Show & Tell

Ask the Gurus

Software/Hardware Demonstrations

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2017

Help Desk

Special Interest Groups

Members Helping Members
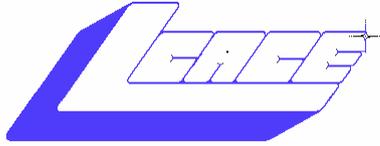
"Members Helping Members"
(since 1983)

Board of Directors
2015-2016

Phil Bock . . . . **President**
   president@lcace.org

Linda Busch . . . . **Vice President**
   vicepresident@lcace.org

Bobby Jacobs. . . . . **Secretary**
   secretary@lcace.org

Judy Dunham . . . . **Treasurer**
   treasurer@lcace.org

Linda Rohlfing . . . . **Programs**
   programs@lcace.org

J.J. Johnson. . . . . **Membership**
   membership@lcace.org

Linda Koudelka . . . . **Public Relations**
   pr@lcace.org

Volunteers

Webmaster . . . . J. J. Johnson
   webmaster@lcace.org

Newsletter Editor . . . . Mike McEnery
    . . . . .J.J. Johnson
   editor@lcace.org

Historian . . . . Lester Larkin

News Journal
The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Members are encouraged to submit contributions which will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

Send articles to editor@lcace.org
Permission is granted to reproduce any or all parts of this newsletter in other User Group publications, provided that credit is given to LCACE and the individual author(s).

Logo designed on an Atari Stacy Laptop in 1989 by Dwight Johnson Jr.

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

LCACE c/o Group Ambassador

"J.J." Johnson

Membership
LCACE membership is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are $20.00 per individual/family. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club hotline, and are now available on our web site at http://www.lcace.org.

Meetings
LCACE meetings are usually held on Saturdays at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Newsletter Submissions
Club members are welcome to submit classified ads, reviews, tips and other articles for publication, to our newsletter editor in Microsoft Word format (.doc). **Publication deadline is the 20th of the month for all ads and articles.** Please do not use tabs or special formatting.

Newsletter 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 15th of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

Notice
LCACE WILL NOT CONDONE or knowingly participate in copyright infringement of any kind. The *LCACE News Journal* is published by and for LCACE members. Opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of LCACE, the membership, the board of directors, and/or our advertisers.

Phil's Ramblings

Best wishes for a happy, healthy 2017! I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season with family and friends!

LCACE members who attended our Holiday Party on December 3rd got their holiday season off to a good start. We had a great mix of members from the old Atari days all the way up to new members who joined during the past year – and one, Cheryl Nickels, who joined at the party! In total, about 35 attendees.

I would like to again recognize Bill Fosdick for selling the most tickets for the major raffle (200) and J. J. Johnson for selling the winning ticket. Of special note, the two top prizes in our major raffle were won by "outsiders", i.e., individuals who are not members of our club. In the past, some LCACE members have had difficulty in selling tickets at work or in other environments outside our club because of the perception that raffle prizes are typically won by club members. Looking forward, the results of this year's raffle should give us a good selling point as we approach non-members in the future and ask for their support.

Party attendees were very generous in supporting our 50/50 raffle; purchasing $225 worth of tickets. Linda Busch was the winner, going home with $112.50. Our club was also a winner, adding $112.50 to our treasury.

The ugly sweater contest was back again this year, with four contestants. The winter for "Ugliest Sweater" was Robin Seidenberg; the winner for "Most Creative" was DeBorah Sirilla. Thanks to our contestants, and our judges!

Looking forward, there do not appear to be any dramatic changes on the horizon with regards to operating systems, applications, security or hardware. However, there are a number of incremental changes in the works, which are well worth keeping track of.

One of these has been underway for approximately six months. Google announced in June that it is working to integrate Android apps into its Chrome operating system. (The Chrome OS is used on Chromebooks; until now the only source of apps for this operating system was the Chrome Web Store, which contains a relatively small number of basic applications.) Google began the rollout of this initiative by selecting three specific Chromebook models for an Android beta test, with the promise that many other existing Chromebook models would be eligible for this upgrade later in 2016.

Unfortunately, this transition seems to be progressing more slowly than was originally promised. Even though 2016 is almost over, I have not seen any announcement from Google that the promised upgrade for the designated Chromebooks will be available anytime soon. Here is a link to a recent article assessing this transition:

http://www.cio.com/article/3150671/chrome-os/android-apps-on-chromebook-arent-ready-for-prime-time.html

When this initiative was first announced, there was some speculation in the technology press that this would enable Chrome-

And the winners are...

1st Prize
Dean Berglund

2nd Prize
Steve Kooba

3rd Prize
Chicago Paul

Ugly Sweater Contestant

50/50
Linda

Ugliest Sweater
Robin

Most Creative
DeBorah

LCACE

And the winners are...

Sold Winning Ticket
J.J. Johnson

Sold Most Tickets
William Fosdick

Won Most Door Prizes
Cheryl Nickels

Jere's Tech Tips

HOW TO SECURE YOUR AMAZON ACCOUNT – If you're like me, you do a lot of shopping on Amazon. But because it's so encompassing, it's also something you're going to want to take extra care to secure.

Odds are you have at least one credit card, your home address, and phone number stored on your Amazon account, which could be very bad should that account fall into the wrong hands. Fortunately, there are a few things you can—and should!—do in order to make sure your Amazon data is as safe as it can be.

Go To the following 'How to Geek' web site and read all about it with step by step pictures and directions.: http://bit.ly/2gPOzMaJTT

HOW TO CUSTOMIZE THE TASKBAR IN WINDOWS 10 – Windows 10 offers all kinds of ways to customize the taskbar to your liking. Go to the following "How to Geek" website to learn more step by step.: http://bit.ly/2g8r4uEJTT

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - CUT HERE - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Trivia

Question Of the month

When was YouTube founded?

⇒ 2005
⇒ 2006
⇒ 2007
⇒ 2008

Be the first to submit the correct answer at the January meeting and win a prize.

Name: _____

Answer: _____

Happy Birthday
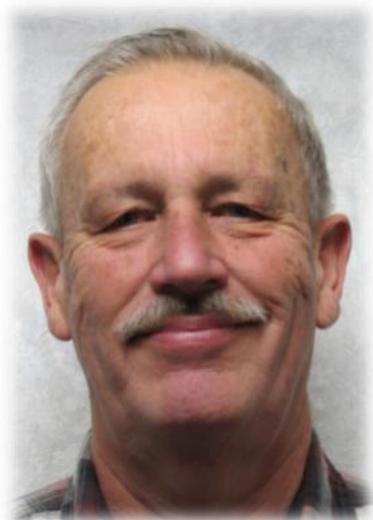
Roger Busch

Donna Kalinoski

In Memoriam

Richard "Dick" Eisenmann
BORN: December 4, 1931
DIED: December 23, 2016
LOCATION: Grayslake, Illinois

books to make further inroads into the laptop market. (Chromebooks have already passed Apple computers in terms of annual sales; tech writers felt that the addition of Android apps would make Chromebooks much tougher competitors for Windows PCs in the future.) Here is a link to an article which addresses this very point:

http://www.zdnet.com/article/chromebook-android-trouble-for-windows-pcs/

However, given Google's struggles with the transition, it appears that the threat to Windows PCs is not as imminent as originally thought. Moreover, Microsoft is continuing to adapt Windows 10 to run on new and different hardware. Recently, the technology press has reported that Microsoft has compiled Windows 10 to run successfully on ARM processors, specifically new Snapdragon models from Qualcomm. While at this time there is no serious talk of introducing laptop PCs running Snapdragon processors, this does provide an avenue for users to run full Windows 10 on smart phones and tablets which contain these processors. There is speculation that it would not be a reach for Microsoft and Qualcomm to work with PC manufacturers to develop low-cost laptop PCs to compete head-to-head with Chromebooks running Android apps. Here is a link to a recent article describing this new Microsoft initiative:

http://www.androidcentral.com/windows-10-arm-microsoft-coming-chromebook-and-might-win

Finally, although this is hardly a new subject, it appears that cyber-warfare by nation-states and criminal hacking for dollars is continuing to expand in both volume and complexity. This has negative implications for us as American citizens and as individuals trying to protect our personal information and finances. This should be a priority for us all in 2017, so that we can participate effectively in national discussions about cyber-security counter-measures while also keeping our personal information and money safe from those who are trying to target us.

"We spend January 1st walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives... not looking for flaws, but for potential." - Ellen Goodman

Meeting Dates

- January 7, 2017   TBD
- February 11, 2017   TBD
- March 11, 2017   TBD
- April 15, 2017   TBD
- December 9, 2017   Holiday Party

Note: January and April are not on the second Saturday.

Member of

APCUG

An International Association of Technology & Computer User Groups

APCUG itself is not a user group; only user groups themselves are members. APCUG's product and service are offered to group leaders, who can then share them with their members.

Voice Control: HEY CORTANA, OK GOOGLE, SIRI & ALEXA

By Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer, The Computer Club, Florida

http://scccomputerclub.org / Philsorr.wordpress.com
philsorr (at) yahoo.com

Remember Dragon Naturally Speaking? It was, and still is, Voice Recognition software mostly used to control the operation of a word processor like Word. Certain words were used for very specific manipulation of the cursor and the text. Naturally Speaking came on the scene and became useful sometime around 1999 to 2003, depending on how much you needed to transcribe documents into the computer. Early versions had to be "trained" by the user to recognize their individual voice, and the speed and accuracy were sometimes acceptable, and sometimes not so much. Things have really improved since then; now the manufacturer, Nuance, claims in its advertising that "Dragon is 3x faster than typing and it's 99% accurate". So, Voice Recognition software has really come a long way.

(For those of you, who are not familiar with Naturally Speaking, it has three primary areas of functionality: dictation, text-to-speech, and command input. The user is able to dictate and have their speech transcribed as written text, or they can have a document synthesized as an audio stream, or they can issue commands that are recognized by the program.)

Naturally Speaking is an example of a local computer application or App. All the computing needed for it to operate is on the computer that runs it. Naturally Speaking doesn't take advantage of Client-Server technology. If you attended one of our classes, you will recall that when an application is implemented with Client-Server technology, the heavy lifting (computer processing) is not done locally, but rather at a Server that is very powerful and very fast, but remote from the Client. The remote Server is connected to the Client by the internet, which allows rapid movement of data between the Client and the Server. So the Client App runs on the local computer and is connected to the Server Software, running in the cloud, via the internet. This combination provides the total Voice Recognition & Control System. The client collects input from the user and sends it to the Server where all the really complex computing is accomplished. The Server analyses the input and develops the responses and sends them to the Client where the results are presented to the user in audio and/or display formats.

Naturally Speaking is certainly a useful product, but the voice recognition and control that has really gotten the attention of the public lately, are the intelligent personal assistants that are provided by some of the leading computer companies, Apple, Microsoft, Google, and Amazon. Apple was first on the scene with "Siri", followed by Google's "Ok Google", then, with Windows 10, came Microsoft's "Hey Cortana", and finally Amazon's "Alexa".

All of these are Client-Server implementations. The Servers are somewhere in the cloud and the Client resides on your smartphone, in the case of Siri and "OK Google", or on your laptop (or desktop, or tablet) in the case of "Hey Cortana", or on a special device that is placed centrally located in your home, in the case of "Alexa".

All of these assistants use a Natural Language User Interface to answer questions. You'll need a microphone on your device to take advantage of this capability. The Client app, on the device, uses the microphone to listen for a "Wake Phrase". After this phrase is recognized, the following intercepted speech is then sent to the Server where it is analyzed via speech recognition software, and converted to commands. The Server then uses these commands to gather answers to the original spoken inquiry. All of these assistants can make recommendations and perform various actions via their Server capabilities. (For example, a verbal request for the "weather" might yield various audible statements about the weather in your location. Or, a request for "traffic" might yield audible indications of the traffic in your location, or possibly maps indicating traffic problems. Or, a request for the best restaurant might yield a list of restaurants near your location. Or, if you have things set up, the statement "Add eggs to my shopping list" will yield an updated shopping list including eggs.)

Wearable Technology: Fitbit fitbit.com

Quad-Cities Computer Society Meeting Review
Presented by Judi McDowell, QCS President
Reviewed by Joe Durham, Editor, Quad-Cities Computer Society, IA
May 2016 issue, Qbits
www.qcs.org
julee89 (at) gmail.com

Fitbit Charge HR

At a recent meeting, Judi McDowell, QCS president, shared her knowledge and experience with wearable technology. The pace of technological change is fast and these devices are now the "in" thing for groups of all ages. She focused on the Fitbit devices as she has a Fitbit Charge which is one of the newer models in the Fitbit line of devices.

She asked for a show of hands among the audience for those who currently use this technology. There were 6 hands: 3 had a Fitbit Charge, one had a Fitbit Alta, one had a Fitbit Flex, and one had a Garmin device. This indicates that the desire to use these new gadgets is growing day by day, even among our QCS members.

Judi gave us an historical overview of how these devices emerged on the scene. Like all technological revolutions the fitness tracking device has its origins in many diverse needs and slowly the growth of technological change brought it all together.

Amazingly, it has its origin in the creation of the lie detector in 1921. A lie detector measures electronically your pulse, blood pressure, and there are seniors on your skin to measure changes there.

Segue to 1961 in Japan. A professor wanted the means to track walking for health. He developed the pedometer, I am sure we have all seen these mechanical aids from time to time.

Now move to 1971 and car technology. The development of air bags brought forth the creation of the accelerometer which measures change in direction, an obvious requirement for air bag to deploy at the right moment in the event of a crash.

Now switch to 1974 and game technology was needed for the all of the new gaming controls, to help us enjoy and become a part of the experience. These advances help everyone navigate

Here are some descriptions (and advertisements) found for each of these Voice Recognition & Control Apps.

- Siri (Speech Interpretation and Recognition Interface) is a computer program that works as an "intelligent personal assistant" and "knowledge navigator", according to Wikipedia. "The software adapts to the user's individual language usage and individual searches with continuing use, and returns results that are individualized", also from Wikipedia. "Hey Siri" is the wake phrase, which can be turned on or off.

- OK Google lets you do things like search, get directions, and create reminders. For example "OK Google do I need an umbrella" to see if there is rain in the weather forecast. To use "OK Google", make sure you have the latest Google Search App and turn on "OK Google detection" in settings.

- Cortana is an App with which you can use your voice to make a call, send a text message, search the web, or open another App. Cortana can help you: schedule a meeting, set a reminder, get up-to-date weather or traffic.(Note: you need a Microsoft account to use Cortana.)"Hey Cortana" seems to be tied to the "Notebook", and thus is set-up in the Notebook-Settings, which may not be obvious. (You get to the Notebook-Settings by clicking in the search bar on the Taskbar, then selecting Notebook [the square icon under the home icon], and finally Settings.)

- Alexa is the name of Amazon's assistant that comes with the Amazon Echo. Echo is a wireless speaker and voice command device. The device consists of a 9.25-inch tall cylinder speaker with a seven-piece microphone array. "Alexa", the "wake word" is always on and can be changed by the user to either "Amazon" or "Echo". The device is capable of voice interaction, music playback, making to-do lists, setting alarms, streaming podcasts, playing audio books, and providing weather, traffic and other real time information. It can also control several smart devices. Echo requires a Wi-Fi internet connection in order to work. The Echo must be plugged in to operate since it has no internal battery.

If these personal digital assistants are successful, many more may show up. I just read that the company that brought us the Sound-Hound App also has a personal assistant called Hound that they hope to embed in other applications so that those Apps can be voice controlled. Imagine setting up an Uber ride by voice. (If you will recall, SoundHound is like the Shazam App, just hum a tune and it will tell you the tune's name.) With all these personal assistants around, we certainly will never have to feel lonely.

through Zelda, Donkey Kong and the rest.

1982 brought forth development from another direction; sports training. Devices appeared that monitored the athlete's heart rate.

In 1999 stationary bikes with monitoring and visual feedback were popular.

GPS technology came to the masses in the year 2000 when it was released for public use. Now there was an earth wide means of tracking movement.

A 3D accelerometer was developed in 2003 which allowed technicians to measure movement in all three directions: up, down, left and right, forward and backwards.

Take the mixture of all of these changes from 1921 to 2003, and a company was able put all of these functions into a small wearable size in 2008, Fitbit

The new models of Fitbit now monitor your heart rate, and sleep. All these functions designed to motivate us to a more healthy lifestyle with the means to monitor our goals in the device and online. James Park and Eric Freidmen were the creators of Fitbit. It is so popular that there are competitors in the marketplace from Apple, Android and Garmin.

In 2015 Fitbit was encouraged to issue an IPO and it is now worth around $3.7 billion. And Park is now #29 on the list of those 40 or un-

der in wealth.

As a means of improving her lifestyle, Judi purchased a Fitbit Charge. She choose this model because it monitors steps, heart rate and has the time on it. When you purchase one, it recommends that you attach it two fingers above your wrist bone. It also has caller ID when configured with compatible mobile devices.

It comes with a USB charger, a dongle that you place in your computer through which you upload data to your Fitbit page online so that you can records your activity. She said that the battery life states 7 – 10 days, but it is not that long in her use of it, but that was not a big issue.

The Fitbit charge also monitors your sleep. Current health advice strongly recommends that we get enough sleep in this fast paced world and the Fitbit aids you in that accounting. Judi did wonders what it records when one falls asleep in the chair from time to time.

Judi then brought her Fitbit account online, this is displayed in what is called the Dashboard. This is the genius of the device, as you dongle the Fitbit periodically it uploads all of your data and helps you visually to see your progress and goals.

The Fitbit Charge will also track your movements as you exercise. One day she walked around a large building at her place many times and you could see her track recorded online as a series of circles in transit.

She did mention a couple of operating quirks. For example, when she was shopping in Walmart and her hands were on the shopping cart the lack of movement of her hands meant that the Fitbit charge was not tracking her steps. Apparently the Fitbit needs see change in your arm movement to record steps. For situations such as these you can tell Fitbit that you are walking a predetermined amount of time and it will account for steps accordingly.

The Fitbit Charge also tracks your movements on stairs. Judi's explanation of her resent stair movement was interesting. She arrived early before the QCS meeting and decided to walk about record and demonstrate the device.

Nearby is Viele Park in Moline. There is a descending terraced set of steps. Going down was easy, but coming back was a bit of challenge. This walk was a good choice for exercise.

Her Fitbit Dashboard account of that travel indicated that her heart rate reached 153 beats per minute and that she was credited with going up 17 flights of stairs on her return back to the Butterworth Education center. By the time she entered the building her Fitbit Charge buzzed which meant that she reached her goal of over 10,000 steps for the day.

The online interface calculates calories burned. You can also input your food intake to see what you have taken in and the balanced burned for the day. Additionally you have the option of downloading your data to a spreadsheet so that you can monitor and analyze your progress.

If you purchase a premium subscription to the Fitbit service, a personal trainer will devise an exercise plan just for you. Judi mentioned that Fitbit Blog online is a good and enjoyable source for information and comment while using the devices.

You may have seen reports that Fitbit is being sued by some athletes for inaccurate results. With any measuring device of this type it is more noteworthy that you have the same device giving you data each day, it a base from which can accurately monitor your progress even though it may not tell you to the inch what your travel has been.

Judi concluded her remarks by observing that media forecasts see a 35% growth each year in personal tracking devices of this type for the next five years. It is certain that we all wish to improve our health status in life and devices of this nature will help move us along towards that goal. The QCS would like to thank Judi for her fine presentation and look into this new and emerging tech field.
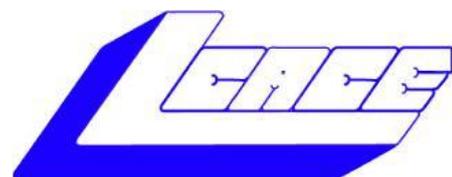
"It can be argued that the computer is humanity's attempt to replicate the human brain. This perhaps an unattainable goal. However, unattainable goals often lead to outstanding accomplishment."
-Ammaar Shaukat Reshi-

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

Do you have computer questions
or need help with your computer?

Visit Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts'
help desk for one on one help

Open to all

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Grayslake Area Public Library
Rooms A-C