# Bits of Blue

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

February in Tampa

## Meeting

### Stephen Blaylock of Barnes & Noble on The Nook

**Wednesday, February 8, 2012**

**6:30 PM**

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Meeting Preview:** Barnes & Noble will demonstrate their Nook ereader. As usual for the first 30 minutes, Bob LaFave will conduct our Windows SIG.

## Editor's Comments

*By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group*
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Please note for now and in your calendar/schedule that the March meeting (not this meeting) date has been moved forward to a Thursday evening at 6:30 PM (March 8th). We have made this one-time change in order to allow the Group to receive a presentation from Gene Barlow, who will be in our area for a limited time, but not on the usual March 14th meeting date. It has been a couple of years since we last heard from Gene, and we wanted to allow our members to hear from him again, and to have a chance to see and purchase his latest offering of software for the hard drive and backups. Please make sure you have this Thursday date in March set aside to attend our meeting in lieu of the normal 2nd Wednesday.

Merle has put some interesting graphics in the minutes. They are QR codes, and there are three of them. If you have a smartphone that will read such codes (I think most do), then by reading the code with the phone, you can go to the web site it represents using the phone. Give it a try. It worked for me. ◆

**March Meeting: Thursday, March 8th by Gene Barlow**

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Association of Personal Computer User Groups

# Minutes of the January Meeting

*By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,*
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The Windows Special Interest Group (SIG) opens our monthly meeting. The meeting began as usual at 6:30PM. 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.

This month Bob had a very successful session demonstrating desktop search, starting with the Windows Explorer Search. Since Windows Explorer Search will index and search the contents of documents, the question was asked about searching PDF files. A member had a collection of PDF that needed searching, and she asked about what was on the market. Bob showed the third-party search program Copernic Desktop Search, but also did some searching on the subject in Winsows Search and found the Adobe Registered iFilter 9 for Windows Explorer. This is added as an Explorer add-in. After installation, it indexed quickly. Bob tested it on a couple of documents in the meeting, and it worked amazingly fast. It's bundled with Adobe Reader 9 for Windows 32-bit and for 64-bit platforms.  Go to http://www.adobe.com/support/downloads/detail.jsp?ftpID=4025

**Important announcement** – March meeting date change: John Witmer announced a change in the March meeting date. It has moved to the second Thursday, March 8, to accommodate the presentation speaker, Gene Barlow. Please note that this is 6 days before the regular meeting date. Gene has been a regular speaker at the TPCUG meetings for many, many years and always has an interesting presentation. Gene and Linda Barlow live in St. George, Utah and run a business User Group Store, http://www.ugr.com. They market Acronis Backup Utility, True Image Home 2012, Partitioning Utility Acronis Disk Direc-

# Phoneography

*By Jim Purcell, Tampa PC Users Group*
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I've had a cell phone for many years. It was just a phone with no frills because all I had ever needed was a portable phone. I retired in 1997, so the phone, a laptop and a Palm Pilot continued to provide all of the "mobile" services that I needed at a very reasonable cost. They provided the information that I required and an understandable and easily accessible database of information that had grown from the time that I began using a (manual) Daytimer back in the early 1970's while working in the Pentagon for six years and then for the next eight years as I worked as a budget officer in Washington D.C.

The Franklin Day Planner was first produced in 1984. Somewhere in the late 1990s, I switched to the Franklin Planner when they developed a Windows software program based on Microsoft Access that allowed me to accumulate all of the information on a computer. Going to cut and paste from erase and rewrite was a huge step. You could also print Planner pages in the size and format of the blank Planner pages. The really great thing that they did was sync the program with the Palm Pilot. When I got the ad from Franklin Covey hyping the Palm Pilot I looked at the picture of this little rectangular box with no keyboard and hardly even any buttons, I was certainly not impressed.

I finally let curiosity take over, and my wife and I drove over to Orlando to the Franklin Covey store one evening and the saleswoman very quickly and skillfully showed me why I was living in the dark ages without one. The software and the Palm were probably the best PDP system that I have experienced. Instead of trying to refine it Franklin Covey decided to replace it. To make a very long story short, the replacement program was a mess, and the Palm product died not long after I purchased the Palm that I am now using. It is over 10 years old and is still working, but barely.

I explored many options and spent endless hours trying to find a suitable replacement. I finally decided to buy a Droid X2 smart phone and find the apps to build a system that would satisfy my needs. I'm making a little headway, but it is still a work in progress to say the least.

When I purchased the Droid X2, I inherited what I assumed was a pretty good simple but very portable 8 megapixel "snapshot" camera. The capability of the camera, the scores of apps that have been written and the unbelievable accessories that are being developed sold to enhance this "snapshot" camera is why I decided to write this article.

The first real eye opener that I had in seeing the obsessive way that people are using these cameras and the pictures that they produce was an article in an email photography newsletter called *Photojojo*. The articles in this newsletter are unusual in nature, as is the equipment and novelties that they sell in their Photojojo Store. This article had *10 Tips to make your Phone Photos Amazing.* I'll summarize the article, and I won't list the many apps that are identified to perform the functions discussed, but if you are interested in the detail and a look at the many apps that they reference, you can find the article at: http://content.photojojo.com/tips/improve-your-phoneography/?utm_source=Photojojo+Newsletter&utm_campaign=b710638d0d-10_Phone_Photo_Tips01_02_2012&utm_medium=email . You might want to wait for the online version of the newsletter to be able to use the link. You can also subscribe to the free newsletter at this site.

The first tip is on controlling the exposure of your picture and taking advantage of the extremes to produce your desired effect. They mention the built in features of the camera on some phones and apps that give you a wide capability of options. There are apps that give you control over your phone's flash to the extent that you can leave the flash on continuously while you set up your shot, insuring that you get the exposure that you want. You can purchase eight vibrant, pocket-sized color filters on a handy ring, ready to hold over your lens or flash ($15.00). See the first photo on next page.

Color Filters



holga iphone lens



Separate photos combined



Set of lenses

*Phoneography.....Continued from page 3*

They also sell a lens dial that mounts 9 special effects on your phone. See the second photo.

There are several apps available that help you combine and split pictures in creative ways just as you would with prints in a frame (see the third photo). There are several examples in the article and at the instagram blog: http://blog.instagram.com/post/12302863597/combiningphotos.

You have a choice of several apps that allow you to add a blurring effect on your photo (Tilt/Shift). The thing that has most astounded me is the fact that supplemental lenses are sold for smart phones and what is even more puzzling is that there is such a wide range in the type and price for these lenses. You can buy a set of  lenses that attach magnetically to your phone. The set includes a wide angle – macro lens, a

fisheye lens and a 2X telephoto lens for $49.00 . You can buy an 8X telephoto lens that includes a case that is the mount for the lens, a tripod, and a cleaning cloth for $35.00. You can buy both kits and a handy carrying case for $79.00.

There is a mount for either a Canon or Nikon SLR lenses for $249.00 each. Who would want to do this? See the last photo.

Apps are available to shoot your smart phone in the HDR mode in which several photos are taken and

## Internet Picture of the Month
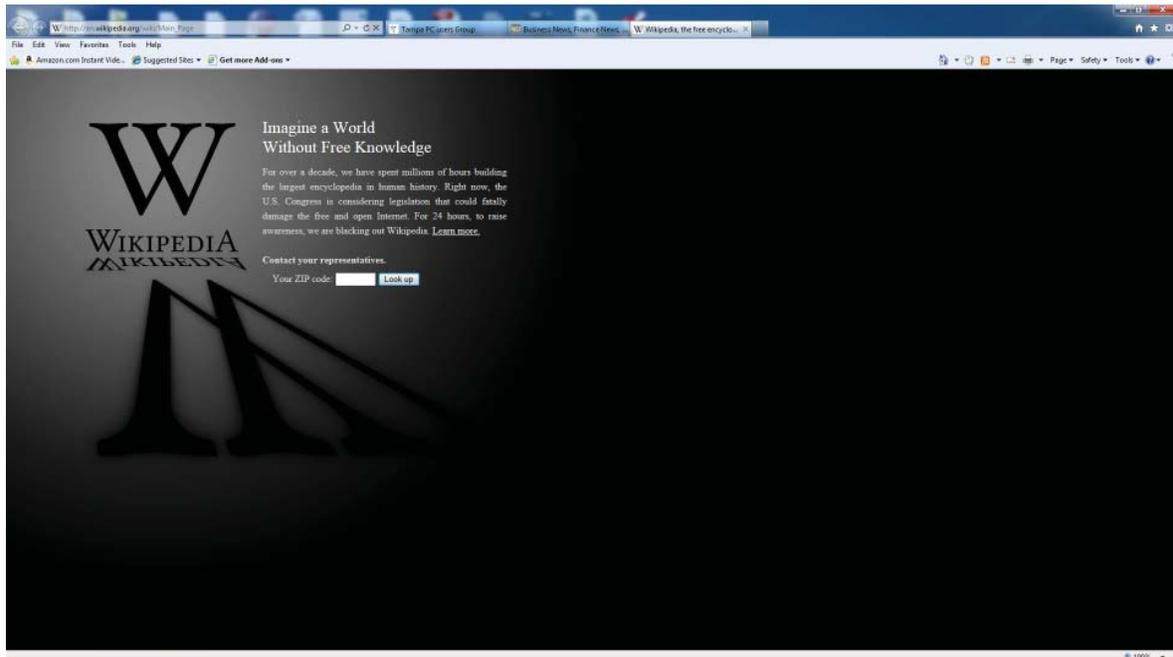


**Wikipedia went dark for a day** On January 18, 2012, a series of coordinated protests occurred against two proposed laws in the United States Congress—the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and the PROTECT IP Act (PIPA). The main such site was Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/.
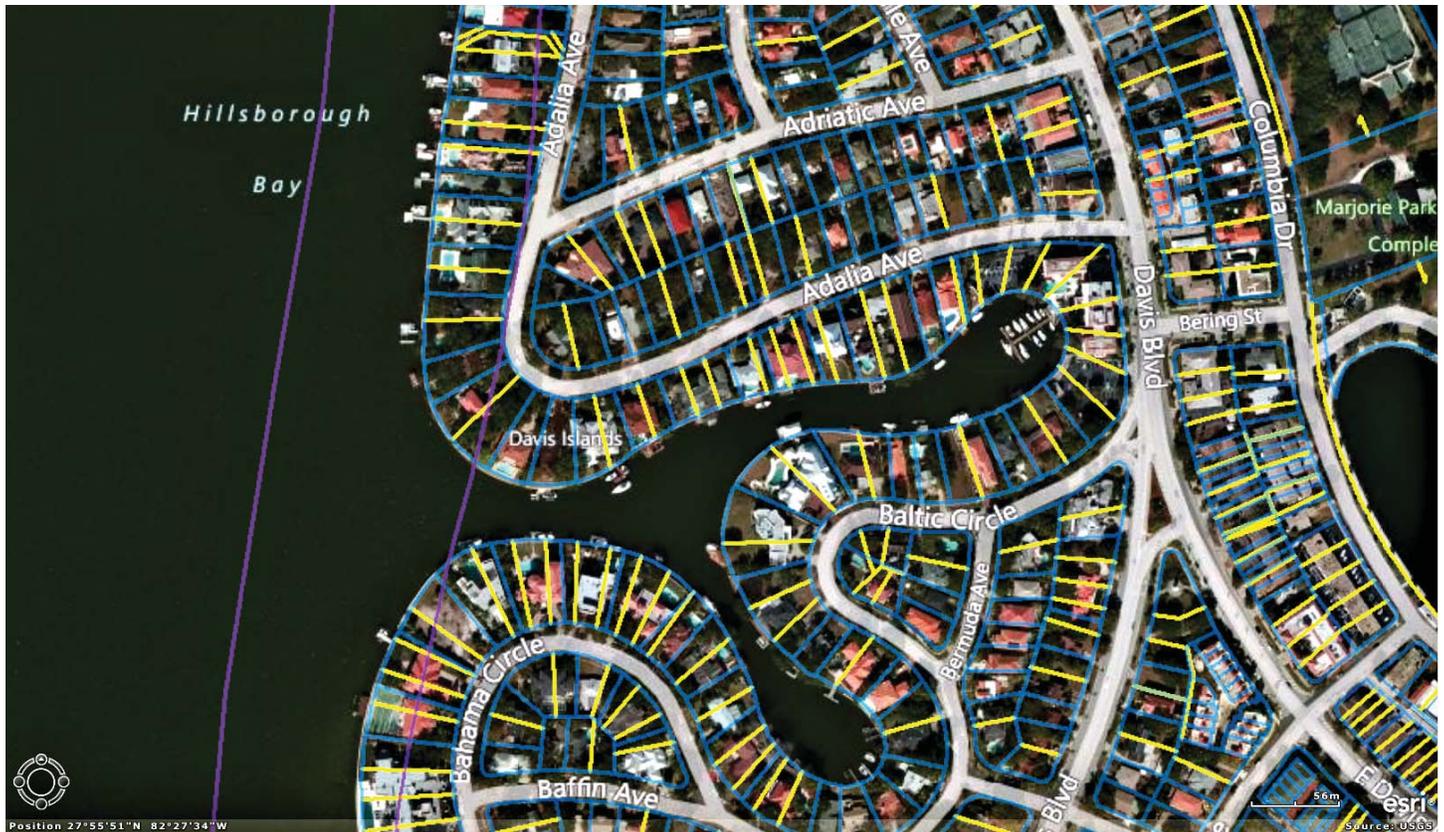
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averaged to produce a more perfect picture. The article suggests that the process creates all sorts of special effects if you shoot fast moving objects, shake or toss the camera during the process. The article covered apps that allow the photographer to combine photographs. These apps will probably excite the photographers that experimented with double and triple exposure photos with conventional cameras.

As you can see the capability of the apps and the smart phones range from simple, affordable and helpful to complicated, expensive and experimental. The newsletters are loaded with information and links to blogs that have even more information. ◆

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### February's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

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|---|---|
| Tampa PC Users Group (that's us) | http://www.tpcug.org/ |
| Zulucam - Live video of an African waterhole | http://www.elecam.org/ |
| esri (GIS program) | http://www.esri.com/ |
| QR Stuff | http://www.qrstuff.com |
| Microsoft Access forum | http://www.utteraccess.com/forum/index.php?app=portal |

# Mapping with Arc GIS Explorer

*By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group*
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Last month a friend asked me if there was a way I could calculate the latitude and longitude of several lots in Polk County he had bought in a bankruptcy auction.  He could  look at the Polk County Property Appraiser's web site and locate the eight one acre parcels and roughly see they were a bit north of Highway 60, but the map was not all that good, and it didn't supply any latitude and longitude. He needed the coordinates of the lots if he wanted to stand on his land. Now, mind you, he was going to have to walk over several lots owned by others to actually get to his lots since he had bought lots with no road access. He had bought into a classic Florida land scam.  But he was lucky, having only paid $1,000 per lot.  The original buyers supposedly paid much more for each lot.  However, it is basically worthless land. Land that you have no access to is not worth all that much unless you can sell it to a neighboring owner who does have road access or he will sell to you.

So, why is an article about real estate in a computer newsletter?  Because I am going to introduce you to a free computer program that will give the latitude and longitude for the above mentioned lots but also do much more. It is also free. The program is Arc GIS Explorer, and it is a large download.  You may download it at http://www.esri.com/software/arcgis/explorer/download.html.

GIS stands for Graphic Information System, which, quoting the web site, "lets us visualize, question, analyze, interpret, and understand data in many ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps, globes, reports, and charts." Once you have the program, you need something to display.  You can import various kinds of data into the program.  I imported what are known as shape files which I acquired from various public entities that were nice enough to make them available, Hillsborough County, Tampa, and the above mentioned Polk County to name a few. The screen capture above is of the program displaying for part of Davis Islands the Hillsborough County real estate parcel boundaries in blue (for color see this newsletter at our web site) along with the historic lot

*Mapping........Continued from page 6*

boundaries (when the subdivisions were originally platted) in yellow. Additionally, there are two roughly vertical purple lines on the left that delineate the flood zones. The westernmost few yards of the island are in the worst zone, and the remaining entire island is in the next zone. So it is not where you want to be in a Cat 4 or 5 hurricane. You are seeing the results of three shape files. Note that a shape file is no more than a collection of coordinates (latitude and longitude) along with the information on which points are connected to other points by lines.

Other shape files provided are Tampa storm water pipes, neighborhoods, historic districts, Hillsborough County subdivisions and section lines. Additionally, for the parcels, if you click on any parcel – for example, the lot where your house is – you will be provided with the same information as at the property appraiser's site: information like lot size, house heated square feet, etc. You will even be provided with your own name.

As I said, Polk County provides similar information, just not as much. But many other counties in Florida provided nothing in my brief searching. I was interested in both New Orleans and New York City, and they provided varying amounts of information in the form of shape files. The Federal Government also is a source of information from the Census and other agencies. There are also other types of files you can download. One such is called a kml file. From FEMA I downloaded a shape file that showed how far inland Hurricane Katrina pushed water over the Mississippi coast.

It is quite interesting if you love data and maps. Just last evening I found a kml file of all the locations in the US of places in the Trust for Historic Preservation and a shape file of all know bald eagle nesting sites in Florida. And as I have time, I am sure I will be adding to my collection of interesting data overlays to put on the map. By the way, the map is of the world, so you can look for data from anywhere. Perhaps there is a file for WWII battles. Who knows? ◆

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

tor 11 Home and Internet Security Invivus Protection Services. You can obtain these products from Gene and Linda on CD at the meeting, or download at the same price.

John Witmer also recognized our long-term member Bob Davis, President of the Society for the Preservation of Early Country and Western Music, Inc. http://mysite.verizon.net/res77qfb/societyforthepreservation-ofearlycountrywesternmusicinc/id14.html. The QR code for the site is:



SPECWM is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the traditional sound of country and western music through various programs and projects. See the Tampa Bay Online article at http://www2.tbo.com/news/brandon/2011/nov/21/twangin-and-toe-tappin-old-country-on-tues-days-ar-325444/. The QR code for the site is:



The program was presented by Bob LaFave – Windows Media Center. Also Windows Live Movie Maker for video editing. Since Bob didn't have a TV connection, his presentation centered on movie captures, editing and transferring to DVD for long term storage. He talked about the Ceton TV cablecard, both the PCIe internal card and the external USB version. These two devices bring TV into your house and present it on a computer and, optionally, your WideScreen

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*Minutes........Continued from page 7*

TV and can record and offer it for editing and long term storage like no other known device on the market.

Also in the presentation Bob answered some questions about Windows Safety Scanner at http://www.microsoft.com/security/scanner/en-us/default.aspx, a live antivirus scanner (QR to the left), and Windows Defender Offline Beta, for creating a CD, DVD or USB flash drive for machines that won't boot otherwise because of a virus. At http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/what-is-windows-defender-offline

Thanks, Bob from all of us for a fine and interesting presentation. ◆

to I-275

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I-4

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to Tampa

N

Columbus Ave