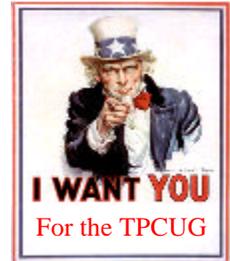




# Bits of Blue



A Monthly Publication of the Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

Vol. 9 No. 12 December 1996

## Meeting

**December 11, 1996  
6:00 PM  
Hillsborough Community  
College, Ybor Campus  
Ybor Room**

**Bargain Tables &  
Election of Officers**

## POSTNET Barcodes

*by William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.*

Done any bulk mail lately? No? Then you can't imagine what you have been missing. One of the many side benefits of being newsletter editor is the privilege of trying to decipher the many rules of bulk mailing and then deciding which apply to you. Then, once you think you have mastered your little niche of the bulk mail world, the post office changes the rules. That is just what happened to all of us bulk mailers this past July.

Our group being a small nonprofit makes things a little easier—not to mention cheaper—than it is, say, for a Realtor doing his or her mailings. He must now, if he is to receive the lowest possible rate, have his mailing list certified several times each year as to containing only legitimate addresses with nine digit zip codes and carrier route numbers, which people in the business will do for him for a small fee. Or he can buy the appropriate program and the updated CD's each three months and do it himself for about the same cost. Then on his mailings he, of course, must print this information with the addition of a POSTNET barcode. Most likely all of the above will probably apply to our group before long.

So, why my interest in all this and what does it have to do with computers? Well, I am interested because it may soon apply to our group and because someone asked me to help them with just such a problem. Of course, if their super software package, which was supposed to do anything a Realtor could ever imagine needing doing as regards keeping records on and keeping in touch with his clients,

*(Barcodes.....Continued on page 8)*

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**Visit us on the Web at <http://www.tbos2cla.com/tpcug/> or on the BBS at 813-980-1295**

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Bits of Blue is published by the Tampa PC Users Group, Inc., a State of Florida registered non-profit corporation, to provide educational information about personal computer systems to its members. Our mailing address is P. O. Box 3492, Tampa, FL 33601-3492.

However, for business concerning this newsletter, Bits of Blue, please contact the Editor, William LaMartin, at 821 S. Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33606-2904; 813-251-3817; lamartin@ix.netcom.com.

Technical information found in this publication is not necessarily compatible with your hardware and software; plus other errors or misprints could occur from time to time. Therefore, the use of programs, commands, functions or anything of a technical nature appearing in this publication will be at your own risk.

Contributors are asked to submit articles as an ASCII, Microsoft Write, Microsoft Word, or Word Perfect file to the editor at 821 S. Boulevard, Tampa, Florida 33606-2904 or upload to the BBS (News section of FILES).

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Commercial advertisements will be accepted. For rate information please contact the Editor by one of the above listed methods.

All advertisements must be prepaid by check payable to TPCUG, in camera ready format (actual size, black ink on white paper), and be submitted on or before the 20th of the month preceding the month of publication. Commercial advertising is usually limited to 25% of the total space of an issue. The Editor reserves the right to hold ads if the total space for ads exceeds this limit or if they are not received on time.

Members may insert non-commercial ads at no charge with the following limitations: no more than 4 ads per member per year; no more than 40 words (240 bytes including spaces); must be camera ready copy or an ASCII file on diskette or uploaded to the BBS as a message to the Editor. Those wishing to place ads are to contact the Editor, William LaMartin, at (813) 251-3817 for space availability and for further information.



## SECRETARY'S REPORT & MINUTES OF MEETING November 11, 1996

*Minutes and Comments by Jenny Lind Olin due to Bruce Register's absence.*

President Connie Kincaid called the meeting to order at 6:27 p.m. She extended a welcome to new members and visitors. Current officers and SIG leaders were recognized. She stated that nominations will be taken from the floor for the election of new officers for the coming year. She invited visitors and members to take advantage of the table with the "freebies." A Micrografx brochure about Windows Draw Graphics & Print Studio, version 5 was passed out as promised last month.

Connie made several announcements concerning the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) as there were some changes in the schedule:

The Genealogy Computer SIG meets on the third Wednesday November 20 (this month), but the December meeting will meet on the first Wednesday, December 4 (next month).

The Access SIG meets on the third Thursday, November 21 (this month), but there will be no December meeting because of the anticipated Christmas activity. The Communication SIG had met on the first Monday, November 4, but there will be no meeting in December because of the unavailability of the meeting facility. The next Communication SIG will be January 6, 1997.

Nominations for the 1997 officers were opened from the floor resulting in the following slate. President: Connie Kincaid was nominated by Jim Clark, seconded by Larry Anders and others. Vice President: Michael Hodges was nominated by Margaret Petro, seconded by Richard Naber. Secretary: Merle Nicholson was nominated by William LaMartin, seconded by Larry Anders and Jim Clark. Treasurer: Will Goble was nominated by Charles Howe and seconded by Fred Buss. Member At Large: Bruce Register was nominated by Margaret Petro and seconded by Larry Anders. Nominations from the floor will also be taken before the vote at the December Meeting.

The following appointments were announced and accepted: Kevan Sheridan had agreed to continue as our SYSOP; Larry Anders agreed to continue as the Librarian; William LaMartin agreed to continue as our Editor of the Newsletter "Bits of Blue" and the TPCUG Home Page on the World Wide Web (WWW). Margaret Petro was asked and she accepted the newly defined position as the Educational Chairperson. She will be aiding the present SIGs and creating new Educational programs and new SIGs. Ken Boyd volunteered to help Margaret in her new position.

It was announced that the Swap Meet/Bargain Table would take place at the next regular meeting December 11, 1996. There will be a \$5.00 donation per vendor for space at a table. Vendors and members are invited to set up a table to sell their useable computer components. TPCUG will also have a table.

The meeting place "move" from the Ybor Campus of Hillsborough

*(Minutes.....Continued on page 6)*

## Software Review

### Street Atlas USA Version 4.0

by Larry Anders, Librarian  
Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

There are only a handful or so of software packages that I have stuck with from the beginning, and Street Atlas USA from DeLorme is one of them. For quite a while now Street Atlas USA has been the best mapping program of its kind, and with version 4.0 it has only gotten better.

New features allow you to:

- Draw lines and shapes
- Measure distances and areas
- Get up-to-date travel information
- Show Zip code boundaries and demographic information
- Copy maps from CD to PC
- Map imported databases and a few other things

You can now add your own lines or various shapes to personalize your maps. Add your own roads, indicate property boundaries, draw a circle to show your house or business in relationship to other homes or businesses or map sales territories.

You can now click on any two points and Street Atlas USA 4 will give you the distance between each point. If you add more points or draw a shape or circle and you will get the area inside that shape. Distances are given in feet, miles or meters and areas are in kilometers, acres and hectares.

Just click on the *UPDATE* button and your Internet service will automatically be started and "go-online" to DeLorme's *FREE* Internet link for you to get all the latest highway construction information, latest updated weather and other localized current event information such as local festivals, etc., and display them right on your maps. This is really a neat feature!

Street Atlas USA 3.0 was the first mapping program to link to a CD-ROM phone directory, Phone Search USA (also avail-

able from DeLorme). With version 4.0 now you can also import names and addresses from your own personal database or contact manager and pinpoint them on street-level maps.

I had always felt that Street Atlas USA was the most detailed mapping software I had used, but now I think it's even better. Now there is also demographic data like population, income, home values, and average age by Zip codes. Also included are area codes and landmarks. You can also denote Zip code and county boundaries.

If there is a particular map or section that you use quite frequently you can copy or download that specific information to your desktop or portable PC for faster access. This could be great for presentations or transferring data to a PC that does not have a CD-ROM.



**TAKE NOTE OF THIS....** NEVER GET LOST AGAIN! For \$125 you can get Street Atlas USA 4.0 and *TRIPMATE*, a high-performance, easy-to-use link to the satellite navigation technology of the Global Positioning System. (GPS is a network of 24 orbiting satellites, placed there by the US Department of Defense, that broadcast low-power radio waves.) With a portable PC, Tripmate will locate you on detailed maps anywhere in the United States. An arrow shows your position on the map and moves as you travel using signals that determine your position, altitude, speed and direction of travel. Even though this seems like "Star Wars" technology DeLorme claims it's really easy to use.

Street Atlas USA 4.0 can save a map in its proprietary format that can then be e-mailed to anyone else with Street Atlas 4.0, and viewed and/or printed on the other end. If there is a negative feature with Street Atlas USA 4.0, it's that it cannot be directly saved to any other file or graphic format. The screen can be captured or copied to the clipboard,

brought into a graphic type program and then saved in various graphic formats. I would rate this process as only *good*. Whereas printing directly from within Street Atlas USA I would rate as *SUPERIOR*.

(Atlas.....Continued on page 6)

## Suncoast Freenet

by Charles Howe,  
Tampa PC users Group

A huge resource is available to Tampa Bay area (Hillsborough County, Pinellas County): the Suncoast Freenet. After a few generalities, this article, which is prescriptive in nature, tells you a shortcut technique which will substantially enhance your efficiency in using the Freenet.

### Signing up:

If you aren't signed up already, you can do so by dialing 273-3755 (Hillsborough), 298-1653 (Pinellas). Or you can go to a public library and find at least one workstation networked to the server. Follow the directions on the screen in either case.

### Accessing after you have signed up:

It is much faster to use a networked computer at a library. The modems you connect to when you dial in from home are 2400 baud only. A third method of access is available if you have a shell account with a commercial ISP: telnet. At the command prompt type

```
telnet scfn.thpl.lib.fl.us
```

("scfn" -- Suncoast Freenet. "thpl" -- Tampa-Hillsborough-Pinellas Library.) Then log on in the usual way.

You can telnet to the site and log on as visitor.

### Shell account:

The freenet is a UNIX box. You have a disguised shell account. You do not (are not allowed to) type in UNIX commands. You follow the menu. Your menu choices are translated into a series of UNIX commands that accomplish your objective, but you never see them. The all important seeming exception is explained below.

### Getting to the Main Menu:

When you log on, a one-screen page shows up. (Nomenclature: A page consists of 1 or more screens -- can be many.) Read it the first time you see it (you will skip by it automatically afterwards), then press the enter key. You are at the second page. Read the first screen, press the space bar (this is UNIX's way of proceeding through text), read the second screen, etc. When you are ready to proceed to the next page -- you will be immediately after you have read it once -- press q (as per the instructions at the bottom of the screen; learn them), then return. The third page shows up. Study it

also, but very soon you will find yourself pressing q, return in one motion.

### The Main Menu:

The main menu shows up. It is the starting point for whatever you do on the Freenet. When you have settled into a routine of using the Freenet -- know what topics you want to deal with -- you will key in a word (take a shortcut) which will either take you where you want to go or nearly there -- some navigation by menu may be necessary, but not as much and maybe none at all. In this learning phase, we are going through some menus. They will show you how to get at all the shortcut words.

The top line reads

```
SUNCOAST FREE-NET MAIN MENU (menu = main)
```

We will refer to it as the Main Menu. From it, choose

1. Suncoast Free-Net (Administration, Help & Index) (admin)

A second menu with the top line

```
ADMINISTRATION CENTER (menu = admin)
```

shows up. Choose

14. Suncoast Free-Net INDEX

We have now gotten to the menu that is the centerpiece of this note. We see

```
SUNCOAST FREE-NET INDEX (menu = index)
```

1. A - B
2. C - D
3. E - G
4. H - J
5. K - M
6. N - Q
7. R - S
8. T - Z
9. Index to USENET Discussion Groups
10. Another Index to UDGs

(There is also a two-line set of navigation instructions at the bottom. Many screens contain one of two two-line sets of navigation instructions. If you become a serious user of the Freenet, they will become second nature.)

Each of these menu choices gives you one-line descriptions of  
(Freenet.....Continued on page 8)

### SOFTWARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

1. **Flight Simulator for Windows 95**- Microsoft-Fly a plane in Windows 95 - CD & Pentium required.
2. **Goldmine** - GoldMine Software Corp. - Contact management software.
3. **Tracer** - 7th Level - Launch into cyberspace with a deadly virus on your heels-Windows 95 CD.
4. **Work Safe Office for Windows**- Production Technology Engineering & Management Services - Ergonomic risk analysis for Computer work stations- Windows 3.1 & 95
5. **Harvard ChartXL** for Windows - Compelling charts from critical data. Software Publishing Co.
6. **On File** -for Windows, Arranges your files into fun-to-use "notebooks "
7. **Family Fun Pack** for OS/2 Warp CD
8. **How Would You Survive?** - Grolier - Multimedia Adventure (ages 7-12) - Windows CD
9. **Jump Start Preschool**- Knowledge Adventure - getting a head start on education (ages 2-5) - Windows CD
10. **Space Adventure**- Knowledge Adventure - up to the moment exploration of outer space. (8-adult)
11. **Aviation Adventure** - Knowledge Adventure - complete

world of Flying (8-adult)

12. **TuneLand** starring Howie Mandel - 7th Level. Interactive Cartoon (ages 3 and up) Windows MPC CD
13. **Crossties** - Organize everything on your PC for instant access - Windows 3.1
14. **Life Form** - fitnessoft - Personal Health Management - Windows
15. **Terror T.R.A.X** -Grolier - Full-Screen/Full-Motion Interactive Horror Film (ages 13+) - Windows CD
16. **SFPD Homicide: The Body in the Bay** - Grolier - Murder Mystery Game (ages 13+)- Windows CD
17. **Info Accelerator** - Baseline -Manage contacts, phone, to-do's, calendar and mail merge inside Word, WordPerfect & Ami Pro - Win 3.1 or Win 95

(Call 251-3817 for information on review software)

**People with software reviews due--we need them!**

### December's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)  
 Biodiversity & Biological Collections  
 Business Week  
 CNET.Com (Internet News and Tips)  
 IRN News (British news in Real Audio)  
 NEWS.COM (Computer News)  
 TUCOWS (Shareware)  
 FindLaw (Law Crawler)  
 Galleria degli Uffizi ( Art museum)  
 Daily Brief (Collection of Audio News)  
 Gene Map of the Human Genome  
 MDR Fernshen (live German TV)  
 Museums on the WWW  
 Book Stacks (commercial book sales)  
 National Library of New Zealand  
 North Carolina Genealogy  
 Mariner's Museum (Newport News VA)  
 Computer Credible Magazine  
 Environmental Horticultural Department (UF)  
 GardenNet  
 Intel Secrets

<http://www.tbos2cla.com/tpcug/>  
<http://www.keil.ukans.edu/>  
<http://www.businessweek.com/>  
<http://www.cnet.com/>  
<http://www.sms.co.uk/real.html>  
<http://www.news.com/?msn.punch>  
<http://www.sausage.com/tucows.htm>  
<http://www.lawcrawler.com/index.html>  
<http://www.televsual.it/uffizi/index.html>  
<http://www.timecast.com/dailybrief1a.htm>  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/SCIENCE96/>  
<http://193.22.36.165/livekam/lk1.htm>  
<http://www.cs.rdg.ac.uk/vlmp/usa.html>  
<http://www.books.com/scripts/news.exe>  
<http://www.natlib.govt.nz/>  
<http://www.flex.net/u/golden/nc-state/nc-state.htm>  
<http://www.mariner.org/>  
<http://www.credible.com/compmain.html>  
<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/>  
<http://trine.com/GardenNet/>  
<http://anet-dfw.com/cgi-bin/imagemap/x86.org/docs/gifs/HomePage.map>

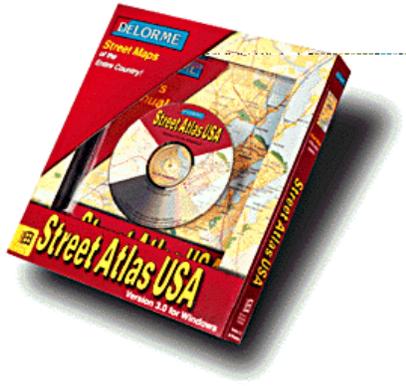


(Atlas.....Continued from page 3)

#### System Requirements:

- IBM-compatible computer with
- 386SX (33MHz) processor ·8MB RAM ·9MB hard drive space ·CD-ROM drive Super VGA graphics ·256-color monitor mouse ·Microsoft® Windows® 3.1 or later (designed for Windows 95)
- Recommended: 486DX (66MHz) processor or higher color printer
- (for Tripmate you will also need a portable PC, 4 AA batteries, and/or DeLorme's AAA Map 'n Go.)

In my opinion this is the finest software of its kind on the market today. And if you own a color printer, you won't believe the quality of the printed maps. The street price ranges from \$40-\$50 with an upgrade from version 3.0 directly from DeLorme for \$25. I took the upgrade route and got more for my money than most programs I've upgraded lately. This program would make someone a great Christmas gift.



DeLorme  
181 US Route 1 South - Freeport, ME 04032  
1-800-575-2244 - <http://www.streetatlasusa.com> ◆

(Minutes.....Continued from page 2)

Community College to the Museum of Science & Industry (MOSI), at 4801 East Fowler, 33617 has been tentatively set for February, 1997.

The membership was invited by Clark Evans to visit MOSI to observe the Ham Radio Station setup. Call 988-0125 to get in free.

Charles Howe informed the group that ISDN is getting close to affordability and is very fast, all digital. He said two companies, Packet Works and Internet Junction (ij.com), resale GTE services for about \$37.00 per month. There is no charge for a voice call. GTE charges \$.02 per connection plus \$.02 per minute after the ISDN line is installed.

Michael Hodges took a survey of on-line users. Eight members use AOL and 2 used MSN, the two services with unlimited access. Two members use Compuserve, none uses Prodigy. Most use other inde-

pendent Internet providers, and almost everyone in the room had some Internet access. Some people raised their hands more than once, indicating that they use more than one service.

A discussion followed concerning a networking segment of the meeting for employers to meet those looking for computer related work.

A program about "Upgrading your Computer Components" was presented by Steven T. Singer, Chief Executive Officer of Regnis Distributors, Inc. He has a degree in industrial engineering from the University of South Florida. He stated that to purchase computer components from his company, you would have to have a tax number and have a business license in computers or electronics.

He said proprietary computers are hard to upgrade, you could get a fine middle of the road computer built by Gateway, but you are better off building your own computer (or having it built).

When upgrading your computer system the key words are Bigger, Better, Faster. This is accomplished by getting a faster processor. We have moved from the 286 to a 386, then the 486, next the Pentium Others, 586s and 686s are also available. A faster processor requires a new mother board, available now for under \$100. Other means of upgrading entail upgrading the software for the BIOS; new chips for speed and more memory; better video cards or more memory for the video card for more colors.

Before upgrading ask: How fast is it? Does It work? How much does it cost? The time to upgrade is now as prices are coming down. The bottom line, though, is the compatibility testing: what will work with what.

Steve gave a presentation that seemed to capture the interest of everyone. He spent much of the talk describing the many different CPUs available, their advantages and disadvantages. He was being questioned during the break and was still giving out information long after the meeting was over and I was leaving the room. I don't know if I left knowing less about more or more about more. This was definitely one of the most interesting presentations, in spite of its mind-boggling aspect.

Steven can be contacted by phone: (813) 623-3302, FAX (813) 622-8580 or E-mail [RegnisDist@aol.com](mailto:RegnisDist@aol.com). His BBS number is 622-8948.

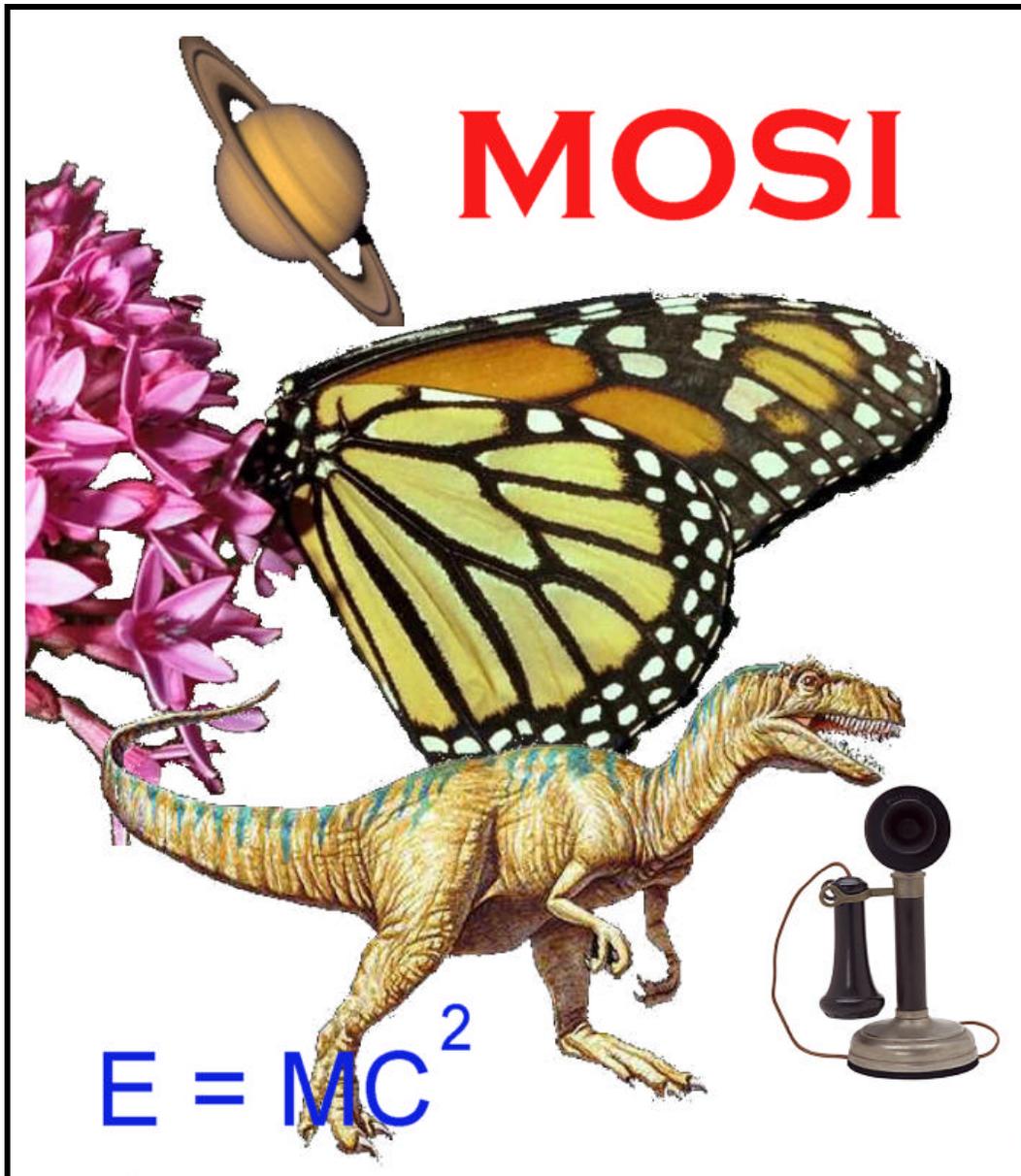
#### Door Prizes:

Scenes  
Avation photography (screen saver)  
Family Fun Pack for OS2

Ken Boyd  
Michael Leiss  
Merle Nicholson

(Special Note of Thanks from Bruce Register to Jenny for taking the above minutes while I was in San Francisco) ◆

In February, follow the Tampa PC Users Group to



Beginning with the **February** meeting, we are moving the site of our monthly meeting from the Ybor campus of HCC to the Museum of Science and Industry at 4801 E. Fowler Avenue, Tampa, FL.

This will be a much better facility for us with computers and projection equipment on site.

The exact location of the meetings and further information will appear in the next newsletter and at our Web site <http://www.tbos2cla.com/> on the "Announcements" page.

(Freenet.....Continued from page 4)

a topic -- a newsgroup; files of information about something such as a program or place or event or how to deal with some bureaucracy or ...other freenets to telnet to; discussion groups; gopher sites; ftp sites; and so on.

To make that concrete, suppose you selected 1. It is a page (see the distinction between page and screen above) 645 lines long. Here is a sampling of topics:

A - B	index
A History of MacDill Air Force Base	tbhcmil
Ab-Fab	tvttalk
Abandoned Cars	hcsubaf
About Suncoast Free-Net Mail	mail
About Connecting to LUIS from the Free-Net	usflib
Acronym Dictionary	elecraf
Adoption Sources	geneal
Airline 800 Number Directory	direct
Amateur Radio, Homebrew	radiotalk
Aquatic Weeds	hcsubaf2
Area Marinas and Boat Ramps	ramps
Armwood High School Leo Club	leo
AT&T 800 Number Directory	busdirec
Barbershop Quartets	barbershop
Baywatch	tvprog
Bean Recipes	vegfood
Bertrand Russell's Ten Commandments	humart
Bible Gateway (four versions in six languages)	protest
Bird Hospital	pconvis
Borrow Pit Permit	hcsubaf2
Bronson, Missouri	ustrav

(My selection criteria? None.)

If you select 9, you see a listing of discussion groups, about 135 in number. A sampling:

Discussion Groups - Animals	animaltalk
Discussion Groups - Breastfeeding	breastfeed
Discussion Groups - Energy	energy
Discussion Groups - Model Railroading	hobbytalk
Discussion Groups - Soccer	soccer

If you select 10, you see a pageful of explanatory text, then about 700 lines like the following:

alt.alien.visitors	astrotalk	Aliens from ...
alt.autos.camaro.firebird	autotalk	Camaros & Fi...
alt.fan.conan-obrien	tvttalk	Conan O'Brie...
alt.fishing	fishtalk	General (alt...
alt.missing-kids	partalk	Missing Chil...
alt.rock-n-roll.classic	rocktalk	Classic Rock...

alt.sports.baseball.balt-orioles	basetalk	Baltimore Or...
alt.sports.football.		
pro.tampabay-bucs	foottalk2	Tampa Bay Bu.
alt.support.arthritis	healtalk	Arthritis ...
alt.tv.seinfeld	tvttalk	Seinfeld ...
bit.listserv.mednews	medtalk	Medical News..
comp.internet.library	inettalk	Internet Li ...
k12.lang.esp-eng	k12talk2	Spanish/Eng ...
misc.invest.real-estate	estate	Real Estate ...
rec.autos.tech	autotalk	Technical ...
rec.games.trivia	gametalk	Trivia ...
rec.pets.dogs.activities	dogtalk	Activities/E...
rec.puzzles.crosswords	gametalk	Crosswords ...
rec.video.cable-tv	cabletv	Technical an...
sci.math	scitalk	Mathematics ...
soc.culture.quebec	ethtalk2	Quebec ...

The shortcut is as follows: when you are at the Main Menu, key in the word that points to what you are interested, then doreturn. Most or all of the navigation is done for you.

Be warned: not every shortcut works as advertised.

Browsing through the lists: download frntshct.zip from the club BBS. Keep in mind that this set of lists is not entirely static. ♦

(Barcodes.....Continued from page 1)

really did what any reasonable person would think that it would do based on the program's description, then there wouldn't have been too much of a problem. And if this individual had owned Microsoft Access and Microsoft Word, which together can certainly handle record keeping, mail merge, label printing, etc. with POSTNET barcodes, then there wouldn't have been much of a problem either. But that was not the case, and buying those programs is a somewhat expensive solution to printing mailing labels with barcodes. So I rebuilt the individual's database, since the supposedly super program would only export the fields necessary for mailing, leaving behind all sorts of other client information. I assume that this was to prevent the customer from ever changing to another program. Then with the rebuilt data, we found an inexpensive program called *My Advanced Mail List* which will do the addresses with barcodes on labels or letters. It will also allow you to edit, import and export all of your data fields. Its only shortcoming was that it didn't do mail merge on text documents. But how much do you want for \$40. The super program that wouldn't allow you to export all of your

(Barcodes.....Continued on page 9)

## The Computer Chicken

*discovered by Merle Nicholson,  
Tampa PC Users Group*

**NT Chicken:** Will cross the road in June. No, August. September for sure.

**OS/2 Chicken:** It crossed the road in style years ago, but it was so quiet that nobody noticed.

**Win 95 Chicken:** You see different colored feathers while it crosses, but cook it and it still tastes like ... chicken.

**Microsoft Chicken (TM):** It's already on both sides of the road. And it just bought the road.

**OOP Chicken:** It doesn't need to cross the road, it just sends a message.

**Assembler Chicken:** First it builds the road ...

**C Chicken:** It crosses the road without looking both ways.

**C++ Chicken:** The chicken wouldn't have to cross the road, you'd simply refer to him on the other side.

**VB Chicken:** USHighways!TheRoad.cross (aChicken)

**Delphi Chicken:** The chicken is dragged across the road and dropped on the other side.

**Java Chicken:** If your road needs to be crossed by a chicken, the server will download one to the other side. (Of course, those are chicklets.)

**Web Chicken:** Jumps out onto the road, turns right, and just keeps on running.

**Gopher Chicken:** Tried to run, but got flattened by the Web chicken.

**Newton Chicken:** Can't cluck, can't fly, and can't lay eggs, but you can carry it across the road in your pocket !

**Cray Chicken:** Crosses faster than any other chicken, but if you don't dip it in liquid nitrogen first, it arrives on the other side fully cooked.

**Quantum Logic Chicken:** The chicken is distributed probabilistically on all sides of the road until you observe it on the side of your course.

**Lotus Chicken:** Don't you \*dare\* try to cross the road the same way we do!

**Mac Chicken:** No reasonable chicken owner would want a chicken to cross the road, so there's no way to tell it to.

**Al Gore Chicken:** Waiting for completion of NCI (National Chicken-crossing Infrastructure) and will cross as soon as it's finished.

**COBOL Chicken:**

```
0001-CHICKEN-CROSSING.
IF NO-MORE-VEHICLES THEN
PERFORM 0010-CROSS-THE-ROAD
VARYING STEPS FROM 1 BY 1 UNTIL
ON-THE-OTHER-SIDE
ELSE
GO TO 0001-CHICKEN-CROSSING ◆
```

*(Barcodes.....Continued from page 8)*

data fields cost more than ten times that much.

Now, all of this got me to thinking about how I could print barcodes for mailing without any special program. After a little research on the Internet, I found that to print a POSTNET barcode for an address you first produce a 12 digit number as follows:

Take your nine digit zip, 33606-2904 in my case, and write it as 336062904. Then you add the last two digits of your street address to this. So, since my street address is 821, I now have 33606290421. Finally you need to add what is called the check digit. To get this you add up all the digits in the above number, which comes to 36 in this example. You then select the single digit which when added to this sum would give you a multiple of 10. In my case the check digit is 4, since  $36 + 4 = 40$ . Thus our 12 digit number is 336062904214.

Now, to get a POSTNET barcode out of this all we need is a barcode font. The Internet also provided me with such a font. This particular font requires that you write the zip to be bar-coded as follows s336062904214s. Other barcode fonts want you to use an \* instead of the s, others use /'s to enclose the zip. So to get my barcode all I do is write out s336062904214s, select it with the mouse, go to the menu bar of whatever program I am writing this in, select the appropriate barcode font as the font for the highlighted text and you

*(Barcodes.....Continued on page 10)*

## Special Interest Groups

### Microsoft Access SIG

**No meeting in December.** This SIG Meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00 PM at the Reflectone Building. Directions: Proceed west on Waters from N. Dale Mabry across the railroad tracks (which is about 1 and 1/2 miles), take second left on Savarese (United Technologies bldg. is just beyond it). Proceed on Savarese until you reach the Reflectone bldg. Take the North door. If you need to ask directions, there is a security guard at the location. PLEASE SIGN IN WITH A SIG LEADER.  
*For more information call Connie Kincaid - 661-8185 - Leave a Message.*

### Communications SIG

**No meeting in December.** This SIG meets the first Monday of the month ( at 6 PM at the Reflectone Building. You must sign up to get on the list and to get by security. See Microsoft Access SIG for directions to Reflectone. *Contact Charles Howe: at 968-1207 or HOWE@INTNET NET*

### Genealogy SIG

This SIG normally meets the third Wednesday of the month. at 7:00 PM at a member's home. **However, December 4 is the next meeting.** *Contact SIG Leader Jenny Lind Olin at 960-5723 for directions and RSVP.*

## PC Willy

Q. Dear PC Willy

Ya know that I've gotten in the mail about 20 to 30 free startup disks from AOL, Compuserve, and Prodigy and some others and I was wondering if I could reformat these disks and use them for other data. Is that allowed?

signed Howed Theygetmyname



A. Dear Howed Theygetmyname

Well you can do anything you want with those disks that they sent you because they're unsolicited advertising. But be carefully about keeping valuable data on them because they are usually not the top of the line disks. I've thrown away about half of the ones that I've received because of errors and bad sectors. Sometimes it's better to just delete all the files on the disks rather than format them. (Be sure to run scandisk on them with surface scan.)

PC Willy



Q. Dear PC Willy

My laptop computer is only about a year old and the battery doesn't seem to hold a charge as good as it did when it was new, any suggestions?

signed Q.K. Typer

A. Dear Q.K. Typer

A lot of batteries will have a "memory effect". That is, when you recharge the battery without completely discharging the battery it will start charging itself faster and faster but not to full capacity. Many machines will cut off before the battery goes dead so the battery never gets to discharge completely and the "memory effect" slowly keeps the battery from charging to its full capacity. A way to overcome this is to use a separate battery charger that will completely kill a battery before it charges it (there are some new ones that do this automatically). But if you remove the battery and put a light bulb (usually a 12 volt car turn signal bulb will do) with wires to the battery and leave it connected for a couple of hours to completely discharge the battery then charge it overnight and kill it again with the bulb 2 or 3 times, that will remove the memory in the battery and make it bounce back to nearly new again. This only applies to NiCad batteries not to the new NiMh ones.

PC Willy

Send questions and hints or trivia to [Wilgoo@aol.com](mailto:Wilgoo@aol.com) ♦

(Bacodes.....Continued from page 9)  
get

53360629042145

Theoretically this barcode uniquely identifies my house among all the others in the United States, but somehow I don't

(Barcodes.....Continued on page 12)

## Friends of the User Group

*We acknowledge the following firms for their support*

IBM  
BCD (Brainchild Computer Distributions, Inc.)  
MerSoft  
Reflectone

*And these national software vendors for their demonstrations and contributions of evaluation software to our group*

Access Software	Micrografx
Adobe Systems, Inc.	Microsoft
Borland	Quarterdeck
Broderbund	Regnis
Corel Systems	Symantec
Grolier	Traveling Software
Knowledge Adventure	Xerox

### RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

WE CERTAINLY HOPE YOU WILL  
MAIL YOUR CHECK AND ANY  
ADDRESS OR NAME CHANGES TO:

TAMPA PC USERS GROUP  
PO BOX 3492  
TAMPA, FL 33601-3492

\$25 Individual      \$35 Family  
\$20 HCC Students & Faculty  
\$60 Corporate = 3 employees + \$20 each add'l employee

**Check the address label for your renewal month**

## MEMBERS HELP-LINE

The following phone list is provided for our Tampa PC Users Group members in an effort to establish local support for those frustrating times which we have all encountered while using our PC's. Please note that these are members that have volunteered to help you; treat them in a courteous manner. Be sure to ask if it is convenient for them to help you now, or if you should call another time. It would also be helpful to have your documentation and have it handy when you call. (Don't expect help if your software is an illegal copy or you do not have documentation!) TPCUG is not responsible for the information or advice provided by volunteers. Volunteers may or may not be experts in the subject matter. You are on your own with any advice received. Be aware also that some of these volunteers may be consultants in their area of expertise. If you are interested in volunteering to answer members' questions, either leave a message on the BBS or fill in the forms provided for this purpose at the meetings.

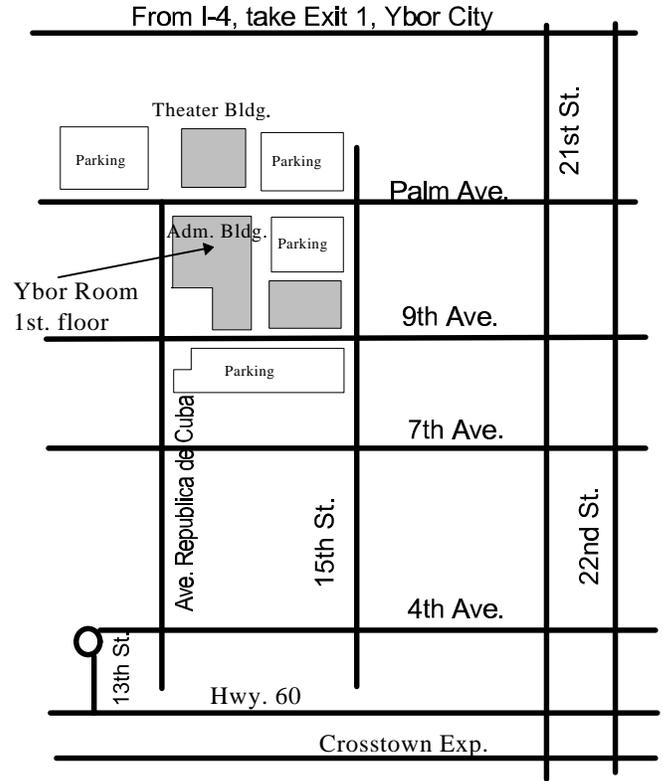
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Phone No:</b>	<b>Day:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>For help on:</b>
Ed Buzza	685-5898	Mon-Sun	10am-9pm	WordPerfect 5.1 and 6 for DOS
Jim Clark	986-3888	Mon-Sun	10am-9pm	Express Publisher for Windows, Word for Windows
Charles Howe	968-1207	Mon-Fri	9am-5pm	Modems, BBS & Internet
Tom Cone	949-3716	Mon-Sun	7pm-9pm	Alpha 4 & Compuserve
Larry Anders	989-9119	Mon-Sun	6pm-9pm	Lotus 123 for Windows
Connie Kincaid	661-8185	Eve.+ Weekends	Leave message	MS Professional Office Suite
Merle Nicholson	879-3602	Mon-Fri	6:00pm-10:00pm	Hardware Memory Management, DOS, Windows 3.1 & 95, Visual Basic, Delphi
John Meroth	831-7878	Mon-Sun	Anytime except 6-8pm	OS/2, Database (general), Clarion, DTP (limited)
William LaMartin	251-3817	Mon-Fri	10am-9pm	Win 95, MS Office Suite, Internet

(Barcodes.....Continued from page 10)

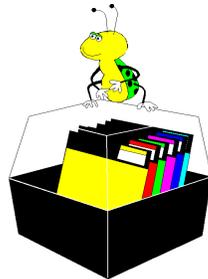
think my mail carrier will deliver a letter to me with that bar-code as the only information on the letter.

However, once you have figured out this much, you just have to write a basic program (Visual Basic in my case) that will take an address with a nine digit zip code and turn it automatically into an address with such a bar code and print it on an envelope or label. Well, when you have gone this far you might as well go all the way. That is, write a Visual Basic program which will open a database containing mailing information, then print out mailing labels for a selected group of entries such that the labels also have POSTNET barcodes as described above.

This is an example of what I enjoy in computing. I used the Internet to find the needed information. Then I used my knowledge of Visual Basic programming to produce a solution to my problem of printing POSTNET barcodes. ♦



**Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.**  
P. O. Box 3492  
Tampa, FL 33601-3492



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- Member: Your membership is up for renewal
- Vendor: Your product was reviewed on page \_\_\_\_