



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



**NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIP**

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January 2017

January in Tampa

Meeting

Extended Windows SIG And Business Meeting

by

All of Us

Wednesday, January 11

6:30 PM

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

Meeting Preview: Extended Windows SIG and a Business Meeting.

Editor's Comments

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

There almost wasn't a newsletter this month. But here it is again. However, you may not have received it in the usual timely manner before the monthly meeting. It may have arrived a few days later. I am pretty sure it will be finished a couple days before the meeting, but that does not allow enough time for having it printed and then mailed. However, it should have been posted online a couple days before the meeting.

The main reason it is late this month is that I received no articles. As should be obvious, in recent years only a handful of members submit anything, and that handful consists mainly of Merle Nicholson and myself with occasional help from about four other members. And this month the handful was an empty hand. In years past, members would provide articles. Sadly some of those members have died, some have left the group and some are just getting old and tired. I am a bit old and tired myself. I have been newsletter editor since December 1995. That is 20 years. I have managed to put out a newsletter on time for those 20 years despite going on vacations, being in the

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February 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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Association of Personal Computer User Groups

Minutes of the December 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.

The December meeting is a social meal held at Pepin Distributors. John Witmer did all the hard catering work with help from his wife. John has done this for enough years that he's found the winning formula, and it was a resounding success. The members took the opportunity to socialize, something that's difficult to do during regular meetings.

Our heartfelt thanks to John and Donna Witmer for the food and to Pepin Distributors for providing the venue.



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hospital and worse. I have enjoyed it and learned a lot in the process. But I need some help with articles if I am to continue.

At the last minute, I told Merle that we had nothing. He said that he had no ideas, and I had only the thinnest of an idea. But we decided to put ourselves to the task, and this newsletter is what we came up with.

As I have mentioned before, I have written a Windows 10 Universal app that you can download from the Windows Store, either for your Win 10 computer or your Windows 10 Phone (I think I am probably the only one in the group that has such a phone) that will allow you to read and search all our newsletters back to 1988. I have also ported that app to Android, so it is available in the Google Play Store for your Android phone or tablet. Well, you know what comes next: An iOS version.

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Where did Safe Mode go?

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

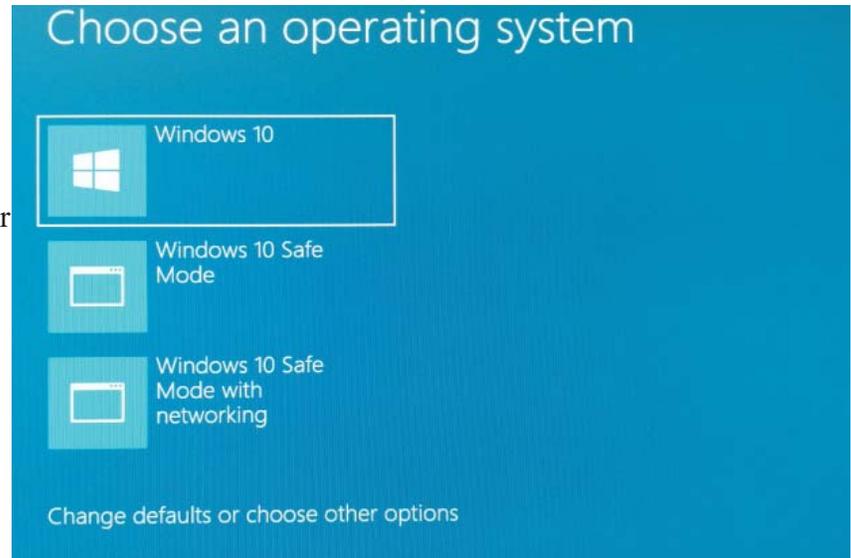
Those of us that have been Windows users for a while have certainly used Safe Mode, and on an OS before Windows 8, it was extremely useful to recover a broken OS without going to extreme measures like reinstalling. Safe mode loaded a minimal OS without many hardware drivers. It was useful because if you got a driver that was incompatible with say a network card, you could boot without drivers and remove the offending one. Most times it is useful to run a virus scan when you have an infection that is persistent. Chances are that the virus is not running in Safe Mode, so it can be removed more easily.

In Windows 7, for instance you must press F8 after the hardware is booted but before the OS is loaded and you got a menu that included Safe Mode. Sometimes the timing was difficult and it took several tries. Another way to get there is through a setting in System Configuration, on the boot tab, set a temporary boot into Safe Mode and then restart. But that presupposes that you can get into Windows in the first place.

Windows 10 has changed it all around. The F8 option is no longer there. If you can run Windows you can get into safe mode, but frankly if I can get into Windows, I don't need Safe Mode. It isn't even available in the repair options. And to my mind, Windows 10 needs it more than ever because of the way updates are forced. You can avoid driver updates somewhat with Windows 10 Pro, but it's a lot of work and only temporary so you have to re-do a lot of work because the driver updates will keep popping up.

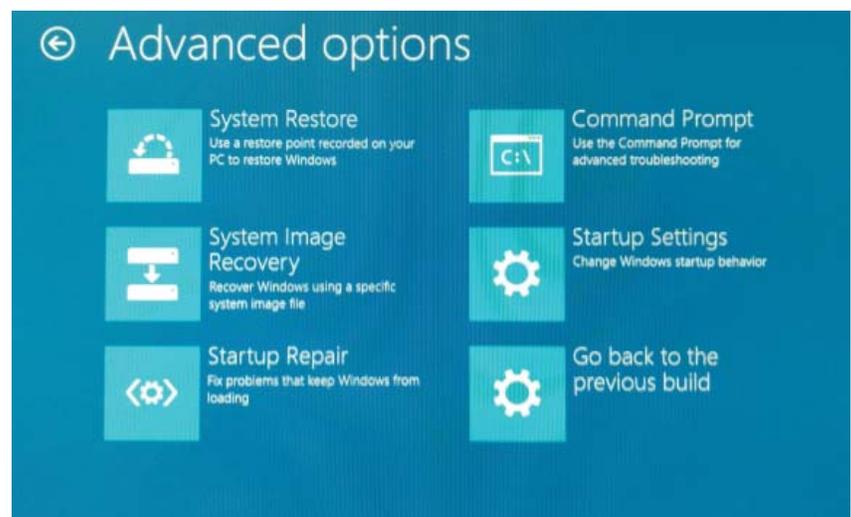
There's an interesting change you can make in Windows 10 to get a boot menu with Safe mode on the menu. It is not a secret especially, and apparently it's been there a long

time. Anyone can do the changes, but it is technical in nature. Here's the final result. Just read on if you think it's worth it.

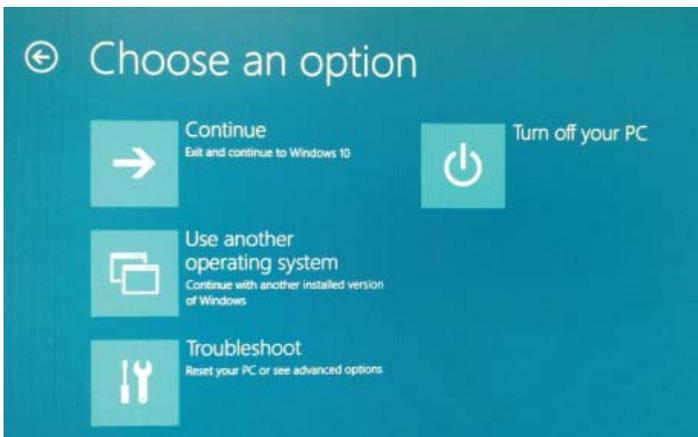
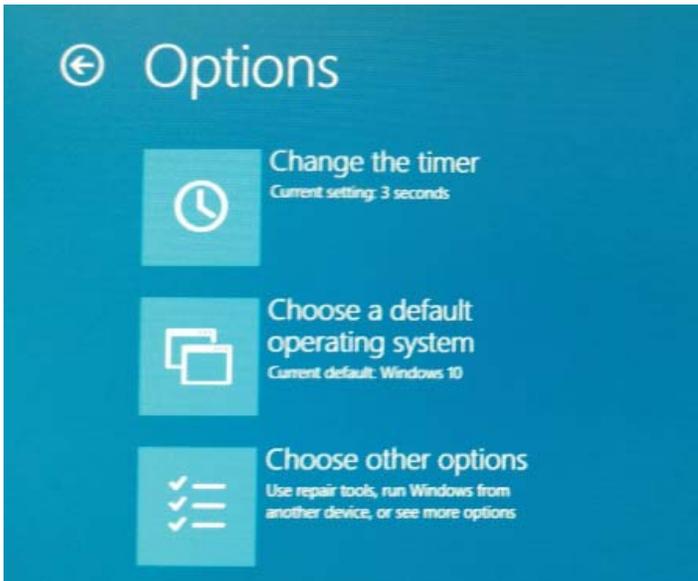


After making the change, the screen above appears just before a normal boot. I've made sure the default choice is Windows 10, and if no action is taken, it will boot into Windows 10 after a three second wait. The time-out is adjustable. I have three seconds to press a down arrow, and regardless what I do after that, there is no time-out. The truly interesting thing is that if the "Change defaults or choose other options" is clicked on you get the full system repair and troubleshooting. These options are normally accessed through a recovery flash drive or installation media.

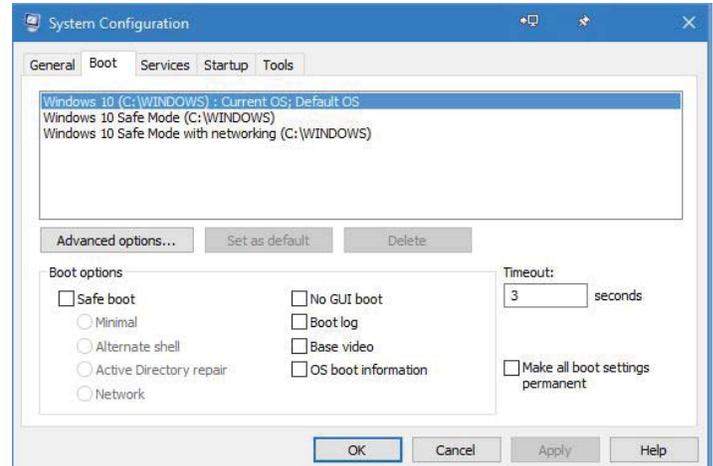
I've clicked around on the options and made some screenshots:



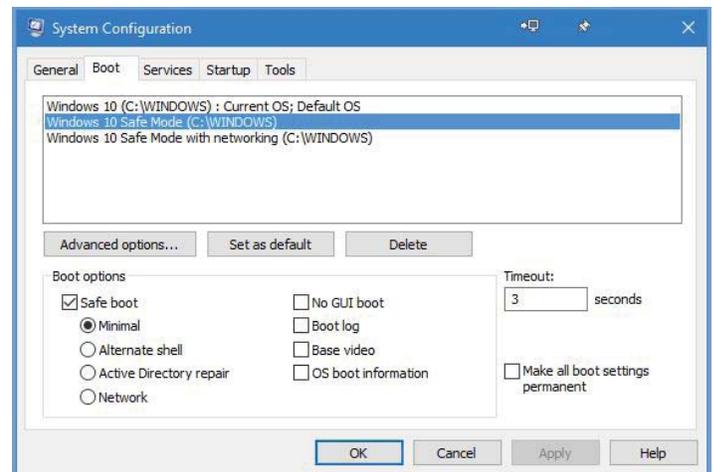
Safe Mode.....Continued from page 3



Here's how you add this menu:
Go into "System Configuration". This can be done several ways, you can search for "system configuration" or in the start menu type "msconfig" or right-click the start button, select "Command Prompt (admin)", and in the command line type "msconfig.exe" (all without the quotes). Click the "Boot" tab and here's what you get, except that you have only one entry, "Windows 10 (...) ... Default OS" We're going to add the other two. Notice that the first, default Windows 10 entry is selected and that there are no Boot Options and that "Set as default" is greyed out because it's already the default and we want to keep it that way.



To add the second option, we need to go back to the "Command Prompt (admin)" and type the following: `bcdedit /copy {current} /d "Windows 10 Safe Mode"` and press Enter. Close out System Configuration and open it again to the Boot tab and you'll see the second "Windows 10 Safe Mode" entry. Select that and click the "Safe boot" option and then the "Minimal" button. Click on "Make all boot settings permanent" and click Apply. There's a lengthy message box with dire warnings, so just read, worry a bit and click.



Now we need to add the third menu item. Repeat the last steps except you want a different description in the command prompt line: `bcdedit /copy {current} /d "Windows 10 Safe Mode with networking"`. Then close and open System Configuration, select "Windows 10 Safe Mode with networking" and click "Safe boot" under "Boot options" and click the "Network" button. You can change the time out from 3 seconds to something longer, but not shorter. Again, click on

Internet Picture of the Month



How to get hummingbirds in your garden

From the Old Farmer's almanac, founded in 1792, at the link: <http://www.almanac.com/content/plants-attract-hummingbirds> They tell you what plants attract hummingbirds and provide facts about hummingbirds, such as: "They are the tiniest of all birds, weighing less than an ounce and measuring only 3 inches long."

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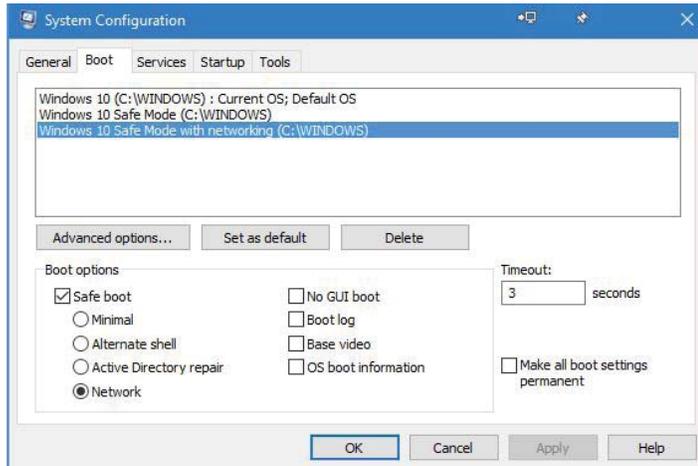
Porting an app or writing one from scratch for iOS (iPhone and iPad) is more difficult, at least for me, than for Windows or Android. And once you have it written and working with no obvious bugs, having tested it on the various OS simulators, an actual iPhone and an actual iPad, there is the problem of jumping through all the hoops necessary to finally get it in the Apple App Store.

As I write this, I have the newsletter app, *Computer Group Newsletters*, running on my iPhone and iPad. The most difficult thing was figuring out how to display a pdf file on an iDevice so that you could pinch and zoom it. But with the help of the Internet, I got that done. It was considerably easier on Windows and Android. I will test the app on my iPhone and iPad for several days before submitting the app to the store.

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“Make all boot settings permanent” and click Apply.



Be sure to use the Command Prompt (Admin), because the changes won't work otherwise. Be sure to select each option in turn to make sure the options are correct and make doubly sure the Windows 10 first entry is the default. It says so and also the “Set as Default” is greyed out and when you click on each of the others it isn't greyed.

I really like this. I'm not sure why it hasn't been talked about or even considered common knowledge. At worst, it's a three second delay on bootup and that may annoy some, but I don't notice it. The access to the system recovery and troubleshooting was a complete surprise to me and I'm really pleased to have it.

I discovered it quite by accident when I was researching a problem with a friends computer. The article I found has several very useful tips including “Enable System Restore”, something I have written about myself. Enabling system restore should be number uno on all new installations. I think this boot menu should be on the top 5 at least.

See <http://www.itpro.co.uk/operating-systems/25802/15-windows-10-problems-and-how-to-fix-them-5> ◆

Comments.....Continued from page 5

The following screen captures from the iPad Pro simulator will demonstrate the appearance of the app.

What you see in the first image below is the app's opening page scrolled down through 330 newsletters to the latest one, December of 2016.

Perhaps I should have ordered the newsletters in descending order by date so that the most recent newsletters were at the top. However, the current order may be the best if you are interested in reading about the early days of the group. And I think that is one of the main values of the app. It allows you to read and recall what was happening in the PC world in the late 1980s and early 1990 when so many exciting things were occurring. At least they were exciting for me, having purchased an Apple IIe in 1984 and a Gateway 2000 IBM clone in 1991, after which I soon joined the Tampa IBM PC Users Group, as we were then named.



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Comments.....Continued from page 6

When I read one of the old newsletters, I am amazed at how much I have forgotten. Just choosing the December 1995 newsletter, the first one with which I had anything to do, the article titles are fairly familiar, being Street Atlas USA, Adobe Photo Shop and Lotus Smart Suit for OS/2. That last one may be a problem for some. Do you recall Lotus? Do you recall OS/2?

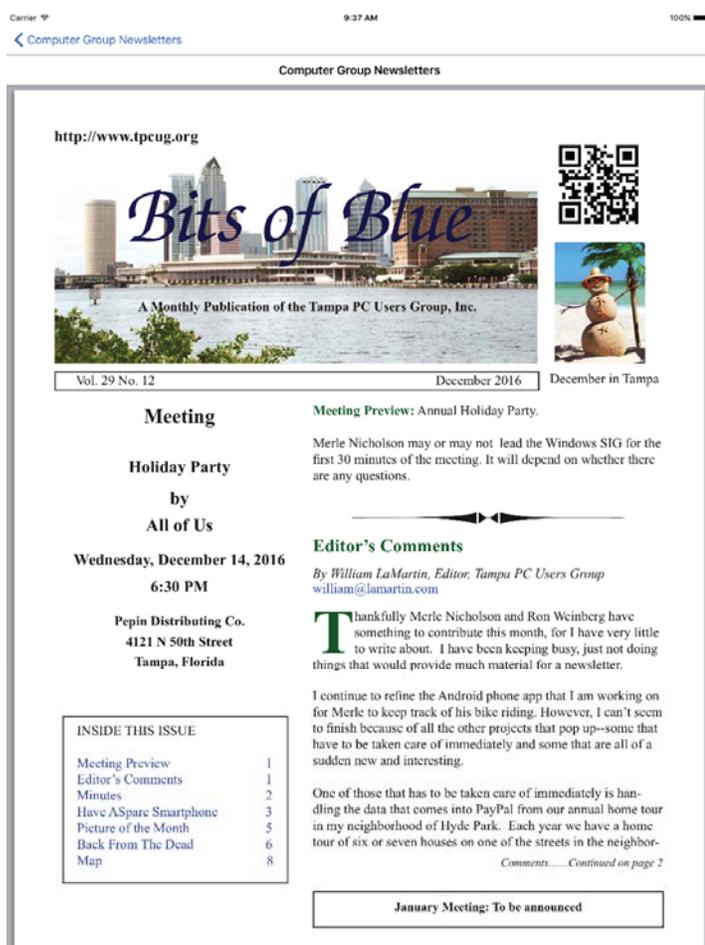
Go to the next newsletter, the January 1996 issue. Do you recall Syncware Fill, Photo Works from Seattle Film Works, Zip Explorer., Partition Magic or Impos/2. The only one you probably recall is Partition Magic. And a reading of the many more old and older newsletters will show you how much you have forgotten. Just try to recall how many personal computers you have owned in the past 20 or more years; how many different operating systems; how many peripheral devices, etc.

The image below is of our most recent newsletter being displayed in the iOS version of the app that I hope

to have in the Apple App Store within a week.

The final image below is of the search page of the app, where it is displaying the results of a search for the word Microsoft and claims to have found 1394 instances of it. The first instance found was on page four of the March 1989 newsletter. The results for the newsletters before December 1995 will not be as complete as those after since for those early newsletters. I scanned them into Adobe Acrobat from paper copies and then ran optical character recognition on them. I next used a feature of Acrobat to extract the text from each page of those newsletters and used that to build the searchable index. Since the OCR was not 100% accurate, the index for those early newsletters will not be 100% accurate. For newsletters from December 1995 onward, the searchable index should be totally accurate with the exception of hyphenated words in the articles.

Once I get the iOS version finished, there will be a version for all three different platforms. Go get one. ◆



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