



Bits of Blue

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



Vol. 29 No. 2

February 2016

February in Tampa

Meeting

Window 10 Essential Customizations

by

Merle Nicholson

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

6:30 PM

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

Meeting Preview: Merle Nicholson will present Windows 10 Essential Customizations. Merle will also lead the Windows SIG for the first 30 minutes of the meeting.

Editor's Comments

*By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group
william@lamartin.com*

Thanks to Merle Nicholson for his contribution this month, including the Picture of the Month. And Doug Mullis has provided our financial report for 2015.

Speaking of the financial report, we missed renewing with the Florida Department of Corporations for our nonprofit TPCUG, so to renew we also had to pay a penalty of \$175, then \$65 for the missed 2015 renewal and \$65 for 2016. I suppose it was my fault since I am the one who usually does that. However, the state is supposed to send out an email reminding you to renew. I have no record of receiving such an email but do have a record of having received such for the previous three years. In the distant past, they used to send me a postcard. Now I have put the renewal on my Outlook calendar.

There is not a lot of text in this newsletter since I used the space for screen captures of my apps running side-by-side in an Android and a Windows 10 Phone in my Xamarin article.

Comments.....Continued on page 2

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March Meeting: To be announced

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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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Florida Association of User Groups
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Minutes of the January Meeting

*By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
Tampa PC Users Group
merle@merlenicholson.com*

The 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 Merle showed several items of interest in Windows 10; Windows Media Center from Windows 7 and Gadgets restoration from Vista.

The January presentation was given by Bob Gostischa, an independent presenter of Avast!, a free Antivirus for PC, Mac, iPhone and Android. The Avast! “Free Antivirus” gives essential protection from viruses and malware and also “strengthens your home network.” There are other paid versions with more features that Bob did not discuss. Bob presents a well-prepared talk on the essentials of Antivirus and was very willing to give advice to the members in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. It was an enjoyable hour and very informative. Thanks go to Bob Gostischa and to Avast! for sponsoring him. ◆

Comments.....Continued from page 1

Ancestry.com created quite a furor a month or so back by announcing it would discontinue its support for Family Tree Maker. There would be no new versions and no maintenance after 2016. They want everyone to move to their cloud app and store all their genealogical data at the Ancestry.com site. That did not go over very well with the many thousands of Family Tree Maker users, many who don't want to trust their data to the cloud and who found the web-based app lacking when compared to the desktop version.

Well, just yesterday Ancestry.com relented a bit to say that they will sell the Windows version to a company that already makes an Apple version of Family Tree Maker and they will also enable the desktop Windows program genealogical RootsMagic to be able to sync with Ancestry.com. ◆

Xamarin

By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group
william@lamartin.com

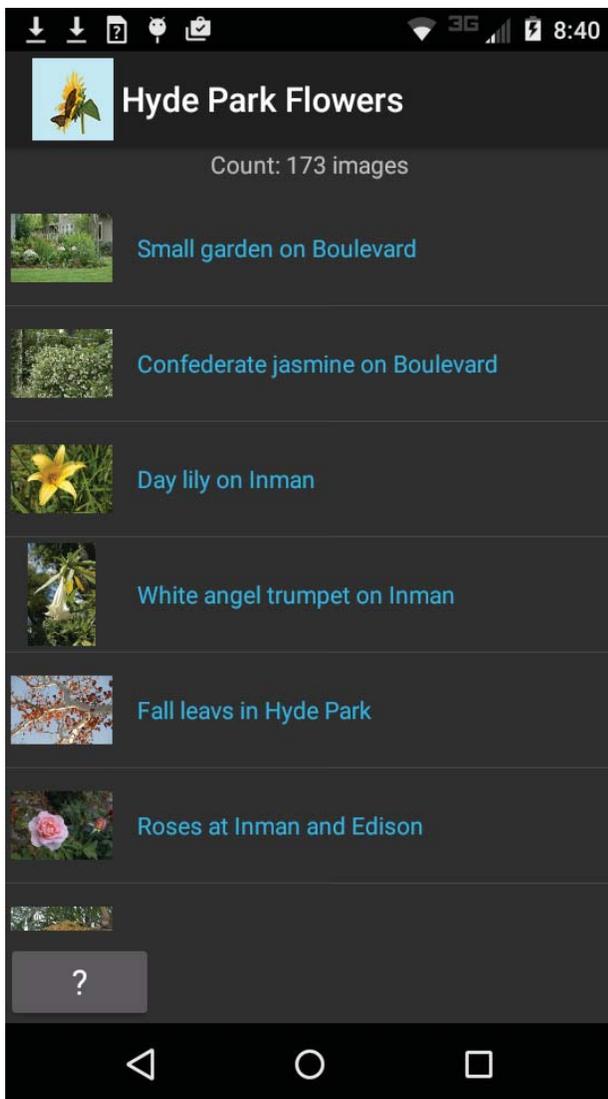
As I mentioned in my comments last month, Xamarin is a software development tool that allows you to develop simultaneously (up to a point) for the three main mobile platforms: Android, iOS and Windows. Also as you probably know, I have been a Windows developer for many years, recently working with Windows Phone and then more recently with Windows 10 Universal apps. The Win 10 Universal apps have the nice feature in that you write one code base and you have an app both for Windows 10 on the desktop/laptop and you have a Win 10 phone app also.

When I heard about Xamarin, I thought, hey, that will

allow me to easily port my Windows phone apps over to Android. I didn't include iOS since that would require an Apple computer to compile the code for iOS and twice the cost for Xamarin. What cost, you ask? Well, Xamarin is not free. To use it with Visual Studio you need to pay \$1000 per platform per year, discounted to \$800 per platform for independent developers such as I. That also helped me omit iOS.

Before going further, note that on this page and the next, there are screen captures of the same app running on an Android phone on the left and a Win 10 phone on the right. The Win 10 version has ads. If the Android app and the Win 10 app are using the same code base, you are justified in asking why the difference in appearance. The reason is that I didn't use Xamarin as it is meant to be used in developing the

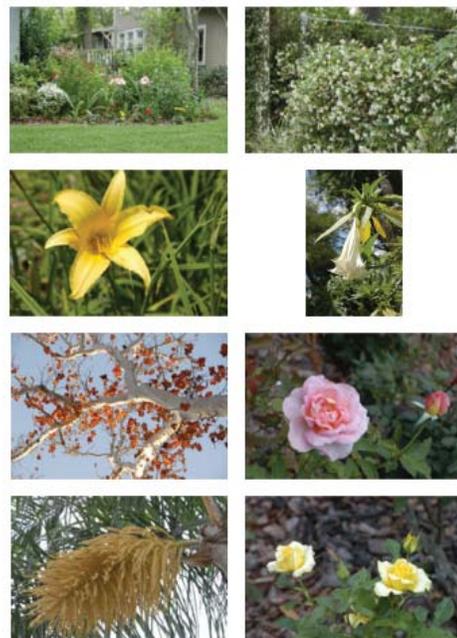
Xamarin.....Continued on page 4



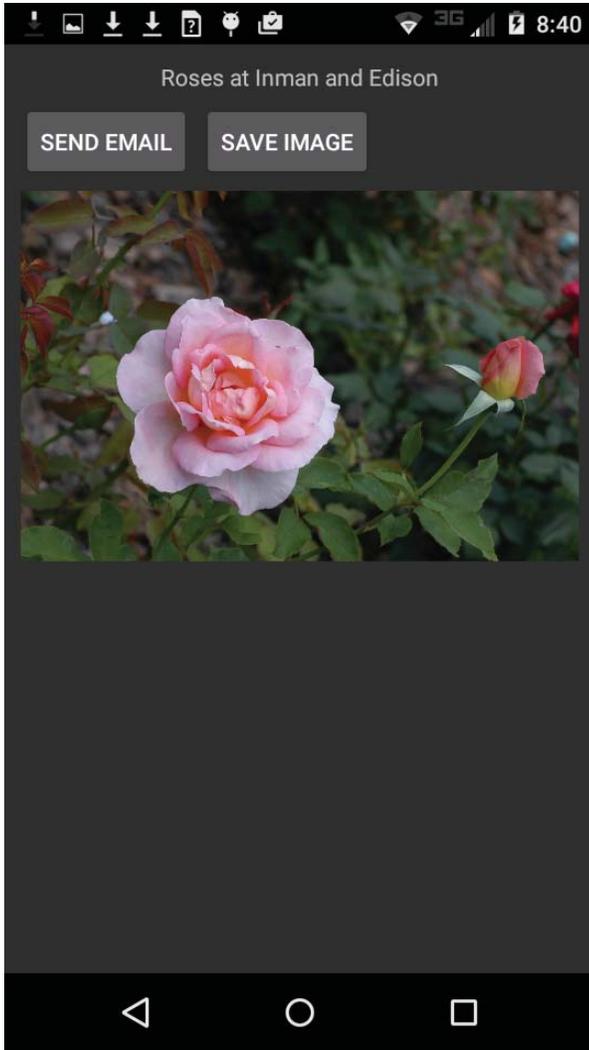
Hyde Park Flowers

Thumbnails

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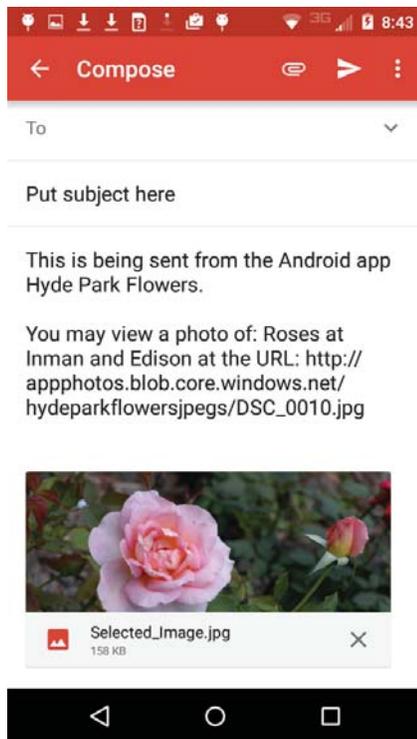


Hyde Park Flowers

Image



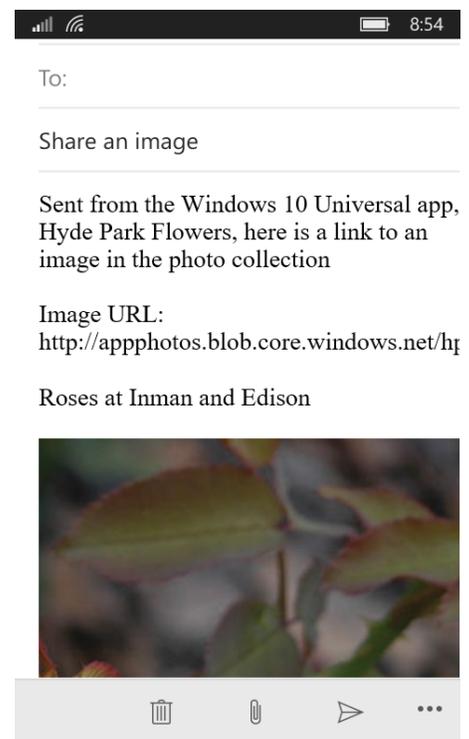
Roses at Inman and Edison



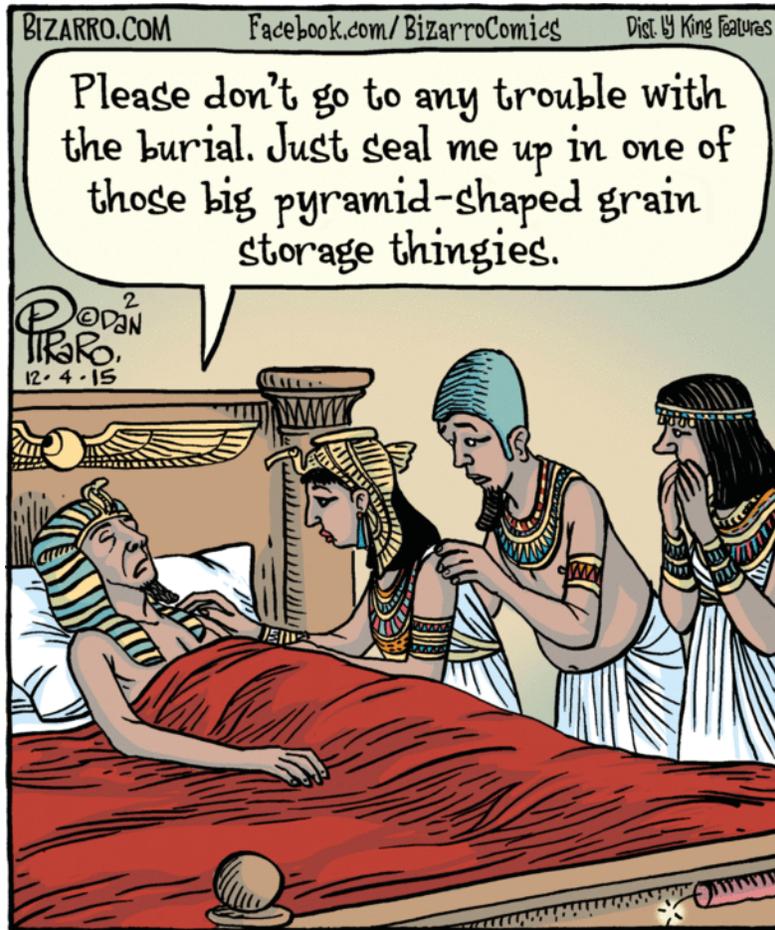
Xamarin.....Continued from page 3

app for both platforms simultaneously. I already had the Win 10 apps, and I only wanted to port the apps to Android – and not use the usual Android development tools. So I simply dropped my C# code for the Win 10 app into the shared part of Xamarin, made a few changes in component names to satisfy Xamarin, such as changing <StackPanel> to <StackLayout>. That got me the Android app up and running with its basic features. To enable features such as sending email and saving an image to the Pictures folder, I had to move to the Android only part of the Xamarin and do what was needed

Xamarin.....Continued on page 6



Internet Picture of the Month



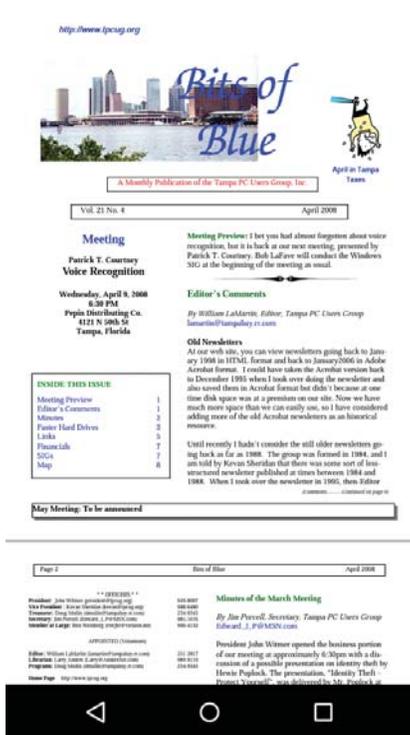
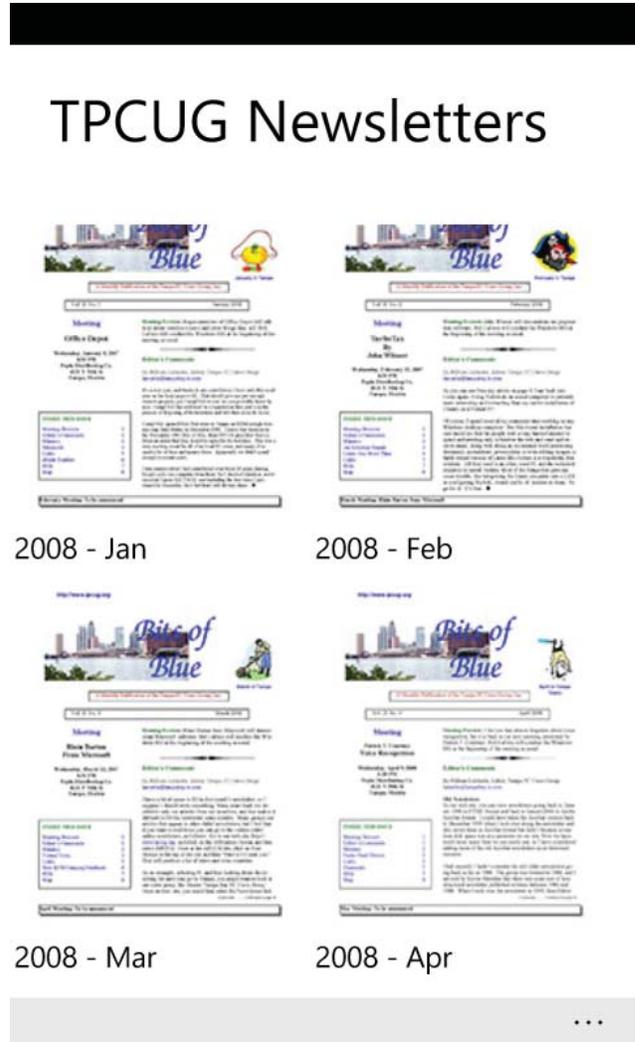
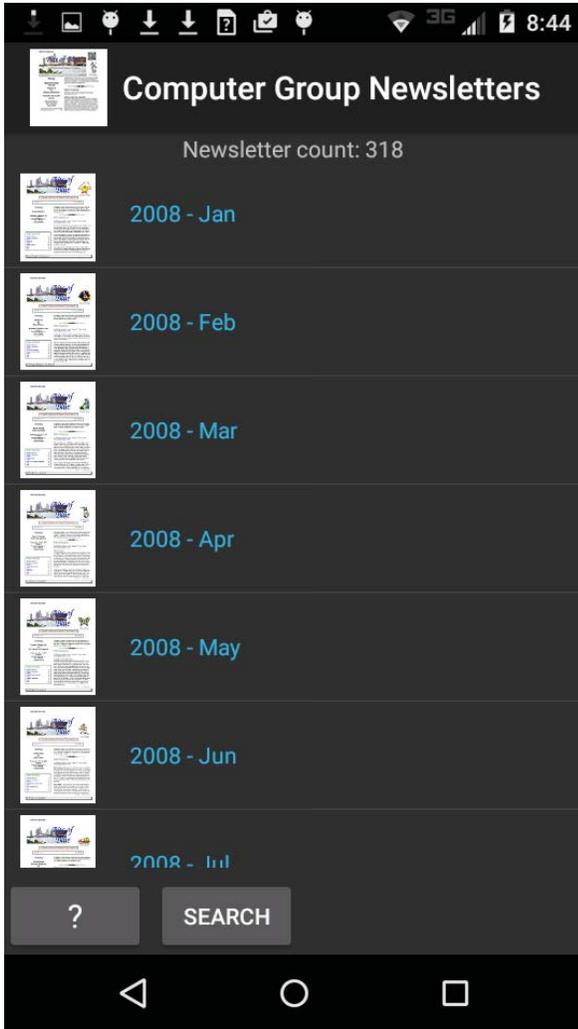
Apparently Ben Carson was correct

From the site <http://bizarro.com/> at <http://bizarro.com/comics/december-4-2015/>. Obviously inspired by Ben Carson's comment that the pyramids were built to hold grain.

February's Links

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)
Bizarro Comic
Windows 10 Media Creation Tool
Suggested changes to Windows 10

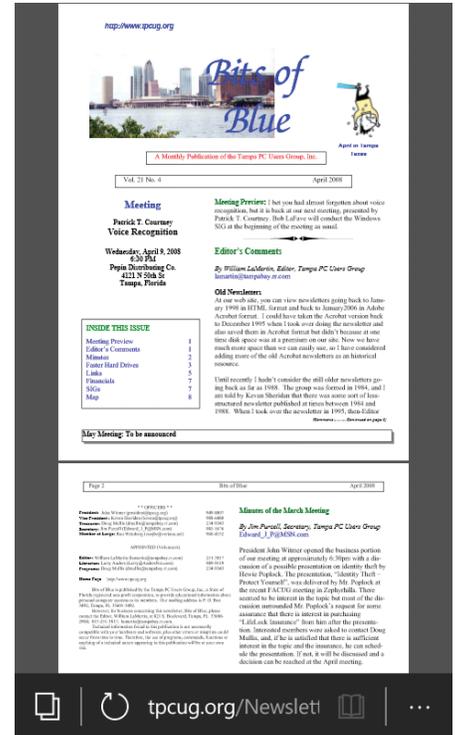
<http://www.tpcug.org>
<http://bizarro.com/>
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/windows10>
<http://www.cnet.com/pictures/8-windows-10-settings-you-should-change-right-away/>



Xamarin.....Continued from page 4

there to be able to send an email with an image attached and also to be able to save an image to the Pictures folder in Android.

A Xamarin Solution in Visual Studio has four projects: A shared code project, then three separate projects for the three platforms. In my work, since I already have a Windows app and am not interested in an iOS app, I only deal with the shared project and the Android project. So far I have ported the Computer Group Newsletter app you see on this page, the previous Hyde Park Flowers app, my Civil War Photos app and my Old Florida Photos app. However, none of the Android apps have yet been published. That is my next project. ♦



**TPCUG FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR 2015**

TPCUG STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES AND BANK BALANCE

2015 INCOME

Memberships (23 single 5 Family)	750.00
Amazon & Misc.	529.10
TOTAL INCOME	1279.10

2015 EXPENSES

Newsletter Postage	197.30
Newsletter Printing	464.17
FACUG Dues	25.00
APCUG Dues	50.00
Florida Incorporation Fee (paid in 2016)	0.00
Web Site Hosting Fee (12 months)	181.08
P O Box Rental	80.00
Dec Holiday Party Costs	300.87
Website Domain Fee (good for 3 years)	113.97
Refreshments (Cookies)	0.00
Miscellaneous (connector cable)	54.94
PayPal Fees	8.94

TOTAL EXPENSES 1476.27

NET DEFICIT FOR 2015 **197.17**

BANK BALANCE – January 1, 2015	7508.98
BANK BALANCE – December 31, 2015	7311.81

Submitted by D.W. Mullis, Treasurer, TPCUG

Yahoo Groups email group

*By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
Tampa PC Users Group
merle@merlenicholson.com*

We have had a Yahoo group for broadcasting emails to members TPCUG@YahooGroups.com for many years, and although there are messages coming out of the group every month, it seems to me the participation is lower than it could be. Will you please consider joining?

The concept and use of the group is pretty straightforward. If you send an email to the YahooGroup, that email gets sent to all subscribers. So you can ask a question, make announcements, send items of interest or ask for help from the entire membership just by sending your email to TPCUG@YahooGroups.com. At least to those members who have subscribed.

Yahoo.....Continued on page 8

Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

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Tampa, FL 33601-3492



First Class Mail

Member: Your membership is up for renewal

Yahoo.....Continued from page 7

To subscribe, send an email to tpcug-subscribe@yahoo.com. It will add the email address that you sent it from. If you're not sure if you're already on the list, just send it anyway, and you'll get a message back to that effect.

We are not getting any spam or anything unwanted from this so far – and it's many years old. There is a monthly reminder to contribute an article to the newsletter and a reminder for the monthly meeting, and an occasional ask for help on one thing or another. It's always had the potential to be truly useful as a way to ask questions of the membership. Will you join? ♦

