

## THE BRIGHT NEW WORLD OF PC MONIORS

The past few years have brought several new developments in computer monitors. When you go shopping for a new display, you'll find more options and a wider range of prices than ever before. Over the next few days I'll mention some hints to help you with your buying decision.

First, LCD displays aren't just for notebooks anymore. Now several manufacturers offer space-saving flat LCD monitors for desktop PCs. Are these new technologies monitors a good buy? Well, yes and no. As with any new technology, these first desktop LCD panels are fairly expensive--most run between \$1000 and \$2000. Another downside is the screen size, or viewable area. Most of these LCD panels measure only about 15 inches on the diagonal, making them the same size as a small CRT monitor today.

There are pluses to these new monitors, or no one would be buying them. First of all, the space you'll save with these flat displays is quite tremendous--most are less than half the volume of a standard CRT monitor. And they weigh much less, allowing you to pick up and move the display whenever you feel the need. Finally, in general, these monitors offer extremely clear screens with brilliant colors. Many reviewers find them better viewing than CRT monitors of the same size.

Monitors now come in the standard VGA interface and in the new USB interface. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a USB monitor? Here's a quick breakdown.

The advantages: USB monitors do not require a video graphics card, saving you money if you don't

already own one. The USB hot-swap capability lets you quickly port a USB monitor from one computer to another. USB monitors often include (or offer as an option) a USB hub, allowing you to plug more USB devices into the back of your monitor.

The disadvantages: Your system's graphics performance may suffer without a video graphics card. USB monitors are slightly more expensive than standard monitors of the same screen size, mostly because the technology is still new.

Large-screen presentation monitors (27 inches or more across the diagonal) now sit alongside regular 21-inch and smaller desktop models on store shelves. These large-screen models make for better viewing, especially for large audiences watching demonstrations and presentations. Unfortunately, you'll end up paying a few hundred dollars more for these large monitors. You should also be aware that most presentation monitors do not support the very high resolutions of high-end desktop monitors, as they are not designed for such use. But if you regularly present computer data to a group, you'll find these monitors more affordable and flexible than a digital projector.

Whenever you consider buying a new monitor, first familiarize yourself with the tuning controls. Because the glare and lighting conditions of your work environment may change as you move your desk and office furniture around, you always want to choose a monitor that offers a wide range of tuning options (brightness, contrast, focus, and so forth).



## Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

**L.C.A.C.E.**

c/o Group Ambassador  
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1999-2000

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#### Membership

Membership for L.C.A.C.E is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only \$10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the L.C.A.C.E. News Journal and access to all club libraries, and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline and is now available on our WEB site at <http://inf-net.com/lcace>.

#### Meetings

L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Warren/Newport Public Library, 224 N. O'Plaine Road in Gurnee, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 11:30a.m, and the formal meeting begins at 12pm. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

#### Advertising

Ad rates per issue: Full page - \$25, Half page -\$15, Quarter page - \$10, Business Card -\$5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send Camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

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#### **ARTICLE DEADLINE**

**The deadline for all articles being submitted for the News Journal is the 20th of each month. Send your articles via E-Mail to Corky Bell at [corky@foxvalley.net](mailto:corky@foxvalley.net) or Vic Falkner at [rvf@se-iowa.net](mailto:rvf@se-iowa.net)**

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### NOTICE

If your E-Mail address is incorrect or missing or you want to add or change your WEB site url, please E-Mail us at [lcace@inf-net.com](mailto:lcace@inf-net.com) with the correct information.

# WEB Sites

Our members own WEB Sites.

Corky Bell

<http://users.foxvalley.net/~corky>

Nancy Larson

<http://users.foxvalley.net/~mamanan>

Jim Rutledge

<http://pweb.netcom.com/~jrutnet2/couples.html>

# Time to Renew

If the mailing label on your News Journal is highlighted in **YELLOW**, this means it is time to renew your membership to L.C.A.C.E. This information will be published in the News Journal and will also be posted on the club's WEB site which is

<http://inf-net.com/lcace>

If it is time for you to renew your membership, please fill out a new Application and a Member's Profile Sheet. These forms can be obtained at the meetings or downloaded from our WEB site.

The following Member(s)  
need to submit renewal applications:

**NONE FOR MAY, JUNE OR JULY, 1999**

If you have already filed an application,  
please disregard this notice.

### APRIL 50/50 WINNER

Leslie Salsburg was the winner of our  
April 50/50 drawing.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**



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During the month of September, there will be no setup fee with a 3 month subscription. All dial up service includes (1) E-Mail account. Additional E-Mail accounts as little as \$2.50/mo. For more details call us at (847)543-1350 or send me an E-Mail at [postmaster@inf-net.com](mailto:postmaster@inf-net.com).

## Scanners

by Arnold Gudyka

Before you go out and get yourself a scanner, you should try to determine what you are going to use it for. If you're looking for a scanner to fulfill multiple functions-such as capturing graphics for Web and print publishing-always go for the unit that meets all of your needs rather than the lowest common denominator. If your needs don't fall into one of the two categories which follow, then you're probably a general-purpose user and should consult the other issues we address here to narrow down your choices.

**Print Publishing: The Best of Everything:** Both scan resolution and color depth are critical if you're publishing high-quality output. Be careful not to confuse common printing rules of thumb with scanner specifications. For instance, even though you may usually require no more than a 150-dpi scan to output on your thermal-dye printer, you rarely want to scan the original at a mere 150 dpi; similarly, just because your high-end inkjet printer can only reproduce 24 bits of color data doesn't mean you won't get better output from a 36-bit scan. Opt for a scanner with a horizontal resolution of at least 400 dpi and a minimum of 30-bit color (although 36-bit is preferable). In addition, make sure that it ships with either a standard ICC profile (under Windows 98) or custom color-matching software (under Windows 95), as well as calibration tools that include a standard IT8 calibration target.

**Document Management: Sharpness Counts.** If you plan to perform optical character recognition (OCR) on the scans or print them out, you need a unit capable of at least 300 dpi (400 is preferable). For onscreen viewing only, 150 to 200 dpi should be sufficient. If you plan on performing document scans frequently, you may want to spring for a unit with a built-in automatic document feeder (ADF)-these are generally sheet-fed designs-or spring for an add-on ADF to a flatbed. Furthermore, the scanner should be able to scan a single black and white page in 8 to 25 seconds. Unless you're managing color-critical images such as artwork or images with lots of shadow detail,

a 24-bit unit should suffice. **Still Images Run Deep:** The dynamic range of a scanner depends upon the sensitivity of its CCD and the capacity of its analog-to-digital converter (ADC). Keep in mind that the bit depth doesn't refer to the actual number of colors the scanner can capture. Rather, it refers to the maximum number of levels it can enumerate. In other words, just because a scanner that has the capacity to assign one of 16.8 million values to a color (24-bit) doesn't mean that the CCD can distinguish between two close shades of gray or blue. That's why more bits will generally give you better image reproduction, even though your printer can't print and your screen can't display more than 16.8 million colors. **24 bits: Good:** The minimum color depth you should consider for scanning photos and documents is 24 bits (8 bits per color or gray shade). Even the best 24-bit scanners suffer from noise, which usually results in a maximum of 6 usable bits per color rather than 8 bits. That's only about 262,144 colors, which falls far short of the color range of the typical photograph. Furthermore, those bits will be clustered around the midrange of the image, which means you'll lose detail in shadows and highlights. The images should be adequate for printouts from older, lower-quality printers as well as quick-and-dirty Web graphics and document management tasks.

**30 bits: Better--Sometimes:** In theory, 30 bits should always be better than 24. Unfortunately, many flatbed scanner vendors play fast and loose with their definition of a 30-bit device. Most use a 24-bit CCD and combine it with a 10-bit rather than a standard 8-bit ADC to stretch the output range of the colors into the shadows and highlights (Umax Technologies' Astra 1220P and 1220S flatbeds purport to achieve 36-bit quality from a 24-bit CCD and a 12-bit ADC). This doesn't add any information, but it can potentially make the existing image data look a little better. Therefore, a very good 24-bit scanner can still give you better images than a mediocre 30-bit one. If you're looking for significantly better images than you can get with a 24-bit scanner, you'll have to jump to 36 bits. On the other hand, if you're scanning slides, negatives, or transparencies, which have a broader tonal range than printed photographs, 30 bits is the minimum you can get away with.

(Continued on page 9 - Scanners)

# The PRESIDENT's RAM

Welcome to the start of the sixteenth year of the Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts. For those of you who haven't received the Election results, here they are:

Corky Bell - President  
Jim Rutledge \_ Vice President  
Linda Busch - Secretary  
JJ Johnson - Treasurer  
Donna Bell - Membership  
Terri Hanlon - Public Relations  
Mike McEnery - Program Chairman

We have already begun making plans for the upcoming year, with a complete agenda planned for each month through, and including, December, 1999. If there is something that you are interested in seeing as a demonstration, please let us know so we can attempt to make arrangements. We will try our best to accommodate any request, but remember we may not be able to fulfill all requests.

**A new concept that we will be introducing is the Monthly CD ROM selection for the software library.**

A new concept that we will be introducing is the Monthly CD ROM selection for the software library. For those of you who are new to L.C.A.C.E., we provide a software library to the membership that consists of programs ranging from basic utilities to complex database programs. All programs will be either Freeware or Shareware, as L.C.A.C.E does not condone, nor will we be a participant in "Pirating" of any software. As soon as we get the library back into shape, a complete inventory of available programs will be presented to the members, along with the prices. It has been along time since the library has been updated, so please bear with us until we can get it completed. Pricing for the disks will remain consistent with the cost of the disks and copying of the programs to the disks. I will attempt to make an area on the WEB Site for the Library so it can be viewed online. Stay tuned for future announcements.

Another addition will be a calendar with the dates of the meetings and an announcement of what the Demo for the month will be. This is already on the Web Site, but now will be included in the News Journal. I have included a small area in the News Journal with the dates only, but now I am going to include more information so you will be better informed on the upcoming meetings.

In the past year we have seen many changes and additions to the Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts. We have moved back to our permanent home, that being the Library. Our membership is increasing. We have added a program coordinator to schedule our meetings. The Web Site has become a valuable piece of media for the group with an upgrading scheduled to be completed, time permitting of course, sometime around July, 1999. We have a new enterprise in the area, that being the County Computer Expo at the Lake County Fairgrounds ([www.ccxpo.com](http://www.ccxpo.com)). With our booth located near the main entrance, we have been able to enhance the public's awareness of the existence of our group. By the way, if there is any member interested in helping at the Expo, please do so. There are never enough people to man the booth and JJ, Linda, Jim and Mike have done an excellent job, but they need some help (and a little rest), so come on out to the Expo. I would like to personally thank the Expo people for allowing us to have the booth.

With these changes and more to come, I can foresee an excellent future for the Group. That's what makes us such a special group, our work does pay off. Don't forget, May's meeting is on May 1st. See everyone there and good computing to all!

Corky



# Windows 98 Tips

## THE FASTEST APPLICATION IN THE WEST

How can you install WordPad on your Taskbar--as opposed to a desktop shortcut--so it's more easily accessible?"

There are two options you may wish to consider. The first is to create a hot key for WordPad, so you can open it at the press of a keyboard combo. Right-click the shortcut you use to open WordPad and select Properties. Click the Shortcut tab, then click inside the text box next to Shortcut key. Type the letter you'd like to use in combination with Ctrl-Alt to open the program, for example, W (Windows 98 fills in the Ctrl-Alt part). Click OK, and from now on, pressing Ctrl-Alt-W opens WordPad.

Your other option is to add a WordPad shortcut to your Quick Launch toolbar (the row of icons to the right of your Start button). Click and drag your current WordPad shortcut down to this toolbar between two existing icons (or on either edge of the bar). A black line will appear to let you know you've chosen an acceptable place to create a shortcut. Let go, and you now have Taskbar access to WordPad!

(Tip: Use the above techniques to create quick access to any of your favorite applications.)

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## WINDOWS 98 YEAR 2000 UPDATE

Although Windows 98 hasn't been around for very long, it is already experiencing year 2000 problems. Microsoft recently announced a free update that addresses and fixes minor year 2000 issues. You can download the update from the Windows Update Web site or order a CD online or by calling 800/363-2896. Microsoft says that the issues will cause neither data loss nor PC damage and that most users will be unaffected by the Y2K issues. But just to be safe, visit the following address for more details:

[www.microsoft.com/windows98/highlights/Win98Y2K.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/windows98/highlights/Win98Y2K.asp)

## LET'S MAKE A SHORTCUT

Did you just delete the Show Desktop item from your Quick Launch toolbar by mistake? D'oh! (Funny, you don't get a warning message asking if you're sure you want to delete it.) Don't worry--you can get it back.

Open an Explorer window, navigate your way to the Windows\System folder, and locate a file named Show Desktop. (If you don't see one, see note below.) Open a second Explorer window and navigate your way to Windows\Application Data\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Quick Launch. Right-click and drag the Show Desktop file from the System folder into the Quick Launch folder, let go, and select Create Shortcut(s) Here.

Hey, look at that--your shortcut's back!

If you don't see a file named Show Desktop in your System folder, you'll need to create one.

Open the Windows\System folder and locate a file named Show Desktop; then create a shortcut to this file in the Windows\Application Data\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Quick Launch folder. Don't see a file named Show Desktop in your System folder? Then you'll need to create one.

Open Notepad--select Start, Programs, Accessories, Notepad--and type the following:

```
[Shell]
Command=2
IconFile=explorer.exe,3
[Taskbar]
Command=ToggleDesktop
```

Select File, Save, navigate your way to the Windows\System folder, name the file

Show Desktop.scf

and click Save. Close Notepad.

Now just create a shortcut to this file in the Windows\Application Data\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Quick Launch folder, as described above, and a Show Desktop item will appear on your Quick Launch toolbar.

# Windows 95 Tips

## CLEAR UP YOUR CLOUDY DAY

Wish you didn't have to stare at that cloudy Windows 95 screen (basically, a Microsoft ad) every time you start your system? There are two ways to hide this logo screen from view: Either edit the msdos.sys file or, assuming you have the utility Tweak UI, make a simple setting change.

If you don't have Tweak UI, you'll have to go about this logo deletion the long way. Open an Explorer window and locate msdos.sys (it's on the root of your hard drive). Right-click this file, select Properties, deselect Read-only, and click OK. Now open msdos.sys inside Notepad (with the file selected, hold down Shift as you right-click the file, select Open With, choose Notepad in the list of programs, then click OK).

Inside the Notepad window, under the [Options] section of msdos.sys, type the line

LOGO=0

Select File, Save to keep your changes, then close Notepad. (Tip: Go back and reattach the read-only attribute to msdos.sys using the same steps you used to remove it.) The next time you start Windows 95, you won't see a cloud in the sky--er, we mean on your screen.

## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO START UP

You say you're one of the millions who didn't create a Windows Startup disk during the Windows 95 installation procedure? Not to worry--you didn't miss your chance. You can create the Startup disk whenever you please as follows (unless your system crashes irrevocably first, in which case you'll wish you had a Startup disk):

1. Click the Start button.
2. Choose Settings + Control Panel.
3. Double-click the Add/Remove Programs icon.
4. Click the Startup Disk tab.

5. Put a floppy disk in your floppy drive.
6. Click Create Disk and follow the instructions.

## SHARPER IMAGES

Want to display your graphics in more or less detail? The number of colors that Windows 95 can use to display images on your screen is determined by your color palette setting.

To change this setting, right-click a blank area of the desktop, select Properties, and click the Settings tab. Click the down arrow next to Color palette, and choose from the available palettes. (Note: Your choices may vary depending on your system's graphics capabilities.) Click OK, then click Yes to restart Windows.

## FINALLY, AN EPT TEST THAT WON'T MAKE YOU NERVOUS

Are you having trouble printing? If you have your Windows 95 installation CD handy, help is on the way. Pop the CD in your CD-ROM drive, click Browse This CD, and navigate your way to the Other\Misc\Epts folder.

Double-click Epts.exe and the Enhanced Printer Troubleshooter springs to life. Follow along, answering the questions it asks, and with any luck, you'll find a solution!

Upcoming  
L.C.A.C.E. Meetings

**May 1, 1999 - World Connect**  
**June 12, 1999**  
**(conference Room to be announced)**  
**July, 1999 - No Meeting**  
**August 14, 1999**  
**September 11, 1999**  
**October 9, 1999**  
**November 13, 1999**  
**December 11, 1999**



(Continued from page 5 - Scanners)

36 bits: Best: Graphic designers, desktop publishers, and other image-intensive users tend to be the main market for 36-bit scanners (and higher). It takes that color depth to obtain an accurate color scan with a good tonal range from a print original. It takes at least that to produce an acceptable tonal range from a slide or negative.

Dr. I. Hatedos

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### **Free Internet**

by Les Larkin 847-949-5888

[LesLarkin@NetZero.net](mailto:LesLarkin@NetZero.net)

So, you want to be on the Internet, but you don't like the idea of paying as much as \$264 per year for an ISP (Internet Service Provider).

Well, if you have a computer running Windows 95, 98 or NT, you can download the 3.337 Mb file that installs as NetZero. With it, you can surf the net and send and receive email for FREE! Of course, this does not include normal phone charges.

How can they do this for free? By advertising. An approximately 1 by 4 inch banner that can be moved anywhere on the screen, displays changing advertising messages. These messages are targeted to your interests.

I have been using NetZero for about 3 weeks as of this writing. In that time, I have had a few problems with the service. Most of the time they were probably caused by the fact that I didn't have my copy of Windows 95 updated per the advice of the ReadMe.txt file. I think I got a busy signal once, but it was probably CompuServe instead. I am also using a 60 day free trial version of CompuServe 2000. The other times, perhaps about 10%, I would get connected, but then I would get tossed off their system. I have no idea whether these failures were caused by a problem with my system setup or a problem at their end. In time, I expect fewer problems. My current copy of Windows 95 has only been on my computer 3 days longer than NetZero, and I have had as much trouble with Windows 95 as I have had with NetZero.

(Continued on page 10 - NetZero)

# Member's Profile

April, 1999

## Member's Profile

# Steve Yeaton

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

E-MAIL ADDRESS

[hiflyer9@bigfoot.com](mailto:hiflyer9@bigfoot.com)

**Month of Birth:** August

**My Job is:** Engineering Manager

**My Hometown is:** Syracuse, NY

**My Family Consists of:** Yes

**For Entertainment I Like:** R/C Model Flying

**Book Recommendations:** Star Wars

**My Favorite Meal is:** Pizza

**My Prized Possession(s):** My 1/3 Scale J3 Cub

**Someone I Admire:** Stephen Hawkins

**Something I Wish I Could Stop:** Eating

**I Want People to Remember Me:** Forever

**I Use My Computer For:** A Door Stop

**My Favorite Computer Program(s) Are:** "You Don't Know Jack"

**My Favorite Phrase or Expression Is:** "Time flies like an arrow - Fruit flies like bananas"

(Continued from page 9 - NetZero)

I have also had about the same amount of trouble with Compuserve.

Overall, I am pleased with the performance of this software and service, and I plan to use it for the foreseeable future. If you would like to talk about it, give me a call at home or send email.

### System Requirements

The NetZero software supports: Windows 95/98/NT 4 and has the following minimum system requirements: 486 System; 16 MB RAM (32 recommended); 12 MB of free disk space; 14.4 modem; SVGA monitor (800x600-screenresolution recommended). You can download NetZero at:

<http://www.NetZero.net>

## Interesting Web Sites

### GEEK SEEK

Looking for a job in high-tech? Take your quest national with Dice.com, at

<http://www.dice.com>

Fill in the search form and click a button, and you're presented with a list of pertinent opportunities, each linked directly to the placement firm charged with filling the position. Dice isn't only for programmers; high-tech salespeople, marketing weenies, writers, and administrative staff can also find positions listed here. The site claims to have thousands of listings, and even the most specific searches we tried turned up at least a handful of openings. Even if you don't find the job you want, you'll almost surely find a new headhunter or two.

### BEFORE YOU GET ANOTHER CAT OR DOG

"In the past several years, due to its relative intelligence, strong human bonding characteristics, and trainability, the potbellied pig has become an increasingly popular companion animal. This surge in ownership has led to many problems, including legal battles,

human-pig conflicts, and the general lack of health-care knowledge among owners and veterinarians alike." The kind people at

<http://www.potbelliedpig.com>

want to prevent these problems through education, which this site offers in cyberreams. Unfortunately, the site offers no footage of the aforementioned "human-pig conflicts," but it does feature a page entitled "Who is more annoying--Jim Carrey or Remington the potbellied pig?" Potential owners should take this test, because it's NOT an easy call.

## The Top Differences in the Middle Ages if Microsoft Had Existed Then

- 10> Chastity belts require a password rather than a key.
- 9> Last year's pitchfork not compatible with this year's hay.
- 8> The "Good Plague" hoax.
- 7> Horses routinely stop in mid-stride, and require a boot to the rear to start again.
- 6> The Microsoft Rack would work, but it would be 3 times larger than it should be and never completely kill anyone.
- 5> Forget about William Tell; William Gates shoots Apple off the head of Steve Jobs.
- 4> Use of a large, clumsy broadsword instead of yet-to-be-invented scissors helps explain Lord Bill's haircut.
- 3> Archbishop of Canterbury gets hit in the face with a pie.
- 2> Stained Glass Windows MCCCXXXXV actually not released until Spring of MCCCXXXXVI.
- 1> The Y1K bug threatens to cripple high-tech industries, like stonemasonry and weaving.

# Computer Country Expo

**May 15, 1999**

**Great prices!**

**Bargains galore!**

**Save up to 70% off retail on everything computer!**

This is Lake County's LARGEST computer expo. The event is on Saturday from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM. This show features computers, supplies, games, parts, software, accessories, CD-ROMs, monitors, diskettes, printers, keyboards, modems, disk drives, cables, expansion boards, services, and anything else in the domain of computers! And with that there are demos dealing with everything from building your own computer to the equipment and software you use with it.

## Location

**Lake County Fairgrounds**

**Route 120 (Belvidere Rd.) & Route 45**

**Grayslake, Illinois**

**Main Exhibit Hall Building #1**

**20,000 sq. feet of everything Computer!**

**PLEASE use the Rte. 45 entrance**

**\$6 Admission**

**All L.C.A.C.E. Members who present their membership card will receive a \$1 discount.**

See our WEB Site at  
[www.ccxpo.com/](http://www.ccxpo.com/)

Print this page, fill out the form below, bring it with you to the show, and get \$1.00 off the entry fee!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_ FAX # \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ WEB Site: \_\_\_\_\_

# Next Meeting!!!

*L.C.A.C.E Online*  
**View our Site**

[www.inf-net.com/lcace/default.html](http://www.inf-net.com/lcace/default.html)

- ◆ LCACE E-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE information,
- ◆ LCACE history and pictures
- ◆ LCACE meeting location and map
- ◆ LCACE members e-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE online membership application

May 01, 1999

## **Warren/Newport Public Library**

McCullough Meeting Room B  
224 N. O'Plaine Road  
Gurnee, Illinois

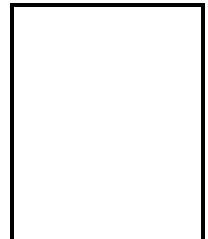
11:30 am - 2:00 p.m.

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**L.C.A.C.E**

*Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts*  
409 S. Elmwood Ave  
Waukegan, IL 60085-5219

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED