Re:Wireless - The Wireless RERC's Consumer Newsletter
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Connecting consumers of all ages and abilities to the research, development and outreach activities of the Wireless RERC.

Welcome!

Happy New Year from all of us at the Wireless Inclusive RERC research staff. It's been an exciting couple of months since our last newsletter. Here's what we've been up to:

- There's still time to let your voice be heard. The latest version of our *Survey of User Needs (SUN)* has launched. I encourage all of our readers to participate as results from this survey are used by engineers and designers to make the next generation of wireless devices, features and services more accessible. Full details and link to the survey are provided below.
- Wireless RERC researcher publishes paper on on-body location mapping for wearables.
- FirstNet addressing accessibility needs through input from Wireless RERC staff
- The FCC is seeking input on communications issues from those that were affected by hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate.
- Upcoming events for research staff:
    - **Learning Disability Association (LDA) 55th Annual International Conference** from February 21-24 in Atlanta, GA
    - **2018 CSUN Assistive Technology Conference** from March 19-23 in San Diego, CA

This newsletter is intended to keep you abreast of some of the latest activities in our research, development and training projects, share upcoming dates to events and conferences we'll be attending, and serve as an invitation to all of our consumers to participate in surveys, workshops, focus groups or user testing projects we may have underway.

Visiting our **website**, subscribing to our **LinkedIn** and **Twitter** feeds, and becoming friends with us on **Facebook** are other great ways to stay informed of our progress!

We welcome you as a reader and hope you enjoy the newsletter! If you are not currently a *Re: Wireless* reader and were forwarded this newsletter, you can join our mailing list below or text WIRELESSRERC to 22828. In 2018, we look forward to providing you wireless resource materials better matched to your interests.

Thank you for reading and enjoy the articles below!

Sincerely,

Ben Lippincott (Managing Editor)

There's Still Time! Please Take and Share the Survey of User Needs

The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for Wireless Inclusive Technologies (Wireless RERC) announces the launch of its updated Survey of User Needs (SUN). The SUN is the Wireless RERC's cornerstone survey on wireless technology use by people with disabilities. It has been completed by over 7,500 consumers with disabilities since it was first launched in 2001.
This latest version represents the 6th version of the survey, which is updated periodically in response to changes in technology. In addition to questions about cell phone and tablet use, this latest version of the SUN collects information about wearables, "smart" home technologies, and other next-generation wirelessly connected devices.

User responses will help designers and engineers make new wireless devices and services for people with disabilities. Data from the SUN also provides important information to the wireless industry, government regulators, and other researchers to help them make wireless technology more accessible and more useful to people with all types of disabilities.

If you have a disability, please consider taking this survey. If you know someone who has a disability, please forward the survey to them.

Additional Information:
Take the Survey
[http://b.gatech.edu/2yvCHnz]

Share the Survey
[http://www.wirelessrerc.gatech.edu/wireless-rerc-launches-latest-survey-user-needs]

Wireless RERC Researcher Publishes Paper on On-Body Location Mapping for Wearable Technologies

Wireless RERC researcher, Clint Zeagler, PhD, recently had his paper, "Where to wear it: functional, technical, and social considerations in on-body location for wearable technology 20 years of designing for wearability" published in the Proceedings of the 2017 ACM International Symposium on Wearable Computers.

Clint's paper addresses issues designers and engineers must consider when placing wearable technology on the body. He discusses best practices for fitting wearables on various parts of the body, and has developed body maps to show where they can be placed for maximum effectiveness for data collection, usability, as well as for social acceptance by the user.

Wireless RERC Staff Instrumental in Addressing Accessibility

Needs in the Development of FirstNet

FirstNet is a nationwide communications infrastructure that will be assisting first responders (fire, police, and EMS) in converting from land mobile radios to a nationwide connected LTE network. First responders of the future will have technologies available that enable real-time information flow.

Such technologies, if designed correctly, could be useful in enhancing safety and security for persons with disabilities. For example, FirstNet could be used to provide resources and tools needed to communicate with PWD including those with cognitive impairments. Real time communication tools that could rapidly be deployed at the time of need would greatly enhance interactions where communication is difficult.

FirstNet could also be used to provide real-time building level data about the location and equipment needs of PWD to reduce overall response times.

Finally, FirstNet might be used to provide hyper-local accessible emergency alerts and two-way communications so that first responders can be directly connected to those being served.

Georgia Tech is playing a large role in defining the user experience and we are making sure that the needs of PWD are adequately considered in the launch of this new technology.

More information on FirstNet can be found at: www.firstnet.gov.

FCC Seeking Input from Those Affected from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate

Are you a person with a disability who experienced the particularly devastating 2017 hurricane season? As wireless emergency alerting during disasters is one of the research areas of the Wireless RERC, we'd like to inform our readers that the FCC would like to hear from you about the effectiveness of emergency communications technologies, procedures, and policies that were employed in response to the hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, Nate. The information will identify trends in communications access issues and where improvements to the systems can be made.

The Hurricane Response Public Notice [17-344] asks a series of questions regarding communications infrastructure, any issues encountered with the FCC's response and support, the communications service providers experience, and the user experience. Questions asked regarding Communications Service User Experience include the following:

- How widespread and effective was the use of Emergency Alert Systems (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)?
- Could 911 services be reached through voice and texts?
- Were communications made available to people with communication related disabilities?
- Were consumer complaints responded to quickly and appropriately?
- How did Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) function during the storms?
- Could first responders use their mobile networks and personal devices during the storms?
- National Security/Emergency Preparedness (NSEP)? How did the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) and Wireless Priority Services (WPS) effect the performance?
- Was there any involvement in the disaster response process with amateur radio operators?

If any of the mentioned communication channels were not functioning to your complete satisfaction, the FCC would like to know if you have ideas or specific strategies on how these areas can be improved.

The reply comment period is open until February 21, 2018.

To submit comments go to https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings. In the "Proceedings" box of the form enter the docket number, "17-344." Your prepared response can be uploaded via this form. Any member of the public is welcomed to provide input, from individual citizens to industry giants.

Additional Information:
Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Seeks Comment on Response Efforts Undertaken During 2017 Hurricane Season
[https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-17-1180A1.pdf]

Save the date!

Upcoming conferences, presentations and webinars include:

Learning Disability Association (LDA) 55th Annual International Conference
Wireless RERC staff from Georgia Tech's AMAC will be presenting at this year's Learning Disabilitiy Association (LDA) annual conference from Februaury 21-24 in Atlanta, GA. Please come for a time of learning and discovering how we can advocate and work together to create new opportunities for children and adults with learning disabilities.
Additional Information:
 2018 LDA's 55th Annual Conference
[https://ldaamerica.org/events/annual-conference/]

2018 CSUN Assistive Technology Conference
Wireless RERC researcher, Salimah LaForce, will present "Getting on the Record with the FCC: Public Input Process How To's" at the 33rd CSUN Assistive Technology Conference (CSUN). Her session is on Thursday, March 22, 2018 at 3:20 PM. CSUN will convene March 19 to March 23, 2018, in San Diego, California. CSUN is the largest international conference addressing topics regarding people with disabilities and assistive and accessible technologies. Conference topics typically pertain to the domains of education, employment and workplace, entertainment, independent living, law and policy, and transportation.
Additional Information:
Conference Web Page
[http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference]

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