



Bits of Blue



August in Tampa

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

Vol. 11 No. 8

August 1998

Meeting

Quarterdeck

August 12, 1998
6:00 PM
Museum of Science
and Industry
4801 E Fowler Ave.

Meeting Preview: At the August meeting, Quarterdeck will present their software. Also, as in the past few meetings, Mary Sheridan will conduct a 30 minute Windows discussion at the beginning of the meeting.

President's Comments

By Merle Nicholson, President, Tampa PC Users Group

Good news! We're finally going to start the Visual Basic SIG August 18th. After some foot-dragging on my part, we have a classroom reserved at the Gateway Country Store on North Dale Mabry. This arrangement was made partly through the two Gateway employees Rich Podolsky and Beth Wood who gave us a very fine talk on Gateway last meeting.

One thing that I hadn't realized was the sheer number of Gateway customers in our membership! And those who mentioned it were all very positive about the experience. Nice to know there are good recommendations out there among us.

I would expect when someone in the group buys something, be it a complete PC or a printer or whatever, that he or she would draw on the experience of other club members, and except for short discussions at the meeting, I don't see much of that going on. We have the perfect forum for the exchange of information. All we have to do is use it – the discussion page on our web site. Won't you please go there today and see what's there? It really makes sense, and this is a perfect example of what a club is for – to post a message and title it "What's the best scanner?" and see just how many responses you get. I'll bet you would be surprised how much free information will be posted.

Even if you aren't in the market for anything right now, if you'll just scan the titles every day, you'll be bound eventually to answer someone else's question.

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September 9: Vinnie Barber from Alps Printers

October 14: Colleen Hinsburg from Mindspring, a nationwide Internet provider

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Minutes of the July 8 Meeting

*By Merle Nicholson, President,
Tampa PC Users Group*

We started with the Windows SIG at 6:00PM, led by Mary Sheridan. The purpose of the SIG is to provide a discussion forum for Windows issues and helping each other. The half-hour was easily filled with a lively discussion, mostly concerning Windows 98 and who has done what so far. We were reluctant to stop, but finally had to because the main event got set up and going - Gateway 2000.

Rich Podoisky and Beth Wood from the Gateway 2000 Country Store gave a very nice talk about their company, interesting facts about the company, about the founder and how he started the company. The founder simply started in his house building computers for people in South Dakota and expanded into his father's barn - hence the cow logo and barn theme in their advertising.

Beth and Rich led some lively discussions and gave out many T-shirts, pencils, cups and key chains to people who would speak up with answers. A prize was given to the person with the fastest computer, the slowest and for computer trivia. As the evening progressed it was obvious that there are a lot of Gateway computer owners among our membership. Some time was devoted to discussing various members' purchases. All the comments were very positive.

Beth and Rich talked some about the newest ads that offer a computer for \$49 a month. It was understandable because the ads really do not offer much detail. But if I understood it correctly, the deal is simply a direct financed purchase of whatever computer you want with payments up to four years. After two years, Gateway will accept the computer back as a trade, with the trade-in value based on the "computer bluebook" published value.

Rich and Beth gave a lively, entertaining talk and we appreciate them coming out to talk to us. They're welcome back any time. During the break, we discussed arranging to use their training room for our Visual Basic SIG, and they were very enthusiastic about the idea. (See page 10 in this newsletter for information on the SIG)

As you know we have two door prize drawings - one for prizes and one for cash. We had good sales and some fun with it. The details - who won what - will be reported next week.



Yeah Write

By Merle Nicholson, President,
Tampa PC Users Group

Yeah Write is a word processor. It's an interesting word processor. That much I can say; interesting enough that I've been continuing to use it even though I have alternatives that I'm more familiar with. My own personal choice is MS Word, but I can't honestly say that I've looked at alternatives. And this is certainly ... well ... an interesting alternative. I'll say to you what I've been reminding myself. A word processor shouldn't cost \$150 or \$89. What about people whose word processing needs are simple? What about people who really can't justify the cost of a full blown word processor? What about simple?

There's always WordPad, isn't there? And Write in Windows 3.1? They're both more than adequate to write your credit card company a note when they've messed up and you want to tell them a thing or two. So why start a company and create a brand new word processor? I'll give it a try first by listing some features.

1. It's \$19 or free or \$29. Take your choice. (More later on this.)
2. It takes up 2MB on your disk when fully installed. (Do I care about this? No, but YOU might if your hard drive is limited.)
3. They're honest. Read the box. They list all the things it CAN'T do.
4. It's fast. (Does a word processor need to be fast? If you're running Win 95 on a 486, yes.)
5. It does a lot of neat things.

This is a new product. The company is made up of ex-WordPerfect employees in Orem, Utah. On the CD, if you buy the CD, is a 16 bit version for Windows 3.1 and also a 32 bit version for Windows 95, 98 and NT. The minimum requirement is Windows 3.1 with 4MB of RAM and 4MB of hard drive space. I'm not kidding.

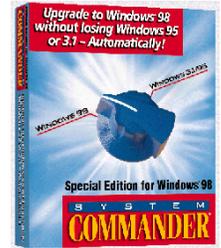
This is my sixth document, including one FAX document. The program loads fast. And it starts where you last left off, even (especially) if you were last editing a document. All documents that you create seem to be contained "in" the word processor. You don't deal with external files, you simply select a tab and add more documents to a list of documents under the tab. The list gives you the date, the title and some of the first line of the text. You double-click on <New> to create a new one or double-click on an existing one. That opens an editing window with the date and title at the top and a text area for typing in the rest of the window. The edit area is sizeable. The tabs at the top classify all the categories of docu-

Yeah Write

System Commander: Special Edition for Windows98

By Don Patzsch, Tampa PC Users Group

This is a very interesting program. You do not need this program if you have SYSTEM COMMANDER 3.0 or SYSTEM COMMANDER Deluxe.



When you install this program, it makes copies of various components of the Windows95 program, or if you are using Windows 3.x, it will make copies of those program components.

The purpose of this program is to put a boot menu choice on your screen when you start your computer. If you now have Windows95, you will see--OS selection Menu. A: Windows95 B: Windows98

You may then select whichever operating system you wish to boot. That is the purpose of this System Commander Special Edition. Use this program only if you plan to install Windows98 UPGRADE. You do not need to set up a separate partition to install the UPGRADE. Another interesting feature is that the DOS boot sector virus protection checks for viruses on every boot-up. If one is found, the program replaces the infected boot sector and hidden files.

Remember, with this program, you may install the Windows98 UPGRADE without affecting your Windows95 or Windows 3.x system. Quite an unusual idea.

For User Group prices, contact sales@v-com.com. For a description of the program visit <http://www.v-com.com/> ♦

ments you can make. Starting with Address, then Diary, Email, Faxes, General, Journal, Letters, Memos, Notes, Text, To Do, and YW Info. This last is the documentation for Yeah Write, implemented as text. It's easy to use, and not complicated, just as you'd expect. You can add tabs of your own as I did for TPCUG and select the default document type for the documents under that tab. Each tab has a different form or "style" that pre-formats your document. This is very hard to describe. You'll not see a "Made for Windows 95" logo on this box!!

(Yeah.....Continued on page 8)

PowerBASIC Console Compiler for Windows

By Tom Cone, Tampa PC Users Group

The **PowerBASIC Console Compiler for Windows** creates EXEcutables (.EXE) capable of running in the Win32 environment (Windows 95, 98 and NT). It's published by PowerBASIC, 316 Mid Valley Center, Carmel, CA 93923. (<http://www.powerbasic.com>)

The program features an Integrated Development Environment for writing and debugging your BASIC code. It will feel very familiar to you if you ever worked in QuickBASIC, PowerBASIC for DOS, or (even longer ago) TurboBASIC.

What is a Console?

A console is a text mode interface connected right to the heart of 32-bit Windows. If you double-click on the MS-DOS icon in Windows, the window that opens with the C:\> prompt is your text console. In it you can execute commands such as DIR, CLS, COPY, etc. Additionally, you can run text mode applications such as XCOPY32.EXE and PING.EXE. These programs are actually 32-bit Windows applications which use special calls to the Win32 API in order to display text inside of the console window.

PB/CC eliminates the need for you to learn these special Win32 API calls in order to create console applications. The whole process is handled for you when you use the PRINT, LOCATE, COLOR, CLS, and other statements in the PB/CC language. This frees you to concentrate on the task at hand.

While not every application written for Windows will need to be a console application, the console seems suitable for many types of tasks. I, for example, have long been interested in database programming. Databases do not require sophisticated graphical components. Usually, it's "heads down" full speed keypunching data entry that's more important. Speed and ease of use are valued more highly than pretty screens. In that setting, having to lift your hand off the keyboard to position and click the mouse slows one down.

Every programmer is familiar with the "Hello, World!" program. It simply displays the greeting text to an end user. While not a significant program, it does measure two important things. The amount of source it takes to write a complete application, and the size of the executable generated by the compiler.

In Visual Basic I believe you have to create a form with a static text label and write the code to change the label. You then have to set the text of the label. And finally you have to access several different menu items and property sheets in or-

der to configure VB to compile a true EXE as small as it possibly can. The result? About 1.9 megabytes of executable and runtime DLL files, I've been told from reliable sources..

In PB/CC only three lines of code are necessary,

```
FUNCTION PbMain()
  PRINT "Hello, World!"
END FUNCTION
```

And the PB/CC compiler takes care of the rest automatically.

There are some differences. Unlike most DOS versions of BASIC, PB/CC requires that all executable code be contained inside of a Sub or Function. Only scanned statements (such as meta-statements, constant declarations and procedure declarations) can be placed outside of Subs and Functions.

The following PB/DOS program:

```
PRINT "At the tone the time will be "; TIME$
BEEP
```

Simply needs to be placed inside of a Function called PbMain() in order to execute:

```
FUNCTION PbMain() AS LONG
  PRINT "At the tone the time will be "; TIME$
  BEEP
END FUNCTION
```

When your program is loaded, the function PbMain() is executed automatically by PB/CC. This is where the main code of your application should be placed. The program stops when there are no more statements in PbMain() or an EXIT FUNCTION is encountered.

By default, all variables are local to Subs and Functions. Which means they can not be seen by other Subs or Functions. If you need to share a variable or array throughout your program, you should use the GLOBAL statement to change the scope. This promotes modular programming styles, which can lead to more efficient programming and easier debugging.

Besides the text console interface, the publisher says PB/CC offers BASIC programmers complete access to the complete Win32 API. It supports all true 32 bit DLL's, including the Winsock API for Internet access and ODBC for accessing SQL and other database servers. Win32 console applications also have a 2 gigabyte flat memory address, so trying to fit everything into 640k or 16 megs of EMS memory is no longer required. A string variable can be many megabytes in size and the limitation on arrays is measured in gigabytes instead of 'k' bytes.

(PowerBASIC.....Continued on page 10)

Internet picture of the month



I-95 & Palm Beach Lakes Blvd in West Palm Beach, FL

This is one of an almost infinite number of satellite photos available at <http://terraserver.microsoft.com/>, the Microsoft TerraServer site mentioned in the Editor's Comments on page 9. The photos come from US and Soviet satellites. You can view the photos at different resolutions, and for the best resolutions you can pay to download better quality images. Essentially all of Florida is covered, a fair amount of the USA and various other locations worldwide. I was interested in the above location since I spent some time there recently.

August's Interesting World Wide Web Locations



Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)	http://www.canx.com/tpcug/
ABA Network Lawyer Locator	http://www.abanet.org/martindale.html
Ancestry.com - Home of Online Genealogy	http://www.familyhistory.com/
SQL Tutorial	http://w3.one.net/~jhoffman/sqltut.htm
555-1212.com	http://www.555-1212.com/
A few scanning tips	http://www.scantips.com/
TerraServer -World's Largest Online Database	http://terraserver.microsoft.com/
EarthCam - The Ultimate Search Engine for Live Web	http://www.earthcam.com/
ICON CITY	http://www.yoink.com/iconcity/icons.htm
Trend Micro online virus scanning service	http://housecall.antivirus.com/explorer.html
AnyWho Find Telephone Number, Email, Home Page	http://www.anywho.com/
The Java Boutique - Java Applet Resource	http://javaboutique.internet.com/
vTuner (your global antenna to Internet radio)	http://www.vtuner.com/
Joslin Diabetes Center	http://www.joslin.org/
Martindale's Reference Desk Calculators On-Line	http://www-sci.lib.uci.edu/~martindale/RefCalculators.html
Online Mapping - Chicago Map Corp	http://www.mapmania.com/scripts/maniac.exe

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.

PhotoSmart Photo Scanner from Hewlett Packard

By William LaMartin, Editor,
Tampa PC Users Group

This last Father's Day brought me something I have wanted for a long time, a scanner for negatives and slides. I have been using an HP ScanJet IIcx flat bed scanner for, perhaps, five years to bring photos or printed text into my computer. But this scanner does not have the ability to scan negatives or slides. There was a negative scanning attachment (actually a new top for the scanner as I remember) available when I bought the scanner. The price was over \$600. Needless to say, I didn't buy it.



The price of the new PhotoSmart Photo Scanner is \$399. In addition to 35mm negatives and slides, it will also scan in a photograph up to 5" x 7" in size. It comes with a SCSI interface card and cable. When I first saw the scanner, my worry was how I was going to install it. If it required an interrupt, then I had problems, since, like many of you, my computer is out of interrupts. But a little thought and \$35 led to a very nice solution.

The solution was to connect it to the already existent HP ScanJet IIcx in a SCSI daisy chain. Specifically the IIcx was already connected to a SCSI interface card in the computer, and the IIcx had an additional SCSI connector on its back to connect another SCSI device. However, to accomplish this I had to locate a special SCSI cable that had a DB 25 pin male connector on one end and a Mini 50 pin male High Density connector on the other. HP sold one for \$30, but I more conveniently also found one for \$35 at a local cable store (Advanced Cable Connection Inc.). After connecting the new scanner to the back of the old one, I just had to set the new scanner's SCSI address to a different number than 2, which was used by my original scanner. Then, shut down Windows 95 and restart. Windows 95 finds the new scanner, and I install the scanner's imaging software.

To use the scanner you first select by pressing a button which media you are going to scan: 35 mm negative, 35 mm slide or photo. Second, you insert the item and the scanner takes it inside, where the software takes over and presents you with a view of the resulting photo on screen. For negatives, it will take in as many as five frames at once and display them on screen in thumbnail size. You then click on the one you want to work with, and, as with a slide scan or a photo scan, that

one is enlarged on the screen.

Once on the screen, you can rotate, resize, modify the color, or change the brightness and contrast of the image. Additionally, you have a number of different formats in which to save the image file including tif and jpg. You may also specify the size of the resulting image. An 8 x 10 in the tif format will eat up about 5.5 MB of your hard drive. I mostly save my files as 4 x 6 tif images. If I am going to send the photo to someone in an email message or use it on the web, I will save it instead as a jpg file, reducing the file size considerably (using the standard 10:1 compression, a 4 x 6 photo with a 1.5 MB file turns into a 150 KB file).

Although the PhotoSmart scanner software is fairly adequate for correcting most simple problems like exposure correction and color correction, I prefer to simply scan it and save it. I then open the file in Corel Photo-Paint, where I have a much larger pallet of tools with which to work. If you don't have a graphics program like Corel Photo-Paint or Microrografx Picture Publisher, then HP has also included Microsoft® Picture It!™ photo manipulation software that lets you easily enhance your photos and use them to create photo projects on your PC. I didn't install this software since I already have Corel Photo-Paint..

The scanning resolution for photos is an optical 300 DPI; for 35 mm negatives and slides it is an optical 2400 DPI. Note that you need the higher DPI for 35 mm negatives and slides since you will usually be enlarging them so much more than you would a photo that you scanned.

Regarding quality, a scan of a negative produces a much sharper image than does a scan of a photo made from that negative. I have sent email with jpg images made from some negative scans, and people tell me they can not believe the quality of the images—the best they have ever seen.

(PhotoScanner.....Continued on page 7)



Ed Snow assembling the newsletter Aug. 1996—from a negative scan. Unfortunately newsletter reproduction does not lend itself to quality photos.



Is it worth it? One Guy's Opinion on Windows 98

By Larry Anders, Librarian, Tampa PC Users Group

Just in case you don't want to read the entire article let me tell you up front Yes, I think it is! Why? Let me tell you

First of all it's more stable and reliable. With Windows 98 you're much less likely to experience those dreaded lock-ups that everyone experienced with 95. The bugs of 95 (approximately 3,000 of them) have been corrected and Windows has been optimized to run the way you want it to and be much more reliable doing so. If you should have problems you can now access the Support Online Web site for answers and even update your copy of Windows. System maintenance is now much easier with the Disk Cleanup Wizard, which automatically deletes unnecessary files, and the Maintenance Wizard, which walks you through the scheduling of basic disk maintenance. If you're a power user, you'll love the Task Scheduler and System Configuration utility.

It supports all kinds of new hardware like DVD, MMX, and USB. You can now utilize more than one monitor at the same time. FAT32 on my computer recaptured 2.5 gigabytes of hard drive space. That alone made up for the \$87 upgrade cost.

It's just plain all around faster. Internet access, hard drive access and memory access have all been tweaked to make Windows as a whole faster. Programs open faster than before. Choosing the desktop option to single-click, where you used to double-click, makes things faster and ... easier.

If you're into the Web then you're into Windows 98 already because of the web integration that's built in. Although Netscape works fine under 98, Microsoft Internet Explorer is included and is as good as Netscape if not better. There's an Internet Connection Wizard to make connecting to the web a simple process. Also included is Outlook Express for your email, FrontPage Express to create your own web pages, NetMeeting to collaborate and hold conferences on the Internet, NetShow for streaming media, just to name a few.

The one thing I find humorous is the person who says, "Never buy version one of anything....let them get the bugs out first". Years ago that may have made some sense but considering some 100 million beta testers have spent years testing 98 I think it's safe to say it's ready for prime time. And installation

for me was really a snap. I just followed the instructions and in about 45 minutes I was upgraded.

No, it isn't as dramatic a change as it was from 3.1 to 95 but it's well worth the money and time. Do yourself a big favor and upgrade. For under \$90 it well worth it! ... and by the time your friends get 98 release 2 you'll already be a power user. ♦

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

As my most recent contribution to the discussion page, I just started a discussion on Windows 98 tips that hopefully will grow as the members get going on Win98 upgrades. And look on pages 5 & 9 at the items on TerraServer! This is a database of satellite photos that you can get online. What fun I had using this, just finding my house on a photo taken from space! Thanks to William LaMartin who found this and posted it on the discussion group.

Also while you're at the web site, you'll notice some small changes William has been making to tidy up, including new background music. Read more about this on page 9.

So here's the message from the pres... Use our web site as often as you can and come to the meetings or tell us why not – we want to know. See the e-mail addresses under officers.

Finally, the TPCUG web site may be changing its URL late in the month. If you don't receive a new URL and can't find the site, contact me at merlenic@tampabay.rr.com or William LaMartin at lamartin@ix.netcom.com. Merle ♦

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

The only thing missing from this piece of hardware is the ability to scan in negatives larger than 35 mm. I have a lot of large format negatives both from old photos—when all negatives were large—and from my more recent work with a camera using the 6 cm x 7 cm format.

HP has two companion pieces of hardware, a digital camera and a photo printer. Their prices are coincidentally \$399 also. I have not worked with either. ♦

Moving Hard Drives

By Forest Wilcox, Tampa PC Users Group

I own two computers, one in New York, my home, and one in Tampa where I spend half of my time. Thus, I am faced with the problem of keeping them in sync with each other. I have struggled with full back ups, backups of files with the archive bit set using Iomega's Ditto tape and Zip disk backup drives. They work fine for most files, but I have found no way to transfer things like Window settings and Desk Top settings between the computers. The way I use my computers, these settings are constantly changing.

After successfully upgrading a hard disk from a one Meg drive to a 4.3 Meg, I was emboldened to carry the new hard disk with me as I traveled back and forth. I was also encouraged by the fact that both computers were of the same make (Acer Pentiums) and vintage, though one is a tower and one is a conventional desktop.

The first transfers weren't without problems, mainly getting the unlike modems to work. I had problems until I discovered Plug N'Play. It really works! All I do now is use Control Panel's Add New Hardware (Start, Settings, Control Panel) after physically installing the drive. I use the default settings, that is, let Windows search for new hardware. Now my Desk Top remains the same wherever I am.

Not willing to quit while I am ahead, I took my hard disk with me on a visit to my daughter in California. I could have made floppy copies of interesting things to exchange and demo, but why not demo the whole hard drive? My daughter's computer is an unknown clone, though a Pentium, and with Windows 95. We had that much in common. This transfer was interesting.

We went through the procedure using Add New Hardware but now Windows requested at various times the original Windows Upgrade CD and other original disks to pick off the necessary drivers and files needed for the strange computer. We had to repeat the process several times until Windows found no new hardware. The other necessary changes required were local telephone numbers for my AT&T Internet, Juno e-mail and Reuters Service accounts, all of which were obtained from 800 number telephone calls. Since this was a very temporary arrangement, we did not make a physical installation. We connected an unused power cable, borrowed the ribbon data cable and let the drive sit outside the chassis. This was an unqualified success.

A precaution, don't try to install the moved drive as a second hard drive; only one operating system per machine is allowed unless you have System Commander or its equivalent.

When I transport my hard drive, I use the anti-static envelope that it came in and then wrap it in bubble wrap. I have carried it

in my carry-on luggage as well as put it in my checked suitcase. I am undecided about putting it through the security system, but have done it without a problem so far.

I still make a full backup before I transport the hard drive (using a Zip drive), but I do save the up to two hours required if I were to use the backup to restore onto a second hard drive.



(Yeah.....Continued from page 3)

All this is organized under "Drawers" that you can name. A drawer is analogous to a folder, and indeed if you create a new drawer, it creates a new folder under the YW directory. When you create that folder you get a new set of tabs with blank lists for documents. If you look in the YW program directory, you can identify the drawers, but not the underlying files in them. This is interesting and may be very appealing to some people, because a lot of people have a concept that a document is "in" WordPerfect or Word. I've many, many times seen people who otherwise use computers efficiently use the file manager in WordPerfect 5.1 to move files. They open a file and save it in another location then go back and use WP's file facilities to delete in the old location. Those people will love YW, no doubt about it. Yes, there are a lot of businesses still using WP 5.1 for DOS, even on a Win 95 machine. I've seen them.

Now, the editing area is NOT WYSIWYG. To see the finished product, you press Print, and you get a graphic print preview. In preview, you can change some basic document format, paragraph style, tabs and font. That is, font, singular - because you can have all the fonts you want up to one (1).

It has a very, very fast spell checker. It's like in the olden days (1994) where you had to press the spell button. You can add your own words to the dictionary. By the way, the spell checker flags YW, Orem and WordPlace (but not WordPerfect) as needing correcting. There is a more traditional Windows Help available on a button at the bottom.

And last - file formats. Obviously it has its own internal format. The import and export formats are Yeah Write, WordPerfect 5.1, Text with ANSI, or Text ASCII Only. You can also import/export to an FTP site. The help suggests if you want to export to another word processor, use WP 5.1 format because that's the only one available that will preserve formatting and most word processors will accept that format. Interestingly, the file open and save as dialog boxes are old "short" file name boxes on my 32-bit version. That's an oversight and a serious disappointment to me, because it's very easy for the programmers to do. I wanted to export to the desktop so I could drop it in e-mail, but

(Yeah.....Continued on page 12)

Editor's Comments

*By William LaMartin, Editor,
Tampa PC Users Group*

As is usual, when there is empty space to fill in the newsletter, you are subjected to hearing about what I have been doing lately with my computer. This month I can write about a slight redesign of the TPCUG web site, writing a Visual Basic Program to teach a bird to speak, some interesting web sites, and, if room permits, some Microsoft Access and bulk mail topics.

Web site redesign For some time, I have felt that our TPCUG site <http://www.canx.com/tpcug/> needed a face lift. It was beginning to look a little dowdy, so I selected a new photo of Tampa and modified the top 25% of the page. I also selected new background music for those who said they were getting a bit tired of Pachelbel's Canon. And on many of the other pages I put at the top of the page some quick links to other parts of our site. That way one doesn't have to always go back to the main page to find the link to somewhere else at the site. I also made other minor changes throughout the site to make the pages look a little more consistent—nothing like a theme—just trying to make them look like they belonged together.

Unfortunately, when you make changes to a web page, it probably won't look the way you want on all browsers at all font settings and screen resolutions. I have received feedback from members regarding this problem and made changes to the layout to try and make it display better in the situations they described. If there are still problems with the display on your system, let me know. It looks fine on mine.

Visual Basic & Birds Some time back Larry Anders wrote a review of a program designed to teach your bird to speak. Well, we now have a new cockatiel in the house, and that came to my mind. But why should I buy someone else's program (although it was very cheap), when I could write my own in Visual Basic. That is the way that I have learned VB over the years—writing programs to solve problems that I encounter—not by simply studying the VB manual (back when they actually provided you with hard copy manuals).

The result is a fairly polished little program that allows you to record sounds up to 15 seconds in length, save them, and then play them for the bird to listen to a selected number of repetitions. You may record as many sounds as you like and select as many repetitions for play back as you like. I typically select 120 repetitions, since that gives the bird 30 minutes to listen to me saying something like "Hello..... Hello..... Hello..... Hello, Bird".

What I got from this exercise is a better understanding of the Visual Basic Multimedia control, which I had had no interest in

using before. What the bird gets out of this, we will have to wait and see. Contact me if you are interested in the program.

TerraServer and HouseCall Online Virus Checking Each month in the newsletter I list the new and interesting sites I have come across since the previous newsletter. This month I have two real good ones: Microsoft TerraServer and HouseCall.

Microsoft TerraServer is at <http://terraServer.microsoft.com>. This is a site containing what is called the "largest database in the world". It contains satellite photos of many different locations on earth. Not every place is photographed, but all of Florida is. The photo of Tampa was taken in 1995. See if you can find your house. Look at famous locations around the world. Their photo of West Palm Beach is shown on page 5.

Reading ZDNet about the latest virus scare in late July led me to the most interesting site--HouseCall, a site that checks your computer for viruses while you are online. You have to be using either Microsoft IE or Netscape Navigator and not mind either an ActiveX component or a Java applet being downloaded and run on your computer (you have to trust Trend Micro). These programs scan that portion of your computer's hard drive designated by you for viruses, including CIH variants (which the ZDNet article was about). By doing this from the Internet, this removes the worry about whether the user's PC is already infected (some viruses apparently attach themselves to the virus checking program).

The site's URL is <http://housecall.antivirus.com>. It will take it a few minutes to load since it is setting up the Java applet or ActiveX component. The site has a certificate and is also recommended by ZDNet, so I suppose it is safe. It had better be since I used it with no ill effects so far. In fact, it found that some of my old Word documents were infected with the Word Concept virus. I had such a problem one or two years back. Apparently I didn't get everything cleaned up then (it is not a very bad virus, and, if I am not mistaken, Word 97 actually detects it and removes it--I just hadn't opened these files with this newer version of Word).

After finding a file that is infected, the program with your permission will attempt to remove the virus. If that is not successful, it will give you the opportunity to delete the file then and there. It cleaned up all my Word Concept infected documents.

Microsoft Access and MySoftware's MyMail List I continue to encounter people who need help with fairly large databases they want to extract information from to then use with bulk mail. In a typical procedure, I first import the database into Access, then using queries, retain only the fields needed and do any manipulations required of the data like combining house number, street name and apartment number into one field. One could then use this data for a mailing, but if you want to get the

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

Special Interest Groups

Internet 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 security. *Contact Mike Hodges at hodges@reflectone.com.*

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.*

Visual Basic

This SIG will hold its first meeting Tuesday, August 18 at the Gateway 2000 Store on North Dale Mabry (just south of Columbus Drive) at 6 PM. For information, contact Merle Nicholson at merlenic@tampabay.rr.com.

(PowerBASIC.....Continued from page 4)

Here's a sample, furnished by the publisher, which I've modified to contain explanatory notes and to cause the text mode interface to remain on screen until the user presses a key.

```
=====
Hello, World!
Copyright (c) 1998 by PowerBASIC, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Modifications by Tom Cone, 6/23/98
=====
```

```
'$RESOURCE "HELLO.PBR" 'embed icon in executable if
desired
```

```
FUNCTION PBMAIN() AS LONG 'PbMain is a user-defined
function called
```

```
'by Windows TO begin execution of an
'application.
```

```
COLOR 7,1 'set to white on blue
```

```
CLS
```

```
LOCATE 15, 10
```

```
PRINT "Hello, World!";
```

```
WAITSTAT 'wait for any key
```

```
'program will end, and console
```

```
'will close.
```

```
END FUNCTION
```

The foregoing code compiled to an EXE that was 9,725 bytes in size. That's less than 10k of 32 bit code. The program will run under Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT. It will not run under Windows 3.x When you run the program a text mode window opens on screen. It's resizable and moveable with your mouse. It seems to behave exactly like a DOS mode program, except that it's actually a 32 bit Windows program. If you're curious what it looks like, send me your e-mail address and I'll send it to you.

The program has other features including support for WinCGI applications, but does not support ActiveX controls. However, it does include support for threaded processes, an inline assem-

bler, and other advanced features that I'm not familiar with (yet).

System Requirements

- Personal computer with a 80386 or higher processor
- Windows 95/98 or Windows NT 3.51 or later
- 2 MB of available memory
- One 3.5" high-density disk drive
- A hard disk with 3.0 MB available for installation

PB/CC version 1.0 is priced at \$149 plus shipping.

Documentation for this product is provided in electronic form, as it allows the maximum amount of information, without the physical size limits of a book. Optionally, printed documentation can be purchased for \$29 plus shipping. ◆

(Comments..... from page 9)

best bulk mail rates, you will need to CASS (a postal term) certify the list. That is where a program like MyMail List comes in. It is a specialized database program for mail management. It also comes with an extra CD (for a fee) that has the most current postal address information. After importing the modified database into MyMail List, you then do an address check using this CD. When you are finished (3.5 hours for 61,000 names), you have a CASS certified list. Now you can select the whole list or any subset of this list using a filter (e.g. voted in last election field is True for a database of voters), and MyMail List will print the mailing labels in the correct order and prepare the necessary forms for bulk mail. It is a bit more complicated than this, but you get the idea. ◆

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We acknowledge the following firms for their support

Museum of Science and Industry
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And these software and hardware vendors for their demonstrations and review software

Adobe Systems	Microsoft
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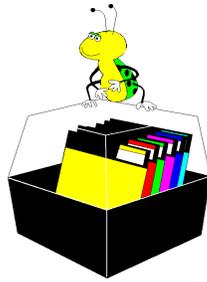
MEMBERS' HELP LINE

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	Warren Fuss	10am - 9:30pm	949-6844	CG, WNT, N
DOS	DOS				
Family Tree Maker	FTM	Connie Kincaid	evenings & weekends	661-8185	DOS, MA, MOS,Q
Hardware General	HG				
Hardware Modem	HM	William LaMartin	Mon - Fri 9:00am - 9:00pm	251-3817	AA, FTM, HTM, IG, MOS, MP, VB, W95, MGS
Hardware Printer	HP				
HTML coding	HTM	Merle Nicholson	Mon - Fri 7:30pm - 9:30pm; weekends	879-3602	CG, DE, DOS, HG, HM, HP, W3, VB
Internet General	IG				
Micrografx Graphics Suite	MGS	Jenny Lind Olin	Mon - Sun 8:00am - 10:00pm	960-5723	ME, MW, PAF, Q, WP
Microsoft Access	MA				
Microsoft Excel	ME	Don Patzsch	Before 8:00pm	689-8662	CG
Microsoft FrontPage	FP				
Microsoft Office Suite	MOS				
Microsoft Publisher	MP				
Microsoft Visual Basic	VB				
Microsoft Word	MW				
Networking	N				
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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(Yeah.....Continued from page 8)

I had to drill down to the desktop folder with this.

Now ... what it won't do .. taken from the back of the box: Tables, Columns, Multiple fonts, EndNotes, Footnotes, Table of Contents, Index, Headers and Footers. I'd miss Footnotes and, of course, graphics. If graphics were implemented in the same manner as WP 5.1 for DOS, I could use this baby for all my word processing needs.

For what Yeah Write does, it does well. And it does it cheaply. I like it. Thanks to Stacie Bise for sending it.

There's a free version, both 16-bit and 32-bit on their web site <http://www.wordplace.com>. After downloading, you can keep the free version, or you can use it for 15 days as a trial version of the \$19 standard product. After sending the \$19, they'll send you an email message with a name and registration number. And if you find it in a store, it's in a nice standard package on CD for \$29.

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