



# Bits of Blue

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



Vol. 28 No. 12

December 2015

December in Tampa

## Meeting

### Holiday Party

by

### Everybody

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

6:30 PM

Pepin Distributing Co.

4121 N 50th Street

Tampa, Florida

**Meeting Preview:** Holiday Party. There will be lots of food for dinner - please come.

## Editor's Comments

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

**T**hanks to Merle Nicholson and Dave Palmer for articles this month. Dave's article on tracking ship locations was of particular interest to me since I created a web app that did exactly that at one time. I pulled the worldwide shipping data from some Greek university. However, after a couple of years, the source of that data disappeared, and I was forced to remove that app from my website.

The Microsoft Store is now open at International Mall, just in time for your Christmas shopping. It is in the Nordstrom wing of the Mall on the upper level. Have a look at the Surface Book. It is expensive but very nice. If that item is a budget buster, there are many other devices at all price levels.

Just the other day, someone told me that they had totally wiped all the files from their data hard drive. And they couldn't really give a clear explanation of how they did it other than it happened while trying to move the data to One Drive. They had been told it would cost \$99 to examin the drive and considerably more to recover any data. I said to bring the drive to me, and I would have a look. That look verified that the drive did appear to have nothing on it.

Time to ask Merle Nicholson, who told me that he had an ancient DOS

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**January Meeting: To be announced**

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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 November Meeting**

*By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,  
Tampa PC Users Group  
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**T**he Windows Special Interest Group (SIG) opens our monthly meeting. Merle Nicholson, the SIG moderator, 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, Windows 10 installation problems were discussed, and Merle gave a quick demo on Windows 10 keyboard shortcuts.

Our guest speaker was TPUG's own Dave Palmer, giving us one of his well-prepared cyber security presentations. This month was Exploit Kits, software designed to take advantage of software flaws; the flawed software most exploited is Java, Silverlight and Flash. Flash accounts for 80% of all exploits. Server-based exploits target built-in browser applications. Besides disabling Flash and Silverlight, another suggestion is to use an alternative PDF reader other than Adobe Reader. Also it's very important to keep all operating system updates current at all times. Our thanks go to Dave for his excellent and well prepared presentation.



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

program named Uneraser, which he sent it to me. That program showed me that there were a lot of files still on the disk (when you delete a file it is not really gone; the operating system just can't find it). However, I couldn't figure out how to use the program to unerase the files. So I went to the program's website, <http://www.uneraser.com>, and downloaded a free trial Windows version of the program. It displayed many folders full of files on the disk and would allow me to unerase one file at a time. To be able to completely restore all the files, I purchased a registered version for \$39. And I was then able to restore around 33 GB of data consisting of approximately 19,000 files in 14,000 folders. Success! ◆

## More windows 10

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,  
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Now that Windows 10 has seen some improvements, I've revisited it and installed it on my notebook.

Back in July, Windows 10 came out, and I thought at the time it was suitable for my notebook, replacing Windows 7 Home Premium. I kept it a couple of weeks and even showed a couple of things at a TPCUG meeting. As I got into it and trying to do my day-to-day stuff, I became somewhat discouraged with the inefficiency of the menu and the old/new schizophrenic settings. Then I got an ad for something on my desktop in a live tile. That did it for me. I recovered my Windows 7 from a backup and went back to where I was three or four weeks before.

Some things have been happening since that time. There is a revision 1511 that came out early November that makes important changes to the licensing and to make it possible to install Windows 10 from scratch easily. Sometimes that's a very handy thing especially if you have some persistent virus or malware. Just as importantly, now you can use Cortana with just a local login. You do miss some advantages because you are not sending your personal information back to Microsoft so Cortana doesn't have the benefit of knowing your habits.

In the meantime I have been running a Windows 10 Virtual Machine that I revisit occasionally to try to learn how to live with it and to see if there are any compelling reasons to switch. I have found nothing in the area of "compelling", but I finally concluded that with the 1511 revision I can configure Windows 10 to be as efficient as 7. By efficient I mean the time and trouble it takes to find stuff and run applications.

A few days ago I felt I was finally there and tackled it. I have to say that once you have Windows 7 (or 8.1) configured, the upgrade goes quickly and smoothly. For this particular notebook I have a "Dual Boot" setup that complicated things for me, but once I learned how to deal with that, the Windows 10 installation was mostly uneventful.

**Preparation: Number 1:** Make certain your Windows 7/8.1 is up to date. All Windows updates must be installed. **Number 2:** Now is the time to uninstall all the applications you no longer need. Go to Control Panel, Programs and Features and go down through the list, find all the stuff you have never needed. Also uninstall anything with the word "toolbar" or "fix my pc" or "repair". Uninstall WInZip while you're at it. **Number 3:** Do a "Disk Cleanup". That's on the properties of your C: drive, including clearing your Recycle bin. **Number 4** do a complete system Image backup or clone of the drive(s). If you cannot make a system backup or clone the drive DO NOT PROCEED. If you don't

have the technical skills to do a full backup, you need help with Windows 10 upgrade anyway.

I do have a suggestion for you. If you have a hard drive over three years old, buy a replacement for it. Clone the boot drive to the new drive and swap them, keeping the old drive as a backup. If the Windows 10 upgrade destroys your system just swap them back. Another good reason to buy a new drive is if you can afford an SSD for your boot drive. There are some bargains out there especially for last year's slower SSDs. Believe me, last year's slow SSD is still five times faster than a conventional drive and far more reliable.

A couple of important changes to Windows 10 installation have been made. First, the upgrade no longer insists that you install your system with a Microsoft login. Previously it did that, but if you knew what to click on you could set up a local account. Now, it assumes a local account. Later on, when I wanted to get something from the MS Store, it tricked me into signing in with my MS account and changed my login to that account, wiping out my local account. I suspect that I wasn't being attentive enough and could have avoided it. But it did not give me a warning that my local account would be wiped. The first I knew of it was when I booted the system and the login screen appeared, and it would not take my account and password. So I tried my MS account name and password, and it logged me in. It's easy to switch back in Control panel, Accounts, but you can't just say "use the local account", you have to create the account over again.

Why is this important to me? I feel that I will not get advertising "pushed" to my desktop with a local account. There are a couple of other settings to make in that regard; more later. Also I don't want to search the internet for items. It's too time consuming. There are obscure settings for that now, too.

Back to the installation. One of the early things it does is scan your PC for incompatible software. It will give you a list of suggested programs to uninstall. In my case there was one; Daemon Tools Lite. This software allows you to mount .ISO files as a drive. That's built into Windows 10 and is not needed. One other item is a clear warning that it is going to uninstall Windows Media Center. I've written on this subject before; if you depend on WMC, Windows 10 is not for you. If you're using it for your DVR, there is no suitable replacement. But the Windows 10 installation makes the removal very clear. I suspect that if you choose to not uninstall the incompatible software it will proceed anyway. As for the WMC removal, it's not optional. It's just there as a warning that it will be removed. Even if you'd paid for it.

It takes quite a while to go through the installation. I used a USB3 flashdrive with all the needed files. This is easy to get from the Microsoft website. You download a tool called "Media Creation Tool", have a USB flashdrive available and run it. Get it from <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/>

*More.....Continued on page 4*

More.....Continued from page 3

windows10. If you go this way, you may want to hang around 20 minutes or more and when it does the first reboot, pull the flash-drive out so it doesn't attempt to reboot to the flashdrive. I use the USB route so I don't worry about an internet interruption while installing. Also it's much faster if you have two or more computers to upgrade. The website has very accurate instructions.

Once it's done all the reboots, you're ready to configure it. All your files should be where you left them, and all your programs should still be working. In particular, check your printers and any other external devices. Also look at Computer Management, Device Manager. (or right-click on the start button, select Device Manager) Look for any system device with a warning flag on it.

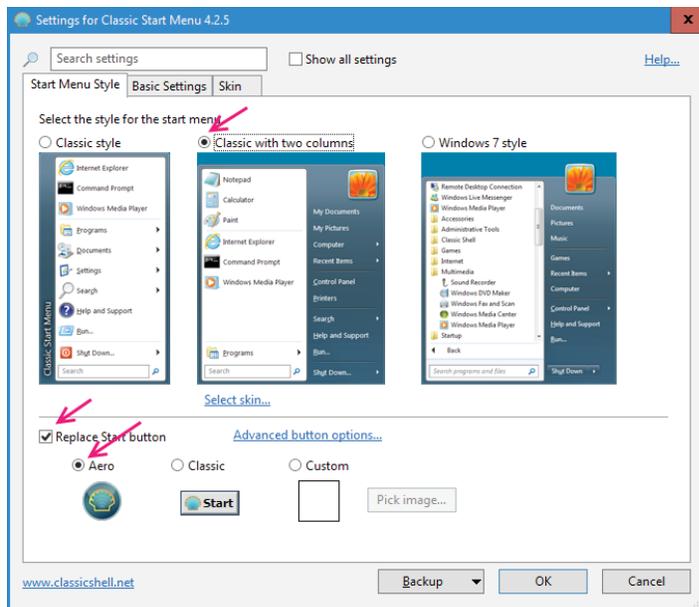
Look at the screen resolution, make sure it's where it was and that you like it. Mine had all desktop icons much larger, a sure indication that my screen resolution is not set to my full native screen size, and that was the case. Right-click on the desktop, select "Display Settings", then pick the "Advanced Display Settings" link at the bottom, then look at the "Screen Resolution" drop-down, make sure it's set on the "recommended", which should be the highest (top) one.

In my case, I had to deal with a disabled Vipre Internet anti-virus. The standard Defender was running, and Vipre did get an automatic update for Windows 10 and reinstalled itself. Defender complained on each boot until I disabled it in Startup apps.

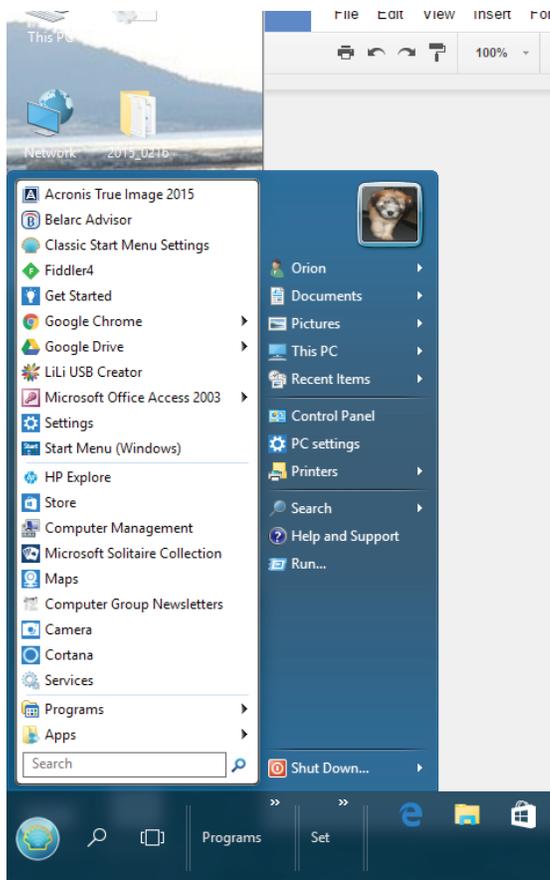
Here's a list of all the things I found necessary to change. You may agree with them or not. First thing I did was to unpin all live tiles. They're interesting for the first 10 seconds, but then you have to ask; "do I want to expend system resources just for this?" Right-click on each and select "UnPin".

I would state right now that I have no intention of making Windows 10 look like Windows 7. But, I do feel that Windows 10 is a step forward with two or three things deficient. The main one being the menu. Frankly, it isn't a menu at all, it's just an alphabetical list of all applications, giving important programs equal weight with the stuff you'll never use. Second, it lacks visual style. The white titlebars are a real pain trying to find the top of anything for windows controls. And last, that you must go to quite a bit of trouble to protect your privacy. Fortunately, using a local account disables much of the information being sent to Microsoft. There is much written about this.

Next I downloaded and installed "Classic Shell" from <http://www.classicshell.net>. Do NOT download from any other site. While you're there, donate 10 or 20 bucks via PayPal Guest. It's a quick install. When you run it, there's a list of items to include. You do not need anything but Classic Shell and Classic Shell Update, and you do not need Classic Explorer or Classic IE. These make changes to Explorer and Internet Explorer. Windows 10 has changed both of these, and I think it's a good idea to get used to them before making changes.



When you look at the setup for classic shell, the "advanced settings" should be off, leaving three tabs of settings. First tab, I selected "Classic with two columns" and "Replace Start button" with "Aero". Under "Skins", I selected "Windows Aero" skin, and in "Basic Settings", I did not change anything. Please don't blame me if you're not happy; just pick something else. Classic Shell is very highly configurable under "Show All Settings".



More.....Continued on page 6

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## Internet Picture of the Month



### Smog in China

From the Wall Street Journal, <http://www.wsj.com>. “A man rides his bicycle across a street amid heavy haze in Fuyang, Anhui province, China. Heavy smog and thick fog engulfed many parts of northern and eastern China on Monday, local media reported. Reuters”

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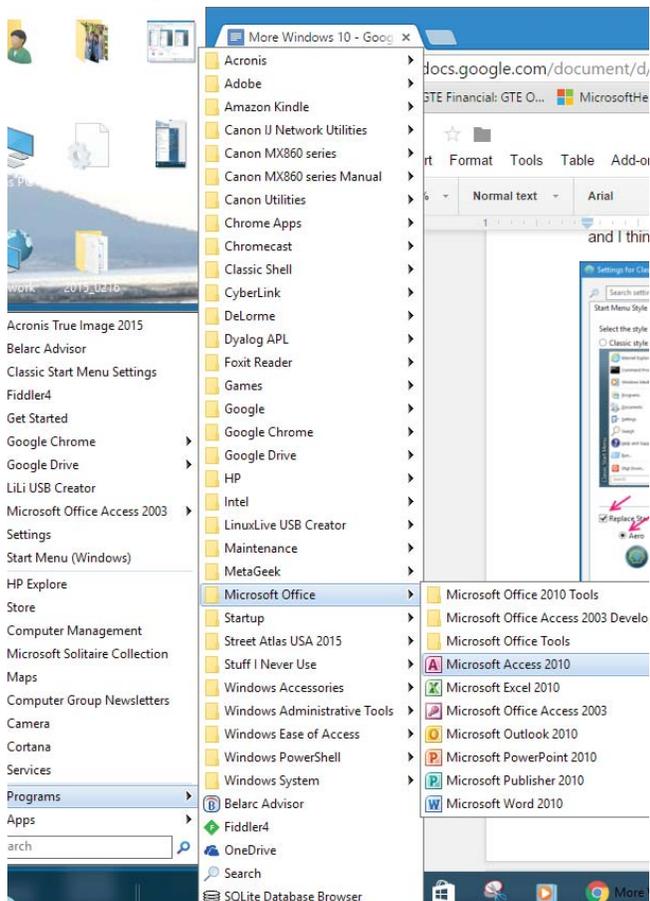
### December's Links

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)  
File uneraser program  
Classic Shell  
Ed Bott Windows 10 Help  
Microsoft Store - Tampa

<http://www.tpcug.org>  
<http://www.uneraser.com>  
<http://classicshell.net>  
<http://www.zdnet.com/blog/bott/>  
<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/store/locations/fl/tampa/international-plaza/store-1111>

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“The Classic with two columns” has the two column layout of Windows 7, combined with the cascading menus of Windows XP. In my mind, it’s perfection.



Configuring further, I installed a theme exported from Windows 7. That put color in the title bars, a badly needed improvement. With the new 1511 update, you can add color to the titlebars, taskbar and action center in settings, personalization, colors. Last, I changed some registry settings that changed all window border widths to the narrowest possible. Contact me if you are interested in doing that; I can send a registry file to you.

**Concluding:** Do a full system backup of your new Windows 10 now. Don’t wait. Later, when you have full confidence in your system and have it backed up, clean up the boot drive. In “Disk Cleanup” there is a button labeled “Clean up system files”. This will reclaim a very large chunk of disk because the Windows 10 upgrade stored all the Windows 7 or 8.1 files on a Windows.old folder. When you do this, you will no longer be able to revert back to the previous version. But we don’t care because we have a full system backup that we can use anytime we want.

Resources:  
<http://www.classicshell.net>

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## Interactive Tracking Websites

By Doug Palmer, Tampa PC Users Group  
[dkp205@hotmail.com](mailto:dkp205@hotmail.com)

I have an extensive list of weird, odd and interesting websites that I’ve run across over the years. Here are two that might qualify as tracking maps as they track something. Most also qualify as interactive as the user has some control over the data seen.

<http://raidsonline.com/>

RAIDS Online is a free public crime map developed by BAIR Analytics. Crime mapping takes data available from law enforcement sources and makes it available to the public in a visual format. This is just one of several such websites available. Raids Online also has mobile apps available for Android and iPhones.

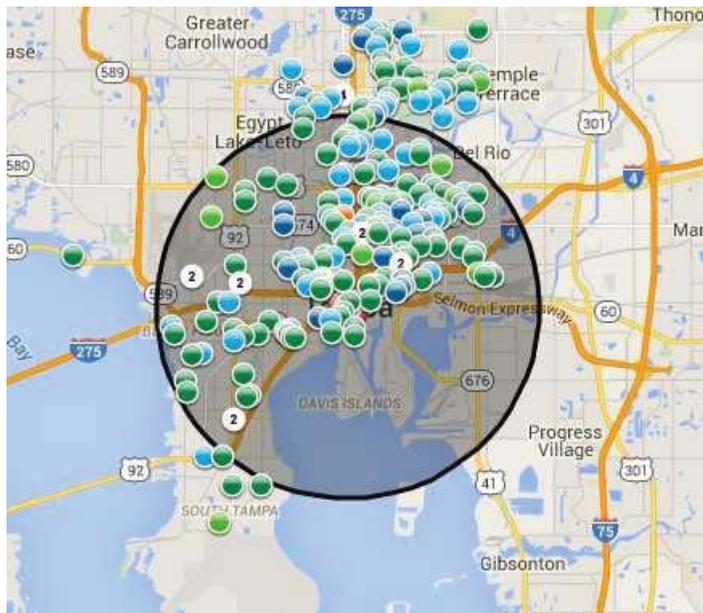
This map works much like Google Maps or other such maps on the Internet. A toolbar is on the left side of the



screen that contains controls to specify multiple layers of data. At the top of the toolbar type in a city name, an address or even a zip code. The map will adjust accordingly. The Buffer section of the toolbar allows you to adjust the size of the area you wish to pinpoint. Below that are several filters that you can use to specify a date range, a long list of various events and crime to either include

Interactive.....Continued on page 6

Interactive.....Continued from page 6



or exclude. Tabs on top allow you to view the data on the map, in charts or in a spreadsheet format. Once you have adjusted the area and events to your liking, you can create a daily or weekly email alert notification of crimes within a certain distance of your home or business

<http://www.marinetraffic.com/>

The Worldwide Marine Traffic interactive map is serious fun for those who love to explore and tinker and learn. This site and several other similar websites are free Internet-based vessel tracking services. They do not require any user registration. They list the position of thousands of ships around the world. On occasion it's interesting to look specifically at the waters around Tampa Bay to see how many ships are out there, where they're from, where they're going, which are underway and which are anchored. Other times I'll pick out a really busy port somewhere in the world – there are many. Those ports make Tampa Bay look like a backwater! Here are a few basics from the FAQs.

Vessels over 299GT (Gross Tonnage) are required to have an AIS transponder on board, which transmits their position, speed and course, among some other static information, such as vessel's name, dimensions and voyage details.

Data received are uploaded in the database in real time and are immediately available on the map and on other pages. However, several positions shown on map may not be continuously refreshed (e.g. when a ship goes out of range). Vessel positions shown on the map may be up to one hour old. Please note also that map web page is only periodically

refreshed or whenever the 'Refresh now' link is pressed manually.

There are numerous filters and controls. The shape of the icons tell you whether the ship is underway or anchored. The color of the icon tells you what type of ship it is. Running your cursor over the icons will give you the name



of the ship, the heading, speed, destination and age of the data. Left click on the icon to see bring up a information box with basic details of the ship along with a small image. Inside that box is a button called 'Vessel Details' which will



provide extensive information as well as one or more images of the ship.

**Editor's Note:** Dave provided a couple more such examples of tracking websites, but we have run out of space. Perhaps they will find a place in the next newsletter. ♦

**Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.**

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*Member: Your membership is up for renewal*

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<http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/make-windows-10-like-windows-7>

<http://www.cnet.com/pictures/8-windows-10-settings-you-should-change-right-away/>

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/windows10>

