



# Bits of Blue

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



Vol. 29 No. 3

March 2016

March in Tampa

## Meeting

### How To Be Smart With Your Smartphone & Tablet

by

Abby Stokes

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

6:30 PM

Pepin Distributing Co.

4121 N 50th Street

Tampa, Florida

**Meeting Preview:** See page 3 for a detailed description of this month's presentation. Merle Nicholson will 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](mailto:william@lamartin.com)

Thanks to Merle Nicholson and Ron Weinberg for their contribution this month. Thanks also to John Witmer for a detailed description of this month's presentation on page three.

Last month I wrote about using Xamarin to port some of my Windows 8.1 and Windows 10 Universal apps to the Android platform. I had finished converting several apps but had not as yet published them to the Google Play Store. Well, as I write this, three of them are now in the Store for you to install on your Android device, phone or tablet. The apps are Hyde Park Flowers, Civil War Photos and Computer Group Newsletters. That last app should be of interest to the group since it provides access on an Android device to all the group's newsletters from 1988 through December 2015. Install them and give me a decent rating. Who knows, you may be the only people who do that, since I have read that there are many apps in both the Apple and the Google stores that never get downloaded.

Comments.....Continued on page 2

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meeting Preview	1
Editor's Comments	1
Minutes	2
March Meeting Expanded	3
Windows 10 Tips	4
Picture of the Month	5
Links	5
Verizon Mail Moves to AOL	7
Map	8

April 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 February Meeting**

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

**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 Merle Showed several items of interest in Windows 10.

The February presentation was given by myself, Merle Nicholson, on Windows 10 in two parts. First was a Pros and cons of doing the upgrade and the circumstances where upgrading may not be the best thing. Next was steps to prepare for the upgrade. Get your system healthy, do a chkdsk and make a good backup or clone of the existing drive.

The second part was Windows 10 essential customizations. A description of Windows 10 Build 1511 and what it means, and finally 11 things to do after installation. The three page slide show is available - just email the presenter at [merle@merlenicholson.com](mailto:merle@merlenicholson.com). ♦

Comments.....Continued from page 1

In the news toward the end of February was that Microsoft bought Xamarin. I had to pay Xamarin \$800 to use Xamarin in conjunction with Microsoft Visual Studio to create my Android apps. Perhaps with that purchase Microsoft will now offer the use of Xamarin with Visual Studio as cheaper or possibly even free. I know a lot of independent developers found the \$800 per year for Android too high. And if you wanted to develop for iOS along with Android with Visual Studio, add another \$800/year. The development for Microsoft Windows was free. Perhaps they will make an announcement about all of this in April at the Mi-

Comments.....Continued on page 3

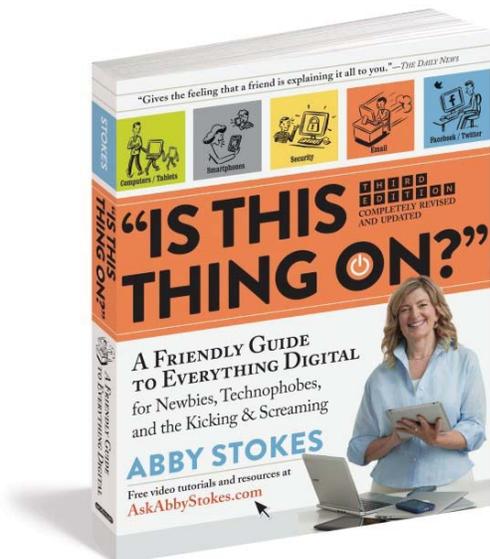
## March 9th Meeting Presentation

By John Witmer, President Tampa PC Users Group  
[tpcugpres@gmail.com](mailto:tpcugpres@gmail.com)

We are privileged to have Abby Stokes present to us this month. The topic selected last month by our members was for her to give us a presentation on “How to be Smart with your Smartphone and Tablet.” Abby is an entertaining and very knowledgeable speaker who gets great reviews from the numerous groups she presents to. She targets her presentation to the older generation, especially those who did not get on board the digital revolution thru work experience or other means before retirement. She also has knowledge and tips to share with the more experienced technology users.

She is the author of the newly revised book “Is This Thing On?” She will have copies of the paperback version (496 pages) of her book available for purchase at the meeting. The cost is \$18.00 and can be paid with cash, check, or credit card. I encourage you to consider purchasing a copy for personal use, or as a gift to someone you know who would benefit from having access to this friendly guide to everything digital.

I would also suggest you check out Abby’s website to review the video tutorials, helpful guides, and other resources she provides to supplement the book content. Go to <http://www.AskAbbyStokes.com> to access her web content and further information on her book.



I am also encouraging our members to invite their spouse or a friend to hear Abby’s presentation. I don’t want anyone who attends our meeting to feel

any obligation to buy her book – I just think whoever does attend this meeting will find it entertaining and enjoyable to hear Abby speak. Hope to see you at our monthly meeting on March 9th at Pepin Distributing Co. ♦

Comments.....Continued from page 2

crosoft Build conference in San Francisco.

Developing for a platform really requires that you have different devices to check how your app appears on them. For windows, I have several Windows phones, tablets, laptops and desktop computers. For Android, I had only one phone. And when I found in using an Android tablet emulator that the buttons on some pages of an app did not look good, even though they looked perfect in an Android phone emulator and an actual phone, I decided it was time to purchase an actual tablet. I settled on an ASUS ZenPad S 8 Z580CA-C1-BK 8” 64 GB Tablet from Amazon.com. The tablet received good reviews, and I have found only one thing that is less than optimal. When I want to watch some of the videos I have made and placed at <http://www.lamartin.com/Videos.aspx>, they are jerky. At this point, I am not 100 percent sure of the cause, but I think it is that the tablet does not get a good connection to the wireless router. The same videos run

Comments.....Continued on page 7

## Windows 10 tips - March 2016

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,  
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This month I have some beginning tips to improve the Windows 10 experience: Playing DVD movies, reducing the amount of “telemetry” data going back to Microsoft and eliminating advertizing on the lock screen.

**DVD:** Windows 10 will not play a DVD movie as delivered, although DVD devices are supported otherwise. Windows 7 did movies through the Windows Media Center and Windows Media Center was available for Windows 8.1. But Windows Media Center is uninstalled by the Windows 10 Upgrade. Please don't mistake what I've said here; Windows 10 handles DVDs fine, but not DVD movies.

There are several solutions to this. You can overcome the loss of WMC by reinstalling it through an unofficial source (See my previous articles on Windows 10). Second option is to install VLC from VideoLAN, a free and open source media player. Be sure to get VLC from the official website <http://www.videolan.org>. DO NOT download from one of the many locations that a Google/Bing search produces. Last option is the best but costly, PowerDVD from CyberLink at <http://www.cyberlink.com>. PowerDVD is a good option if you have a Blu-ray drive. PowerDVD also extends Blu-ray support to WMC.

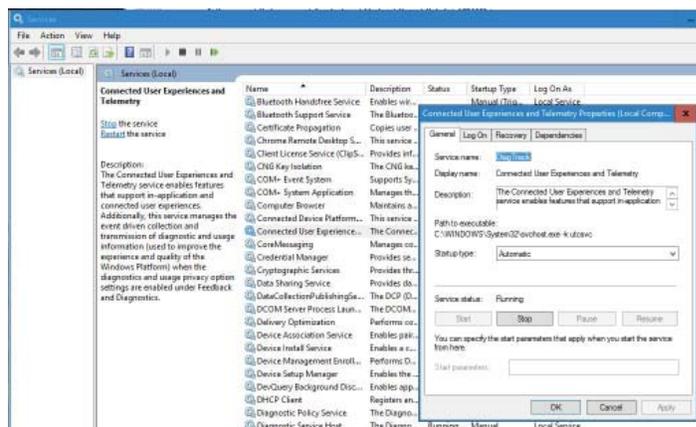
**Telemetry:** The bloggers (and Microsoft) are now calling the usage data being sent from your computer back to Microsoft “telemetry”. Not a bad word I guess if you're trying to downplay the importance of this data. (I worked on space programs at Cape Canaveral for 10 years and I'm pretty sure I know what telemetry is.) There is a long technical Microsoft TechNet article that explains the general content of this data, and describes four levels of settings available to some versions of Windows 10. Windows 10 is always set to the highest (least private) “Full” setting by default. As it turns out, the settings are accessible. A very trustworthy technical writer, Ed Bott, writes about this pretty comprehensively. See <http://www.zdnet.com/article/>

[windows-10-telemetry-secrets/](http://windows-10-telemetry-secrets/). He references that TechNet article, and if you have access to it, it's pretty interesting technically.

Further searches produce instructions on how to make the setting as low as possible. In addition there is a background service that handles some or all of the “telemetry”, and everyone is saying that it's safe to disable this service. I have done so on my four Windows computers.

One last thing about Telemetry. Recent updates to Windows 7 and 8.1 have installed the “Diagnostic Tracking Service” to your PC if that's what you are using. The Service name is “DiagTrack”. I have now disabled that service on my Windows 7 computers. I have read the claim that DiagTrack was installed by an optional update, suggesting that it's your own fault that it's installed. I think that's valid only if there's a thorough description of the update in Updates. I look at the Microsoft articles on all optional updates for my computers, and I guess I just missed this . . . three times. My fault obviously. Disabling it in Windows 7 and 8.1 is the same as in Windows 10.

To kill the DiagTrack service in Windows 7, 8.1 and 10, go to Control Panel, Administrative tools, Services. Scroll down and find “Connected User Experience” service, right-click and select “Properties”.



Then Use the “Stop” button to stop the service – it takes a moment – and then change the “Startup type” to Disabled as indicated in the screen capture on page six.

Tips.....Continued on page 6

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## Internet Picture of the Month



### Black Back Gorilla

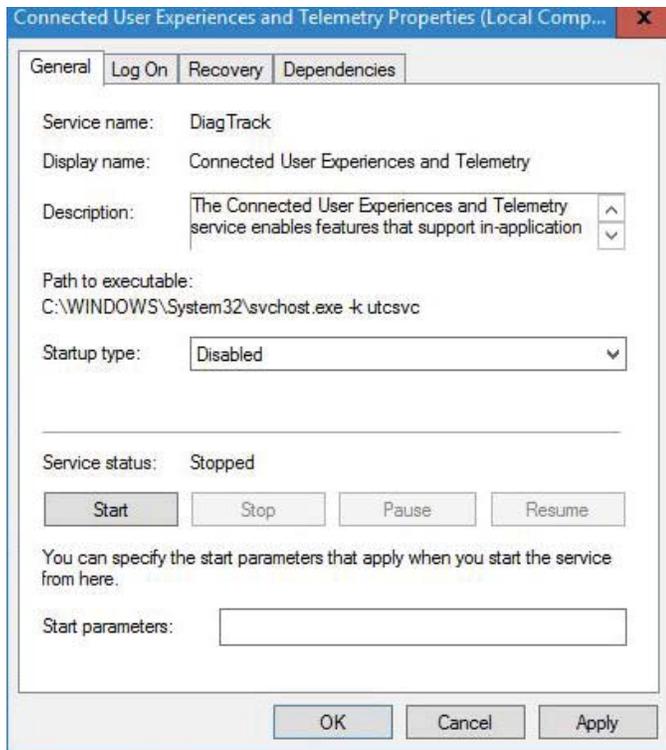
From Flickr at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/helenehoffman/25396174705/in/explore-2016-03-01/>.  
Photographed by Ron Anthony Bautista at the San Diego Zoo. You may see more of his photos at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bautistany/favorites/>.

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### March's Links

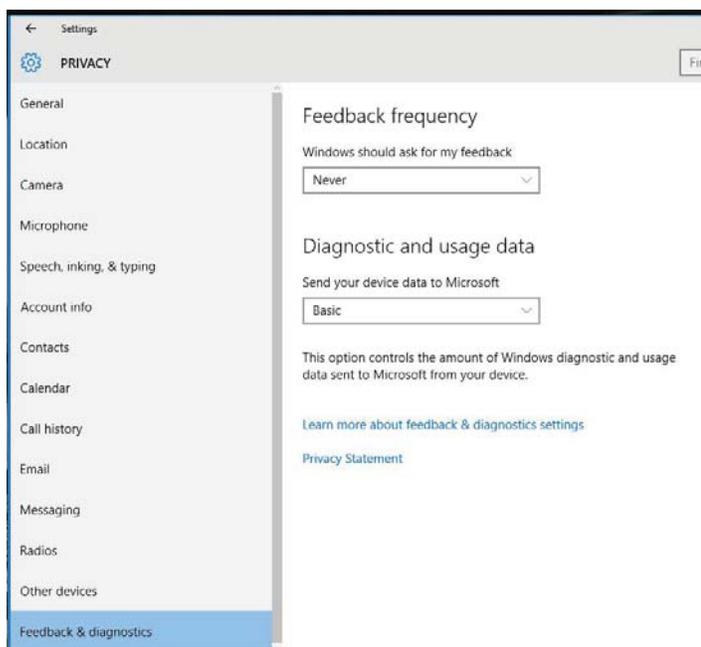
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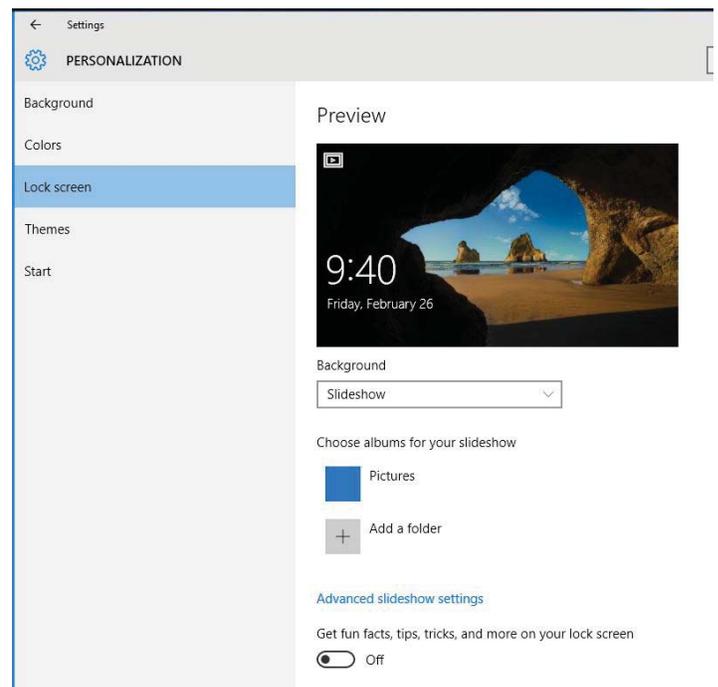


Tips.....Continued from page 4

In Settings, Privacy, Feedback and Diagnostics, Set “Windows should ask for my feedback” to “Never”, and set “Send your device data to Microsoft” to “Basic”.



**Advertising on the Windows 10 lock screen.** Yes, that’s right. Microsoft has been pretty discrete about this. Some advertizing for a couple of games and for Minions has appeared. It was planned all along to use this for push advertising to you; they finally did and got a lot of flack about it. I probably wouldn’t notice it for a long time because I bypass the lock screen, but sooner or later I would want to login as Administrator and maybe see this. As it turns out, there’s a setting to turn it off, but like a lot of Windows 10 settings, you wouldn’t have guessed it.



In Settings, Personalization, Lock screen, set the Background to anything but “Windows Spotlight”, the installation default. I’ve set mine to Slideshow. Then switch “Get fun facts, tips, tricks and more on your lock screen” to Off. ◆



## Verizon.net Mail Moves to AOL

By Ron Weinberg, Member-at-Large,  
Tampa PC Users Group  
[rswjbr@verizon.net](mailto:rswjbr@verizon.net)

**T**he many Verizon subscribers in Florida, California, and Texas who use Verizon.net email at home or when traveling have already been notified in an email proclaiming new benefits.

You should have also received a separate activation notification message wherein the necessary conversion could be completed. If you use Verizon for email you must take prompt action.

Here are a few important points to be aware of.

We quote from AOL Help. “Your verizon.net email must be moved to AOL before March 15, 2016. If you do not complete the basic AOL registration to move your verizon.net email to AOL by this date, your email will be deleted and you will not be able to use it in the future.”

“If you use your verizon.net account to access Flickr, you must update your login ID to another Yahoo account. This action **MUST** be taken **BEFORE** you receive the notification that it is time to make the move to AOL Mail or you will lose access to your Flickr account and stored photos/videos. You can complete this process at <http://aol.it/flickr>.”

“If you use your verizon.net account to access other Yahoo services, such as Yahoo Finance or Groups, you will no longer have access to those accounts. You must use an existing or new Yahoo account to use those services in the future. It is a good idea to take a screen shot or print out any information you want to retain before you migrate your verizon.net account to AOL Mail. Then you can mirror that information within your new Yahoo account.”

By using the method in the notification you will be able to retain your Verizon.net address. Folders and Contacts and sub accounts will be moved for you. If you attempt to sign up to AOL Mail directly, the con-

nection to Verizon will not be available. Therefore, if you have lost the notification email you may have to call Verizon or AOL for assistance.

If you receive your Verizon email on your local PC through Outlook, Thunderbird, Live Mail, Incredi-Mail, Apple Mail, etc., you will not have to change your POP or SMTP server but you must replace your Verizon email password with the AOL Mail password. Verizon passwords will still be valid for non-email entry to your Verizon account.

Android or iOS users need add AOL to their native email app or download “Alto” or the “AOL Mail News Weather and Video” app.

Additional information is available at: <https://help.aol.com/products/aol-mail-verizon>. ◆

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*Comments.....Continued from page 3*

fine on my desktop computers and also on my Surface Pro 2 that is using the same wireless. The tablet works fine for regular web pages. There is just a problem with my videos (which are quite large).

My videos are of three types. Videos that are made of a collection of still photos joined together using Adobe Premier Elements. Then there are ones made up of still photos interspersed within actual movie clips, and finally ones that are exclusively movies. Having taken only still photographs since I was in junior high, I only started taking movies when I purchased a Nikon D800 DSLR that had movie capabilities in addition to still photography two year ago. I never thought I would enjoy making movies but am finding it interesting.

While the Nikon D800 gives excellent results when you have managed to get it correctly focused and held steady, it is not the ideal piece of equipment for making moves. Hence, a Sony HDR-CX900 Full HD Handycam Camcorder is on order from B & H Photo. I am spending my children’s inheritance. ◆

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