DATALINE

SCV COMPUTER CLUB

Meetings
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In This Issue

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Wearable Technology

6:00 pm –The pace of technological change is fast and these devices are now the "in" thing for groups of all ages. According to analysts at Gartner Research, the "smart wearable" market, as a subset of the Internet of Things (IoT), will generate $28.7 billion in 2016. If you want to move more, sleep better, and improve your overall health, a fitness tracker can help.

Judy Taylour will give an historical overview presentation 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.

This presentation will be followed by several people 'showing & telling' how they use their activity trackers.

If you have one, please plan to join the discussion on activity trackers and tell us how you use it.

Following the activity tracker session, we'll take a look at a few sites where you can sell or donate your 'old' smartphone. As well as download the latest version of Avast, Nitro.

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

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 setup 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 SoundHound 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.

Windows 10: 3 by 3
By Cary Quinn, President, P*PCompAS
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June 2016 issue, Bits of Bytes
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This article was written as a quick start to the Pikes Peak groups' discussion at their June meeting on whether one should decide to upgrade to Windows 10 prior to the advancing deadline of July 29th 2016 to get the free upgrade (for users of Windows 7 Sp2 or Windows 8.1).

My goal here is to provide to the-point answers for five questions, each from pro and con sides of the Win10 upgrade debate. The information provided here is a compilation of ideas from many P*PCompAS members and outside sources, and I thank them for the input.

Pro #1: I'm ready to upgrade to Windows 10 but want to be ready for anything... what should I do?

(For the mildly nerdly paranoid) Make a backup of your system. An image backup with a program like Acronis TrueImage is recommended, but you should be able to get by even with the backup and restore tools built into Windows 7 and 8.1.

Run Belarc Advisor (and save the report to a separate drive), CCleaner or Auslogic Registry Cleaner, Malwarebytes, your current virus scanner, and consider doing a de frag of the system partition.

Make sure all the system updates NOT including the update to Windows 10 have been run on your system, with whatever driver updates you feel okay with doing, and that you have safely shut down and restarted the computer at least once before continuing. (I recommend twice if you are on the paranoid side).

NOTE: I would recommend these steps even if you are not going to upgrade to Windows 10.

These are just good maintenance tips to have and use for any Windows computer, but the goal here is to facilitate the transition and hopefully make the process smoother as a result.

Once you have done (most of) these steps, then consider yourself ready to upgrade to Windows 10 at your convenience.

Con #1: I don't want to upgrade my system to Windows 10... what should I do?

First, review the steps for the answer above; as noted, they still apply to you.

Second, download and install GWX control panel http://ultimateoutsider.com/downloads/ or Never10 https://www.grc.com/never10.htm and run either of those tools. Then as they say, fuggedaboutit. Those tools should keep your computer from nagging you to do the update well past the July cut off.

It appears Microsoft is getting a little more enthusiastic about promoting Windows 10 as we get closer to the end of July deadline, so use of these tools may be more necessary than previously recommended just to be able to better ignore the upgrade notifications.

Pro #2: I haven't been getting the upgrade notification...

Check the article https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/kb/3081048 for troubleshooting tips. Or download the media creation tool from https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/softwaredownload/windows10/to create bootable media to try and upgrade from.

Con #2: I can't upgrade my system because it is running Windows XP or the hardware is not compatible...

If you're okay with still running Windows XP, keep in mind that while support from Microsoft itself is "officially" gone, many older computers will probably be run for years to come off the older OSes until they finally wear down or can no longer keep pace with the needs of their users. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to make the maintenance steps given above part of your regular routine for those computers, along with other protection habits as recommended by your more safety conscious friends. Or consider the answer to con question #3.

Pro #3: What else should I consider when upgrading?

Microsoft is positioning Windows 10 as the foundation for a whole new ecosystem of products and services that tie in with the Xbox, mobile systems, and the users of Microsoft accounts. It should be increasingly more useful for people who are already invested in using current MS products and services.

Con #3: What are other alternatives?

On older hardware, and as a choice on newer PC-based stems, Linux is a strong contender as an alternative OS. There is still a bit of a learning curve, but distributions like Linuxmint or Ubuntu make it fairly easy to boot from a DVD or thumb drive and play around with it.

I would point to this article: http://lifehacker.com/5993297/ubuntu-vsmint-which-linux-distro-is-better-forbeginners as a good starting point for those choices. Or consider the Macintosh/Apple "eco-system" if a complete switch is in your budget. One advantage of the MacBook Pro (if you can get one) is that they can run Windows thru boot camp for those who do not wish to switch completely.

Another choice more in the mobile space are the Android or ChromeOS based devices. Most are designed to be compatible with your primary system (or even a replacement in some cases) but a little research is warranted to get the most out of integration with your existing setup.

Since I am pushing a deadline of my own in finishing this article, I will save my brain cells for later feedback to continue with this. I hope what I have written so far proves useful to you.

Using Bluetooth on Your Smartphone and Tablet
By Julie Mahaffey, Member, ICON (Interactive Computer Owners Network)
March 2016 issue, The ICON Newsletter
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The international symbol for Bluetooth.

Bluetooth is wireless and a way for devices to communicate with each other over a small distance. Created in 1994 Bluetooth® technology is a wireless alternative to data cables. Data is shared through radio waves rather than hooking a cable to a device. Bluetooth connects the Internet of Things (IoT), machine to machine, Ex. smartphones, tablets, headphones, speakers, etc. A Bluetooth product, like a headset or watch, contains a tiny computer chip with a Bluetooth radio and software that makes it easy to connect.
See more at: https://www.bluetooth.com/what-is-bluetooth-technology/bluetooth#sthash.BvuWBzJz.dpuf

Bluetooth Facts:
- Bluetooth is everywhere – Smartphones, tablets, headphones, speakers, TVs, computers, cars, medical devices, etc.

- Bluetooth is low power – Runs off of small button batteries.
- Bluetooth is easy to use – When two Bluetooth devices want to talk to each other, they need to pair.
- Go to settings, turn on Bluetooth on both devices, hit the pairing button and wait for Bluetooth to connect.
- Bluetooth is low cost – Today Bluetooth is included in most devices but it can be added for a small cost.

Bluetooth Devices:
- Headsets – fits over your ear to make phone calls or listen to music
- Speakers – connect to tablet or smartphone for music listening
- Home Deadbolt Door Lock – lock or unlock a deadbolt lock with a smartphone
- Smart Pen for iPad – write and draw
- Weight Scales – connects to smartphone
- Armband Sensor – sends pulse rate to smartphone
- Keyboard – connect to computer or tablet
- Bluetooth Car Kit – hands-free phone call

Works Cited:
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What's New?
Trilby, Charging Hub 400 and
Canary
By George Harding, Treasurer,
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This is an interesting product that you use in your kitchen. You can leave messages for others, call to or from other family members, and listen to the radio. T

The device is:
- About 6 inches square.
- The top part of the square is a handle for the device.
- There is a small screen on the front surface on which transmitted messages are displayed.
- There are several buttons, two phone buttons on the left, two radio buttons on the left.
- The rest of the front is devoted to speakers.
- The back of the device has two magnetized strips used to attach the device to your refrigerator or other metallic fixture.
- The left side has a sliding panel that slips out when there is a message received.
- The right side has a charging port.

- The product comes with the device and a charging cable.
- A downloadable app is available from the Apple store.
- An Android app is under development.

With the app, you can set up connections to everyone in the family. You can call any of them through Triby, or any one can call Triby. You can add as many family members as you need or want. You can add non-family members, as well, if you wish.

If you like to listen to the radio while you work in the kitchen, you have available through the app a selection of many stations, from talk radio to classical music to sports. You can pretune two of these to the two radio buttons on the face of the device, for easy tuning. If you are a Spotify subscriber, you can play songs from that source.

Triby is connected to the Internet through your home network. It is also connected with Bluetooth for local communication.

One of the interesting features is the ability to send messages to Triby from your phone. They appear on the display screen on the front of Triby. At the time of receipt, the yellow slider on the left side of Triby slides out to notify you of a message. The message is limited by the size of the display screen, so it must be fairly brief. What you send need not be a message, but rather can be a drawing or an emoticon. Or a scribble. Or anything else you want.

This is an interesting, innovative product that is useful in your kitchen or other home locations.

Triby by Invoxia   www.invoxia.com/triby   Price $199

Charging Hub 400 ...

One of the problems today is the many devices we have that need charging. While it would be nice to spread them out, sometimes two or more need charging at the same time.

Ventev's charging hub to the rescue! This hub has four USB ports, which can all be used at the same time, if necessary. Three of the ports share a 3 amp supply, one is 2.4 amp. You can use any of the ports to charge any device, but the 2.4 amp port will provide the fastest charge.

The hub has a connecting cord for plugging into a wall socket. The manual suggests that the cord be removed from the socket when the hub is not in use.

The accompanying User Manual is thorough and complete. It is a strip 8 ½ inches by 3 ½ inches folded into five panels. Although not much instruction is required, it is fully laid out in this manual.

In my use, rather than attaching the charging cords to the hub when a device needed charging, I wound up simply leave the charging cables for my various devices attached to the hub. That eliminated the search that sometimes occurred when I needed a cable and couldn't find it.

Charging Hub 400 by Ventev   www.mobileaccessories.ventev.com   Price $40

Canary …

Canary is a home security device that is easy to set up and works very well.
It provides you with a view of your home area from wherever you are away from home. You only need your smartphone and Wi-Fi.

Starting out, you put the Canary in a central spot that has a good view of your area. Next, plug the Canary into a wall socket and connect to your Wi-Fi.

Now you have an inside view of the area you chose to see. You can access it anytime you have Wi-Fi coverage.

You will get alerts whenever Canary sees movement when you are not at home. How does it know you aren't there? I don't know, but it does! Canary is automatically armed when you leave the house and disarmed when you are home.

The alerts show up on your smartphone and are recorded for you to view if needed.

The smartphone screen also has an alarm button and a police call button.

Canary also has a few features that will be of interest to you. One is a temperature monitor which tells you the temperature in Canary's locale. The second is a Humidity monitor, which may be of interest. And third is an air quality monitor. Each of these can be displayed as a graph to see variations over time.

The air quality monitor is pretty interesting. It monitors for isobutene, hydrogen (don't know when that might be present), methane, ethanol, carbon monoxide, cigarette

smoke and cooking odors. The Guide points out that Canary should not be used as a replacement for a dedicated monoxide or smoke detector.

One extra advantage is that having Canary monitoring your environment may get you a discount on your Home Owner's insurance with State Farm.

Canary is easy to use and set up. I have had only one problem, controlling the mobile alerts. I have been getting them even when at home. That produces many alerts.

Canary Home Security   meetcanary.com Price $199

From the President's Column – April 2016
By Andrew Cummins, President, Interactive Computer Owners Network, MO
April 2016 issue, The ICON Newsletter
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As a follow up to the info shared at our June meeting regarding brains being like hard drives: *Brains of elderly slow because they know so much, By Sarah Knapton, Science Correspondent,* I thought you might be interested in this column.

Many studies have been done, involving seniors, to quantitatively measure how beneficial various activities are. One such study is ongoing by researchers at Oregon Health and Science University. They're studying a group of people ages 70 to 98 years old, and have been for several years. They put software on their PCs to measure how much they used their computers, by monitoring mouse movement. They use MRIs to observe and measure brain characteristics. Researchers also measured such things as their sleep, mobility, and education, to control other variables. Guess what they found.

Those who used computers regularly maintained healthier brains than their peers. One researcher with the Oregon study said she expected regular computer usage to help the frontal lobe of the brain which handles such things as multi-tasking and planning. Using The brain keeps it sharp.

But, she was surprised to see regular computer usage benefit the areas of the brain related to memory, the hippocampus and medial temporal lobe. If you use computers regularly, you'll literally have a bigger brain than those who don't.

In illustrative fact, computer usage is more beneficial for the brain than other activities, such as reading magazines, knitting and crafts, playing games, and social outings. ICON adds social outings to using computers, maybe games and crafts too, being all the better.

You'll find people, researchers, who even claim physical benefits to computer usage, such as reducing arthritis symptoms and heart problems.

These researchers always caution people not to draw too much from their data. And, maybe declining computer use is warning sign of mental decline. But, I have no doubt that getting out, coming to ICON meetings, and spending time on a PC enriches one's life. You should even be getting others you know to come with you; it's just the neighborly thing to do.

Find Your Tech Support Match
By Nancy DeMarte, 1st Vice President,
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May 2016 issue, STUG Monitor
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We all run into occasional problems with our computers and digital devices. Finding the solution can be a nightmare, especially if the problem is unique or you are not fluent in tech terms. There is a wealth of support available, but it's a matter of finding the right kind of help to fit your kind of problem and your learning style. Let's take a look at some of the popular support options and the kind of people who might benefit most from them.

Good options for people who learn best by reading:
Website support: A visit to the website most closely related to your problem can often give you the answers you need, even if your device is past warranty. If your computer isn't working properly, for example, or you need to update drivers, you can go to the website of the computer's manufacturer and search its Support pages. If you need help understanding how to use a certain feature of your device, you can go to the manufacturer's site and download a User Manual for your model. Or you can try the Frequently Asked Questions list (FAQ). These are questions most commonly asked about the product with answers by support professionals. Most large sites also have Discussion forums where you can post a question or search through questions on your topic and find answers.

Google it: Some people say that whenever they have a tech problem, they type it into the Google search box and often find the answer. This approach is fine if you can sum up your issue accurately and choose the right website. Be aware that not all independent blogs or tech help sites have correct information. And in these dangerous times, not all are legitimate. Choose sites familiar to you, like pcmag.com or cnet.com; they are more likely to be reputable.

Good options for people who prefer to interact with a real person:
Tech phone support: This was the standard method in the early days of personal computers. It is still a viable option if you are experienced enough to be able to explain your problem and possibly make changes to your device while on the phone. The advantage is you get to speak with a real person. Disadvantages may include a long wait time before reaching the right person and being unable to understand unfamiliar accents.

Live Chat: If you don't like phone support, you can still get personal support by trying Live Chat, which is found on many website support pages. Live Chat doesn't involve talking; it's done by typing, much like a text message, but in real time. You request a chat session by clicking a link and choosing or typing your problem category. A chat window opens and a support person types you a "Hello, my name is __. What can I help you with today?" message. You type back what you know about your problem, and he or she attempts to resolve it. The big advantage is you are interacting with a real person without having to think quickly, as you might on the phone. Plus, your person will help you narrow down your issue and, if not solve it, transfer you to someone who can.

Good options for those who learn best by seeing it done:
Video Tutorials: If you like hands-on demonstrations, a good choice is the video tutorials on tech websites (Microsoft has excellent ones) or on YouTube, where you can search for videos on practically any topic and watch it being done and explained. A lesser known, but excellent website with many instructional videos on computer topics is a North Carolina site sponsored by Goodwill. Go to www.gcflearnfree.org/technology.

Remote assistance: These days it's not uncommon for a phone support or live chat person to offer to access your computer remotely and make changes to it to resolve your problem. If you have initiated the request for help, and the support person is employed by a reputable company, you can be quite confident that your computer will not be compromised during this process. You will be asked for permission before the person begins remote assistance. You sit in front of your computer and watch what's going on. You may be asked to participate, such as logging into your device yourself to protect your password. Be sure you have a good backup of your data prior to using this option.

If you've tried everything:
Take it to the shop: If you have what appears to be a serious hacking or malware breach or mechanical problem with a device, taking it to a reputable repair shop or having a tech person come to your home may be your best solution. Yes, it will cost you something, but if you've tried other options and still have an unworkable device, this may be the answer.

Good help is out there. Know your style and choose a support method that matches it.

President's Corner
Windows 10 – Resistance is Futile
By Greg Skalka, President, Under the
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July 2016 issue, Drive Light
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In the fictional Star Trek universe, the most dangerous adversary ever faced by the starship Enterprise and her crew was the Borg. A far greater threat to the United

Federation of Planets than the Romulans or Klingons, the Borg was a collective of beings that acted as one, like a hive of insects. Their goal was to seek perfection in advancing their race; the result was the elimination of individuality.

As individuals, the Borg were organic humanoid life forms of various species that were extensively augmented with technology (Is a cell phone seemingly permanently affixed to a hand our start down this dark road?). Not only were they injected with microscopic nanomachines, many of their organs and limbs were enhanced synthetic replacements, resulting in a race of beings that were part organic and part machine. Through implanted cybernetic devices, all Borg were connected to the hive mind, sharing thoughts over a Borg version of Wi-Fi internet. The Borg drive for "perfection" causes them to abduct and assimilate suitable beings they encounter into their hive collective, and incorporate captured technology into the collective for their own use. Borg seldom speak as individuals, but often send audio messages from the collective to other species they encounter, often using the phrases "You will be assimilated" and "Resistance is futile".

The Borg first appeared in the second season of the Star Trek: The Next Generation television series in 1988. In addition to other Star Trek: TNG episodes, they appeared in the Star Trek: First Contact movie (1996), many episodes of the Star Trek: Voyager television series (1995-2001) and one episode in the Star Trek: Enterprise series (2001-2005). The Borg are finally defeated in the Voyager finale.

Around the same time in our real universe, Microsoft Windows was far and away the dominant computer operating system. Windows 3.1 was released in 1992, a few years after we were introduced to the Borg on TV. By the time the Borg were making their final TV appearance, Windows XP was dominating the computing world as the most popular desktop/laptop OS ever. I think XP was a great OS (I'm writing this on my last remaining XP computer, and I still use XP at work), but some felt Microsoft's dominance in the OS and office software product areas made them seem like the Borg. One member of our group (I think it was the original Ol' Whitebeard, Al Brengle) had a tee shirt with a picture of Microsoft's then-leader Bill Gates made up as a Borg, with the caption "Resistance is futile, you will be assimilated."

Unfortunately for Microsoft, they dropped the ball on seeking perfection, and later lost the war over computing device OS market dominance to a little robot (Google's Android) and a fruit (Apple's iOS). Their Surface tablet and Windows Phone OS could not compete after smart phones and tablets came on the scene in 2007 and have since become the dominant computing devices in terms of numbers. Microsoft still reigns supreme in traditional desktop/laptop (non-mobile) OS installations, but that slice of the overall computing pie continues to shrink.

Microsoft appears to share another attribute with Star Trek - the 'Alternating Good / Bad Syndrome'. For at least the early releases, the Star Trek movies seemed to alternate between good and dud, according to most fans. The first movie, Star Trek: The Motion Picture, and other odd-numbered releases, are not fan favorites, while the even-numbered ones, like Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan, are generally regarded as superior. Microsoft seems to have followed the same pattern for OS releases since

Windows 98, which was a success. The next offering, Windows ME, was kind of a flop. Win XP was a big hit, while Windows Vista was generally a disappointment. Windows 7 is currently the most popular desktop OS (nearly 45% of desktops), while Windows 8/8.1, its immediate successor, has only one quarter of 7's market share. Though the pattern would predict that Windows 10 will be a success, it had a little less than half the market share (by browsing statistics) of Windows 7 in April 2016.

When Microsoft released Windows 10 on July 29, 2015, it appears to have desperately wanted a success, and have most users switch to their latest OS right away. Users had definitely shown a preference for hanging on to their old operating systems in the past. XP retained the top spot in use over Win7 until just before it lost Microsoft security support, and it is likely Win8 will never top Win7. To boost acceptance of Win10, Microsoft announced it would offer all legitimate owners of Win7 and Win8.1 a free upgrade to Win10 for one year from the release date. If you see the little Windows symbol in your system tray, you are entitled to the free upgrade.

My "if it's not broke, don't try to fix it" philosophy has so far led me to want to stay with Win7 on the four computers I've bought with it in the last four years. Windows 7 won't be getting any more feature fixes, but Microsoft is committed to providing security updates for it until January 14, 2020. By that time, I'll have probably lost interest in the hardware in these PCs anyway. Only once have I ever updated to a new OS on a computer (from ME to XP). When it is time to buy a new computer, I'll probably wind up with Windows 10 on it.

Microsoft's free offer was initially a soft sell. The Get Windows 10 (GWT) app got installed in every Windows 7 and 8.1 system tray, but it remained just an annoying pop-up on start-up. It was easy to decline the upgrade and continue with your business. Windows 10 started to appear under Windows Update, but only as an optional update. I have all of the computers I use set to check for updates, but let me choose when and if they are installed. I believe security updates are important, but am annoyed when I need to shut down my laptop to take it with me and am forced to wait on the shut-down while Windows installs updates. Since I don't get on my wife's desktop PC as often as I'd like, I have it set to automatically install important updates.

At some point this spring, Microsoft must have decided that we Windows 7 users were not adopting Win10 fast enough (this was predicted by Computerworld and reported by CNET - see links below). Apparently Microsoft became more like the Borg, insisting that our resistance was futile, and we would be assimilated. According to CNET, they changed the Win10 pop-up to trick users into scheduling the upgrade, and changed the upgrade from 'optional' to 'recommended' in Windows Updates.

I had heard rumors of this but it didn't hit home until my wife came running on Sunday, May 1, to tell me that Windows 10 was in the process of installing on her desktop PC. She claimed she didn't click on anything to initiate this, but I could imagine her being tricked fairly easily. Since the upgrade was in process, there was not much I could do but watch for 30 minutes or so while the upgrade completed. I spent some of the time on-line on another computer, researching how to undo the upgrade.

Once the upgrade was complete, the Microsoft software license screen appeared. By declining the software license terms, I was provided a choice to undo the Windows 10 upgrade. It only took about 10 minutes to uninstall, and then it appeared her Windows 7 installation was back to normal. I verified some of the basic programs she uses for work still worked, and then went back to my computer to research how to prevent this from happening in the future.

When I came back to her computer a while later, I found that Windows 10 was once again in the process of installing. I had to wait again for the install to complete, and then once again decline the license agreement, so that Windows 7 would be again restored. I had read online about remedies to this upgrade problem, but most were rather complex. There were things I'd have to do to prevent the upgrade, and things I'd had to do to remove the upgrade from her hard drive (now the large update file was sitting on her hard drive, taking up space, just waiting for the opportunity to install).

In the end I chose a simple but so far effective way to stop the installation - I set her Windows Update settings to only update when and if I agree. This means the Win10 upgrade file is still sitting on her hard drive. I now must schedule myself to check for updates on her PC on a regular basis. Since Windows Update now always recommends the Win10 upgrade, I must go through a few more steps and deselect it from the list of recommended updates.

I do have one Windows 7 computer that I am considering allowing the free Win10 upgrade on; I need to figure this out soon, as their offer may run out in a month. I wonder what will happen after July 29, 2016. Will Microsoft stop trying to assimilate my computers? Will they extend the free upgrade deadline, due to the poor acceptance of Windows 10 so far? In either case, I do hope resistance is not futile, and that no matter which OS I choose (and it remains my choice), my computers will live long and prosper.

Cartoons from….

"Great. I can't remember my pen number."
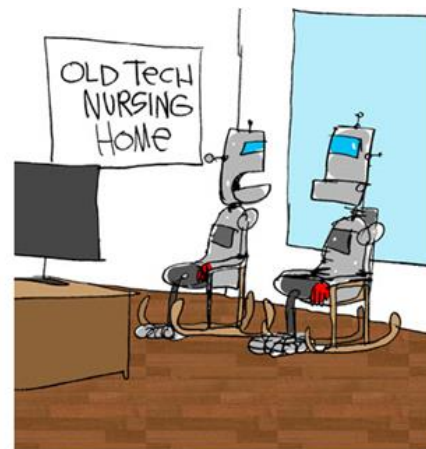
"The Androids never come to see us."

The Meeting that Was...June
By Judy

Summer Travel Tips, Our Older Brains, the National Do Not Call Act, Nomorobo – a way to block telemarketers and robo calls that really works and Time Warner's Call Blocker Select were covered at this meeting.

The Summer Travel Tips presentation featured Abby Stokes' tips on what gadgets to take when you travel as well as some apps you might want to use with your Smartphone. Abby is the author of *Is This Computer On? A Friendly Guide to Everything Digital.*

A 2014 scientific study in Great Britain noted that the hypothesis that our older brains only appear to slow down because we have so much information to compute, much like a full-up hard drive. Perhaps this why we sometimes can't remember where we put our keys.

The National Do Not Call Act and Nomorobo was my favorite presentation. I downloaded it prior to the meeting and the presentation featured screenshots of the setup including the info required when it was added to my Time Warner account. Dick Beekman also talked about Nomorobo and we both encouraged everyone to download it. There was a lively discussion on how to make sure relatives', the dentist, etc. numbers aren't blocked. When I gave the presentation the next day to the La Verne Computer Club there was one member whose number is blocked when she calls their president who uses Nomorobo (she has been using it since January). The Pres just needs to get in touch with Nomorobo and let them know that a 'good' number is on their 'black' list and have it removed.

I have been using it for a month and my house is really quiet. It blocks all of the calls I don't want to receive and lets all my personal calls through. I think that once it starts blocking calls, the word spreads since I receive very few unwanted calls / day when my phone often was ringing, ringing, ringing – with one 'company' calling three times in a row.

We finished with a survey of what attendees carry in their car in case of an emergency. The majority of them have almost everything they need to take care of an emergency.
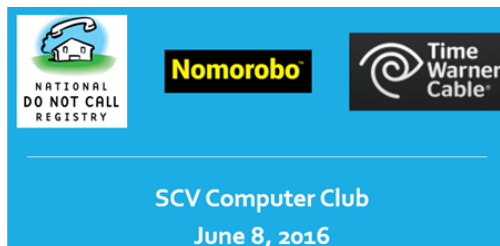
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       Santa Clarita, CA 91351

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       SCV Senior Center
       22900 Market Street
       Newhall CA 91321

And, the Winners were:

Agnes Chaney – Abby Stokes' Book, *Is This Computer On?—A Friendly Guide to Everything Digital* ($18)
Kathy Kazmer – PNY Power Pack ($15)

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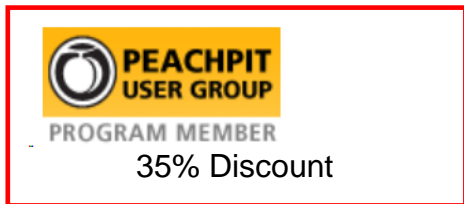
The SCV Computer Club is dedicated to supporting the needs of its members and to the exchange of information about computers, peripherals, services, hardware and software through meetings, its web page, and the distribution of this newsletter.

The SCV Computer Club is a member of SCRUGS and APCUG
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(Association of Personal Computer User Groups)

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