Bits of Blue

February in Tampa

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

Meeting

**Digital Photography
And Your Computer**

**February 14, 2001
6:00 PM
Museum of Science
and Industry
4801 E Fowler Ave.**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meeting Preview: William LaMartin will give a presentation on Digital photography and the digital darkroom. As usual Mary Sheridan will conduct a computing and Windows discussion for the first 30 minutes of the meeting. Finally, we will raffle off a copy of QuickBooks Pro 2000 Accounting software.

President's Message

By Mary Sheridan, President, Tampa PC Users Group
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It's 2001, and we find the Tampa PC Users Group doing extremely well. We have a solid member base. We have a wonderful projector and screen that's paid for. Our bills are paid, and we have Bruce Register working on some exciting presentations for the upcoming year. It just "doesn't get any better than this." Sure, we could use a little more income so we could provide better door prizes. I guess you all realize that our vendors, as a rule, are not providing us with product to use for our raffles. We are to the point of needing to buy software to raffle off. We need the raffle money to make our income equal our expenses. The board decided that raising dues would be a bad idea. So we're left with the need for some creative solutions to our raffle issue. William LaMartin, Bruce Register, Bill DeLucia and many others have donated some wonderful things for us to raffle, so that's one solution. Any other ideas will be greatly appreciated. It's not a crisis, but a small problem that needs fixing.

I want to once again thank everyone who contributed to the projector fund. A very special thanks to Merle Nicholson for thinking the whole thing up. The fund was a great idea and a huge success.

March 14: To be announced — Check our web site later

Minutes of the January Meeting

The first part of the meeting Bob LaFave demonstrated how to copy the files from one computer to another by removing the hard drive from Jenny Lind Olin's old computer and installing it in her new computer as a second hard drive. He then simply used Windows Explorer to copy files from the old drive to the new drive.

With the file transfer still continuing we conducted a brief business meeting, which included the installation of the new officers for 2001. We then started our main presentation.

This was given by Chris Morris (in the photo) and Joey Richardson of Verison DSL service, which is no longer officially part of the Verison telephone service. The presenter pictured below gave a brief description of DSL in general and Versison DSL in particular. He then fielded a good number of questions from the group. It appeared that there was considerable interest in DSL.

As usual, the meeting ended with a drawing for prizes—Verison shirts among them. ◆

The Spring Conference for FACUG will be the first weekend in March. As always, any who may be interested in attending can contact me or another board member for information. It's in Kissimmee, it's fun and you get to meet some really nice people.

I sure hope this year is as successful as last year. ◆

Digital Photography and Your Computer

By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group
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In the January newsletter I wrote about the new Canon PowerShot G1 digital camera and included some photos taken with it. The photo above was also taken with the camera at our January meeting. The goal of this article, though, is not to write about the camera again, but, rather, to give an introduction to my presentation at our February meeting.

I started snapping photographs when I was around 10 years old—1956—and had a 35 mm camera by the time I was in the eighth grade. I wrote my first computer program (to run on the only thing there was then—a mainframe) around 1967. I developed my first strip of film around 1973, when I also printed my first photo in a darkroom. I didn't get a PC until 1983, and that Apple II really had no way to deal with photographs. Why, it only had 65 KB of memory and 65 KB of

what was called auxiliary memory. It had two floppy drives, each able to hold 135 KB of data. And I didn't have a way to get a photograph I had taken into a computer until I got my first scanner, a HP IICX flatbed scanner, in 1994. That $1,100 scanner allowed me to scan photographs—not negatives—into my PC, a Gateway 33 MHz with, I think 16 MB (4 originally) of RAM. So, you see, I had moved up a bit from the Apple.

But that old Gateway would be hard pressed to handle the large graphics files I use now. The file of our meeting above is a 1,855 KB JPEG file, and that is not at all large by today's standards. Of course, anything for the web has to be much smaller to facilitate a relatively quick download.

The next step in my photography/computer journey was getting a scanner that would scan 35 mm slides and negatives. This was the HP PhotoSmart photo scanner. Then came faster computers with more memory and finally a new HP flatbed 5370Cse scanner and the Canon G1 digital camera.

New Computer

By Jenny Lind Olin, Treasurer, Tampa PC Users Group
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I didn't have enough memory -- Computer RAM Memory. Somewhere in the back of my mind I remembered that "You can't be too thin, too rich, too pretty, or have too much memory [RAM]." I had tried twice to upgrade the old computer with more memory, and both times the old computer didn't recognize the new chips. Never mind that when I ordered the computer, I asked for a computer that was upgradeable. Is that word, "upgradeable" an oxymoron?

What would buying a new computer mean? I could get the latest version of Windows Millennium (ME), thus no need to clean up the previous version. Two Pluses. I could get a cable Internet connection (Local Road Runner), so no more AOL taking over my machine. Two more Pluses. I could upgrade my word processor, spreadsheet, (Office 2000) which would have Microsoft Access so I could catch up in the Access SIG. Another Plus. I would have the latest version of Internet Explorer and could learn how to use Outlook Express. Is that a Plus or a Minus?

The downside was the cost, just about the same as the three-year-old computer cost. But it is just money.

I got interested in my old jazz records and wanted to play them and save the recordings on CDs. (I am way in over my head here.) I had also seen my brother using Napster to play around with his musical downloads and that looked really neat. With a new computer, I would download Napster, and when around him I would just pretend I had been using Napster all my life and what was the big deal. But I would need some spiffy speakers and the best sound cards (Sound Blaster Live) I could afford. No problem, it was just money.

I would need a CD reader and burner. Then I would need CD blanks and covers. And maybe labels. This is what brought up the question about the life-span of a CD (see our Tampa PC User Group's Online Discussion Group).

I now own an AMD 700 Duron Processor, 30 Gigabyte hard drive, 128 MB SDRAM. With this system I got Corel's WordPerfect Suite 8 which includes their QuattroPro spreadsheet program. This will work, and I can convert all my Word documents and Excel spreadsheets to this new format. I can save my worksheets to Excel format when I want to send them to others as an attachment on my E-mail. Still no database program, but there is time for that later.

I loaded my genealogy program, Family Tree Maker 6.0, without a problem, but I wasn't expecting one. The real problem was getting the large genealogy databases from the old

computer to the new one. Most of my data files I could copy on floppies and then copy from floppies to the new computer, but my genealogy databases were too large to do that easily. So the Windows SIG at the last Tampa PC Users Group came into play.

I took both my old computer and my new computer and monitor to the meeting. Bob LaFave was arriving about the same time I got there, so he helped transport the components upstairs to the lab.

Before anybody else arrived Bob had both computers opened up and had removed the hard drive from the old computer (see photo in the Digital Photography article in this newsletter). Bob connected that drive to the new computer as a slave drive. He showed us how he looked at the diagram on the side of the hard drive and then changed the setting to match. After his demonstration of how to do the setup, it was time to transfer the data. The old drive was then considered the D-drive. He made a folder in the new computer called "Old Drive" and then we copied all the files from the D-drive (the slave) to the C-drive in the new computer. My antiviral program was working and did find a downloaded file from some e-mail that had a virus. PC-cillin 98 paid for itself that night. This process took awhile, so we went on with the regular program while files literally flew from one computer to the other.

With that process done, it was time to learn what I had to know to use Outlook Express for my email. I was not so lucky as to be able to transfer my email addresses and my favorite places from AOL to Outlook Express and Internet Explorer. I can't read them unless I am using the AOL program. I had to do them a few at a time. Still doing that to tell the truth.

To finish a message later, I have learned I can copy the message to the draft folder or I can save the file and the default is the draft folder. I can move a message to the draft folder by right clicking on the file listed and then select "move to folder."

I usually send a joke to several people on my list. I like to send them as blind carbon copies (bcc) so that the recipient doesn't have to go through line after line of addresses in the header before they get to the message. I know how I feel after scrolling down line after line after line only to find a joke that I have read so many times that I have memorized it. The other day I sent the joke off in a rush and forgot to put an address in the TO: box. AOL would not send a message without a TO: recepient. But since I had used bcc, the message went out as "Undisclosed Recepient." Neat. My name was in the FROM: box, so it wasn't as though the message seemed to come out of nowhere. AOL will not let you send a message without an address in the TO: box.

Tampa PC Users Group 2000 Financial Report

Bank Balance

Beginning Balance	$2,697.27
Ending Balance	$3,049.94
Earnings	$352.67

Projector Project Fund

Donations	$3,195.00
Outflow	$2,011.56
Balance	$1,183.44

Total Assets	$4,233.38

(Computer………Continued from page 4)

I have noticed that if somebody sends me a forwarded message it comes as a blank message, and there is an attachment. That makes it very easy to just delete (no guilt involved) the message as I have no idea what and from whom I am receiving (probably) junk. I also received a GEDCOM for my genealogy program and it came as an attachment, and the text was also in the body of the message. Every message is now a surprise as far as format is concerned.

As soon as I forget how to use AOL and I learn how to use Outlook Express, I will be looking for some other problem to cope with. ◆
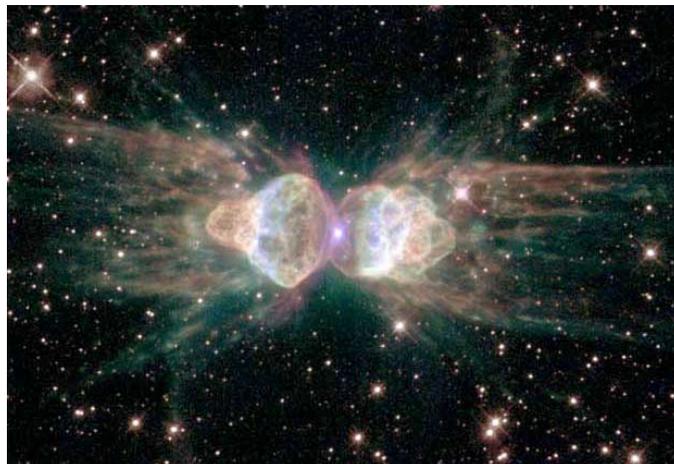
Planetary Nebula Mz3: The Ant Nebula

This photo from the site http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/ is the February 5 Astronomy Picture of the Day. Go there and look through their archive of astronomical photographs.

February's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)	http://www.tpcug.org/
Luminous-Landscape (Photography)	http://www.luminous-landscape.com/
Astronomy Picture of the Day	http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/
PhotoShop Tutorial Search Engine	http://www.rainworld.com/oe_99/forge/ps_tut/
WebReference.com - The Webmaster's Reference Library	http://www.webreference.com/
User Evaluations of On-Line Computer Hardware Vendors	http://www.resellerratings.com/
FreeTranslation.com - Free Translation from English to….	http://www.freetranslation.com/
Florida Newspaper Links	http://www.usnewspaperlinks.com/flnews.html
Biolinks – Internet Search Engine for Scientists	http://www.biolinks.com/
Alex Patout's Louisiana Restaurant	http://patout.com/
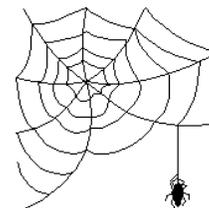
Some of these links will join the many already on the Links page at our web site, where you need only click on the name.

Internet Site Review

By Larry Anders, Librarian, Tampa PC Users Group
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I recently got my reminder email from William that the articles for this month's newsletter were due, so the pressure was on. While I was pondering just what to write about this month my email notification chimed-up and there it was, *DOWN-LOAD.COM.*

As Librarian for the TPCUG in years past (before the popularity of the Internet), my job was to collect, categorize and have available to our members all the software I could acquire, and it was a chore to haul that collection to each general meeting. Then the Internet came along and made my collection obsolete. But I'm not complaining because the quality and quantity of software out on the World Wide Web is excellent and so much easier to access now for everyone.

One of my favorite sites for software is http://download.com, a part of CNET, which is a major force on the Internet today. It doesn't matter if you use a PC or MAC, Windows or Linux, or even a handheld computer; it's all there for you. It's a software geek's paradise. (Now you know why I like it.) You can download to your heart's content, and a lot of the software is actually free (another reason I like it), or Shareware, in which case you can download for free, try it for a period of time and if you like or need it, you can buy it. Now, you can't get a guarantee like that off the shelf. And the price is fair. You don't pay for all the fancy packaging or advertisements that the "big boys" do.

When you log-on to *DOWNLOAD.COM,* one of the first things you see is **this week's top picks**. As I was writing this article the top picks were:

- **ICQ** – the popular instant-messaging program that lets you communicate with friends and colleagues in real time. **FREE**
- **Napster** – the controversial search engine that allows you to find and download MP3 audio files. **FREE**
- **Diablo II** – the classic dark fantasy game. **DEMO**
- **Opera 5** – a versatile Internet/intranet browser that also includes a newsreader. **FREE to try, $39 to register**
- **WindowBlinds** - a utility designed to change the way you look at Windows by allowing you to completely customize your desktop by changing the style of title bars, buttons, toolbars and many other choices. **FREE to try, $20 to register**
- **Internet Explorer** – get the latest version of IE 5.5 SP1 here. **FREE**
- **TaxACT 2000** – one of the competitors to the commer-

cially popular TurboTax TaxACT 2000 helps you complete your tax return. It features more than 80 forms, schedules, and worksheets, plus an interview process to guide you through completing your return. You can also directly enter your information onto the tax forms. TaxACT calculates your return for you, then reviews your return and alerts you of possible errors. **FREE to try, $20 to register.**

The software for the PC compatible is divided into 11 categories, which are:

- **MP3 & Audio**
- **Games**
- **Desktop Enhancements**
- **Business & Finance**
- **Home & Education**
- **Drivers & System Files**
- **Internet**
- **Utilities**
- **Multimedia & Design**
- **Software Development**
- **Web Authoring**

Each category is broken down into several sections and each category lists its most popular download, new releases and *DOWNLOAD.COM'*s own picks. So if you want to take the time to go through all the thousands of programs or just look at the most popular titles, it's your choice. And you don't have to download every program to find out what it's all about. There are thorough descriptions and product specs on all of the programs with links back to their home sites if what you find on *DOWNLOAD.COM* is not enough for you.

I could go on and on but I think if you will just take a few minutes to go to http://download.com you'll see what I'm talking about. If you haven't been there, you owe it to yourself to see what's available for the download at *DOWNLOAD.COM*, but be careful… it's addictive! ◆

One tool is still to be mentioned—Software. There are the cameras to take my pictures. They are the new digital Canon G1, the relatively new Nikon 35 mm single lens reflex camera, and an assortment of older 35 mm cameras and one large format camera. Then there are the scanners to input the images from the film cameras into the computers. But what do you do with the images once you have the files in your computer? That is where software comes in.

I purchased my first serious graphics and photo editing program in 1994. It was Corel Draw 3, an older—and hence cheaper—version than whatever the current version was at the time. I didn't upgrade to Corel Draw 8 until 1998. In 1999/2000 I added Adobe PhotoShop and Adobe Illustrator, two products that I am still trying to master. So much for history.

With either Corel Draw's Photo-Paint or Adobe's PhotoShop, you have one component of a digital darkroom. Your printer, of course, is the other component. However, most of my digital photographs are never printed. They are either viewed on the computer or optimized for the web and included as parts of web pages.

Let's talk a bit now about how I use all this digital photographic equipment. One obvious use is in the production of this newsletter—although we often have too much content to leave room for much graphical filler. The photo below was a quick snap of Bob LaFave at our January meeting working on Jenny Lind Olin's computer preparatory to transferring data from her old computer's hard drive to her new computer's

Member Bob LaFave works on Jenny Lind Olin's computer

hard drive. No editing of any kind has been done on this image. Below pirate Wade Herman has had a Hyde Park squirrel added to his shoulder. Since the squirrel was not situated in a uniform background, it did take a bit of work in PhotoShop to cut him out of his photo so as to paste him in with Wade. I assume this is the sort of thing the *National Inquirer*

Member Wade Herman and friends at Gasparilla

does all the time so as to juxtapose celebrities.

PhotoShop, Corel Photo-Paint and lesser such photo editing programs allow you to do much more than cut out squirrels and place them on pirates' shoulders. You can "repair" damage, change the color balance, contrast and brightness, and do so much more that I am convinced you could spend a lifetime learning all the ins and outs of these programs. For an amateur, I am not bad, but compared to the professionals, I know nothing about PhotoShop—but I have from now on to learn. And each time I use the program, I learn a bit more.

What I will be discussing at our next meeting are the various ways I use all of these digital photography tools. The newsletter I already mentioned. Then there are the various web sites I maintain which need photographic content. Of course, there are all those family photos—both current and some well over 100 years old—of which I have made copies. Finally, there are those projects I think of from time to time. My most recent project consists of taking a digital photo of each house in my neighborhood and writing a Visual Basic program which will list all the addresses such that when you select an address, the picture of the house for that address will be displayed. Here I am combining photography, an Access database and VB programming. Hope to see you at the meeting. ◆

A Horror Story

By Wade Herman, Tampa PC Users Group
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About a year ago I upgraded my computer to a new mother-board with a 500Mhz Athalon but kept my old ATI All-In-Wonder Video Card and an even older Creative Sound Blaster AWE32 sound card. I had been reading about the new ATI All-In-Wonder Radion, which promised greatly improved perform-ance for Video Editing. It also turns your computer into a TIVO like system; more about that at another time. There was also the Sound Blaster Live Platinum card which touted a host of cool features. The front panel analog and digital I/O connectors were especially appealing to me.

During a trip to the local Comp USA, I discovered they had just received the new ATI Radion card. So I yielded to the tempta-tion; after all it was only 2 ½ months until Santa Day. While I was at the cashier, I asked about the Sound Blaster card and learned that they had just received, not even on the shelf yet, Sound Blaster Live Platinum 5.1. Having never had any Plati-num, I decided to go all the way. Being from Creative Labs and one of the most expensive cards at $199, it must be great.

With great anticipation I dashed home and installed the new Gems. The installation of the ATI card went without a hitch. Now to install the Platinum. I had no concerns as their previous Sound Cards and DVD players installed without a hitch. **WRONG!**

Try as I might the software would not install. I am not exactly new to this procedure, having done it since the first Apple II. Being male, I take it as a challenge to solve problems on my own. I checked Creative's web site—no help there. After sev-eral hours of getting nowhere, it was time to call their Tech Support Line. The call is on your nickel, which irritates me, but I am sure it eliminates a lot of calls from people who otherwise would make no effort to read the book. Within 10 or so minutes a very pleasant tech support person answered. It took almost 2 hours but finally everything seemed to be working OK, so I hung up. **WRONG!**

The second or third time I re-booted the system I received one of those dreaded fatal error messages, as the desktop was start-ing to load. MSGSRV32 has caused a fatal error in Devcon32. dll. This is particularly frightening since, as most people are aware, Devcon5 denotes an impending Nuclear Attack. From a computer standpoint it is almost as bad, as the computer is to-tally locked. Forget CTRL-ALT-DEL, the only option is to say a prayer and turn off the power. Now the only way to boot the machine is to boot in Safe Mode and disable the sound card. Then the computer will boot normally but naturally with no sound support. More hours of tinkering and un-installing, re-installing and it is obvious that I need help from a higher power, and, since God's line was busy, I again called Creative. A very nice young lady listened to my tale of woe and spent almost two

hours trying to solve the problem. She acknowledged that the problem is with their Devcon32.dll file and is probably related to my video card. She will send the problem to engineering and will personally call me back with the fix, which may take as much a two weeks. Naturally I am not a happy camper, but I have the feeling that it will be resolved. Over six weeks later I still had not received the promised call. So I called again, on my nickel, and went through their automated telephone support, and there was a solution—Joy of Joys. But the elation was short lived as the fix did not work for me. Now yet another call to Tech Support, with elevated blood pressure, to let them know how I felt about the company, but no point to take it out on the Tech because those above are not doing their job. The Tech was aware of the problem and said they knew that the posted fix only worked in some instances, which was why I had not re-ceive the promised call—sure.

After trying a few things and getting nowhere I demanded to speak to a supervisor. He told me that he was pretty sure they would eventually have a solution, but it might be a month or two. At this point I requested that they take back their Sound Blaster Platinum Live 5.1 and refund what I had paid. Honest, I did not tell them where I thought they should stick it. They in-formed me that they do not take merchandise back. I would have to take it up with the Dealer. I reminded him that due to the time that had expired since the promised two week fix that was not possible. He was sorry, but my only other option was to take it up with Customer Service. Great I thought, bring on the SOBs (Sweet Old Boys). He even gave me the number and then added that it was a fax only number; they will not talk to people directly! How about that for Cus-to-mer Service! I am sure I would hear back in about the same time frame as the original promise and with as much satisfaction as I have received to date. I am sending them a copy of this article as my submission.

In one final attempt to get help, a friend suggested I see if they had a News Group listing, and boy do they. I strongly suggest anyone thinking of buying a Sound Blaster or other product read the postings. To be sure you see all of the postings, read them daily as very critical ones tend to be deleted in short order, as mine was when I outlined the problems described above and requested help. I did find out that I am not Home Alone! With all of the other problems users are experiencing, I may be lucky mine was not solved. One critical posting, which did not seem terribly strong to me, was responded to by Creative's Ambassa-dor of Goodwill, Harvey Fong, stating that he was going to block all postings from her ISP until they canceled her account. There may been justification from other postings to ban an indi-vidual, but trying to coerce an ISP into canceling someone's account by punishing all of their subscribers, really. Later that day he made a half hearted apology, undoubtedly after taking his dose of Lithium. It is their news group so it is their right to control it as they see fit.

I am sure that most people who purchase a Sound Blaster Live are very satisfied. But from my experience and research I would strongly recommend that you be sure that if it does not function

RunRun DLL Reprise

By Michael Hutchison, Tampa PC Users Group
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About three more normal work sessions with my machine after I sent in an article to this publication for December dealing with my problems getting Windows 98 to shut down (and what was hoped was a solution had been arrived at), it froze again. It named the same old suspect, but as time went on RunDLL began to get some company in the Programs not Responding dialog/list box. Among these "norespondents" were:

mprexe.exe and msqsrv32. The first file accepts network requests from the API and sends them to the correct network provider. The second file handles Plug-and-Play messages between various parts of the operating system, coordinates automatic responses to setup programs, plays the system startup and shutdown sounds, runs the shell program. As things now seemed to be on the old computer, these two files were moving up fast on the suspect list, particularly msqsrv32.

But I'm getting ahead of an accurate recap of the situation with respect to chronology. In the parade of events, guesses and angst, I also took a minor excursion through the land of Bootlog.txt and BIOS. This was due to a helpful tip from one of our members, Brian Lance—or was it Jim Weber? I was telling him that as a result of my reading an article or a web page which talked about a file called Bootlog.txt, I suspected that I had a problem with either the mouse driver or an old sound card.

Bootlog.txt resides in the root directory. It is plain old text file so it can be examined with any text editor. Towards the bottom of the file there is a group of lines which should look something like the lines below:

Terminate=User
Terminate=Query Drivers
End Terminate=Query Drivers
Terminate=KERNEL
Terminate=RIT
EndTerminate=RIT
EndTerminate=KERNEL

From Windows Help we have the following:

To pinpoint the problem in the Bootlog.txt file

1. Use any text editor, such as Notepad, to examine the Bootlog.txt file for Terminate= entries. These entries are located at the end of the file and may provide clues to the cause of the problem.

2. For each Terminate=entry, find a matching EndTerminate=entry.
If the last line in the Bootlog.txt file is EndTermi-

nate=KERNEL, Windows 98 shut down successfully.

If the last line in the Bootlog.txt file is one of the following entries, check the listed possible cause:

Last line — Possible cause
Terminate=Query Drivers — Memory manager problem.
Terminate=Unload Network — Conflict with real-mode network driver in the Config.sys file.
Terminate=Reset Display — Video shadowing may need to be disabled. May also need an updated video driver.
Terminate=RIT — Timer-related problems with the sound card or an old mouse driver.
Terminate=Win32 — Problem with a 32-bit program blocking a thread.

After examining this information, I noticed that in the instances when the machine did freeze on shutdown, the computer did not play the new wave file which I had created and then gone into Control Panel and made the new system shutdown sound. At that time I thought that perhaps I had installed something which was periodically asking my old sound card to do things it wasn't capable of and this was causing errors. I did not give enough consideration to the phrase *Timer-related problems with sound card or...*in the Possible Cause column after Terminate=RIT.

I did not know what was wrong, and I was ready to try a little trial and error replacement cloaked in upgrades clothing after getting as close to the problem as was possible. This lead to consideration of updating my BIOS to facilitate various minor hardware improvements either just completed or proposed. Some of these additions or upgrades had no bearing on the shutdown issue. Therefore, I was inclined to think a BIOS upgrade was not a bad idea on a couple of levels. However, other club members didn't feel the BIOS was the culprit in my shutdown woes. So I abandoned this tack. I also tried changing the mouse driver (again grasping at the straws in the wind provided by the Terminate=RIT *Timer* related…) and managed to effectively KO the hapless little rodent temporarily.

Seeing some of my options in the form of throwing small to medium amounts of money at the problem/s thus thwarted, I turned my attention again to the last part of the Bootlog.txt file. At length (fairly great length), I decided to change the system shutdown sound back to the default Windows sound file. It can not be claimed that there was any great thunderclap of sudden understanding behind this move. Rather, this was one of a short list of things to try just prior to formatting the poor old machine's hard drive and putting Linux on it to experiment with.

The computer has now performed a shutdown quite a few times in a row and in a reasonably normal fashion. I say quite a few; don't know how many times exactly, but it's more than the computer has done in a long time. It was the length of the shutoff sound file in terms of time it took to play which was doing the dirty deed. ◆

Special Interest Groups

Microsoft Access SIG

This SIG meets the first Monday of the month at the Gateway 2000 Store on North Dale Mabry (just south of Columbus Drive) at 6:30 PM. For information contact either William LaMartin at *lamartin@tampabay.rr.com* or Merle Nicholson at *merlenic@tampabay.rr.com.*

Genealogy SIG

To be included on the TPCUG genealogy mailing list, contact Jenny Lind Olin at 960-5723 or jlolin@tampabay.rr.com

Visual Basic for Applications SIG

This SIG meets the third Tuesday of the month, at the Gateway 2000 Store on North Dale Mabry at 6:30 PM. For information, *contact Merle Nicholson at merlenic@tampabay.rr.com.*

Windows SIG

This SIG occupies the first 30 minutes of our monthly, regular meeting at MOSI and is devoted to a general Windows and computing discussion. Mary Sheridan moderates the discussion.

A Personal View of Technology 2000

By Mary Sheridan, President, Tampa PC Users Group
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It hasn't been a very exciting year for technology. I can't think of even one new innovation.

I want an MP3 player, but I'm hoping the price will drop below $100.00 and I'd also like for the play time to be longer than one hour.

The Ebook I have is still a great idea, but the books sold for it cost the same price as the hardbound versions. It seems that it is much less expensive to produce an electronic version, so I resent the cost.

The Virgin Connect Web Player has been shut down. It was a neat idea, but I couldn't figure out how they could make money, and I guess they didn't.

My web-enabled cell phone is amazingly slow when accessing the Internet. The phone itself works fine, but that's hardly "new technology."

Digital cameras are becoming more affordable so more people are able to use them. I'm still trying to figure out my Instamatic, so photography isn't for me.

I use my Palm Pilot, but only as an address book. The other functions are just easier and faster on the PC. I'm getting better at note taking with graffiti, but it's still more efficient to take notes on a piece of paper.

I'm taking college courses with the University of Phoenix Online. My schedule would never allow me to physically attend courses on a regular basic, so this is wonderful for me. Online learning has been around for quite some time, but it's just now becoming accepted and accredited.

The upgrade to Windows Millennium hasn't made any difference. I'm just glad I only paid $49.00 for it.

So, here's hoping 2001 will be a banner year for technology and the cushy lifestyle said technology will bring. ◆

Friends of the User Group

We acknowledge the following firms for their support

Museum of Science and Industry
Gateway 2000
BAE
Marshall & Stevens

And these software and hardware vendors for their demonstrations and review software and contributions of evaluation software to our group

Adobe Systems	Microsoft
CompUSA	Office Depot
Corel Systems	PowerQuest
Imprise/Borland	RDI, Inc.
Intuit	Symantec

RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP?
WE CERTAINLY HOPE YOU WILL

MAIL YOUR CHECK AND ANY
ADDRESS OR NAME CHANGES TO:

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

$25 Individual $35 Family
$60 Corporate = 3 employees + $20 each add'l employee

Go to our web site http://www.tpcug.org and click on the Join link to fill in an online membership application

Check the address label for your renewal month

MEMBERS' HELP LINE

Program	Code
Adobe Acrobat	AA
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
Windows 3.1	W3
Windows 95/98	W95/98
Windows NT	WNT
WordPerfect	WP

Name	Time	Phone	Codes
Cheryl Alexander	10:00am - 9:00pm M - F	914-0008	HTM,PSP,WP
Larry Anders	Mon - Sun 6:00pm - 10:00pm	989-9119	AOL, ME, MW, FP, PSP
Bob LaFave	8:00pm-10:00pm	960-0208	W95/W98, MOS
William LaMartin	Mon - Fri 9:00am - 9:00pm	251-3817	AA, FTM, IG, MOS, MP, VB, W95
Merle Nicholson	Mon - Fri 7:30pm - 9:30pm; weekends	879-3602	CG, DE, DOS, HG, HM, HP, VB
Jenny Lind Olin	Mon - Sun 8:00am - 10:00pm	960-5723	ME, MW, PAF, Q, WP
Don Patzsch		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
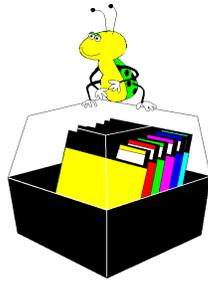
☐ Member: Your membership is up for renewal
☐ Vendor: Your product was reviewed on page ___

properly you can return it for a full **Dealer refund.**

Finally, My Solution Since there was no assurance of an early resolution to my problem and others may follow, I decided to take my loss and research other possibilities. Naturally Creative Sound Blaster is the card that immediately comes to mind because of the tremendous amount of money they spend on glitzy advertising. What a shame they don't spend a little of it elsewhere. There are several other possible choices. After reading several rave reviews of the Turtle Beach, Santa Cruz, I decided to investigate further. I called their Technical Staff to ask if there were any known issues that might cause me problems. It was worth it to me to spend a few bucks to try and avoid a repeat of the expense, time, anguish and aggravation with Creative. I was assured me that they knew of none of the problems I had experienced and in fact the Tech personally was using the previous version of my ATI All-In-Wonder card. Then he cinched the choice by telling me that if I bought the Santa Cruz directly from them it carries a 30day unconditional return warranty. It is half the price of the Sound Blaster, but it does not have the cool front panel connectors and teaser software. All I can say is the Santa Cruz installed without a curse word, works and sounds great. Once again it appears Avis tries harder. ◆

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