



Vol. 22 No. 4

April 2009

April in Tampa

## Meeting

### Online Program Training Videos at Lynda.Com and More

by

William LaMartin

Wednesday April 8, 2009

6:30 PM

Pepin Distributing Co.  
4121 N 50th Street  
Tampa, Florida

**Meeting Preview:** Would you like training in any of the major computer programs? William LaMartin will demonstrate how to receive it at Lynda.com. Bob LaFave will also conduct the Windows SIG at the beginning of the meeting as usual.

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## Editor's Comments

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

A number of members attended the FACUG Spring Conference this past month in Zephyrhills, and attendee Ron Wienberg tells us some of the highlights of the meeting in his article on page three of this newsletter. Our secretary, Jim Purcell, ever conscientious, while traveling emailed the minutes from a Panera Bread location in New York. However, someone else must have forgotten to send in his/her article, so you will be stuck with what I have this month. Actually, I think my topic is fairly interesting. It is a web application that for any state, displays the location of each city with an National Public Radio station. Further, if you hover your mouse over the pin at a city, a fly-out lists the call letters of all stations in the city, and, if the stations have a live audio feed, a link to that is provided. Additionally, the pins are color-coded so as to indicate multiple stations in a city and whether or not they have live feeds. I hope you find my description of creating it interesting. ♦

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**May Meeting: To be announced**

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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@tampabay.rr.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.

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**Affiliations**

Florida Association of User Groups  
Association of Personal Computer User Groups

**Minutes of the March Meeting**

By Jim Purcell, Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group  
[Edward\\_J\\_P@MSN.com](mailto:Edward_J_P@MSN.com)

**B**ob LaFave started the Windows SIG at 6:35 PM. He began by demonstrating how to reach Amazon.com through our web site in order for our user group to receive a commission on a purchase. Bob also answered a question on exporting cookies from one computer to another. He described the features of "LightScribe," a labeling program for specially treated DVD/CD's. He advised that sometimes the colors you choose will affect the quality of your label on some LightScribe blanks. He demonstrated the repair and restore functions available in Vista. Bob discussed CD/DVD capacities as a follow-up to a question at last month's meeting. He mentioned Nero Info Tool, a program that will give you all of the information on your CD/DVD players and an inserted disk. Bob discussed the details of how you can watch TV and listen to the radio on your computer. He took a minute to explain the mechanics of backing up computers with the Vista operating system. You can easily backup several Vista computers on the same hard drive. The backup system is very simple, with few or no choices. Almost everything is decided for you. Bob led an extensive discussion of TV tuners and how they can be used. In response to a question on how to record "You Tube" programs, he also mentioned that "Total Recorder" is a program that will record almost any form of audio.

The Windows SIG ended at approximately 8:00 PM. The last part of the Windows SIG led into the presentation for March, "Microsoft Moviemaker," which was also presented by Bob. The Microsoft Moviemaker program is included in the Windows Vista Ultimate operating system. Bob's presentation contained numerous tips and procedures to help the user get the most from this program. Bob stressed the ease with which you can complete complicated and impressive functions which in the past were difficult to learn and to execute. He demonstrated the ways that you can build your video and enhance it by importing audio and video supplements from various sources. The program also provides numerous special effects. The

*Minutes .....Continued on page 8*

## FACUG Conference Highlights

By Ron Weinberg, Member at Large, Tampa PC Users Group  
[rswjbr@verizon.net](mailto:rswjbr@verizon.net)

**T**he Florida Association of Computer User Groups, or FACUG, held its Spring Conference in Zephyrhills on March 14 and 15.

These events consist of a number of separate sessions in which various topics of interest to Florida group members and other guests are discussed. Each topic is led by an expert on the subject. Some presentations are made by representatives of software or hardware companies to explain their products or to introduce new ones. Each presenter tries to answer related questions.

Several sessions were devoted to topics related to the administration of User Groups such as: Increasing Membership, Remote Presentations, Microsoft Live Meeting, Group Communications and Online Newsletters.

More of interest to general members were sessions which covered some of the most timely subjects and technology issues of today. A brief comment on several follows.

**Smart Computing Magazine** had staff members present to explain in detail the workings of their superb free tech support program, now only available to subscribers. It was noted by several attendees' experiences that this is a very valuable service. The support team will go to great lengths and spend much time resolving user issues.

**Virtual Worlds and Second Life.** As defined by Wikipedia, a virtual world is a computer-based simulated environment intended for its users to inhabit and interact via avatars. Second Life is a popular virtual world. Secondlife.com explains that Second Life is a free 3D virtual world where users can socialize, connect and create using voice and text chat. Virtual worlds are predicted to be future locations of many interpersonal relationships, some of which can involve the transfer of genuine actual currency. They can be an excellent educational tool also.

**Cloud Computing**, one of the new techniques taking over computing was explained. Essentially, banks of gigantic servers replace users' own hardware and software. Access to everything is online. Local PCs or large corporations do not require powerful processors, large memory or storage devices. There is no need to know where the processing and storage is. "It is in the cloud."

**Wikis** (quoting from the presenter, Dave Dockery). "A Wiki is a web page that can be edited by its creator, and also by visitors. Wikis may be used as an excellent group planning tool. They are easy to create and edit." Two sites to work with wikis are <http://www.wikispaces.com> and <http://www.pbwiki.com>.

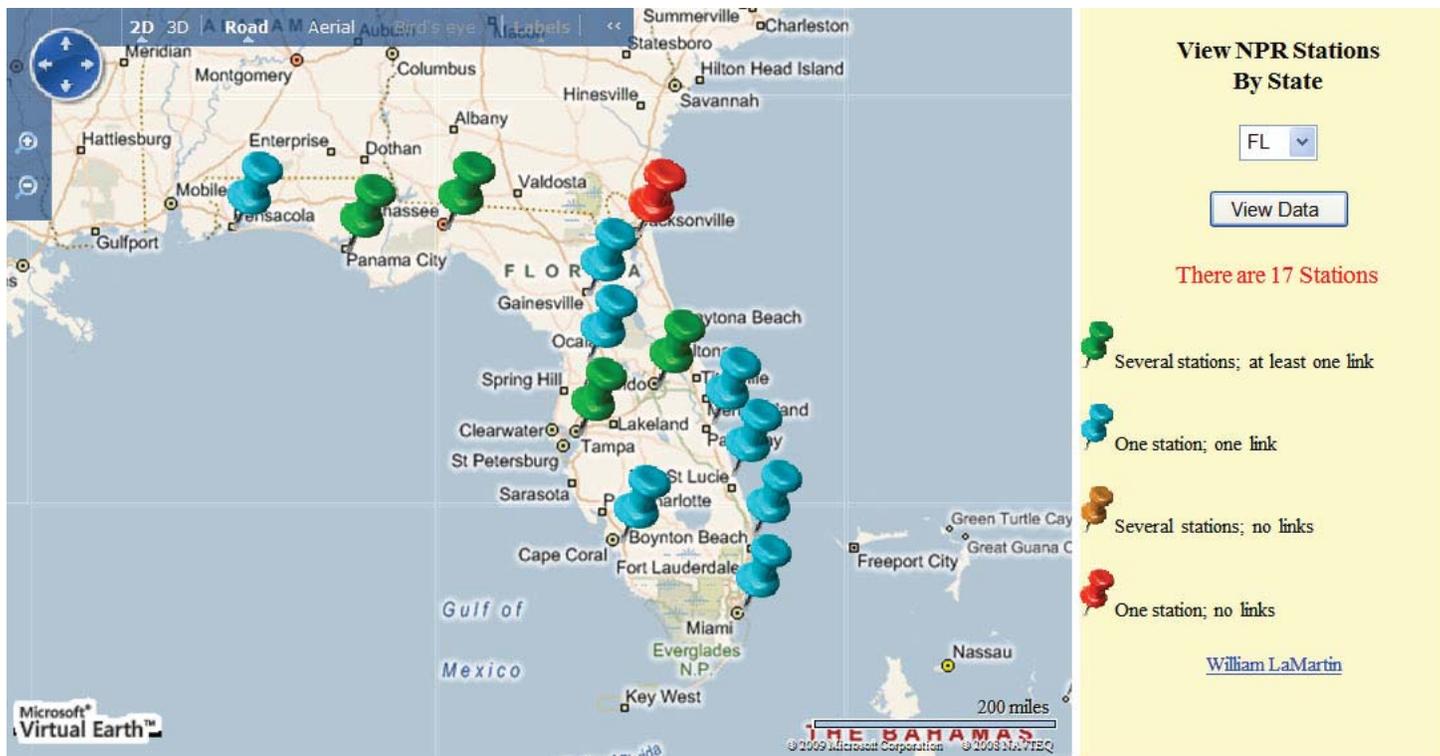
**Ning** is an interactive web site with which users can create their own customized social networking site. Go to <http://www.aboutning.com> for more information.

**Twitter.** Sending tweets with Twitter is the current rage. Tweets are merely short messages (140 character maximum). They are a written Internet version of instant messages. Go to <http://www.twitter.com> to use it.

**Drupal** is a very popular complete web design tool, free and open source. It can be learned for individual use or you can contract with consultants to use it for you.

**Microsoft Windows 7.** Conference attendees received a copy of the beta release and a demonstration by Jay Ferron. Discussion of Windows 7 is best left to the myriad of other articles now appearing everywhere. There seems to be agreement that this will be the answer to complaints about Vista.

This article is not all inclusive. Several of the other valuable sessions were not mentioned here such as: Bar Camp Unconference, Doterati, Magix Multimedia Audio Video Software, offering free Widgets at [magixwidgets.com](http://magixwidgets.com), Photoshop.com for online sharing and editing, and ZoomWare screen magnification for everyone. More information on each of these is available through Google. There was also a superb fill-in



## Creating Interactive Maps

By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC users Group  
lamartin@tampabay.rr.com

In past articles, I have described how to geo-tag your photos—that is, add latitude and longitude information to the image file using the free Microsoft Pro Photo Tools. And once you have your photos geo-tagged, you can then identify the locations on a map with a bit of programming. As a final touch, you can have a thumbnail of the image display, along with some text, when someone hovers their mouse over the location indicator pin and then, if they actually click on the thumbnail, have a larger version of the image display.

This sort of process opens up all sorts of possibilities for using maps for displaying data other than images. Within the last year, I created an example using the 2000 United States census which, I believe, I mentioned in the newsletter. I will briefly describe that application a little later in this article and give a link to it. My main interest here, though, is to give a non-technical description of how I created my National Public Radio (NPR) stations interactive map shown above in a screen capture of its display of cities in

Florida with NPR stations.

First off, I should say that someone did a similar application before me, for when I did a search for a list of all NPR stations, among the hits was the site <http://www.broofa.com/Toys/NPRStations/>, which had an interactive map based on Google mapping. The creator was also nice enough to have a link to a file containing the data on which his map was based. He got his data from a stations list, <http://www.npr.org/stations/pdf/nprstations.pdf>, at National Public Radio, which I, too, had found.

The NPR list had given me a list of stations, their call letters and the cities they were in. What it didn't give me were the latitude and longitude of the cities where the stations were—and, more importantly, what the online audio live feed URL for the stations was. Now I could have used the US Gazetteer site, <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/gazetteer>, to retrieve the latitude and longitude of each city. I wouldn't do this by going to the page and individually entering the city name and state for each city and then retrieving the result. I am a programmer, so I would write a program that would run down the list of cities and retrieve this information for all the cities on the list without my having to

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## Internet Picture of the Month



### William C Durant Mausoleum

With General Motors about to go bankrupt, it might be of interest to consider its founder, William Durant, who, after founding GM, lost the company. He then founded Chevrolet and regained control of GM, only to lose it again. He started Durant Motors and was a major player on Wall Street in the 1920s. The failure of Durant Motors and the crash of the market ruined him financially. The photo is from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_C.\\_Durant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_C._Durant).

### April's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)  
lynda.com - instructional videos (meeting topic)  
File Extension Database  
General Motors History  
Davis Islands Yacht Club Weather

<http://www.tpcug.org/>  
<http://www.lynda.com>  
<http://extensionfile.net/>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General\\_Motors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Motors)  
<http://www.diy.org/wx/>

*Mapping.....Continued from page 4*

do anything. However, this was not necessary since the other fellow's data file provided the latitude and longitude information for each of the cities. So that is the first of two things with which he provided me.

His site does not provide a URL for a station's audio live feed, but he did provide a link to a site named radio-locator, <http://www.radio-locator.com/>, which did provide this information. This was the second thing he provided that was useful. Now all I would need to do was to again use my programming ability to write a program that would, for each station, go to the radio-locator site, provide it with the call letters for the station and be presented with a page of information about the station. The program would then analyze the page to see if there was an audio feed URL listed for the station. If so, it would save it and then move on to the next station on the list.

Well, I wrote my program, tested it on a few stations to work out the bugs, and then set it to retrieve the information on the first 100 stations. However, it wasn't long before things stopped. In examining the text on the last page returned, I found "You have exceeded your allotted usage." Next day, I could again retrieve information from the radio-locator site. This time I did it in small bits so as to see at what point I would again get cut off. That happened a little past 60 requests.

You may wonder how did the web site know that the same computer was making those requests. The simple answer is that when my program made what is known as an http request, the same as when your browser make a request for a web page, it sends along the IP address of the requesting computer. How else would the web server know where to send the page. And it would do no good to move to a different computer in the house, since the IP address sent is that of the router to which all the computers are connected.

How to speed up the process a bit? I could have taken my program to some of my friends homes, installed it on their computers and then got another 60 each day. What I actually did was write another type of program, called a web service, that did the same thing

and placed it on two of my web sites. Then I modified my program to also use these remote web services to request pages. Since these requests would be coming from two new IP addresses, I could get 60 more results from each of them for a total of 180 each day. That made it a bit easier to get the 800 or so responses I needed.

Now I had a list of NPR stations in each state, the latitude and longitude of the cities where they were and an URL of their live audio feed if one existed. The next thing to do was check out the data on the audio URLs. That check revealed a not-insignificant number did not provide any audio. One problem was that, in cases of what turned out to be long URLs, the radio-locator data was truncated. However, the most common problem was that the URL was now different from what was listed by the radio-locator site. My solution for getting a correct URL for a station was to do a search in Google with terms being the station's call letters plus the text "audio live feed". This was a process that I did one station at a time. Most of the problems stations were resolved, but there are still a few, and I invite you to try my application and send me any stations that don't work properly. Also, enjoy listening to stations all over the country. Right now I am listening to KWED in San Francisco. The current program is Morning Edition, which airs much earlier here in Tampa due to the time difference.

The link to my NPR Stations interactive map is <http://www.lamartin.com/VENPRStations/> in the Useful Things section of <http://www.lamartin.com>.

Briefly, the 2000 Census Interactive Map at <http://www.lamartin.com/VECensus/> uses the same technology to plot pins at each zip code in a state. When you hover your mouse over any pin, you are provided with the most important census data for that zip code. For example, if I zoom in the map for Florida to Tampa and then to the 33606 zip, hovering the mouse over the 33606 pin reveals, among many other pieces of information, that in 2000 the population was 14,960. The data for this application is obviously US Census data. ♦

**Special Interest Groups****Visual Basic .Net SIG** (and sometimes Access 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@tam-pabay.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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**TPCUG STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES AND BANK BALANCE FOR THE YEAR 2008**
**2008 INCOME**

MEMBERSHIPS (40 Single + 2 Family)	\$1,070.00	
DOOR PRIZES		\$66.00
AMAZON & MISC		\$176.46
TOTAL INCOME:		\$1,312.46

**2008 EXPENSES**

NEWSLETTER POSTAGE	\$166.20	
NEWSLETTER PAPER	\$48.97	
FACUG CONF REGISTRATIONS	-	
FACUG DUES	\$25.00	
APCUG DUES	\$50.00	
FLORIDA INCORPORATION FEE	\$61.25	
WEB SITE HOSTING FEE	\$149.50	
PO BOX RENTAL (Pd in 2009)	-	
DEC HOLIDAY PARTY COSTS	\$232.61	
REFRESHMENTS - COOKIES	\$33.70	
PAYPAL FEES - 11 PAYMENTS	\$10.97	
MISCELLANEOUS (LABELS, TAPE)	\$36.36	
TOTAL EXPENSES:		\$814.56

**NET INCOME FOR 2008****\$497.90**

CASH BALANCE PER BOOKS - BEGINNING OF 2008 \$5,491.95

CASH BALANCE PER BOOKS - END OF 2008 \$5,989.85

## RECONCILIATION OF BANK STATEMENT TO BOOK BALANCE:

Balance per BANK STMT at 12-31-08		\$5,941.55
Deduct: Outstanding checks written as of 12/31/08	NONE	-
Add: PayPal dues deposit in transit	Jim Sides	\$24.15
(Rec'd in PayPal Acct 12/10 & 12/18)	Wm LaMartin	\$24.15

Balance per BOOKS at 12-31-08 is this amount: \$5,989.85

SUBMITTED BY: DOUG MULLIS, TREASURER TPCUG

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*FACUG.....Continued from page 3*

presentation by Jay Ferron on identity theft.

The FACUG.org website shows a session summary under Conference Presentations and has video streams and downloads of most sessions available. ◆



*Minutes.....Continued from page 2*

program can be easily recorded to various forms of media such as your computer hard drive, a DVD, a CD, email, or you can record it back to your camcorder for viewing. Bob also went through the process of downloading video and sound from the Internet.

The meeting ended at approximately 9:00 PM. ◆

