

Vol. 24 No. 2

February 2011

February in Tampa

## Meeting

### 2010 Malware – A Review

by

**Dave Palmer**

**Wednesday, February 9**

**6:30 PM**

**Pepin Distributing Co.**

**4121 N 50th Street**

**Tampa, Florida**

**Meeting Preview:** Dave Palmer from the University of Florida Extension Service will discuss malware that appeared in 2010. As usual, Bob Lafave will conduct the Windows SIG for the first half hour of the meeting..

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## Editor's Comments

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

**T**his is turning out to be a particularly tough newsletter since, as I sat at the computer just four days before we usually print and assemble the newsletter, I had no articles. My usual handful of contributors seemed to have run out of ideas (or time) and the rest of the club is in a prolonged dry spell. Then Ron Weinberg came through for me, for which I am very appreciative.

### **The past and the present**

The *Bits of Blue* used to be 12 pages instead of the current eight, and the print was 10 point instead of 12. However, we did use articles from other groups and there was a boilerplate page at the back with a list of members and the software items they were willing to give assistance on. We also had free software given to us by vendors that we could provide to members in exchange for reviews to appear in the newsletter. But that was then, and things are different now: There is no free software, we have many fewer members, and the excitement and newness of

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**March Meeting: Bob Gostischa speaking on Internet Security**

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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.

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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**Minutes of the January Meeting**

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

**T**he Windows Special Interest Group (SIG) normally opens our monthly meeting. The meeting began at 6:30 PM. The SIG is devoted to a discussion of all aspects of the Windows Operating Systems and of computer-related subjects in general. The SIG moderator, Bob LaFave, introduces new or little-known products and technological developments for discussion by the group. He accepts questions and requests for help in solving problems from attendees. Bob leads the group in finding answers to questions and solutions to problems. This month's SIG concluded at 7:00 PM.

The very brief business portion of the meeting was opened by John Witmer, Tampa PC Users Group President.

The presentation was "More Windows 7," a second attempt at showing the unique features of the newest Microsoft Operating System. It was conducted by myself, Merle Nicholson, and went from approximately 7:10 to 8:40 PM.

During the course of the presentation, there were many questions from the membership relative to computers in general, including an endorsement of the Amazon Kindle. All attempts to structure the material and keep on the agenda failed, but it was deemed an overall success by many attendees.

Subjects covered included a newly-installed user account intended for my dog and the limitations a dog has in using a computer. We migrated through the default Start Menu and some of the adjustments you can make to customize the desktop. An emphasis was put on the real necessity to learn the basics of the file structure of a computer to help you find files when they're "missing." A brief mention was made on the subject of passwords and the necessity of having a password database of some kind. Bob LaFave had touched on RoboForm earlier and Merle endorsed

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## How we got to watch our first streamed movie

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

Since my earlier article “Uniting The Internet and Your TV” (April 2010), the use of rented DVDs to watch movies continues to rapidly decline and streaming will likely become the standard method, leaving rentals for occasional users and those who may lack proper equipment.

In that article, I enumerated many devices and methods for the task, a list which now includes game consoles, iPhone, Windows Phone, and iPad. Expect other tablets to be included soon. Availability notwithstanding, most people prefer to watch movies on big screens rather than small.

As avid movie fans, my wife and I watch several films each week. We are Blockbuster members, Redbox users, and theatre goers, generally avoiding Video on Demand. I have been anxious to try streaming to simplify things, no disc to mail or take from or to a store or vending machine and no bad weather issues. I chose Netflix because of reputation, availability, and price. Unlimited streaming is 7.99 per month, and currently there is a one-month free trial.

Alas, my new HDTV purchased in 2009, which has an Ethernet port, was supposed to have an app making it easy to connect to Netflix directly using only my router. This would require connecting the TV to the router by Ethernet cable or wirelessly. Running an Ethernet cable would have been awkward. An alternative would have been to purchase a pair of relatively expensive Power Line Ethernet adapters, or a less expensive \$69 wireless adapter, to plug into the TV’s USB port.

I waited for the Netflix app for the TV, but it never became available for my model TV, so I had to consider one of the other options. We had been considering a Blu-ray player, so we killed two birds with



one stone by buying a Samsung Blu-ray player with a built-in wireless connection. This player includes the Netflix app, as well as other apps.

Our ISP is Verizon FIOS, and there was one issue concerning streaming with wireless that could present a problem.

We are using a Verizon-supplied FIOS 9100EM Router. This is a Wired and Wireless G Router. Reading blogs and reviews, there was a question as to whether or not Wireless G was adequate for faultless streaming.

Some said yes, some said no, but those who said no recommended Wireless N.

Verizon has been promising to offer Wireless N capability but so far has not delivered. Several alternative methods for using Wireless N with FIOS are available, such as connecting a second router as primary, secondary, or bridge. Instructions for this are readily available from the Verizon FIOS site, router manufacturers and independent sources.

I took my wireless laptop close to the Blu-ray player and determined that I was receiving a strong wireless signal there. So, I decided to take a chance and try using the existing Wireless G connection. If that was unsatisfactory, I could then pursue one of the other options.

I opened a Netflix account and selected the equipment I was using (Samsung Blu-ray Player). The first time I  
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*Streaming.....Continued from page 3*

started the Netflix app on the TV, I was asked if I had an account. When I replied yes, a code number was generated. This code had to be entered into my Netflix account to activate the device. Once activated, I have unlimited access to the library of films. No code entry is required for normal use. The process is simple. It may vary slightly on other configurations.

Turn on Blu-ray player, which is connected via HDMI to the TV. This automatically powers on the TV. Select Internet from Blu-ray Options, and then select the Netflix app.

That evening we watched our first streamed movie. Results were excellent. After a short wait for loading, the film came on. Sound and color was the equal of DVD quality. The film can be paused and restarted and, if turned off, can be restarted from where it left off. So far, we are highly satisfied with streaming, and it is easy to see why this delivery method is predicted to be a winner. ◆



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

computing has long ago worn off. For most, I think, computing has turned into entertainment and something called social networking.

A look back over our old newsletters easily demonstrates the changes. We have newsletters in Acrobat format at our web site starting in 1988. There are two from 1988, eight from 1989 (we do not have newsletters for the missing months) and the complete years up through 1993. These were scanned in from printed versions and then had optical character recognition performed. The years 1994 and 1995 remain to be scanned. Starting in 1996 through last month's January 2011 newsletter, we have Acrobat versions that were made directly from the creating program: Microsoft Word for a few newsletters, then Microsoft Publisher for many years and, finally, Adobe InDesign for the past couple of years. That is more than 20 years of personal computing history. Perhaps when I manage to scan in the 1994 and 1995 issues, I can put them all on a CD, 1988 - 2011 and have Acrobat (full version)

index the collection so that the entire group is searchable and not just each individual issue. That might be something of interest to the group. Right now, those issues make up around 271 MB of data.

Instead of updating your Facebook page, you could then read all the articles about Word Perfect, Corel Draw, Hayes modems, Windows 3.0, OS/2, 486 computers and 500 MB hard drives. All these items were very exciting to the club at one time. Then there was the beginning of the Internet for the group, with Prodigy and AOL. And there was President Harvey Bruneau reporting to us each year on the excitement of his visit to COMDEX in Las Vegas.

But all this is past, and time marches on. Apple, a company almost unworthy of mention in those years, is now threatening to take over the consumer computing world with, of all things, a computer masquerading as a telephone called the iPhone. Right now these iThings seem to be proliferating like rabbits. There is the iMac, iPod, iPhone, iPad, and suggested by some wags, the soon-to-be iToilet, since it appears that anything with an i in front of it and sold by Apple will produce a line of people wrapping around a city block in all sorts of weather so as to be among the first adopters.

Microsoft, which has provided so much joy (and pain) to us PC users over the past 30 years, has now been pushed aside and relegated to the trash heap of old ideas by a good portion of the computing press, to be replaced by Google and the aforementioned iThing company, Apple. Google, an advertising company that dabbles in computer software so as to create other platforms for its advertising, is supposedly to soon one-up Microsoft by allowing us to do everything we need computer-wise using only a browser and storing all of our data in the Cloud. They are even working on their own operating system that will support this browser-for-everything paradigm and thus free us from the terrible burden of needing Windows or Microsoft. No more need for software, and, hence, no more need for Microsoft. All software will now be free. All you need do is allow Google to watch everything you do so as to better target you with advertising.

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Comments.....Continued from page 4

Apple, which also sells regular computers that surprisingly allow Windows to be installed, has created a tablet, the iTab, that, according to some in the press, will, once it is refined in later versions, allow its users to do all the computing that the average person (read social media type) will need without a keyboard or mouse. You will just move your fingers around and get things done. Sort of like finger painting, I suppose.

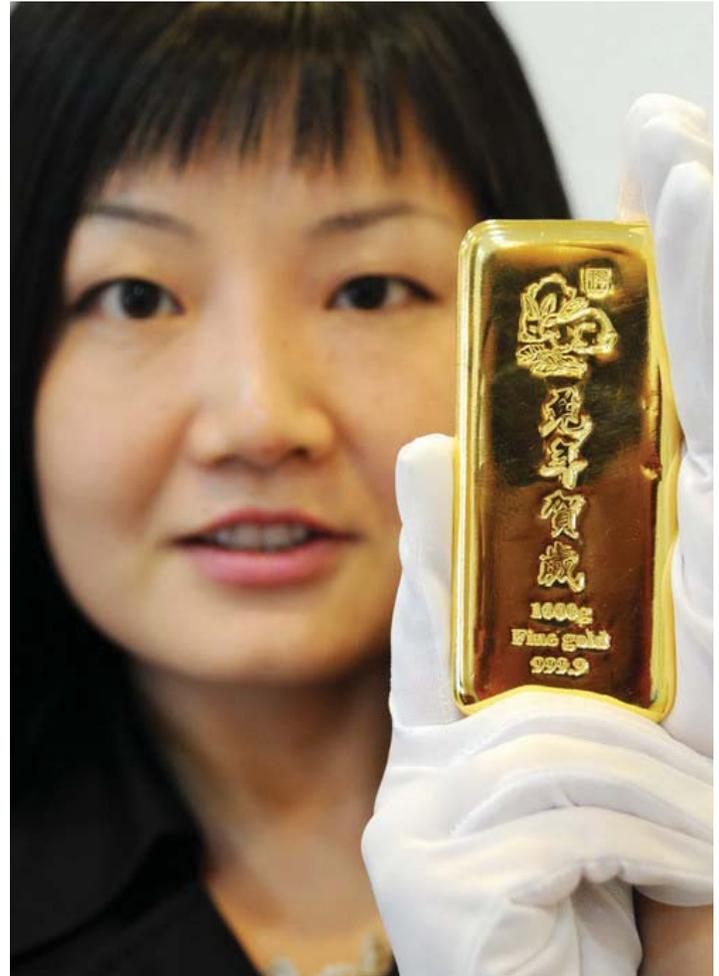
But enough of this. Otherwise you will think that I am not a progressive person, willing to accept change and all the good things it brings. But you would be wrong; I applaud Google for what they have done with their search engine and Apple for their improvements in the smart phone interface. I was using a search engine (recall AltaVista) and a smart phone (recall Windows Mobile) long before Google and Apple introduced their versions of these items. So they weren't the first. But they did introduce a better product. However, I now think Bing (from Microsoft) produces nearly as good search results as Google. And from what I have been told the new Android phones (using the Google Android operating system) are as good as, or better than, the iPhone. So time marches on. Today's winners may be tomorrow's also-rans.

### **We are running out of more than money**

We are running out of web addresses. In a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, I read that there are now only 117 million left of the original 4.3 billion. What is an IP address? It is a number, such as 168.144.211.61, which is the IP address of the tpcug.org web site on the Internet. If you put <http://168.144.211.61> in your browser you will get our site just the same as if you used <http://www.tpcug.org>. The TPCUG does not own that numeric address. It is part of a block of

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

## **Internet Picture of the Month**



### **Year of the Rabbit in Gold**

From the China Daily site at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-11/12/content\\_11541201.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-11/12/content_11541201.htm), we have: "... a 1000g Year-of-Rabbit gold bar at a jewelry store in Suzhou, East of China's Jiangsu province on Nov 11, 2010. To seize the market share, many jewelry stores start to sell new designs for the upcoming 2011, the Year of the Rabbit in Chinese lunar calendar."

At around \$42,000, I will take that over a real rabbit.

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### **February's Interesting World Wide Web Locations**

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)  
 Art Project, powered by Google  
 Microsoft's timeline from 1975 - 1990  
 Hard-to-get Industrial Supplies

<http://www.tpcug.org/>  
<http://www.googleartproject.com/>  
[http://www.thocp.net/companies/microsoft/microsoft\\_company.htm](http://www.thocp.net/companies/microsoft/microsoft_company.htm)  
<http://www.smallparts.com>

*Comments.....Continued from page 5*

IP addresses allocated to our web hosting company, myHosting.com, and they assigned it to us when I first set up the web site many years back. We do, however, own the domain name tpcug.org.

The system now used is called IP version four, or IPV4. The new system created to fix the problem is named IPV6 and has  $4.3 \times 10^{28}$  possible addresses. That is a very large number. To read more about IPV6, check the Wikipedia article at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

According to the WSJ article, “....the transition – likely to happen gradually over a number of years – won’t have a big impact on consumers. Some older operating systems and home routers won’t work with the new addresses, but ones bought in the last couple of years should, according to networking experts.”

You can test your IPV6 connectivity by pointing your browser to <http://www.test-ipv6.com/>. My computer failed; probably because Verizon does not support such yet.

Another very good article on all of this is at [http://news.cnet.com/8301-30685\\_3-20029721-264.html](http://news.cnet.com/8301-30685_3-20029721-264.html).

Well, enough on the new IP address setup. It may not

occur for a long time. However, one does wonder why 4.3 billion IP addresses is not enough. And there are actually many millions of those that, I suppose, have been allocated to hosting companies in large blocks but not yet used.

### Photography

One of the primary uses of the computer for me is working with images taken with my digital camera or with images derived by scanning old negatives, slides or printed photos. The image below was taken just a few days ago at the annual Gasparilla Pirate Invasion. It was captured with a Nikon D200 digital camera using a 24 mm to 200 mm zoom lens. Very little work was needed to move this image from the camera to this newsletter.

I snapped around 385 photos on Gasparilla Day – people and floats. The floats are pretty much the same from year to year, but the people vary. And it is a great day for people photos since many of those there are there to see and be seen. Also having a good zoom lens helps. Of the many thousands of people at the parade, I only saw three other people with digital SLR cameras (one was a *St. Pete Times* photographer). All other photos were being taken with phone cameras. I have yet to figure out how such cameras, with lenses the size of the tip of my little finger, can provide enough information to fill five or eight megapixel images, as these cameras supposedly do.



What to do with all these Gasparilla photos? First you select a collection of the better ones; then you make a slide show; and then you put that on the Internet for everyone to see. I selected 163, reduced each to a maximum dimension of 1000 pixels and then used Adobe Bridge (part of Adobe Creative Suite 4) to create a Flash slide show that you may view at

<http://www.lamartin.com/Gasparilla2011SlideShow/>.

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## 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.

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While watching the slide show, you are supposed to be able to pause the show, then right-click on it and select Zoom In and then be able to left-click and move the larger image around your screen. This works on my laptop, and, for several people I asked to try it, on their computers. However, on both my desktop computers, when I zoom in, I lose part of the image off to one side and am only able to left-click and move the image just a tiny amount. Perhaps someone can figure out why this is happening. Is it because of a setting, a mouse driver, a video card, or a video driver?



The black-and-white photo on this page is from another era, and a lot of work was done before that image appeared here. First of all, that image is from 1946, probably taken with a press camera, and what I had to work with was the negative – a 64-year-old 4” x 5” negative. The photo was taken by my father-in-law when he was living in New Orleans, as part of an article about Mississippi River pilots for the *Saturday Evening Post*. I had earlier scanned this negative, along with many others, from that era using my Epson Perfection 3200 Photo scanner. Unfortunately, I cannot use this scanner with my new Windows 7 desktop computer since Epson has made no drivers for Win 7. Eventually I will need to get a new scanner to use with what is now my main computer.

A few weeks back, I decided to find the old *Saturday Evening Post* that contained the article and do something with it and the photos of the river pilots at Pilot-

town, Louisiana. What I did was use Adobe Acrobat Professional to scan in the magazine article, with its color photos, as a number of different Acrobat files. I then used Adobe InDesign to create a 5-page article from these separate Acrobat files, which I then made into one final Acrobat file.

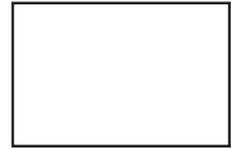
For the 21 black-and-white photos, I used Photoshop to clean them up a bit since they had a few scratches and dust spots. I also adjusted the brightness and a few other things, depending on the particular photo, and added my father-in-law’s last name to the corner of each image. After all, these were 64 old negatives that hadn’t been kept in archival conditions, so a little work was expected. Finally, I used Adobe Bridge to create a slide show of the 21 photos.

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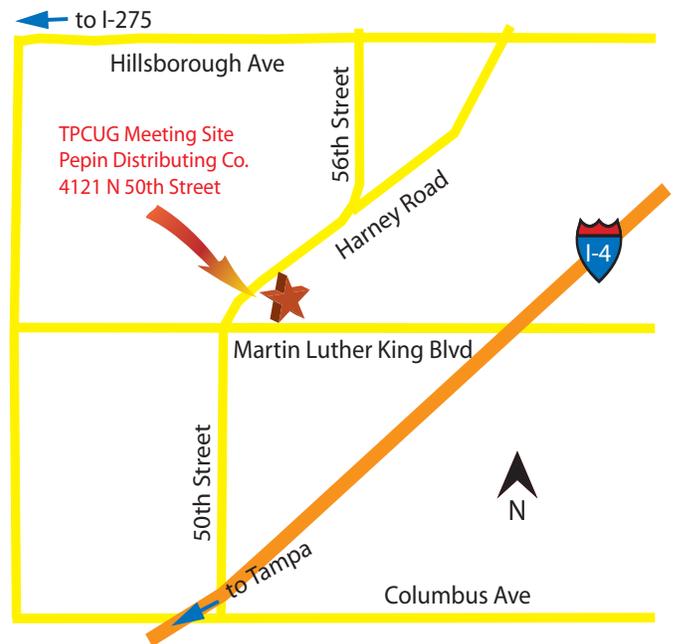
**First Class Mail**

*Member: Your membership is up for renewal*

*Comments.....Continued from page 7*

You may view the *Post* article and the slide show at the Photos section of my website, lamartin.com, at <http://www.lamartin.com/Pilottown.aspx>.

These 4" x 5" negatives have lasted in fairly good condition for 64 years. How long are my digital files of the Gasparilla photos going to last? I will continue to copy them to new computers as I get such, along with copying them to external drives and then to newer external drives. But are any of those drives going to be around and usable 64 years from now? I know I won't be here. How long will data persist on a flash drive? Do we yet have the equivalent of a film negative for digital data? ◆



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

KeePassX as a free cross-platform password keeper.

The presentation fell apart at 8:40 PM, and everyone went home. ◆