

MC³ Newsletter

May 2017

VOLUME 34 NUMBER 4

The March meeting of the McHenry County Computer Club is **May 13th**, at the Salvation Army Building, 290 W. Crystal Lake Ave., in Crystal Lake.

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions & Reports
- Demo – **Team Viewer** John Katkus

Upcoming Demos - Subject to Change

- June 2017: “Zorin on Old Machines” - Ken Schuring

April Q & A

There are no questions and answers this month.



From TechNewsWorld - John P. Mello, Jr.: May 10, 2017

Amazon Adds Show to Echo's Tell

Echo isn't just for sound anymore.

Amazon on Tuesday announced Echo Show, a new version of its popular smart speaker that comes with a 7-inch color touchscreen, 5-inch front-facing camera and dual 2-inch Dolby speakers.

The unit is priced at US\$230 -- or two for \$330 -- and will start shipping June 28.

Show can do everything Echo does, and more. With its screen, it can show YouTube videos, access home security cameras, display photos and scroll lyrics as you listen to songs from streaming services like Amazon Music, Pandora, Spotify, TuneIn, iHeartRadio and others.

Show's Drop In feature makes it easy to video conference with friends and family who have an Echo or the Alexa app.

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Our membership is \$26.00 a year.

NOTE: This fee offsets the running of the club; membership benefits include help with computer problems. Please pay Lyle Giese, our treasurer, or the designated Board Member in his absence.

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Virtual Drop In

With Drop In, people can place each other on contact lists for Drop In calls. When you want to drop in on someone, you can tell Amazon's digital assistant Alexa to perform the task.

Initially your screen will appear as a pane of frosted glass. If the person you're calling wants to accept the call, the frost will melt away after 10 seconds. They may opt to take the call as a voice-only conversation or reject it.

Drop In users can activate a "Do Not Disturb" mode to ensure they won't be interrupted. They also can leave voice messages when they can't reach a Drop In buddy.

While a display may broaden Echo's features, it may be only a marginal improvement over Echo's existing interface.

"I think the voice interface is more convenient," said Kevin Krewell, a principal analyst at Tirias Research and an Echo owner.

"The ability for Echo's microphones to pick up voices across the room is great," he told TechNewsWorld.

Read more at <http://www.technewsworld.com/story/84522.html>

From FoxNewsTech - Brad Jones: May 10, 2017

Microsoft has technology that can help Parkinson's disease

Graphic designer Emma Lawton was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease three years at the age of 29. Now, with the help of a BBC project and Haiyan Zhang, Microsoft Research Cambridge's innovation director, she's been able to use a wearable device to reclaim her lifelong passion for drawing and sketching.

The Big Life Fix is a BBC series that got underway Wednesday. Lawton was featured in the first episode of the series, which focuses on people in need who turn to some of the United Kingdom's top inventors for solutions to problems that affect their day-to-day life.

Other projects being tackled by the show include a solution for a terminally ill photographer who can no longer operate a camera, and the construction of a specialized BMX bike for a child born with no hands or feet.

Parkinson's disease can cause sufferer's hands to shake uncontrollably, making even simple actions almost impossible to carry out. Lawton's tremor was becoming so severe that her career as a graphic designer was in serious jeopardy, according to a report from MS Power User.

Zhang previously created cutlery for disabled people that reacts to their movements to avoid spilling food. Building upon that foundation, she was able to create a wrist-worn device dubbed the Emma that helps facilitate drawing and sketching by counteracting the impulses being sent to the wearer's arm.

The Emma intentionally shakes the user's arm, interrupting the feedback loop that impedes normal movement. While wearing the device, Lawton was able to draw straight lines, and even write legibly. Since the BBC program was filmed, she's apparently been wearing the Emma on a daily basis.

Zhang currently has no plans to develop the Emma into a commercial release, having designed the device to fit Lawton's particular needs. However, she hopes that others will take the basis of the technology and continue to develop it further.

Read more at <http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2017/05/10/microsoft-has-technology-that-can-help-parkinsons-disease.html>

From The Star Online - May 11, 2017

Nissan is offering a free drone with its latest car

Alongside features like leather seats and a premium infotainment system, owners will now be able to choose a Parrot Bebop 2 Drone when selecting the optional equipment on their next Nissan SUV.

Nissan is hoping that the addition of a Parrot drone as standard equipment on its X-Trail SUV will help take on-the-road adventures to another level.

In recent months, a host of automakers have previewed concept vehicles that come complete with a drone for making deliveries or for scouting out the route ahead. But Nissan's package is one of the first of its kind for a true production vehicle.

The company hasn't integrated a landing pad for the drone on the X-Trail's roof, nor has it developed the drone in question completely in-house. Instead it's partnering with French startup Parrot and have together gone with a Bebop 2 unit as standard.

It has a flight time of up to 25 minutes between charges and features an integrated 14-megapixel camera that can shoot and stream live video to a smartphone screen or to a dedicated headset. It can also autonomously follow the user via GPS – a great feature for those that use a crossover or SUV to actually get into the great outdoors and beyond on adventures.

The drone, along with its remote controller and headset, can be stored in a specially designed padded backpack when not in use and, because the whole set tips the scales at a little over 500g, the bag will be light enough to carry with you once the car has stopped.

Although Nissan will only be offering the drone as standard equipment on the X-Trail X-Scape for a limited period it is now also officially on the X-Trail's list of cost options. — AFP Relaxnews

Read more at <http://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2017/05/11/nissan-is-offering-a-free-drone-with-its-latest-car/#gQpHUi4YsBdzjsSj.99>