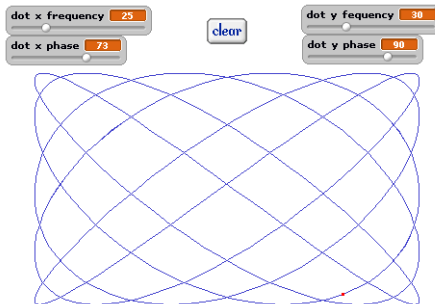


# Tech News

## Happy New Year!

I'm happy to be running Tech Club again after break, and I look forward to seeing all the projects you've created over break.

I did not do many myself—I updated the RPN\_calculator program to use the new Scratch functions (sin, cos, tan, ...), and made Lissajous figures, fireworks, and Color flashlight. The fireworks program is very crude, and would be a good program for Tech Club kids to use remix to make better fireworks.



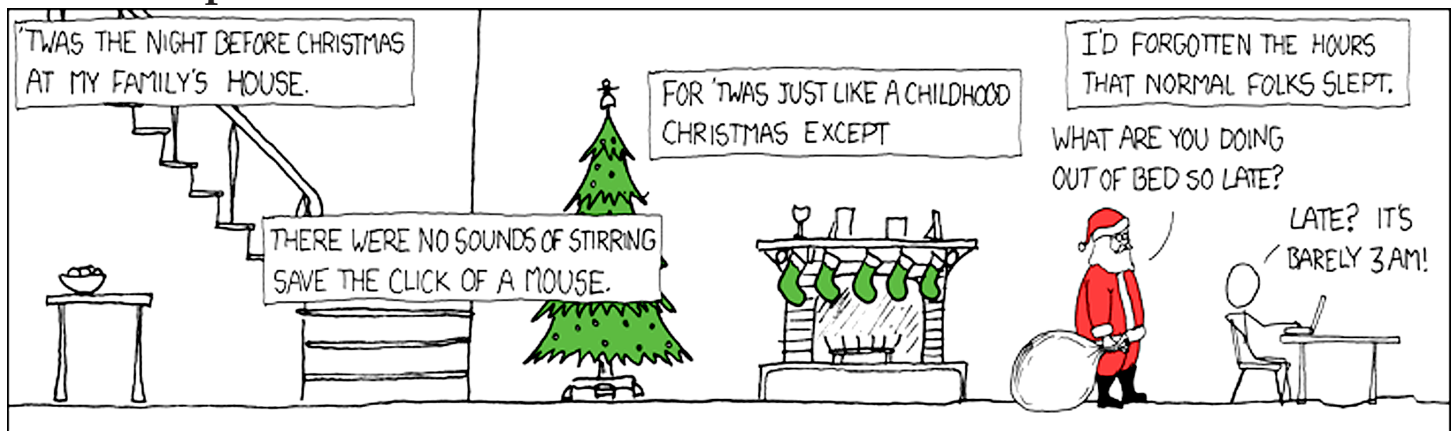
*Lissajous figure, made from two sine waves of different frequency and phase.*



I bought a scratchboard for Abe and me, which allows some input from the real world. It has a light sensor, a sound sensor, a slider, and 4 pairs of wires that can be used for sensing electrical resistance. We haven't done much with it yet, but we hope to be able to do some fun stuff with it later.

More info at <http://scratch.mit.edu/scratchboard>

**XKCD** <http://www.xkcd.com/361/>



## Calendar

There are a lot of interesting engineering dates in January:

Jan 1, 1939: William Hewitt and David Packard started their company, whose first product was an oscillator. Their company later became famous for scientific instruments, calculators, and computers.

Jan 6, 1838: First successful public demonstration of the telegraph system.

Jan 11, 1895: birthdate for Laurens Hammond, inventor of the electrical musical keyboard.

Jan 17, 1706: birthdate of Benjamin Franklin

Jan 26, 1875: George F. Green patented the electrical dental drill.

These dates were taken from a calendar in *The Institute*, a publication of IEEE.

On a more local note, the Spring Hill Science Fair is just over 2 weeks away (29 Jan 2008), and the County Science Fair is 8 March 2008. I hope everyone has started their science fair projects! If any one needs some advice, feel free to ask me.

Even further in the future, Family Science Night is 24 April 2008.

## Things to Read

There are always lots of techie things around to read, but choosing a few good ones is always hard. We have found it worth our time to buy the Tuesday issues of the *NY Times* for the *Science Times* section. There are a lot of short articles about interesting things happening in science, well worth the cost of the paper.