Cortana, Open Alexa, Amazon Says And Microsoft Agrees

In an unusual partnership, Amazon and Microsoft are working together to extend the ability of their overcontrolled digital assistants.

From Twin City Nibbler
By Jeannine Sloan

I talk to Cortana every day — at home, work and on-the-go — to get information about my day, to set reminders so I don't forget things, and to answer my questions. But I don't just use one digital assistant. I also frequently talk to Alexa to listen to audio books or to add things to my shopping list. Because people use and interact with all kinds of products, we're very excited to announce a first-of-its-kind collaboration with Amazon between Cortana and Alexa that will offer more choice, value and access to both intelligent personal assistants. Available later this year, this collaboration will allow you to access Alexa via Cortana on Windows 10 PCs, followed by Android and iOS in the future. Conversely, you'll be able to access Cortana on Alexa-enabled devices like the Amazon Echo,
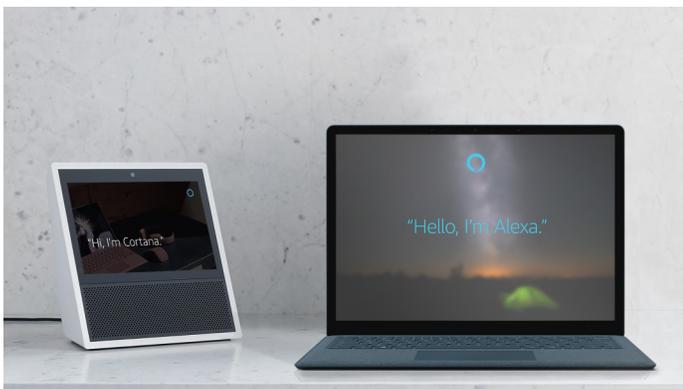

Echo Dot and Echo Show.
Amazon press release, the collaboration between Microsoft and Amazon reflects our belief that when people and technology work together, everybody wins:

"Ensuring Cortana is available for our customers everywhere and across any device is a key priority for us. Bringing Cortana's knowledge, Office 365 integration, commitments and reminders to Alexa is a great step toward that goal."
By bringing Cortana to Alexa and Alexa to Cortana, I'm excited that we're adding more value and choice for consumers and developers alike. Cortana users will be able to have Alexa shop on Amazon.com and manage their Amazon orders and access many of Alexa's third-party skills by asking Cortana to open Alexa, just as Alexa users will have access to Cortana's world knowledge and helpful productivity features such as calendar management, day at a glance and location-based reminders simply by asking Alexa to open Cortana.
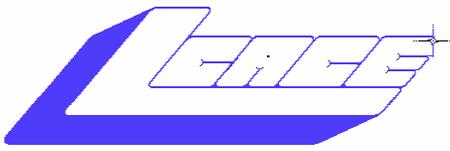
Alexa as a guest on Cortana
With Alexa as a guest on Cortana, Cortana users

Members Helping Members

"Members Helping Members"
(since 1983)

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Send articles to editor@lcace.org
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Logo designed on an **Atari Stacy Laptop** in 1989 by ***Dwight Johnson Jr.***

Lake County Area
Computer Enthusiasts

L.C.A.C.E.
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.

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Phil's Ramblings

October was a busy month! While people across America have been busy trying to protect themselves from the potential consequences of the Equifax data breach, new / improved scams and/or cyber-dangers have continued to appear. Here is an example…..

"IRS" robocalls. These, of course, are not really from the IRS although your caller ID will say they are. Folks who have been paying attention to the increase in "spoofed" caller IDs would typically ignore these calls, especially since the IRS normally contacts taxpayers by letter. (For example, if they do want to talk to you they will send you a letter explaining the situation and ask that you call them.) However, there is now a new wrinkle.

Starting this year, the IRS began using private collection agencies to assist in their collection efforts. Those agencies are authorized to call delinquent taxpayers as part of their normal process. But you should not begin receiving these legitimate phone calls without first having been contacted by mail by the IRS, on at least several occasions.

So, you would be well advised to ignore a call purporting to be from the IRS. Simply let the call go to voicemail. One of two things will happen. Either the caller will not leave a message, in which case you can simply go about your business, or he will leave a message, more likely than not demanding that you call him back immediately to discuss your delinquent taxes

If the caller does leave a message and request for call back, check the caller ID information and the phone number that was provided for callback. Here are the four private collection agencies that the IRS is working with:

1. CBE - P.O. Box 2217 Waterloo, IA 50704 *1-800-910-5837*
2. ConServe - P.O. Box 307 Fairport, NY 14450-0307 *1-844-853-4875*
3. Performant - P.O. Box 9045 Pleasanton, CA 94566-9045 *1-844-807-9367*
   Pioneer - P.O. Box 500 Horseheads, NY 14845 *1-800-448-3531*

If the caller ID information and callback phone number do not match any of these agencies, you are dealing with a scammer. Just don't call back; it saves you from having to go through an annoying phone conversation.
(If by chance you do pick up the phone and find yourself in a scary conversation with someone claiming to be calling on behalf of the IRS, remember that legitimate callers will not demand payment via prepaid debit, iTunes or gift cards. Any payments should be made directly to the IRS, either electronically or by mail. If you have any qualms about the conversation, just hang up

the phone and follow up directly with the IRS to find out if there is a legitimate problem, and how it can be resolved.)

Speaking of taxes and the IRS, there is a growing scam that targets businesses. (The bad news is that the consequences of this scam affect individuals!) In this scam, "spear-phishing" emails are sent to employees who work in HR, designed to look as though they were sent by high-level executives in the company. In these emails, the HR employees are ordered to send copies of current year W-2s for employees to their "boss" by return email, for a confidential research project.

The special email address provided in the email is of course bogus; If the low-level HR recipients are afraid to challenge the "boss" who supposedly requested the W-2's, they may be sent as ordered. Armed with names, Social Security numbers and actual pay / withholding information, the bad guys can now file bogus income tax returns in your name and have your refund sent to them.

I haven't seen a good countermeasure for this, since individual employees have no way of knowing that this is going on until they file their legitimate tax returns and have them rejected by the IRS. However, the IRS is aware of this problem and presumably is taking steps to identify and investigate questionable returns.

Moving to the larger problem of massive ongoing data breaches….. As discussed at our October meeting, these breaches typically put your logon credentials at risk – for emails, for financial accounts and so on. Bad guys can use them to do lots of bad things – clean out your bank account, enlist your email account in one of their botnets, and so on. This makes it very important for you to consider two-factor authentication (2FA)! As one cyber-security article put it, "2FA makes your passwords worthless to cyber thieves".

This can be a minor annoyance when you log-in from an unfamiliar computer for the first time, because you will be challenged to complete whatever 2FA process you have established for the account you are trying to access. But, the good news is that you can complete the process and logon. The bad guy cannot. Just remember to set up a unique password and 2FA process for each account.

If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to set up a digital folder (or file folder) devoted to cyber-security, and use it to collect related emails, articles from news media / Internet, information you receive at our LCACE meetings and elsewhere. Cyber-security challenges will be with us forever, and the bad guys are smart and creative. We must be knowledgeable, disciplined and vigilant if we are to remain safe!

On a separate note, I have been asked to give my recent presentations on Cyber-Security and Digital Afterlife at the Waukegan Township Park Place Senior Center in November and December. For those who were not able to attend one or both of those LCACE presentations you are welcome to attend the coming presentations at the Senior Center. The Cyber-Security presentation will be at 1:00pm on Wednesday, November 29th; the Digital Afterlife presentation will be at 1:00 pm on Wednesday, December 13th. The Senior Center is located at 414 S. Lewis Avenue, Waukegan.

Have a great Thanksgiving!

CLUB HISTORIAN

Our October meeting was conducted by Phil Bock.

The door prize was won by Fred Barnett. He won a 16 GB, 3.0 USB thumb drive.

DeBorah Sirilla won the 50/50 raffle, she and the club each receiving $12.00.

Congratulations to all prize winners!

Thanks to Phil Bock for making the coffee, and to Liz Barnett who provided munchables for us.

This month's program was "Cyber-security update" by our President, Phil Bock. Phil helped us in our ongoing quest to stay on top of our cyber security issues. Thanks, again, Phil.

Another great meeting, and I hope to see you at our November 11 meeting.

Lester Larkin
Club Historian

The Fall VTC will be held on Saturday, November 4. A preview of topics to be covered is below.

Register at: http://bit.ly/apcug-fall-2017-vtc-eventbrite

VHS No Longer Computes

Customer: "I've got a broken computer and I need it fixed."

(The customer proceeds to open a bag and out comes a old VHS player.)

Me: "Sir, that is not a computer. That is a VHS tape player."

Customer: "Well, my PC is broken and I was hoping that you could fix it."

Me: "Sir, that is not a PC. That's a VHS tape player and there is no repair shop for VHS players around anymore, as they are deemed outdated."

Customer: "Well, where can I find one?"

Me: "You can't. You will have to buy a new one."

Customer: "So, you can't repair it?"

Me: "No."

Customer: "I heard great service from my friends when they came here to fix their PC."

Me: "That is not a PC. That is a VHS player that you are holding in your hands."

Customer: "So, can you fix it?"

By Jasmin D'Katz

I was introduced to Swifink through a member of my camera club. I have a Canon Pixma Pro 10 which uses 10 separate ink cartridges at a cost of about $110 per set. So, I took a chance and purchased a replacement cartridge for my next cartridge that indicated it was low and needed replacement.

Service was swift and within a couple of days it arrived. My printer recognized the new cartridge and the first photo I printed was just as amazing as with the original Canon cartridges.
Therefore, if you are tired of paying $19 to $24 for cartridges, you might want to give Swift Ink a try.

Swiftink.com

and the WINNERS ARE...

Door Prizes Winner
Fred Barnett

50/50 Winner
DeBorah Sirilla

Membership

Chairmen Report

Active Members: 60
Meeting Attendee: 24

THANKS FOR JOINING
None

THANKS FOR RENEWING
Leslie Salsburg
Gary Quarnstrom
Winnie & Jack Frost

THANKS FOR VISITING
None

Winners:
50/50: Deborah Sirilla
Door Prize: Fred Barnett

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Diane Carlson

Gerald Straw

Cheryl Nickels

Richard Garling

**Lake County Area
Computer Enthusiasts**
"Members Helping Members"
(since 1983)

HOLIDAY RAFFLE 2017

1st Prize:

**Ausus
Notebook Computer
15.6" LED Display**
- Intel Core I5-7200U Processor @ 2.5 GHz
- Windows 10
- 8GB system memory
- 1TB hard drive
- Super Multi DVD drive
- USB-C 3-1 port

2nd Prize:

$150.00

$150.00

3rd Prize:

$50.00

$50.00

Tickets: $1 each, 6 for $5, or 25 for $20

Drawing December 9, 2017
WINNER NEED NOT BE PRESENT

Ugly Sweater Contest

MONTHLY TRIVIA

What did the United States buy for $7.2 million in 1867?

- Guam
- Hawaii
- Puerto Rico
- Alaska

Answer:

I n April of 1983 a **Atari** computer group was formed in Lake County. On a cold rainy day, six Atari enthusiasts gathered and founded *Lake County Atari User Group* (LCAUG).

For nine years the group was strong until the demise of Atari, but the group did not disband, but endured to become *Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts* (LCACE). And as we enter our 34th year we continue our moto of "**Members Helping Members**."

Atari User Groups

A Place Called Friendship Lane

We may not meet as often
    As we would like, it's true
But there's a place
    in Friendship Lane
Where I meet in thought with you.

And always as we meet and chat
    As friends as can be
Quite magically, the hours take on
    New happiness for me
And It's grand to know that always
    Thought cloudy days of fair
Wherever I walk down Friendship Lane
    I find you waiting there.

Atarians

Member of

An International Association of Technology & Computer User Groups

The Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) is a worldwide organization that helps groups devoted to the world of technology including computers, tablets, smartphones, digital photography, genealogy, etc. by facilitating communications between member groups and industry vendors.

BEST ANDROID APPS

Bill James, Vice President, Computer Club of Oklahoma City
Presentation

Life is made easier with apps. Bill will share some of his must-have apps during this presentation. Come and share the apps you can't live without with others who attend 2016 session…..you'll probably go home with new ones that will make your life easier.

APCUG Videos Library

APCUG offers **FREE** Virtual Technology Conferences quarterly. VTCs give User Group members the opportunity to 'attend' presentations in the comfort of their home. You can also check out past video presentation at APCUGs YouTube channel.
www.youtube.com/apcugvideos

PUSH Articles

September 2017

A few of my favorite things, Greg Skalka, UCHUG (approx. 1233 words). In the Sound of Music, a nun turned governess, sings of her favorite things to her seven young charges. I wonder how her list might be different if the story was set today. What would a list of today's favorite technology items look like? UCHUG's editor sends me Greg's President's column each month and has started contributing to PUSH himself as are some of their members.

Anatomy of a Death Certificate, Genealogy SIG Report, Harold D. Kelley, Computer Users of Erie (found this one when I read their newsletter) – (Approx, 987 words.) Sue Mueller is a contributor to Family Grave and explained that new death certificates don't have as much information on them as the old ones. However, since it is 50 years before you can obtain death certificates that are available to the public, most of the ones we see will be very interesting because they are older. She had a handout and it's included at the end of the article.

Associations – We need them!, Phil Sorrentino, The Computer Club (Approx. 1070 words). Phil sends me his articles each month. Although "guilt by association" may lead you to an incorrect logical conclusion (refer to Association Fallacy in Wikipedia), your computer, without associations, would not be able to make any sense out of any of the files you use.

Close Your Windows Before You Leave on Vacation or Can Google-Powered Devices Eclipse Microsoft for Travel?, Greg Skalka, UCHUG (Approx. 1739 words). Greg has used MS Windows-based computers for probably 90% or more of his computing lifetime. He has also used Apple computers and tablets a bit, and currently uses an Android smartphone and a Chromebook regularly. It was a big decision on what technology take when he and his wife went to Nebraska to look at the Eclipse.

Create and Save a Custom Footer in Word, Nancy De-Marte, Sarasota Technology Users Group (Approx. 819 words) We've all seen a document with a footer – it's a bit of text or graphics in the margin at the bottom of each page in a book or article. As usual, Nancy shows us how to add footers to our documents. Thanks to Nancy for sending me her articles, with graphics.

Educating My Phone – Graduating to a Smartphone, Greg Skalka, UCHUG (Approx. 1577 words). Those of us who personally know Greg were surprised and delighted when he joined us in the Smartphone world 😊.

Educational, Fun, and Interesting Web Sites – June 2017, Howard Lewis, Midland Computer Club (Approx. 299 words). Found this article in their newsletter. You and your members will surely find places of interest to visit.

GNU Octave, Dick Maybach, Brookdale Computer Users' Group (Approx. 1392 words). Dick no longer belongs to the group (he moved) but he got in touch a few years ago and asked if I wanted him to send me his articles – the answer, of course, was yes. Engineers, scientists, and educators use computer math tools extensively, and students would also find these helpful, but their costs are often a barrier. Fortunately, there are free program that provide similar power to their commercial kin and both (GNU Octave & Scilab) are available for Windows, OS X and Linux. He discusses GNU Octave in this article. Many of the article don't include graphics and I know that editors appreciate it when they do. Dick always has a lot of graphics in his articles as does Nancy DeMarte.

HDMI Cable and Connectors, Jim Cerny, Sarasota Technology User's Group (Approx. 581 words). Dick usually sends me a few months of articles at a time. More and more devices are available to us. For most of us who use technology for personal and home, would like to connect some devices to our TVs to enjoy the big screen video and great sound experience. Ender HDMI – High Definition Media Interface.

How to Retrieve Individual Files from a Windows Backup, David Kretchmar, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club (Approx. 581 words). Occasionally, David and Tom Burt have PUSH-type articles – found in their newsletter. In Windows 10, MS has included the old Backup and restore feature from Win 7. This was weakened in Win 8 and completely removed in Win 8.1 but is back in 10, even if it is a bit depreciated. It's now called "Backup and Restore (Windows 7)." This article explains how to restore individual files from a system image, even though MS says it isn't possible.

Interesting Internet Finds – August, Steve Costello, Boca Raton Computer Society (Approx. 321 words). Steve sends me their newsletter as well as an additional e-mail with his finds. I need to pay attention since he doesn't want me to include them until the following month. Steve includes almost all of the information I need at the top of the article.

Interesting Internet Finds – July (Approx. 328 words)

Microsoft's Varied Word-Processing Options, Nancy DeMarte (Approx. 562 words). WordPad, NotePad, etc. – Nancy covers them all.

Musing of an Apple Tyro – May, Lorrin R. Garson, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society (Approx. 770 words). Demise of Vista, Apple computers are falling behind, MacBook pro Battery Stamina, Google Chrome Limitations, Quantum Computers, KrebsOnSecurity and more....

Musings of an Apple Tyro – June (Approx. 834 words). Source for Special Characters, Swift Playgrounds, Unsubscribing to Email Subscriptions, 5G Networks,

BITS & BYTES

KRACK Wi-Fi is a new hack that may be affecting your router and you need to protect it. If you haven't already, you need to ensure that you have a solid and secure password using Wi-Fi Protected Access…READ MORE

Windows 10 Fall Creations: It's that time of year and the Fall days are getting shorter and well at the weather getting cooler. Windows 10 had a new Fall Creator update and it you want to download it, here's how….**READ MORE**

Check Your Windows 10 PC for Memory Problems
Windows 10 includes its own Windows Memory Diagnostic tool to check if your computer has memory problems. In this Windows 10 guide, we walk you through the steps to use the Windows Memory Diagnostic tool to find out if you have a faulty memory stick **READ MORE**

Mobile Device Security
1. Set up a passcode.
2. 2. Scrutinize your apps.
3. 3. Be wary of wi-fi.
4. 4. Keep a remote backup of your data.
5. 5. Update your operating system.
6. **6.** Log out of your accounts. Read more at Mental Floss: **READ MORE**

Never Go Online Without a VPN
This post explains why you should always use a VPN when you go online. I always do, even on my desktop computers. **READ MORE**

Top 10 Ways to Boost Your Home Wi-Fi
One of the best ways to make sure your network is as fast and reliable as possible is to use up-to-date hardware. We've gone through the basics of router hardware before, so check out the first lesson of our networking Night School for the full lowdown. The main thing you need to know: Wireless A, B, G, and N are older wireless standards, with 8 The Digital VIKING September 2017 wireless AC being the most current offering **READ MORE**

An Alexa-Integrated smartwatch to make your life easier.
This wearable goes the extra mile—and is on sale at half off. **READ MORE**

Effective Communication in Computer Clubs

The early days of personal computing were exciting, and each computer was somebody's personal project. There were small computer shops everywhere, garage manufacturers, many magazines, books, TV and radio shows, and computer clubs, all trying to keep up. Then, PCs were considered to be a hobby, but since then the situation has changed dramatically. READ MORE

will now have another way of making their lives easier with a great shopping experience. Say you are at work, and you receive a text from your part

Microsoft, Alexa

ner saying, "We're running low on diapers." In the future, on your Windows 10 PC, iPhone or Android phone, you could simply say, "Hey Cortana, open Alexa," and ask Alexa to order diapers using your preferred payment method for your Amazon account.

Cortana as a guest on Alexa
With Cortana as a guest on Alexa, Alexa users will have access to some of Cortana's most useful productivity capabilities that help people stay organized and on top of what's important to them. What if you're making breakfast in the morning and need to know if you have enough time to drop off the dry-cleaning before work? On your Alexa device, you can say, "Alexa, open Cortana," and ask when your first meeting is. If you won't have enough time, simply ask Alexa to open Cortana again and set a reminder for the end of your workday to drop off the clothes.

I know this is going to make my life a little bit easier. We look forward to having Alexa on Cortana-enabled devices and Cortana on Alexa-enabled devices later this year.

What is an iPad Widget?

And How Do I Install One?
By Bill Crowe, 1st Vice President, Sarasota Technology User's Group, FL
March 2017 issue, Sarasota Monitor
www.thestug.org

Widgets are small apps that run on a device's interface, such as a clock or a widget that tells you the current weather. While widgets have been popular on Android and Windows RT tablets for a while now, they haven't made their way to the iPad... until now. The iOS 8 update brought "Extensibility" to the iPad. Extensibility is a cool feature that allows a snippet of an app to run within another app. This allows widgets to run on the iPad via the Notification Center. You'll be able to customize the notification center to show widgets and choose which widgets to show in the notification center. You can also choose to access the notification center while the iPad is locked, so you can see your widget without typing in your passcode.

How do I Install a Widget on My iPad?

Widgets can be installed into the Notification Center by opening notifications by sliding your finger down, careful to start at the very top of the screen, and then tapping the 'Edit' button located at the end of your active notifications. The edit screen is split into those widgets that will display in the Notification Center and those that are installed on the device but not currently showing with the other notifications. To install a widget, simply tap the green button with the plus sign next to it. To remove a widget, tap the red button with the minus sign and then tap the remove button that appears to the right of the widget. Yes, it's that simple. Once the widget is installed, it will be displayed when you open the Notification Center.

Will There Be a Separate 'Widget' Store?

The way Apple has implemented widgets is by allowing an app to display a custom interface within another app. This means a widget is just an app that allows part of itself to be shown in another app, which in this case is the notification center. Sound confusing? It's not. If you want to see sports scores in your notification center, you can simply download a sports app like ScoreCenter from the app store. The app will need to support becoming a widget in the notification center, but you don't need to install a special version of the app. Once installed, you can configure which apps to show in the notification center through the iPad's notification settings.

Can I Use a Widget to Replace the On-Screen Keyboard?

Another exciting benefit of Extensibility is the ability to use third-party keyboards. Swype has long been a popular alternative to traditional typing (or tapping, as we do on our tablets). An Android keyboard alternative, Swype lets you draw words instead of tap them out, which ultimately leads to faster and more accurate typing. (It's also amazing how quickly you can get used to the idea). For information on installing third-party keyboards, we'll have to wait until third-party keyboards arrive in the App Store. Several have already been confirmed, including Swype.

What Other Ways Can I Use a Widget?

Because extensibility is the ability for an app to run within another app, widgets can expand almost any app. For example, you can use the Pinterest app as a widget by installing it into Safari as an additional way to share web pages. You can also use photo editing apps like *Litely* inside of the iPad's Photos app, which gives you a single place to edit a photo and use features from other photo-editing apps.

How to Reorder Widgets on the iPad Notification Center

Now that you have added a few widgets to the iPad's Notification Center, it might occur to you that widgets further down the page would be more useful towards the top. For example, the Yahoo Weather widget makes a great replacement for the default weather widget, but it won't do you as much good if it is at the bottom of the list. You can easily reorder widgets in the Notification Center by dragging a widget and dropping it in the order you want it to appear.

- First, you need to be in edit mode. You can enter edit mode by scrolling down to the bottom of the Notification Center and tapping the edit button.
- Next, tap the three horizontal lines next to the widget, and without removing your finger from the screen, drag it up or down the list.

This makes a great way of customizing the Notification Center and quickly getting at the information or widgets you want to see most. Unfortunately, Apple doesn't allow a widget to go above the Today Summary and Traffic Conditions or below the Tomorrow Summary.

Source and Compliments lifewire.com

Digital Corner

Captued moments
Tips for great smartphone photos

THE BEST CAMERA, as they say, is the one you have with you.

Oh sure, your digital-SLR-toting friends might get their lanyards all tied in a knot about you hoist- ing your iPhone or Android device. But smartphone cameras have some advantages when it comes to editing and sharing your work. To help you get more out of your summer "phonegraphy" consider the following tips and tricks.

Turn the phone sideways. Unless you're taking a picture of the Empire State Building, use the hori- zontal ("landscape") orientation when taking a photo, as it will look much better on a computer or television later on (that is, no vertical black bars on each side of the photo). Besides, a landscape photo is better for group shots and scenery, as it gets more into the frame. Speaking of scenery, play around with your phone's panoramic mode for ultrawide photos.

Get up close and personal. Don't be shy. Unless it's a large, growling dog, there's no reason to be 5 feet away from your subject. Fill the whole frame with your subjects.

Going in closer also means you can cap- ture more facial detail, such as light freckling, a charm- ing dimple or soft, pale blues of the iris. Don't use your phone's digital zoom, as it might make your photo look pixelated-get closer your- self. Play around with how close is too close, though, as that "macro" shot of a flower petal might look blurry when you look at it later on.

Use the light around you. Avoid using the flash wherever possible; instead, try to use the light that's accessible, whether it's overhead lighting while indoors or, preferably, the sun outside. Cloudy days are great for photos, as they diffuse the sun.

If the sun is out, be sure your back-and not your subject's-is to the sun or the subject will look like a blacked-out silhouette. The hour before and after sunset creates gorgeous light for photos.
Be a human tripod. If you can help it, don't hold your phone at arm's length when taking photos. You'll probably shake the phone more than you think, which could result in blurry images. Instead, turn yourself into a human tripod by holding the camera with both hands and pulling your arms into your chest or stomach. You might look a little silly, but you'll see the difference with your sturdier grip.

Position for composition. Instead of placing your subjects in the center of the frame all the time, move them to the left or right to make your photos instantly more powerful and beautiful. Better yet, go in on an angle to add extra energy to the shot.

Also, try to match the height of the subject, such as by kneeling on the ground to snap a pic- ture of a toddler, to ensure you're at eye level in- stead of angling up or down.

Have fun with filters. Phone cameras usually in- clude filters as part of the software, but there are numerous apps that can help you easily edit and share photos and videos. Some automatically tweak your shots for better color and brightness. Apps like Instagram can add fun filters, such as a sepia finish or a retro '70s look. Snapchat adds fun animated effects to your pies. Literally thousands of apps are available, for all platforms, so experi- ment away.'

Back up, back up, back up. There's nothing worse than losing your smartphone and never hav- ing backed up all those photos on it. There are many ways to back them up. One is to plug your phone into your PC or Mac every night to charge it up, and check off the option to back up everything onto the hard drive.

Another option is to take advantage of a free password-protected "cloud" service-like OneDrive, Drop box, iCloud, Google Drive or Google Photos- and have it upload all of your phones· photos when- ever you snap them. To save cellular data, you can select to upload only over Wi-Fi.

Finally, some USB thumb drives are wire- less and let you back up photos and videos from a phone. It's worth safeguarding your memories.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE!

OCTOBER

WAS NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH (NCSAM) –

This is an annual campaign to raise awareness about the importance of cybersecurity. The Internet touches almost all aspects of everyone's daily life, whether we realize it or not. NCSAM is designed to engage and educate public and private sector partners through events and initiatives to raise awareness about the importance of cybersecurity, provide them with tools and resources needed to stay safe online, and increase the resiliency of the Nation in the event of a cyber incident. We're an official Champion - are you? Join us in creating a culture of cybersecurity. **READ MORE**

Build a Better Password

Use these proven techniques to block hackers from accessing your accounts

By Doug Shadel
OUTSMART FRAUD

Think of a computer as being a front door to your wealth and secrets. It can be make of flimsy wood or as impenetrable as a titanium bank vault. Here's how to best secure your fortress.

Use passphrases
Hacker use sophisticated software that can run millions of combinations of letters and symbols in a short time. Your defense: longer passwords, Former hacker Kevin Mitnick recommends 20 characters or longer. The trick: use a sentence of phrase you create, such as "My Aunt Sylvis has loved me since I was a child." It's ultra-hard to hack but easy to remember. For even more security, add a number or symbol at the end, along with a capital letter or two.

Add a second door
Two-factor authentication services add an extra layer of security to your most vital digital accounts. You log in to an account using your usual password. Next, the two-factor authentication site sends your phone a six-digit code that you must enter before gaining access. For a list of websites that offer two-factor authentication, go to twofactorauth.org

Keep your password in a vault
Never store passwords in a file on your computer. Instead, use password manager apps that store passwords in a well-protected digital space. All you need is a master password to access the list. Popular versions that use the cloud technology include LastPass, Dashline and iPassword. Apps that put the vault on your hard drive include RoboForm. Password Safe or KeePass.

Refresh routinely
Once a year, change the password on all your important accounts. With hackers stealing data on millions of accounts at a time, this will keep you protected if their focus turns toward you. Also change your password if you've notified by a website that its security has been breached.

Vary your passwords
That's the golden rule, cybersecurity experts say; Why let one key unlock every one of your digital doors?

My Password: SUPercalifragilisticexpialidocious**1945**

COMPROMISED WITH MALWARE —

CCleaner version 5.33 was compromised with malware. Please check to see which version of CCleaner you have on your computer.

Open CCleaner and you will find the version number in the upper left corner on the title bar.

Version 5.33 of the CCleaner app offered for download between August 15 and September 12 was modified to include the Floxif malware, according to a report published by Cisco Talos a few minutes ago. Updating to recent versions removes malware.

Floxif is a malware downloader that gathers information about infected systems and sends it back to its C&C server. The malware also had the ability to download and run other binaries, but at the time of writing, there is no evidence that Floxif downloaded additional second-stage payloads on infected hosts.

The malware collected information such as computer name, a list of installed software, a list of running processes, MAC addresses for the first three network interfaces, and unique IDs to identify each computer in part. Researchers noted that the malware only ran on 32-bit systems. The malware also quit execution if the user was not using an administrator account.

Avast recently bought Piriform – below from Avast CTO:

In an email to Bleeping Computer, Avast CTO Ondrej Vlcek said that updating CCleaner to the most recent recent versions fixes any issues, as "the only malware to remove is the one embedded in the CCleaner binary itself."

"The affected software (CCleaner v5.33.6162 and CCleaner Cloud v1.07.3191) has been installed on 2.27M machines from its inception up until now," Vlcek also added. "We believe that these users are safe now as our investigation indicates we were able to disarm the threat before it was able to do any harm."

"There is no indication or evidence that any additional "malware" has been delivered through the backdoor," Vlcek added.

WHICH FILES SHOULD YOU BACK UP ON YOUR WINDOWS PC? – Your PC's hard drive could fail tomorrow, or a software bug could erase your files, so backups are critical. But you don't need to back up all the files on your PC. That would just waste space and make your backups take longer to complete.

"Jim was told that he could back up his data by making an image of his computer."

The All-Important Rule of Backups – The most important rule of backups is that any important data should exist in two or more physical locations at once. You cannot create a backup and delete the original. If you do, it's no longer really a backup. You still have just one copy of your data—you just moved it to a different place.

You might think this is obvious, but you'd be surprised how often we've been approached by readers that lost their data after their "backup" drive died.

Go to this How-To Geek Web page and read about the best method for backups. http://bit.ly/2gySVoB

You Play a vital role in the Chain of Survival!
The Waukegan Fire Department is offering **WEEKLY** classes on CPR/Defibrillator, First Aid, Bloodborne Pathogen and Healthcare Providers.
Contact: FF Elizabeth Mass (847-815-4459 or Elizabeth.Mass@waukeganIL.gov

SPECIAL DISCOUNT
Monitor and Protect Your Hard Drive

MONITOR AND PROTECT YOUR HARD DRIVE –
 Computer hard drives are your systems complex workhorse — spinning rapidly non-stop, reliably and rapidly fetching and storing data, year after year. Until — uh oh, something's wrong and where's my data?!

Hard Disk Sentinel

Wouldn't you like a window into your hard drive operation, performance, quality, stability, and reliability? A lot goes on inside these devices that isn't revealed by your system's hard drive activity light!

HD Sentinel <**www.harddisksentinel.com**/> is a powerful tool for monitoring hard drive health and learning more about drive innards than you likely imagined possible. At the same time, it's designed for people who aren't (and don't want to become) experts; you can use it at a high-level ("How's my

drive doing today?" or drill deep into hard drive characteristics, history, usage patterns, and health).

While the website only discusses simple hard drives, HD Sentinel also supports other storage devices: SSDs, SSHD (hybrid drives), memory cards and thumb drives (where available), tape drives, and RAID controllers. Most of these are uniquely supported by Hard Disk Sentinel, not by any other diagnostics/monitoring tools.

HD Sentinel offers APCUG conference attendees & members of their groups a 40% discount from the five-copy lifetime family license price of $53, or a cost of $32 through December 24

**Order your copy of HD Sentinel here
ORDER Coupon Code XYZZY**

**Monitor & Protect Your Data presentation video by Ray Parker, Epsilogix
SEE VIDEO**

The Internet of Ransomware.
By Jasmine D'katz

I should be worried since my house is now smarter than me. I wake up in the morning and say good morning to Alexa and then ask her the weather. As I rise out of bed my thermostat detects motion in the bedroom and turns on the HVAC to adjust the temperature in the house. Alexa detects my entering the kitchen and pours me a cup of coffee and the TV comes on. While I'm having my coffee Alexa informs me of any upcoming event I may have for the day. As I pass by the thermostat, it remines me that the filter needs replacing in 4 days. As I check my phone, it detected motion in the driveway, therefore I know my morning paper has arrived.
As I go through the day I get more warning from my security cameras that someone is in my driveway and then a notification that the mail has been delivered. When I open and close the door, I'm notified the status of the door.

Before I leave the house, I place my evening meal in the Sosu Vide cooler and set the temp and timer on
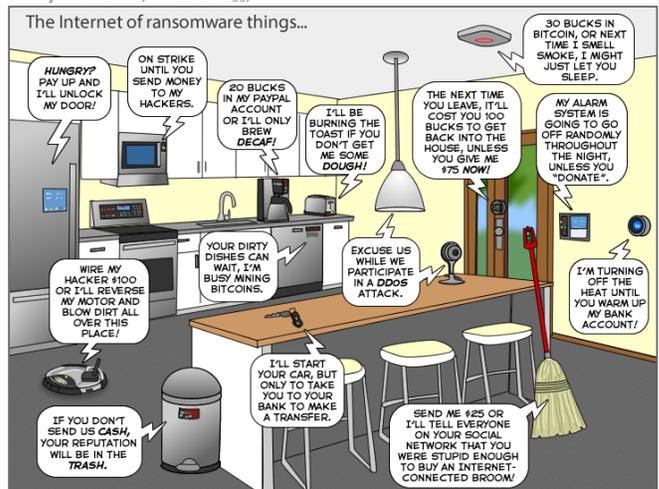
my phone and get a notification when it's done.

Once a week Alexa notifies me if I want to start the Roomba and clean the house.

For entertainment, I can talk to my TV remote and my Roku remote to choose what programs or movies I wish to watch.

It been a long day interacting with my smart home devices so as I head to bed, I tell Alexa to turn out the light and set the security alarms.

Now I exhausted and time to sleep!

The Joy of Tech™ by Nitrozac & Snaggy — The Internet of ransomware things...

PUSH Articles

Open Source Software of the Month – May, Geof Goodrum, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society (Approx. 667 words). Geof accumulates and sends me the Musing of an Apple Tyro and his Open Source Software of the Month articles. The articles are reading-to-use with all the information I put at the beginning of articles. Jmil, Notepad++, Python Solitaire Fan Club Edition, VideoLAN Client and more.

Open Source Software of the Month – June (Approx. 656 words). 7-Zip, BZFlag, GIMP, TuxGuitar.

NAB (National Association of Broadcasters) Conference, Review by George Harding, Tucson Computer Society (380 words). Francis Chao, a member of TCS, sends me a few of George's reviews at a time.

Niterie, review by George Harding (Approx. 415 words). This company has a wide range of useful products and the list keeps getting longer. Your members might be interested in buying some of them. George has been reviewing products for a gazillion years and has a great track record with vendors. He regularly visits COMDEX and meets with vendors to obtain product to review – and, they send it to him.

Pay with your phone – Maybe soon, using Android Pay or Apple Pay, Phil Sorrentino (Approx. 1017 words). This article got me to start using Android Pay. Android and Apple Pay are payment services developed and supported by Google and Apple respectively. They both support in-app and tap-to-pay purchases on their respective mobile devices (phones, tablets, watches).

The Case of the Random Keystroke Repeats, Bob Woods, UCHUG (Approx. 520 words). A couple of years ago Bob decided he needed a new laptop and bought an Acer on sale at Costco. Overall, it has been an excellent choice with one exception, the keyboard. It has a nice feel but randomly repeats keystrokes.

System Upgrade, Jim Quinn, UCHUG (Approx. 380 words). Jim's Linux computer system drive (SSD) was running out of space. It was installed February 2015. Jim's article covers how he moved everything to a 1TB SSD.

What is a "Database" Anyway?, Jim Cerny, Sarasota Technology User's Group (Approx. 684 words). A database is an organized collection of data (accessed online or through a software program on your computer). Your members might not realize it but they are probably using a database every day.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Dwight "J.J." Johnson
U.S. Navy Retired (1962-1982)

October 17, 2017
United States of American Vietnam War Commemoration

Dwight receives the official Vietnam War 50th Commemoration pin and certificates from Rep. Brad Schneider D-Ill.

Answer: On this day in 1867, the U.S. formally took possession of Alaska after purchasing the territory from Russia for $7.2 million, or less than two cents an acre. The Alaska purchase comprised 586,412 square miles, about twice the size of Texas, and was championed by William Henry Seward, the enthusiasticly expansionist secretary of state under President Andrew Johnson. At the time, critics thought Seward was crazy and called the deal "Seward's folly." The Senate ratified the treaty that approved the purchase by just one vote.