November 2014

CALENDAR

SIG = Special Interest Group

This Week's Schedule:

November 8 - Saturday - 1:00-3:00 PM
General Meeting - Leader: Ray Carlson
Location: Prescott Public Library

Topic: Windows 10

Last month, Windows 10 was scheduled as the focus for the first hour of the general meeting. Since that presentation had to be cancelled, we will try again this month. Ray Carlson will review the timing, pressures and naming of this new version of Windows, and Jim Perry will provide a demonstration of some of the key features in the technical preview of this operating system.

In addition to the presentations, the following are typical events which take place at our General meetings:

1) We hold an informal Flea Market in which you are encouraged to bring in your excess computer equipment or software and make them available for others to enjoy at no charge. Please deposit give-away items on the table in the back marked "Free Stuff." Any items left here at the end of the meeting are subject to disposal.

2) If you have items that are just too good to give away, you may set up a separate table and hold your own sale.

3) We conduct a raffle of new computer items at the end of the meeting, so make sure to get a pair of tickets from whoever is in charge and place one on the item you'd like to win.

4) We will also accept your used ink and toner cartridges for recycling. They are turned in to Think4Inc for credits which PCS uses to purchase office supplies from them.

November 15 - Saturday

There will be no PCS meeting today.

Future Meetings

November 22 - Saturday - 1:00-3:00 PM
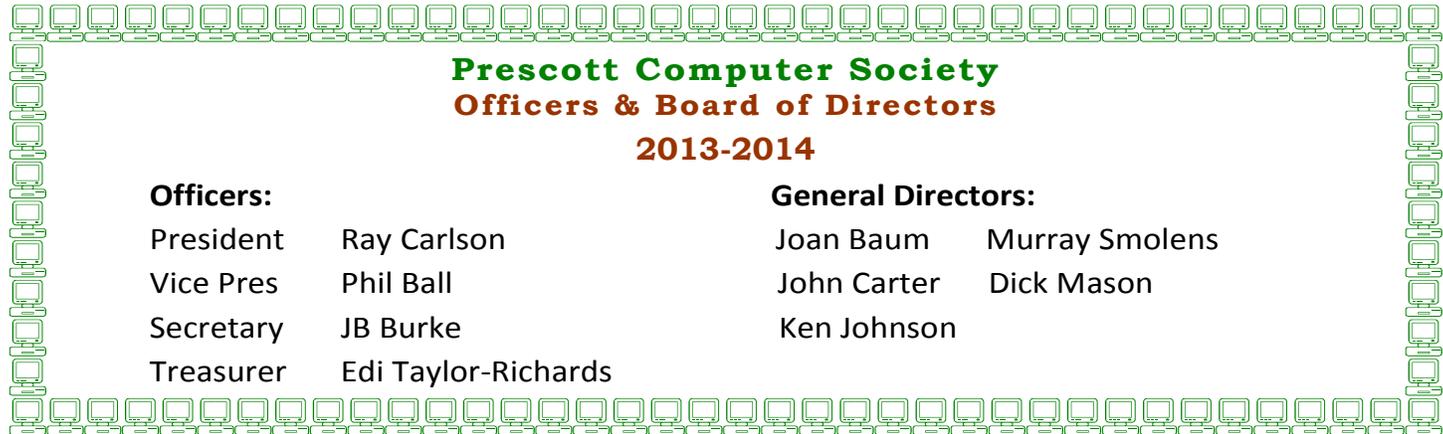[Special Topics SIG](#) - Leader: JB Burke
Location: Prescott Public Library

This month, JB will delve into topics related to computer hardware, software, the Internet and the World Wide Web. You are sure to find something educational and/or entertaining and/or interesting in this fast-paced enjoyable session. As always, questions and comments will be welcome. After all, JB has to be learning something from these sessions too!

November 29 - Saturday

There will be no PCS meeting today.

Note that these dates are correct at time of publication but are subject to change.
Up to date information can be found on our website, www.pcs4me.com
Unless otherwise noted, our meetings are usually held in the
Founder's Suite at the Prescott Public Library.

Prescott Computer Society
Officers & Board of Directors
2013-2014

Officers:		General Directors:	
President	Ray Carlson	Joan Baum	Murray Smolens
Vice Pres	Phil Ball	John Carter	Dick Mason
Secretary	JB Burke	Ken Johnson	
Treasurer	Edi Taylor-Richards		

Welcome to

NEW MEMBER

Dan Storvick

Computer Book & Magazine Recycling Service

Do you have old computer magazines or books that you don't need any longer? Bring them to a General meeting. Just bring your recent, but no longer wanted computer-related material to a general meeting. We suggest not bringing anything over a year old because they are out-of-date.

Anyone, including guests, can help themselves to any items on this table. There will be no charge for any items. After the meeting, remaining items will be discarded.

Please save your used computer-related books and magazines and bring them to the next General meeting for recycling.

Your unwanted items may be someone's treasure.

aptera blog
Business-Inspired Technology Solutions

My Switch from iPhone to Windows Phone
by John Alumbaugh, August 2014
www.apterainc.com

When I joined Aptera, one of my friends had the Windows Phone 7, and he seemed to like it pretty well, but he was ex Microsoft so I dismissed it as brand loyalty. Recently, though, he got the new Lumia icon phone with Windows 8.0 and seemed very happy with it. I liked the screen size, the interface, the responsiveness, and the reported battery life. Don't get me wrong, I love iPhone and what it did to the industry. I believe it paved the way for all the modern Android and Windows Phones by proving smart phones were a device people not only wanted, but would use practically every waking moment. However, iOS seemed to me to be showing its age. It was more of the same with no real innovations with any "wow" factor. And screen size: the Lumia just had the iPhone beat here. I started noticing that in the office EVERYONE had a Windows 8 Phone, and not a single person said they regretted the switch. So over the next couple of weeks, I tried out several Windows Phones whenever I happened to be at a Microsoft store. One of the things I really liked was that I could get "different" handsets; they weren't all the same like my essentially unchanged iPhone for the past 8 years. But if there was anything I didn't like about my iPhone, it was the battery charge. I rarely could go more than a day without a charge, even on a day of moderate use.

Then one day I was on a call with one of the salespeople who joined a Lync conference with video from his Windows 8 Phone while opening a Word proposal from his OneDrive. I knew I had to have that kind of functionality in my work life. You always hear that Office on your phone is a good reason for a Windows Phone, but I didn't believe it until I saw it in practice. My mind was made up.

Making the switch

The first thing I did after making the decision was to do an "apps" inventory on my iPhone and see what I would be missing in the switch. Much to my surprise, everything I used on a regular basis had a Windows Phone counterpart. I was clearly giving up iMessage, but the Find My Friends feature of iOS had several Windows counterparts, albeit paid versions. Still, it wasn't enough to keep me away. I had set my heart on the 6-inch screen of the Lumia 1520, and I was diving in.

Migrating my data was really never a concern since I move email for a living and contacts are just email objects to me. But it was even easier than I'd expected. I ordered the device directly from AT&T, and it arrived in 24 hours. In the box was a Welcome to Windows Phone flyer with a URL to follow for iOS users. It directed me to an app Nokia had built for just this reason. It connected the new device to my old phone via Bluetooth and copied all my contacts and numbers over in seconds.

I immediately began getting the apps I used regularly and began setting them up. I grabbed several new ones that were specific to Windows Phone, too, mostly stuff that takes advantage of the 22 megapixel camera built into the 1520. The 1520 is a big phone, and greatly eclipsed my iPhone 5. I have big hands, so it felt a lot better and easier to hold than the iPhone. It's the first cell phone that has the ear piece by my ear with a mic that's actually close to my mouth. It's a thin and light device—some refer to it as a phablet because of the screen real estate. It has been very easy to carry in my pocket. It reads in sunlight very well because the background is black glass with light lettering. The software is very customizable and allows for a wide variety of cust-tomized home screens. As for the frequent apps, all of them have been a similar or improved experience. The driving and walking/GPS apps are very useful and as good as or better than Google Maps with the People app that lists in a consolidated

on iOS. There is a LOT of social media integration with the people app that lists in a consolidated feed all my Facebook, twitter and Linkedin activities.

My favorite thing about this device though is the battery life. I don't always believe marketing materials, but this one was modest. I charge on average about every three days, and the 8.1 update that just rolled out added a few hours to that. Figure 1 shows the screen capture I took on Tues evening before I went to bed. Notice the last charge. When I last unplugged was Saturday at 10:08AM. I was plugging in to recharge about 9PM Tuesday night and still had 9 hours until the device would shut itself off. All this with the battery saver feature OFF.

Impressions at 90 days

I have used my Windows Phone now for about 90days, and all I can say is that I am impressed.

The call quality is fantastic. I can't go anywhere without someone commenting on the size or the beauty of the screen. The Office experience with OneNote, Word, and OneDrive is excellent. Excel appears to be the same but I am not a heavy Excel user and can't really imagine doing spreadsheets on a phone, even one this large. I discovered an Office app called Office Lens that is designed to take pictures of whiteboard drawings, photos, or documents and import them into OneNote. I've always been able to take a picture and manually add it to a document later, but Office Lens simplifies the process in a very streamlined and beautiful package.

The texting was always better on my Windows Phone, not only because the suggested words are accurate for a change, but because it remembers common words and adds them to a dictionary. I no longer have to approve my last name; it suggests and spells it correctly after only two uses. The 8.1 update also added a handy Android text feature called "swype," where you can type words without lifting your finger off the keyboard. 8.1 updated the calendar to a very useful display, a sorely needed improvement from the 8.0 version. The notification center and quiet hours feature gave me back two iOS features that I really loved. And Cortana? Just wow. I have quickly become accustomed to telling Cortana to remind me of things like "Get trash bags when I am by a store," and when I get near a retail establishment, she reminds me. In fact, the only real drawback I have encountered are new apps. They always come out for iOS or Android first. Many of them make a Windows version, but not all of them do or even plan to. Bottom line? I loved my iPhones. But it was time to move on to something newer, and Windows Phone 8/ 8.1 has delivered for me in a big way. The experience moving from iOS was not at all painful, and I'm happy with the switch.

Editor's note: I came across this blog on Aptera's site right after publishing the October issue of The Messenger and thought it would be a fine addition to my last two articles about my experience with my Samsung ATIV SE Windows Phone 8.0. Maybe soon I can enjoy the 8.1 additional features as well!

I have no information yet about when I can expect the 8.1 phone Upgrade . It's beginning to get annoying that it is taking so long for Samsung/Microsoft to get their acts together.

I shall continue to be patient even if it causes me grief.

Cloud Computing

By Larry McJunkin
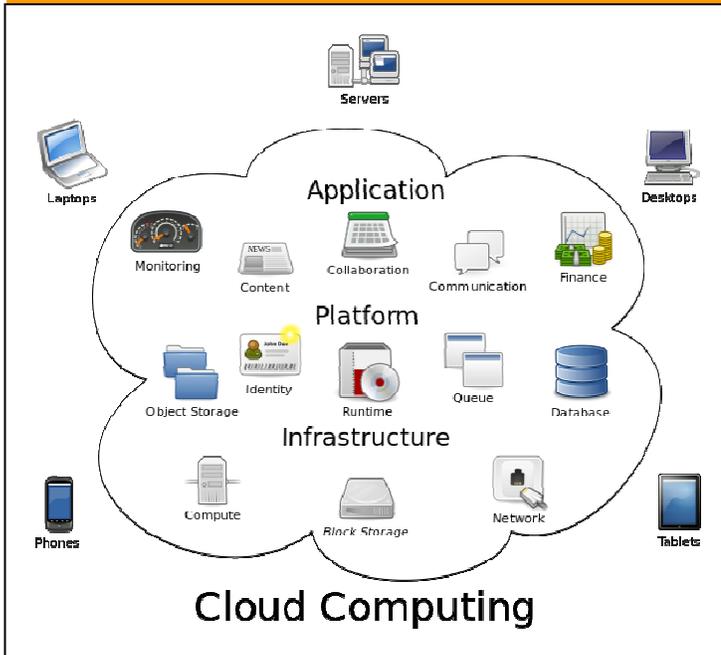
The Retired Geek Technical Tips for the Non-Technical "Over 50" Crowd

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Cloud Computing

While the above image may look complicated, simply defined, cloud computing is the practice of using a network of remote servers hosted on the internet to store, manage, and process your data, rather than keeping it on your own computer.

Understanding the idea behind cloud computing may be simple, but getting on board with it seems to be difficult for some (though I really don't understand why). Hundreds of millions of people use cloud computing and don't even realize it, with email programs like Gmail, Yahoo! Mail, Outlook.com, etc. You do not install any programs for these on your computer; they are instead hosted on remote servers at the provider.

The goal of cloud computing is to apply traditional supercomputing, or high-performance computing power, normally used by military and research facilities, to perform tens of trillions of computations per second, in consumer-oriented applications. These applications are things like financial portfolios, email, corporate and individual data and they store and deliver personalized information to and from the users (you and me).

To do this, cloud computing uses networks of large groups of servers, typically running low-cost consumer PC technology with specialized connections to spread data-processing chores across them. This shared IT infrastructure contains large pools of systems that are linked together. Often, virtualization techniques are used to maximize the power of cloud computing. But you don't need to know these things…you just need to know that cloud computing is safe, effective, and keeps us from losing data on our own computers.

Some of the old file-sharing programs that existed years ago were actually early forms of cloud computing as well. Data, movies, pictures and music were hosted by other computers. You logged in and were able to watch, listen or view the data from the comfort of your own home, while someone else hosted it. But now cloud computing has taken off and gone to the next level, being a system of computers linked up together hosting, serving and storing data so users can use that data without even needing to install or upgrade their own computers.

For many of us early adopters, cloud computing is a concept we've used for quite some time. But now the cat is out of the bag, so to speak, and it has become the new "in" thing in computing, both for businesses and individuals.

To better understand cloud computing, try out Dropbox, which is a (FREE) prime example of cloud computing. Dropbox is the most well known cloud service today and it lets you store and access your files from anywhere…on the web, on your hard drive, or on all your mobile devices. Here's how it works:

1. Go to Dropbox on the web at https://db.tt/7rEut4dJ.

2. Install Dropbox on your computer or mobile device.

3. Throw your files into the Dropbox folder… it's always right there on your device.

> Add Dropbox to your mobile devices by visiting the iTunes Store or Android Store.

Now your files go everywhere you do. Change a file on the web, on your computer, or on your mobile device and it updates on every device where you've installed Google Drive. Share, collaborate, or work alone: your files…your choice.

RAMBLINGS –

By Jack Fischer, Director/Communications, The Computer Club, Inc., Florida

March 2014 issue, The Journal
www.scccomputerclub.org/
jafischer (at) juno.com

My nomination for the "Invention of the Century" is Caller ID. I know of nothing as empowering as looking at that TV or device-screen and deciding whether to answer the phone, or just let it ring!

It must be frustrating to those trying to sell me an Air Conditioner or a Security Alarm or whatever, but it certainly feels good from my side. I figure if it is someone who really needs, or wants, to get in touch with me, they will leave a message on my answering machine. If they merely hang up, it suggests that I don't need whatever it is they are offering.

Telephones have certainly changed. Remember the black, Western Electric instrument, where the phone company charged extra if we had more than one.

Today, it seems that everyone, from the President's encrypted Blackberry to my neighbor who hangs one on a string around his neck, has one of those that communicates, takes pictures, plays music and apparently protects us from Global Warming.

Not me, of course. I have an old rudimentary one that I keep in the car to call AAA when I run out of gas, or from the cellphone lot when meeting someone at the airport.

 Happy Computing, Jack