



November in Tampa

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

Vol. 19 No. 11 November 2006

## Meeting

### Hardware Presentation By Steve Singer

Wednesday, November 8, 2006  
6:30 PM  
Art Pepin Hospitality Room  
Pepin Distributing Co.  
4121 N 50th St  
Tampa, Florida

**Meeting Preview:** This month Steve Singer from RDI@TampaBay will give us his annual rundown on new hardware. We will also have the usual half-hour Windows SIG.

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### Editor's Comments

*By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group*  
[lamartin@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:lamartin@tampabay.rr.com)

**Mouse problems solved** Last month I described the problem I was having with my computer freezing occasionally when I moved my mouse or clicked on something with it. I had tried all sorts of things—using different mice, getting new mouse drivers, getting new video drivers, changing the hardware acceleration settings for the video drivers and stopping some software programs that run all the time, like Spysweeper. None of this solved the problem.

Well, one obvious thing remained to be done—try a different video card. Most of us don't have extra video cards just lying around, but Merle Nicholson does, and he loaned me a relatively high-end one from Matrox to try. I took out my NVIDIA card, installed the Matrox one and booted the computer. When the new hardware was found by Windows, I

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**December Meeting:** Marcy Gunn from Smart Computing

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**Minutes of the October Meeting**

*By Doug Mullis, Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group*  
[dmullis@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:dmullis@tampabay.rr.com)

Bob LaFave started the Windows SIG portion of our meeting at 6:35 pm. Several members were having problems with their computer's startup routine. Merle Nicholson suggested removing programs from your startup that you normally do not use. Bob referred us to a program by Mike Lin called Startup Control Panel that allows you to configure programs to run when your computer starts. You can get to Mike Lin's Home Page at <http://www.mlin.net>. William LaMartin cautioned those planning to disable programs, as you may cause more problems if you don't know what you are doing.

One member was having a problem with Windows Vista Analyzer due to his wireless network. Bob said not to worry about it.

At 7:05 pm, Bob turned the meeting over to President John Witmer to conduct the business portion of our meeting. John thanked Bob for doing the SIG meeting and then introduced three guests: Marva Christy and Harry Lockabay from Lakeland and Robin Fortner from Bartow. The guests were welcomed, and Harry Lockabay has become the newest person to join our Group. Debbie Whittaker joined at our September meeting.

William LaMartin called attention to the revised TPCUG website. Some complimentary comments were made, and William asked for suggestions and reports of any problems with access to the site. John said he plans to demonstrate using PayPal on the site to renew and pay his dues at the November meeting.

Elections are to be held at the December meeting for next year's officers. Mary Sheridan wants to relinquish

*(Minutes.....Continued on page 5)*



Member of  
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pointed it to the Matrox CD to install the new driver. After the new driver was installed and I changed the screen resolution to my preference, I went into Add/Remove to see about uninstalling the NVIDIA driver. It was already gone. Apparently the installation of the Matrox driver also removed the NVIDIA driver.

After three days of being freeze free, I purchased a new video card for my computer and gave Merle his loaned one back. The new card is made by ATI and, importantly, is Windows Vista ready. Merle reminded me that I wanted to be sure to get a card that would support the new features in Vista, like Aero with Flip3D.

**Windows Vista** After seeing Microsoft's presentation of Vista at our meeting, and given the fact that I had a fairly high-end computer only one year old, I just assumed that I would be upgrading to Vista when it was available. After running the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor, I am not so sure. The problem is not with my computer—although there were several potential problems, such as no compatibility data for the NVIDIA nForce Networking Controller and the NVIDIA nForce RAID Class Device.

The problem is with my scanner and my photo printer, both by Epson. The advisor said that the Epson Perfection 3200 Photo scanner would not run in Vista and that it had no compatibility data for my Epson Stylus 2200 Photo printer. Well, the scanner was purchased January 16 of 2004 for a bit over \$400, and the printer was purchased December 29, 2004 for \$780. Not exactly old items and not exactly cheap items.

I searched the Epson site to find something about Vista drivers but found nothing. So who is to blame here, Microsoft or Epson? Perhaps by the time Vista comes out, there will be a change. If not, Vista will not be installed on this computer. I have too much invested in the printer, plus several hundred dollars worth of ink and paper on hand. And the printer is working well. The scanner is also working fine except for the item below.

**Scanner Catch-22** Since my HP Photo scanner died a few years back, I have been scanning negatives on flatbed scanners. The Epson I am currently using, the

3200 Photo, was purchased specifically because it was said to do a reasonably good job on both 35-mm negatives and larger-format negatives, of which I have a few hundred. I have scanned in more than 8,000 negatives frames and slides using the HP PhotoSmart film scanner, an HP flatbed scanner (also now dead) and the current Epson flatbed scanner. I am basically finished with my black and white negatives, the large format negatives and my slides but have a couple of thousand color negatives yet to go. I do them when I have time, or the mood hits me!

About a month back, though, I encountered a problem. For the 35 mm negative holder (or mask, or whatever it is called), the piece of plastic that holds one of the strips of negatives in place on the bottom part of the holder broke. I still had one good top piece, but that meant I could only scan one strip at a time instead of two.

I contacted Epson via email and they supplied the names of three suppliers who should be able to sell me the part. I looked at their web sites and purchased a 35-mm holder from one. In fact, I purchased two 35-mm holders, along with one larger format holder, since there was a minimum purchase of \$10, and these holders only cost about \$4 each.

There was no joy when the package arrived, though, since I had received three negative holders with no top hold-down pieces. Unbeknown to me, a negative holder consists of a top part and a bottom part. In ordering the holders I saw at the site, I thought you got both pieces. Upon contacting the online supplier, I was told that the top piece was separate and that they did not carry it. Neither did the other two dealers. However, one supplier did give me the part number that was needed. I contacted Epson parts with a "secret" phone number one of the suppliers gave me and asked for the part by number.

In a nice way, the person who answered at Epson said that he could only sell parts to retailers and that I couldn't buy the part from him. He wouldn't even tell me if he had the part or not. So there is the Catch-22. My solution: Krazy Glue, and the repaired piece is still holding together.

**iWoz** That is the name of the recently published book

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## Monitor/TV and TV/Monitor Samsung models 910MP and 940MW

By Merle Nicholson, Tampa PC Users Group  
merle@merlenicholson.com

### 910MP Monitor/TV:

The 910MP monitor is a strange animal, but it may suit you as well as it does me. In short, it's a 19-inch standard LCD monitor, but it's also a TV. It's primarily a monitor, because it's shaped like one. It's a standard 4:3 ratio with a native resolution of 1280x1024. So if it's sitting next to a standard 19" LCD monitor, it's the same screen size and resolution.

Over the years I've had TV cards in my primary computer from time to time — three different ones that I can recall for sure — all of them ultimately unsatisfactory. In my own experience, TV as a secondary function on your PC is helpful but fraught with occasional PC lockups. I always felt I couldn't push the limits of my computer when the TV card was running and I had to be especially careful not to move or resize the TV window too aggressively to prevent lockups. Maybe it was just bad luck, but it was bad luck with three different cards!

But I do want a TV in my work office. I don't find it especially distracting because I can tune it in and out in my head when I need to. Hence the 910MP. It's attached to my server on a table to the side, and I switch between Monitor and TV sources using the supplied remote. While it's in Monitor source, I can also bring up the TV in a PIP window, something in which I have no particular interest. And — to me — the best thing about all this is that the PC has no knowledge of the TV at all. No lockups.

This device does not have a lot of input/output choices, just the essential ones: Cable Coax, a not-too-accessible headphone jack, AV In (a three jack set - stereo and composite), PC In (15-pin D-Sub VGA and Stereo 3.5mm jack). It has no DVI or HDMI inputs. It has a very good remote with all functions. It has a row of nine buttons at the bottom of the unit, but the labeling is hard to read, and I've never attempted to use them. The speakers are fairly large and adequate.

As for using it as a PC monitor, it works very well. The display is clear and crisp, with no dead pixels. The contrast ratio is an excellent 700:1. My oldest son is using a standard 19-inch LCD Samsung monitor and also had a TV failure and was looking for a replacement TV. He also wanted a dual monitor setup for his primary PC, so I ordered one of these for him too. So his 910MP and his 19-inch LCD monitor are sitting side-by-side. He claims the new 910MP is somewhat crisper with better contrast than his LCD, probably due to the high contrast ratio.

The current price for the 910MP is \$410 at NewEgg, but I paid about \$350 for mine after a sizeable rebate from Samsung. Search around for deals, and be patient.



### 940MW TV/Monitor:

I won't go into as much detail as this is an LCD TV, but after buying the one Monitor/TV Samsung 910MP, I went out a month later and bought two TV/Monitor Samsung Model 940MWs to replace two aging tube type bedroom TV's. It has a wide screen with native resolution of 1440x900. At that resolution it's more a TV that also serves as a monitor, but perhaps it could be used functionally as a primary monitor if the vertical resolution is adequate for your own needs. On reflection, it's the same resolution as my notebook, and I certainly find that adequate as long as it's not my primary PC. Functionally, the two — 910MP and 940MW — are the same, except for the shape and the in/out ports. The controls are the

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her role as the Member at Large; Doug Mullis would like to turn over the Secretary duties to another member, and Mike Hodges has a work conflict that makes it prudent that he give up the Treasurer's duties. We also have an important appointed position left vacant when Bruce Register moved from the area, that of "Official Greeter." This person greets members and guests at the beginning of each meeting and sees that nametags are worn and then collected at the meeting's conclusion. We need a slate of nominees at our November meeting, so let Mary, John or Kevan know of your interest to help lead our Group in the coming year. We will have the duties of the various offices put into the next newsletter. [See page 6.]

The Fall Conference of the FACUG is on Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup> in Orlando. Please visit the FACUG website for particulars. Registration is \$20 for this one-day conference.

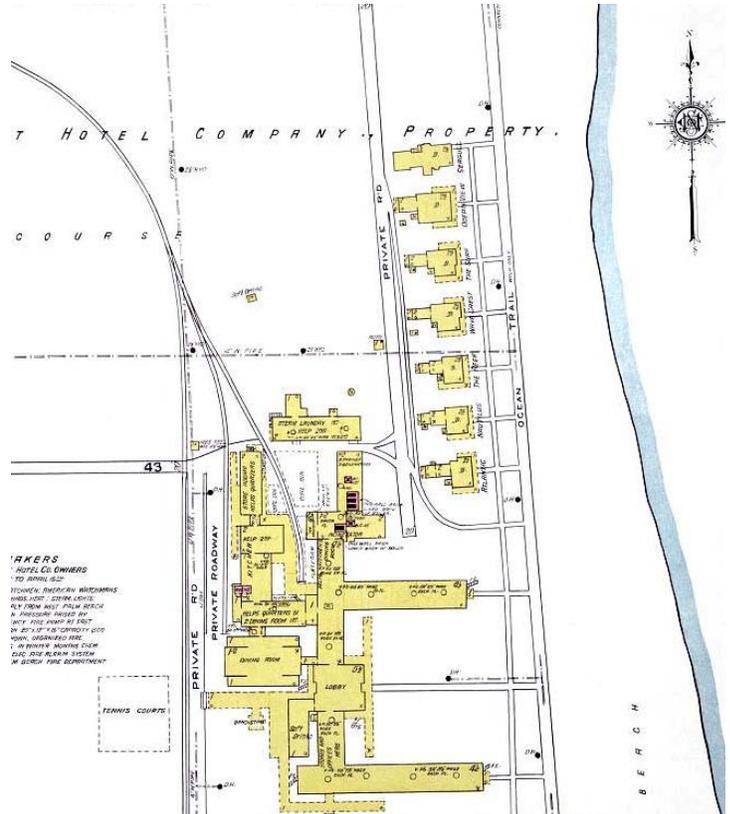
November's program will feature Steve Singer from the RDI distributorship. Steve will tell us of the latest computer hardware, as he does each year. This presentation is always an interesting program to kick off the holiday buying season.

Ed White has suggested a PC Building SIG. Ed recently had fun building two computers and wants to share his experience. Let Ed or John know of your interest in doing this. We will need to find a suitable meeting place for this SIG group.

At 7:05 pm, John Witmer changed hats and became our speaker for the evening. His topic was Excel and

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## Internet Picture of the Month



### The Breakers 1919

This is a screen capture from one of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of Florida cities. This detail shows the Breakers Hotel on the Atlantic in Palm Beach Florida in 1919. At the site <http://palmm.fcla.edu/sanborn/>, if you click on search you can select a Florida city and view maps that display the buildings existent in that city from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. The yellow color indicates it was of frame construction, which is certainly not the case now.

## November's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)  
RDI@TampaBay (our presenter)  
Barbecue Recipes and Grill Information  
Sanborn Maps (Fla. Historical maps)  
JAlbum - free web photo album software  
FL Dept. of Health - Physician Profiles

<http://www.tpcug.org/>  
<http://morevalu.net/>  
<http://bbq.about.com/>  
<http://palmm.fcla.edu/sanborn/>  
<http://jalbum.net/>  
<http://ww2.doh.state.fl.us/irm00profiling/searchform.asp>



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.

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same, and the remote may be identical.

I bought these two at the same time at Staples because they were offering a \$50 rebate after a \$350 store price. One I use attached to a Windows Media Center PC I built to use as a PVR (Personal Video Recorder), with a Bluetooth keyboard and mouse. The other LCD TV uses one external input, a combo DVD/VCR, besides the TV. I'm using an HDMI-to-DVI cable, with excellent results at 720p resolution.

The 940MW has a wider range of input/output ports, comparable to what you'd expect on an LCD TV. Accessible on the left side is a headphone jack and AV input connectors with composite and stereo and also S-Video.

Less accessible underneath in the back is the TV cable connector and component In, audio and video. For PC connection, there's both a 15-pin D-Sub VGA and a DVI video connector and a 3.5mm stereo jack.

The current price at NewEgg is \$339.



Incidentally, when you delve into LCD or plasma screens you'll be needing some very expensive cabling, HDMI-to-HDMI, HDMI-to-DVI, S-Video and others. Do NOT buy this cabling at retail stores. It is available online at a fraction of the cost. I bought two Phillips brand HDMI-to-HDMI cables at Sam's Club for \$26 each. The cheapest at Circuit City is \$85. Best Buy is \$120, although they do have a 3-foot cable for \$50. ◆

## Election of TPCUG Officers is soon The duties of the officers are:

1. **President:** The president shall foster and promote direction, leadership, education, and organizational goals. The president shall act as the legal head and chief administrative officer; exercise supervision of the corporation and its activities; represent and speak for the organization; preside at meetings of the members; appoint and discharge committees; sign letters or documents necessary to carry out the mission of the organization; and preside as the Chair of the Board of Directors.
2. **Vice President:** The vice president shall assume the duties of the president in the event the president is absent or incapacitated, or at the request of the president, and becomes president on the death, resignation, or permanent incapacity of the president.
3. **Secretary:** The secretary shall serve as the chief recording and correspondence officer and the custodian of the records of the corporation. The secretary shall take such steps as necessary to prepare and certify the correctness of member and Board of Directors meeting minutes; preserve all records, reports, and official documents of the corporation except for those specifically assigned to the custody of others; sign official documents to attest to their authenticity; and carry on the official correspondence of the corporation as directed, except for those matters assigned to other officers. The secretary shall assume the duties of the president and/or vice-president in the event the president and vice-president are absent or incapacitated and shall become president on the death, resignation or permanent incapacity of both the president and the vice-president.

4. **Treasurer:** The treasurer is responsible for the collection of funds, their safe deposit, and the expenditure of all funds for the organization; and for keeping an accurate record of the collections and expenditures. The treasurer shall submit a report at the Board of Directors meeting and prepare an annual report to the members. The treasurer shall issue payments for bills submitted to the corporation as approved by the Board

(Duties.....Continued on page 7)

## Special Interest Groups

### Microsoft Access SIG

This SIG meets the **first Tuesday** of the month at 6:30 PM. The meeting location varies. For information contact William LaMartin at [lamartin@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:lamartin@tampabay.rr.com), or Merle Nicholson at [merle@merlenicholson.com](mailto:merle@merlenicholson.com).

### Digital Imaging SIG—Cancelled until further notice

This SIG meets the **fourth Monday** of the month at Pepin Distributors at 6:30 PM. For information contact Mary Sheridan at [mcpease@mindspring.com](mailto:mcpease@mindspring.com).

### Visual Basic for Applications SIG

This SIG meets the **third Wednesday** of the month at 6:30 PM. The meeting location varies. For information contact William LaMartin at [lamartin@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:lamartin@tampabay.rr.com).

### Windows SIG

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

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*(Minutes.....Continued from page 5)*

its many applications at home and at the office. John said about 85% of his work on his computer is with Excel. He asked how many use Excel and to do what? Several responded they use it to make lists, keep financial records, to record genealogy information and to keep home business records.

John said Excel is a spreadsheet with cells that can contain a value, a formula, text or even pictures. It does functions invaluable for financial and statistical analysis. The power of Excel is in knowing how to use the many tools built into it. You can quickly set up payment schedules, inventories, payment records and plot histories.

John's company uses Excel to track sales activities and expenses, maintain personnel records, track monthly inventories, schedule events and track equipment usage and billing records. John showed us examples of these applications.

At home, John uses Excel for payment records, recording trip logs, cataloging and calendars. John catalogs photos and even did floor plan layouts of his home. Again, he walked us through his efforts and answered many questions.

John offered to help anyone apply Excel to projects they may be contemplating. Based on the interest shown during his presentation (which made us run overtime) and the group gathered around him after-

ward, John should be busy for a while. Thanks for presenting such an interesting topic, John.

Due to the lateness of the hour, we did not have a raffle for the Microsoft OneNote software door prize left by Blain Barton of Microsoft at our last meeting. If time permits at the November meeting, we will have a raffle at the end of the presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm. ◆

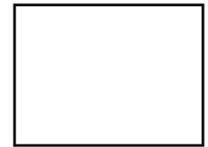
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*(Duties.....Continued from page 6)*

of Directors or the membership, as per standing policy or special consideration by the Board of Directors.

5. Member at Large: The member at large shall serve in the capacity of an ombudsman for the members of the organization; propose a slate of candidates for the offices of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and member at large, and perform such other duties as requested by the president and/or the Board of Directors. The member at large shall, to the best of one's ability, be accessible to the members and to bring to the attention of the Board of Directors those matters that the members, for whatever reason, wish to be brought to the Board of Directors rather than have those matters brought to the floor of the regular meeting. ◆

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



**First Class Mail**

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

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

by Steve Wozniak, creator of the Apple I and Apple II personal computers and the co-founder, with Steve Jobs, of Apple. If there had been a lot of space to fill in the newsletter, I was going to do a full review of this book (\$15 from Amazon), but the space is mostly filled, so here are just a few observations:

- Wozniak, tutored by his engineer father, started learning about electronic devices and transistors in grade school.
- As a pastime, he redesigned on paper the mini computers of the time so as to make them more efficient and to use fewer chips.
- He basically made the Apple I and II by himself.
- He was the first person to type input at a keyboard and to see it appear on a monitor.
- He loves to play pranks on people.
- He is not an ambitious person—and was happy to give the plans for the precursor of the Apple I to anyone (this is where Steve Jobs' business sense became important to the creation of Apple).
- Being shy, he thought he might never have a girlfriend. He is now on his third marriage.
- Finally, Woz is a nice guy. ◆

