

MC³ Newsletter

January 2018

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The December meeting of the McHenry County Computer Club is **January 13, 2018 at Salvation Army Building 290 W. Crystal Lake Ave., in Crystal Lake, IL.**

NOTE: *Enter the building on the parking lot level under the awning.*

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions & Reports
- Using an Offline Backup Drive - Bob Wagner
- Q & A

Upcoming Demos - Subject to Change

- Backing Up to an External HD - Bob Wagner

December Q & A

The editor has not received any questions and answers from December.



HP Patches Hundreds of Laptops to Remove Hidden Keylogger - Brad Chacos, PCWorld

If you bought an HP laptop anytime in the last five years, it could be tracking your every keystroke. Over the weekend HP revealed that nearly 500 of its notebooks dating as far back as 2012 shipped with a secret keylogger installed. Alongside the announcement, HP released driver updates to eradicate the software on affected laptops.

Security researcher Michael Myng discovered the keylogger when probing the Synaptics touchpad software on an HP laptop. HP's security bulletin says the "potential security vulnerability" affects all laptops with "certain versions of Synaptics touchpad drivers" — not necessarily just HP models.

The keylogger is disabled by default, however. "A party would need administrative privileges in order to take advantage of the vulnerability," the bulletin states. "Neither Synaptics nor

continued on next page



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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HP has access to customer data as a result of this issue.” HP told Myng that the keylogger was a debugging tool.

How to remove the keylogger in HP laptops

The same security bulletin includes separate software update links for every HP laptop loaded with the keylogger. HP says you should install those updates “as soon as possible.” CSO counted them all up and found a total of 475 affected laptops, with 303 being consumer laptops. Spectre, Envy, Pavilion, Omen, Compaq—they all contain the keylogger.

You’ll need to know your laptop’s model number to download the correct software package. You can find HP laptop model numbers by looking for the information on a sticker on the bottom of the machine. If you don’t see the sticker, you can press Fn + Esc simultaneously to summon HP’s System Information window. You’re looking for the “product name” entry. Once you know it, head to HP’s security bulletin, press Ctrl + F, and type in your laptop’s details to quickly find the correct update for your system. You don’t want to sift through all 475 listings individually to find the right one!

This isn’t the first time HP has run into keylogging trouble in 2017. In May, HP patched 30 laptops after a diagnostic update to the audio drivers accidentally resulted in capturing every keystroke and saving it to a local file. We’re leaving superb systems like the HP Spectre x360 on PCWorld’s list of the best laptops because the actions weren’t nefarious, but here’s hoping the company steps up its software quality assurance going forward.

Thanks to Bob Wagner for sending this article

6 Tech Trends to Watch at CES 2018 - Heather Kelley - CNNTech

The International Consumer Electronics Show — CES to its friends — is a sprawling and overwhelming blur of booths, press events, demos and gadgets. With more than 3,900 exhibitors, CES is still a place where you can find the latest technology trends.

1. The voice assistants are everywhere

Voice assistants made a big impact at CES last year, but next week they will be all but inescapable on the show floor. They’re moving on from smart speakers and will show up in everything from cars to microwaves. Companies like Amazon, Microsoft and Google will take a break from promoting their own devices to strike up partnerships with third-parties. Licensing and the promise of signing people up for services like Amazon Prime or YouTube Red are a huge potential revenue stream for these companies. Will your next shower head be an Alexa, Bixby or Google Assistant?

2. Cities are planning for the future

The UN estimates that 60% of the world’s population will live in urban areas by 2030. For the first time, CES is dedicating an area to smart city technology. It is expected to be one of the more internationally focused areas, with representatives from cities around the world searching for ways to sustain their growing populations.

While the United States is focused on transportation (specifically self-driving cars, less so public transit) countries in Europe are more concerned with things like energy conservation, says Koenig.

There will be air quality tech, electric bikes, home automation gadgets, and even a connected hive monitor for beekeepers.

3. Sports tech goes pro

The sports zone will bring together trends that have appeared at CES over the years: wearables, augmented reality, sensors and apps for quantifying physical activity. Now companies are pushing software and hardware for professional sports. They could be used to aid performance, help injury recovery or to give real-time updates on an athlete's performance during a big game. eSports will also have a presence in the sports section.

4. Robots that are (almost) useful

Robots have long been a mainstay on the CES show floor, but they're usually more of a novelty than a real product. This year, thanks to AI, voice interfaces and advanced sensors, robots are inching closer to becoming useful. One category to watch is mobile service robots, which can handle deliveries and other simple tasks.

Companion robots are also on the rise, though perhaps a few years behind. As smart assistants flesh out their personalities and get better at conversing and anticipating needs, they could be a natural fit for robots.

5. More cars, fewer drivers

CES is not a car show, but many big name auto manufacturers will have flashy displays and events this year. That's because the focus has shifted from the latest car design and how they drive, to the technology inside. Self-driving features are the biggest draw, but this year there will also be a focus on how 5G networks will impact driving, says Koenig. That will include things like low-latency mobile broadband in your car.

6. Bad ideas

Genuinely innovative gadgets that are destined for mass adoption are the exception, not the rule at CES. Many of the products will be quickly forgotten — like last year's wi-fi connected trash can with voice controls. That's OK. One of the most enjoyable parts of the show is finding goofy and odd hardware. But there's also the chance of stumbling on the next big thing in some dim corner of the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Samsung Will Reportedly Unlock FM Chip in Future Smartphones - Angela Moscaritolo, PC Magazine

Good news, frugal music lovers. Word has it that future Samsung smartphones will have a new feature: FM radio.

The world's largest Android smartphone maker has agreed to unlock the FM chip in upcoming handsets sold in the US and Canada, according to NextRadio, maker of an FM radio app. Samsung itself did not immediately respond to PCMag's request for comment about NextRadio's announcement.

NextRadio's app leverages a phone's built-in FM chip to broadcast local radio stations. The app also works on devices without an active FM chip by streaming local FM stations over the internet, which

uses more battery and data.

“Samsung should be lauded for taking this important step,” NextRadio President Paul Brenner said in a statement. “They are providing their customers a more engaging, immersive radio experience and, as importantly, a means to connect with life-saving information in emergencies.”

The news comes after FCC Chairman Ajit Pai last February pushed for FM radio in US smartphones but argued that companies should not be forced to turn it on. “It seems odd that every day we hear about a new smartphone app that lets you do something innovative, yet these modern-day mobile miracles don’t enable a key function offered by a 1982 Sony Walkman,” Pai said at the time.

The majority of smartphones sold in this country contain FM chips, Pai pointed out. But, as of the fall of 2016, less than half of them had been activated.

The problem, according to Wired, is that phone manufacturers and carriers don’t have much incentive to turn them on. In fact, they have an incentive not to. Carriers, for instance, profit when you use up all your data streaming music.

Meanwhile, the iPhone 7 and iPhone 8 don’t even have FM radio chips, and Apple doesn’t exactly seem keen to enable them in older iPhones. Critics say Cupertino doesn’t want to challenge music-streaming services, including its own.

Humor from Frank (McGurn)

Should a computer be Masculine Or Feminine?

A SPANISH Teacher was explaining to her class that in Spanish, unlike English, nouns are designated as either masculine or feminine.

‘House’ for instance, is feminine: ‘la casa.’

‘Pencil,’ however, is masculine: ‘el lapiz.’

A student asked, ‘What gender is ‘computer’?’

Instead of giving the answer, the teacher split the class into two groups, male and female, and asked them to decide for themselves whether computer’ should be a masculine or a feminine noun. Each group was asked to give four reasons for its recommendation.

The men’s group decided that ‘computer’ should definitely be of the feminine gender (‘la computadora’), because:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic;
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else;
3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for possible later retrieval; and

4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your paycheck on accessories for it.

The women's group, however, concluded that computers should be Masculine ('el computador'), because:

1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on;
2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves;
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they ARE the problem; and
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realize that if you had waited a little longer, you could have gotten a better model.

The women won.