

Interface

Lorain County Computer Users Group
LCCUG.com (or) info@LCCUG.com
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2025

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Thursday
February 13, 2025
10:00 AM

Banking, Payment Methods & Security.

Presented by

**LCCUG OFFICERS
&
APCUG VIDEOS**



LCCUG

Our links can be found at:

LCCUG.com/links, There you will find many interesting places to visit. Check them out and see what you can find interesting

This meeting will be held in person and on Zoom on Thursday from January thru May 2025 10:00 am.

Join us in person at:

LCCC Community Learning Center
201 W Erie Ave, Lorain, OH 44052

Please Email: info@lccug.com if you have any questions or concerns!



A Word From Our President



Welcome back to LCCUG and Thursdays.

At the end of this newsletter is a copy of the first 5-page newsletter that I promised in the January newsletter. Last month we had included pictures of some of our current members from years ago!!! Our first newsletter was published in December 1990!! It is fun to look at and see what the subjects of interest were at that time.

Our January meeting looked at several short videos on really interesting technology. I know I learned a lot. Watching these always leads to an interesting discussion among our members.

At the February meeting on the second Thursday, February 13 at 10 am, we will explore more of these kinds of videos as we attempt to keep up with all the changes going on in the technology world.

We continue to post a list of links to the videos we look at on our lccug.com/links page. Check them out. We can always benefit from re-watching the ones we want to better understand.

We would have to be living very remotely not to be hearing lots about AI on a daily basis. It behooves us to at least be aware of what it all encompasses.

Watch for the ZOOM link closer to the meeting or come in person. We'd love to see you.

Sandra Ruth
LCCUG President



LCCUG Officers For 2025

President	Sandee Ruth president@lccug.com
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Thursday
February 13, 2024

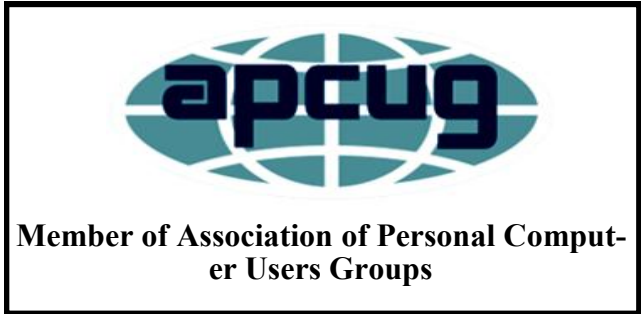
Banking, Payment Methods & Security.

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&
APCUG VIDEOS**



**Important Meeting
Announcement:**
Due to tax season schedule conflicts, starting in January through April's meeting, we will be having our meetings on the second Thursday of the month, starting at 10:00 am. Hope to see you there.
**Sandra Ruth
LCCUG President**



Member of Association of Personal Computer Users Groups

AARP Fraud Watch Network
Did you know that AARP makes available free articles on preventing scams & fraud? Visit this site for more information:
<https://www.aarp.org/membership/benefits/finance/fraud-watch-network/>

Woohoo
Your renewal dues have been changed from \$15.00, To 3 years for \$15.00. When everyone else is raising their prices our Computer Club is lowering their dues, so tell your friends to come and Join in the fun and learn computer information.
Tell your family and friends about this great deal. Once in a lifetime opportunity.
**LCCUG
Director of Membership,
membership@lccug.com.**



Executive Board Meeting Minutes

JANUARY 5, 2025

The January board meeting was held at the BREW KETTLE in Amherst and attended by Sandee Ruth, Don Hall, Micky Knickman and Pam Rihel.

Discussion was held concerning member attendance at meetings and what we can do to increase attendance.

Revising the **INTERFACE** layout including the Officers, Workshop and Need Help sections was discussed and assigned to Pam.

Micky moved, Don seconded meeting be adjourned.



MEMBERSHIP WITH LCCUG:

Yearly dues are now \$15.00 For 3 years. For more information contact:

LCCUG
Director of Membership,
membership@lccug.com.

Meeting Location:
At a new time: from 10 am. - noon
in a new location: LCCC facility at
[201 W. Erie, Lorain](#)

Our meeting space is on the first floor – easily accessible – larger – refreshments available! Please email info@lccug.com if you have any questions.

Newsletter Editor: Pam Rihel using Microsoft Publisher, 2019

This Month's contributors: Micky Knickman, Sandra Ruth, Pam Rihel, Don Hall, Neil Higgins, Michael John Neill, Tom Burt, Adobe Stock, Scambusters, Ask Leo, APCUG, Google Images, Microsoft Office art online, AARP

Newsletter is now
Online at:
lccug.com/newsletters or lccug.com



General Meeting Minutes

JANUARY 9, 2025

President Sandee Ruth called the meeting to order. She talked about her work on old issues of the **INTERFACE** and making them available on our website.

Sandee and Micky presented a program "How Can AI Help You?" They started with Google's Gemini Live which is a \$20 / month service. The program continued with "Five of The Greatest Scams". These along with the other Videos were informative.

There was a great deal of discussion between members at Lorain about the different subjects.

Nancy Smith moved, Sandee seconded the meeting be adjourned.



The Lorain County Chapter of OGS

is having its next meeting online:

Check our webpage for the next program.

<http://loraincoogs.org/events.html>



We are having our meetings virtually only, using Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/6681479672?pwd=amh0NmtmalZWa0lmRWVBWEwySkxmZz09&omn=92912561207>

Lorain County Chapter is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Meetings are free and the program begins at 7:00 PM.

John Kolb
secretary@loraincoogs.org

The top tips on how to spot and avoid the 10 cell phone scams you're most likely to encounter:

Internet Scambusters #315

Today's issue is about cell phone scams. Cell phone technology, and its cheap availability, have made a huge difference in the way we communicate and the speed with which we can get and stay in touch.

But it provides a lucrative channel for scammers and snoopers, who use the technology to steal our money or our identity, and even to track our movements and listen to our conversations.

In today's issue, we explain the 10 most common cell phone scams and show you the steps you can take to protect yourself.

The 10 Most Common Cell Phone Scams and How to Avoid Them

Cell phones have changed our lives, but so have cell phone scams...

This clever technology that keeps us constantly in touch with friends, relatives and even the Internet may be a boon, but it has also opened up more of the airwaves to crooks and snoopers.

In some cases, further technological advances have made it tougher for certain cell phone scams to work, but elsewhere the crooks are having a field day.

In this Scambusters issue, we identify 10 of the most common cell phone scams and the action you can take to avoid or reduce the risk of them.

1. Subscriber fraud

Subscriber fraud is simply an offshoot of identity theft. It is far and away the biggest cell phone scam, costing the industry an estimated \$150m a year and causing untold anguish to the victims.

How it works: Someone steals your personal

details and opens a cell phone account in your name, racking up huge bills that may land in your mailbox.

Action: Take all possible steps to protect yourself against identity theft. You can find more about identity theft in the [Identity Theft](#) Information Center.

2. Stolen or lost phones

An estimated three million cell phones are stolen or lost in the US every year! In the wrong hands they can be used to make unauthorized calls -- one recent victim faced a \$26,000 bill. Alternatively, they can be mined for any personal and contact details stored on them. In other words, loss of your phone can be just a prelude for costly identity theft.

Action: Look after your cell phone as carefully as you care for your wallet. If you must use it to store confidential information, use password protection. See this article on [cell phone theft](#) and passwords.

3. Cloning

Crooks use scanners to read your cell phone identity, including the number and its unique serial number.

Then they program another phone with the same details and make calls at your expense.

Action: This is one area where the crime fighters have made progress, with new technology that makes it more difficult to scan for the number. There's nothing more you can do other than keep a close eye on your bill.

4. Eavesdropping

Cell phone scam merchants may find it more difficult to scan for your phone ID but they can do potentially much more dangerous things -- like listening in to your calls and downloading your phone usage records.

They can even track your phone to know where you are or where you have been at a particular time.

One piece of perfectly legal software can be secretly installed on someone else's cell

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5) The top tips on how to spot and avoid the 10 cell phone scams you're most likely to encounter

phone, then the crook -- or concerned spouse -
- can dial in and snoop.

They can listen to your phone calls, download copies of text messages and numbers dialed, or even just silently activate the phone and use its microphone to monitor any nearby sounds or conversations.

And people who use Bluetooth short-range radio to connect a hands-free headset to their cell phone can be targeted by nearby scammers using Bluetooth to eavesdrop.

Action: If you don't let your phone out of your sight and always password protect it, people can't install software on it. But, to be on the safe side, always switch the phone fully off so it can't be activated when confidentiality could be compromised.

Bluetooth users should un-select the "discoverable" option on their devices. See [Airport Travel Scams: Watch Out For These Airport Tricksters](#) for more info.

5. Ringtone cell phone scams

Apart from driving nearby people crazy with their awful sounds, users of downloaded ringtones could be exposing themselves to a couple of potentially costly cell phone scams.

Some tones -- usually free ones or those exchanged via peer-to-peer software -- have been hacked by scammers and can install a virus that either damages the phone or steals confidential information.

Second, you may get a text message inviting you to download a ringtone by returning another message or calling a 1-800 number. But when you do this, you may incur a hefty charge and/or unwittingly sign up for a monthly charge for services you don't want.

Action: Get your tones only from established, reputable companies. And don't return messages or calls from people or organizations you don't know.

6. Bogus text messages

There are numerous variations of this cell phone scam but the bottom line is that you receive an unsolicited text message (which you may have to pay for!) which prompts you take some sort of action you'll later regret.

Most common is what seems to be a message from your bank (this may also arrive as an automated voicemail) saying your account has been suspended and asking you to call a 1-800 number where your account number, PIN and other details may be requested. In reality, your identity is being stolen.

Another variation is a "pump and dump" ruse, where you receive a tip urging you to buy stock in a particular company. If enough people fall for it, the share price goes up and the scammers offload their previously worthless stock for a profit.

Action: If you get any message supposedly from your bank, call them on their normal number to check it out. And never buy stock on the basis of a single tip -- from any source.

7. The old switcheroo

You get a call from what seems to be your cell phone company offering you what they claim is a better deal than your present one, or maybe even telling you your current deal is coming to an end and that you must switch.

In reality, it's a competitor, another phone store, trying to switch you over to one of their packages, which may or may not be better than your current one. But since they're trying to deceive you, assume it's better not to do business with them.

Action: Ask the caller to give you some info about your current phone usage. If they can't tell you when you made your last call or sent an SMS message, they're not who they say they are.

8. Catches in the small print

Sometimes you find what seems to be a really sweet cell phone rental deal. You don't find out

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6) *The top tips on how to spot and avoid the 10 cell phone scams you're most likely to encounter*

you've been ripped off till the bill arrives, showing all sorts of additional charges you didn't know about.

In one of the [travel scams](#) we reported previously, renters of temporary cell phones were taken in by a money-back deal, offering a refund of the rental fee when the phone was returned. But the credit card they provided was used to levy exorbitant charges for the calls themselves.

Usually these deals are perfectly legitimate and the sting is hidden away in the small print of the Terms & Conditions.

Action: Read the Terms & Conditions!

9. Vote with your phone

During the recent presidential election, people received text or recorded messages offering them the chance to cast their vote by phone, simply by pressing a key for each of the candidates.

Turned out this was a trick targeted at voters of one political persuasion or another, to stop victims from actually casting their vote for real.

Action: You can't vote this way -- yet. It's also a Federal offense to trick people out of their votes.

10. Beware of these hoaxes

Finally, there are a couple of hoaxes related to cell phone scams to look out for:

- * An email that warns against taking a call from a bogus engineer who asks you to key in 90# for a test of your cell phone. The message claims the caller can then use a scanner to collect ID numbers for cloning or to collect other confidential information. It's an urban legend and untrue.

- * You get a message warning you that cell phone companies will soon be releasing all

mobile numbers to telemarketers and that to avoid them you must add your number to the "do not call" registry.

Sometimes, this is just a bit of mischief; other times they ask you to call a bogus number for which you will be charged an excessive fee. Fact is, cell phone numbers are not publicly available for marketing in this way.

OK, we said '10' but number 10 wasn't really a scam, was it?

So, let's just add one more cell phone scam that applies to almost anything you want to buy -- the Too Good to Be True deal. You know the sort of thing -- the cell phone of your dreams, with all the latest gadgetry and doo-hickeys at an unbelievably low price. It's almost always a scam.

Action: Don't even think about it...

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<http://www.scambusters.org>

Genealogy Tip of the day

Michael John Neill Genealogy Tip of the Day
Rootdig.com mjnrootdig@gmail.com

Did the First Spouse Die?

A relative is married in 1843 in St. Louis, Missouri. He is married again in Illinois in 1848.

The most likely scenario is that she died. It is possible that the couple actually divorced or separated and never bothered to divorce. The divorce would have generated a court record.

A separation that never resulted in divorce may not have generated any records at all.

But I should not assume the first wife died unless there is some additional evidence other than simply the subsequent marriage.





AI – What Next?

By Tom Burt, Vice President
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club
<https://www.scscclub.com>
[tomburt89134 @cox.net](mailto:tomburt89134@cox.net)



I recently came across an article from TechRepublic reviewing Intel's new Core Ultra and Xeon CPU chips with onboard support for AI. Here's the link to that article:

<https://www.techrepublic.com/article/intel-ai-everywhere-event-2023>.

I shared the article with our Tuesday Kaffee Klatch group. A friend replied, "Really interesting! What's Next?" In this article, we'll explore that question.

My first thought was, "What is AMD doing?" I ran a quick web search and immediately found that AMD has a family of Ryzen AI CPUs offering AMD's XDNA architecture. Here's a link to AMD's web page:

<https://www.amd.com/en/products/processors/consumer/ryzen-ai.html>

My next thought was, "What is ARM doing?" Sure enough, ARM also has CPU chips with onboard support for AI. ARM CPUs are the dominant chips on cell phones, tablets, and recent Apple devices. Here's a link to ARM's web page:

<https://www.arm.com/markets/artificial-intelligence>

So, all the major CPU chip families used in servers, PCs, laptops, and mobile devices incorporate onboard AI support. AI apps like ChatGPT, Bard, and Claude can run on your PC, laptop, or mobile device rather than on a cloud-based server farm. As this technology rolls out over the next few years, it will augment the available worldwide AI processing power by several billion devices.

Futurism

Usually, I avoid trying to predict the future, especially with technology. Reality tends to outstrip even "far-out-there" predictions. However, I'll have to make a few SWAGs in a "What's Next?" article, especially since I'm writing this at the beginning of the new year. However, I'll probably look at this a few years from now and laugh wryly at my naiveté. Let's look at areas where this new onboard CPU support

for AI may significantly impact.

Speech Recognition and Generation

Speech recognition has come a long way since my software engineering days at Citibank's Transaction Technology Institute in the mid-1980s. Today, we are at the point where humans can talk to machines using natural, colloquial language and be understood. Even accented speech can be understood. Further, machines can now speak in natural voices and be easily understood by humans.

Machines can also translate textual content from one language to another. Combining translation with voice recognition and synthesis brings us to the realization of the science fiction concept of a universal translator.

A quick search on Google turned up two Android apps and an iOS app that offer this functionality today:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.speakandtranslate.voicetranslator.alllanguages&hl=en_US&gl=US

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.erudite.translator&hl=en_US&gl=US

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/itranslate-voice/id522626820>

For desktop computer users, Google Translate can recognize speech and translate it.

Currently, these apps, while very capable and well-rated, seem to depend on cloud-based servers for the actual translation intelligence. This means their ability to function depends on having an Internet connection. As the new CPU chips mentioned above become commonplace in mobile devices, look for more of this functionality to operate on the mobile device itself with better performance.

If you're a regular Zoom user, you've likely come across its live captioning and transcription features. Zoom can do real-time voice recognition of all the voices on a Zoom session and display the speech as text in a running window at the bottom of the screen. This is a huge aid to hearing-impaired participants. Similar technology is now providing captioning for online videos and other audio streams. For Android and iOS smartphones, there are Live Transcription apps:

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(Continued from page 8) AI What's Next!

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.audio.hearing.visualization.accessibility.scribe>

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/live-transcribe/id1471473738>

Looking ahead, with advanced CPU chips in smart TVs, it becomes feasible for the TV to automatically generate live captions of any incoming audio stream and do on-the-fly translation of the source audio stream language to another language.

Customer Service

Customer service is a fertile area for applying voice recognition and synthesis. Consider a service application that can run on your smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop or a service kiosk, displaying a photo-realistic human face and torso, that can converse colloquially with you in any language and has a vast knowledge of the business's products, services and policies, federal, state and local regulations and has the reasoning and operational skills needed to resolve virtually all classes of customer support problems.

Customer Service is a huge cost for all businesses, a large part of which is recruiting and training service representatives. The service activity often has a high turnover rate, meaning the training expense is recurring. Also, policies and products may change frequently, requiring training updates for existing staff. An essential virtue of a "smart" customer service application is that only one master copy of the application needs to be updated, and those updates can be replicated automatically and nearly instantly in all instances of the application. Another virtue is that a "smart" service application is tireless – it will work 24 hours/day, 365 days/year, and doesn't get sick, take vacations, or lose patience with demanding customers.

Every business is somewhat different; consequently, its customer service applications must be customized. Having on-chip AI support in the CPUs of the business's in-house servers will make it easier to keep this customization and give better performance than depending on cloud-based servers. It also gives the business greater control over what data stays "in-house."

AI Companions

AI companions are an evolution of "smart" assistants like Siri, Alexa, and Cortana. Here are two articles that discuss the state of AI companion services:

<https://cybernews.com/tech/ai-companions-explained/>

<https://theweek.com/tech/the-pros-and-cons-of-ai-companions>

These systems today run on cloud servers, but with advanced AI CPUs, they should evolve to run directly on users' devices. This will provide better performance and prevent some concerns about personal information learned by these companions from being in the cloud.

Merging of AI and Robotics

In the past few years, there have been significant advances in robotics. Robots can now "see" via cameras, radar, and lidar and "hear" via microphones. This has helped in factory automation and many other repetitive actions. Self-driving vehicles are a reality, though they still need refinement.

There's also a lot of work on humanoid robots – robots with a head, torso, arms, hands, and feet that can perform tasks traditionally done by humans. These robots have been research projects but are beginning to be deployed in manual labor settings. Here are two links that survey what's current in the field. The YouTube video is quite remarkable.

<https://builtin.com/robotics/humanoid-robots>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFp18nW7p34>

The humanoid robotic form has some challenges: The mechanical and software algorithms to keep the robot upright, especially on stairs and uneven terrain, are complex. The many small actuators needed to animate the robot's limbs draw a lot of power, which requires a large battery pack and regular recharging every few hours.

With advanced AI support in the CPU chips powering robots of all types, the robots should have more autonomy; they won't need to access the Internet cloud as much to provide their "intelligence." We can foresee a time not very far in the future when humanoid robots may serve as effective caregivers, nannies, servants, and companions in home and institutional settings. This

(Continued on page 10)

could significantly improve the quality of life for aging seniors who are often alone and frail.

Final Thoughts

As is often the case, I've barely scratched the surface of the vastness of artificial intelligence. I kept thinking of more things to discuss as I wrote this article. I'll return to this topic now and then in 2024, both in articles and in a few of my monthly seminars.

Robotics and AI are not without concerns. Human workers, especially those in lower-skilled manual and clerical jobs, will likely be displaced. Even in creative professions, AI may be able to replace many workers by automatically synthesizing new works of art. Society must have a plan for repurposing these displaced workers.

AI will affect business, generally making it more efficient and productive. However, it can also make it easier for companies to manipulate consumers.

AI can amplify the power of government for good and evil. In the hands of despots, AI could become the ultimate tool for imposing tyranny. Used for good, AI may vastly elevate happiness and prosperity worldwide.

Genealogy Tip of the day
Michael John Neill Genealogy Tip of the Day
Rootdig.com mjnrootdig@gmail.com

The Town is Not In the County

Varying civil jurisdictional levels can confuse the genealogist. One thing to remember is that a state or province may have different civil jurisdictions with the same name. In Illinois, the town Henderson is not in the county of Henderson. There are numerous other examples, particularly when smaller civil units, such as townships are considered. Always consider the possibility that someone may be confusing the town with the township or county of the same name.

Keokuk, Iowa, is not in Keokuk County, Iowa. The list of examples is a very long one.

What Does It Mean to Quarantine Malware? And Is It Safe? It means the system's working.

by [Leo A. Notenboom](#)

Question: What does it mean to quarantine something? Why is it done, etc.?

Almost all security software includes the concept of quarantining **malware** once it is found. Let's dive into what happens when something gets quarantined.

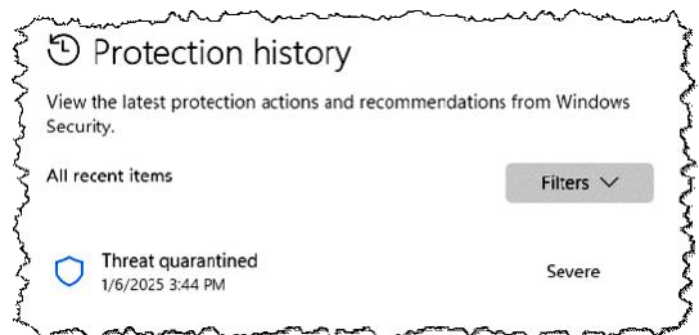
Quarantining malware

Quarantining keeps suspicious files harmlessly locked away by your security software. The malware can't run or spread while in quarantine, but the files are still available in case of a false positive. The biggest risk? Accidentally releasing it yourself.

Malware found!

When your security software discovers suspected malware on your machine, it must take action. The two most important things it can do are:

- Tell you about it so you know what's going on.
- Get rid of it so you don't need to worry about it.



Windows Security's protection history report. (Screenshot: askleo.com)

But there's a third option between doing nothing and completely removing the malware: placing it in quarantine.

Quarantine

A quarantine is nothing more than a special location on your [hard disk](#). Yes, the malware is still on your hard disk, but that's okay. This "special location" (which varies between security tools) has some important characteristics.

Anything in quarantine cannot be run.

Malware is software, and in order to infect your computer, it must be able to be run. Any malware placed in quarantine is completely impotent.

Anything in quarantine cannot be accessed

by anything other than the security software that put it there. If the malware is, for example, a component of something else on your machine that could try to run it, that can't happen.

Anything in quarantine is altered.

By that I mean the file(s) that make up the malware could be encrypted or altered such that they look nothing like their original state. This is yet another way to ensure the malware can't run or be used by anything else on your machine.

Why not just delete it?

If "get rid of it" is one of the two most important things that security software might do once it has discovered malware, why doesn't it do that immediately?

In a word: undo.

Like so many things, malware scanning is an inexact science. It's good but never perfect. It's possible for security software to incorrectly flag something as malware and quarantine it even though it's not malware at all. Placing it in

quarantine gives you the ability to restore the file should you find that's the case.

It's also a way for malware to be made available to researchers. Some security software even uploads discovered malware to their own servers for analysis and to improve future detection.

Risks

There's nearly zero risk in malware being quarantined instead of outright removed. Doing so acts as kind of a safety net.

However, "nearly zero" isn't zero. The biggest risk in quarantining a file is the possibility that you or I might restore it — unquarantine it — when we shouldn't. Doing so renews the risk of the malware as if the security software hadn't detected it at all.

Do this

This is rarely something you need to pay attention to. Most security software silently handles all this in the background for you.

However, should you ever run across malware that's been quarantined, now you know what that means and why you needn't be concerned.

I take that back: there is something to pay attention to. If something's been quarantined, that means that malware made it onto your computer. That indicates the need to pay at-



Lorain County



Users Group

Volume 1 Number 1

December 1990

IN THIS ISSUE

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The next meeting will be Tuesday, 7pm, December 4, at the Lorain Public Library.

Because the first Tuesday in January falls on New Year's Day, January's meeting will be on the 8th.

PRESIDENT'S FORUM

by Mike Mantkowski

Hello everyone! Well this is the first of what will probably be many (at least 12) of the *President's Forums* you will be reading from me. How should I start? Well I guess an introduction of myself would be appropriate. First off, my name is Michael Mantkowski. My wife and my mother are the only ones who call me Michael; everyone else just calls me Mike. My wife's name is Renee, and we have a four-year-old son, Justin. I am currently employed as the Computer Systems Administrator at Lortec Power Systems in Elyria. Lortec makes Uninterruptable Power Systems for telecommunications, industry, and large computer installations. They also sell systems for microcomputers like you and I use.

I am also the senior partner of Custom Information Systems. C.I.S is a consulting firm that caters to the needs of medium and smaller-sized businesses. We specialize in the use of Microsoft Windows and all the applications that fall under its wing.

Speaking of Windows!! As you get to know me, you will begin to see a pattern. I like

Windows. I really do feel that the 90's will see microcomputing keep moving into Windows and maybe OS/2. (OS/2 is IBM's and Microsoft's replacement for DOS. Though I'm not sure any more how much Microsoft really believes that.)

Forum continued on page 2

NOVEMBER MEETING

Chosen as officers during the first election held by LCCUG are:

Pres.—Mike Mantkowski
VP—Dwayne Hughes
Sec'y—Sandra Ruth
Treas.—Dick Harben
Russell Cromwell was appointed Librarian.

George Harizal presented a program on Bulletin Board Systems (BBS's). George is SysOp for The Ware House BBS, 967-9457. Besides giving a great deal of information, he brought his BBS with him to give members a chance to look through it. He also handed out copies of *Computers & Modems, a Beginner's Guide to the Lorain BBS Scene*.

FROM THE EDITOR

The main purpose of this newsletter is to be useful and responsive to the membership. To accomplish this, I need your input. Would you be able to 1) write a regular column? 2) write an article or articles? 3) contribute original graphics or cartoons? 4) give suggestions about what you want to see in the NL?

If your answer is yes to any of the above, the deadline is the 15th of each month. You may send material to me at 855 Mildred Ave., Lorain, 44052; bring it to my house; leave it at the Lorain Public Library; or give it to me at the monthly meetings. If you need to call me, my number is 244-9654. We leave our answering machine on all the time, so don't just hang up. If I'm home, I'll answer as soon as I know you're not a salesperson or a crank call.

PLANS FOR NL FEATURES

We plan to run ads for members who want to buy or sell computer equipment. For now at least, these ads will be free. Also, you can submit computer questions or problems. If I can find an answer by the NL deadline, I'll print the question and answer. If not, I'll print the question for response by the membership.

I'm looking forward to the coming year as Editor. Several people have already expressed interest in writing for and helping with the NL.

The more members who get involved, the better the NL will meet the needs of the whole group.

Kaye Collier

FORUM

Cont'd from p1

The December program coincidentally is about Graphical User Interfaces (abbreviated G.U.I.). Most people, when they think of G.U.I.'s, think of the Apple Macintosh whose interface has been synonymous with ease of use for the last five years. Windows is one of the few G.U.I.'s available for the IBM compatible computers. Until recently Windows suffered from many different angles when compared with the Apple product. But with the release of Windows 3, that has for the most part changed. I'll try to show you why. There are also a few other G.U.I.'s on the IBM market. They are GEM (from Digital Research, pretty much on a downhill slide), Deskmate from Tandy, and a new player from the same people that make GEOS for the Commodore 64 and the Apple II. I think I'll be able to give you a sneak preview of that one also. So if you've ever wondered what all the computer industry gurus are talking about now, don't miss this meeting.

Also at our first meeting (with officers), we would like suggestions from you about future programs and activities. We are in charge of

making sure we have informative programs for the group. It will be up to you to make sure we know what programs you wish to see.

It's also come to our attention that "Lorain County Computer Users Group" does not lend itself to abbreviation very well. It comes out LCCUG. It might make an appropriate name for a pit bull though. So we were thinking maybe we should have a change-the-name contest. We would be glad to hear any suggestions.

I'm looking forward to the next year, and hopefully we will all leave each meeting knowing at least one thing we didn't when we came in. I believe that, in a nut shell, is why we're there.

See you on the 4th,
Mike

CAUTION

Using WD-40 to extend the life of a printer can turn out to be costly. For one thing it leaves a film, and you could end up needing to replace the print head. There are people who have used WD-40 with no problems, but be aware that you're taking a chance.

PC MAGAZINES

In this and coming issues, there will be brief reviews of several PC magazines. Hopefully, these reviews will give those who may not be familiar with the variety of publications available, some idea of which ones would be useful to them.

Most of these publications have several things in common. They review hardware and software, sometimes in depth, other times as more of an overview. They usually have at least one section of questions and answers, tips on computer care and use, suggestions about how to use specific programs, news of upcoming developments, letters from readers, and lots of ads. Some magazines tend to be technical, and are written for power users, while others are designed for the less-experienced user. Many of them are available at the library. All of them can be bought on the newsstand, although some are harder to find than others.

We'll start with magazines helpful to the beginner.

PC Novice; monthly; Peed Corporation; Managing Editor, Ronald D. Kobler; \$2.95.

As its cover states, this is "The Magazine For Computer Newcomers!" Early issues were rather poorly put together. Columns were printed in the wrong order and there were errors that needed human copy-readers rather than a spell-check or grammar program. They've cut down on the errors, but mistakes still crop up.

While this is much smaller than most computer magazines (75pp in contrast to 614 for *PC Magazine*, for example), there is a lot of useful information for the beginner. Some of it may seem too obvious—if your computer doesn't start up, be sure it's plugged in—but hey, it happens! Around 20 pages are devoted to classifieds for hardware and software, making comparison shopping easy. The glossary of terms (floppy disk, GUI, Ram, etc) is also helpful for novices.



PC Today; Monthly; Peed Corporation; Managing Editor, Stephen Mann; \$2.95.

The layout and format are the same as *PC Novice*, although there are more pages (100). This one is also very good for beginners as well as those with more experience. Its slogan is "Computers in Plain English." September and October feature articles dealt with operating systems.

They're still having error problems. September's issue didn't list the editor and staff. October's issue gives September as the date on the Table of Contents. These are both minor to be sure, but it makes you wonder how reliable their articles are. Since there's a real need for easy-to-understand computer information, I hope they solve this problem.



Compute, monthly; Compute Publications International, LTD; Editor-in-Chief, Peter Scisco; \$2.95.

This magazine has changed its format somewhat to give more coverage to Amiga, Commodore 64/128, and Macintosh. Formerly, these received only a few pages each. The sections, including one on PCs, are color coded, making them easy to find.

Sections directed toward all readers include the usual software reviews, many of them entertainment and education; "Home Office;" "Entertainment," which includes "Gameplay" by Orson Scott Card, a prolific SciFi author; and "Discovery." The November issue included "The Japan Factor" which discussed Japan's impact on the personal computer industry.

Compute offers a monthly shareware disk that readers may send for. This is a good magazine for beginners and is also worthwhile for the more advanced.



Home Office Computing; Monthly; Scholastic Inc.; Editor-in-Chief, Claudia Cohl; \$2.95.

Recent articles include home office design, business management, insurance, best business opportunities for the 90's, techniques for repeat business. Product reviews reflect the magazine's main focus, but also include entertainment and education. The "Clinic" presents readers' questions and helpful hints.

Reviews cont'd on p5

MEET THE OFFICERS

President Mike Mantkowski

Mike has 9 years of computer experience and uses his Everex 386/20 MHz mainly for business and programming. He can program in Basic, C, Pascal, and Omnis 5. At the December meeting, Mike will present a program on GUI's, concentrating mainly on Windows.

Vice President Dwayne Hughes

Dwayne will be happy to help members with system set up and communication. His computer experience goes back 7 years. He has a Leading Edge and a TI-99/4A which he uses for education, entertainment, and programming in Basic and C.

Treasurer Dick Harben

When Dick Harben isn't busy with his job as Production Engineer at Lithonia Downlighting or his wife and 5 children, he is likely to be doing word processing and treasurer reports on his Gold Star 286/12 MHz. Dick has 8 years of computer experience and uses Pro. Write and Professional File most often.

Secretary Sandra Ruth

Besides LCCUG, Sandy is a member of and Librarian for the Westside Computer Club in North Olmsted, which is appropriate since she is a Library Assistant in interloans and periodicals for the Lorain Public Library.

Her first computer in 1982 was a TI, and she now uses a Tandy 1000 TL. Sandy has Deskmate, 1st Choice, Print Shop, and Quick-en to help with word processing, her modem, and her checkbook. Her children use Children's Writing & Publishing Workshop and do homework and play games on the computer.

Newsletter Editor Kaye Collier

Kaye is also a member of Westside Computer Club. She has the least computer experience of the officers, a little over a year. For this NL as well as for *Black River Review*, an annual literary magazine of which she is editor, she uses Word Perfect 5.1. She also uses her Panasonic 1650 to make concert programs and keep student records for her husband Claude, band and orchestra director at Southview H.S. in Lorain.

Librarian Russell Cromwell

Russell has 4 computers; a 286AT, an XT, a 128 Commodore, and a 64 Commodore. He programs in Basic, Fortran, C, and Bourne Shell. His experience spans 5 years, and he uses his computer for work as a System Administrator and for entertainment. Programs used most often include PFS Prof. Word Prs. PFS 1st Publisher, Form Tools, Easy Flow Lotus, Tango, and Orcad.

PROJECT LETTERS

Sandra Ruth

GENie online services is offering to send your letter by modem to anyone in Desert Shield. You don't have to be a GENie subscriber to take advantage of this service. The letter has to go to a specific individual, and you need to know his/her name, rank, unit, social security number, APO or FPO, etc.

To listen to a recording about this service, call 1-800-638-9636.

The Elyria number for GENie is 323-5902, and the Lorain number is 933-4600 (7-E-1). There is a \$2 sur-charge to use either of these numbers. That should be your only cost.

Reviews cont'd from p4

Columns are "Working Smarter," by Paul & Sarah Edwards—the November issue discussed preparing a publicity kit, and "Workstyles," by Nick Sullivan who often gives a humorous perspective on working at home.

HOC often includes individual success stories. The magazine doesn't get extremely technical and is easy to understand by someone who doesn't have a lot of computer experience.

CLEVELAND COMPUTER SOCIETY

Sandra Ruth

A large umbrella group for computer user clubs was formed in Cleveland this summer. This alliance of computer organizations is called the Cleveland Computer Society and represents a total membership of 1500 users.

Benefits to the user community include more bargaining power with hardware and software vendors. The first such benefit is a 35% discount from the publisher on all QUE books for all participants whose local group has joined the CCS. A large membership makes it possible to attract well-known speakers to meetings. Similar organizations have their own large scale seminars and computer shows.

LCCUG is looking into joining this group. A list of other clubs in north-east Ohio already affiliated is available at our club meetings.

Look for their SIG on the Cleveland Free-Net.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Since the name "Lorain County Computer Users Group" is rather unwieldy, perhaps we could use a nickname or change it completely as Mike suggests in the *President's Forum*. We have two suggestions so far—LOCO or Keysters. How about it, any other clever ideas out there?

LORAIN COUNTY FREE-NET

Lorain County Free-Net is on the move. The Advisory Board is very excited about the project and the moral and financial support that has been received. We are interested in broadening our membership. If you often find yourself needing community information as well as information on topics of general interest, you might want to consider becoming part of our Advisory Board. For more information, please contact:

Sharon Herzer
P.O. Box 840
Lorain, OH 44052-0840
Phone # (216)246-5268
Fax #(216)244-4380

RADIO SHACK OFFER

Radio Shack is selling the Tandy 2000's that have been used in Radio Shack stores. The \$295.95 package includes an internal 2400 baud modem, 20 MG hard drive, a high resolution monitor—either green or color as available, and a 30-day warranty. To use programs not designed for this model, the hard drive needs to be reformatted with PC-Dos.

If you're interested, contact Rick at the Brook Park Radio Shack on Ridge Road or call Jerry at 226-7497. By now, there may not be many left.

Reminder

Yearly dues of \$12.00 should be paid at the December meeting.