



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



Vol. 25 No. 5

May 2012

May in Tampa

## Meeting

**William LaMartin**  
**on**  
**Windows 8**  
**&**  
**Oracle's VirtualBox**  
**Wednesday, May 9, 2012**  
**6:30 PM**  
**Pepin Distributing Co.**  
**4121 N 50th Street**  
**Tampa, Florida**

**Meeting Preview:** William LaMartin will describe installing Windows 8 on a virtual machine using Oracle's VirtualBox. He will then take us on a tour of Windows 8. 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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Thanks to newsletter contributors Ron Weinberg for his article on resurrecting his Win XP computer, Jim Purcell for the database article and Merle Nicholson for the minutes and all the QR codes. Somehow, we always manage to put out our small newsletter with our own original content.

In last month's newsletter I wrote about installing a preview version of Microsoft Windows 8 on a Virtual Machine using Oracle's VirtualBox. That saved me from having to dedicate an actual computer to the installation. There I gave links to all the pertinent web pages you would need to repeat the process yourself. Possibly some of you actually tried it.

This month I will demonstrate all of this at our monthly meeting and lead you through a tour of using the new operating system that should be coming out in the Fall.

Merle has included QR codes at the end of the minutes which,  
*Comments.....Continued on page 8*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meeting Preview	1
Editor's Comments	1
Minutes	2
Saving an Old PC	3
B-Folder-3	4
Picture of the Month	5
Links	5
Map	8

**June Meeting: Blain Barton from Microsoft**

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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.

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**

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Association of Personal Computer User Groups

**Minutes of the April Meeting**

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

**O**ur meeting was six days earlier than scheduled to accommodate our speaker, Gene Barlow.

The Windows Special Interest Group (SIG) 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.

This month Bob showed us quick demos on drive utilities Acronis, Seagate and Western Digital WD Support; also, Easeus To-Do Backup, Easeus Partition Manager and Drive ImageXML, most of which are free as downloads.

- **EaseUS:**  
<http://www.todo-Backup.com>,  
<http://www.partition-tool.com>
- **Seagate:**  
<http://www.seagate.com/support/downloads/>
- **Western Digital:**  
<http://www.wdc.com/wdproducts/acronis/um.asp>,  
[http://support.wdc.com/product/downloaddetail.asp?swid=119&wdc\\_lang=en](http://support.wdc.com/product/downloaddetail.asp?swid=119&wdc_lang=en)  
<http://support.wdc.com/product/download.asp>

And finally, Bob showed a Microsoft SyncToy demonstration. Bob then led discussions on extending a TV signal and on the Microsoft Security monthly newsletter at <http://www.microsoft.com/security/resources/newsletter.aspx>

Kevan Sheridan, vice-president of TPCUG and a very long term member, gave a slideshow-augmented presentation on Google Voice, where he routinely

*Minutes.....Continued on page 7*

## SAVING AN OLD PC ON THE THIRD TRY

By Ron Weinberg, Member at Large,  
Tampa PC Users Group  
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**M**y desktop system is a seven-year-old Dell Dimension system which was well-equipped and not inexpensive for its time. It still has all original components. The operating system is Windows XP Professional, originally SP2 but now SP3. Naturally, age takes its toll, and I have had several system problems in the last few months, all of which I have recovered from.

### 1. System Failure Feb 6, 2012.

Error Message:

“Windows could not start because the following file is missing or corrupt:  
\\Windows\System32\Config\System

You can attempt to repair this file by starting Windows Setup using the original Setup CD-ROM  
Select ‘r’ at the first screen to start repair.”

I loaded the disk and carefully proceeded to use the System Repair option. However, it appeared that instead it was reinstalling most of the entire system.

When that completed, I repeatedly got as far as the sign-on screen, which did have my user name and did accept my password. But it kept looping back to loading and would not completely boot. I got some fatal system errors which went by so fast I could not record them. It was logging the errors, but because I could not boot I never got to read them.

I repeated the Repair with much the same result, whereupon I ran hardware diagnostics on the memory and hard drive. All passed successfully with zero errors noted.

I concluded that despite my efforts the operating system was corrupted beyond repair.

I then used Acronis to completely restore everything from my last entire system backup. After a few updates were installed I ran a complete AV scan and was fully operational. Unfortunately, the backup was one month old so I lost my January and early February work.

I reinstalled a program which I had recently installed and was now missing. Next, I rechecked for additional updates and there were quite a few, including 11 optional ones, and I installed them all. Lastly, I created a new Restore Point.

At that point my comments were that a seven-year-old system is obviously prone to problems but it has served me well. Reluctantly, if problems continue a new system may be the only answer. Meanwhile I’ll be backing up work files weekly.

### 2. Problem reoccurred on Feb 9.

This time I pressed ‘R’ at the first screen and got in the Recovery Console wherein a number of DOS commands were available. I copied Config.Sys from the CD and rebooted. Problem appeared corrected.

3. Not long after, my system crashed again, and I was just about to purchase a new hard drive, but, stubborn as I am, and because the hard drive seemed to pass all diagnostics, I decided for one more try at resurrection.

This time, instead of using the Microsoft Repair or Recovery Console, I tried a method published online by Charlie White, <http://webcast.broadcastnewsroom.com/articles/viewarticle.jsp?id=8658>, which seems to be similar to “How to recover from a corrupted registry that prevents Windows XP from starting.” (Microsoft Article 307545)

This process involves copying critical Registry entries from an original XP disk and then replacing those entries in the Registry. There are a number of important steps that must be followed in sequence, but the result for me was excellent.

Upon completion, my system booted perfectly, and I had no loss of program data, personal documents, or

## B-FOLDER 3

By Jim Purcell, Tampa PC Users Group  
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The reason that I had an immediate interest in “B-Folders 3” software was that it seemed to provide the versatility to create and securely store data in a format similar to what I had used with a Palm Pilot. It also appeared to be capable of importing about 15 years of data that I had accumulated on my Palm Pilot.

I started using a Day-Timer in the early 70s while I was working as a Budget Officer in the Air Force, and I continued to use it until I switched to an almost identical product offered by Franklin Covey. Both companies had developed a computer program that mimicked their notebooks and both programs would print pages for all sizes of their notebooks, either as blank pages or pages containing the content of your program. The Franklin Covey program was frankly one of the best computer programs that I have ever owned. It was simple, powerful and was based on Microsoft Access. When all else failed, you could open your database in Access and correct or repair it. Then in the late nineties, Franklin Covey announced that their program would Sync with Palm Pilot. So “SHAZAM”, prior to 2000 I had a smart phone (Sans phone of course but also Sans quagmire and Sans \$60 a month). The B-Folder 3 program instructions indicate that you can not only sync your desktop with all of your devices but also you can sync using USB, Wi-Fi, 3G or your LAN, and they provide a tutorial for each method. Sync sessions are always encrypted so you can use whatever network is available - Wi-Fi, Ethernet or even public hotspots. They also have a free stand-alone app for Android for Smartphones and tablets.

About three days before I found the B-FOLDER 3 program, my Palm Pilot died. If I can revive the Palm Pilot, I hope that I can export the data, otherwise I’m going to be doing a lot of cutting and pasting.

You are probably wondering why I am writing about the program since I just downloaded it and have no words of wisdom about how well it has done the job

for which it was acquired. There are two reasons, the first of which is the structure of the program itself. It is an encrypted database that allows you to structure it according to your needs. The database is created by establishing a structure of folders that you name and connect. Usually it is by “type” of entry or by “topic/subject”. Unstructured data can be stored and found, as can structured data and “managers”. Predesigned forms are available for notepad, contact manager, task manager, password manager, bookmark manager, credit card and journal. These forms give you even more flexibility; for example, you can use the password manager simply as an encrypted storage place for your passwords, or you can enter the appropriate instructions on individual or all passwords to allow you to launch a program requiring a username and password with one click from within the database. The forms can also be customized in a variety of ways. The customizable cards format can be used for bank accounts, frequent flyer accounts, insurance and other similarly structured data.

The second reason that I am writing now is that the software is marketed in such a way that you can explore it completely at no cost. You can download the complete and fully-operating program for a 30 day trial period with no charge. At the end of the 30-day period, if you wish to continue, you pay \$29.00 for the program. One license covers all your personal computers and devices. If you choose not to buy, editing and creating new items will be disabled. However, you will still be able to read and search your data. The free Android app is fully operational with or without the desktop program.

In summary, when you start B-Folders for the first time, there is no database and you need to create one. You must provide a strong password since the strength of the database is that it remains encrypted when you sync it and when you back it up and that it is constructed to minimize exposure. Another example of the nature of the database is that B-Folders cannot recover lost passwords and, without the password, all of your data will be permanently lost, and since backups require the password in effect at the time of backup, they too are lost. In managing backups, you must retain all passwords and relate them to the appropriate

*B-Folder-3.....Continued on page 6*

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## Internet Picture of the Month



### May Day Occupy Oakland

May 1 is a big day for protest parades. The photo above is of one such in Oakland, CA. The photo can be found posted on flickr at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bonjourjanel/7134888859/> by a user named jsrubby22.

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*Saving.....Continued from page 3*

photos.

I had been using Windows Live Mail, and that disappeared requiring a new install. Accordingly, I lost a few days of email and my old deleted items, but nothing that I had saved in previously created Storage folders.

After checking for updates and backing up, I did notice several programs which I had added over the years did not work. It seemed as if they were not recognized

by the Registry and did not even show in Control Panel Add and Remove Programs. Rather than try to re-register them, I reinstalled them.

I can now report that my system is working better than ever, response is fast and errors nil.

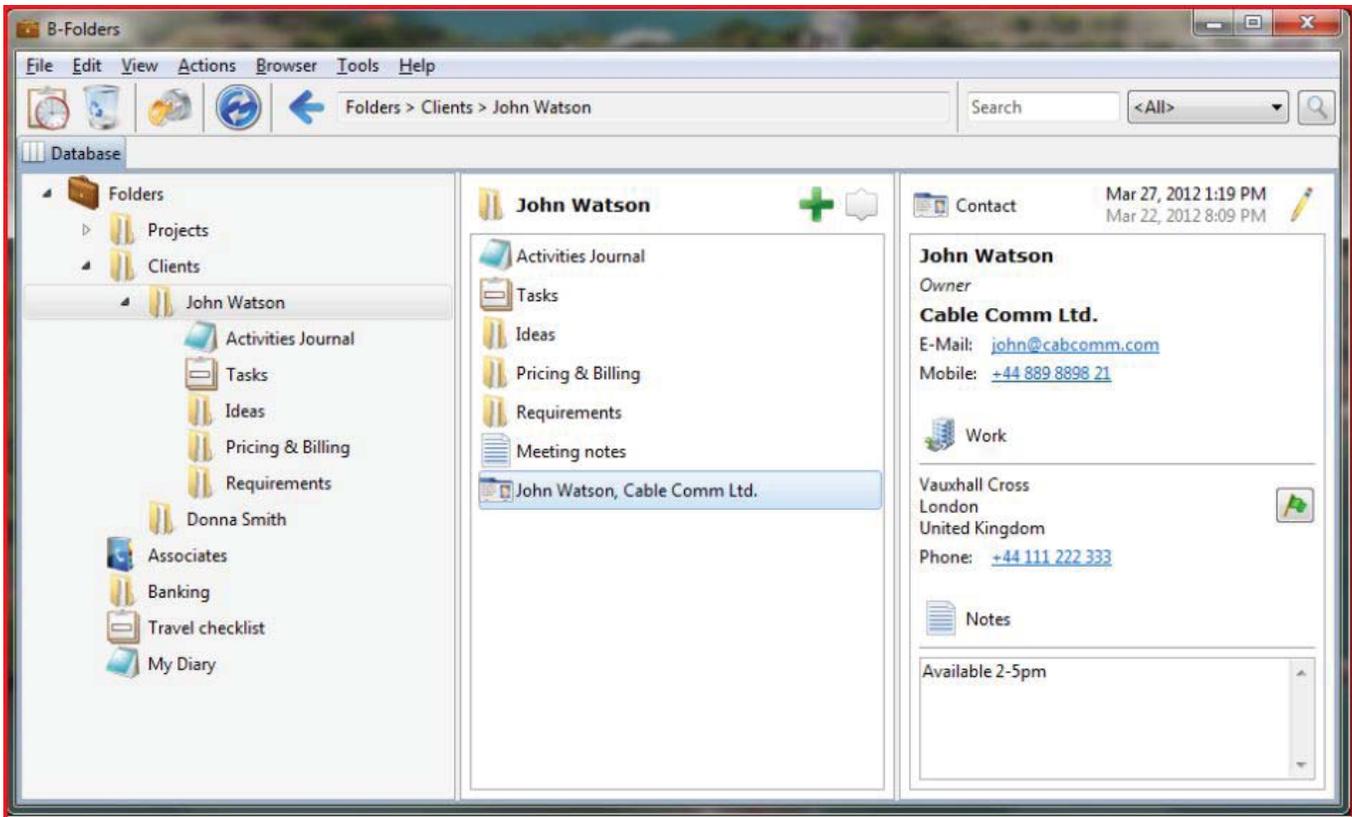
Just I case, I did install Acronis Drive Monitor to watch my old hard drive. ♦

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### May's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)  
 Find domain stats - Check website info  
 QR Stuff  
 The Civil War, Part 1: The Places

<http://www.tpcug.org/>  
<http://www.findwebstats.com/>  
<http://www.qrstuff.com/>  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2012/02/the-civil-war-part-1-the-places/100241/>

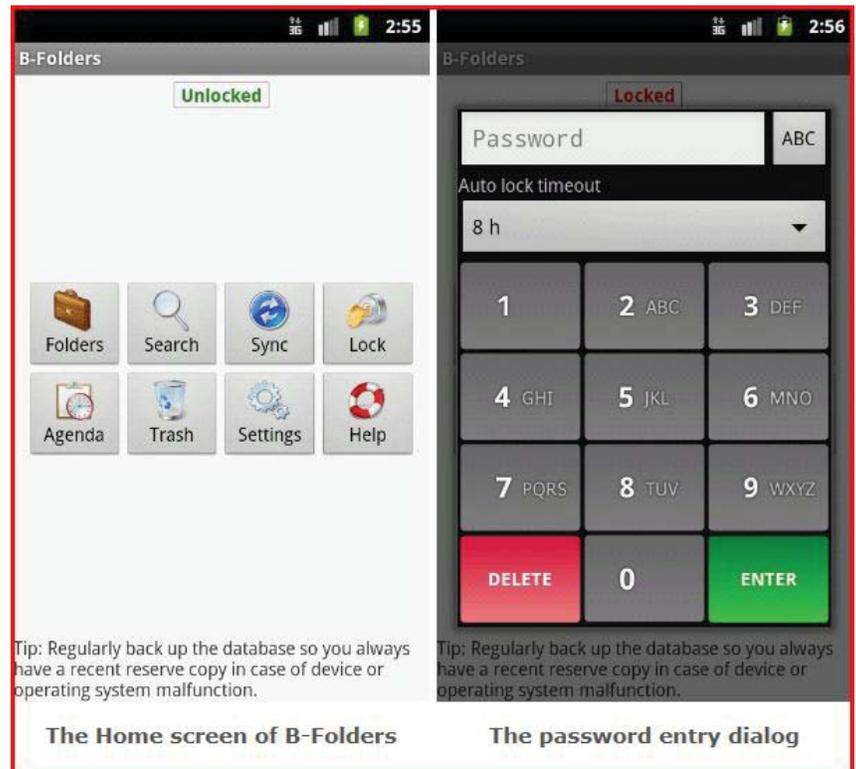


*B-Folder-3.....Continued from page 4*

backup in order to access the data.

This main application window has three vertical panes (see image above). The left pane displays the hierarchy of folders as a tree structure, the middle pane shows the contents of the current folder as a list of items, and the right pane shows the current item. The B-Folders site at <http://jointlogic.com/b-folders/> will provide all of the needed information, including online help, illustrations, support and download of the desktop and Android edition for smartphones and tablets.

The Home screen of B-Folders Android edition (see image to the right) is the first screen displayed when you start the application. It acts like a menu and allows you to easily access the most common features of the application. As in the desktop edition, there is initially no database so you will be required to create a new one. After the database is created, you will see the Folders screen. ◆



### 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.

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

directs all his incoming calls to any device of his choice, wherever he is. The subjects and uses of this (free) system are large, and it takes a dynamic speaker like Kevan to cover most of it in a single session. The highlights were:

- Caller ID
- Call Screening
- Consolidation to one number for any number of call devices
- Answer/Call with any telephone or computer
- Money Savings – Text messaging, cell minutes – all free

To get Started: <https://www.google.com/voice>.

Our thanks to Kevan for a spirited and interesting talk. We learned so much, had our interest piqued in new phone-y things and learned to not hand Kevan your cell phone. ◆

Use your smartphone and the QR codes below to go to the URLs in this article:



**Partition Tool**



**Segate Support**



**WD Support**



**todo Backup**



**GoogleVoice**



**Microsoft Security**



**WDC - Acronis**

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**First Class Mail**

*Member: Your membership is up for renewal*

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

if scanned with the appropriate program on your smartphone, will open the web page they represent in the phone's browser. Perhaps we should have T-shirts made with such a code on it at which people could point their smartphones and the phone would then open the TPCUG.ORG site in the phone. I have placed that QR code in the upper right corner above.

