soon we want to upgrade to VB6. If you are remotely interested in learning how to develop software using Visual Basic, please come join us. On the 3rd Monday of each month we usually like to take the group up a level and show some pretty neat advanced development techniques as part of the WADSIG.

Manuel Dennis III