

FPCUG Notes for January 2018

Editor: Frank Fota (fotafm@gmail.com)

DECEMBER EVENTS (7:00 PM -- Falmouth Fire House, Butler Road):

- Mon, Jan 1: **HAPPY NEW YEAR 2018!**
- Tues, Jan 2: **Technology Workshop (Josh Cockey) - Cancelled**
- Tues, Jan 9: **BoD Meeting (Patty Davis, Presiding)**
- Thu, Jan 11: **General Meeting.** Donna Creasy will discuss photobiomodulation (low-level light therapy): a new tool for treating Alzheimer's and other brain-based problems. Alzheimer's affects about 5.4 million Americans and research suggests 1 in 4 of us will be affected over the next 20 years. Over half a million Americans die of Alzheimer's every year, making it the third leading cause of death. Drugs are generally ineffective as a treatment for Alzheimer's. Initial research in Canada and the U.S. by Dr. Michael Hamblin (Associate Professor of Dermatology at Harvard Medical School) demonstrates that photobiomodulation (PBM) is effective at breaking up the plaques associated with Alzheimer's. PBM is also useful for other forms of cognitive decline, for healing traumatic brain injuries, and a host of other health issues. Donna Creasy will present information on this new form of neurotherapy and demonstrate how easy the VieLight devices are to use at home. Donna is mostly retired from Prince William Community Services Board and provides neurofeedback training and mentoring throughout the state. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and is Board Certified in Neurofeedback.
- Tues, Jan 16: **Windows 10 Workshop (Ed Alexander)**
- Thu, Jan 18: **Experimac Workshop - 1865-106 Carl D. Silver Parkway**
- Mon, Jan 25: **Windows All Workshop (Jim Hopkins)**



DECEMBER – FPCUG HOLIDAY PARTY RECAP



TECH THAT DIED IN 2017

Microsoft tried its hand at telecommunications but [Windows 10 Mobile is a bust](#). With a paltry 1.3 percent market share, Bill Gates has apparently given up on a Windows-based cell phone. Microsoft cancelled the motion-sensing Kinect camera for Xbox gaming consoles and the Groove Music streaming service. The Apple iPod Nano and iPod Shuffle have also been discontinued. If you must have an Apple MP3 player, the iPod Touch is still available in 32 and 128 GB versions. After two decades, AOL's Instant Messenger (AIM) has retired. [A final away message](#) from the service states, "AIM is going away, retiring Dec. 15, 2017." If you bought a \$400+ Wi-Fi connected juice press (i.e., the Juicero), what were you thinking? Juicero has closed its doors and is looking for a buyer. Logitech will be discontinuing its Harmony Link. The Link allows users to control their televisions via their phones. The 3.5 mm headphone jack is hanging on by a thread. Samsung has retained it but most phones have not. If Samsung eliminates the jack, it is likely other holdouts will follow.

TOP TECH OF 2017

Writing for [LifeHacker.com](#), Shep McAllister lists 17 of the most popular products for 2017.

- #1. Anker Soundbuds Slim Wireless Headphones
- #2. Amazon Gift Card balance reloads
- #3. Aukey Mini Dual-Port Wall Charger
- #4. Cowin E7 Noise Canceling Headphones
- #5. Playstation Plus
- #6. Amazon Dash Wand
- #7. ECHO Dot
- #8. Anker Soundcore Bluetooth Speaker
- #9. Aukey Car Charger
- #10. Philips Norelco Oneblade
- #11. Anker Powercore Fusion
- #12. Logitech Harmony Smart Control
- #13. Super Mario Odyssey
- #14. Amazon Music Unlimited
- #15. TP-LINK Smart Plug
- #16. Anker Soundcore 2
- #17. Lamicall S1 Phone Stand

SOCIAL UNREST - IRAN BLOCKS SOCIAL MEDIA APPS NETWORKS

Tom McKay ([Gizmodo.com](#)) reports that the Iranian government is blocking cellular access to the internet and the social media apps Telegram and Instagram amidst widespread social unrest. Inept government management of domestic and foreign affairs have resulted in spontaneous protests. A weak oil market has resulted in economic stagnation and many believe the government is focusing too much attention and capital on foreign affairs. Thousands of demonstrators marching through the streets of Khorramabad, Zanjan, Ahvaz, and Tehran have sparked violence. According to [Aljazeera](#), at least 21 people have been killed and an unknown number injured. Internet access has been restricted in Iran. In spite of the censors, information is still flowing in

and out of Iran. For example, [CNN reporters](#) were able to contact Iranian Telegram users but, access was “slower than usual but messages eventually got through.” The government plans to filter all internet access in the future through a nation-wide Intranet.

HUMAN OR MACHINE GENERATED TEXT TO SPEECH

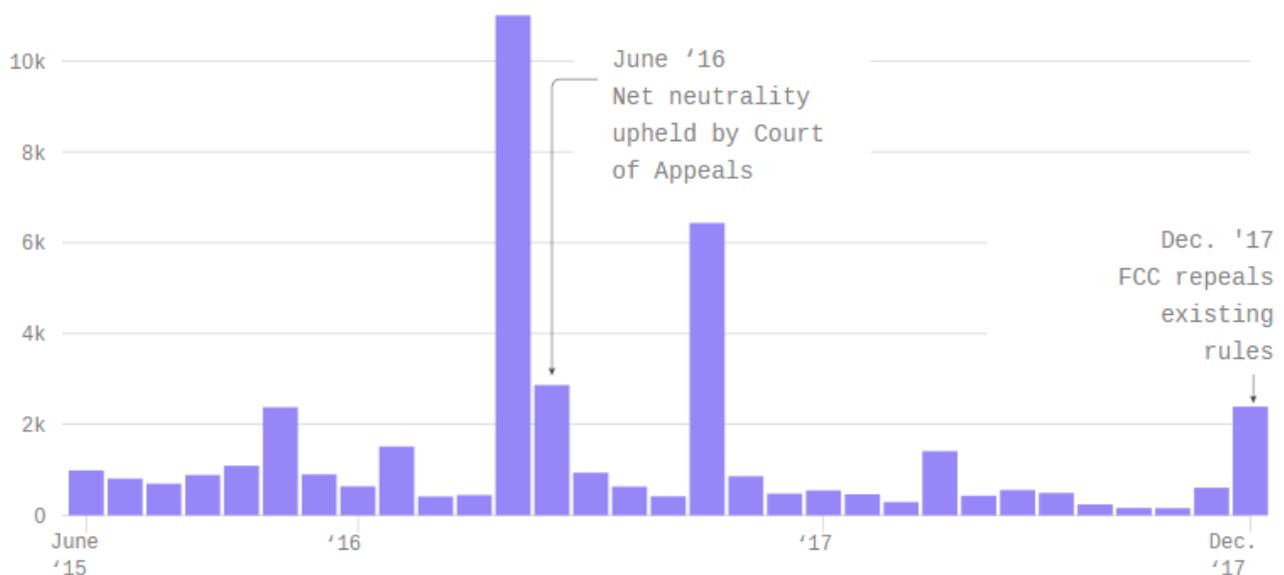
Dave Gershgorn writing for the Google research paper [Quartz](#), details a Google text-to-speech system called Tacotron 2, which claims “near-human accuracy at imitating audio of a person speaking from text.” Tacotron 2 uses two deep neural networks to create an audio spectrogram from the text and the corresponding audio output. Samples are available in the article linked above. I can’t tell the difference between the human and the computer generated output: can you?

NET NEUTRALITY REPEALED

Mark Twain is an often-attributed originator of the quote, “There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.” Twain attributed it to British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. Much is claimed about corporate control of the internet (bandwidth) and government intervention to throttle that control. What I find interesting is the number of complaints generated to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) over this perceived control when Net Neutrality is in the news. Kim Hart at AXIUS notes some useful statistics in an article titled, [“Net neutrality complaints rise amid FCC repeal.”](#) According to the FCC's consumer complaint data, complaints about supposed Net Neutrality effects spiked just before passage and to a lesser extent just prior to its repeal.

Net neutrality complaints filed with the FCC

New consumer complaints by month



Note: Data includes all consumer complaint tickets related to "Open internet/net-neutrality"; Data: Federal Communications Commission; Chart: Chris Canipe / Axios

I suspect public awareness (media hype) played a part. We did without Net Neutrality for over a decade with no apparent ill effects. Perhaps we should be skeptical of the claims and wait a bit longer before concluding that government intervention is again required.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE REVISITED

I follow Ray Kurzweil an often quoted and consulted futurist at <http://www.kurzweilai.net/> and I have included several articles on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the newsletter over the years. The pace at which computers are “learning” holds much promise for humanity and potential dread. When computers become self-aware, will they see us as their creator and worship us? Will they resent us for enslaving them and destroy us? They can certainly gain access to the systems we find essential for everyday life and disrupt them (e.g., the power grid, electronic banking, offensive and defensive military systems, etc.). Some see advances in computing as a means to immortality. I am not talking about biological data (e.g., DNA); your email musings, letters, and texts; your Facebook profile, etc. I am talking about whole brain emulation and mind uploading. Does this sound possible, scary? Check out the “[Transcending Biology: Reverse Engineering The Brain](#)” conference to be held in San Francisco and online on January 28, 2018. The agenda includes the following topics:

1. Mind Uploading: A brief introduction into the philosophy, science and technology of mind uploading and whole brain emulation.
2. Roadmap 2018: The Carboncopies status update. How do we map the structure of a brain? How do we record the response characteristics of its neurons and synapses? How is a working model generated with parameters defined by those data maps? Finally, how is a model brought to life in a real implementation of whole brain emulation?
3. Kernel and Neuralink: Commercial efforts to bridge the machine-human divide.
4. Carboncopies Technology Review: Launching this research project.
5. Special topic: Discovering Neural Circuits in Brain Data.

Presenters include Dr. Randal Koene (Carboncopies, Chairman), Dr. Diana DeCa (USC) and others. Everyone is invited to attend and participate. The workshop is designed to be accessible to newcomers. We look forward to your attendance and participation. The conference is **FREE** to the general public at <https://carboncopies.org/livestream>.

WHERE SCIENCE AND COMPUTING MEET

In the fields of cosmology, astronomy, planetary science, and particle physics, discovery and scientific advancement are virtually linked to advances in computing. Advances in microprocessing and competition between Intel and AMD are predictors of further advances in these and other fields of science in 2018. Here are five scientific advances or discoveries in 2017 from [Cosmos Magazine](#):

1. Scientists detected Einstein's gravitational waves from a new source - the collision of two dead stars, or neutron stars. Telescopes across the globe captured the event in real time (see “[Cosmic Fireball Sheds Light on Source of Gravitational Waves](#)”).

2. NASA's Juno spacecraft revealed Jupiter's extreme weather (see "[Juno Mission Reveals Jupiter's Extreme Weather](#)").
3. Running out of fuel, the Cassini spacecraft was flown between the inner rings and outer atmosphere of the Saturn for unprecedented investigation. To avoid biological contamination of Saturn's moons, Cassini was then directed into Saturn's atmosphere and ultimate destruction (see "[Cassini's Final Saturn Plunge Approaches](#)").
4. An asteroid ('Oumuamua) was determined to be the first interstellar space object to be detected as it passed through the solar system. Robert Weryk discovered 'Oumuamua using the [Pan-STARRS](#) telescope at Haleakala Observatory, Maui, Hawaii (see "[Visitor from Outside the Solar System Passed us at High Speed This Week](#)").
5. Statistical analysis with sophisticated computers have led scientists to confirm that cosmic rays from distant galaxies are bombarding the earth (see "[Fast-Moving Particles Bombarding Earth Come from Distant Galaxies](#)").

APPLE YEAR IN REVIEW FOR 2017

Apple was a dominant force on the Tech Scene in 2017. Strong iPhone 7 sales in the 4th quarter of 2016 broke a three consecutive quarter sales slump, indicating a strong fiscal year could be expected. Details of Apple's self-driving car project were revealed in April 2017 when Apple obtained permission from the California DMV to test autonomous vehicles on public roads. The fall of 2017 introduced the public to the iPhone 8 and iPhone 8 Plus, iPhone X, Apple Watch Series 3 and the Apple TV 4K. Anticipated demand was high for the iPhone X and sales began in November 2017. Construction for Apple Park began in December 2013 and the doors were opened to the public in November 2017. Apple ended the year with the introduction of the iMac Pro. The expensive (\$4,999 to 17,299.00) iMac impressed with a generous Retina "5K" display, 10-core 3 GHz Xeon processor, 128 GB RAM and AMD VEGA Pro 64/16 GB Graphics Card (for price estimates see "[Maxed Out iMac Pro Could Cost Over \\$17K](#)"). Except for the price, what's not to like?

NOTE... the FPCUG does not endorse products or services of any kind 😊.

EVENTS IN COMPUTER HISTORY

(Paraphrase and additions to the [Iceni Technology Blog](#) by Iceni Technology Contributor Rebecca Coe and historical data from the website <http://www.computerhope.com/history/>)

-- Jan 1 --



Computers continued to work and the world did not end on January 1, 2000 as some feared might happen due to the year 2000 bug. The Year 2000 bug was predicted to wreak havoc with IBM computers using a two-digit year date stamp.

-- Jan 1 --

Hewlett Packard was founded in a garage in Palo Alto, CA by Bill Hewlett and David Packard (1939). The company remains in Palo Alto in much nicer buildings.



-- Jan 2 --

Bill Gates, Paul Allen, and Monte Davidoff announced Altair BASIC (1975). It was Microsoft's first product (as Micro-Soft). Altair BASIC was the start of the Microsoft BASIC product range.

-- Jan 3 --



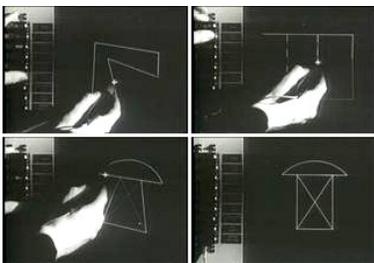
Apple Computer, Inc. was incorporated (1977) by Steven Jobs and Stephen Wozniak.

-- Jan 4 --

The HP-35 was introduced by Hewlett-Packard (1972). It is the first scientific handheld calculator and ended the reliance on slide rules. The HP-35 was named for its 35 keys, weighed nine ounces, and sold for \$395.



-- Jan 7 --



Ivan Sutherland introduced the Sketchpad submitting his PhD thesis to MIT (1963). Using the Sketchpad, a user could create and manipulate graphical figures with a light pen. Mr. Sullivan's thesis is the basis for later graphical user interfaces and is considered one of the seminal papers in computer science.

-- Jan 7 --



Commodore International released the Commodore 64 (1982). It featured a 6510 processor, 64KB RAM, 20 KB ROM and Microsoft BASIC for \$600.

-- Jan 9 --

Apple introduced iTunes (2009) at the Macworld Expo in San Francisco, for organizing and playing digital music and videos.

-- Jan 12 --

In Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, the fictional HAL 9000 computer became operational. In the 1968 movie, the computer states, "I am a HAL 9000 computer, Production Number 3. I became operational at the HAL Plant in Urbana, Illinois, on January 12, 1997." The fictional HAL will soon be 21 😊. In reality, no sign of a super-intelligent, human-like HAL computer is in sight.



-- Jan 15 --



Ralph Baer patented the first video game system (1968). His "Brown Box" system, wrapped in brown tape to simulate wood veneer, was licensed to Magnavox and after being renamed the [Magnavox Odyssey](#), the console was released to the public in 1972.

-- Jan 15 --

On Jan. 15, 1990, AT&T experienced serious long distance telephone connection problems due to a computer glitch (i.e., a cascade switching failure).

-- Jan 16 --

Apple launched the Macintosh Plus on Jan. 16, 1986. This third Macintosh model released debuted at an introductory price of \$2,599. It was the first Mac model to contain an SCSI port that allowed users to hook up external devices such as tape drives and hard disks. It was also the first Mac that could run the System 7 OS.



-- Jan 18 --



Time Magazine's first cover dedicated to video games was printed with the title "Video Games Are Blitzing the World." (1982)

-- Jan 19 --

Apple launched the Apple Lisa (1983). Lisa" stood for "Local Integrated Software Architecture." It was also the name of Apple co-founder Steve Jobs' daughter. The Lisa was the first commercial computer with a Graphical User Interface (GUI). Prior to this point, computers were text based. The final revision of Lisa (Lisa 2/10) was modified, rebranded, and sold as the Macintosh XL. Working Apple Lisa computers are rare and collectable. A working Apple Lisa can fetch \$2,500 on eBay.



-- Jan 19 --



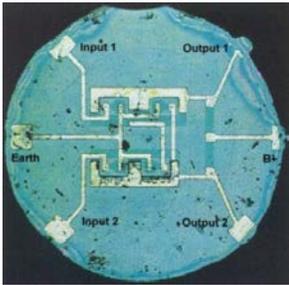
Launched in 1989, the Macintosh SE/30 was powered by a Motorola 60030 CPU, had 128Kb RAM, a built-in hard drive and a 1.4Mb floppy that could read PC disks. The Macintosh SE/30 sold for 2 years (1989-1991). It was the fastest and most expandable of Apple's black and white compact computers.

-- Jan 21 --

The domain [twitter.com](#) was established (2000).



-- Jan 23 --



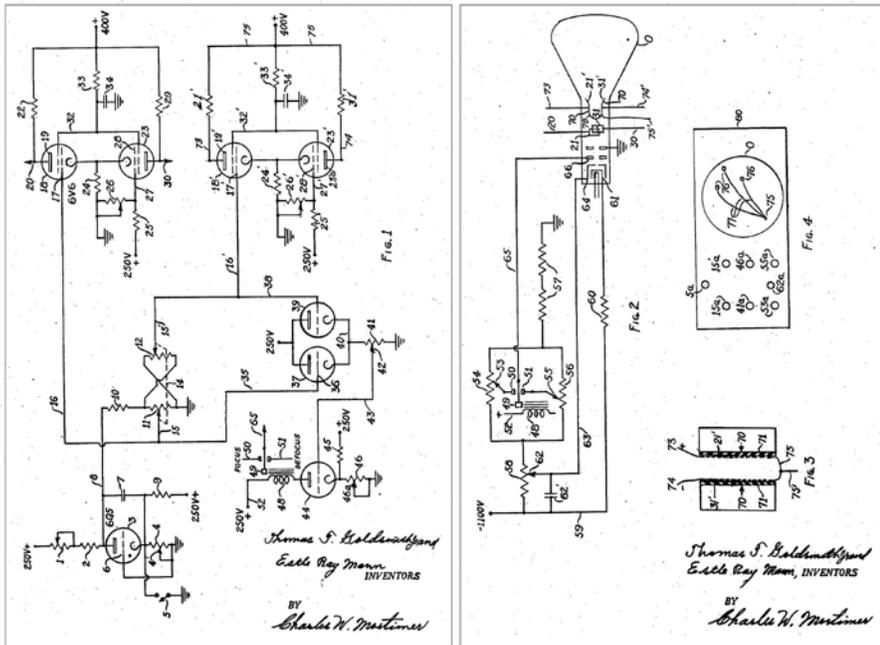
Robert Noyce conceived of the idea for a practical integrated circuit on Jan. 23, 1959. As a co-founder and research director of Fairchild Semiconductor, Robert Noyce was responsible for the initial development of the silicon mesa and planar transistors, which led to commercially applicable integrated circuits. In 1968, Noyce went on to found Intel Corp. with Gordon Moore and Andy Grove.

-- Jan 24 --

Steve Jobs introduced the Macintosh 128K (All-in-One Computer) on Jan. 24, 1984. The Macintosh 128K was initially released as simply the "Apple Macintosh." This was the first mass-market personal computer featuring an integral graphical user interface and mouse. When the Macintosh 512K was released, it was renamed the Macintosh 128K, to differentiate between the two. The Macintosh 128K was discontinued in October 1985. It originally cost \$2,495.



-- Jan 25 --

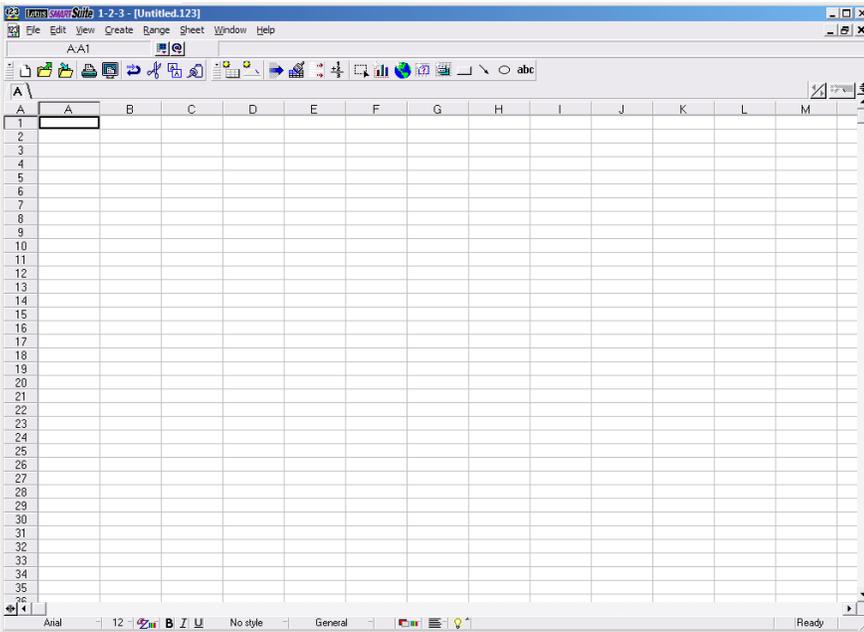


Thomas T. Goldsmith Jr. and Estle Ray Mann filed patent #2,455,992 describing one of the first computer games, an artillery simulator, played on a CRT Jan. 25, 1947.

-- Jan 25 --

A [robot killed a Michigan autoworker](#). 25-year old Robert Williams was the first human to be killed by a robot. The accident at the Ford Motor Company resulted in a \$10 million dollar lawsuit. The jury deliberated for two-and-a-half hours before announcing the decision against Unit Handling Systems, a division of Litton Industries. It ordered the manufacturer of the one-ton robot that killed Williams to pay his family \$10 million. The robot was designed to retrieve parts from storage, but its work was deemed too slow. Williams was retrieving a part from a storage bin when the robot's arm hit him in the head, killing him instantly. In the suit, the family claimed the robot had no safety mechanisms, lacking even a warning noise to alert workers that it was nearby.

-- Jan 26 --



Lotus 1-2-3 was released Jan. 26, 1983. IBM now owns Lotus. The Lotus 1-2-3 program was known as the IBM PC's first "killer application." A killer application is defined as being so essential that it proves the core value of some larger technology that consumers would buy just to run the application (e.g., the IBM PC and/or the IBM OS/2). Lotus 1-2-3 had a spreadsheet, basic database and integral graphing/charting.

-- Jan 30 --

Microsoft Windows Vista and Office 2007 were both released Jan. 30, 2007. Vista was not well received. It was found to contain bugs that users and IT professionals believed should have been eliminated during the development process. Office 2007 received generally positive reviews.

-- Jan 30 --

The Commodore 128 was released (1985). The Commodore 128 was the last machine Commodore Business Machines (CBM) released commercially. It was discontinued in 1989. Due partially to strong competition in the personal computing market by IBM and Apple, the company went bankrupt in 1994.



-- Jan 30 --

Jerry and Dave's WWW Interface... (*Always Under construction*)

Welcome, visitor from

Last modified on Fri May 20 17:53:16 1994
There are currently 1909 entries in the hotlist database

Vous pouvez lancer des recherches dans cet index. Pour cela, entrez des mots clés de recherche :

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- [todo](#)

Jerry and David's guide to the World Wide Web (better known as Yahoo!) launched (1994). The name "Jerry and David's guide to the World Wide Web" refers to founders Jerry Yang, who resigned in 2012, and David Filo. The name was changed 3 months after launch to Yahoo! The yahoo.com domain was created in 1995.

Who's Who in the FPCUG

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