



Bits of Blue



Happy New Year

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

Vol. 11 No. 1

January 1998

Meeting

**Microstar Research
will demonstrate
Investment Software**

**January 14, 1998
6:00 PM
Museum of Science
and Industry
4801 E Fowler Ave.**

Starting this month, our meeting room at MOSI has changed.

We will follow the computer lab to its new location in the new wing of MOSI. Enter the main lobby, take the stairs to the second floor, then turn left and proceed to the computer lab. Someone should be available to direct you.

President's Message

by Merle Nicholson, President, Tampa PC Users Group

We have a new year upon us, a (kind of) new officer lineup, a relocated meeting place and some acknowledgments to make.

First I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to Connie Kincaid for serving as President for the past two years. Connie brought friendliness and perceptiveness to the job. She has changed the job description for President of TPCUG for a long time to come. Having served on the board for a year myself, I've observed her dedication and experience on the job, and, believe me, it has been exemplary. On behalf of the members of TPCUG: Thanks, Connie.

Wil Gobel is also leaving us as outgoing treasurer, having held the job for two years. Wil will be missed. Thanks for a job well done, Wil.

Kevan Sheridan and Jenny Lind Olin will be serving as Secretary and Treasurer, replacing myself and Wil in those positions. Kevan and Jenny have been participating on the board as past BBS Sysop and Genealogy SIG leader, respectively,

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February 10: Corel will demonstrate their Internet Web design products & update us on their other titles. Visit the chat page & the discussion group page at our Internet site <http://www.canx.com/tpcug/>.

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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).

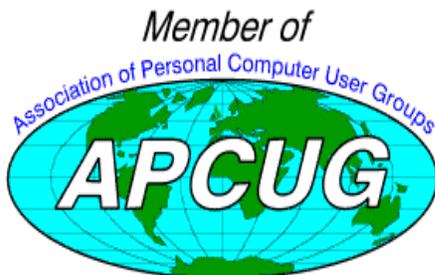
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Commercial advertisements will be accepted. For rate information please contact the Editor by one of the above listed methods.

All advertisements must be prepaid by check payable to TPCUG, be 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 December 10, 1997

*Minutes and Comments by Merle Nicholson,
Secretary '97, Tampa PC Users Group*

The pre-meeting HTML class started at 6:00, followed by introductions and announcements. TPCUG Officer nominations and elections followed. A very informative talk on the Roadrunner Internet service by Time Warner was next and the meeting was concluded with the doorprize drawing.

A pre-meeting tutorial on HTML was conducted by member Don Patzsch from 6:00 to 6:30. As expected, Don presented a very concise, informative session. A large group of members and guests attended the session. This is to be a monthly feature, and if you're even remotely interested in the subject you can't help but learn something about the Internet and how it works.

Connie opened with SIG Announcements. The Comm SIG was spoken for by Charles Howe and the Genealogy SIG by Ford Bond.

Starting in December, the meeting room will be in a different location. It will be in the new wing on the second floor gallery above the main lobby. This should make us easier to find.

Connie briefly mentioned upcoming events such as a possible job fair in the spring in conjunction with MOSI. Also the FACUG is conducting a web page contest and a judge is needed to serve for a limited time to look at the contested web pages. Also intentions are to bring in tax preparation software for demo starting in January for a couple of months.

The officer elections for 1998 came next. The following people were nominated and duly elected to serve in 1998:

- Merle Nicholson, President
- Mike Hodges, Vice President
- Kevan Sheridan, Secretary
- Jenny Lind Olin, Treasurer
- Bruce Register, Member at Large

A very informative talk on the Roadrunner Internet service was next. A representative of Time Warner, Jason Wells, assisted by Ty Abrahams of Groupware International gave an outstanding talk on the cable modem system being installed throughout most of Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties. There was just too much data given during the talk for me to be able to do it justice here.

They are a complete Internet Service Provider (ISP), offering

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(President.....Continued from page 1)

for some time, so they both bring a lot of experience to the job.

Mike Hodges and Bruce Register are continuing in their positions as Vice President and Member at Large. Mike and Bruce both have the past year's experience on the job, and Bruce has several more years as past Secretary.

Ford Bond, Larry Anders, Charles Howe, Mary Sheridan and William LaMartin have all agreed to continue as: MOSI Liaison, Librarian, Comm SIG Chairman, Programs Coordinator/BBS Sysop and Newsletter/Web Editor, respectively.

So it's a good, experienced group of people, all fun to be with, so I know we're going to enjoy the year at the helm.

If it seems that we're playing musical chairs with the board positions, that would be right. What we're actually doing is reducing our total number of board persons by two with the loss of Connie and Wil. My personal preference would be to bring in at least a couple of new people each year. It was not to be. Bruce did an excellent job pleading for other members to fill positions--with no success. So it's on my personal agenda to take a new approach to solicit help for next year. I'll start right now with this: **The board meeting is open to all members. We meet at Reflectone at 6:00PM on the Thursday prior to the Wednesday meeting. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME and NEEDED.** If you think you can serve in some capacity during the following year, come to the meeting and participate, and maybe scope out your next job, or just help out. Contact Mike Hodges first to get on the Reflectone security list.

Finally, just a couple of acknowledgments; *A very special thanks to Don Patzsch* for conducting the HTML class and for bringing his special knowledge to each meeting and for his willingness to serve in any way he can.

MOSI, through Ford Bond, has provided the facilities without which we cannot exist. Ford came though for us and continues on our behalf.

And thanks to Mary Sheridan who has brought a renewed enthusiasm to scheduling our monthly programs. The quality of the programs is evident. She volunteered for the job when it was needed and is serving very effectively in the #1 most important job in the club. The OTHER #1 most important job is .the newsletter/web editor. William LaMartin has brought the quality of the newsletter to an all time high. William really cares deeply about the club in general and about the newsletter and web site in particular. They're both "award winners" in my book. And not forgetting Larry Anders, whose humor, interest, experience and especially newsletter articles have been invaluable to us for many years.

Thanks, and I'll see you at the next meeting. Merle ♦

Comments

by William LaMartin, Editor,
Tampa PC users Group

Several months back I upgraded to the newest versions of two of the more expensive programs that I use: Visual Basic Professional and Microsoft Office Professional. With some searching I found the new versions at fairly reasonable prices—when compared to the highest asking price out there. More recently I upgraded three programs I have been using for years, programs which, I think, are the best in their respective categories—and which all three taken together don't cost as much to upgrade as one of the first two programs mentioned. They are Delorme's Street Atlas 5.0, Broderbund's Family tree Maker 4.0, and Intuit's Quicken 98. (The latter was actually a Christmas gift from my son.) I have the deluxe version of Quicken, the non-deluxe version of Family Tree Maker, and the only version of Street Atlas.

I have been using these programs for years, starting with the DOS versions of Quicken and Family Tree Maker since in the beginning that was all that existed. I immediately jumped to their Windows versions when they were first offered and have watched them improve with each new version. Occasionally I skip an upgrade for Family Tree Maker and Quicken. For example, my previous Quicken was version 4; the new one is Quicken 98 with versions 5 and 6 for Windows in between. For Street Atlas, though, I have purchased each new version since each one has been such a major step over the previous one. Version 5.0 combines the mapping features of version 4.0 with the trip planning features of Deloreme's *Map and Go* program. So, now, I have two programs for the price of one, and there are plenty of new features to boot.

The one new feature common to all three programs is their integration of the Internet. Each has a menu button to click on to connect to the Internet to access financial data in the case of Quicken, genealogical data for Family Tree Maker, and travel information like new road construction in the case of Street Atlas. As space needs filling in the newsletter I will write about these programs. Luckily I don't need to use all three this issue.

For the past six months I have been struggling with space on my 18 month old computer's 2.5 GB hard drive. I aggressively delete programs and files that I no longer need; I save to ZIP disks those files that I use only rarely. I empty my browser's cache regularly as well as the Windows Temp folder. But none of this seems to stop the steady diminution of free space on my hard drive. When my son loaded Riven with the 150 MB of files that it installs, things really got tight.

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Software Review

Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia

by Larry Anders, Librarian,
Tampa PC Users Group

To start out the New Year differently, I thought I would do something new myself.... re-review a product for the third time. I first reviewed the original issue of Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia (*GME*) in 1994, then again in 1996. With each new issue it keeps getting better and bigger. Now, the Deluxe Edition comes with two CDs full of interactive information. Considering each CD can hold up to 680 megabytes of data. You do the math. It's loaded. The 1998 edition works with both Windows 3.1 and 95, but if you're not using Windows 95 yet, quit waiting. You're only depriving yourself of a much more enjoyable time between you and your computer.

When *GME* is first installed, Apple's Quick Time movie player is installed and you are given a chance to register on-line. If you register on-line you are then given the opportunity to install 36 new *free* fonts. After that you're ready to start an interactive, learning-by-doing experience you, and/or your children, are sure to enjoy. Grolier has been doing this for over 100 years, and I believe they continue that tradition with *GME* 1998.

The initial screen gives you an immediate opportunity to tour what's available in *GME*, or you can dive right in and explore yesterday and today on your own with help usually just a click away. The 1998 edition of *GME* has:

- Over 35,000 articles, including 1,100 new and 4,200 updated articles.
- Over 15,000 images, including 3,700 new pictures.
- 31 Guided Tours that guide you through specific topics with related sights, sounds and articles.
- 1,200 geopolitical, historical and thematic maps that include multimedia features.
- 400 points of interest.
- Over 15 hours of sound.
- 10 custom interfaces.
- 1996-97 Yearbook, including multimedia video coverage, current events, chronology of events, and photos of the month for '96-97.
- On-line Knowledge Explorer that includes the Grolier Internet Index of related sites, links from *GME* articles to two additional Grolier encyclopedias on-line, Encyclopedia Americana and The New Book of Knowledge and monthly updates that mean your articles are never really out-of-date.
- The American Heritage College Dictionary, available by

just clicking on a word or just typing in the word for a definition.

- Drill-Down Atlases link map to map allowing you to drill down to smaller and smaller geographical areas, to points of interest photographs and related articles. You can also change from geopolitical to thematic to historical maps of the same area.
- Multiplex Videos create a multimedia learning experience by combining all the videos on a given topic on a single screen.
- Interactive Timelines allow you to explore the relationships between events in world history by knowing what was happening in one part of the world while something else was happening elsewhere.
- Free Activity Book developed with teachers and other education experts provides fun family projects to help you become familiar with the many features of *GME*.

Whether you just got your first computer this Christmas or you're an old pro at computing, I don't think you can go wrong with Grolier's Multimedia Encyclopedia for 1998. In either case you'll find *GME* easy to install, understand and use. *GME* makes learning come to life with exciting and innovative features. The easy-to-use interactive modules let you explore the world in all its geographic, scientific, artistic, and cultural wonder. And under Windows you're always just a click away from your word processor.

List price is under \$50 with a \$20 mail-in rebate if you are a previous owner of *GME*, *Microsoft Encarta*, *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*, *IBM World Book* or *Encyclopedia Britannica* and if you purchase by June 30, 1998. You can find out more about *GME* at <http://www.grolier.com>. ♦



SOFTWARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

1. **Mixman Studio** - Mixman Technologies -Mixing studio where you can load up to 16 tracks of digital sound, mix, them and perform them in real time - Win95, Pentium & CD required.
2. **G-NOME** - 7th Level - Pilot more than 20 different mechanized vehicles in war action - Win95, Pentium 90, 16 MB RAM & 4X CD required (13+)
3. **HELI COPS** - 7th Level - Helicopter war game simulation - Win95, Pentium 100, 8MB RAM, 4X CD
4. **Magic Cap** - General Magic - Organize all your communications: email, fax, etc. - Windows 95 CD
5. **How Would You Survive?** - Grolier - Multimedia Adventure (ages 7-12) - Windows CD
6. **Space Adventure**- Knowledge Adventure - up to the moment exploration of outer space (8-adult)
7. **Aviation Adventure** - Knowledge Adventure - complete world of flying (8-adult)

(Call 251-3817 for information on review software)

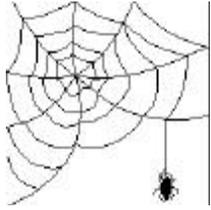
Internet picture of the month



Sacred Heart Church, Tampa FL

This photo is from the Tour of Tampa Bay collection at the Tampa Bay Online site <http://tampabayonline.net/tour/home.htm> . This is a collection of interactive, panoramic, 360 degree photos of Tampa area sites. Using your mouse, you can move around a 360 degree tour of the church. This particular photo was taken by Jim Reed.

January's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)	http://www.canx.com/tpcug/	
Art Masterpiece Collection - Jim's Fine Art Collection	http://www2.iinet.com/art/	
Broadcast Network on the Internet	http://www.audionet.com/	
Compendium of HTML Elements	http://www.htmlcompendium.org/sitemap.htm	
drivesavers.com (hard drive rescue)	http://www.drivesavers.com/home.html	
Blues Summit (Internet Only Radio)	http://www.radio.audionet.com/radio/blues/blues_summit/station.html	
CompareNet! (comparison shopping)	http://www.compare.net/cgi-bin/webc/comparenet/home.html	
Earth TV Galicia Channel page (Spanish TV)	http://dove.mtx.net.au/~punky/TVgalicia.html	
Earth TV LCI Channel page (France)	http://dove.mtx.net.au/~punky/TVlci.html	
Escher The Ultimate Collection.	http://www.uq.edu.au/~zztmunda/escher.html	
Happy Puppy's Front Porch (Game Site)	http://www.happypuppy.com/	
Java Chess interface	http://pine.cs.yale.edu:4201/java/chess.html	
Legal Information Institute	http://www.law.cornell.edu/	
Medical Multimedia Group - Reference Library	http://www.sechrest.com/mmg/reflib.html	
MetaCrawler search	http://www.metacrawler.com/	
Tour of Tampa Bay (360 degree images of Tampa)	http://tampabayonline.net/tour/home.htm	

Most of these links will join the many already on the Links page at our Web site, where you need only click on the name.

Hardware Review

UMAX Astra 1200S Scanner

by Merle Nicholson, President,
Tampa PC Users Group

Well, I just had to buy a scanner after many years of price checking. You may have noticed that the prices, while going down steadily, took a nosedive just before Christmas. This one, a 600x1200 dpi model was priced at \$249, and the model 610 at 300x600 dpi was priced at \$119 and for a day or so, had a rebate bringing it down to \$99. But I took a look at the 600x1200 for \$250 and didn't give the other a second thought. I should maybe have given it a second thought, but more on this later.

As for the hardware, it's a scanner. What more can I say except that it is SCSI, and it has a lid, being a 8 1/2 x 14 flatbed, and it scans. The proof is in the software!

The attraction that it had over the 610 was the SCSI interface card. I really didn't want to add another parallel cable to an already tight, crowded mess of cables, and was also reluctant because of stories of printing issues and operating with the LS120 or ZIP drive I was planning to put there too. So - unless you already have SCSI installed - you have to open your computer and install the 8-bit card in an ISA slot. Windows 95 does not recognize the card at all. There are no settings on the card or in software. It just does not exist as far as the operating system is concerned, but it works. The techie part of me hates that, but what the hey. The installation instructions are very clear and easy for anyone to follow. That's the hardware part of the review.

When it comes to scanners, software is probably more important than hardware, and this one really is not bad. The biggest complaint that I have is with the documentation. There's nothing I can find that gives a really clear picture of the overall functions of the software and how they fit together. I have it mostly figured out, but not all. There are two good manuals in Acrobat format, one on the main program called Presto PageManager and one on the TWAIN device called VistaScan. PageManager is the central program, and I'll start there after I cover the three utility programs: Copier, AutoScan Setup and Scanner Test.

Copier is just wonderful. You just start Copier, put a document in the scanner, select the number of copies, and hit the start button. It's like a real copier, except slower. In 30 seconds the printer starts, so on my old Deskjet it's a full two minutes from start to finish, but, to be fair, the printer time is 3/4 of that and you can be scanning more while the printer prints. Copier's control panel has several controls like reduc-



tion from 1% to 200% and other controls making it more versatile than a standard Xerographic copier. Copier is a nice bonus as far as I'm concerned; not having expected it. I find I use it a lot, and my family does too. And don't forget that your FAX, if you have a FAX modem, is a printer device too, making it easy to FAX out anything on paper.

The other two utilities, Autoscan Setup and Scanner are for setup and testing. They do a good job, but you don't use them unless you have trouble with the interface. I did not.

Now to PageManager. It's a kind of a "shell" to use a software term, a kind of a manager for all the scanning you may want to do. You don't have to use it all the time (except for OCR), but it's a neat concept, and after I figured out what it did, I use it all the time except for copying.

First let's review a scanner term - TWAIN. It's a standardized interfacing system that allows many different software applications to access one or more input devices. In our case just one: a scanner. You may have noticed in Paintshop Pro a menu item called "Acquire". All graphics programs will have it. (I was surprised that Microsoft PowerPoint doesn't, that I could find.) The menu item Acquire in such a program will start up the registered TWAIN-compliant device - in our case, a program called VistaScan. With VistaScan, you do the actual scanning, and then when done, VistaScan "hands" the result to the program!

Now back to PageManager. PageManager uses the Acquire in its tool menu to get more scanned documents or pictures and stacks them up as small thumbnail pictures side by side. So you can manage all the scanned images you have from here. Delete them as needed or pass them onto other programs. PageManager has an application toolbar at its bottom to designate all the apps that you may want to pass images onto. The bar is customizable, but the basic list contains e-mail, FAX, Print, PageType, PageImage and Notepad. I removed Notepad and replaced it with Microsoft Word, and then added Paintshop Pro and PhotoDeluxe. So after scanning in the image and after it appears as a thumbnail picture, you simply drag the thumbnail image to the Application button of your choice. Now, associated with each application program is a

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(Scanner.....Continued from page 6)

selection of image type. The image types are Bitmapmed (.BMP), PCX (.PCX), TIFF (.TIF) and ASCII Text. In the case of MS Word (and notepad before I deleted it), I selected ASCII text. So guess what happens when you drag an image to Word? It does OCR on the image! (OCR=Optical Character Recognition). Converts it to text. And I must say it's fast and fairly accurate, too. Now that's a subjective opinion, of course. I really didn't do testing of its accuracy. And its having OCR was the reason I put MS Word on the App bar. Notepad doesn't have a spell checker. And all OCR needs a spell checker to find the words it messes up, and this OCR just doesn't have it. I'm sure I'd be happier with one of several good OCR software programs; I've used them and like them, but this one comes with the package and I didn't spend the extra \$80 or so. I'll stick with this until I have some large difficult OCR'ing to do.

Two other apps are supplied, PageImage for image editing and PageType for forms conversion. I'll have to skip over PageType. The help for it is abysmal, consisting of a definition of each menu item. PageImage's help is the same, but at least I know what an image editor does, and the functions are strikingly similar to Paintshop Pro, the popular shareware program, so I was comfortable with it. But I've decided that PaintShop Pro has more functions, so I've stopped using PageImage, and I'll probably delete it from my system. But in fairness, PageImage isn't bad, and isn't hard to use, and for basic cropping, resizing, color adjustments and such and if the limited output formats (.JPG, .PCD, .PCX, .TGA and .TIF) are adequate (where's .GIF?), then it'll work well.

Neither PaintShop Pro nor PageImage is good for photo editing, and they weren't really designed for it. For detailed photo editing, I used Adobe PhotoDeluxe. I won it as a doorprize long ago and didn't take it out of the box until I got the scanner. I clipped the background out of a photo and then pasted in a graduated blue background for my personal website. Nice.

When "Acquiring" images into any application, the VistaScan software is as easy to use as any I've seen, and it is better than the software that comes with the Hewlett-Packard scanners I am familiar with. It gives a range of adjustments and histograms that would take some study to be able to use them effectively, but that's true of Paintshop Pro, too. Fortunately, you can take the defaults and do very well. Some obvious functions are for contrast and brightness that you may want to use most of the time, and, at the worst, you just keep scanning and adjusting until you get what you want.

Now to the problems and overall observations. I really didn't have any problems except in my own expectations. I discovered that to use what I paid for (not much money at that) I need more ... memory, hard drive and printer. On a scanner

that I paid extra money for to get 600x1200 dpi, guess what? ... I'm scanning at 300 dpi. Why? My 32MB of system memory isn't enough for really high resolutions scans. I can do a standard photo at 1200x1200 and then if I close all other apps down I can edit it. And the hard drive space! It apparently uses a lot of temporary disk space, so I had to uninstall it and reinstall on another drive where I had more room. But the detail! Zoom in! Wow! A lot of detail. It looks like nothing on the photo is lost!

I never thought that I'd see an "out of memory" error on my system, but I had it within 10 minutes of installing the scanner. Am I really disappointed? No. 300dpi is quite enough for most purposes, and I really didn't know that. So, could I have bought the 300x600 and saved \$100? Yes, but I wouldn't have gotten the SCSI interface with that model as far as I could tell. I'm still happy with it, and I can always add another 32MB of RAM, can't I? But it'll have to wait for a new photo-quality printer.

UMAX Technologies Inc., 3561 Gateway Blvd. , Fremont CA 94538, (510) 651-4000
<http://www.umax.com>
 About \$250 is the street price. ◆

(Comments.....Continued from page 3)

The solution, of course, was to add a second hard drive, and I finally gave in and bought a 5.1 GB Western Digital drive for \$279. And this brought back memories of past hard drives: My first two IBM compatible computers and 120 MB and 75 MB drives. I don't recall the prices of those drives, but I do recall the next hard drive I purchased. It was a 350 MB drive which cost \$350--a price which at the time seemed like a real bargain. At that \$1/MB price, my new 5.1 GB drive would cost \$5,100. What a price reduction we have seen. Similar reductions have occurred in memory. The first memory I ever bought was 64 KB for an Apple IIe in 1983. I think it cost \$200 - \$250. I believe the first memory I bought for an IBM compatible was over \$60/MB, and now you can get 32 MB for around \$60.

Now the same dynamic seems to be at work on the complete computer system with the advent of quite loaded computers for under \$1,000. But buyer beware! Due to some of them having at most one expansion slot, many of these bargain

(Comments.....Continued on page 10)

Software Review

Street Atlas USA 5.0 from Delorme

by William LaMartin, Editor,
Tampa PC Users Group

As I mentioned in my Comments article earlier, this is a program of which I have purchased every version starting with version 1.0. And every update has been more than worth the fairly modest price of updating. This update combines Delorme's *Map and Go* trip route planning program into the Street Atlas program. So now, in addition to viewing maps from every location in the US, you can also plan a trip to any US location, having the program calculate the shortest, quickest, most scenic, etc. route for you. It will also list the points of interest along the way and print out a AAA-type routing booklet of maps to take on your trip.

If you have a laptop with a CD drive, you won't even need to print out anything, since you can view the map data on the laptop as you drive. Additionally, if you purchase the Delorme global positioning device called *Tripmate*, which I reviewed in the February 1997 newsletter, you can let the computer guide you on your journey—even letting it tell you where to turn or take a different highway if your laptop has a sound card.

I recently tried out this last feature on a 140 mile trip. The only problem I encountered was the low volume of the laptop's sound. If there was a lot of noise in the car at the time the computer decided to advise you of an upcoming route change you might miss it. In addition to mapping out your trip and guiding you along it with audio instructions, you can also have the program display points of interest and businesses with their phone numbers along your route. I don't know how the particular businesses get into the database, since some obvious candidates were omitted and some obscure ones were included.

If you desire you can have it tell you the entire route. While using the global position, you are presented with a split screen with a list of different roads you will take, how many miles and the estimated time needed in the left frame and the map with your current position in the right frame. It is something that you only want to take quick glances at while you are driving. This was not a problem on this trip since there were two of us in the car, and the passenger could navigate with the computer.

When I first started with Delorme's *Map and Go*, in making trip plans you were required to start and end trips at major locations. Now you can start and end a trip at any point on the

map. There are now a lot more points of interest, public buildings, churches, etc. denoted on the maps than in the past. Of course, you can turn off this feature if it clutters your screen, as I did in the screen capture at the end of the article. As usual, you can find locations based on address, zip code and phone extension as in the past. And, as before, at any point you click you will be given the longitude and latitude.

You can connect to the Internet to download current road work notices. For example, I noted that there was a warning of a slowdown on Hillsborough Avenue in Tampa due to work on the bridge over the Hillsborough River. You can also download Coast Guard information on public marine aids to navigation along the coasts and information regarding the location of nuclear power plants and dams for some reason I cannot fathom. I assume that the available information here will increase with time. For example, all you speeders will probably eventually be able to find the locations of the latest speed traps.

It is a great program that just gets better with every new version. In addition to the major additions, there are the minor ones that improve the appearance of the program on your screen and the way you interact with it.

Some of the new features in Delorme's own words are:

- **Address-to-Address Routing** DeLorme's extraordinary map detail enhanced with address-to-address routing
- **Over 2 Million Points of Interest** Find restaurants, hotels, gas stations and lots of fun things to do along the way
- **GPS Voice Navigation** When using the GPS feature, Street Atlas USA 5.0 talks to you as you travel, telling you how far it is to your next turn, what road you're on and how far it is to the end of your journey
- **PalmPilot PDA Support** Plan a route and send your directions to a 3Com PalmPilot to carry with you
- **Enhanced GPS Features** Automatic panning, automatic logging, automatic tracking, GPS map features, change symbol size, monitor satellites and more
- **Prefer/Avoid Roads** Select or avoid certain roads in your route
- **Edit Roads** Assign characteristics to roads (e.g., one way, no left turn, etc.) that are incorporated into the routing
- **Automatic On-line Updates** With an Internet connection, on-line information for weather, road construction, upcoming events and other points of interest automatically appears on your maps as you pan
- **On-line Gazetteer** Direct Internet access to hundreds of city Web pages for more detailed regional information
- **Attractions Web Sites** Direct Internet access to up-to-date information for points of interest

(Atlas.....Continued on page 10)

Software Review

Quicken Deluxe 98 from Intuit

by William LaMartin, Editor,
Tampa PC Users Group

Quicken is another program that I have been with since almost day 1 in personal computer time. I started with the DOS version, switched to the first Windows version when it came out, and have updated to about every other successive version. You know that the program must have served me well all these years or I wouldn't have stayed with it. I can remember only one time I had some trouble with it. That was when converting data for the DOS to Windows upgrade or from the Windows 1 version to the next Windows version. In the conversion, some of my splits (the different lines you can break a transaction into if you want to specify the separate items, for example, that make up a single deposit) had the correct amounts but incorrect descriptions. Since this concerned only a few entries and they were several years old and the amounts were correct, I didn't worry too much about it. But that was the only time I have had cause to really complain about Quicken.

Of course, Quicken is much more now than a simple checking register. It is a place to track anything financial in your life. Most of what Quicken has added (at least for the deluxe versions) starting with version 4, I believe, are the investment features that I really don't use. I mainly use it to track the disappearance of my money instead of its growth. My accounts and different categories of expenses (and a few categories of income) easily reach 50 in number. Just think, before the personal computer and Quicken none of this would be possible. It is another example of how the personal computer has made us more productive. Now I track 50 different items, where as in the past I only struggled to balance my checkbook and a few savings vehicles with pencil and paper.

Seriously, Quicken has been a bookkeeping life saver for me. A couple of years back I let it take over more of my life when I ordered sheets of checks to feed into my laser printer so that Quicken could not only record my expenses, it could also pay my bills. This way, I save time by letting Quicken print the check and record it in my checking register at the same time.

But, enough of how wonderful Quicken has been in the past. What is new for Quicken 98? Well, as might be expected, there is more of a tilt toward the Internet. You can now get all sorts of investment and other financial information from the Quicken site. If you use any of the online brokers like Charles Schwab & Co., E*TRADE, Fidelity Investments or Waterhouse Securities, they will let you interface with them directly



from the program. And in the works is the ability to download all of your credit card data (recent charges, etc.) directly into your Quicken credit card register for card issuers that team up with Quicken. This is intended to keep you from having to input this data yourself, but, to me, if you don't enter it yourself you have no check on whether the charges when you get them are valid.

Of course, they also are forging alliances with various banks to allow you to do online banking using Quicken and connecting to these banks over the Internet. Local banks that I saw listed were Barnett and Sun. Of course, Barnett is about to be gobbled up by NCNB, so that may no longer be available since NCNB was not on the list.

Banking is definitely moving to the Internet. But the problem, as I see it right now, is that we are getting many different groupings of banks, using different software, so that at this point services like those Quicken is offering will only be of use to a select few of us potential Quicken and Internet users. If my bank or credit card company is not allied with Quicken, then all bets are off. Additionally, many banks, like Barnett, want to charge you about \$10/month for accessing your account via the Internet. I think it should be free, since such service is keeping me out of their buildings and away from their human tellers. And indeed some banks offer such services free. Huntington Bank, for example, offers free Internet access to your account with them via a secure Internet server if your browser is Java enabled, as Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator are. So Quicken gets cut out of deals like this one, and my bet is that this is the direction banks will go in the future (although they may offer some sort of Quicken compatible download of your transactions).

Other than access to financial information on the Internet and more investment help, what else do you get with this new version? Since I skipped two versions before this upgrade, I cannot say what is completely new, but to me the most noticeable changes involved the "small" things. It is now just a lot easier to move around my different accounts in Quicken. The appearance of the program on the screen is more pleasing, and they seem to get more information and options presented in the same space than in the past.

When I open the program I am presented with a week's worth
(Quicken.....Continued on page 12)

Special Interest Groups

Communications SIG

This SIG meets the first Monday of the month at 6 PM at the Reflectone Building. **Directions: Proceed west on Waters from N. Dale Mabry across the railroad tracks, about 1.5 miles; take second left on Savarese. Proceed on Savarese until you reach the Reflectone building. Use the north door.** You must sign up to get on the list and to get by secu-

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

approximately 27MB/sec at the modem for \$39.95/month for current cable subscribers after an installation cost of \$99.95.

The installation of the necessary infrastructure to offer all of the Time Warner system in the two counties is still ongoing. They look for completion of that by June 15th, 1998. The City of Tampa area will start at the first of the year and be completed to South Tampa in March or April.

As an ISP, they are offering added services: 5MB for personal web sites, up to 5 e-mail addresses etc. The equipment installed, including an Ethernet card installed in your PC, is owned and maintained by Time Warner. It consists of the Ethernet card, cable modem and cabling, and a new dedicated cable run into your house. There is a discount offered to all TPCUG members reducing the installation cost to \$49.95. Contact Jason Wells at jason@timewarnercable.com.

The door prize drawing followed after a short break. Roger Waters won a hat and software. Micrografx Greetingcard Gold was won by John Weber, and Janet Bowersox received a Tee shirt; Vince McCoy won a mouse pad; and Warren Fuss, Larry Anders and Merle Nicholson received Time Warner hats. ◆

(Comments.....Continued from page 7)

computers cannot be upgraded. Even laptops are rapidly delining in price. It is amazing what you can now get for less than \$2,000 in a name-brand laptop (the only type to have). ◆

urity. Contact Charles Howe: at 968-1207 or HOWE@INTNET.NET

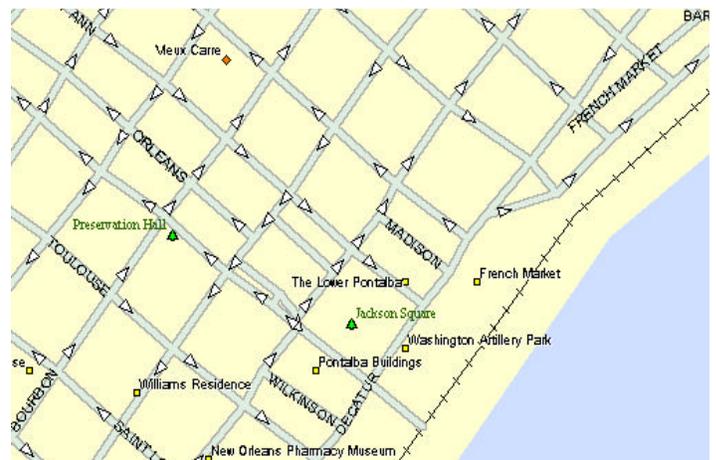
Genealogy SIG

This SIG meets the second Monday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Museum of Science and Industry. Contact Jenny Lind Olin at 960-5723 or Ford Bond at 987-6309 .

(Atlas.....Continued from page 8)

- **Reservations** Make on-line reservations for hotel accommodations, airline tickets, car rentals, etc.
- **Training Card Tutorials** Easy-to-use tutorials coach you step-by-step as you learn about Street Atlas USA 5.0's many features
- **Travel Package** Printing options include Summary, Directions, North Up Map, Detailed Maps and Travel Plan - everything you need to keep you informed as you travel
- **Weather Almanac** Weather statistics for 341 places in the United States
- **Radio Listings** Listings of AM and FM radio stations and their formats throughout the United States
- **Exit Services** Comprehensive listings of available services at US interstate highway exits
- **Avoid Areas in Routing** Avoid specific geographic areas, such as cities with heavy traffic congestion or major road construction

It is a great program even if you don't have a laptop to take it on the road. But it really comes into its own on a color laptop with sound and CD ROM to which you have attached the Delorme Tripmate GPS unit. Pop in the disk and hit the road. You will never get lost again. ◆



Screen shot of Street Atlas showing one way streets in the New Orleans French Quarter

Friends of the User Group

We acknowledge the following firms for their support

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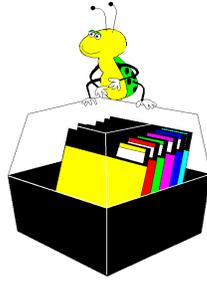
MEMBERS' HELP LINE

Program	Code	Name	Time	Phone	Codes
Adobe Acrobat	AA	Larry Anders	Mon - Sun 6:00pm - 10:00pm	989-9119	AOL, ME, MW, FP, PSP
Alpha4	A4				
AOL	AOL	Tom Cone	Mon - Sun 7:00pm - 9:00pm	949-3716	A4,VdB
Computer General	CG				
Delphi	DE	Connie Kincaid	evenings & week-ends	661-8185	DOS, MOS,Q
DOS	DOS				
Family Tree Maker	FTM	William LaMartin	Mon - Fri 9:00am - 9:00pm	251-3817	AA, FTM, IG, MOS, MP, VB, W95
Hardware General	HG				
Hardware Modem	HM	Merle Nicholson	Mon - Fri 7:30pm - 9:30pm; weekends	879-3602	CG, DE, DOS, HG, HM, HP, W3, VB
Hardware Printer	HP				
HTML coding	HTM	Jenny Lind Olin	Mon - Sun 8:00am - 10:00pm	960-5723	ME, MW, PAF, Q, WP
Internet General	IG				
Micrografx Graphics Suite	MGS	Don Patzsch	Before 8:00pm	689-8662	CG
Microsoft Access	MA				
Microsoft Excel	ME				
Microsoft FrontPage	FP				
Microsoft Office Suite	MOS				
Microsoft Publisher	MP				
Microsoft Visual Basic	VB				
Microsoft Word	MW				
PAF	PAF				
PaintShop PRO	PSP				
Quicken	Q				
Visual dBase	VdB				
Windows 3.1	W3				
Windows 95	W95				
Windows NT	WNT				
WordPerfect	WP				

We encourage other members to add their names to the list of those willing to assist fellow members with their computer problems. Contact William LaMartin to add your name to the list.

Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

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

(Quicken.....Continued from page 9)

of bills to be paid or scheduled deposits to be made. That way I know what lies ahead and hopefully I won't miss any payments this way. On my right I have tabs that list the various account registers that are open, and this allows me to move between them easily—a big improvement over older versions. In brief, it just has a more polished look than past versions—not that there was anything really bad about the previous versions. Of course, there is extensive help, including tutorials. Finally, this version also takes you on the Internet (again) to a Quicken site, which allows you to search for the best car insurance rate or home mortgage deal. It also allows you to do minimal tax planning.

Quicken Deluxe sells for around \$59 with a \$20 rebate for previous Quicken owners. If you are happy with the basic Quicken package, which omits much of the investment material and tax planning material but really does everything that I want out of the package, you can probably get that for around \$20. ♦

