Bits of Blue

April in Tampa

Meeting

APC
Power Supplies

April 14, 1999
6:00 PM
Museum of Science
and Industry
4801 E Fowler Ave.

Meeting Preview: At the April meeting Kim Slinko from American Power Conversion (APC) will speak about uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) and surge protectors. Mary Sheridan, as usual, will conduct a 30 minute Windows discussion at the beginning of the meeting.

President's Message

By Merle Nicholson, President, Tampa PC Users Group

Membership drive April 1 through September 30

The TPCUG is having a membership contest, with a dinner for two going to the person who brings in the most new members!

The contest rules are:
1. You have to be a member in good standing at the conclusion of the drive, September 30.
2. You must lay claim to any new people you bring in to our drive chairman, VP Mike Hodges. Mike will track the results and declare the winner at the October meeting. You do not have to be present to win.
3. In case of a tie, the winner will be selected by a drawing.
4. The prize will be a gift certificate, tentatively at Applebee's in an amount that will cover a meal for two.

It would be best if you'd send an email to Mike when – or shortly after - each of your new members join. His email is hodges@reflectone.com. He will acknowl-edge all emails. In the case that you do not have email (is it possible?) you'll need to write your claim down and make sure some officer gets it, or you can send snail-mail to our mailing address: TPCUG, PO Box 3492, Tampa FL 33601. Be sure to do this by September 30.

May 12: Steve Tulloh - Road Runner & Cable Modems

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 South Blvd., Tampa, Florida 33606-2904 or to lamartin@ix.netcom.com.

Permission to reproduce portions which are not specifically copyrighted is given to other computer users' groups for nonprofit use. Reprints must be unaltered; proper credit given to the author and publication; and a copy of the publication must be sent to the attention of the Bits of Blue Editor at the club address. All other reproduction is prohibited without the specific written permission of the original author.

The use of trademarked and copyrighted names herein is not intended to infringe upon the owner's rights but rather to identify the products for the enlightenment of our users.

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 as an attachment to an email 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.

Member of
Association of Personal Computer User Groups
APCUG

Minutes of the March Meeting

By Jim Weber, Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group

The Windows SIG started in the MOSI computer lab at 6:00 PM with Mary Sheridan at the helm. The discussion soon turned toward Linux again with several members expressing an interest in the OS.

The next topic of discussion was Windows networking. With more homes having multiple computers these days, home networking is becoming increasingly popular. William LaMartin was quick to point out that his own home network allows him to use one computer as an internet router, so only one computer has to be configured for calling outside the home and the other computers connect through it. For people with high speed Internet connections, like RoadRunner, you would only have to pay for the single connection. We talked about simple "Direct Cable Connections" between two computers to running wire and installing network cards in your home. New network products now on the market work through the existing phone lines or connect wirelessly, like a cordless phone, and will help make a home network easier to install. The network discussion went from setting up a Windows network to the cost of on site network service. With some places charging over $200.00 per hour to come out to work on a network, some of us considered a career change.

If anyone is interested in starting new SIGs like Access or Linux, or a study group for certification such as A+ or MCSE, please contact any of the board members or bring it up during the meeting.

President Merle Nicholson called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. He started by introducing guests and new members to the group. Merle then passed along a warning to users of Road-Runner that, since the system is basically a large Windows network, if you don't have your security features set properly, outside users can obtain your I. P. address without your knowledge, or access information on your hard drive. This means someone else can pretend to be you on the Internet. Merle announced the dates and times for our SIGs and reminded everyone that they are listed in the newsletter. Mary Sheridan and Bruce Register returned from this years FACUG meeting in Orlando and brought back new users group price lists from Power Quest, Jasc, and Symantec.

Merle then announced the new membership drive. For those who missed it, we will be giving away a meal for two at Applebee's to the member in good standing who brings in the most new members beginning April 1, 1999 to October 1, 1999. In case of a tie, the winner will be determined by a

Visual Basic Projects

By Merle Nicholson, President,
Tampa PC Users Group

As all our members know, we have a Visual Basic SIG that's doing well. It's well attended and interesting. I'd like to mention something to some of the members of that group and anyone else who is just beginning to have an interest in programming. Here it is, and you can quote me on this. "You have to *do it* to learn anything about it". It isn't like going to a history class where more study improves your performance. It's more like learning to drive. You can study it forever, but as we all know, 99.9% of the skills you learn is doing the driving.

I'd like to present two very recent projects I've done by way of illustrating some of the useful things you can accomplish with programming. One is an Address Book, and the other is a picture re-size calculator. I'm not going to give you any programmer-type language here, just what it does and why I did the projects, so read on.

Address Book

What this world does NOT need is another address book. Definitely. But I have this project as an aid for the VB classes I teach. Also the address books I've looked at don't quite fit what Valerie and I use one for. We have this small brown book by the telephone downstairs that has, yes, names and addresses, but also things like peoples' birthdays, and when their children graduated from school, and things like what kind of illness their

mother has. This way Valerie and I can kind of know what each other knows about people we talk to and send cards to. One thing that it doesn't have though that we need is say the phone number to Ho Ho's so we can order carryout, things like that, that would definitely make that little book too complicated.

Also, it's downstairs. My part of the house is in an upstairs "office". Valerie's computer is downstairs, and both are networked to the server, an ideal place to keep a central database. So why not? I revamped the fields some, and added a search field. Note in the picture, the example has "wildflower florist" in it so you can search for either word. Also simply typing in a "w" got to the first record that has a "w" in the first word. The search works just about instantaneously, and the upper right navigation buttons allow you to page through all qualifying entries. In this case all records that start with a "w" in the search field.

I deliberately do not search through Last Name, First Name as you would expect. Instead, you must enter some category words in the search field. In the case of personal friends, perhaps starting with the last name, but if you normally refer to a person as "Dan", that's all you'd put there. Maybe Ho Ho's would be "Ho Chinese food". Notice that there are four telephone entries and two email addresses. Valerie and I have four telephone numbers between us, not counting the modem phone, so for version 2, I'm considering just a free-form box for telephone numbers.

We've just begun putting all the "little book" entries in, and by the time we're done, I may have changed the appearance completely. Also I may give it a way to address envelopes and also some way to go through and check off about thirty entries to do Christmas envelopes. It may just be a Word Basic program instead that accesses the database independently. We'll see. In my household a program is never done.

PixCalc

This is one that I really had fun with. It took about three or four hours to program, and it takes a bit of explaining. When I got Paint Shop Pro 5, I discovered a new (for version 5) feature. It shows any picture with a ruler on it, showing the size of the picture in inches. And I'm REALLY interested in this, because I want to place these pictures on the printed page. I want to print a picture out say as a 5 by 7 or 8 by 10, or I may want to place six small pictures on a single page. If you "scale" a picture you must maintain an "aspect ratio" to keep the picture from being elongated or distorted. So how does a picture that is 5.389 by 2.750 at 72 pixels per inch fit into a 5 by 7, or 7 by 5? Probably not too well unless you do some accurate calculations. I've been doing this with a calculator for a while. And it's just a simple matter of proportions, some straightforward algebra. But it's tedious, and many times you must do it a number of times

(VB.........Continued from page 3)
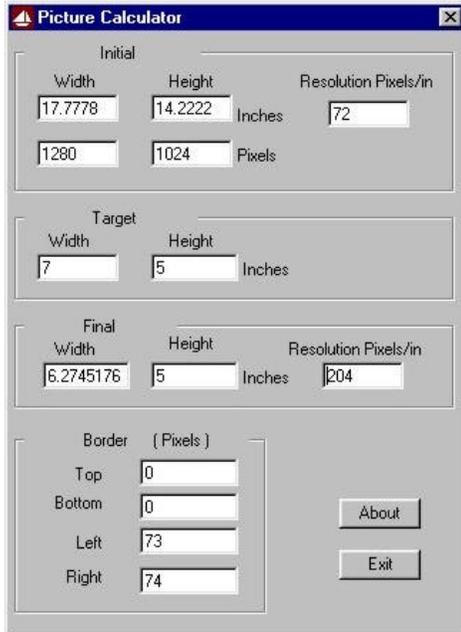
to decide what to do. As you increase the size, one dimension or the other will meet the target dimension, but the other won't if you maintain the original aspect ratio. So you need to know the final dimension, and sometimes you want to know how may pixels to add left and right or top and bottom, so you can sometimes add a border to fill out to the required dimensions.

Some experimentation shows that the initial size in inches is determined by the resolution in pixels, at 72 pixels per inch. Now let's say if it's high resolution you don't just want to scale the picture and maintain 72 pixels per inch. What you really want to do is increase the pixels per inch to reduce the physical size so that either the width or height meet the target printed size.

And this little baby does all that all by typing in the initial size in inches and the pixels in inches. Paint Shop Pro gives you this on the Image, Resize panel. That automatically fills in the Initial Pixels. Sometimes because of round off error, those two pixel numbers may need changing by one or two, and you can do that.

Then you fill in the Target Width and Height and automatically, the new (Final) Pixels/In and the Final Width and Height are calculated. Internally, a judgement must be made about which dimension is reached first. In the example shown, the height target was met, and the width was not. It's short of meeting that target by .73 inches. And if you were to add 73 pixels on the left and 74 pixels on the right, the picture will be exactly 7 by 5. In Paint Shop Pro, you can add borders like this in any color you like. Doing it in white just makes it easier to center the 7 by 5 on the printed page. All you need to do is plug the Final Resolution number in PSP's Image, Resize panel, and it'll print exactly the correct size.

That's it! Except for the About panel, which I'm showing here also. The System Info is interesting, I think. It's the same one that you see on the About panel in MS Word. This About panel was made from a Wizard in Visual Basic, with some modifications. If you're interested in this program, I'll be happy to send it to you by email. The only catch is if you have the Visual Basic 5 product, you don't want this. It's written in VB 6, and the files play havoc with a VB 5 compiler product. As do ALL VB 6 programs. There's no problem otherwise to everyone else. Send me email at merlenic@tampabay.rr.com and indicate if you want the source code also. ◆
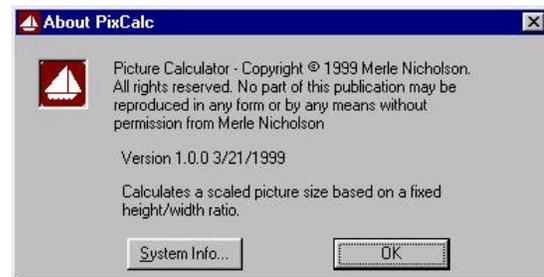
(Minutes..........Continued from page 2)
drawing.

Jason Velasco of Ontrack software started his presentation at 7:00 PM. Ontrack is a company that specializes in data recovery. They were originally known for their disk manager program, which allowed older computers to recognize and use newer, larger hard drives. Now they perform minor miracles by resurrecting lost data. Mr. Velasco passed along some interesting statistics on data loss, like hardware failure being the most common cause of loss (44%) followed by human error (32%). Virii fell far below at only 7%. Larger hard drives have shown a greater rate of failure than smaller ones, probably because they spin faster and have more closely packed data areas.

Mr. Velasco then described the methods used by Ontrack to recover your lost data. Copies of "Data Advisor" were brought in for the group to take home. This program boots from the floppy only when your hard drive fails and loads directly to system memory. No information is moved to or from the hard drive. Data Advisor begins with a mechanical and electrical test of the drive's hardware before ever checking the data files on the disk. If the drive fails at this point the test stops. The program then tests the integrity of the data on the disk, and it then tests the disk sectors. Again, if any part

(Minutes.........Continued from page 4)

of the test fails the whole process ends. Where Data Advisor makes itself truly useful is a modem driver that will run strictly from memory and call Ontrack. The technicians at Ontrack can then attempt to recover lost data remotely over the modem. This process won't work with a Win modem; the drivers are too large for a single floppy. Ontrack also has Class 100 clean rooms where they can open a hard drive to physically repair a damaged disk. Most hard drive manufacturers will continue to honor their warranty after Ontrack has opened the drive. Try that at home. If you choose to send the drive to Ontrack they charge a standard $100.00 fee for just the evaluation.

Data Advisor is available from Ontrack at http//www.ontrack.com for free. There is also a Y2K Bios tester available as freeware. I found this to be a very handy tool.

After a short break we began the drawing for the door prizes. A special congratulations goes out to one of our new members, Mike Torres. Mr. Torres won a copy of Nuts & Bolts, Via Grafix training CD, and an Ontrack T-shirt. Arthur Young, another new member, won a spell-checking program called "Spell Catcher." Ford Bond won a Via Grafix disk and Bob LaFave won "Glider 4.0." ◆

Internet picture of the month

**Armour – Stiner Octagon House
1860: Irvington, NJ**

This is one of the many things Victorian at the site Victorian Station. You may visit it at http://www.victorianstation.com/. Once there, just click on the Victorian lady to enter the site.

April's Interesting World Wide Web Locations - just click on the link

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)	http://www.tpcug.org/
Taxes - Essential Links to Taxes	http://www.el.com/elinks/taxes/
American Power Conversion (this month's presenter)	http://www.apcc.com/
Inner Learning On-line (Human & Auto Anatomy)	http://www.innerbody.com/
gettingstarted.net (Web site tutorial)	http://www.gettingstarted.net/contents.html
Molecular Expressions – Images from the Microscope	http://micro.magnet.fsu.edu/
Victorian Station (everything Victorian)	http://www.victorianstation.com/
Visual Elements (the Chemical Elements)	http://www.chemsoc.org/viselements/
Brandon TownCenter On The Web	http://www.shopbtc.com/
Time Inc. Picture Collection	http://www.thepicturecollection.com/
User Friendly Computer News (Tampa)	http://www.userfriendlyonline.com/
ParenthoodWeb	http://www.parenthoodweb.com/

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

Family TreeMaker 5.0/6.0

By William LaMartin, Editor,
Tampa PC Users Group

How many versions of Family TreeMaker have I purchased over the years? It is easier to count how many I haven't bought—very few. And since my version 4.0, 4.1 or whatever, was not all that old, I didn't plan on purchasing 5.0 when it came out sometime last year. But my sister, who does the bulk of data gathering in our genealogical searches, had version 5.0, and, as is usual in these matters, version 4.0 can not load version 5.0 files. I don't know what new feature added makes the way the data is stored different in the newer versions, but I do know that it is a good feature for the software marketers. Since I couldn't load version 5.0 files, I had to buy the new version also. And as I write here about version 5.0 being relatively new, guess what our friends at Family TreeMaker have done. They now have produced Version 6.0. I truly believe that within the last 12 months you could have bought the most recent versions available and produced three different versions.

It seems as if every time they think up a new way of displaying your data in a report they feel it incumbent upon themselves to produce a new version—the files of which I assume the older versions will not open. Of course, they only want $20 from me for version 6.0, but this constant updating of the program—now more often than once a year—is getting bothersome. If Microsoft updated their programs as rapidly, you would hear people cry foul.

A little history. I first bought Family TreeMaker as a DOS program made by a company called Banner Blue. Then, along came their first Windows version called Family TreeMaker for Windows. That was a welcome addition. Then came the newer and newer versions, each one adding a feature or two. I think the first version either couldn't import or export to a GEDCOM file, and the notes and the types of reports were limited. But with each new version these deficiencies were removed. In version 5.0, for example, we got the ability to spell check our Notes (actually that was in version 4.4, I think, but I never saw that version). Before I got around this problem by first creating the note in a word processor, spell checking it there then copying it and pasting it into the Family TreeMaker note.

While all these improvements were being made to the program, the company was obviously growing due to the increasing popularity of its product. As a result, BannerBlue became the BannerBlue division of Broderbund, which in turn was gobbled up by the Learning Company. And in the past few months, the Learning Company has become part of the toy maker Mattel. Not a good situation as far as I am concerned, since I see little of value that a toy company can offer a software company. Time will tell.

Obviously this is not your standard product review. But with a bow to such, I will note that any genealogy program is nothing more than a fancy interface to a database where you have the ability to input your data and then view it in a variety of different reports. What Family TreeMaker is doing with each newer version is to give you more latitude in what sort of data you can enter and more variety in the type of reports it will produce. For example with 5.0 you got the ability to view an "hourglass" report, which displays an individual's ancestors and descendants on the same chart. With 6.0 you get the ability to determine the relationship between any two particular individuals. With version 5 and earlier, you could only display all relationships of a particular individual; thus, to get the relationship to another particular individual, you would have to search through this list. Big deal.

With version 6.0, you have the ability to find the Soundex code for anyone in your family tree. They have also enhanced the book feature—the option that weaves the data you select into a "book". Isn't technology great? You can now have the computer write a family book for you, weaving your genealogical data into a sensible narrative by supplying the appropriate connecting words between your basic facts.

I like Family TreeMaker. As a genealogical database, I recommend it, having used it almost from the beginning of its existence, but I am tired of these constant upgrades.

Back around Version 2 or 3, they started offering additional CDs with genealogical information: the social security database, marriages in Georgia 1776 – 1845 (I don't recall if this is an actual title), etc. I think they got started at this by buying a company that had been providing such CDs to libraries. And over the years, Family TreeMaker has added greatly to the list of available CDs they offer. In fact, when you buy Family TreeMaker now you are confronted with several different prices depending on how many extra CDs you would like in the package.

Once the Internet started booming, they jumped on that too with a useful site at http://www.familytreemaker.com. The products they sell make up only a small part of the site, most of which is devoted to articles on genealogy. They also give you the ability to search for information on individual names. If you get a "hit" on a name, you are presented with a list of sources for more information. Quite naturally most of these sources are CDs produced by Family TreeMaker. So if you want to see the information, you know what you need to do. Buy that CD.

They also host individual Family TreeMaker users' genealogical web sites (not mine, though). They are obviously trying to make themselves your one stop for genealogy. ◆

Quicken 99 Deluxe from Intuit

By Jenny Lind Olin, Treasurer,
Tampa PC Users Group

I have used Quicken, well let's just say, since DOS. That is like BC in computer time. I upgraded to the Windows version in due time, and I didn't think Quicken could get much better. It is, and that is an understatement.

Last March, as my luck would have it (a change for the better), I won a copy **of Quicken 98 Deluxe** at the Florida Association of Computer Users Group (FACUG) Convention. That Deluxe version of Quicken was actually more and better than I expected. My new **Quicken 99 Deluxe** just has more features. I thought I had died and gone to heaven.

A very "in" thing in today's world is doing your investing via the Internet. Quicken 99 provides a complete **investment tracking** feature. I plan to use the **One Step Update** to download all of my financial data, as well as stock quotes, right over the Internet and into Quicken. Since I am prone to forget, I need to store my passwords and PIN numbers. **PIN Vault** will hold all of my passwords and PIN numbers using state-of-the-art encryption.

I have thoroughly enjoyed using Quicken 99 Deluxe for my personal accounting and recommend this software package to anybody who is interested in tracking as little as just their checkbook entries or as much as keeping track of every aspect of their financial life as I do. Quicken 99 Deluxe has **60 reports and graphs** available. I like to run reports and file them so I have a record to use for future purposes.

Also as treasurer of this group, I have been using **Quicken 99 Deluxe** to keep track of our finances. I am able to run an **itemized category report** each month and thus give the Board of Directors a report of where we have been, what we have done, and where we are going financially speaking.

As for my own accounting endeavors, I keep track of everything. I remember watching my brother using a little black book where he wrote down everything he spent. He was trying to see where his money was going and how to spend more wisely. It must be in the genes, as I track everything, as I said before. If I write a check to pay for my groceries, it is always for a larger amount than the total amount of the groceries. The excess is tracked in my Cash account. That is where **splitting the amounts to different account categories** comes into play--part goes to groceries and part goes to cash. Now I can see how much I actually spend for groceries. I track my checking account, savings account, credit card accounts, money market account, other intangible accounts as well as my real estate, my car (s), etc. If I own it and it changes in value, I track it.

Quicken 99 makes all those tasks so easy. My eye doctor, Dr.

Anderson, recommended Quicken to me. He was telling me how easy it was to **reconcile the bank statement**. In fact he was actually reconciling his bank statement with his Quicken entries as we were talking on the telephone. I am the person who would spend all Saturday afternoon balancing my checkbook to the penny. I still do that, but it takes only seconds now, and I can do something else at the same time. When Quicken tells me that I jive with the beginning and ending balances, then I have the choice to run the **reconciliation report**, or not.

Also I don't keep track of my check writing in the manual check register anymore. I do use checks that make a carbon copy and when I sit down at the computer, I try to record any checks I have written that day. If I have forgotten to enter a transaction, I can edit in the middle of the reconciliation.

Another Quicken 99 feature is their improved **online banking and bill payment**. I do not use this feature, as my financial institution does not offer that. You have the choice of printing your checks or manually writing them. I don't have to use the check writing feature very often, as I have most of my bills paid by electronic transfer, automatically drafting my account. When my bill comes in I immediately enter the transaction in the checking register and date the transaction on the day my bank will be drafted. Now Quicken offers a **Quick Entry 99** icon. I click on the new icon, then I can quickly enter one or more transaction(s). Most of my transactions have been memorized by Quicken so with a speedy edit it is a done deal. I can forget about it. No pile of receipts sitting on top of my computer waiting for me to muster up a block of time to enter them. Later when I do bring up the whole package, I am prompted to add the quick entries at that time. I might just break my habit of procrastinating. Not only will I be more financially sound, I will be a better person.

When I pull up the full Quicken Deluxe 99 package, I see the **Quicken Home Page**, a display of my accounts with the current value for each. The bottom line is I can see my net worth at a glance. I click on my checking account link that takes me to the register to enter new transactions. If the CD is in place there is a **Quicken Audio** that talks to me telling me what I am do at this point. This feature is great for the novice, or if you are lonely, you can listen to a very nice woman's voice.

To help with your taxes, Quicken has provided two features, the **Tax Activity Center** and the **Free TurboTax Online**, both new to Quicken 99 Deluxe. When you categorize your transactions especially if it is tax deductible, Quicken automatically tracks it for your tax purposes, giving you a summary of your current tax status. When you are ready to file your income taxes, run the report for the **Quicken tax data**, then go online and use the free online service or load it into your tax preparing software and most of your entries are automatically done. ◆

A New Sound of Music

By Larry Anders, Librarian., Tampa PC Users Group

No, Julie Andrews hasn't resurrected her roll of the singing nun-wannabe. The Internet has spawned a new breed of music called MP3, which is short for MPEG-1 Layer 3. MPEG (Moving Picture Experts Group) was developed for the compression and storage of video. Layer 3 is that part of the standard that addresses the compression and storage of audio.

Are you totally confused? Don't be. Plain and simple…MP3 compresses audio to a fraction of the size of a standard audio file found on today's music CDs. What does this mean? Audio files have now become easily transferable electronically (over the Internet). The modern music album that is sold today uses up most of the real estate of a 680-megabyte CD. A CD with the same music in MP3 format can be stored on less than 50 megabytes. MP3 typically uses one megabyte for one minute of music.

What's better yet is that anyone can record an MP3 file, which has spawned this revolution of an abundance of music now available for nothing, or next to nothing, on the Internet. Do a search on the Internet for 'MP3' and see what you come up with. It's everywhere.

Is it as good as a store bought CD that you pay $10 - $15 for? Probably not, but close enough for my ears and the price is hard to beat.

Okay… so how do you play and record this music? There's a bunch of shareware and freeware MP3 players and recorders all over the Internet. You can also download these files from your computer to portable players like the 'Diamond Rio', which is slightly larger than a pager and sells for about $100, and take your music with you. My favorite place for anything that deals with MP3 is aptly named MP3.com. Here you can find every popular MP3 player and enough free music to keep you busy for months. But, this is not the only place. Just do your search and see how many you come up with. Even Lycos, one of the Internet's major search engines, now has an MP3 database search ability.

You can also translate your own personal music CDs into MP3 and with the size of the new files play them directly off your own PC, or, like I do, copy them to your notebook and take your music along with you. If you have a CD writer you can convert about 10 CDs to MP3 and copy all of them to one CD. But remember, you are still dealing with copyright laws here. Making personal copies for yourself is one thing, but giving away or selling copies is still **ILLEGAL** no matter what format you use.

One of the reasons there is so much music out there is because it is so easy and inexpensive to make your own MP3 music.

That has opened the door for many new musicians that otherwise would have had to wait for their big break to get a record deal, which doesn't come easy. Don't get me wrong… your definition of music and mine are probably different. But there is so much choice that I'm sure that all of our tastes in music can be satisfied. And with the popularity of MP3 growing every day, there are more and more seasoned artists deciding to publish their music in the MP3 format also.

None of this is hard to learn so do yourself a favor and start enjoying some of the benefits of having that Internet account. You won't be sorry! ◆

Editor's Comments

By William LaMartin, Editor,
Tampa PC Users Group

Amazon Link If you are going to make a purchase through Amazon.Com, don't forget to go there through the Amazon link on our home page. If you then make a purchase, the TPCUG gets a 5% commission at no extra cost to you.

FACUG Web Site Contest Our humble TPCUG web site placed fourth in the annual Florida Association of Computer User Groups home page contest. In order, the winners were

1 Greater Tampa Bay PC User Group
    http://members.cftnet.com/gtbpcug/
2 Sarasota PCUG http://www.spcug.org
3 PCRAMS Computer Club (West Palm)
    http://www.pcrams.org
4 Tampa PC Users Group http://www.tpcug.org/

I was quite pleased with my fourth place prize of *Adobe Photo-Shop 5.0*. Now I have a new program to learn. It will be interesting to compare it with the CorelDraw Package I have been using. You will probably see a review of it in the future.

Genealogy from last month Last month I mentioned my effort to get my Family TreeMaker (FTM) data into a Microsoft database. I accomplished that and showed the results to the VB SIG, since I had created a VB program to import the data from a FTM GEDCOM into Access. However, most of the work was in creating queries, form and reports in Access to replicate the way FTM allows you to display data. The most difficult part was creating the query and report to display an individual's ancestors or descendants for up to 10 generations. I did the above for two reasons. First, it gave me some VB practice (but taught me nothing new), second, it not only gave me practice with Access, but I actually learned a couple new techniques.

Meeting of the FACUG, Orlando

By Donald Patzsch, Tampa PC Users Group

March 5 through 7, the Florida Association of Computer User Groups (FACUG) met in Orlando at the Adams Mark Hotel.

On Friday night, Adobe sponsored the dinner. They told us a bit about the programs Acrobat 4 and PageMaker Plus version 6.5. After dinner each person present was given a copy of Adobe PhotoDeluxe, Business Edition. Adobe also furnished all the User Groups with discount coupons.

On Saturday morning, Gene Barlow of PowerQuest presented all their programs. He especially told us about the new Lost and Found, a program to recreate files on your hard disk if you have a crash, or if you simply accidentally deleted some files. The disk drive must be rotating, though. The drive may also have been formatted, and recovery is still possible, by you, not a place you send it. PowerQuest sponsored the breakfast, and they provided discount coupons so that we can buy any one of the programs for a cost of $30 plus a small shipping cost.

For the next session, Joan Dineen presented a talk on grants. There was also a second session on grants on Sunday afternoon. Grants are a hot item right now apparently.

When we here in Tampa (not the TPCUG) were given a grant of $140,000, I was authorized to spend most of the money personally. I took bids and carried out the process. All this is in the public records so you may visit the work and then trace it back to the grant application if you like. It is easy to accomplish if you have a definite purpose in mind.

To apply for a grant, first decide what you want to ask for. Don't forget to include extras. The people who approve the grants understand this need (extra cords, tapes, extended warranties, etc.). Second, Look over a few foundations and pick one. Third, Get in your car and drive to the foundation after you make an appointment. Ask to see some successful grants and be sure to ask what they want on their application. Some want a short specific comment here, and maybe something "special" there. The people who pay attention to this detail are the ones who are most likely not to see their application thrown out.

Saturday's lunch was sponsored by Symantec. Everyone, about 150 people, was given an alarm clock. This is one of the most interesting clocks. It has a screen about the size of those on a cell phone. On the top is the year and the month and the date. Just below that is a real calendar that changes with the month. And below that is the time. Across the bottom are the control buttons. One of those buttons will bring up the time remaining until Y2K. It's a countdown also! Many of the Norton programs were shown and a User Group discount form handed out.

In the afternoon, I attended the session on incorporation and obtaining non-profit status for user groups.

The evening dinner was sponsored by Intuit. The two men who put on the presentation are terrific. They not only tell you about the products, but they entertain you as well.

Following the dinner, the home page contest prizes were given. First, GTBPCUG, Brandon's homepage. Written by Charles Vanderford of USF. Second, Sarasota's home page. Great job, Gary. Third, PC Rams home page. Always a real nice home page. Fourth. Tampa PC Users Group, Written by William LaMartin. This page has won honors before.

Sunday morning breakfast was sponsored by JASC, maker of the Paint Shop Pro version 5 software. They provided a user group discount coupon for all. After breakfast there were two more open sessions, and then at noon lunch was sponsored by the Corel Corporation. Their products are well known and used throughout the world.

Following the luncheon, the sponsors set up displays where anyone could visit with any of the individual representatives. This is good way to get answers to your questions on their software. After that, a wrap up and then prizes were drawn for all. The meetings ended at 4 P.M.

Each year there are a Fall meeting and a Spring meeting. The Fall meeting is only one day. These meetings are worth attending. ◆

That is how I learned Microsoft Access—by creating database applications that solve problems in which I have an interest.

New Laptop I have a new laptop passed on to me by son when he purchased a still newer one. It is a ThinkPad 385XD-LEU with 233 MHz processor, 3.2 hard drive, 32 MB RAM and a 12.1" screen. What surprises me is that it is a little more than 7 months old, was a new model at the time of purchase, but is now no longer made. IBM has a new model in its slot—at a considerably lower price. Laptops are now truly affordable, have large hard drives, fast processors and fairly large screens.

It came with Win 98, and I had a question about something which led me to click on Help. I got a message saying that Win Help had some fatal problem. So the only way to get help was to reinstall Win 98, and that reminded me of one of my main complaints concerning computer makers—many do not provide a true copy of Windows on a CD. They either provide a "recovery" CD and/or have Win 98 installation files in a folder somewhere on your hard drive. With a recovery CD, you can

Special **I**nterest **G**roups

Internet SIG

This SIG meets the first Monday of the month at 6 PM at the Reflectone Building, off West Waters Ave. You must sign up to get on the list and to get by security. Contact Mike Hodges at hodges@reflectone.com. For directions, see the map at our web site or contact Mike Hodges**.**

We consider all topics concerned with creating web sites. We study sites of interest from the web and those created by members of the SIG. Last meeting we had our first look at Microsoft FrontPage.

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 SIG

This SIG meets the third Tuesday of the month, 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 .

Last month, we studied a VB program that imported data for a GEDCOM (genealogical file) and exported it to a Microsoft Access database. This was a little advanced, so this month we will drop back to something more basic.

(Comments……….Continued from page 9)

only reinstall Windows 98 by restoring the original preloaded image from the Recovery CD. This will wipe out everything else on your drive and replace it with whatever software originally came with the computer. Not a very good option. With a Gateway laptop I recently worked on, you had a recovery CD, but it also allowed you to browse through its files, and there was a Windows 98 directory for which you could run the Win 98 setup program to reinstall if you wished. Not so with the ThinkPad. None of the files made any sense. There were only 10 of them, and they appeared for the most part to image files, I assume, of various directories that would be placed on your hard drive.

So I ran the Win 98 setup program from the Win 98 folder on the hard drive—an option that would not be available if you somehow had corrupted it. When finished, Win 98 help now functioned. But, as you might guess, that is not the end of the story.

I had the Win 98 laptop and a Win 95 computer connected via a LAN with network cards with no problems. After the reinstall of Win 98 on the laptop, the Win 95 machine didn't show up in the network neighborhood in Windows Explorer of the Win 98 machine. You could, however, find it from "Tools | find computer." But once found, a double click on it produced a message that the win 95 machine was not accessible--not logged on. Additionally the log on screen that had appeared for Windows networking during the boot up of the win 98 machine no longer appeared.

At first I had no problem seeing the Win 98 computer from the Win 95 computer. But then to try and solve my problem, I went into the network properties and, under file and printer sharing for Microsoft networks, enabled browse master on the Win 95 machine since I had read that this might help. All it did was

make it so that the Win 98 machine now didn't show up in the network neighborhood of the Win 95 machine. Luckily I could still do a "tools | find" and get the Win 95 machine, where a double click on it produced all the shared folders. Removing the browse master feature did not return things to their previous state either. Seems things can only get worse—not better.

I then removed and reinstalled basically every adapter and protocol I could in Network Neighborhood to no effect. I was sure it was something simple but could not find the answer. I then noted that if I clicked on start, one of the options was to log off. I did that. And guess what, my network log on screen appeared asking me for a username & password. A click on OK got me back to Windows--and now the Win 95 computer showed up on the Win 98 one and vice/versa. Furthermore, if I now clicked Start, I had the option of logging off LaMartin. Apparently the reinstall of Win 98 caused 98 to start up with another user other than me--once I logged off that user, I had all my network functionality back.

Another half-day wasted to discover that a simple click of the mouse produced the desired result. The final problem was how to make it log me on at the beginning? The solution came from where many of my solutions come from—a Usenet Newsgroup. I had posted my problem to the comp.os.ms-windows. networking.win95 newsgroup, and a fellow named Steve Winograd posted the following solution: "The most likely fix is to delete this registry key HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software \Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Network\Real Mode Net \AutoLogon. See this Microsoft Knowledge Base article for more information: No Windows or Network Logon Dialog Box at Startup http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/ q141/8/58.asp." I had searched Microsoft but had found nothing myself. I cannot recommend the Usenet newsgroups enough as sources of solutions.

Friends of the User Group

We acknowledge the following firms for their support

Gateway 2000
Museum of Science and Industry
BCD
Reflectone

And these software and hardware vendors for their demonstrations and review software

Adobe Systems	Micrografx
Broderbund	Microsoft
Corel Systems	PowerQuest
Grolier	RDI, Inc.
Intuit	SoftKey International
Knowledge Adventure	Symantec

MEMBERS' HELP LINE

Program	Code
Adobe Acrobat	AA
Alpha4	A4
AOL	AOL
Computer General	CG
Delphi	DE
DOS	DOS
Family Tree Maker	FTM
Hardware General	HG
Hardware Modem	HM
Hardware Printer	HP
HTML coding	HTM
Internet General	IG
Micrografx Graphics Suite	MGS
Microsoft Access	MA
Microsoft Excel	ME
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 95/98	W95/W98
Windows NT	WNT
WordPerfect	WP

Name	Time	Phone	Codes
Larry Anders	Mon - Sun 6:00pm - 10:00pm	989-9119	AOL, ME, MW, FP, PSP
Tom Cone	Mon - Sun 7:00pm - 9:00pm	949-3716	A4, VdB
Warren Fuss	10am - 9:30pm	949-6844	CG, WNT, N
Connie Kincaid	evenings & weekends	661-8185	DOS, MA, MOS, Q
William LaMartin	Mon - Fri 9:00am - 9:00pm	251-3817	AA, FTM, HTM, IG, MOS, MP, VB, W95, MGS
Merle Nicholson	Mon - Fri 7:30pm - 9:30pm; weekends	879-3602	CG, DE, DOS, HG, HM, HP, W3, VB
Jenny Lind Olin	Mon - Sun 8:00am - 10:00pm	960-5723	ME, MW, PAF, Q, WP
Don Patzsch	Before 8:00pm	689-8662	CG
Mary Sheridan	9:30am - 9:00pm	988-6480	AOL, CG, DOS, HG, IG, MW, Q, W95, W98

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.
P. O. Box 3492
Tampa, FL 33601-3492
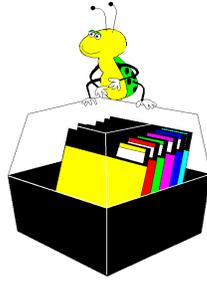
☐ Member: Your membership is up for renewal
☐ Vendor: Your product was reviewed on page ___

Please take note of the membership contest. And remember the SIGs. We have a lot going for us: an outstanding newsletter and web site, our SIGs are very well attended and the most successful in a great many years, and the fine quality of our meeting presentations is continuing. We have everything going for us except an expanding membership. It's stable, but that's really not enough over the long haul. It doesn't have to grow fast, just expand enough that we can ride through the summer slump. The biggest concern that we have is our continuing ability to attract quality presenters. We're too much on the small side for a lot of vendors, and we need to pick it up a bit. Let's see what we can do over the next six months. ◆

If you noticed that there are few graphics in this issue. The reason is that there was too much text, so I put a few of them in the background. ◆

E Fletcher Ave

USF

E Fowler Ave

I - 275

Parking

50th St

Meeting site: MOSI
4801 E Fowler
Main Entrance

To Tampa

N

The map is **not** to scale