Our Club

RCSI is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) group open for membership to anyone interested in computers and new technology. Established in 1981, our aim is to provide an exchange of information between users of digital devices. We are not in any way affiliated with any computer manufacturer or software company, and *we do not sell your data or email address*.

Program Meetings

No admission fee for non-members. Everyone is welcome! Second Tuesday of every month, *except July and August*, from 6:30pm-8:30pm.

Help's Half Hour (Q & A) 6:30pm – 7:00pm. *Members and Guests are welcome to attend and bring their computer related questions with them to get answered*. **Yes, you may bring the problem computer with you.**

7:00 – 7:10, Club Business

7:10 – 8:30+, Main Presentation Come and join in the fun and enjoy a snack! **You are welcome to bring a guest**.

Become a Member

The club would like to have you as a member, and your subscription will help to keep us going. Go to our website, www.rcsi.org, and download a printed form for use by the Post Office mail, **or** enter your info online and pay with a credit card or PayPal, **or** attend a meeting.

The Rochester Computer Society, Inc.

a computer & tech club open to everyone

M NIT R

Vol. 44, No.09 web: www.rcsi.org Rochester, NY September, 2025

Sept 9, 'Potluck Video Night', members can bring a 5 to 10 minute video to show [any topic]

Oct 14, "Cybersecurity and Mass Data Breaches", "Rise of Internet of Things and Smart Home Tech"

In This Issue

Do numerous ads on a website bother you? They certainly bother me. I go to a website to look for answers to a problem or I may just casually read an article that I find of interest. But, once in a great while, an ad might grab my attention and I will click on it. The owner of the add, then sends a few pennies to the website, in consideration for displaying the add and driving some business their way. This presents a dilemma for me, since I surf the Internet looking for content for this newsletter. I easily look at a couple hundred sites each month, looking for articles that I might be able to print. Yes, I am looking for FREE articles that will not cost me anything, BUT, I also have my favorite places and writers that I print articles from, on a regular basis. The following article is by one of my favorite writers. He has a great

way of explaining technical issues that I really enjoy and feel our computer club readers will understand. I am printing his explanation of some changes to his website, and his hope for a viable future.

Changes for Ask Leo!

by Leo Notenboom, https://askleo.com/
Making Technology Work For Everyone

The world changes, and so do I.

Changes are coming to Ask Leo!, including the removal of outside ads. I'll explain why this (very) scary step is necessary, how search engines and AI are changing the game, what it means for the future of the site, and how you can help.
By the time you read this, I'll (hopefully) have implemented a couple of technological changes at Ask Leo!.

The big one?

No outside ads.

And that scares the pants off of me. But it's time.

In Short

Advertising and Ask Leo!

Ads are gone from Ask Leo! because they don't work like they used to. Fewer people visit the site, and search engines now show answers without sending folks to my pages. It's very risky, but it's time for a change. You can help by signing up for the newsletter or becoming a patron.

Website advertising is broken
You know what I'm talking about before I even say it: websites are plastered with ads that all too often obscure the content you went to the website to see.

And, yes, Ask Leo! has been guilty of this in the past.

The worst offenders, of course, entice you with clickbait headlines to get you to click. Hopefully, this is something I've avoided.

But it paid the bills. Website advertising allowed Ask Leo! to come into existence almost 22 years ago and has kept it a viable business ever since.

But the industry is changing.

Search engine optimization is broken
The other part of the equation that has allowed Ask Leo! to operate is what's called SEO, or search engine optimization.

In short, by writing quality content and structuring it in a way that was easy for the search engine(s) (OK, mostly Google) to understand, Ask Leo! articles appeared in results when people searched for an answer
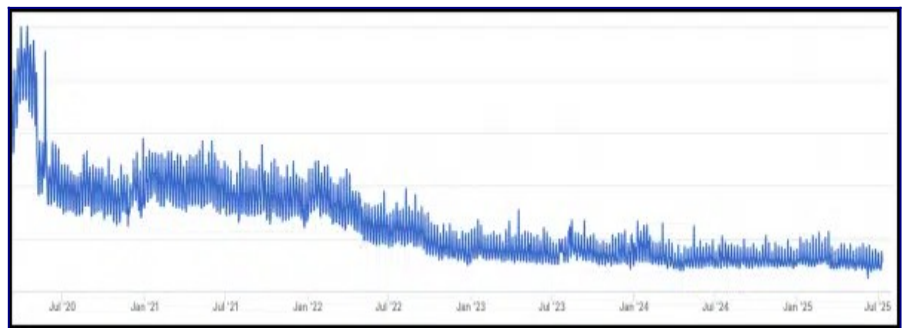
to a question. They'd come to the site and hopefully get the answer they were looking for. The ads displayed alongside that answer were the "cost" that paid for me and my staff to do what we do.

Then Google started summarizing answers directly in search results. Rather than clicking through to the websites that ultimately provided the information, people did not need to go further: the answer was right there. This pre-dates AI, but AI, and the use of AI in lieu of traditional search, has exacerbated this.

It's a great user experience — one fewer click for your answer! — but it removes the primary mechanism that sites like Ask Leo! use to pay the bills. If there are no visitors to the site (other than the Google or AI bots), there's no ad revenue. It's come to be referred to as the "traffic apocalypse".

Ask Leo! traffic trends for the last five years. Click for larger image. (Screenshot: askleo.com)

Fortunately, YouTube isn't as far down this path and remains viable. But traffic on written articles on websites is clearly declining.

So, if site ads aren't working and are on the decline, why have them at all?

Removing ads
By the time you read this, I'll have removed the advertising network used by Ask Leo!. Even if you visit the site without being signed in, you won't see a wall of ads.

This is a huge risk. While advertising revenue is down significantly, it's not zero. I'm hoping we'll make up for it in other ways, but it's scary. Advertising saved Ask Leo! from shutting down completely around five years ago, so it's not an easy decision to walk away from it today.

But for now, no ads (other than a few ads for patronage or my own products). I may opt to accept sponsorships with simple, single box ads. Should revenue not meet what's needed to run the site, I may rejoin a less aggressive ad network. (Of course, just as before, patrons will not see any ads no matter what I elect to do.)

But the oh-so-common and oh-so-in-your-face wall of ads should be gone for good.

Other changes
While I'm at it, I'm streamlining the Confident Computing newsletter a little to make it easier to put together. If you're a subscriber, you may have already seen that reflected in the most recent issue. Nothing drastic, just a little simpler.

Once the dust settles a little, I'll embark on my next course, tentatively titled *Linux Without Tears*.

I'm also hoping to increase the rate at which I produce ebooks. That's an idea in progress, though.

As I come up with ideas to make patronage more valuable, you may see some changes there as well.

Do this
Most of this is a behind-the-scenes look at what it means to run a web-based business these days. It's probably more complicated than you realize. 🙂

There are two things you can do to help, though.

First, subscribe to Confident Computing! My weekly newsletter is completely free. Less frustration and more confidence, solutions, answers, and tips in your inbox every week.

Then consider becoming a patron of Ask Leo! It's one of the best ways to help ensure I can keep doing what I do.

Either way, I appreciate your being here, and I look forward to continuing to do this for a long, long time.

Here is the link to Leo's article and some posted comments, https://askleo.com/changes-for-ask-leo/.

Some ways to support Leo. https://askleo.com/support-ask-leo/

END OF ARTICLE # #

Got Questions?
Send an email to either person below and they will get back to you. The questions can be related to the OS (Operating System) or hardware related issues. Please give them time for a response, as they do this service on a volunteer basis. Thank you.

Windows OS: . . . . . Arpad Kovacs, podcomputer@gmail.com

Linux & some Mac: Carl Schmidtmann,   unixgeek@faultline.com

What has DeepSeeks Impact Been in the AI Community

Combined responses by AI overview in Google Search, and Duck Assist, 8/25

DeepSeek has had a significant impact on the AI community, primarily by challenging the status quo of large language model (LLM) development and democratizing access to powerful AI technology. It has outperformed established competitors like OpenAI and Meta at a fraction of the cost, promoting a shift towards more cost-effective AI development. The DeepSeek-R1 model, in particular, excels in logical reasoning and problem-solving tasks, showcasing capabilities that rival those of established players. Its open-source approach encourages innovation and accessibility, challenging traditional business models in the AI industry.

Overview of DeepSeek's Impact on the AI Community

Open-source revolution: DeepSeek's release of its models and the detailed technical documentation as open-source software, particularly its DeepSeek-R1 model, has ignited a wave of open-source AI development. This allows researchers and developers worldwide to freely access, modify, and build upon their work, fostering collaboration and accelerating innovation at an unprecedented scale, according to InfoWorld. This approach significantly differentiates DeepSeek from proprietary models offered by companies like OpenAI and Google. This fosters innovation and collaboration within the AI community, enabling smaller teams to leverage high-performance AI without significant financial barriers.

Cost efficiency and accessibility: DeepSeek demonstrated that high-performing AI models can be developed and run at a significantly lower cost than previously thought. DeepSeek-R1, for example, was developed for a fraction of the cost of comparable models from companies like OpenAI. This was achieved through innovative techniques such as the Mixture-of-Experts (MoE) architecture, which utilizes a specialized network of "experts" to process only relevant parts of the input, drastically reducing computational needs. DeepSeek also optimized its models for less powerful and more readily available hardware, like NVIDIA H800 GPUs, further reducing costs and expanding access to advanced AI for a wider range of users, including startups and researchers with limited resources.

Challenging industry leaders and accelerating innovation: DeepSeek's success and its open-source approach have put pressure on established AI firms to innovate more efficiently and potentially rethink their proprietary strategies. This has fostered a more competitive AI landscape and has driven other companies to accelerate their own development and release of new tools and models, potentially leading to faster breakthroughs across the industry.

KEEP WINDOWS 11 IN TOP SHAPE BY SCHEDULING THIS WEEKLY ACTION – Use Task Scheduler to Automate PC Restart.

One way to schedule a restart of your Windows 11 PC is to use Task Scheduler. This built-in utility allows you to create a task that turns off and back on your machine at the specified time and date.
https://www.howtogeek.com/how-to-schedule-your-windows-11-pc-to-auto-restart-once-a-week/

OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE POWERS 96% OF MODERN APPLICATIONS, NEW STUDY FINDS – In a landmark study highlighting the pervasive role of free and open source software (FOSS) in today's digital economy, researchers have found that open source components are present in nearly all modern applications, with cloud-specific packages showing dramatic growth and traditional development patterns evolving rapidly.
https://www.itprotoday.com/software-development/open-source-software-powers-96-of-modern-applications-new-study-finds

10 CHANGES I MAKE TO MY IPHONE BEFORE EVERY VACATION – Want to be vacation-ready before you start your journey? There's a lot of planning you may need to do before you leave, and the first step is to prepare your iPhone for the trip ahead. Read more at:
https://www.howtogeek.com/get-your-iphone-vacation-ready-with-these-tips/

User experience: The DeepSeek app has gained popularity for its user-friendly interface and unique features, such as displaying the reasoning behind its answers. This "Chain of Thought" reasoning is not commonly found in other AI models, enhancing user engagement and understanding.

Industry Reactions

Market Disruption: The rapid rise of DeepSeek has caused fluctuations in the stock prices of major AI hardware companies, such as Nvidia and Astera Labs, indicating a shift in market dynamics. Concerns about competition have led to discussions about the future of AI development and hardware investments.

Reshaping the geopolitical landscape of AI: DeepSeek's emergence from China, particularly given the context of U.S. export controls on AI chips, highlights the global nature of AI development and challenges assumptions about which countries lead in this field, according to The New York Times. This has sparked discussions about the effectiveness of such restrictions and the potential for countries to innovate around them.

Safety and Data Privacy Concerns: As a Chinese company, DeepSeek raises questions about data privacy and security, particularly regarding user information. Experts caution that data input into DeepSeek's models may be captured and used for future training, highlighting the need for careful consideration when using its technology.

Fostering broader engagement in AI development: By providing freely available models and resources, DeepSeek promotes a more inclusive AI ecosystem. This allows a more diverse group of researchers and developers to contribute to the field, potentially leading to more varied and impactful applications of AI across various industries and addressing different societal needs, according to Built In.

In essence, DeepSeek has become a catalyst in the AI community, pushing for more efficient, accessible, and collaborative approaches to AI development while simultaneously impacting market dynamics and raising important questions about the future of AI's governance and global distribution. DeepSeek's emergence is reshaping the AI community, driving innovation, and prompting discussions about cost, performance, and ethical considerations in AI development.

END OF ARTICLE # #

Is This for Real?

Guinness World Records

Reverend Kevin Fast, who has several other weight-pulling records under his belt and is dubbed the "world's strongest man" managed to pull an entire 416,299 pound (about 29,735 stone) CC-177 Globemaster III aeroplane for almost 9 metres back in 2009.

If you're one to swat away a bee coming a little too close to your lemonade, imagine having 673,000 of them covering your entire body. Not to mention that's about 63 kilos in weight. Ruan Liangming, or should we call him, the 'calmest man alive', did exactly this, inspired by a 19th-century carnival act called 'bee Bearding' where performers placed a queen bee on their bodies thereby attracting thousands of her workers to their beard.

Georges Christen ran 11 and a half metres while carrying an 11.7-kilo table and a 49-kilo woman sitting *on top,* between his *teeth!* Talk about strong gnashers. He also holds 23 other Guinness World Records, including the fastest hot water bottle inflated by lung power.

Apparently, Kevin Shelley thought it would be fun to see how many toilet seats he could break in one minute with nothing but his head. He broke 46 of them. Aside from the fact that he could have given himself a concussion, it's a pretty niche thing to say you can do.

* * * * * SOFTWARE and HARDWARE * * * * *

Discover the Best Software Tools with ScoutForge

By Mohamed Ahmed, Published March 1, 2025

Discover the Best Software Tools with **ScoutForge**: Your Ultimate Guide to Finding the Right Solutions for Every Need

In today's fast-paced digital world, finding the right software tools can make or break your productivity. Whether you're a freelancer, entrepreneur, developer, or part of a large team, having access to the best software is essential to streamline processes, boost efficiency, and stay ahead of the competition. But with thousands of tools available, how do you make the right choice? That's where ScoutForge comes in.

What is ScoutForge?
ScoutForge.net is an innovative platform that helps you explore, discover, and evaluate the best new software across multiple categories. From project management tools to digital marketing solutions, ScoutForge curates a collection of top-rated apps, giving users like you the power to choose software that can transform how you work.

Whether you're looking for productivity apps to manage your workflow or specialized tools to enhance your team's communication, ScoutForge offers a comprehensive selection of software to meet your needs. The platform provides detailed insights, user reviews, and comparisons, allowing you to make informed decisions without being overwhelmed.

Why ScoutForge is Your Go-To Software Discovery Platform
One of the unique aspects of ScoutForge is its easy-to-use interface. The site categorizes tools into various industries and niches, so you can quickly find what's relevant to your goals. With software reviews from real users and expert opinions, you'll gain a clearer understanding of what each tool can do before you make your choice. Here are some standout features of ScoutForge.net:

Comprehensive Software Database – ScoutForge offers an extensive list of software across categories like productivity, marketing tools, project management, business automation, and much more. This makes it a one-stop destination for anyone looking to discover new tools.

User Reviews and Ratings – The power of feedback cannot be overstated. On ScoutForge, you'll find honest reviews and ratings from users who have experienced the software firsthand, allowing you to gauge how well it fits your needs.

Regularly Updated – ScoutForge constantly updates its platform to ensure that the latest software tools are featured. This gives you access

Future Medical

Personalized Medicine via Genetic Mapping

One of the most promising medical breakthroughs anticipated in the next decade is the rise of **personalized medicine**, driven by advances in genetic mapping technology. Precision medicine, another name for personalized medicine, is a cutting-edge approach to healthcare that customizes medical therapy for each patient according to their particular genetic, environmental, and lifestyle characteristics. By analyzing an individual's unique genetic profile, doctors will soon be able to design highly tailored treatment plans, significantly enhancing their effectiveness and minimizing adverse reactions. This shift away from "one-size-fits-all" medicine means treatments such as chemotherapy, psychiatric medications, and cardiovascular therapies will become safer and more efficient. As genetic testing becomes increasingly accessible, personalized medicine could transform healthcare by enabling earlier interventions, improved therapeutic outcomes, and ultimately, better patient quality of life.

Read about this at https://www.ijpsjournal.com/article/Mapping+the+Future+Personalized+Medicine+and+Its+Impact+on+Modern+Healthcare+in+Integrative+Medicine+.

to cutting-edge technologies and solutions as soon as they hit the market.

Keywords for SEO (Search Engine Optimization) Success
To make the most of your search engine visibility, here are some keywords that are closely tied to ScoutForge's mission:

Best software tools - Software reviews - Discover new software

Top software platforms - Productivity tools - Software comparisons

Business software solutions - Digital marketing tools

Project management tools - New apps for entrepreneurs

By targeting these high-traffic keywords in your content, you'll ensure that your audience is more likely to find ScoutForge when searching for software tools and solutions. Integrating them into your blog posts, reviews, and other resources will boost your chances of ranking higher on Google.

How ScoutForge Can Transform Your Workflow
Choosing the right software tools can be a daunting task with so many options available. Whether you're optimizing your marketing strategies, managing client projects, or automating business processes, ScoutForge is here to simplify your search. By using ScoutForge.net, you can access a curated collection of apps that have been tested and reviewed by users, so you can confidently invest in the tools that will take your business or personal productivity to the next level.

From team collaboration software to data analytics tools and customer relationship management (CRM) systems, the variety of solutions available on ScoutForge will ensure that you find exactly what you need. The added benefit of expert advice and community feedback makes it easier to avoid common pitfalls and pick only the software that will help you grow.

Conclusion
If you're overwhelmed by the sheer number of software options out there, ScoutForge.net is your go-to resource for making smarter, more informed software decisions. By providing an intuitive platform filled with user reviews, expert insights, and powerful search tools, ScoutForge helps you cut through the noise and find software that suits your exact needs. So, why wait? Dive into ScoutForge today and start discovering the software solutions that will revolutionize your workflow.

Website: https://scoutforge.net/

Reprinted from https://articlebiz.com/article/1052462191-discover-the-best-software-tools-with-scoutforge.

AI-Powered Voice Cloning Scams: The New Emergency Call Nightmare.
The Threat: Scammers now need just 15-30 seconds of someone's voice (from social media, voicemails, or even a brief "Hello?" when answering unknown calls) to create AI clones using tools like ElevenLabs, Speechify, and Resemble AI. These deepfake calls are targeting families with fake emergency scenarios.

AI-Generated Job Listings: Scammers now use AI to create fraudulent job descriptions and professional-looking websites that lead job seekers to fake application portals designed to steal personal data.

Fake Recruiters on LinkedIn: Scammers impersonate well-known companies and pose as "recruiters" on LinkedIn and other job platforms, requesting payment for fake equipment or asking for personal information like driver's licenses, Social Security numbers, or bank details before offering employment.

Still #1: Imposter scams continue to top the list of reported scams. Scammers now use AI to enhance traditional imposter tactics, creating multi-party scams where the first scammer directs victims to accomplices posing as government agents or bank employees.

How to Check Your SSD Health on Windows 10

by Tony Dellelo
Rochester Computer Society

Hard drives are slowly being replaced with SSDs (Solid State Drives). They are many times faster than a traditional hard drive, very quiet (no moving parts), can withstand rigorous vibration, and are less prone to breaking. But, they are more expensive for the storage capacities they provide. For those diehards relying on traditional mechanical hard drives, myself included, SSD development now rivals traditional drives in reliability and may be better. Traditional drives usually give you an indication of impending failure, by making unusual noises, but what about SSDs?

For those who do plan to change, manufacturers rate their drives by three key factors: age of the drive, total terabytes written over time (TBW), and drive writes per day (DWPD). Yes, SSDs have limits on their use and can wear out, just like a magnetic drive. When you write files on a fresh storage drive, the files are written as a continuous block of data (usually in 4 KB chunks). When you delete files, the space those files occupied are marked as free. Sometimes, depending on the file system and OS, new files are written in these free blocks. But if the file can't fit in the block, it gets split up and saved in the next available space. This is called fragmentation. Defragmentation is rearranging files so that all these data chunks are placed in one spot. The reason to do this is to improve hard drive performance so that the data pick-up head does not have to move all over the place. Defragmentation isn't useful on SSDs because they can access data in a random fashion much more quickly than a hard drive and it requires a lot of writing, which would be added to the TBW factor.

So, you bought an SSD and have been using it for awhile, or you have one that is several years old and wonder what the life expectancy might be. There are several methods to check this in Windows 10, by using built-in tools like **Defrag and Optimize Drives**, command level tools such as **CHKDSK** (Check Disk), and **WMIC** (Windows Management Instrumentation Command-line).

Lets start with the first option: press the 'Windows key' and 'x' at the same time, select 'Search' and type Optimize Drives and 'Defragment and Optimize Drives' appears. Select the drive you want checked. Windows will run the Defragmentation tool for Hard Drives and the Trim tool for SSDs. This will help improve access times and overall performance. By default, Windows does this automatically once a week, but you can modify this time frequency. The other two options run in the CMD (Command) window and as an example; CHKDSK C: and press 'Enter'. The command line confuses most people and none of the above methods will give you much in the way of usable information.

Jokes About Rabbits:

Why did the rabbit go to the barber?
He was having a bad hare day!

What do you call a rabbit with a lot of money?
A million-hare.

What's a magician's favorite kind of rabbit?
A hare-dini!

Why did the bunny eat the lightbulb?
He was looking for a light snack.

How do you know if a rabbit is in a good mood?
It has a hop-timistic attitude!

What's a rabbit's favorite kind of music?
Hip-hop.

Why did the rabbit get a ticket from the police?
For jay-hopping!

What do you call a line of rabbits walking backwards?
A receding hare-line.

What do you call a rabbit who tells jokes?
A funny bunny!

What did the carrot say to the rabbit?
"It's been nice gnawing you!

How does a rabbit keep its fur looking so good?
He uses hare spray

What's a rabbit's favorite dance?
The Bunny Hop, obviously.

There are third party tools, like **CrystalDiskInfo**, which is a free and Open Source utility that monitors and displays the health of your hard drive or SSD, including basic information, S.M.A.R.T. values, and disk temperature. Also available as a **portable version**. I downloaded this software from www.majorgeeks.com, but there are other sites that have it. The parent site is https:/crystalmark.info. This gives quite a few details about a drive, including the 'power on time', mine is currently 17,938 hours. It might be time for me to look for a replacement drive, possibly try out an SSD. In any case, always backup your data, since a failure can happen at anytime. This software also works with Windows XP/Vista/7/8/8.1/11 and Windows Server 2003 – 2025.

END OF ARTICLE # #

* * * * * BITS and PIECES in the NEWS * * * * *

Editor's Note: To continue reading the following articles, you may copy the long URL at the end of the article and enter it into a web browser **or** click on the URL in the PDF or web versions of this newsletter.

China Expands Guowang Satellite Constellation to 72 Units
By Jon Martindale August 18, 2025

China expanded its native broadband satellite low Earth orbit (LEO) constellation, known as Guowang, with another five satellites following this weekend's successful Long March 4C launch. This brings the total number of satellites to 72, putting China on target to hit its milestone of 400 satellites by 2027—though it's still far from its planned 13,000-strong constellation network.

Following the success of SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet network, a number of companies and countries have planned to build something similar. In the US, Amazon's Project Kuiper network will compete directly for Starlink's domestic audience, while Europe is pushing the Eutelasat network, among other initiatives. In China, however, the state is pushing the Guowang network as an alternative to Starlink for rural broadband provision.

Still, it will be a long time before Guowang can compete with Starlink, which has over 8,000 active LEO satellites and newer, more advanced models launching at regular intervals. Although China and a number of companies hope to compete with Starlink's service in the future, for the next few years at least, they will have to play catch-up.

As reported in https://www.extremetech.com/aerospace/china-expands-guowang-satellite-constellation-to-72-units.

Odds and Ends

China's inaugural 'Robot Olympics' delivers impressive feats and disastrous falls.

The first-ever World Humanoid Robot Games have come to a close with some new world records, but don't expect them to beat humans in a 100-meter dash any time soon. The three-day robotics event in Beijing, China that saw humanoid robots compete in everything from boxing to cleaning concluded this weekend. According to the World Humanoid Robot Games, more than 280 teams from 16 countries, including the US, Germany, Brazil and the host country, entered their robots into the event.

A majority of the teams came from universities, but several teams came from established robotics companies like Unitree and Fournier Intelligence. Hundreds of robots competed in traditional sporting events like running, soccer and table tennis, along with events for more practical tasks, like cleaning or sorting medicine.

We're still a long way from widespread adoption of these humanoid bots though, especially if they can't avoid running into each other.

Reported on https://www.engadget.com/ai/chinas-inaugural-robot-olympics-delivers-impressive-feats-and-disastrous-falls-221450458.html.

An Alternative to LASIK—Without the Lasers

by American Chemical Society, 8/18/25
edited by Sadie Harley, reviewed by Robert Egan

Millions of Americans have altered vision, ranging from blurriness to blindness. But not everyone wants to wear prescription glasses or contact lenses. Accordingly, hundreds of thousands of people undergo corrective eye surgery each year, including LASIK—a laser-assisted surgery that reshapes the cornea and corrects vision.

Human corneas are dome-shaped, clear structures that sit at the front of the eye, bending light from surroundings and focusing it onto the retina, where it's sent to the brain and interpreted as an image. But if the cornea is misshapen, it doesn't focus light properly, resulting in a blurry image. With LASIK, specialized lasers reshape the cornea by removing precise sections of the tissue. The procedure can result in negative side effects, prompting researchers to take the laser out of LASIK by remodeling the cornea, rather than cutting it.

But what if the cornea could be reshaped without the need for any incisions? This is what Hill and collaborator Brian Wong (Occidental College of Los Angeles) are exploring through a process known as electromechanical reshaping (EMR). "The whole effect was discovered by accident," explains Wong, a professor and surgeon at the University of California, Irvine. "I was looking at living tissues as moldable materials and discovered this whole process of chemical modification."

In the body, the shapes of many collagen-containing tissues, including corneas, are held in place by attractions of oppositely charged components. These tissues contain a lot of water, so applying an electric potential to them lowers the tissue's pH, making it more acidic. By altering the pH, the rigid attractions within the tissue are loosened and make the shape malleable. When the original pH is restored, the tissue is locked into the new shape.

In this work, the team constructed specialized, platinum "contact lenses" that provided a template for the corrected shape of the cornea. The platinum lens acted as an electrode to generate a precise pH change when the researchers applied a small electric potential to the lens. After about a minute, the cornea's curvature conformed to the shape of the lens—about the same amount of time LASIK takes, but with fewer steps, less expensive equipment and no incisions.

Though this initial work is promising, the researchers emphasize that it is in its very early stages. Though the next steps are planned, uncertainties in the team's scientific funding have put them on hold. "There's a long road between what we've done and the clinic. But, if we get there, this technique is widely applicable, vastly cheaper and potentially even reversible," concludes Hill.

Found on https://medicalxpress.com/news/2025-08-alternative-lasik-lasers.html.

CLUB and REGIONAL NEWS

FREE Electronics Recycling. Clean Out Your Old Electronics Drawer (Or Pile).
Saturday, Sept 13, in Farmington, from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at **Finger Lakes Gaming and Racetrack**
For more info and directions: https://www.sunnking.com/events/farmington-09-13-25 .

Can Amazon Alexa or Google Home help detect Parkinson's?

By Luke Auburn , U of R | Director of Communications,
Hajim School of Engineering & Applied Sciences, July 23, 2025

A quick, speech-based AI tool offers a new way to screen for a key indicator of the neurodegenerative disease.

Computer scientists at the University of Rochester have developed an AI-powered, speech-based screening tool that can help people assess whether they are showing signs of Parkinson's disease, the fastest growing neurological disability in the world. A study published in the journal *npj Parkinson's Disease* introduces a web-based screening test that asks users to recite two pangrams—short sentences using all 26 letters of the alphabet. Within seconds, the AI analyzes the voice recordings for subtle patterns linked to Parkinson's, with nearly 86 percent accuracy.

Parkinson's disease is typically diagnosed by movement disorder specialists—neurologists with specific training to evaluate complex motor symptoms—using a combination of family history, neurological examinations, and brain imaging. While the study's authors emphasize that their AI-based tool is not a substitute for a clinical diagnosis, they see it as a fast, low-barrier, and accessible way to flag people, especially in remote areas, who might be living with the condition and encourage them to seek more thorough clinical evaluations.

Research shows that nearly 89 percent of people with Parkinson's have a deformity in their voice. To train and validate the tool, the researchers collected data from more than 1,300 participants—with and without Parkinson's—across diverse environments, including home settings, clinical visits at the University of Rochester Medical Center, and the InMotion Parkinson's disease care center in Ohio.

Using the computer's microphone, users simply read aloud two sentences: "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. The dog wakes up and follows the fox into the forest, but again the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog." By leveraging the power of advanced semi-supervised speech models trained on millions of digital audio recordings to understand the characteristics of speech, the tool can glean enough vocal cues from those two short sentences to flag warning signs.

Read more at https://www.rochester.edu/newscenter/ai-speech-based-screening-parkinsons-disease-661062/.

Our Meeting Place
St John's Meadows at Johnsarbor Drive, is on the left, past Clinton Avenue, when going West on Elmwood Avenue. The opening in the white fence is Johnsarbor Drive. At the '**T**', turn right. The meeting is in the SECOND building on the left – **Chestnut Court**.

www.rcsi.org

Got Questions?
Send an email to either person below and they will get back to you. The questions can be related to the OS (Operating System) or hardware related issues. Please give them time for a response, as they do this service on a volunteer basis. Thank you.

Windows OS: . . . . . Arpad Kovacs, podcomputer@gmail.com

Linux & some Mac: Carl Schmidtmann, unixgeek@faultline.com