NOVEMBER 1996 ISSUE OF THE DPRG NEWSLETTER

Newsletter via Email

Hey cool, the newsletter is back up and now it's via email!!! Just think of all the money in postage we'll save! For archieve purposes, it's also online via the webpage at: http://www.dprg.org/history/newsletters/index.html! Right now it's via pure text for email and basically text with URL links (and maybe pictures next time) on the web page. Pure text seems to be the most universal method for sending via email, and also makes it easy to post as HTML. Other methods such as PDF or Word format require either to purchase formatting software, or that everyone have a platform that can handle the viewer. HTML and email seems to be the best bet for now. Any content for the newsletter or suggestions for the next newsletter are always welcome. Got something to sell, advertise it on the newsletter! If anyone still wants the newsletter via snail mail, we can still have that option.

Changing of the Guard

I spoke with Eric Yundt (current pres.) about me taking over as President and he agreed. I suppose that will be one thing we should vote about in the next meeting.

ORG DPRG = $100

WE'VE GOT www.dprg.org!!! Steve Rainwater of Network Cybernetics Corporation agreed to get the "www.dprg.org" domain name for us at $100 for setup and $50 per year to keep it. In return, he asks that the money contributed will be his annual DPRG dues, and he also said it would be nice to have a "sponsored by" advertisement on the web page. It sounded reasonable to me! I already posted the web pages to his computer and added the sponsorship advertisement to the web page. The new page will be at http://www.dprg.org. We should give a big hand to Steve for this one.

DFW-Xchange - Gotta get back in time

After the October 12th's meeting I talked with Stuart Yarus of the DFW-Xchange Corp. about moving our time up to 12pm. He seemed to think that it shouldn't be a problem. I'll let yall know his response. Either way, we'll either get a new room at 12pm or meet as usual at 12pm in the cafeteria and then migrate to the room at 2pm. Also, he stated that it was that time of year again to fill out our contract with them. It's basically something to sign that we'll be "cool" and also to give them 1 man hour down in the basement to setup tables if they ever ask us to do so. He said that if we ever drop below 10 members showing up they may ask us to begin paying rent for the room (eek - Oct 12th we had 11 - whew!) He said he'd mail it to me this month and we need to sign it and get it back to him. Let me know if there's any reason why we shouldn't. But, I think the past we've always done it?

DSP board available

Kevin Carter and Chris Nelson still has one DSP eval board left. They want to give it to a happy home who will use it. It's part of the TI 320xx series DSP boards and comes with manuals. Chris also sent the following web sites to check out:

- http://www.hh.avnet.com/tispect.html has a form to fill out to receive dsp info.
- http://www.ti.com/sc/docs/dsps/tools/c5x/dsk.html Shows some specs on TI's DSP board.

Promax Device Programmer

We still need some nice EPLD fuse software for the Promax device programmer. Basically if anyone knows of some inexpensive software that can compile EPLD fuse code, we'd love to to purchase it (one that can program any EPLD - we're easy). Kevin Carter has graciously agreed to donate the nice $600+ device programmer if we can help him make it program EPLD devices. We don't want to lose this opportunity.

Robotics Newsgroups to check out

At the last meeting Roger Arrick recommended some newsgroups to check out if you're interested in robotics. He also sent me the list via email for posting them to the newsletter. Here they are:

- comp.robotics.misc
- comp.realtime
- comp.arch.embedded
- comp.ai
- comp.ai.fuzzy
- comp.ai.neural-nets

- [comp.ai.vision](#)
- [comp.speech](#)
- [sci.nanotech](#)

Library of Books Online

The list of the DPRG Library books is now online thanks to [Tyce Elkins](#) our librarian. You can view this list online at: http://www.dprg.org/library.html Contact [Tyce Elkins](#) if you want to check out a book from the DPRG library. To check out a book from the DPRG library, you must be a member of DPRG. If you have any robotics books you want to donate, please give them to Tyce.

Austin's robofest video

Sorry about not being able to view the video of our trip to Austin to see the [Austin's robotics group](#) Robofest 7 at the last meeting. :-(I'll bring my video player and Tyce said he'll bring his monitor so we can watch it this coming meeting. The video also has footage of our last robot contest that we can watch also. It's only about 15 minutes of footage. As a bonus, it also has footage of the Cascade Caverns trip we took the same day. It shows the advertised 100 foot water falls that's deep underground. The cool part is seeing them "turning on" the 100 foot water falls via a water pump!!! Yes, you read that right, a water pump! We couldn't believe it either. Maybe if we have time, we can watch that too. Meanwhile, check out the [photos](#)!

Bring your robots

Everyone bring your robots or cool electronics projects to the next meeting (and every meeting). The more robots we have around, the more it boosts participation. Even if they're not working, bring what you've got, I'm sure everyone would like to see what's in the works. I'll bring my video camera and film them, then scan them via a video capture board, and post them to the web page. Here's your chance to get your robot's picture on the web! The robots will make great conversation starters at the meeting too!

Philips 16-bit 80C51 Seminar

Erick Wagner sent in this information. Philips is having a seminar in Dallas on **October 31st** over their new 16-bit 80C51 CPU. All registrations are to be prepaid. Registration fees: Morning session $25, Both sessions $40, Buy a low-cost development tool and attend both sessions free. For questions about registration call: 1-888-XA16BIT (1-888-921-6248). email alliancegr@aol.com. Email them the following info if you want to go: Name, Title, CoName, Dept, Addr, City, State, Zip, PhoneNo, Fax, EmailAddr. They'll call you back and arrange payment. I'm not sure where it is yet. So far I think Erick Wagner and I are going.

Schematic Software

Kevin Carter mentioned getting free schematic creation software from http://www.ivex.com. He said that the free unregistered version allows 100 holes and the upgrade at $29.95 allows for 200 holes. It appears to create really nice schematics, and you can't beat the price. Check it out.

Taken totally by Supplies

Michael's (now MJ Designs) is a great place for robotics raw material. I was in there with my wife and found some corragated plastic for $4.99. That's cool (a bit overpriced I thought), it's light, and it's strong, and the same stuff someone in the Austin robotics group used on a dog. They've got other cool stuff as well. Another great place to brainstorm for supplies is Home Depot. They have some really nice hardware that's great for making robots such as casters, "L" brackets, plywood, etc. Also, I went to a toy store in the Galleria, and saw the [Robotix](#)set for $199. It only comes with 5 motors, but it includes enough pieces and gears to make a 3 foot humanoid robot. I was droolin. They also had a $39 set, but you got what looked like one motor and just a few peices - didn't look worth it. It's way better than legos, and looks like it's begging for computer control. The two most important things robotics builders need neither of these places seemed to have which are time and money.