



# Bits of Blue

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



Vol. 24 No. 1 January 2011

January in Tampa

## Meeting

### More on Windows 7

by

Merle Nicholson

Wednesday, January 12

6:30 PM

Pepin Distributing Co.

4121 N 50th Street

Tampa, Florida

**Meeting Preview:** Merle Nicholson will expand on what he presented in a prior meeting about Windows 7. As usual, Bob Lafave will conduct the Windows SIG for the first half hour of the meeting..



## Editor's Comments

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

The Microsoft Windows Phone 7 is out but not yet available from Verizon, my cell phone provider. So my interest in programming for it has waned a bit. Then Merle purchased an Android phone about which he writes in this newsletter. And that gave me an idea: See if I could write some simple programs for that phone. This would require a new language, Java, and a new programming environment, Eclipse.

I have never really programmed with Java other than to do a few things for web sites with Java Script. And I would have to switch from using Visual Studio as a programming environment to a free program called Eclipse. The screen shot you see on page 6 in this article is of a simple program I wrote (with much help from the Internet) that uses the Google Maps Application Programming Interface (API) to display a pushpin where you click and to also display the coordinates of the point. The program is running in the Android Emulator, which is a software-

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**February Meeting: 2010 Malware - A Review by Dave Palmer**

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However, for business concerning this newsletter, Bits of Blue, please contact the Editor, William LaMartin, at 813-251-3817, or william@lamartin.com.

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**Minutes of the December Meeting**

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

**J**ohn Witmer, our president, opened the business portion of the meeting with a few remarks during the annual Christmas party which began at 6:30 PM. He gave a short summary of the December Board meeting and indicated that he would present the slate of candidates since Ron Weinberg, our member at large, who normally announces the slate of candidates, was unable to attend the meeting. He advised that anyone who desired to run for any of the offices could still be considered. When no one stepped forward, the following slate of officers was presented:

- For President: John Witmer
- For Vice President: Kevan Sheridan
- For Treasurer: Doug Mullis
- For Secretary: Merle Nicholson
- For Member at Large: Ron Weinberg

A motion was made to accept this slate and to vote. All members present voted in favor of the slate of officers as presented. Terms of office begin January 1, 2010.

The party continued until approximately 9:30 PM ♦

*Comments.....Continued from page 1*

created version of the Android phone that Eclipse uses to debug the phone programs. In case you don't recognize the location, it is of our meeting site at Pepin. By the way, Eclipse can be used for any Java Programming, not just for the Android phone.

One advantage, I think, of the Android phone is that you can side-load applications onto it (not have to get them from the Google app store), whereas for the Windows Phone 7 (and the iPhone) you have to go through the Microsoft Phone 7(or iPhone) app store. This, however, may change in the future. Of course, if you sign up as a developer for either the Windows Phone 7 or the iPhone, you get the ability to side-load

*Comments.....Continued on page 6*

## New handheld computer that also phones (Smartphone)

(Verizon Motorola Droid X – Android OS 2.2 Froyo)

By Merle Nicholson, Tampa PC Users Group  
[merle@merlenicholson.com](mailto:merle@merlenicholson.com)

**O**K – this is an article about an Android phone by a guy who is three times older than the demographic that normally buys these things. So I'm going to say "Facebook" here and now, the first and last time because I'd don't have a Facebook account; I haven't "friended" anyone, so I certainly don't care where they are. And I haven't gone hunting for dates for 47 years. Just so you know who I am.

I've replaced two pocket devices with one Android smartphone two weeks ago. I had a tiny wireless telephone that I used for, well, telephoning, and a five year old PDA – a Dell Axim x50v.

The old Dell is still functioning almost as well as it did when it was new. Its connectivity options are limited to wireless/b and Bluetooth. I used it mostly to sync with my Outlook calendar and contacts and keep family pictures to bore people with. The charging/sync connector is getting flaky, and I bought a new part to replace it, but the tiny soldering required put me off some and also prompted me to look elsewhere. Don't get me wrong, I can solder. NASA taught me how a lifetime ago. But this is tiny, close together and there are about twenty things to be soldered.

The phone I've had for two years has been just a telephone to me; it connects to a hands-free device I bought for the car, but it will also take pictures and do messaging, in which I had no interest. I discovered that the process to keep the camera from taking pictures of the inside of my pocket made it hard to take any kind of pictures at all and that Verizon was going to charge me to get them off my phone after I did take some. I have a good camera anyway.

Verizon is making it pretty easy to get a new phone and a data/mail plan to go along with it. But Amazon is doing it better by reducing the price of this model

(Droid X) down to \$120, \$50 cheaper than buying direct from Verizon. That's after a \$30 credit accumulated at Verizon for having fulfilled my last 2-year contract. That's \$120, no tax, no shipping, no activation fee, plus, I later discovered that, because I went to Amazon through the TPCUG link, \$65 was credited to the TPCUG. I activated the phone with Verizon within a few minutes of delivery to my house but after the on-line activation failed. Apparently Amazon and Verizon work it all out because the Amazon price is reduced by Verizon's \$30, and Amazon checks while you wait online to verify the Verizon eligibility if you've told Amazon that you're an existing Verizon customer and have given the phone number you want to use.

OK, now about Android phones – or rather what I've learned so far. There seems to be a consensus that the latest version of the OS, version 2.2, is the best so far, and 2.2 apparently has some much-needed new features. Being a Google product – you guessed it – it had a lot of features imbedded in it that depend on Google. I'm not especially fond of going to one source for everything, but Google has not eliminated all your choices, and, with time, now I'm completely comfortable with it.

Email would be a good example. I'm using my own email server account for email, not my Gmail account. My mail is still managed on my home PC because I run a business and my Outlook is essential. My Outlook 2010 isn't just an email/contact list/calendar; it truly categorizes and manages that searchable client data going back several years. So the phone brings in all my incoming mail from my private server, and I can send replies or initiate new mail through my server.

The web-based Gmail/Contacts manages your contact list on your Android phone pretty much seamlessly. I export files (calendar by broad date range and contacts one at a time) from Outlook and then log into my Google email account and import each of those files. I really don't know if the data is on the phone or in the "cloud," but I've decided I don't care. The contacts and calendar data appear in my phone not instantly but within maybe an hour; I'm not sure.

*Droid.....Continued from page 3*

So far no one has discovered my Gmail account and that's just fine. On the phone, I pretty much just read any incoming email that I'm especially interested in, reply if required and then just erase all the phone's email. There are programs (purchased and free) that improve the Outlook to Android transfer process, but I haven't yet seen any need to fully automate the exchange.

Here's a list of most of the functions and programs I'm actively using. Most are free and already installed. A few were free from the Android Market, and just two were purchased.

**Browser** – The Internet browser is surprisingly good considering the screen size. It responds to 2-finger zoom and pan rapidly, so, with a small amount of manipulation, you can see any part of even a large page in all detail. A very large number of websites have pages optimized for mobiles. Wikipedia is one excellent example.

**Navigation** – Google navigation is just amazing, and it's free, unlike the optional VZNavigator, which has a \$10 monthly fee from Verizon. Type in or speak a destination, and Google looks up and presents all the possibilities; select the one you want and the route is presented with voice directions as you drive. When you reach the destination, it presents a Google Street view. This really surprised me when I stopped and it showed a photo of the front of my house.

**Maps** – Google maps, satellite view and Street View, just like on the PC. Nothing seems to be missing.

**Car Locator** – This is a small GPS program that lets you quickly set the location of your car and then find it later using a directional arrow as you walk with the distance in feet or meters. \$3.

**Kindle** – This is a Kindle book reader; there are versions available for many other devices including PC's. The library of digital books you own here are identical to your Kindle. If you stay connected on both, it tracks your last read page so you can switch devices and not lose your place. It's wonderfully readable. It's not a substitute for the Kindle if you own one, but it's handy, and if you happen to own a mobile phone, there's no real need to buy a Kindle if you don't want to.

**Alarm Clock** – You simply add alarms; each has its own settings for sound, snooze and vibrate and appearance.

**Kitchen Timer** – A free app to track three time settings with alarm at the end. I'm using this every day.

**Contacts** – An excellent contacts database that is integrated with the Phone, email and IM. You can search and select favorites and list of last calls. It's fully synchronized with Google Calendar.

**Weather** - AccuWeather.com real-time continuous weather at any multiple locations you select, with 5-day forecasts. Drill deeper and you can get animated radar.

**FTP** – A free app that is an FTP file server. When turned on, it exposes the entire phone file system to my network wirelessly. A few shortcuts placed in my Windows Explorer and file transfers are trivial. I find this to be the fastest way to drag and drop pictures on and off the camera.

**Tether** – Provides pretty fast Internet service to my notebook via USB cable anywhere I have 3G telephone service. With Verizon, that's pretty much anywhere I'd go. Purchased for \$16 and worth every penny. PDANet at <http://www.junefabrics.com>.

**Dock** – I bought a Motorola desk docking station for charging, but it also automatically displays an attractive digital clock and responds to alarms and dimming, the music player and just about anything else you can think of.

**Voice Commands** – An app with a library of voice commands that you can use to control the device. It makes dialing by voice easy. I may give up the hands-free device I have in my car.

**Google Talk** – This is Google's version of Instant Messaging. It works great, and transferring files is quick and easy. You can use voice to text if you wish, eliminating typing altogether. The Voice to Text is very good, accurate enough for IM and then some.

**Google Voice** – VOIP – This is real Voice-over-IP, but wherever your phone is, without eating into your minutes. It's integrated into Contacts as well. It's well thought out and easy to use. My sons and I are using it regularly for long distance.

*Droid.....Continued on page 5*

## Internet Picture of the Month



### Text To Movie

The image above is a screen capture of a YouTube video produced using xtranormal's text to movie program. This particular one at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FL7yD-0pqZg> shows the female bear (in blue) telling the male bear how much she wants an iPhone, and he is telling her it is not as good as the HTC EVO. There are many such movies out there made by people using the xtranormal software. I found some of the ones about Ben Bernanke and the economy particularly amusing. Go make your own movies (<http://www.xtranormal.com/>).

*Droid.....Continued from page 4*

**Email** – Well, it's email. It's the mail that I get from my mail server. I do reply to email from the phone when I feel I have to, and, since the voice-to-text feature works here as well, it's pretty easy.

**Calendar** – It's pretty good, completely integrated with Google Calendar.

**Voicemail** – Google voicemail takes your voicemail messages, translates them to text and places a message on your phone to read or play – your option.

**Music player** – There's a sync app that detects when you're plugged into a PC and syncs your PC music to the device. There's also a DLNA app that plays media from a network with a media server. Otherwise it's a decent MP3/WMA player that also does videos.

**Camera** – An 8 Megapixel camera with face detection and panorama stitching. It has two fairly bright LEDs for

*Droid.....Continued on page 7*

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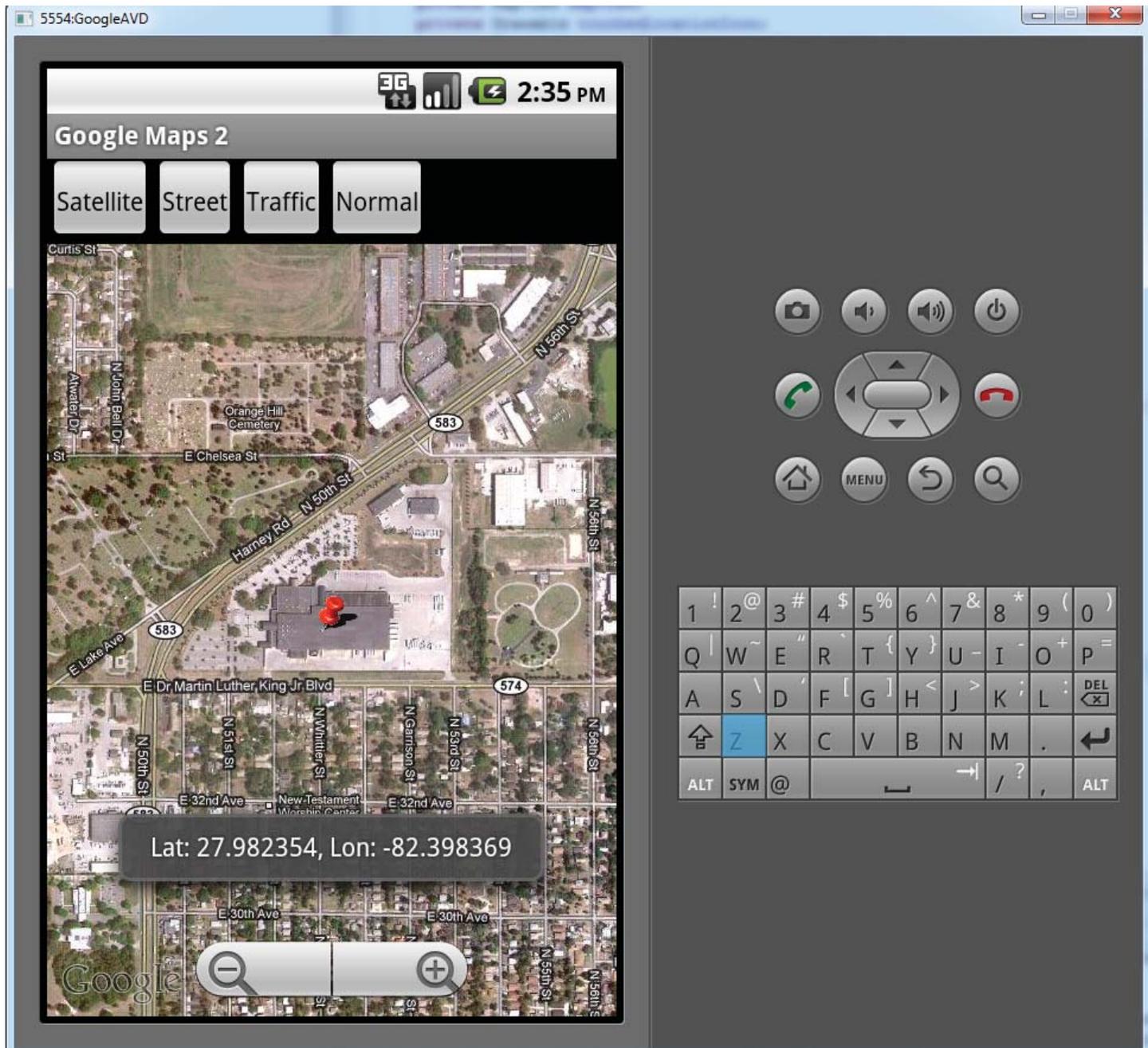


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### January's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)  
 Xtranormal Text-to-Movie  
 Dale Chihuly artwork  
 Free eBooks by Project Gutenberg

<http://www.tpcug.org/>  
<http://www.xtranormal.com/>  
<http://www.chihuly.com/home.aspx>  
<http://www.gutenberg.org/>



*Comments.....Continued from page 2*

your apps onto a phone you own so as to be able to test them on an actual device and not just on an emulator. But, at present, I cannot write a Windows Phone 7 application and give it to you so that you would be able to install it on your Windows Phone 7. The same is true for the iPhone. Supposedly this is to save you from rogue applications, but it obviously also makes money for the app store.

What I would like to do in the remaining space is

outline the process I went through to be able to write programs for the Android phone. What is needed are several downloads and some configuring. First you need to get the Java runtime (the thing that many of you are probably always being reminded to update when you start your computer--at least that is the case for me) and the Java SDK. The next piece of software is the Eclipse program. Then the fun begins in trying to configure everything.

Here are the steps I followed in setting up everything.

*Comments.....Continued on page 7*

## Special Interest Groups

### Visual Basic .Net SIG (and sometimes Access SIG)

This SIG meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM. For information, contact Editor William LaMartin at [william@lamartin.com](mailto:william@lamartin.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. Member Bob LaFave moderates the discussion.

*Comments.....Continued from page 6*

That will be followed by links that were very useful.

### Steps

1. Install Java runtime and Java SDK. If you are getting them for a 64-bit system, then you need to do the downloads using a 64-bit browser.
2. Install Android SDK: just put the folder in the C:\ directory
3. Add the Tools directory of the Android SDK to the system path variable
4. Install Eclipse: Just put the folder in the C:\ directory
5. To be able to run Eclipse, make a shortcut on your desktop with the property C:\eclipse\eclipse.exe -vm "C:\Program Files\Java\jdk1.6.0\_23\jre\bin\java.exe"
6. Install the ADT plug-in in Eclipse: From Help, select install new software, then select the ADT plug-in (<https://dl-ssl.google.com/android/eclipse/>)
7. Modify Eclipse preferences (Window | preferences) to point to the Android SDK directory
8. Create an AVD (an emulator with the properties of a particular phone)
9. You are ready to start programming.

### Links

Java Items: <http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/java/javase/downloads/>

Eclipse (get the Java EE version) <http://www.eclipse.org/downloads/>

Android SDK & general Android help: <http://devel->

[oper.android.com/index.html](http://oper.android.com/index.html)

Create your first App: <http://developer.android.com/guide/tutorials/hello-world.html>

A good walkthrough: <http://android.marvinlee.net/2009/07/start-development-android-sd/>

If you are going to use the Google maps, then you will need a Google account, which is free, and then a Map API key, also free. There are tutorials on how to do all of this – just do an Internet search.

Anyone can be a programmer (with a lot of work). ◆

*Droid.....Continued from page 5*

flash and plenty of manual settings. Very good zooming, as you'd expect with 8MPixels to work with.

**Camcorder** – The camera also functions as a 720p HD video recorder. The device also has a mini HDMI port for playing to an external device such as a wide screen TV. It comes with a 16GB SDHC card.

**Slideshow and picture management** – naturally.

**Password management** I use the PC version of KeePassX, and I was delighted to find they make an Android version. Free.

**Swype** - I saved this for last. It's an alternative screen keyboard that allows you to enter a word by sliding a finger from letter to letter. It uses error-correcting algorithms to guess the word and presents alternatives. A world record was set on a touchscreen and Swype using a Samsung Galaxy S. The world record text message consists of 26 words and was typed in 25.94 seconds, which corresponds to a speed of 60 words per minute.

*Droid.....Continued on page 8*

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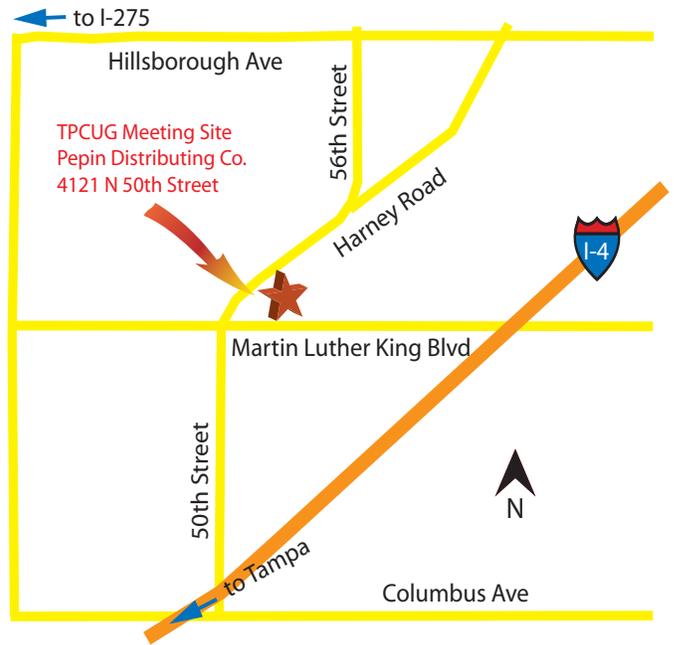
**First Class Mail**

*Member: Your membership is up for renewal*

*Droid.....Continued from page 7*

**The few things I don't like** It's a mystery to me that Android applications don't have an exit or close. Instead, they stay running until you either shut down each service manually or turn off the phone. I'd guess the up side to this is that everything launches very quickly. It's so fast in fact that you take it all for granted. I haven't found a disadvantage to this, although I've read complaints that it must be taking up cpu cycles and therefore must be draining the battery and contributing heat to global warming. I guess I doubt all that, but what I really don't understand is why I find apps such as Skype running when I've never used them. There are programs you can purchase to help you manage these, but it's also widely held that you'd live a calmer life if you just ignored it all. Finally I did read a built-in tutorial recommending that you turn the phone off once a day to clear out unused programs in memory.

Second, in spite of the claim of 220 hours of standby and 480 minutes of talk time, this thing eats battery. I'll admit I pretty much actively used it all one day for 10 hours and ran the battery down. I used it for phone



calls very little. The display, when on, eats most of the battery, so a continuous charge is necessary if you're going to use it for navigation. There's an extended battery for \$50, which is way too much. ◆