



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



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March 2011

March in Tampa

Meeting

Internet Security

by

Bob Gostischa

Wednesday, March 9

6:30 PM

Pepin Distributing Co.

4121 N 50th Street

Tampa, Florida

Meeting Preview: Bob Gostischa, who has presented to other user groups on Internet security, will give us a similar presentation. 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
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We have three contributors this month from whom we haven't seen anything in some time. Welcome back to Larry Anders, Bob Davis and Doug Mullis. More will be expected from you in the future.

Old Newsletters Last month I mentioned that we have newsletters at our web site running from 1988 through the present. The ones before 1995 are in the Old Newsletter section and were scanned into Adobe Acrobat from the paper newsletters instead of being created as Acrobat documents by the original desktop publishing software. I also mentioned that the issues from 1994 and 1995 had not yet been scanned. Well, that is now done, and they are at the web site. You can now view and search these old newsletters.

Actually, I am not happy with the quality of some of the earlier newsletter scans. I have redone some of them, but some of the

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April Meeting: Steve Singer on Android phones and tablets

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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 813-251-3817, or william@lamartin.com.

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Affiliations

Florida Association of User Groups
Association of Personal Computer User Groups

Minutes of the February Meeting

*By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
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The Windows Special Interest Group (SIG) normally opens our monthly meeting. The meeting began as usual 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. Bob mentioned the availability of free Microsoft Office tutorials, Secuna PSI 2.0 Personal Software Inspector and SkyDrive, the Microsoft "Cloud" computing where users can make use of online Office Products. This month's SIG concluded at 7:10 PM.

John Witmer conducted a brief business meeting and mentioned his experiences with FIOS replacement batteries.

Our speaker this month was club member Dave Palmer of the Manatee County Extension office. He conducts a well-organized review of the latest malware dangers and the steps to protect yourself online.

His slide show of the review of 2010 online criminal activity is comprehensive and thorough. Part of the presentation was devoted to a review of current Internet crime news. As always, Dave gives us a top quality presentation. He maintains a website at <http://techtoughtoo.com>, subtitled "Scouring the Web for interesting technology and Internet security news." ◆

A Free Apple a Day Keeps the Doctor Away

By Larry Anders, Tampa PC Users Group
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I had been highly opposed to Apple products for years because of what I feel to be the small-mindedness of Steve Jobs and the Apple management by not making their code available to developers, which would allow software to be developed so there would be more choice at reasonable prices. If so, I'm sure there would be a Mac in my house instead of just seven PCs running various Windows operating systems.

Above, you'll notice I said "had" been. Then I purchased my first iPod, and I was hooked! I did not get the first version iPhone, but I have had the 3GS now for almost two years. It is about the 10th cell phone I've owned and by far the very best. I have been tempted to try an Android phone but so far have had no reason to give up the iPhone. The Apps for the iPhone make it an everyday challenge to find something useful, and typically for free. Why Mr. Jobs can't see that allowing all these people to develop software for the iPod/iPhone/iPad has made his products extremely successful is beyond my understanding. He has still kept control by not allowing anything to be installed except through the iTunes App Store store. Even the free Apps. If something similar was allowed for the Mac, I think he would see the popularity of the Mac increase also. I just can't validate paying twice the price for software just because it's a Mac. It's good, but not that good.

For Christmas I was given an iPad by my wife and kids. Now, you want to talk about what I think is the best invention of the 21st century. Since December, I use my PCs at least 50% less. My iPad sits next to me on the couch when it is not in my hand. Email, Mes-

senger and text messaging is with me now wherever I am, between the iPad and iPhone. The two are very similar, but the 9" screen on the iPad is much easier to read and work with.

The iPad comes with several built-in Apps, such as Calendar (to track your appointments), Notes (to keep lists of things), Maps (complete Google maps), Videos (to watch your favorite videos), YouTube, iTunes, App Store and Games. They also include Safari (Apple's Internet browser), Email, Photos (access to your photos, graphics and screen captures), iPod (for music) and Contacts. That's plenty to keep you going until you learn how to start downloading some of the thousands of Apps available, with more coming every day. If you're into anything, there is probably an App for it. Also, there are free Internet music-streaming sites that will allow you to listen to any kind of music whenever you want, with no hiccups.

The battery is excellent. With my constant use, I still get two to three days between charges, and the recharge is very fast.

Apple has also released iBooks, which will probably be a permanent fixture in the next iOS upgrade. In my opinion, it's one of the better (free) eBooks reader programs.

If you're used to using Kindle, Google or any of the other readers, there is an App out there for that, too. I downloaded a free App the other day that makes 23,469 classic books available at your tap. And I did say free.

One App I especially like is the Dragon Speaking App, for both the iPhone and the iPad. There is no need to type. Just start the App, push Record and start talking. It recognizes when you stop, allows you to insert commas, periods and new paragraphs. When you're done with the dictation, tap Copy, then paste it wherever you want, or tap Email and it will send it directly into your email. Oh yeah, did I mention it was free?!

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The iPad does not come with a text program, like the iPhone, but there are several free Apps that will take care of this problem. I use one that I am more than happy to pay for but see no reason to do so as the developers do not ask me to. There is a small unobtrusive ad area in the lower left corner and that's it. The same with Messenger.

I am currently using Dragon Speaking with a free App called Documents to create this article. Documents allows you to review and edit Word and Excel documents. I wouldn't expect to be able to work on some gigantic files. I expect a version of Word and Excel to be out soon, assuming Apple will allow a Microsoft App to infiltrate their domain.

Another thing I am really pleased with are Apps available for our younger computer users. My daughter and son-in-law both have iPads, so my 5-year-old granddaughter is well-versed on using the iPad. I typically get her to teach me some secret thing when she comes over on the weekends. I spent a lot of money for the overhead movie system in my Tahoe for her to be able to watch movies, etc., when we are in the car. Lately, though, she would rather have my iPad while we are driving around. There are some excellent educational Apps (free, of course) that help teach her to read, do math, draw and all sorts of other things.

As some of you know, I am a cancer patient. I spend hours at a time at Moffitt Cancer Center waiting between treatments. The WiFi connection at Moffitt is excellent, and, with the iPad in hand, cancer treatment is so much more pleasurable (if that's really possible).

In any case, as I have thanked Bill Gates and the team at Microsoft in the past for making computing enjoyable with Windows, I now need to thank Steve Jobs and the gang at Apple for heading in a new direction and once again making computing enjoyable. I can't wait for the 22nd century to get here!

Sent from Larry's iPad. ◆

Reviving My Apevia PC

By Robert Davis, Tampa PC Users Group
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Last Sunday afternoon I powered up my financial PC, got a cup of coffee, and returned to find it wasn't powered up anymore. I hit the power on button, the lights flashed and went out again. It also had a bad smell to it. Not the best way to start the afternoon! This is a PC that has all our financial records on it, and I hadn't backed up the data for a couple weeks. When I opened the box, the smell appeared to be from the power supply. I called Bob LaFave who said if the power supply stinks it's probably bad. I thanked him for calling back and said I would call if replacing the power supply didn't fix the problem. I have an old dead PC lying around with a good power supply in it. So I pulled both power supplies but found the old one didn't have a four-pin plug added on the motherboard power socket. Not being sure what that meant at the time, I went to CompUSA and was fumbling through the many power supply selections. Another guy who was gathering stuff to build a PC came over and explained about the power supplies. My new PC has a P4 motherboard, which requires the extra plug. My old PC was not a P4 type, so the power supply was not right for my newer Apevia PC. Of course, all the new power supplies are equipped to handle the P4 and more.

Unfortunately, the guy took the last of the 600-watt power supplies that were on sale, so I had to settle for a 550-watt unit for about \$10 more. But I figured the \$10 extra I paid by fumbling around there was the price I paid to find out what to buy. My original Apevia system came with a 350-watt power supply. I had talked the salesman I bought it from a couple years ago into adding a CD ROM drive, and a 3.5" disk drive. They also had added a second hard drive. So I think what happened is the 350-watt power supply was straining all the time to handle all the extra load and finally died. So a 550-watt power supply should be able to handle the extra load without a problem.

I installed the new power supply, even though it had

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several extra cables with odd connectors that I had no idea what they were used for. I bundled them up out of the way. Then came the challenging smoke test. The system came up without a hitch. You know, the first thing I did was back up that data! It may be my imagination, but it seems the PC is running better now than before. Anyway, I'm a happy camper again. ♦

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1991 and all of the 1992 and 1993 ones would be improved by a rescanning. The software I am using now for scanning does a much better job on the old newsletters than whatever software I had used before (I can't recall if I did them with HP or with Epson programs). And that brings me to the next topic.

VueScan, which is a scanning program from <http://www.hamrick.com/>. I have mentioned that I could not use my Epson Perfection 3200 Photo scanner with my Windows 7 desktop computer since Epson has not provided any Windows 7 64-bit drivers. So I was still doing all my scanning using my Windows XP desktop computer. I had thought about purchasing a new scanner, possibly the Epson V600 Photo scanner, which has a 6400 x 9600 dpi hardware resolution, while my older scanner has a 3200 x 6400 dpi hardware resolution. The 600 costs \$200. I think my Epson 3200 scanner was around \$330 and, to my surprise on checking just now, is seven years old. Perhaps I did need a new scanner. However, the old scanner produced document scans that were more than satisfactory, and, in performing negative or slide scans, I noted that my negatives and slides did not benefit from using the highest resolutions the 3200

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Internet Picture of the Month



McDonald's at 98 Boulevard Saint Germain, Paris

This photo is from <http://www.flickr.com> at the link <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mckroes/242517306/>. The person who placed it there has a collection at flickr devoted to photos of McDonald's locations from around the world. If he took all the photos listed there, he is quite a traveler. The link to that collection is <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mckroes/sets/72057594069544156/with/242517306/>.

My interest in the photo was because of the address, which was the address for a restaurant on a business card my father-in-law brought back from Paris in the 1930s. The restaurant was the Grand Restaurant Des Écoles Réunies. Now it is the Grand McDonald's, I suppose. Time marches on.

March's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)
International Music Score Library Project
Google Ngram Viewer
City Data
VueScan 9 Scanning Software

<http://www.tpcug.org/>
<http://imslp.org/>
<http://ngrams.googlelabs.com/>
<http://www.city-data.com/>
<http://www.hamrick.com/>

The 2011 FACUG Technology Conference at Sea

By Doug Mullis, Treasurer, Tampa PC Users Group
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Well, you really missed a good experience at the end of January. The Florida Association of Computer Users (of which our group is a member) had their second annual conference at sea, sailing from Tampa while going to and from Cozumel, Mexico. Harry Lockabay and I did our best to represent our group. We even took our wives. Harry is an old hand at cruising, but this was my first cruise. Bruce Register (a former member) now residing in Dothan, AL and his daughter were also along. I can tell you the seas were calm and the weather perfect.

This was FACUG's second such event, as last year they sailed to the Bahamas for their conference. Bruce also went on that one. The only down side of this cruise was that we did not leave Tampa until 3 AM Friday due to repair to one of the propeller pods. No rudder on this ship; in fact, you couldn't tell when it was moving. We ran on both gas-turbine engines, making up all but two hours of our 10-hour delay.

The FACUG sessions were held between 2 PM and 5 PM on Thursday (while still in port) and from 8 AM to 5 PM the two days we were at sea. I attended about half in order to spend time with my wife, who didn't want to attend the conference. Neither one of us had sailed before, so there was a lot to see and experience. The conference welcoming speaker was Dave Dockery of the Clearwater/Largo group followed, by the FACUG general meeting led by President Sam Wexler. The next speaker was Abby Stokes, encouraging people over 39 not be intimidated and to get with current technology. She addressed seniors the next day, encouraging them to buy a computer (and her book on how to use it). Abby is a good motivational speaker, as is Dave Dockery.

As I have been to several FACUG conferences, I can tell you this was the typical conference, with a number of vendors pushing their products (Adobe, Tech Smith, Corel, Zoom Text, Microsoft, Smart Computing and

User Group Relations). Not all vendors were presenters but all contributed door prizes. The door prizes and the food have always made these conferences worthwhile. The prizes are not as large as they used to be but there are many.

Other presentations dealt with user group problems and presentation ideas. I enjoyed Abby Stokes' presentations, two by Bill Campbell on taking and making the most of your photographs, and how to get the most (ink mileage) out of your printer by Jere Minich. There were several sessions by Evelyn Watts on Corel VideoStudios Pro X3 and Corel PaintShop Pro. Two or three sessions often were scheduled at the same time in adjacent rooms so you could choose which was of most interest to you. I missed the sessions on how to sell on ebay and shop online. There also was a session by Carey Holzman on security, passwords and backups. Overall we heard that smart phones are taking over the technology world.

Would I do it again? I've always enjoyed the FACUG 2-day spring seminars. Registration is usually \$50 including meals. The cruise adds more. Would I go on a cruise again? I enjoyed it but the big draw was sailing out of Tampa. I was really impressed with The Radiance of the Seas. Next year they are back to sailing from Miami. I've seen Cozumel but not Bermuda. I haven't made up my mind yet. Anyone want to go? ◆

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scanner offered. So a new scanner would possibly not improve my results. Nonetheless, I still couldn't use the old scanner with my new desktop computer. That is, I couldn't until I recalled the Hamrick scanning software which I had purchased many years ago. It was VueScan 7.6. If I could have found my information on that order, I could have possibly have gotten a free upgrade to the new 9.017 version. But I could find no documentation of that purchase.

The VueScan site offers two versions: Standard and Pro. The Pro version has several extra features; the only one probably of interest to most users would be

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Special Interest Groups

Windows SIG

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.

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.

**TPCUG FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR 2010**

TPCUG STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES AND BANK BALANCE

2010 INCOME

Memberships (28 Single + 4 Family)	840.00
Door Prize/Auction Receipts	166.00
Amazon Link Commissions	463.96
TOTAL INCOME	1,469.96

2010 EXPENSES

Newsletter Postage	184.80
Newsletter Paper (Used 2009 Purchase)	0.00
FACUG Dues	25.00
APCUG Dues	50.00
Florida Incorporation Fee	61.25
Web Site Hosting Fee (11 Months)	165.99
P O Box Rental (fee increase)	60.00
December Holiday Party Costs	227.51
Refreshments (Cookies)	48.69
PayPal Fees (3 payments @ \$0.85 ea)	2.55
TOTAL EXPENSES	825.79

NET INCOME FOR 2010 **644.17**

CASH BALANCE PER BOOKS – BEGINNING OF 2010	6,096.30
CASH BALANCE PER BOOKS – END OF 2010	6,740.47

RECONCILLIATION OF BANK STATEMENT TO BOOK BALANCE:

Balance per BANK STATEMENT at 12-31-2010 (No Outstanding Reconciling Items)	6,740.47
Balance per Books at 12-31-2010	6,740.47

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Member: Your membership is up for renewal

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the free upgrade to newer versions. You can check if your scanner is supported. And I bet it is, since they claim to support 1,100 scanners. My Epson Perfection 3200 Photo scanner was there, along with my small Canon scanner I use if I want to take a scanner on a trip. There is no charge to download the software and try it (it puts a watermark on your scans). Once you know that it works you can make the purchase. It supposedly runs on 32-bit and 64-bit versions of Windows XP, Vista and 7. It certainly works well for me on Windows 7 64-bit for both the Epson scanner mentioned above and the smaller Canon CanoScan Lide 500F, which scans a standard letter-sized sheet but is very small and light and gets all its power from the USB connection. ◆

