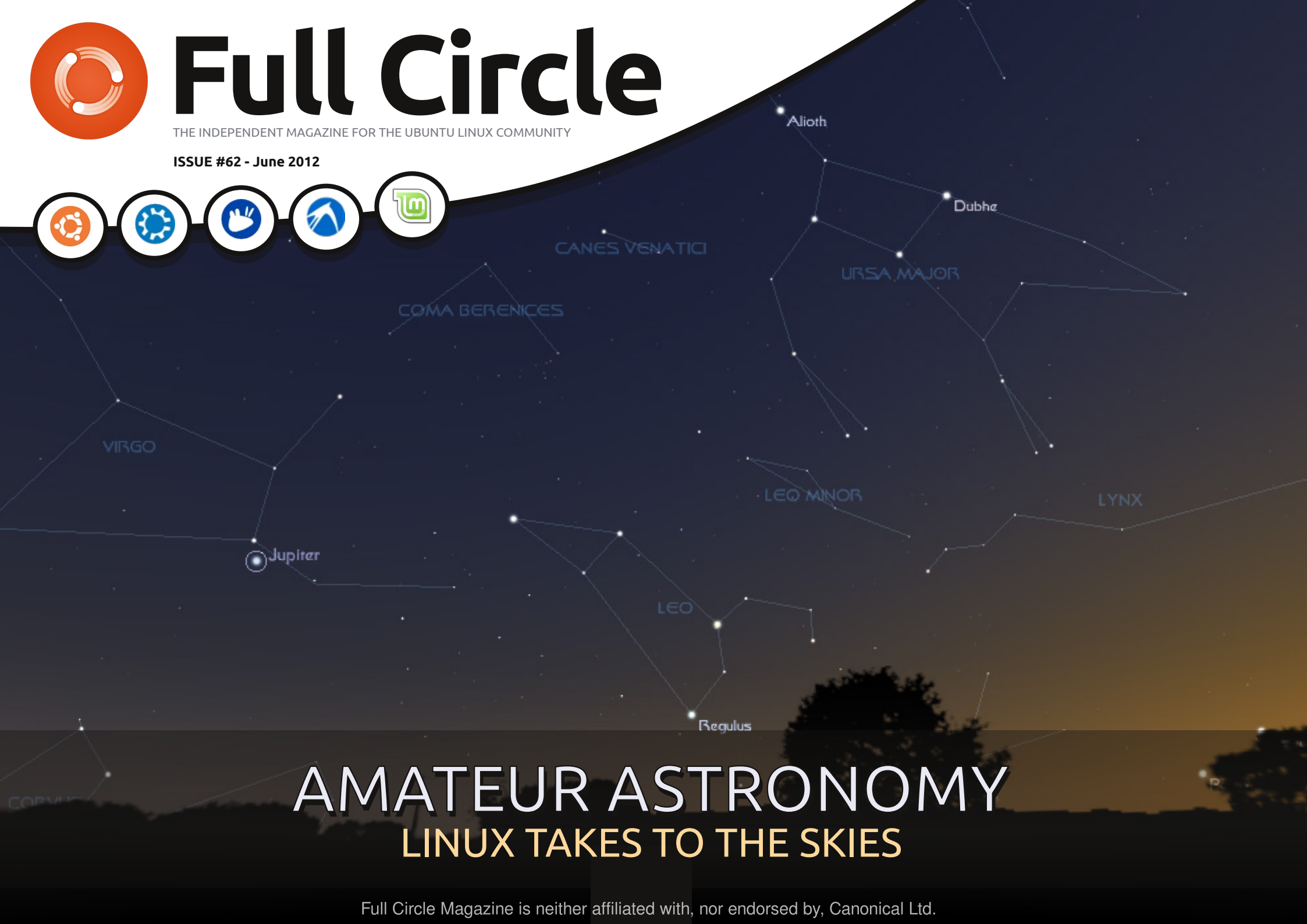
Full Circle

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR THE UBUNTU LINUX COMMUNITY

ISSUE #62 - June 2012



AMATEUR ASTRONOMY

LINUX TAKES TO THE SKIES

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Full Circle

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR THE UBUNTU LINUX COMMUNITY

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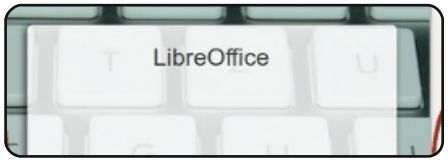

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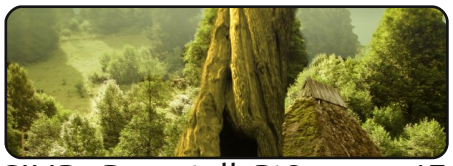

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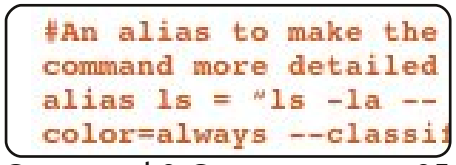

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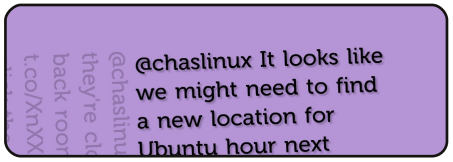

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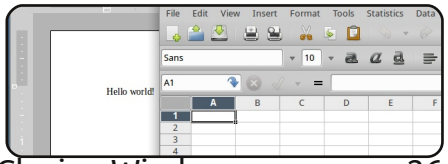

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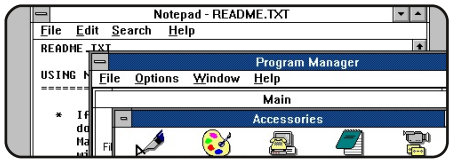

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to another issue of Full Circle!

We're back with more of the same *buntu goodness. This month, we have the usual Python and LibreOffice tutorials, with the addition of a two-part article I've written on my latest endeavour, astronomy. Like any good Linux user, I wanted to avoid Windows software where possible and, thankfully, it's been easily possible. So, the first part of my How-To is a list of Linux astronomy applications.

Mark's Inkscape series continues with keyboard shortcuts for the basics, and my GIMP Beanstalk tutorial ends, but we have more GIMP tutorials coming. Don't worry!

If you need some music in the background while you work on this month's tutorials, then you should read Nicola's Audio Flux article which recommends some free Creative Commons tracks.

Even if you haven't been following the Closing Windows articles, you might find this month's article useful, since it discusses the various Linux equivalents to common Windows applications. We (my co-authors and I) tried to keep the article non-personal by listing the apps that come with that particular desktop rather than listing our personal favorites.

If you're a fan of Twitter, then you might want to look at Charles's Linux Labs article as it deals with turning a spare machine into a Twitter display that'd be useful for a kiosk or something similar.

As ever, feel free to send in your articles and letters!

All the best, and keep in touch!
Ronnie
ronnie@fullcirclemagazine.org

This magazine was created using :

Full Circle Podcast

Released monthly, each episode covers all the latest Ubuntu news, opinions, reviews, interviews and listener feedback. The Side-Pod is a new addition, it's an extra (irregular) short-form podcast which is intended to be a branch of the main podcast. It's somewhere to put all the general technology and non-Ubuntu stuff that doesn't fit in the main podcast.

Hosts:
- Les Pounder
- Tony Hughes
- Jon Chamberlain
- Oliver Clark

http://fullcirclemagazine.org

LINUX NEWS

Canonical To Use Efilinux For UEFI Secure Boot

Canonical will drop Grub 2 in favour of Intel's efilinux as its bootloader in order to comply with Microsoft's UEFI Secure Boot.

Following Red Hat announcing its plans to ensure that Fedora will not fall afoul of Microsoft's UEFI Secure Boot mechanism, Canonical has detailed how it plans on working with Microsoft's 'security feature' [by] modify Intel's efilinux bootloader to add a menu interface.

For machines that come preloaded with Ubuntu, Canonical will store the Ubuntu key in firmware. The company will require machines that have "Ubuntu certified" labels to have the Ubuntu key stored in the UEFI signature database.

Source: TheInquirer.net

Nvidia Stuffs Up Huge Chinese Order

While Nvidia probably does not care too much about the one fingered protest from Torvalds, it might be more miffed that it has lost a huge order from the Chinese government for the same reason. The Chinese wanted to order ten million GPUs that would work with its Longsoon processors and home-built, Linux-based OS.

Longsoon chips are MIPS-based, and Nvidia's Linux driver doesn't support that architecture. For 10 million GPUs, Nvidia should have shared the driver source code to get the MIPS capable, but it seems that the company did not want to do that either claiming that it would cost it millions to do that. As a result the order was given to the more open source friendly AMD. Being stubborn cost Nvidia about $500 million.

Source: techeye.net

New Asus PC Comes with Ubuntu

The new EeePC 1225C, [is] an 11.6-inch notebook device that features the all new Intel Atom Cedar Trail dual-core CPU and Canonical's popular Ubuntu Linux operating system.

It's becoming increasingly common to see PCs preloaded with Ubuntu, and it wasn't long ago that I [PC Advisor] wrote about a few new examples from Linux-focused vendor System76.

Asus, it should be noted, already has a Linux-friendly history, too; this time last year I was writing about a MeeGo-based offering in its lineup, for example.

Now, this latest entry from Asus adds another compelling choice to the mix.

Source: pcadvisor.co.uk

EPUB

Finally, we have mobile editions of ***Full Circle*** on the downloads page. At the moment, there are only a couple of issues online, but we're hoping to have back issues online shortly. If you've any problems with the epub file/formatting, you can drop an email to Jens at: mobile@fullcirclemagazine.org

Big thanks to Jens, and the beta testers, for making them a reality.

Google Currents

Google Currents has been released worldwide, so install it on your Android/Apple devices, search for 'full circle' (in the app) and add issues 55-60 to your app. Or, you can click the links on the FCM download page for those issues.

COMMAND & CONQUER

Written by Lucas Westermann

Unison

Before I begin with the actual article, I thought it might be useful to address a question I got via email. A reader was asking where best to place my wallpapers.sh script, and, in doing so, reminded me that I haven't ever explained how best to go about this. My approach is to store all my scripts in a single folder (either a folder called “scripts,” or, if I want to save some visual space in my home folder, I'll call it .bin or .scripts so the folder is hidden). Make sure any script you place here is executable (chmod +x), and that they specify in the first line which interpreter is required (#!/bin/bash, #!/usr/env python, etc.) - otherwise calling it will not work. Once that is done, you could create a symbolic link to the script in /usr/bin with

```
sudo ln -s /path/to/script /usr/bin/script
```

However, this can be complicated if you start removing scripts (it will leave broken links in your /usr/bin directory). Another method is to add the folder into your $PATH variable. This can be done with

```
export PATH=$PATH:<folder>
```

(replace folder with the actual path to the folder you created). To make it permanent, you can either place it in your .bashrc, your .xinitrc (if you start your interface with startx), or in any other script that gets called when you log in. I've had some hit-and-miss experiences with this, but generally /etc/environment works well. Since, however, the PATH is created in /etc/profile, you can also simply add the path to the scripts folder at the end of this path. I recommend avoiding any files in /etc/, and instead organize all your scripts within $HOME. This is due to the problems that can arise when creating system-wide settings using files that not all users can access. The problem is that anything in $HOME is restricted access wise to your user account. And now, on to the actual article.

The rest of my family has recently moved over to MacBooks for mobile workstations, and, for most of them, keeping files organized is fairly easy. For one of them, the MacBook is the only computer, and, for the other, it's a work machine where only company-related files need to be synchronized. However, for the latter person, whose PC runs both Arch Linux and Windows, it's a little more complicated. At first, I thought I'd use rsync in a custom script to synchronize the folders one after the other, but, since changes may be made on either machine, I needed a robust method to synchronize them (including deleted files). Rsync may be able to do this, but I have yet to get it working at 100%. As such, I began looking at unison again, which has resulted in me adopting it for my backup needs as well. Below, I describe my method for configuring Unison (which is available from the universe repository).

From the Unison manual “Unison is a file-synchronization tool for Unix and Windows. It allows two replicas of a collection of files and directories to be stored on different hosts (or different disks on the same host), modified separately, and then brought up to date by propagating the changes in each replica to the other.”

To synchronize across multiple machines, the first thing you need to do is configure SSH on one of the machines (I did this on my mother’s PC, to minimize any possible security holes which would arise from a laptop with SSH enabled in public networks). It is also extremely important that you enable key-based logins on SSH. This is fairly easy with the following two commands:

```
ssh-keygen -b 521 -t ecdsa -C"$(id -un)@$(hostname)-$(date –rfc-3339=date)"
```

This creates the key. Follow the on-screen instructions. Keep in mind that entering a passphrase requires you to type this in when you use it – which defeats the point of a key-based login.

```
scp ~/.ssh/id_ecdsa.pub
username@remote-
server.org:~/.ssh/authorized_
keys
```

This will copy the file into the authorized keys of the server, meaning that if you try ssh <IP>, without a username, it will automatically log you in using the key, without prompting for a password. Note: If your version of ssh doesn't support ecdsa, rsa keys are fine too.

Now then, on to Unison. The easiest way to manage multiple synchronization folders is to create multiple profiles (.prf files). Since the options are all the same, I will cover only a single example. My Music sync profile looks like this:

```
# Unison preferences
label = Music sync
root = /home/lswest/Music
root =
ssh://user@IP//home/lswest/Mu
sic/Hyperion/
fastcheck = true
dontchmod = true
ignore = Name *.ini
ignore = Name *.jpg
ignore = Name *.jpeg
sshargs = -C
```

From top to bottom, the settings do the following:

label – assigns the name of the profile, for the GUI's list of profiles.

root – These are the sender/receiver (in that order). It shouldn't be possible to use more than 2 roots, though I haven't tested this.

fastcheck – I find that this reduces the search time immensely. It is supposed to be the default for Unix systems, but it doesn't hurt to be certain. The way this works is that it reads a file's modification times during the first pass, so it can ignore any files that weren't changed (meaning the modification times are the same as what was stored in the database). On the second pass. it generates a fingerprint. and compares it to the last contents to be synchronized.

dontchmod – Unison tries to keep permissions the same, which is fine for syncs with Linux/Unix systems on either end, but for anything stored on NTFS (or with a Windows server), you will need to turn this off, to prevent dozens of permission warnings. Leaving this option isn't bad, as the permission settings simply fail, but it does slow down the transfers.

ignore – This option tells Unison what files to ignore. In my case, I ignore all the .ini files that Windows is so fond of creating (since my media is on an NTFS hard drive shared between Windows and Arch on my PC), and any of the cover art, since I use a different method in Linux.

sshargs – passes arguments to the ssh session. The option "-C" tells SSH to compress any of the information being sent, theoretically reducing transfer time per file (I haven't tested to see if this slows the entire process down, since the files need to be compressed, but for my rather large Music folder, it doesn't take too long to synchronize the changes these days).

Keep in mind that the first run-through will take a while, since Unison has to assume every file is new.

The first few times you run Unison, I highly recommend manually checking the sync settings for each file that pops up (options are: right to left, left to right, skip), to make sure you're not losing/gaining any files you don't want. Once you're satisfied with how Unison is handling it, you can configure it to automatically accept non-conflicting changes. Do this by adding "auto = true" to the .prf file. You can also have Unison accept the non-conflicting changes, while skipping any conflicts with "batch = true". Whether or not you can make this a completely automatic process, I'm not sure. However, you can minimize the input that is required using the above steps. To find out more about Unison, check the Further Reading section for a link to the user manual. If you want to simply mirror a folder in one direction (i.e. copy it from one machine to the next, without synchronizing), then I would still highly recommend rsync instead, due to the fact that it doesn't require any input when run properly. It's also extremely well documented in the manpage, making it quite easy to use. As a final note, I want to point out that both Unison and Rsync work for local folders too, meaning you can use it to create backups on a USB drive as well. If you decide to run these commands automatically on a schedule, I would recommend creating a script to first check if the USB drive is connected, or to check that you have the correct

Unison

remote IP address (or can ping the router's IP). This is to avoid using resources to run a command that will simply fail. It also avoids opening SSH connections with computers that have the same IP but aren't your intended target, which could lead to problems down the line.

I hope at least some of you have found this interesting or helpful. I'm going to continue expanding my preferences files as I get more comfortable with Unison, and will mention any further tips I discover as time goes on. As always, if you have any questions, suggestions, or comments, you can reach me via email at lswest34@gmail.com. If you do decide to email me, please put "C&C"or "FCM" in the subject line, so that I don't overlook it.

Further Reading:

Unison Manual:
http://www.cis.upenn.edu/~bcpierce/unison/download/releases/stable/unison-manual.html#usingit

Ubuntu Wiki page on SSH keys:
https://help.ubuntu.com/community/SSH/OpenSSH/Keys

Lucas has learned all he knows from repeatedly breaking his system, then having no other option but to discover how to fix it. You can email Lucas at: lswest34@gmail.com.

CODEWORD

Every number in the codewords grid is 'code' for a letter of the alphabet. At the end you should have a different letter in each numbered box, and a word in English in each of the horizontal and vertical runs on the codeword grid.

7	5	22	21	1	26	5	16		2	10	24	17
	26		10		5		2		15		22	
3	17	16	18	1	26		25	20	9	2	20	26
	17		2		18	10	15		26		26	
6	2	21	17		21		17	21	15	22	9	26
	20				2				5			
2	17	21	5	26	15		19	2	16	26	25	15
			26				10				20	
12	26	25	4	8	10		23		21	11	22	4
	8		22		21	10	25		11		21	
4	26	15	7	22	5		26	5	22	13	22	15
	15		5		10		15		17		26	
14	16	5	26		17	21	2	25	21	26	17	21
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Solutions are on the second last page.

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Beginning Python - Part 34

This time, we'll finish up using SL4A. We'll make a larger program and then send it to the virtual machine via ADB.

Let's deal with our code first. In this, we'll simply be trying out some of the "widgets" that are available to us when using SL4A. Start on your desktop using your favorite editor.

Enter the code shown top right and save it (but don't try to run it) as "atest.py".

```
import android

droid = android.Android()
uname = droid.dialogGetInput("Hello","What's your name?")
droid.makeToast("Hello %s from python on Android!" % uname.result)
```

```
droid.dialogCreateAlert(uname.result,"Would you like to play a game?")
droid.dialogSetPositiveButtonText('Yes')
droid.dialogSetNegativeButtonText('No')
droid.dialogShow()
while True: #wait for events for up to 10 seconds...
      response = droid.eventWait(10000).result
      if response == None:
      break
      if response["name"] == "dialog":
      break
droid.dialogDismiss()
```

The first line imports the android library. We create an instance of it in the second line. Line 3 creates and displays a dialog box with the title "Hello", the prompt of "What's your name?", a text box for the user to enter their name, and two buttons, "OK" and "Cancel". Once the user presses "OK", the response is returned in the variable uname. The last line (so far) then says "Hello {username} from python on Android!". This isn't new, we did this before. Now we'll add more code (above).

Save your code as atest1.py. We'll be sending this to our virtual machine after we discuss what it does.

Take a look at the first four lines we just entered. We create an alert type dialog asking "Would you like to play a game?". In the case of an alert type dialog, there's no text box to enter anything. The next two lines say to create two buttons, one with the text "Yes", which is a "positive" button, and one with the text "No", a "negative" button. The positive and negative buttons refer to the response returned - either "positive" or "negative". The next line then shows the dialog. The next seven lines wait for a response from the user.

We create a simple loop (while True:) then wait for a response for up to 10 seconds by using the droid.eventWait(value) call. The response (either "positive" or "negative") will be returned in - you guessed it - the response variable. If response has the name of "dialog", then we will break out of the loop and return the response. If nothing happens before the timeout occurs, we simply break out of the loop. The actual information returned in the response variable is something like this (assuming the "positive" or "Yes" button is pressed)...

```
{u'data': {u'which':
u'positive'}, u'name':
u'dialog', u'time':
1339021661398000.0}
```

You can see that the value is passed in the 'data' dictionary, the dialog key is in the 'name' dictionary, and there is a 'time' value that we don't care about here.

Finally we dismiss the dialog box.

Before we can send our code to the virtual machine, we have to start the virtual machine. Start your Android emulator. Once it starts up, notice that the title bar has four digits at the start of the title. This is the port that the machine is listening on. In my case (and probably yours) it's 5554.

Now, let's push it to our virtual machine. Open a terminal window and change to the folder you saved the code in. Assuming you have set your path to include the SDK, type

```
adb devices
```

This asks adb to show any devices that are connected. This can include not only the Android emulator but also any smartphones, tablets, or other Android devices. You should see something like this...

```
List of devices attached
emulator-5554    device
```

Now that we are sure that our device is attached, we want to push the application to the device. The syntax is...

```
adb push source_filename
destination_path_and_filename
```

So, in my case it would be...

```
adb push atest1.py
/sdcard/sl4a/scripts/atest1.p
y
```

If everything works correctly, you'll get a rather disappointing message similar to this...

```
11 KB/s (570 bytes in 0.046s)
```

Now, on the Android emulator, start SL4A. You should see all of the python scripts, and, in there you should see atest1.py. Tap (click) on 'atest1.py', and you'll see a popup dialog with 6 icons. From left to right, they are "Run in a dialog window", "Run outside of a window", "Edit", "Save", "Delete", and "Open in an external editor". Right now, tap (click) on the far left icon "Run in a dialog window" so you can see what happens.

You'll see the first dialog asking for your name. Enter something in the box and tap (click) the 'Ok' button. You'll see the hello message. Next, you'll see the alert dialog. Tap (click) on either button to dismiss the dialog. We aren't looking at the responses yet so it doesn't matter which one you choose. Now we'll add some more code (top right).

I'm sure you can figure out that

```
if response==None:
      print "Timed out."
else:
      rdialog=response["data"]
```

this set of code simply checks the response, and, if it's 'None' due to a timeout, we simply print "Timed out." And, if it's actually something we want, then we assign the data to the variable rdialog. Now add the next bit of code (below)...

This part of the code will look at the data passed back by the button-press event. We check to see if the response has a "which" key, and, if so, it's a legitimate button press for us. We then check to see if the result is a "positive" ('Ok' button) response. If so, we'll create another alert dialog, but this time, we will add a list of items for the user to choose from. In this case, we offer the user to select

```
      if rdialog.has_key("which"):
      result=rdialog["which"]
      if result=="positive":
            droid.dialogCreateAlert("Play a Game","Select a game to play")
            droid.dialogSetItems(['Checkers','Chess','Hangman','Thermal
Nuclear War']) # 0,1,2,3
            droid.dialogShow()
            resp = droid.dialogGetResponse()
```

from a list including Checkers, Chess, Hangman, and Thermal Nuclear War, and we assign the values 0 to 3 to each item. (Is this starting to seem familiar? Yes, it's from a movie.) We then display the dialog and wait for a response. The part of the response we are interested in is in the form of a dictionary. Assuming the user tapped (clicked) on Chess, the resulting response comes back like this...

```
Result(id=12,
result={u'item':1},
error=None)
```

In this case, we are really interested in the result portion of

the returned data. The selection is #1 and is held in the 'item' key. Here's the next part of the code (above right)...

```
if resp.result.has_key("item"):
    sel = resp.result['item']
    if sel == 0:
        droid.makeToast("Enjoy your checkers game")
    elif sel == 1:
        droid.makeToast("I like Chess")
    elif sel == 2:
        droid.makeToast("Want to 'hang around' for a while?")
    else:
        droid.makeToast("The only way to win is not to play...")
```

Here we check to see if the response has the key "item", and, if so, assign it to the variable "sel". Now we use an if/elif/else loop to check the values and deal with whichever is selected. We use the droid.makeToast function to display our response. Of course, you could add your own code here. Now for the last of the code (bottom right)...

```
        elif result=="negative":
            droid.makeToast("Sorry.  See you later.")
    elif rdialog.has_key("canceled"):
        print "Sorry you can't make up your mind."
    else:
        print "unknown response=",response
print "Done"
```

As you can see, we simply respond to the other types of button-presses here.

Save, push, and run the program.

As you can see, SL4A gives you the ability to make "GUIfied" applications, but not full gui apps. This however, should not keep you from going forward and starting to write your own programs for Android. Don't expect to put these up on the "market". Most people really want full GUI type apps. We'll look at that next time. For more information on using SL4A, simply do a web search and you'll find lots of tutorials and more information.

By the way, you can push directly to your smartphone or tablet in the same way.

As usual, the code has been put up on pastebin at http://pastebin.com/REkFYcSU

See you next time.

Greg is the owner of RainyDay Solutions, LLC, a consulting company in Aurora, Colorado, and has been programming since 1972. He enjoys cooking, hiking, music, and spending time with his family. His website is www.thedesignatedgeek.net.

LibreOffice Pt15: Impress

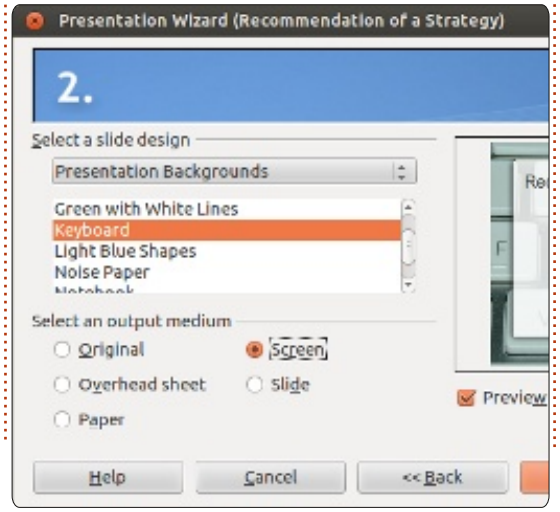
Impress is LibreOffice's presentation program and is equivalent to Microsoft Office's Powerpoint. With Impress, you can create professional visual presentations that include graphics, pictures, videos, audio, spreadsheets, and charts. Impress has a presentation wizard that is very useful for setting up a new presentation and getting you started on the right track, and a main window that helps break the process down into tasks.

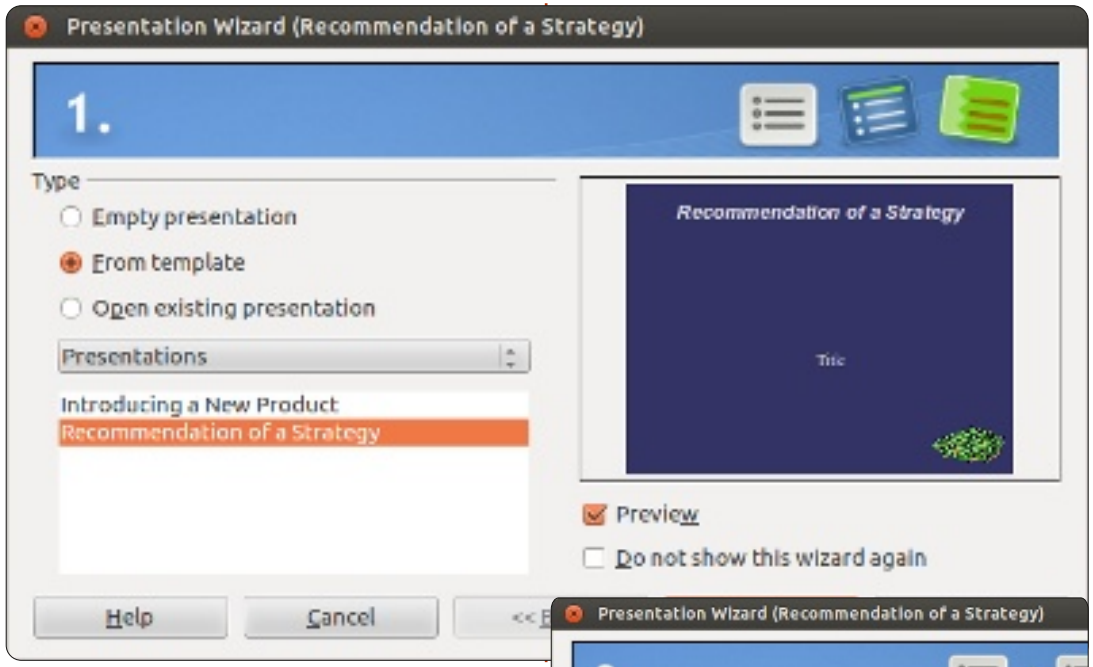
The Presentation Wizard

You can create a new blank presentation by going to File > New > Presentation. However, to start the presentation wizard, click on File > Wizards > Presentation. If you want to start with the wizard every time you create a new presentation, you can turn it on in the settings. While in Impress, click on Tools > Options > LibreOffice Impress > General, and check "Start with wizard" under New document.

The first screen of the wizard (right) lets you pick from an empty presentation, a template, or open an existing presentation. If you select "From template", there are two default templates in Impress. Both come with predefined slides. I recommend you have Preview checked as it allows you to see a visual of your presentation as you create it in the wizard.

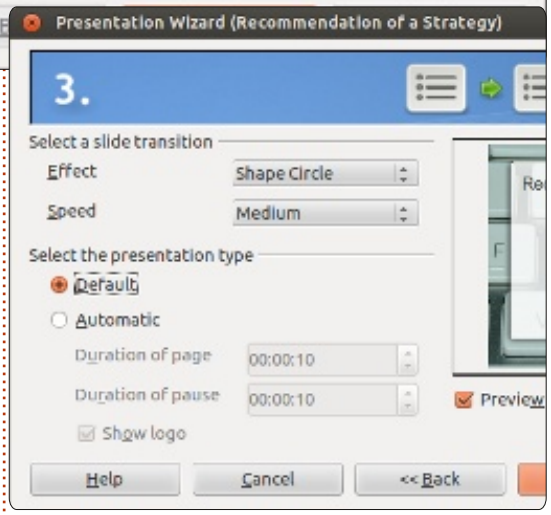
TIP: At any point in the wizard, you can click the Create button to create a new presentation. This allows you to use only the parts of the wizard you need.



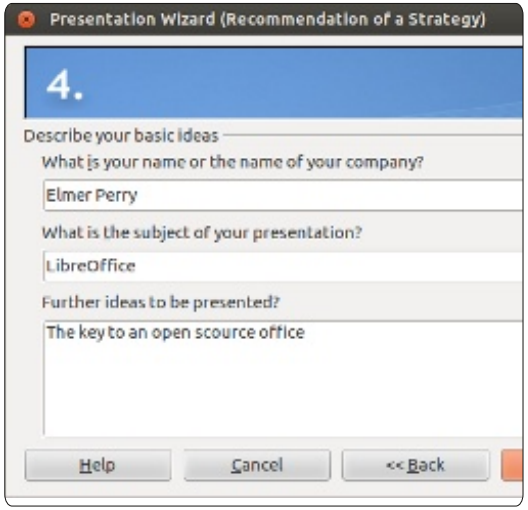


Click Next >> to move to the second screen of the wizard. On this screen you can pick from many different backgrounds for your presentation. You can change the background for individual slides later, but this will become the basic background for your presentation. You will also want to select the output medium for the presentation - normally screen - but other options are available should you need them.

Click Next >> to move to the third wizard screen. You can pick a slide transition for changing from one slide to the next. There are many different transitions to choose from. When you select a



transition, you get a preview on the effect in the preview window. You can also adjust the speed of the transition. You can change the transition for individual slides later, but the transition, along with the background, is one of the things that create consistency in your presentation. On this screen you can also pick the presentation type. “Default” advances the elements and slides through mouse clicks or the keyboard. “Automatic” allows you to set each slide to advance after a certain amount of time. The choice will depend on the presentation and is beyond the scope of this article.



Click Next >> to move to the fourth wizard screen. Here you can give a topic, company name (or your name if your presentation is not for a company), and the ideas behind your presentation. The information you use here will plug into your opening slide.

Click Next >> to move to the fifth wizard screen. If you selected a template on the first screen of the wizard, you can use this screen to preview each of the slides after your changes. You can select whether a slide will be included in the presentation or not. Check “Create summary” to create a summary of your slide.

SIDEBAR: You can always use the << Back button to move back and change elements of your presentation.

Click on the Create button, and Impress will create the slides for your new presentation.

The Main Window

The main window for Impress (above) is divided into three sections, the Slide pane, the Workspace pane, and the Tasks pane. You can hide the Slide and Tasks panes by clicking the X in the upper corner of each pane. To show the panes again use View > Slide Pane or View > Tasks Pane. Alternatively, you can use the Hide/Show markers (circled in red in the image) to hide and show the panes.

The Slide Pane

The Slide pane shows thumbnails of all the slides in your presentation in the order in which they will appear in the presentation. In the Slide pane, you can add, delete, copy, paste, move, duplicate, rename, or hide slides. Clicking on a slide in the Slide pane places it in the Workspace pane where you can change and modify it.

The Workspace Pane

The Workspace pane is the main work area for editing slides. You have five tabs in the Workspace pane.

Normal View

Normal View is where you make changes to individual slides. Here you can add images, modify and add text, animation effects, and more.

Outline View

The outline view displays an outline of all the text in the default text boxes on each slide. Each slide is numbered. You can use the outline view to proof and change the text on your slides, as well as add text to the slides. The slide names are not included in the outline.

Notes View

You can use the Notes View to add notes to individual slides. You can change the size of the note box under the slide by clicking on the border and dragging the handles. The notes will not show in the presentation, but you can print them and use them during your presentation or as handouts.

Handout View

In Handout View, you can setup how your handout of the presentation will print. If you select Layout in the Tasks pane, you can set the number of slides that show on each page of the handout (up to 9 slides per page). You can also use this view to determine what information will print on the handouts.

Slide Sorter View

The Slide Sorter view works much like the Slide pane but gives you more space to work. You can add, delete, move, copy, paste, duplicate, rename, and hide slides. You can also work with groups of slides by selecting more than one slide.

The Tasks Pane

The Tasks pane has five sections. You expand a section by clicking on the section name. You can only expand one section at a time.

Master Pages

Here you define the page style for your presentation. Impress contains many predefined master pages you can use. You can modify the look of a master page using styles. A single presentation can contain more than one master page, allowing you to use more than one visual style in the presentation.

Layouts

The prepackaged layouts are shown here. You can select a layout - and use it as it is or modify it. Unfortunately, you cannot save custom layouts to the layout lists.

Table Design

Standard table layouts are shown here. You always have the option of changing the layout, and the table will behave much like a table in Calc.

Custom Animation

With custom animations, you can control when and how elements appear on the slides. You have many different options that help create the visual effects you need as you give your presentation. Don't go overboard here unless you have a good reason. While animations can make your presentation visually pleasing and interesting, they can also make your presentation look unprofessional and overwhelming. On the other hand, if you need to make an emphasis on a certain point, custom animations can help you accomplish such emphasis.

Slide Transition

The Slide Transition section gives you access to changing how one slide replaces the next. You have the choice of many different transitions as well as the speed of the transition. If you use automatic transition, you can also control how long the slide will display.

This has been a quick overview to get you started working in Impress. I encourage you to begin to play with the different views, sections, and layouts to get a feel for how they work and what you can do with them. Next time we will begin work on editing slides, adding text, and adding graphics to our slides.

Elmer Perry's history of working, and programming, computers involves an Apple IIE, adding some Amiga, a generous helping of DOS and Windows, a dash of Unix, and blend well with Linux and Ubuntu.

Amateur Astronomy Pt1

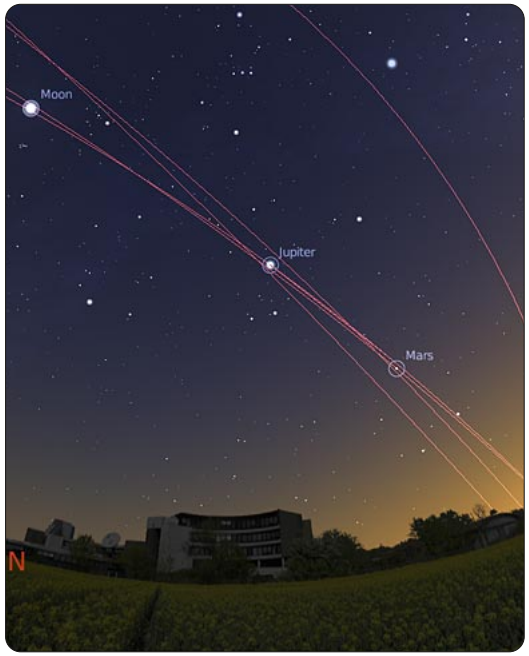
With the once in a lifetime opportunity to see Venus crossing the Sun having passed at the start of this month, I thought it would be quite topical to write about free- and open-source software, and my new hobby, astronomy.

Having recently taken an interest in astronomy, I decided that my software should be free and/or open source where possible. Thankfully, it seems that Linux isn't left short when it comes to astronomy applications.

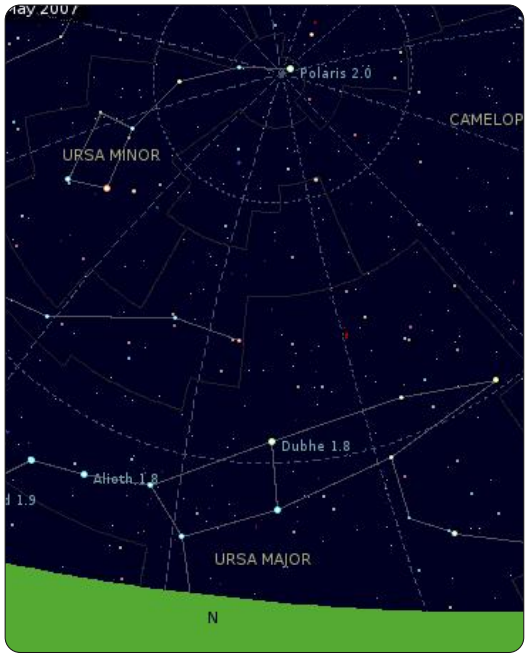
Sky Maps

The one thing that Linux isn't short on is sky-mapping software. The idea behind these pieces of software is to load up a database of known stars, constellations, nebulae, etc, and show you where they are right now. Also, in most of these applications, you can fast-forward and rewind time. I quite often use the fast-forward feature to see where a particular star/planet will be at a particular time of night.

Quite probably the most widely used is ***Stellarium*** (www.stellarium.org).



It's very polished and has a lovely plug-in system - which includes plug-ins to simulate telescope viewing and a plug-in to remote control a motorized scope. Its only downside is that it won't run on older machines/laptops. But, never fear.



Kstars (edu.kde.org/kstars) will run on older hardware and, while not as fancy looking as Stellarium, and being KDE-based (which might upset some purists out there), it's certainly up for the job of showing you stars and controlling your telescope. It also has some nice features not in Stellarium - such as being able to right-click on stars, view images from the Internet, and add notes/log entries. Both Stellarium and Kstars are in most repositories.

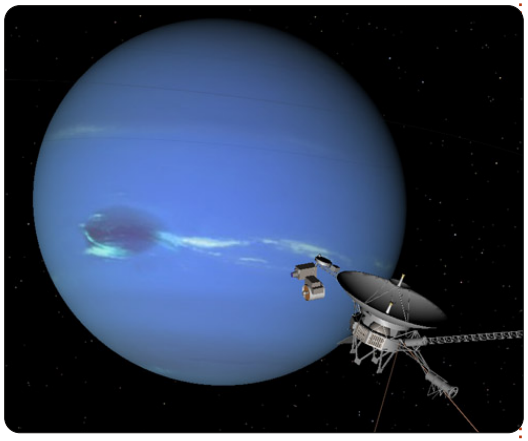
A more technical looking application is ***Aladin*** (ladin.u-strasbg.fr). I've used it only briefly while working through an Open University course, and, while it certainly has some nice layering/technical features, it is certainly used by the professionals since it can load the industry standard FITS files. One thing I have to say, though, is that it is Java based, so you'll need to have Java installed on your system to use it. But, since it's Java, you can actually use the application on their website without downloading it.

Another equally scientific-looking (and tricky to use) app is ***XEphem*** (www.clearskyinstitute.com/xephem). It does need compiling from source, though, but, if you look around the Internet enough, you'll find a pre-compiled RPM that you can convert to DEB by using the 'Alien' terminal command.

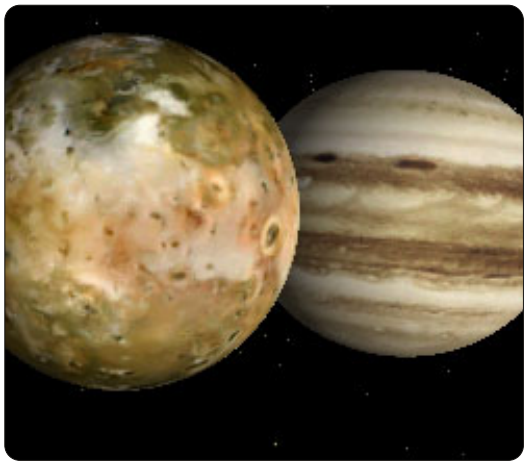
Space Simulator

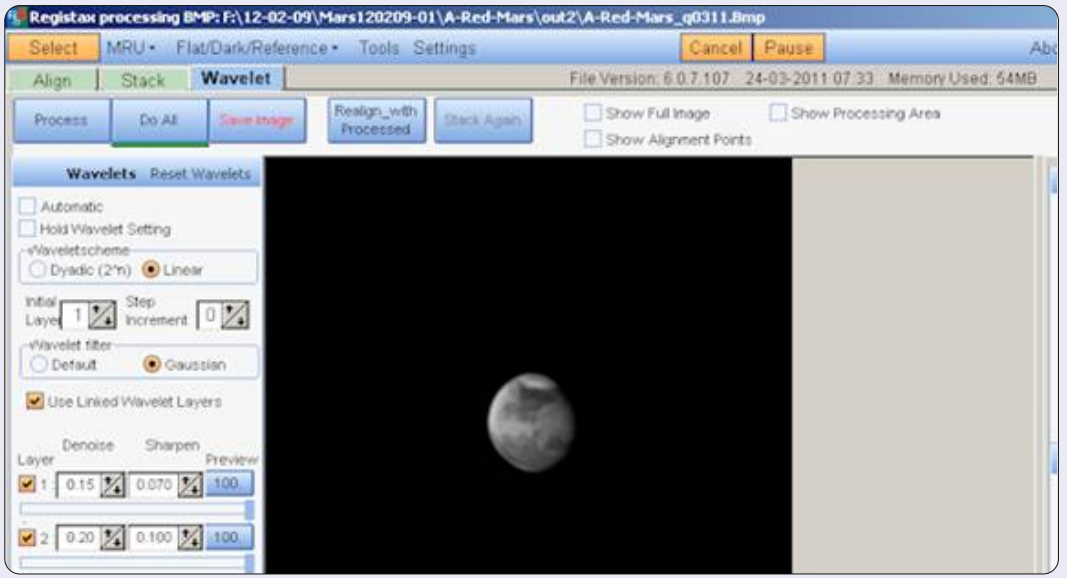
A space simulator differs from a sky map in that you can zoom out

into the milky way and see the planets, their placements, and their orbits. ***Celestia*** (www.shatters.net/celestia) seems to be the one that most people use, and is in most repos.



But, like everything on Linux, there's an alternative, ***OpenUniverse*** (www.openuniverse.org). Which, while looking nice, doesn't seem to have been updated in a while.





RegiStax

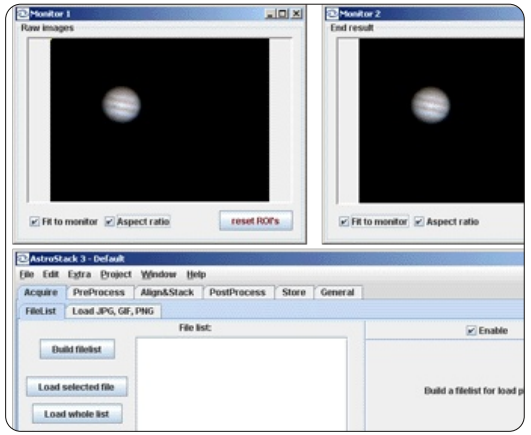
(www.astronomie.be/registax/index.html)

Probably the most widely used application in image stacking, and, while it's hugely complex, it can give some amazing results to what initially looks like hundreds of blurry images, RegiStax 5 (and 6) run quite flawlessly in Wine.

Image Stacking

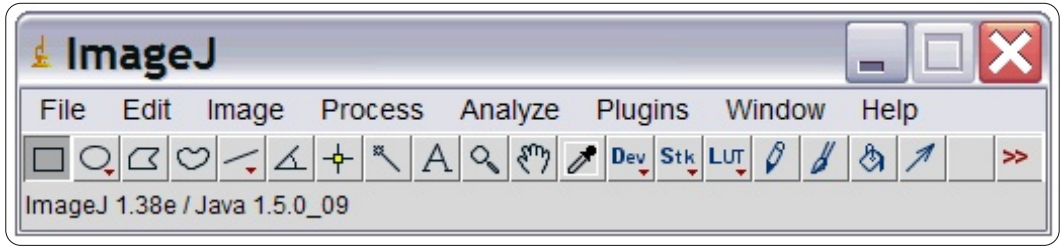
These applications veer into astrophotography. While most people will use a DSLR camera worth several hundred pounds, you can get surprisingly good results using a basic digital camera (even a webcam), hundreds of images, and some nice software. Most folks swear by Registax, which is, unfortunately, Windows only, but I'll come to that later since Linux native apps is what we really want.

While not the most user friendly, ***AstroStack*** (www.astrostack.com) allows you



to 'stack' images (or frames from a video if you buy the full version), which it will combine into one image which should, in theory, have more detail in it. Its downside is that it's a bit slow as it's written in Java.

Another step up the ladder of complexity is ***ImageJ*** (imagej.nih.gov/ij). It's primarily used by scientists and, after looking at it briefly, I can see why. It's certainly powerful (albeit that it too is written in Java), but it's



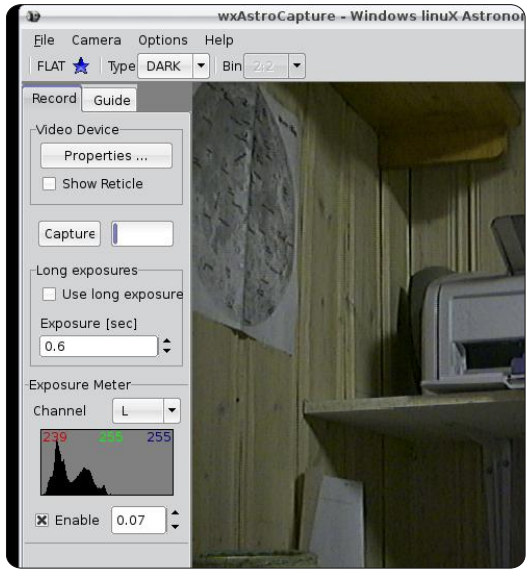
really not all that user friendly.

AviStack (www.avistack.de) is another image/video stacking tool which runs on Linux, but it requires the user to sign up for and install the IDL VM, which, at over 200MB, turned me off right away. Many people swear by it, but they're probably Windows users who don't need the IDL VM (whatever it may be).

wxAstroCapture (arnholm.org/astro/software/wxAstroCapture/) isn't technically an application for stacking images, but for taking images to stack. It recognises and connects to most webcams allowing more advanced features such as long exposures (if supported by your webcam) and image/video capture. While it seems to have an active Yahoo! Group (http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/wxAstroCapture/), the application hasn't been updated since the time of 10.x (and shows screens from Kubuntu 8.x), but it's still a firm favorite.

Scope Control

These are applications which



have been recommended to me. I don't have a motorized telescope, so I can't vouch for their user friendliness, or lack of.

OpenPHD (code.google.com/p/open-phd-guiding)

Device Control Device (pygtkindiclient.sourceforge.net)

EQ Polar Alignment (code.google.com/p/eq-polar-alignment)

If you'd like to write a follow-up piece to this about motorized mounts, feel free!

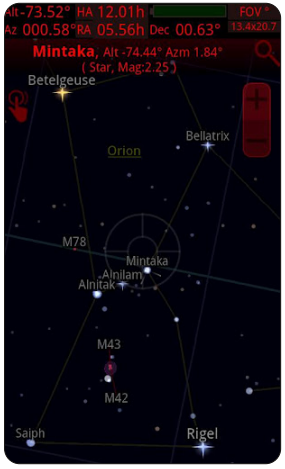
Android

No article on astronomy would be complete without mentioning several of the helpful Android apps that are out there in the wild.

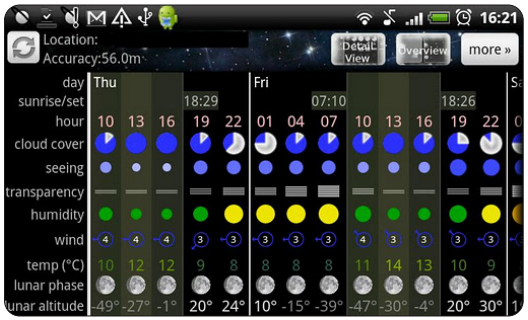
Sky Map (http://goo.gl/ryhaV)

is pretty much a pocket sky map. You can use the GPS and/or internal tilt sensors in your Android device to show which star you're holding your phone up to.

SkEye (http://goo.gl/KY5Xt) is



pretty similar to Sky Map, but lets you scan across the sky without waving your device around your head, and can, according to the creator, be 'strapped to your OTA' to be used as a 'PUSHTO guide'. Not something I've tried.



AstroPanel (http://goo.gl/HXS1a) is last, but not least. It's a small app that (when given your location) will give you a weather forecast for several days ahead with astronomical information such as moon/general visibility and cloud cover.

Next month, I'll discuss a quick way of remote viewing your scope - which can also be used to remotely control your webcam/telescope from a warm and cosy place.

Sources:
Stargazers Lounge Forum
http://stargazerslounge.com

Ronnie is the founder, and editor, of Full Circle, an official Ubuntu member, and part-time artist whose work can be seen at:
http://ronnietucker.co.uk

GIMP - The Beanstalk Pt3

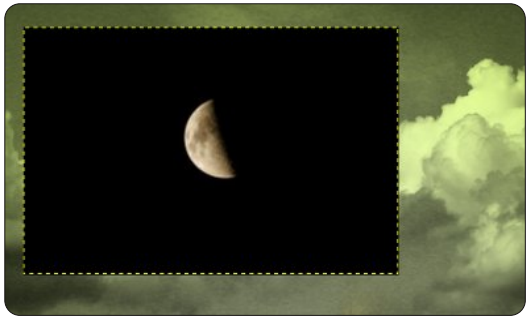
We're almost done with the beanstalk image, but I'd like to add some random bits and bobs to give it some pizzazz.

Sources:
Moon:
http://www.sxc.hu/photo/1126941
Stars:
http://www.sxc.hu/photo/1005288

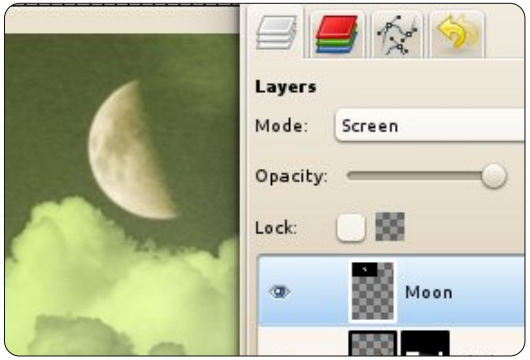
YouTube Video:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZcoOx94ox8

Moonshine

Copy/paste the moon image into the beanstalk scene. I'm keeping the moon layer at about 150 wide and have flipped it horizontally.



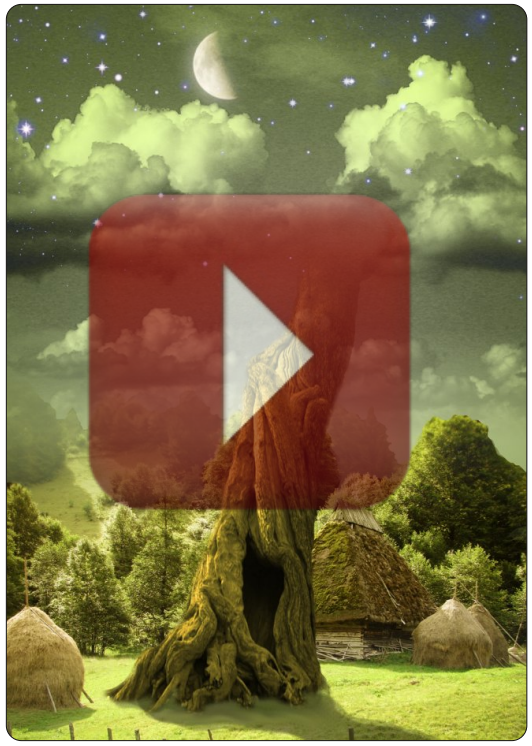
This time, in the dropdown menu above the list of layers, choose 'Screen'; the black in the layer will vanish, and the moon will blend in nicely.



Although, a glow around it wouldn't go amiss. We'll cheat with the glow and use a filter. Click Filters > Artistic > Softglow. Move the sliders until you get something pretty. I used a high brightness and glow radius.

The good thing about doing this in a non-destructive manner is that you can change anything at any time without having to completely redo chunks of the image. I'm going to use an S-curve now on the tree as I think it needs to have brighter highlights on it and that hollow should be nice and dark.

One last thing is that I'm going to add some stars to the sky, so it's time to bring in the image of the stars: place the layer below the moon layer, and make it about 300 pixels wide. This time though, make the layer mode 'Lighten only' from the dropdown menu. The last thing to do is give the stars a layer mask that will fade them out midway down the image.



Next month we'll have a tutorial from Thomas Standiford on making your photo look retro.

Ronnie is the founder, and editor, of Full Circle, an official Ubuntu member, and part-time artist whose work can be seen at:
http://ronnietucker.co.uk

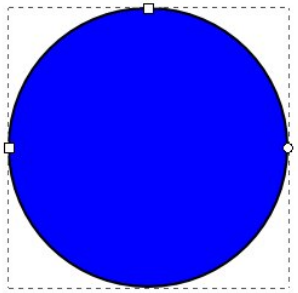
Inkscape - Pt2

Last month, we learned how to draw ellipses using the Circle tool. But you may have noticed that we didn't actually draw any circles, despite the tool's name. You may have got close by adjusting an ellipse by eye, but that's not quite the same as drawing a perfect circle. The secret to drawing a perfect circle is actually the secret to making the best use of Inkscape in general: you need to use the keyboard.

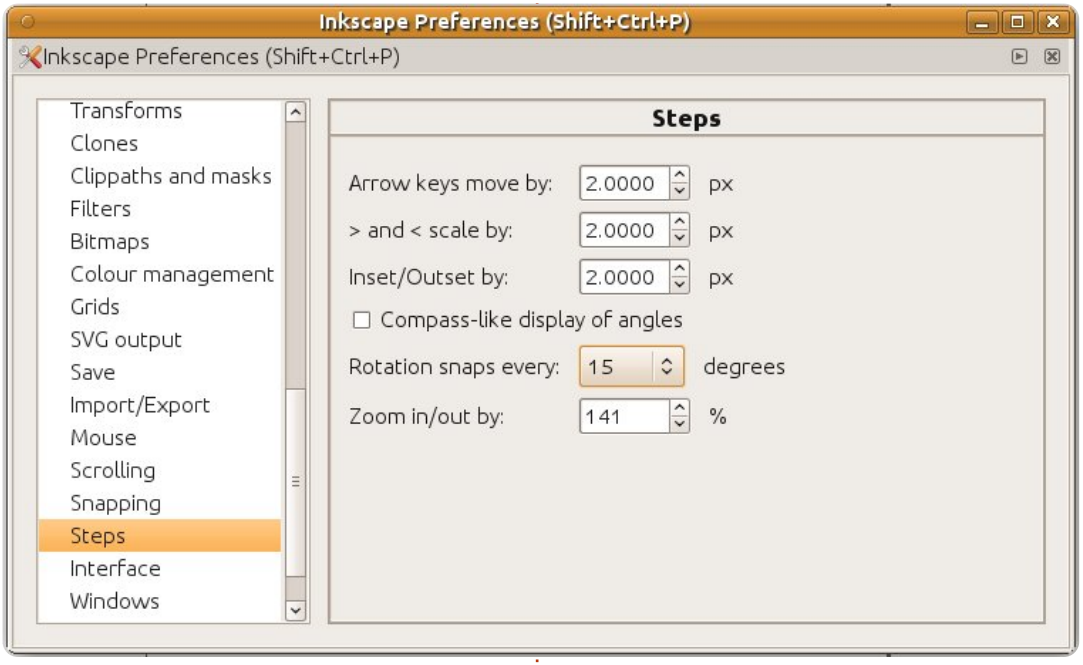
Inkscape has a huge number of keyboard shortcuts and modifiers. Last month, I mentioned using the Plus and Minus keys to zoom in and out, but there are hundreds more listed on the Inkscape Keys and Mouse Reference – the URL is at the end of this article, but you can also get to it directly via the Help menu in Inkscape. Such a large number of shortcuts can be overwhelming, so I'm just going to introduce them a few at a time, starting with the CTRL and SHIFT keys.

These keys serve different purposes depending on what you're doing in Inkscape at the time that you press them, but, very broadly speaking, they usually have the following effects:
CTRL: Lock or snap some aspect of the operation
SHIFT: Affect the center or starting point for an operation

An "operation" in this case refers to drawing, rotating, skewing, or otherwise manipulating an object. Let's look at each of these keyboard modifiers when used with our Circles and Ellipses tool.



Select the Circle tool by clicking its icon, or by pressing the "e" key (for ellipse) or the F5 key. Now hold down CTRL while you drag an ellipse out onto the canvas. You'll find that you can no longer smoothly adjust the width and height of the ellipse, but rather that it snaps to fixed ratios of 1:1, 1:2, 3:1, and so on. So the answer to the question of how to draw a circle is simply to hold down CTRL whilst drawing an ellipse.



As well as locking the ratio when you first draw an object, the CTRL key can also be used to snap your subsequent edits to defined values. Try selecting your ellipse with the Circle tool active, then move the small circular control handles (to turn your ellipse into a segment or arc) while holding the CTRL key. You'll find that the handles snap to particular angles, defaulting to 15°. You can change that value via the File > Inkscape Preferences > Steps dialog, where you can choose from a selection of other angles via a drop down list, although the default is a good choice for most uses.

Now try selecting an ellipse using the Select

tool (previous page, pointer icon), then clicking a second time to enable the rotation and skewing handles. Hold down CTRL as you rotate your object, and you'll find that the same snapping action occurs. It also happens for skewing, but that's a little less obvious with an ellipse, so we'll come back to that one a little later.

Click on the ellipse again to switch back to the move and scale handles. If you try dragging your ellipse around, you'll find that the CTRL key locks you to only horizontal or vertical movements. Now, try resizing with the arrow handles, and you'll discover that the CTRL key locks the aspect ratio of your ellipse – you can make it bigger and smaller, but it will keep the same ratio of width to height.

If you use a mouse with a wheel, then the CTRL key has another feature: hold it down as you scroll the mouse wheel in order to quickly zoom in and out of your document. While you're playing with the mouse wheel, try using it to click and drag the canvas around – a much faster way to pan around your drawing than using the scroll bars.

Now let's consider the SHIFT key. Try holding it down while drawing a new ellipse. Notice that it's being drawn relative to the center of the ellipse, rather than the corner. One of the most common uses for the SHIFT key in Inkscape is to change the starting or reference point for an operation.

Select an ellipse using the Select tool, then hold SHIFT as you resize it with the arrow handles. Notice how the reference point for your actions has switched to the center of the ellipse. Try pressing and releasing SHIFT while you're in the middle of resizing the ellipse to make it more obvious. You don't have to press these modifiers right at the start of an operation, you can press and release them at any point. The only thing that matters is whether they're pressed when you release the mouse button.

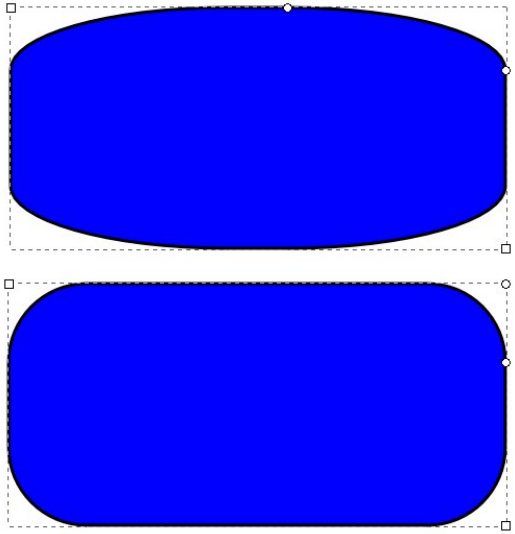
Click the ellipse to switch to rotation mode, and hold SHIFT while you rotate or skew using the handles. You should see the small cross that indicates the rotation center jump to the opposite corner or side from the handle you're moving, and your ellipse will rotate or skew around that reference point.

You can also combine the CTRL and SHIFT keys. Press both as you draw with the Circle tool in order to create a perfect circle drawn out from its center point, or while you rotate your ellipse to rotate it in 15° steps around the opposite corner from the rotation handle.

Let's finish this month with a new shape: there's only so much you can draw with circles and ellipses so we'll create some rectangles and squares instead.

For this, we'll use the Rectangle tool (shown left. Press F4 or "r"). Start by clicking on the button in the toolbox, then drag your shape out on the drawing canvas, just as you've been doing with ellipses. You should now have a nice rectangle:

Notice how your rectangle has small square and circular handles, like those on the ellipses. The two square handles are used to adjust the width and height. Hold SHIFT as you move them to constrain your changes to just one direction or the other. The circle handle, like that on an ellipse, is actually a pair of handles on top of one another. Move just one of them (or hold CTRL whilst moving either of them), and you'll get nice symmetrically-rounded corners to your rectangle – like a quarter of a circle. Move both of them and you'll get an elliptically-rounded corner instead. If you want to go back to perfect 90° corners, simply SHIFT-click one of the circular handles, or use the button at the end of the Tool Control bar (just above the canvas).



The CTRL and SHIFT keys work in a very similar way with the Rectangle tool as they do with the Circle tool: hold down CTRL while you draw your rectangle to constrain it to fixed ratios if you want to create a perfect square, or hold down SHIFT if you want to draw from the center outwards rather than corner to corner.

Of course you can change the color of the fill and stroke for your rectangles – just as we did with ellipses last month. You can also use the Select tool to move, resize, rotate, and skew them – and if you hold down CTRL while skewing a rectangle, it's a lot more obvious what's happening than it is with an ellipse.

Now that you can create rectangles and squares, why not enhance that snowman you drew last month by adding a hat and pipe?

Useful Links:
Keys and Mouse Reference:
http://inkscape.org/doc/keys048.html

Mark has been using Linux since 1994, and uses Inkscape to create two webcomics, 'The Greys' and 'Monsters, Inked' which can both be found at:
http://www.peppertop.com/

CODEWORD

Every number in the grid is 'code' for a letter of the alphabet. Thus the number '2' may correspond to the letter 'L', for instance. All - except the difficult codeword puzzles - come with a few letters to start you off

		C		7			1	2	4		E	D	A		
		E	F		6	D	5	A							
D						2			7	5		8		E	C
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Solutions are on the second last page.

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Write For Full Circle Magazine

Guidelines

The single rule for an article is that **it must somehow be linked to Ubuntu or one of the many derivatives of Ubuntu** (Kubuntu, Xubuntu, Lubuntu, etc).

Write your article in whichever software you choose. I would recommend LibreOffice, but **PLEASE SPELL AND GRAMMAR CHECK IT!**

Writing

There is no word limit for articles, but be advised that long articles may be split across several issues. In your article, please place where you would like a particular image to be. Please do not use any formatting in your document.

Images

Images should be no wider than 800 pixels, in JPG format, and use low compression.

If you are writing a review, please follow these guidelines :

For a more detailed list of the style rules and common pitfalls please refer to: https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuMagazine/Style - in short: US spelling, no l33t speak and no smilies.

When you are ready to submit your article please email it to: articles@fullcirclemagazine.org

If you can't write articles, but hang out in Ubuntu Forums, send us interesting forum threads that we could print.

Non-English Writers

If your native language isn't English, don't worry. Write your article, and the proof-readers will read it for you and correct any grammatical or spelling errors. Not only are you helping the magazine and the community, but we'll help you with your English!

REVIEWS

Games/Applications

When reviewing games/applications please state clearly:

- title of the game
- who makes the game
- is it free, or a paid download?
- where to get it from (give download/homepage URL)
- is it Linux native, or did you use Wine?
- your marks out of five
- a summary with positive and negative points

Hardware

When reviewing hardware please state clearly:

- make and model of the hardware
- what category would you put this hardware into?
- any glitches that you may have had while using the hardware?
- easy to get the hardware working in Linux?
- did you have to use Windows drivers?
- marks out of five
- a summary with positive and negative points

You don't need to be an expert to write an article - write about the games, applications and hardware that you use every day.

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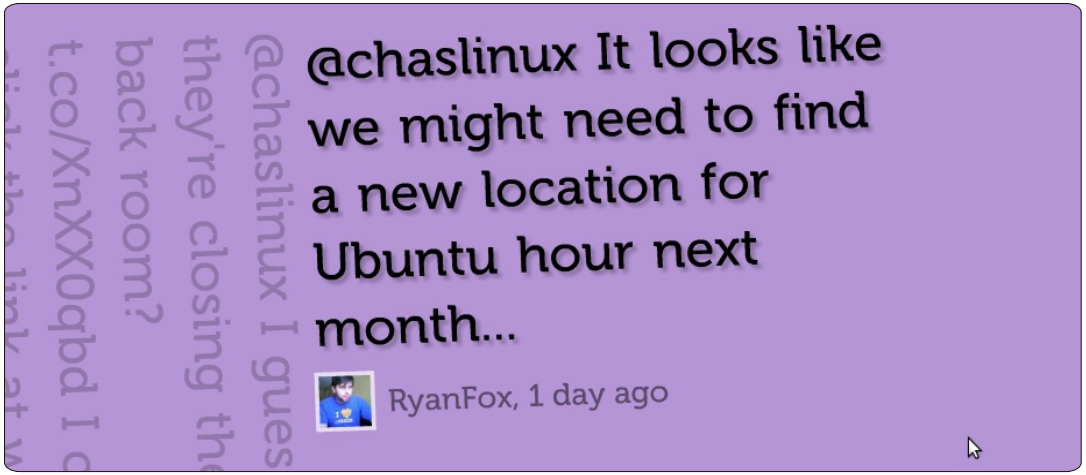
Tweet Screen - Part 1

Hackerspaces are awesome! In our city, we're lucky enough to have a great hackerspace, Kwartzlab. I've visited Kwartzlab a few times to check out some of the cool equipment and projects members were working on: 3D printers, motherboard artwork, a large laser cutter, even an icosahedron flight simulator. One of the simpler items around the space that caught my eye was a small picture frame that displayed a twitter feed of tweets that include the @kwartzlab tag.

I thought it would be interesting to have the same kind of device in our computer recycling shop - displaying tweets including our organization's @ tag and tweets by other computer refurbishers. I considered doing this project with an Arduino and LCD, but it seemed more fitting to use one of the older notebooks donated to our project. After sorting through a bunch of notebooks missing parts I



managed to build a functional IBM Thinkpad R31. The R31 is a vastly underpowered notebook by today's standards, but Thinkpads were generally well-built notebooks. Our R31 had a Celeron 1066MHz CPU and 128MB of RAM - which we bumped to 512MB. A notebook with built-in wireless would have meant one less cable, but I chose the R31 because it was one of the few notebooks in salvageable condition.

Because we wanted the notebook to do one task, serve our twitter updates, choosing a lean OS was important. Lubuntu seemed a practical choice, it's current, lightweight, and uses a modern browser, Chromium, as its default.

It was also a snap to install since our project uses a PXE boot server to deploy Ubuntu, Lubuntu, and Xubuntu images. All of our Linux images are set to autologin, so I didn't need to modify lxdm, but, for the sake of completeness, you can set an account to autologin in Lubuntu by finding the following line in /etc/lxdm/lxdm.conf and uncommenting it, then inserting the appropriate username:

```
#autologin=username
```

By default, most Linux

distributions are set up to display a screen saver after a short period. This is a good practice for security, but not so great for our Twit Screen project. To disable the screensaver, click the Lubuntu button > Preferences > Screensaver, then select Disable Screen Saver from the Mode dropdown option.

I thought that Midori might be a tad lighter on memory than Chromium, but discovered when I ran cat /proc/meminfo | grep MemFree that Chromium was slightly lighter. The load process for Chromium also felt slightly faster, and, since Twit Screen should act like an appliance and the CPU is already slow, any extra speed was beneficial.

The next step was figuring out how to display live Twitter feeds in a cool manner. For that I found Cameron Adams' visibletweets.com. Visibletweets has a couple of nice features I like, a choice of 3 types of animated tweets, and, more importantly, you can use Twitter search operators. Visibletweets also doesn't require a login. Since I already knew I wanted to search for multiple tags and twitter accounts, the OR operator came in handy. As a test I entered:

```
@WorkingCentre OR @chaslinux OR @kwartzlab OR "Computer Recycling"
```

Tweets started to appear beginning with Computer Recycling tweets. At the moment I typed in the search, one company's tweets kept coming up with the same message in a really spam-like fashion. I learned that the minus operator (NOT seemed more appropriate but didn't work) can be used to limit results and you shouldn't include the @ sign when eliminating particular results from a twitter user, just -username. My revised test:

```
@WorkingCentre OR @chaslinux OR @kwartzlab OR "Computer Recycling" -60IT
```

This kept @60IT results from showing in the tweets. I also noticed that if I left off the quotation marks around "Computer Recycling", visibletweets seemed to display only computer recycling tweets. Normally, it displays the most recent tweet. So, if you're testing against multiple words, put them in quotation marks.

Next, I took note of the URL that resulted when I typed in the query - it wasn't pretty: http://visibletweets.com/#query=%40WorkingCentre%20OR%20%40chaslinux%20OR%20%40kwartzlab%20OR%20%22Computer%20Recycling%22%20-60IT&animation=2

The idea is that just after autologin, I'd start chromium in full-screen mode with the search URL. LXDE does have some applications that can be enabled just after logging in by clicking the LXDE button > Preferences > Desktop Session Settings, but, out of the box, it doesn't seem to have a graphical way of adding applications to startup the way Gnome does. To start an application, its *.desktop file needs to be copied to ~/.config/autostart. When I changed into the ~/.config folder, I noticed there was no autostart folder, so I made one.

At first I thought there was no chromium.desktop file until I remembered the full filename is chromium browser, so I needed to run locate chromium-browser.desktop. I then copied the file to the ~/.config/autostart directory:

```
cp /usr/share/applications/chromium-browser.desktop
```


contents

```
~/.config/autostart
```

But, I also wanted it to start with that nasty URL, so I changed into the ~/.config/autostart folder and changed the line that read:

```
Exec=/usr/bin/chromium-browser %U
```

I replaced the %U with the long URL from visibletweets. When I logged out and logged back in, visibletweets now started with the operators I wanted.

Nice, but I could still see LXDE's interface. As an appliance, I wanted this to disappear. The solution, run chromium-browser in full-screen mode. Full-screen mode is known in chromium parlance as kiosk mode, and starting in kiosk mode was as simple as appending --kiosk to the end of our arguments in the ~/.config/autostart/chromium-browser.desktop file:

```
Exec=/usr/bin/chromium-browser <url> --kiosk
```

Note that I've put <url> in place of where that nasty URL goes.

With chromium loading the website in full-screen on autologin, the last step on the software side of things was to install SSH:

```
sudo apt-get install ssh
```

Since the keyboard was going to eventually be inaccessible behind the screen, I needed a way to remotely administer the system (to apply updates, and perhaps setting the system up for other functions at a later date), and SSH is my favoured method.

Several years ago I built a similar system to display photographs. It was a success initially, but I learned the hard way that you have to be very careful about Electro Static Discharge (ESD). My photobox worked well, but the back end stuck out of the photo-frame. When I went to remove more components from the notebook I forgot to properly ground myself … and you probably know the rest of the story.

Next month: Tweet Screen - Part 2 - Hacking the hardware

Charles is a step-father, husband, and Linux fan who runs a not-for-profit computer refurbishing project. When not breaking hardware/servers he maintains a blog at http://www.charlesmccolm.com/.

ubuntu uk podcast

The Ubuntu Podcast covers all the latest news and issues facing Ubuntu Linux users and Free Software fans in general. The show appeals to the newest user and the oldest coder. Our discussions cover the development of Ubuntu but aren't overly technical. We are lucky enough to have some great guests on the show, telling us first hand about the latest exciting developments they are working on, in a way that we can all understand! We also talk about the Ubuntu community and what it gets up to.

The show is presented by members of the UK's Ubuntu Linux community. Because it is covered by the Ubuntu Code of Conduct it is suitable for all.

The show is broadcast live every fortnight on a Tuesday evening (British time) and is available for download the following day.

podcast.ubuntu-uk.org

CLOSING WINDOWS

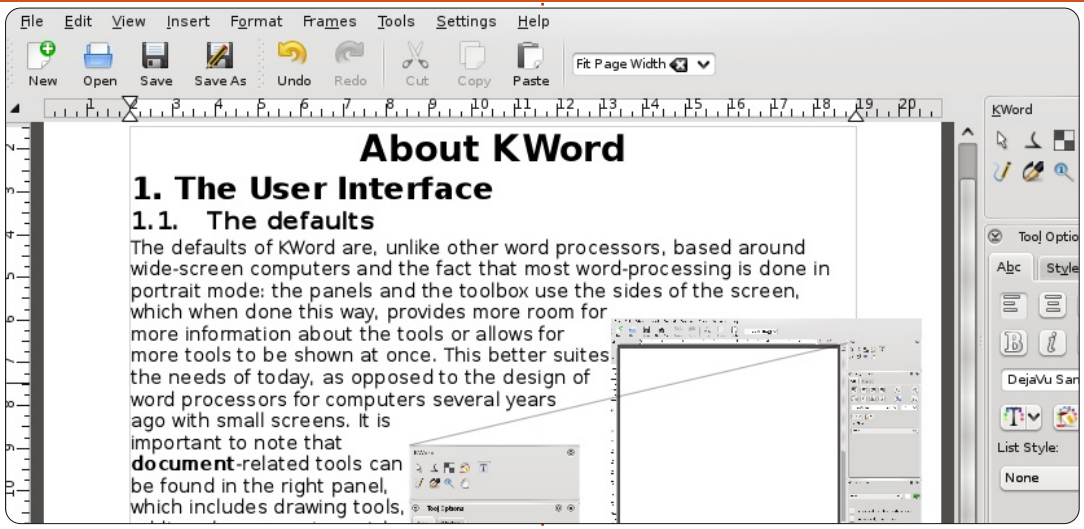
*buntu Equivalents

Written by:
Ronnie Tucker (KDE)
Jan Mussche (Gnome)
Elizabeth Krumbach (XFCE)
Mark Boyajian (LXDE)
David Tigue (Unity)

This month, rather than discuss an actual Windows feature, we'll look at Linux equivalents to Windows applications. Please bear in mind that, although an application may be listed as KDE, it will still run in Gnome, XFCE and LXDE (and vice versa), so don't think you're limited by your desktop. So, let's look at equivalents for Office (including at least a word processor and spreadsheet), Media Player, Image Viewer, Document Viewer, Photoshop, Outlook Express, Internet Explorer, and the all important Solitaire.

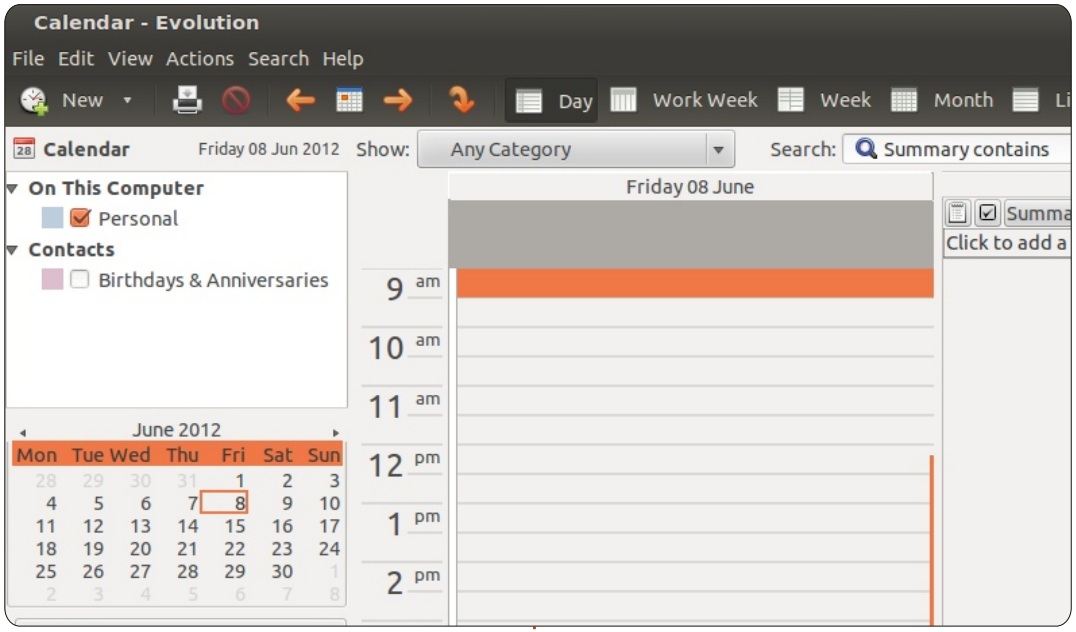
Kubuntu

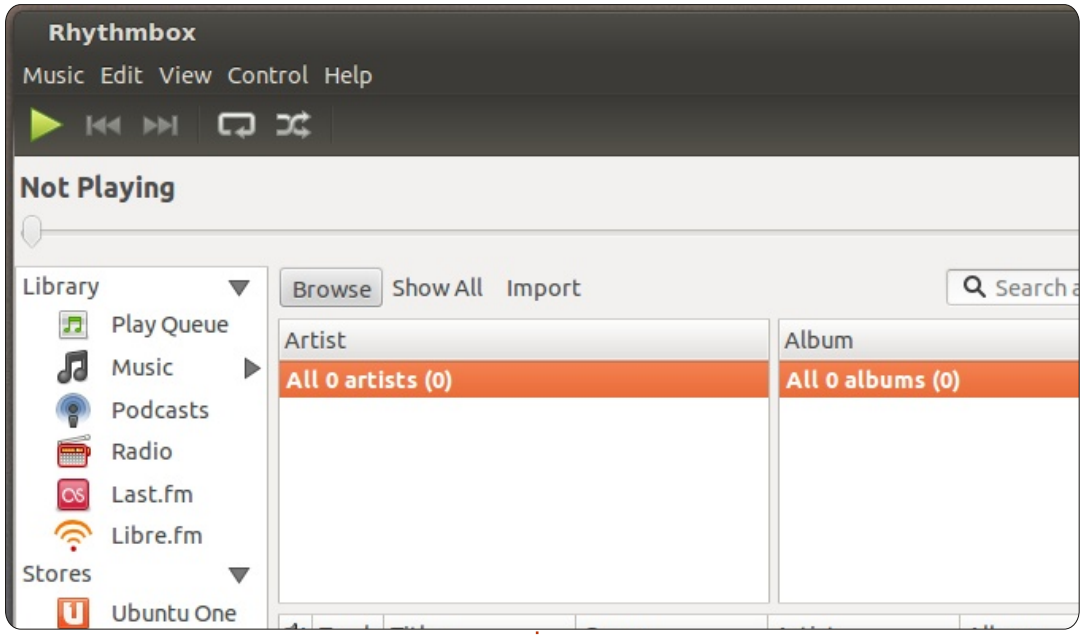
Since Kubuntu is KDE based, I'll list the KDE equivalents of the Windows applications listed above.



While most distros install LibreOffice (I'll let someone else talk about it), KDE does have its own Office suite called KOffice which is made up of: KWord (word processor), KCells (spreadsheet), and Showcase (presentations). For playing media, KDE comes with Dragon Player, but the ever faithful VLC can be installed with just a couple of clicks. KDE's image viewer is called Gwenview. While I wouldn't recommend it for sorting your family photos (digiKam is best for that), it's fine for quickly viewing and rotating images. Okular is the KDE document viewer and will display all your files including PDFs. While there is GIMP to replace Photoshop, KDE does come with a nice drawing application called Krita - which has recently undergone a complete revamp and is trying to emulate real-world media. We artists can but hope! Your emails can be sent/received by Kmail, recently updated to version two and part of the KDE Kontact suite of apps. Kmail even looks similar (in layout) to Outlook. While KDE's file manager (Dolphin) can, technically speaking, be used as a browser, KDE comes with Rekonq. It's OK as a quick/temporary browser, but I'd recommend installing Chrome if you're serious about your browsing.

Fear not office workers - you are also looked after with KPatience. You can put that pack of playing cards away.





Gnome-shell/Unity

In Gnome, the standard web browser is Mozilla Firefox. Not a bad choice, I might add. Especially with the use of extensions, you can give the program a lot of functionality. My favorite browser however is Google Chrome, also extendable with extensions.

The standard e-mail client in Gnome is Evolution, adored by many, hated by others. What can I say, you can't argue about taste. Evolution is a good email program - with everything an email program should have, including a calendar function. When you use an Outlook Exchange server at work, you can install an extra option in Evolution so the program can very easily make contact with that server, thus making it possible to read your company emails at home. It's called Evolution Exchange, and it works with Outlook Web Access - so it is important the email server has that enabled.

For listening to music and/or watching movies, you can choose either Rhythmbox or Banshee. Not typical in Gnome, but very popular, is VLC - which plays almost everything audio/video.

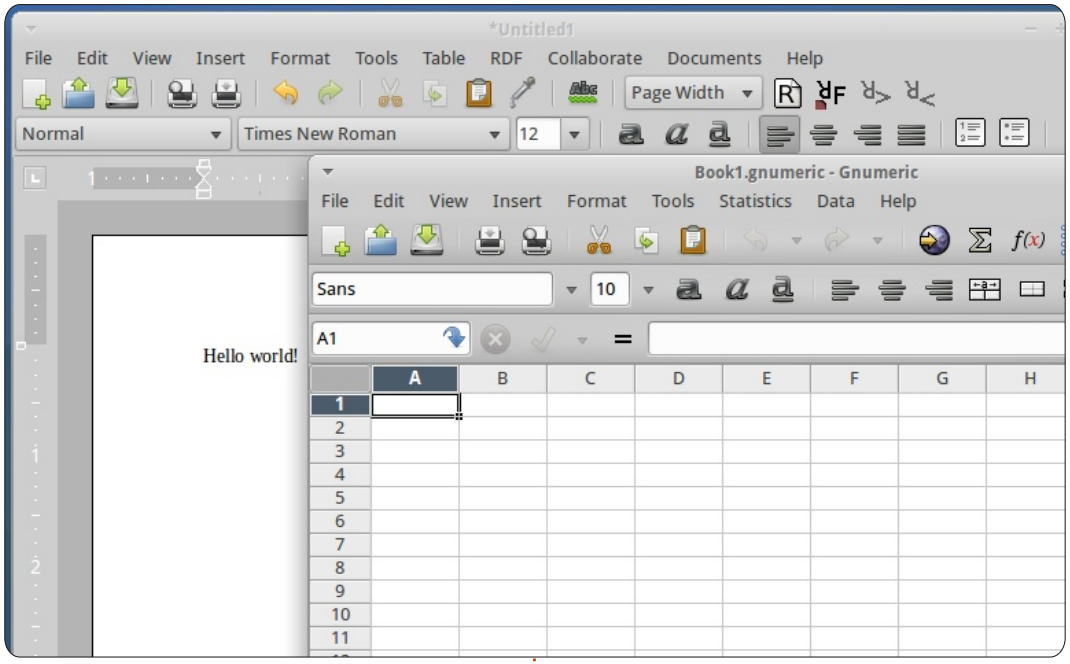
The office program for Gnome is LibreOffice. In a very short time it has become a very good and popular program. It contains all necessary parts: word processor (Write), Spreadsheet (Calc), drawing program (Draw), presentation creator/viewer (Impress). One of the nice things in the Linux office programs is the export-to-PDF option. No hassle of installing a pdf printer, or buying an expensive option in MS Office; no, it's just there and delivers high quality PDF files from your documents.

Evince is the standard Gnome PDF viewer. What can I say? It's a program made for the job and it does that job very well. For viewing pictures, use F-Spot. It's small, it's simple, but it does what it is supposed to do: show pictures.

The photo-editing software for Linux is, of course, GIMP. No doubt about it. It's an extensive program which matches Photoshop (almost). Many things Photoshop can do, GIMP can do as well, although sometimes with a different name for the function.

XFCE

Rather than shipping with a full office suite, Xubuntu simply provides Gnome Office's AbiWord



for word processing and Gnumeric for spreadsheets. Both of these applications have familiar interfaces for word processing and spreadsheets, and offer support for the popular document formats.

The media player that comes with Xubuntu is Parole, which offers the basic requirements of a media player for playback - as well as streaming and DVD support when you have the corresponding libraries installed. In addition to this media player, gmusicbrowser is also included for indexing and playback of your music collection.

The default image viewer is gThumb, which has the benefit of not only showing you a single image when you load it up, but also showing you thumbnails of other images in the same directory, giving you a more comprehensive "image browser" experience.

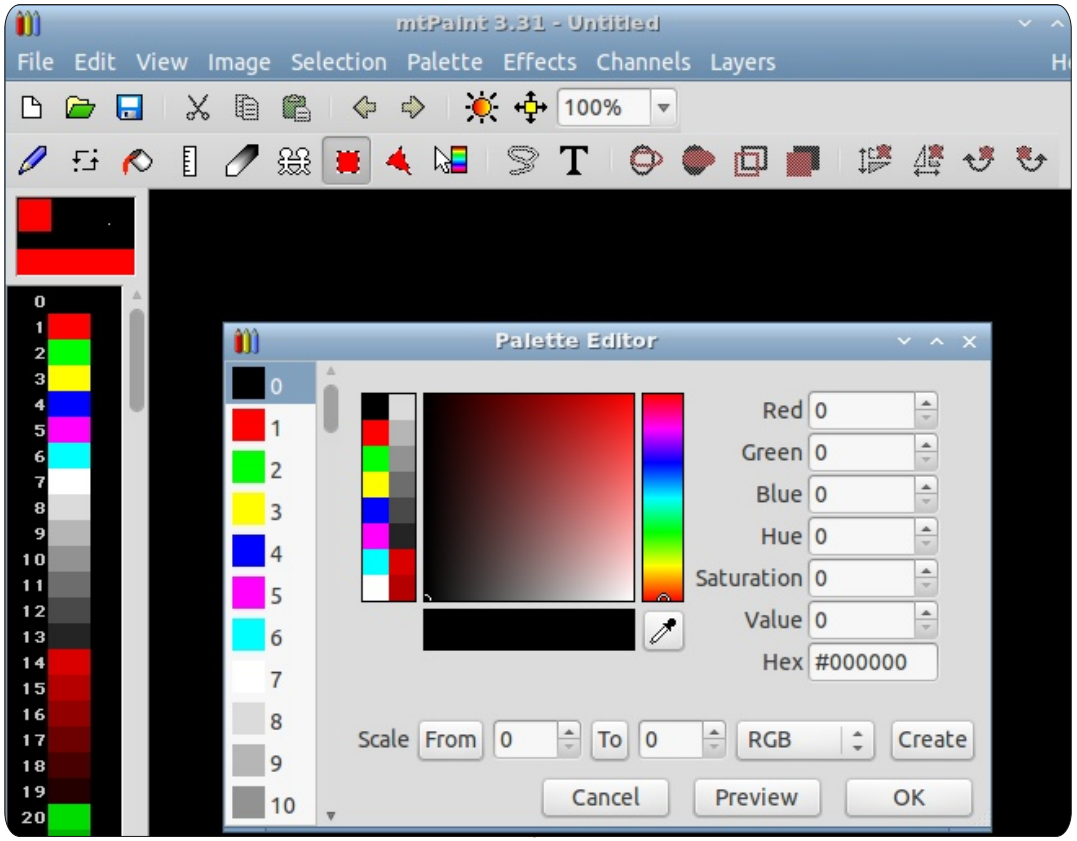
Just like Gnome, Xubuntu comes with GIMP for image manipulation, and Evince for viewing of PDF files. Firefox and Thunderbird are the web browser and email client of choice for Xubuntu. Finally, it pulls from Gnome's suite of games to offer Aisleriot Solitaire, along with FreeCell, Mahjongg, Mines, and Sudoku.

LXDE

As already mentioned above, most Linux distributions support applications regardless of the desktop environment (e.g. KDE, Gnome, LXDE, etc.) for which it was specifically written. Lubuntu is no exception, and it will happily run such behemoths as LibreOffice, OpenOffice, GIMP, or Digikam, but since the larger, more "heavyweight" applications are discussed in the context of the distributions that are deliberately designed for newer and more powerful hardware (e.g. KDE, Gnome, Unity), this section will focus on the "lightweight" applications that correlate with older or less powerful hardware that is targeted by Lubuntu.

The default word processor in Lubuntu is AbiWord. It is a lightweight and very fast application! It is easy to use and surprisingly capable, providing 80% of what most people will want/need in a word processor - including styles, backgrounds, embedded images, hyperlinks, tables, and collaboration tools, to name just a few. The default spreadsheet application is Gnumeric, which is a marvel of conservation and functionality. Most users would not know that they were using a super-lightweight application because so much functionality is provided in Gnumeric; so much so that it's not even worth trying to enumerate the features. In fact, many people who are currently using the "big boys" (Calc, MS Excel) might find they prefer the simple, functional, and blazingly fast performance of Gnumeric for most if not all of their work. And yes, both AbiWord and Gnumeric can save to a wide range of file formats for data porting, including (of course) MS file formats, ODF, CSV, and LaTeX.

The default media players installed with Lubuntu are Audacious (for audio) and Gnome Player (audio/video). Don't be fooled by the extraordinarily simple interfaces of each of these applications; they are both very powerful and very good at what they do! Audacious is a fantastic audio player capable of playing a wide range of audio file types, CDs, and URLs. It provides versatile playlists, a surprising number of



audio effects, and an audio equalizer. Gnome Player is a "full" media player capable of playing pretty much everything Audacious can play, plus DVDs, VCDs, and TV (analog and digital).

The default web browser in Lubuntu is Chromium, the open-source version of Google's Chrome web browser. (Surprise! Google Chrome is NOT open-source and tracks every move you make; Chromium doesn't! [In case you wanted to know.]) Sylpheed is the

l

ocal eMail client and Osmo is a very nifty personal organizer featuring notes, tasks, and a contacts database, all with some surprising (and useful) features.

You'll find Pidgin as your IM client and xChat as your IRC client. For viewing images you have GPicView; a more than capable image viewer designed specifically for LXDE. Although there is no document viewer installed by default, Evince and other viewing apps are readily available in the repositories.

"Lightweight" and "graphics editor" seem to be an oxymoron when used together, but that's exactly what you get with mtPaint. This program is certainly not in the same league as GIMP and Adobe Photoshop, but, as with the other lightweight applications you'll find by default in Lubuntu, it will surprise you! It has robust color, brush, and shape palettes, supports channels, overlays, layers, and masks, and has many visual effects, drawing tools and view.

And yes, Lubuntu comes with games; the default selection being Ace of Penguins, which is a set of solitaire games including Canfield, Freecell, Golf, Mastermind, Merlin, Minesweeper, Pegged, Solitaire, Spider, Taipei (with a level editor), and Thornq. And of course, there are lots more games of all kinds in the repositories, which are two mouse-clicks away from the desktop.

Next month we'll talk about sharing files and/or folders through a network.

Coming Soon!

The Full Circle Podcast Returns!

It may be a new team of podcasters, but the format will be the same.

We'll be talking about Full Circle Magazine, news, reviews and interviews.

Your new team is:
- Les Pounder
- Tony Hughes
- Jon Chamberlain
- Oliver Clark

All are members of the Blackpool (UK) LUG
http://blackpool.lug.org.uk

Keep an eye out for our debut episode, coming **soon**.

MY STORY

Written by Chris Rheinherren

Let me start off the story here with the past. I was, in the beginning, a diehard Windows user - not only with desktop machines but also with servers. I have owned several servers that were running Windows NT, and later Windows 2003 server, using IIS for the web server software. I have used Windows 3.x, 95, 98, 98 SE, ME, 2000 and XP for my desktop OS systems. Even when my servers were networked to other servers, I ran Windows while the other servers in the network were running on Linux.

I did defend Microsoft and Windows right and left - against all attacks on them by others who thought less of the company and the operating systems it produced. But, even then I did from time to time dabble with Linux. I attempted to install Redhat once, and failed at that - the install was highly complex, and it didn't work afterwards. So I returned to Windows. I wouldn't try Linux again for several more years.

My second attempt at using Linux was with Mepis, I had a thing for the egyptian theme. It installed wonderfully, and I did it as a dual-boot option so I didn't have to fully give up my beloved Windows OS and applications that I loved so much. But of course by this time I had already begun some tech support for Linux servers at my job, and I was beginning to see the difference. Needless to say, like a n00b, I hosed my Linux system and when it came to having to reinstall from scratch, I again opted to shelve Linux and reclaim the hard drive space for Windows.

My third and final attempt came shortly thereafter. At this point, I was using both Windows and Mac OS X, but Mac OS X didn't let me easily install anything from source code. The differences between Darwin and other *nix systems was too great, and it would require too much editing of code. I was also using Windows less and less. My server had already been switched from a Windows server to a Linux one just a couple of years back. Cost was lower, and I had enough information to know what I was doing. So I gave up Windows for Linux. installing Ubuntu Linux - again choosing a Debian variant as I did when I previously used Mepis. And, of course, my Linux server was running Debian itself. It was familiar and even seemed friendly to me.

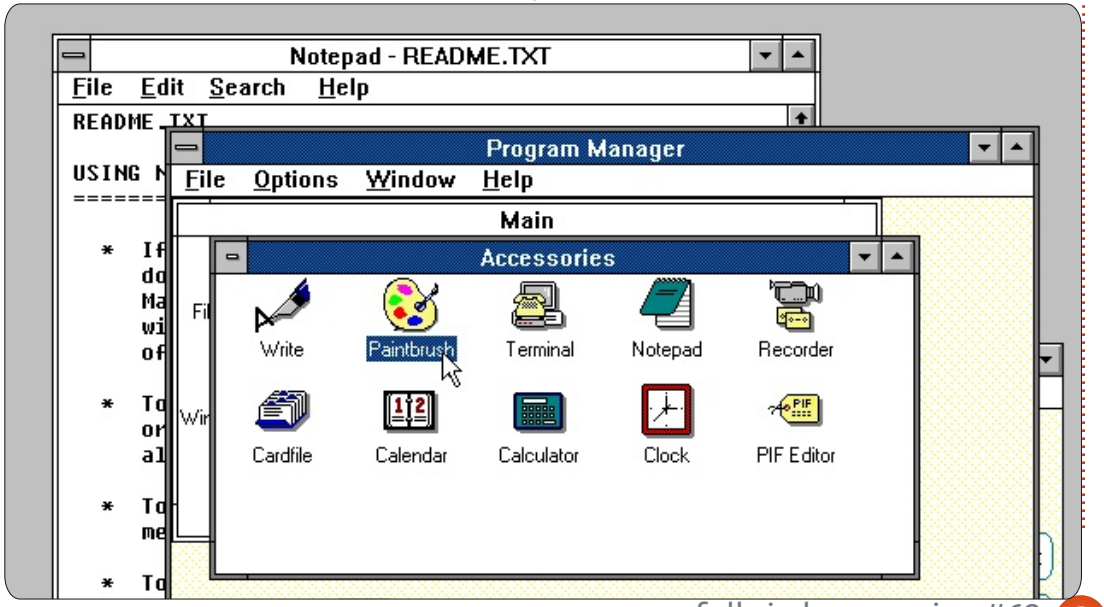
This was about 3-4 years ago. I haven't looked back since. I sold my Macbook - great resale value in a Mac. And now I have replaced every bit of software I used to use on Windows and Mac with something freely available in Linux. Most software is in the repository already as a binary file. Some, of course, I have installed from source with little or no difficulty. And now I constantly read more on the command-line and evangelize the simplicity, ease, and low cost of

Linux to anyone who will listen. And even to some who will not.

Linux provides everything that I need in an operating system for both the desktop or server environment. And at a fraction of the cost that Windows or Mac can offer. Using a desktop environment, even someone who is totally used to Windows can make the switch to Linux. In fact, even a person who is not technically inclined can do it. Linux really is easy to learn. It has options for those power users, far more options than Windows will ever have, via the command-line. But that's not necessary for a general user who is going to surf the web, check email, and play some games.

If you are considering Linux, I suggest strongly in checking out the site "Why Linux is better" located at http://whylinuxisbetter.net - it has a ton of information available on that subject.

You can always ask me about Linux; I will be happy to show it to you. I can even provide you with a live CD so you can try out Linux without making any permanent changes to your system. You will be amazed and wonder how Windows or Apple are able to remain in the computer business with Linux out there, and it is a rising force.



16x16 SUDOKU

Numbers 0 to 9 and letters A to F are to be filled into the 16x16 grid so that every row, every column, and every 4x4 box contains 0 to 9 and A - F.

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Solutions are on the second last page.

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MY OPINION

Written by Mattias Nykkel

I am 79, retired, basically an electronics-oriented person. I had my first computer in 1985, a Commodore Plus/4, with an external floppy drive and a 9-needle dot-matrix printer - that were usable with C+/4 and the IBM type computers as well. It is obvious that a monochrome monitor was used, or it could be used with a normal TV set. Being a Hungarian, I had to use accented characters, and the first thing to do was to replace the built-in character set with a matching Hungarian font set - both for the printer and the monitor. Thanks to the Peter Norton books and the built in assembler program, as well as the corresponding literature of the Commodore Machine, I achieved the necessary knowledge to do the job. It was necessary as I worked after office-hours as a technical translator into and from English and Spanish languages, and the built-in word processing program was a great help for me.

Later, I got my first IBM 286 machine (16 MHz processor, 2 MB RAM) and DOS 3.3. The same happened, as I had to use the Hungarian accented font set, and it was my job to provide it both for the keyboard and the monitor. Programming in various BASIC languages was a common task for me (being also a radio amateur), in helping to home-build my own receivers and transmitters required for my hobby. When the first Windows operating systems became available, I ceased programming, since it was a too complicated and time-consuming job. However, from time to time I made some BASIC programs - and converted them into .com and .exe forms. At the beginning, I used the Internet through a dial-up phone line, and only e-mail sending and receiving was available (using Win 3.1). The opening of the window to the world happened when I got a broadband cable connection and changed the operating system to Win 98, and afterwards to Windows XP. For curiosity, I test the new beta Microsoft operating systems (Win 7, Win 8), but I hardly believe that I will like the Metro graphic environment due to the reasons detailed below.

In 2002, I met first with a Linux operating system, Lindows, later Linspire and, afterwards, I tried various Linux distributions (e.g: UHU, Knoppix, Suse, Fedora, Kubuntu, Xubuntu, Ubuntu, Debian, etc.). Finally, I selected the one that was the best, the most user friendly, the easiest to use and install, and the fastest. It was Ubuntu.

I started with Ubuntu 6.04, then all the following ones were tried and installed, including later the previous distributions also (4.10, 5.04). The best was 8.04.4, and finally I stopped at 10.10.

The highest score was given by me to the 8.04 LTS due to its ease of installation (with Windows) with using the "wubi.exe".

Any newcomer could easily install it without the risk of harming any existing operating system(s).

The later distributions abandoned this installation mode (in reality it happened at the introduction of the 10.04 distribution).

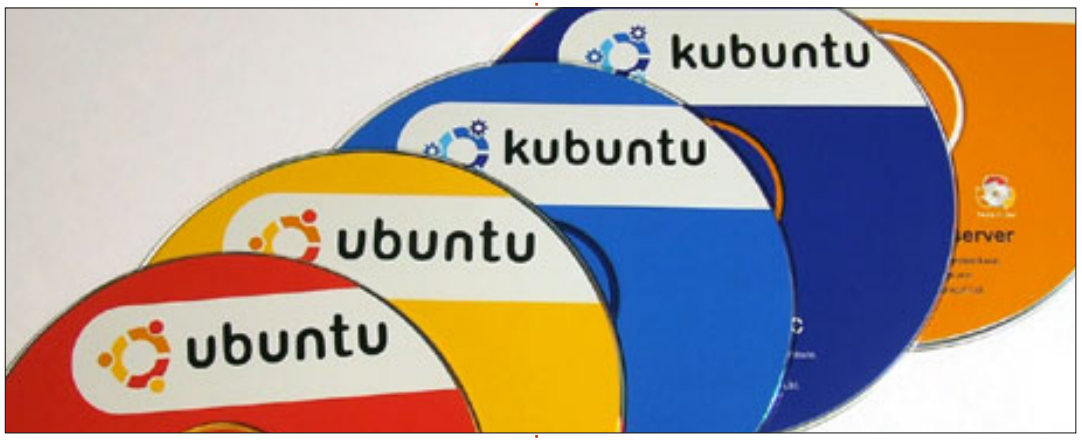
The second highest score was given by me to the 10.04 LTS / 10.10 that still used the Classic Look Gnome environment.

The later distributions abandoned the Classic Look Gnome environment, and introduced Unity - without an option to choose the Classic Look. This facility would mean that users would remain faithful to Ubuntu, while, without this facility, a lot of people would choose another Linux version and abandon Ubuntu.

The reasons for my decision are:

From the first encounter with Ubuntu, I have recruited a lot of Ubuntu fans, spreading free-of-charge a large number of Live CDs, and teaching them how to use it. There are also among them a lot of first-time computer users, including people over 80 years of age. Even these old people (male and female), on their own, could use Ubuntu for sending/receiving e-mails, browsing the Internet, watching videos, listening to music, using video or written only chat, even downloading and uploading files, after 2 to 3 months of active use!!!! Thanks to Ubuntu 8.04, 9.04, 10.04.

These people claimed the user friendliness after updating the distribution and seeing the Unity environment - in the crowded, big-size icon mass, it is laborious to find the required program, or a utility to adjust and/or set some parameter, even if the names are in ABC order and written in lower-case. The selection of the categories are well hidden, and it is very slow to locate them. To change from one workplace to another also takes a lot of time - until a window opens in the actual workplace to show the selection icons. In a desktop machine, with or without a touch-screen, all these facilities are hard to use, or useless, and slow down the user's experience. This theme is not practical at all in a productive business environment. Even if some people temporarily like this appearance, the serious computer user will quickly lose his/her interest in this laborious and difficult approach.



The inexperienced users are afraid to install the newer Ubuntu distributions (to avoid risk to their actual running systems). They will not upgrade if they have an old windows already installed and they do not have the necessary money/background to buy a new operating system. "Partitioning" is hard to use by unskilled people.

In Full Circle Magazine, issue 56. I have seen an article describing how to re-establish the Classic Gnome Look. That is fine, but it is very difficult to visit every unskilled user and do the job for them, one by one! Why can it not be done only once, as part of the development steps?

In sum, these business politics do not help to spread Ubuntu among prospective users.

Finally, I have to say, I am happy to have discovered the wonders of the Ubuntu operating system, and now I understand why some people cry if somebody takes his/her toy!

I should like to express my congratulations and gratitude to the people involved in the development of Ubuntu, and wish that their concept is compatible with the majority of the users, both the skilled and the unskilled ones. To my greatest sorrow, it is a little late for me to learn programming so deeply that permits me to participate with the Ubuntu developers. I guess, I am helping more if I continue to recruit and teach new Ubuntu users.

UBUNTU user

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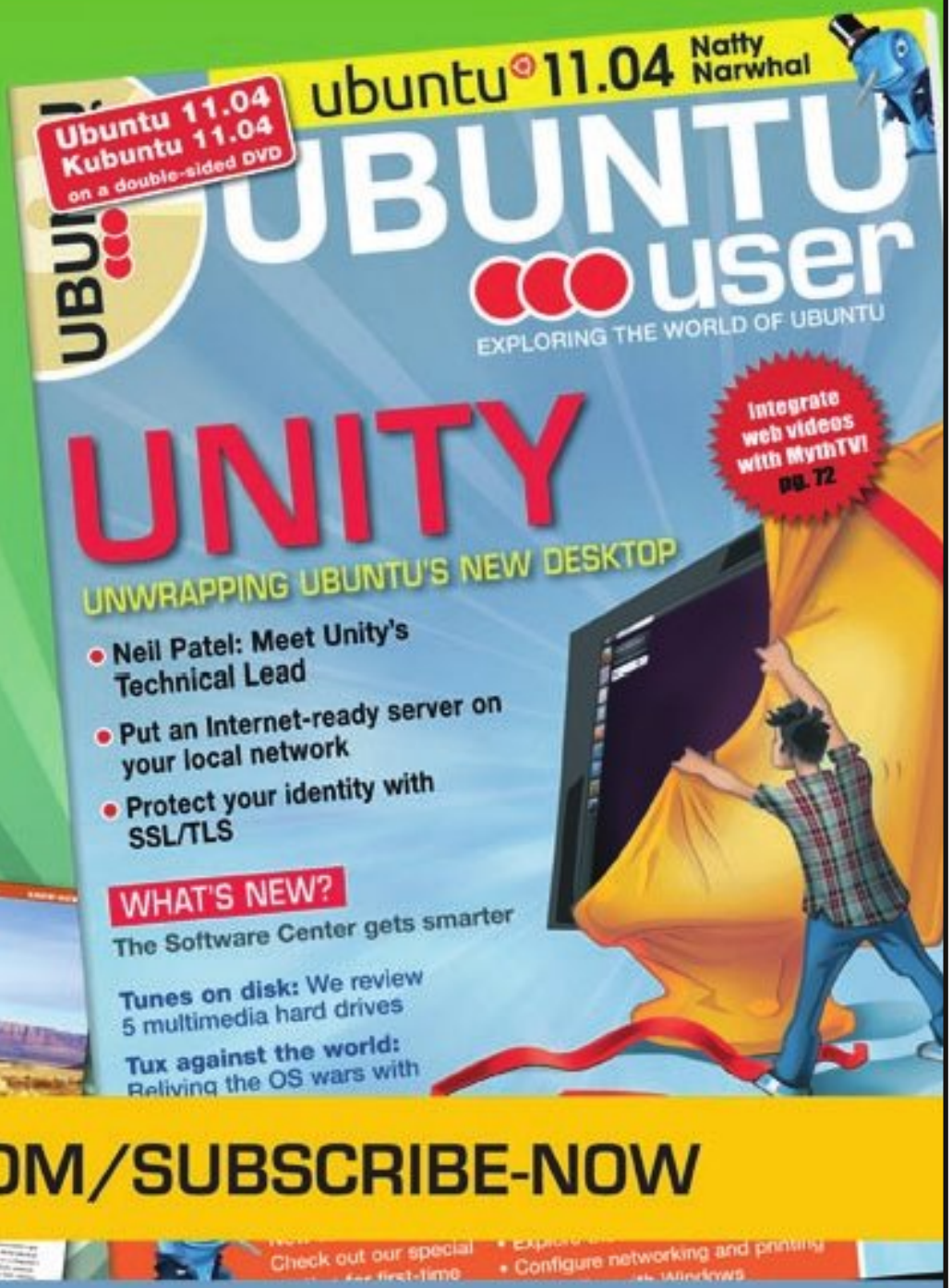

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The most often asked question when discussing Ubuntu basics? How do I add programs? While I could end the conversation with Synaptic or Ubuntu Software Center, the fact remains that there are other avenues — some of which are unknown to even seasoned users.

Over time, I've created a partial listing of websites, managers and sources I've found of interest. Undoubtedly, I've missed a couple and ignored others (like rebranded managers that are merely fronts for another), but you'll get some idea of what exists.

Stars below the title indicate my personal score out of five. For the purposes of this listing, Ubuntu refers to not only that OS but any fork or variation based upon it.

Ailurus

Named after a Chinese red panda, Ailurus is an add-on (Ultimate Edition – UE, does have it as standard). Offers nearly 100 programs but it can also clean junk files, list device information, edit repositories, and provide Linux tips and tutorials. It can be found at http://code.google.com/p/ailurus or in the getdeb repository.

Good: Offers system information, along with helpful hints and programs to add. Gives apt-get commands in program notes should you go that route. Puts already installed programs at bottom of listings instead of mixing with new ones. Installs tar files without having to extract, compile, etc.

Bad: Basically a GUI front end for apt-get, so users do have to watch for questions that may pop up when the terminal starts its work (it's not a click-and-ignore system). Some links are dead or outdated, and be wary of the junk file removal system (it once attempted to remove an active kernel from my system).

Alien/Package Converter

Option for installing foreign packages outside the deb arena, Alien is often passed over because it's a command line proposition. The addition of the Package Converter GUI changed it from a difficult option to an easy-to-use program. Excels in taking various file packages from other formats such as tar, and converting them to deb. Alien is in the Ubuntu repositories. Package Converter is available at http://code.google.com/p/foxoman/.

Good: When it works, it can convert foreign (non-deb) files to something Ubuntu can digest. The worst it can do is refuse and no damage is done in the process. This places Alien in the safe “never know until you try” category.

Bad: Seems to be a 50/50 proposition, with some files refusing to convert. Many users who are turned off by the command-line interface are unaware of the GUI available with Package Converter.

Alioth.Debian.org

Website that is a parking place for Debian, Windows, and Mac developmental programs. Often has a listing of 10 to 20 projects available for download with many being either beta or final releases.

Good: You can find some unusual projects in here that may eventually make it to the mainstream.

Bad: Website speed is measured in minutes, and navigation is largely a matter of luck. Some projects may not be ready for prime-time, so download anything with a great deal of caution.

Apt-Get

Command-line protocol for the retrieval of programs from the Internet. Requires nothing more than a terminal and the ability to type “sudo apt-get install” plus a program name. Since all Ubuntu variants come with a terminal, it could be stated that apt-get is standard equipment.

Good: Requires just a terminal and keyboard. Can also be used to remove programs no longer desired, but see note below about exact names. For those desiring older program versions over the current, apt-get commands can be altered for this.

Bad: Adds dependencies by the bushel, most of which aren't necessary. To avoid this you must be versed in the “sudo apt-get install –no-install-recommends” command line, something most are not even aware of. Requires exact program name—and that may not be what you think. Less effective as a method of uninstalling programs (often leaves stray files and dependencies), and users must know the difference between purge and remove in this category.

Aptitude Package Manager

GUI front-end for apt-get, Aptitude goes one step further by allowing users to search without having to dig through repositories or knowing exact program titles. Few know this exists—because it's tucked away in the System menu in the Administration sub-category if it's there. If not, get it from the Ubuntu repositories.

Good: Allows for program, driver and codec searching with just a partial name. Also does complete purging of installed programs should something you add be stubborn (unlike other managers that may leave residual file traces). For those thinking it looks a little familiar, Synaptic, Ubuntu Software Center, and Adept all have similar interfaces and borrow heavily from Aptitude.

Bad: If any of your repository sources are slow to respond, it can drag Aptitude down (takes an inordinate amount of time to pass over an unresponsive source). Canonical passes on it for their Ubuntu Software Center (naturally).

BodhiLinux.com

Main website for Ubuntu-based Bodhi Linux. You can't actually download specific programs without pulling a few tricks, but this one is stellar in its listing of programs, alternatives, and descriptions for both. Over 2GB of listed programs and packages, and some of the narratives are more in-depth than what the individual developers provide.

Good: Comprehensive listing of packages and individual programs along with alternatives. Descriptions are concise, and forums are well staffed should you have more questions. Unlike other OS-based sites that give a listing but no way to download programs, this one provides all services.

Bad: Unless you're using Bodhi, you can't just download from the website: you'll have to add the repository (deb http://packages.bodhilinux.com/bodhi/) to another package handler for that duty. Due to .bod file extension, even Bodhi users must go through Firefox or Midori browsers (nothing else works).

Dedoimedo.com

Devoted to providing Linux information, along with program offerings, this site plays equally across all offerings, and it's possible to find tutorials about Suse, Debian and Puppy Linux as well as Ubuntu and variants. Found at http://www.dedoimedo.com/computers/new-cool-list-linux.html.

Good: Gives in-depth tutorials on how to install nearly any Linux offering, while throwing a few programs in the mix, too.

Bad: Confusing mishmash of new and old. You'll see an article for the newest version of Ubuntu,

but go to tutorials and it mentions "Ubuntu 9.10 Karmic Koala is going to be released soon" which makes that part about 3 years out of date (not to mention offering Firefox 3.1 from 2008). Finding programs can be a trick, and make sure what you choose is the current version.

DVDs

Since Canonical doesn't offer downloads of its program library (at least not as a whole unit) you can buy a copy at places like EBay, ElectroDisc, OSDisc or LinuxCD.org.

Good: No Internet connection worries here, mate. Great for those without reliable internet service.

Bad: You have to pay up to $30 for this "free" software, and the average collection seems to range from 8 to 12 DVDs, requiring a lot of swapping to access contents. Depending upon how radical the next Ubuntu upgrade is, these libraries could be outdated in as little as 6 months. If it's the standard Ubuntu library, you've already got it in Synaptic or Ubuntu Software Center.

Eve Installer

Relatively unknown, this manager/installer is fairly elusive, although it can be downloaded via http://apticon.wordpress.com/2011/05/19/eve-installer-0-9-3-51-3/ (make sure you get the proper version – it's offered in both English and Spanish).

Good: Offers repositories and PPA sources along with a few programs. Although the programs are limited, the listing is still more than Ubuntu Tweak and the like. Looks like a hybrid between Ubuntu Tweak and Ailurus and that isn't bad.

Bad: It's really a front for automatically running terminal apt-get commands, so you can't just click and forget (remain seated in case questions pop up). Currently pegged for Ubuntu 11.x and Mint 12—so those using earlier or later versions should be careful. Unknown developer, so will it be around long?

GDebi

GUI for installing deb files downloaded from websites and sources outside the repositories. Dumped from Ubuntu after 10.04, it can be added via Synaptic or Ubuntu Software Center or through https://launchpad.net/gdebi. Great if you're in the habit of grabbing deb packages from online sources, GDebi doesn't list programs as much as offering a way to install them without having to use the more bloated Ubuntu Software Center.

Good: Faster to install programs than Ubuntu Software Center (USC) that replaced it, although the gap seems to be lessening as Canonical updates USC.

Bad: Has a cruel streak of listing dependencies and then refusing to install them until yet another dependency is located (yet will offer to install them all occasionally). Largely ignored for USC. Installs but not much else.

GetDeb.net

Both a website and a program. The site (www.getdeb.net/welcome) contains Debian programs but you have to add it to your software sources. Offers almost 25 pages of programs, roughly 120 in all. Link for games goes to separate site, PlayDeb.net, that offers a like number of games.

Good: Installs programs with a single click, and listing does offer some programs not found in the usual repositories (some dating back to 2009). Offers program website links for those desiring additional information before committing. Attempting to install what you've got already halts the process before creating additional problems.

Bad: Site appears to have a random update schedule, and anything after page 10 is almost guaranteed to be inactive. No clue as to file size until you opt for

installation, and some are deceptively large. Contains programs that defected from deb standards to tar (thereby canceling installation attempts).

Launchpad.net

Devoted to Ubuntu software, and appropriate given it is currently maintained by Ubuntu developer Canonical. Mainly a place to keep and maintain software projects—you can find everything from completed programs to those in alpha/beta stages. Located at https://launchpad.net.

Good: If it's Ubuntu related, it's probably here, including long-forgotten apps and libraries left to the dustbin of time. This is where most people are directed to if they are doing a Google search for a specific Ubuntu program that is no longer active.

Bad: A parking lot for development programs, there is no table of contents, per se, so plan on playing hide-and-go-seek. Older programs may come with dependencies no longer necessary, while those marked as beta or unstable may not work. Geared more to the developers than actual users, many may find some of the lingo outside their realm of knowledge.

LinuxAppFinder.com

Specializes in the listing of Linux applications, but this site also comes with a listing of Linux alternatives to Windows or OS X programs, and mixes free with commercial.

Good: Wide range of programs, just about the whole of what you might find in Synaptic and then some. Has both free and commercial applications for those who prefer those choices, and offers alternatives for those switching from Windows or Apple. Allows visitors to sign up for weekly emails that highlight new applications just entered.

Bad: Some listings are merely links to other sites, especially commercial applications. Can't tell 32 from 64-bit processors so it's up to you to install the proper version. Allows unknown developers to park programs here—so know what you're getting before committing.

Muon Package Manager

The primary KDE package manager, about 90% of the included programs will work just fine in other shells. Relatively unknown outside of KDE circles for some reason. Can be found in the Ubuntu repositories. Recent updates have turned it into a software center, package manager and update manager.

Good: Can update installed programs as well as the OS itself. Remove the titles and you'd swear it's Synaptic or Ubuntu Software Center at first glance. Offers a good selection of programs. Intuitive interface and nearly every program has a rating up front instead of having to dig.

Bad: Also unknown outside of KDE circles because many assume these programs can't be run outside that desktop (not true). Unfortunately, the 10% that won't work can really gum up your system. Mainly a 11.x and 12.x proposition; at this point it's nice but Synaptic offers pretty much the same.

PlayDeb.net

Sister site to GetDeb.net, above, this one lists games—about 100 spread out over 26 pages. Offers emulators for long extinct and modern gaming systems, although you'll have to cough up the game ROM chips or code to run them. You can link from GetDeb.net, or go to www.playdeb.net/welcome.

Good: Offers some games not found in repositories, along with website links and videos. Narratives give what Ubuntu versions each game will work on — instead of finding out the hard way.

Bad: After the fifth page or so,

the links are mainly dead, and some won't install because developers defected to non-deb standards. No clue as to file size, and some are humongous. Hardly inspires confidence by indicating they don't guarantee quality or content.

repogen.simplylinux.ch

Not a program manager or listing agent, this site specializes in creating PPA source lists that you can copy and paste into another package manager. This, in turn, allows for programs to be listed and eventually downloaded. Go to http://repogen.simplylinux.ch/ for additional information.

Good: Very comprehensive listing of sources, just about everything is covered here from the well-known to the obscure. You merely click on what you want, and press Generate to create a PPA listing that can be exported to your manager of choice. Easy interface that anybody can understand, and has a separate link titled DebGen that will generate Debian sources, most of which can be used in Ubuntu. You can actually choose sources from various countries (why, I don't know).

Bad: As with all PPA sources, some are dead out of the gate. I have no doubt a few of these are unstable or beta sources, so be careful what you download.

Softpedia.com

Mix of Windows, Mac and Linux programs, this site offers nearly 900 Linux apps, some of which don't appear readily available via the usual repositories or other package managers.

Good: Wide mix of programs, and descriptions are better than most. Users reviews are often included, and those utilizing RSSOwl or other RSS readers can set up a feed that provides the top 10 to 20 programs of the day.

Bad: Not everything is a program, and some links go to ads. No way of knowing if your program is tar, deb or otherwise, so have Alien at the ready. Sometimes Windows and OS X programs get tossed in with Linux, so watch what you click.

SourceForge.net

Site offering roughly 650 Linux programs, this is a distant kin to Softpedia, mentioned above, and has programs for Windows, OS X and various Linux alternatives. One of the few sites I know of where Linux listings outnumber those for Windows.

Good: Good number of programs along with user ratings and screenshots. Using the advanced search function, you can separate the expensive programs from the free offerings. In advanced mode, hovering over a program's title causes the area to expand with more information such as user rating, an in-depth description and last update status.

Bad: Unless you use advanced search options, pages are a mix of Windows, OS X, and Linux programs — with no indication of OS limitations until you click on the header. Page loading can be tedious. Most of what I saw can be retrieved easier from already existing sources on your computer.

Synaptic Package Manager

Standard equipment up through Ubuntu 10.04, this manager was replaced by Ubuntu Software Center. Offers over 30,000 programs, shells, drivers and codecs, across a wide spectrum: Gnome, KDE, Unity, e17, etc. If it's not already installed (go to System/Administration), you can get it from the Ubuntu repositories. KDE version was called Adept, but that has been replaced by Muon.

Good: Terrific number of programs. Adding PPA sources can increase that number greatly. Good search and filter options. Allows the option of using older PPA sources for those preferring earlier or discontinued programs.

Bad: Installs outdated and/or useless dependencies galore, sometimes hundreds of megabytes beyond what the actual program carries. May uninstall another program for the one you choose, so read the warning box that pops up before authorizing installation. Descriptions, especially for earlier programs, can border on cryptic, and the screenshot function rarely works. Interface is getting old.

Ubuntu.com

What better website than the developers sponsoring the OS you're using? Just go to http://packages.ubuntu.com/.

Good: You can spend days perusing the listings, and it has active collections back to Hardy Heron, as well as current and beta releases. Ancient history buffs can find releases going back to 2004 (Warty Warthog). If it's here, it's safe.

Bad: Can get pokey, and visiting as a new Ubuntu version is released is just begging to test the old adage "slow as molasses..." Often defeats itself by stating the same programs are offered through "proper" software channels (such as USC, below, or Synaptic). Old programs may come with dependencies no longer necessary.

Ubuntu Software Center/Centre (USC)

Now standard in Ubuntu, USC replaces Synaptic as a manager, and GDebi as a package handler. Much like Synaptic, it offers roughly 35,000 packages, but this figure increases as users add sources (and can decrease if you trim the fat). Some variants delete it for Synaptic, but it can be added, oddly enough, via Synaptic. Once called AppCenter. 12.04 version has an area just for periodicals , including Full Circle Magazine.

Good: Allows users to peruse the program catalog while downloading others — unlike Synaptic, which freezes out additional activity during that phase. Better descriptions than what Synaptic offers, and, since everything is geared to Ubuntu, you don't have to worry about compiling, unpacking, etc.

Bad: Commercial and free offerings are side-by-side, so watch what you click. Loads of dependencies without regard to usefulness, and offers no way of deleting them. If the program source is slow, it can jam the works and the cancel button doesn't always respond. If you don't have USC, be careful of the version you install, since so many are offered.

Ubuntu Tweak

Tweak is an add-on for Ubuntu—with some like UE and Super OS providing it as standard. Offers a handful of programs (maybe 30 to 40), but will also clean up junk files and dead kernels, add repositories, and can be used to tweak desktop settings, at least in Gome. Go to ubuntu-tweak.com for information. Although primarily a Gnome manager, it'll work just fine on KDE and other shells, albeit with reduced functions. Available from the getdeb repository as ubuntu-tweak.

Good: Pretty much does it all, and seems to excel in everything. Probably the best of the group, and undoubtedly one of the safest avenues for removing unnecessary files and installation leftovers (better than BleachBit or Computer Janitor).

Bad: Miniscule program listing. Get the proper version for your OS (the main one at the website is for 11.x and above, and loading it on earlier versions may cause problems). Reduced functions in other than Gnome, and now that Canonical is canceling that for Unity, what'll happen to Tweak? Before adding PPA sources, make sure you read the descriptions since some are unstable or in beta.

LETTERS

Every month we like to publish some of the emails we receive. If you would like to submit a letter for publication, compliment or complaint, please email it to: letters@fullcirclemagazine.org. PLEASE NOTE: some letters may be edited for space.

HAM Radio articles, please

I am a HAM radio operator, and have been one since 1974. I sure would like to see some reviews or articles on the many HAM radio programs available in Linux. I have spoken to many HAM's who use Linux and love it. Three logging programs, APRS (Automatic Packet Reporting), Igate, Digipeater, and such. I know hams would love to see an article every now and then.

L. B. Little

Ronnie says: *Any HAM radio operators out there who'd like to write an article on Linux software?*

My Desktop

Hey, just want you to know that [my desktop] is by far the best part of the mag. Having peeps show off their mods/themes is awesome, and it would be nice to have them available for download. You should have a contest to see who can have the sickest theme!

Jason Gunther

CC Hits

Thanks for listing some great music sites. I just wanted to draw your attention to a project I run called CCHits.net. It's a site which promotes Creative Commons music, and its artists, and shows (both radio and podcasts) which play it. The site also features daily, weekly and monthly podcasts playing a track each day, reviewing those tracks each week, and playing a top-forty chart show each month. It's been running for about a year and a half with (currently) over 600 internal (daily/weekly/monthly) shows, and nearly 150 externally listed shows. The site currently lists 644 tracks, but I'm always on the lookout for more great tracks.

It's run entirely by one guy - me! and the code is totally open source (it's at Gitorious.net) with open (CC-Zero) data - only user credentials and API keys are masked.

Jon "The Nice Guy" Spriggs

Promoting Ubuntu

I have thought for some time that since the Linux community does not advertise to the general public, that we need some kind of bulletin that we could print out and leave in various places we visit during the normal course of our daily travels. It would tell about Full Circle Magazine, Ubuntu.com, Kubuntu.com, and other Linux links. We need to get the word out. Even some bumper stickers may be in order. Maybe you could stick something in Full Circle each month for us to print out and pass around.

Jim Bainter

Ronnie says: *Anyone looking for printable stuff should have a look at: http://spreadubuntu.org/ it has downloadable leaflets, booklets, presentations, and such-like.*

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- linkedin.com/company/full-circle-magazine
- ubuntuforums.org/forumdisplay.php?f=270

Podcast

Just a quick line to say how much I enjoyed and looked forward to Robin Catlin's podcasts (as I do with the magazine, obviously). He will be missed. I always thought his views/rants on Linux and Ubuntu were spot-on (which means they

were in line with my own views/rants, I guess). So cheers Robin - hope you put in some guest appearances on the new show. Good luck to Les Pounder and his team!

Les Waters

Ronnie says: *Yes, in case you missed the current Full Circle Side-pod, Robin and Dave are handing the main Full Circle Podcast over to Les Pounder and the Blackpool LUG who are hoping to release a regular monthly podcast with Robin and Dave releasing a Side-pod when possible. Best of luck to Les and co.!*

Linux Mint & Tablets

I've been using Ubuntu for about four years, and have a Windows machine for a couple of programs, but have almost managed to eliminate Windows by using Wine. I also have an Asus netbook with 2Gb of Ram and a 250Gb hard disk which I use quite a lot and got enticed to Linux Mint 12. I installed Mint on my netbook and it even recognized the extra touch-pad button to turn it on and off. Even Ubuntu didn't recognize this button!

Now, regarding the Unity/Windows 8 tablet debacle, so clearly described in the FCM#60 article by Art Schreckengost. I can understand why Canonical is going the Unity route as this is the way Windows 8 seems to be heading. It is aimed at tablet, touch-screen computers and TVs. On several trips to computer and mobile phone shops I have had a look at some non-Apple tablets on the market. The tablets on sale are very confusing as some have a USB port some don't, most have reduced storage capacity and memory, some are cheap, but most are very expensive, and as someone who is a gadget freak the tablet is one thing I have not rushed out to buy. Why buy a tablet, with reduced specs, when you can get a high spec netbook at a better price? In my opinion the tablet is not going to last in the market.

Allan Hambidge

FCM#61 WINNERS!

Edward Kilb
Josh Dollins
Boriss Redkins
Dragan Ralic
Keith Bowerman

Congratulations! You should hear from the author, shortly.

My Sad Inbox

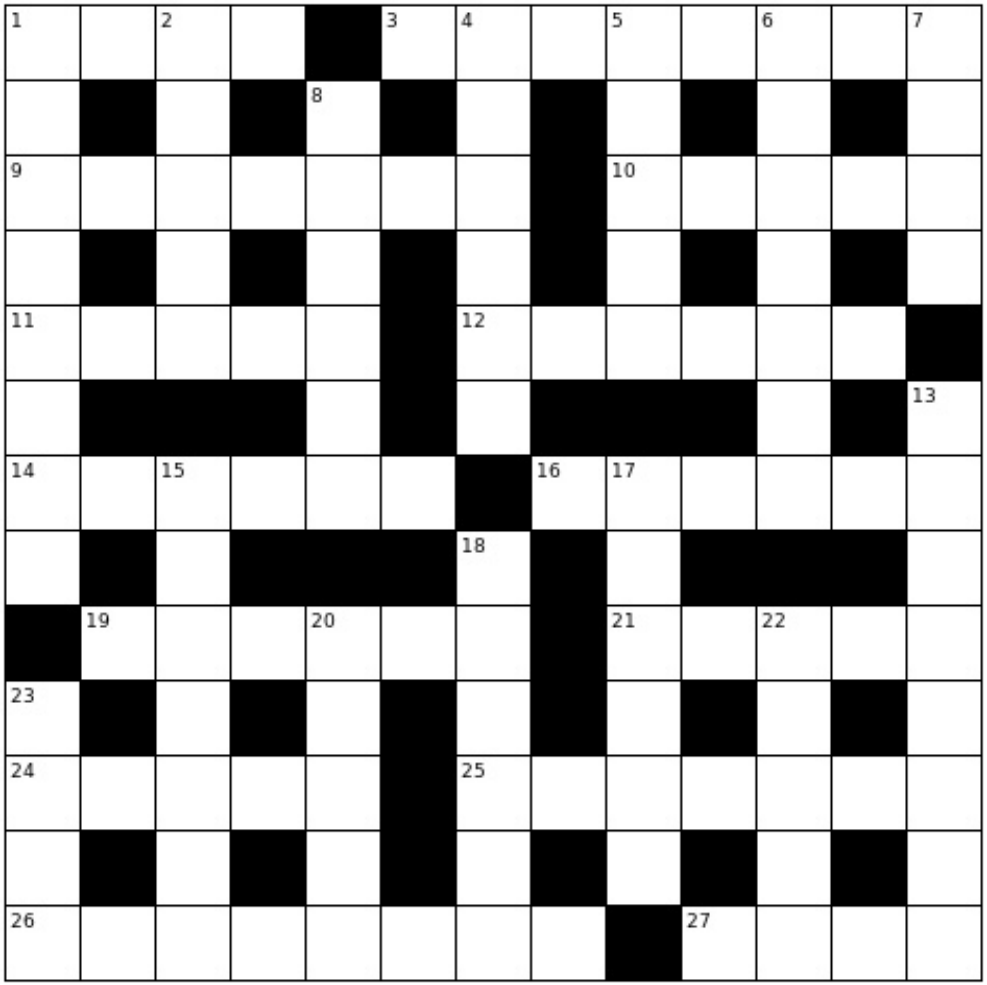
My inbox is looking rather empty again folks. Surely you have something on your mind that you want to say. Doesn't need to be just about Ubuntu. It can be about any of the other *buntu's, in fact, it can be about anything Linux.

Whether you've written an app, need help with something, have a quick (non-technical) question, or just want to show us something you've done, this is the place for it.

Send it to:
letters@fullcirclemagazine.org

PUZZLES

If you would like to submit a puzzle for publication, please email it to: letters@fullcirclemagazine.org. Solutions are on the second last page of this issue. No peeking!



Across

1 Trashes non-core binary files (4)
3 Release anteater - left to sleep - then returns to cut down trees at home (8)
9 Quantal month? (7)
10 Note, man heard (and left) message (5)
11 Means of communication for aerial exercise (5)
12 The French exam is most recent (6)
14 Permissions not left to superuser initially (6)
16 To do list from, reportedly, a male - or a female? (6)
19 See 27
21 Topic from article applied to myself (5)
24 Remember topless hot stuff? (5)
25 Embarrassed interpreter hides in a shed (7)
26 Annoyed after new Unity starts to unravel in alpha (8)
27/19 Dishonestly earn 5s for 1d (4,6)

Down

1 Queen on ship, right in front ahead of navigators (8)
2 Fashionable North Atlantic terminal (5)
4 Ladies, with 9s, upgrade these months (6)
5 Visitor from east in blast (5)
6 I sail on clumsily into meeting (7)
7 Valueless countries up to 50:50 (4)
8 Challenge in a class of its own? (6)
13 Recklessly lend a car to get to appointments (8)
15 Perform, not much, for some data (7)
17 Apple contains meat? (6)
18 Get away from shenanigans, having lost recent years (6)
20 Extreme emails removed from criminal senders and geeks (5)
22 More than one Eth0? This sets the scene! (5)
23 Old boys go to university - nowadays this is global (4)

Crossword by Marlon Mann

The solutions to all the puzzles are on the second last page of this issue. **No peeking!**

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Q&A

Compiled by Gord Campbell

If you have Ubuntu-related questions, email them to: questions@fullcirclemagazine.org, and Gord will answer them in a future issue. Please include as much information as you can about your problem.

Q I have a high-end Nvidia graphics card, and Ubuntu 12.04 doesn't like it at all.

A To boot, hold shift from the BIOS boot to get a Grub menu. Press "e" on getting the Grub menu. Using the arrow keys, navigate to, and delete, quiet and splash, and type the word nomodeset in their place. Press Ctrl-x to boot.

Add this in Software Sources: ***ppa:ubuntu-x-swat/x-updates***

Now you can install a later version of the video driver, which works for most systems.

Q I am using Ubuntu 12.04, 64-bit. Skype sees that I have a webcam, but it doesn't send images.

A Install the ia32-libs. Launch Skype with this command:

```
bash -c
'LD_PRELOAD=/usr/lib/i386-
linux-
gnu/libv4l/v4l1compat.so
skype'
```

It seems v4l1compat.so moves around from version to version.

Q When I try to open Software Center, it opens and then closes before I get a chance to use it.

A Run these commands:

```
sudo apt-get update

sudo apt-get upgrade
```

Q How do I set Shotwell NOT to start when I insert a disk, or SD card, or Flash drive with pictures on it?

A If you're on Precise, the setting is in System Settings > System > Details > Removable Media.

Q My wacom tablet doesn´t work in ubuntu 12.04.

A Google: *Wacom tablet drivers launchpad*

Download the .deb file, install it, and reboot.

Q I have a printer attached to my Ubuntu desktop. I would like to print on it from my Windows netbook.

A See this web page: https://help.ubuntu.com/community/NetworkPrintingWithUbuntu

Q How can I install Sopcast (peer-to-peer streaming, mostly Chinese, TV) in a recent Ubuntu?

A Add the following to your software sources: ***ppa:ferramroberto/sopcast***

After a reload, you can install sopcast.

Q Where are the log files in ubuntu 12.04?

A (Thanks to ***cc7gir*** in the Ubuntu Forums.) /var/log/syslog

Q My computer has a GeForce FX5200 video card. Aptitude won't install the nvidia-173 package.

A (Thanks to ***papibie*** in the Ubuntu Forums.) The oldest versions of the driver (173 and 93) are not compatible with the new versions of Ubuntu; actually any Linux distribution using an up-to-date version of Xorg. For now, I would recommend using the default open source driver, called nouveau. These days it is working pretty well supporting Nvidia cards.

Q How can I create a list of all the programs on my PC?

A Open Terminal and paste this command:

```
dpkg -l > Desktop/applist.txt
```

That will put a file on your desktop, listing all the "packages" on your computer, with descriptions. The list is probably a lot longer than you expected.

Q How to play .rm files in Ubuntu 12.04 64-bit?

A Those are Real Media files. Use Gnome mplayer. VLC might handle them.

Q When I tell my computer to shut down, it goes through all the motions as if it will shut down, but then it stays on.

A Add acpi=force in grub with these commands:

```
gksudo gedit
/etc/default/grub
```

find the line which looks like this:

```
GRUB_CMDLINE_LINUX=""
```

Change it to:

```
GRUB_CMDLINE_LINUX="acpi=forc
e"
```

save the file and exit, then run:

```
sudo update-grub
```

It won't help until after you reboot.

Q How can I use an external monitor with my Asus netbook?

A Install Arandr. For more information: http://www.ubuntugeek.com/arandr-a-simple-visual-front-end-for-xrandr.html

Q How can I install TTF fonts in Ubuntu?

A There are two methods at: http://www.wikihow.com/Install-TrueType-Fonts-on-Ubuntu

Q Can I develop and run Visual Basic applications in Ubuntu?

A Yes. See http://monodevelop.com/ (This was the biggest surprise of the year for me!)

Q My Sennheiser HD 201 headphone works fine with Windows 7 and even with my Galaxy smartphone. But when I use it in Ubuntu, I can hardly hear any sound. The volume is very low.

A In ALSAmixer, change the "Front", "Side" and "Center" levels. Even though the headphone value stays at zero, the headphones should work nicely.

Q Where should I put environment variables?

A See: https://help.ubuntu.com/community/EnvironmentVariables#System-wide_environment_variables

Put them in /etc/environment

Q I have a 70 GB SSD and a large hard drive in my laptop. I want to ensure my personal data is encrypted, but still take advantage of the speed of the SSD for loading programs. How should I set it up?

A During installation, put your root partition (/) on the SSD, and /home and swap on the hard drive. Specify that you want /home encrypted. Select a powerful password, more than eight characters, with upper and lower case letters, numbers, and other symbols. A lot of the space on your SSD will be wasted, but that's life.

Q Why does Ubuntu use the Linux kernel instead of the Linux-libre kernel?

A (Thanks to ***3rdalbum*** in the Ubuntu Forums) It's better to enable people to use Linux, than to prevent them from using Linux.

Tips and Techniques

It's Mint

Spring of 2012 was time to choose a new "primary computing environment" to use for the next few years. For me, 64-bit Linux Mint 13 with Cinnamon is the answer.

I was happy with Ubuntu 10.04, but 10.10 improved the support for my AMD Phenom II processor. It was my primary system until April 10, 2012, when Canonical dropped support. (They could have at least kept it going for the few days until Ubuntu 12.04 was released.) I had an open partition, so I installed Mint 12 with Cinnamon.

It works the way I work! All my hardware works, it took about 20 seconds to install my printer. I can share a folder and access shared folders. My video adaptor is well supported. There's a program menu and a single panel at the bottom, so most of the screen real-estate is available. Conky works, there's a weather applet, the date is available in a pleasing format. It uses Nautilus as its file manager. (I wanted to like Kubuntu, but its file manager made me crazy.) The buttons are where I like them. Menus are part of the program's window. Skype works (see above) and the Youtube HD extension automatically picks the resolution I prefer.

When Mint 13 became available, I installed it on my laptop. Works nicely. (I also have Ubuntu 12.04 on the laptop, and it works nicely, but not the way I work.) The desktop installation went smoothly.

My "primary computing environment" is defined by where my real email is, and where I run Miro, my podcast catcher. I still use Evolution for email, and have become expert at backing it up here, and restoring it there. Similarly, I export my web bookmarks here and import them there. I'm chicken, so I still backup my files before installing a new version, even though I've never lost anything during installation.

Cinnamon is not perfect. I've run into a couple of minor bugs, but I could work around them. I expect it will only get better.

Even though I test new versions/distros frequently, moving to a new version is not my favorite activity. Like Ubuntu 12.04, Mint 13 is a long-term support release. It's possible I will use it until 2016, when Ubuntu 16.04 will go up against Mint 17. By then, I might even find a compelling reason to get a new computer. (My Phenom II is almost three years old.) Or maybe, by then, we will all be using tiny, low-power computers based on the ARM architecture. Ain't change great?

After a long career in the computer industry, including a stint as editor of Computing Canada and Computer Dealer News, **Gord** is now more-or-less retired.

AUDIO FLUX

Written by Nicola Cappellini

The old saying, "you get what you pay for," is not always true, and these tracks are the proof.

Lee Roosevere

"Do what you can"
http://bit.ly/9R3XZx
Low-down funk for those convinced it never went out of style, mixed together by Lee Roosevere. You can hear other creations of his on freemusicarchive.org. I discovered this one on CCHits.net.

Nico Latinidade

"No mundo da flor"
http://bit.ly/KfQqfn
Born in Argentina, raised in Italy, educated in England, and living in Brazil, how could we expect his music to be anything but spectacular? A rare case of a gentle voice that you won't fall asleep listening to. Download the album free at NicoLatinidade.com.

Artus Fochi

"Candombe lagrima"
http://bit.ly/LD1rPv
Listen free on Soundcloud. Rich guitar chords: check. Velvety vocals: check. Clarinet solo: double check.

OxTet

"New whack fling"
http://bit.ly/LU27N3
Moog-synth rock band with curious groove. One of the few groups brazen enough to venture into serial 12-tone row land. Recorded live, download the entire set from Soundcloud.

Huun Huur Tu

"Chyraa Khoor"
http://bit.ly/NssNZb
From the Russia-Mongolia border, Tuvan band Huun Huur Tu weaves rich textures together with the characteristic throat-singing of the region. The voice sings two notes at the same time, or maintains a drone with a whistle. Very interesting - download some of their music from freemusicarchive.org.

Next month: more recommendations and a tutorial on some neat things you can do with Ardour.

Nicola is a freelance musician, translator, and web-whiz. He can be seen on the stage, behind the scenes, and in the zone - for whatever task is at hand.

Wasteland 2 - the crowd-funded kickstarter project has finally settled on a game engine for the game - the two semi-finalists were Unigine's game engine which produced Oil Rush, and Unity (not the Ubuntu interface). Unigine was offered free-of-charge to Wasteland 2 but it lost out to the Unity 3D Game engine as the final choice. Unlike Unigine, currently there is no Linux version of Unity 3D engine. No official reason was given why Unigine lost out to Unity but conjecture is that it's easier to import assets into Unity 3D than Unigine. Also, while Unigine was offered for free to use, support would cost extra, and the developers would have no access to the source code. On the other hand, the source code of Unity3D has been given to the Wasteland 2 developers to build a linux version of the game engine. A list of Unity powered games can be found here: http://unity3d.com/gallery/made-with-unity/game-list, I am familiar only with Rochard and Ballastic

Next up, **The Shadowrun Project** has completed its kickstarter run - earning over 2 million in crowdsource funding, and will have a Mac and Linux port of the game for sale, and releasing at the same time as the windows version.

Finally, another Kickstarter project: **Legends of Eisenwald** http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1684781151/legends-of-eisenwald, this time a real-time strategy action RPG. The developers have pledged to bring out Mac and Linux versions of their game if they successfully get to $100k. The project met its basic pledge amount of fifty thousand dollars, but didn't quite make it to the $100k - reaching only $83k. We can but hope that they'll maybe use the extra $33k for a Linux version.

Clone Wolf

Clone Wolf: Protector is part 2D platformer and part tower defense. Originally created in less than 48 hours as a Ludum Dare submission in 2011, Jaroslav Meloun (aka Jarnik) has since expanded it into a full game with eleven levels and ten bosses spanning five environments.

Story

You play as Wolf, a (bearded) carpenter who lost his family and entire village, inspiring him to begin his journey to protect others. Throughout his travels, Wolf meets plenty of helpful citizens who aid him during his quest to defeat the monsters that plague their villages. It is a straightforward story of a hero on a quest with plenty of comical bits and classic references thrown in. The jokes are well timed and well placed, alluding to the classics without overt mockery or trite, which is refreshing to see.

Gameplay

For those familiar with the concept and gameplay of Braid, getting used to the mechanics of cloning Wolf will be a breeze. Other players may feel a little clumsy trying to maneuver numerous clones around for the first time, but the controls are simple enough to get used to quickly.

You can use the cloning powers of the magical medallion to help Wolf to reach higher places, simultaneously fight incoming hordes from both sides of the screen, and target the weak points of the bosses that you encounter. Wolf's wood-crafting skill is a nice touch that allows you to rebuild damaged houses and construct palisades to keep your foes at bay. This works pretty well most of the time, but there are moments when you're better off hacking at the enemy rather than trying to build or rebuild.

Graphics

The game was built on the Flixel engine and runs via Flash which provides a (mostly) smooth, glitch-free experience on Ubuntu 12.04. During the first playthrough there was an instance of unresponsive keys in full-screen mode, but it seems to have been an isolated incident.

The pixel style graphics are appropriately complemented by a nice chiptune soundtrack by Fuxoft. There isn't a lot of variation to the environments other than a few changes in color scheme and minor details. But this isn't a huge deal as the pacing of the game requires you to focus on controlling your clones rather than the scenery.

Overall, Clone Wolf: Protector is a clever hybrid of side-scrolling platformer and tower defense goodness - with a story that is as fun as the gameplay. Clone Wolf is part of the Indie Underdog Pack Bundle, along with four other DRM-free games for just $3.99. You can also purchase it on Desura or direct from Jarnik's site: http://www.jarnik.com/1062-clone-wolf-protector.

Pros:
- fun, addictive gameplay
- good graphics and soundtrack
- humorous twist on a classic plot

Cons:
- fairly short, can be completed quickly
- environments lack some variety

Jennifer is a fine arts student from the Chicago-land area. You can find her on Google+ or follow @missjendie on Twitter.

Urban Terror

Urban Terror is a multi-platform first person shooter for your home computer. It runs natively in Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. This is how a game should be designed. Open to game players of any operating system, not just Windows.

And, like many games available on Linux, Urban Terror is freely available to all users. The website itself (http://www.urbanterror.info) is ad-supported with banner ads and they request that you do not block them. A minor request to be sure and one easily accepted by disabling any ad-blocker for their site.

This is a multi-player game based on the Quake game engine. It is produced by FrozenSand, which does a good job living up to its motto of "fun over realism". Their website describes the game as an unique combination of realism and fun, a Hollywood tactical shooter. I would have to agree that it is indeed both an enjoyable and addictive game.

After the game is first installed and run, a short tutorial demo is played. It really doesn't require any interaction from the player. It just runs through the basic default keyboard and mouse commands. There are other commands that are not mentioned in the tutorial - but are found throughout the website, including tweaks and tips that can be found in the forums.

Once the tutorial is finished, you set your username, which can be changed, as well as other information about your in-game character: weapons, armor and extra equipment, plus whatever color you want added to your default uniform to set you apart from others.

Then it is on to a server. There are thousands of them - each running different types of games, some are password protected. You have to be a member of a specific game group (called clans) to join and play on their servers. You also have the option of starting a local game that can be played over a LAN, or even running a full server that would be added to the list.

Gameplay itself is set in one of several maps which have their own challenges, including weather conditions. There are several modes of play. The modes do not change from round to round, but the maps will. The various game modes provide several team-based modes: Bomb & Defuse, Capture & Hold, Capture the Flag, Follow the Leader, Team Deathmatch & Team Survivor, and the non-team mode of Free-for-all.

With each round, respawning after death may occur within the round or at the end of the round depending on the game mode. The map will change at the end of the round as well. Depending on the play mode, the rounds can be timed or until a specific event occurs. Then, of course, a winner or winning team is declared.

Personally, I'm not much of a computer gamer. I am an old-school paper and pencil gamer. So, when I find a computer game that I like, I tend to stay with it for some time. I currently play on the pm (Pizza Militia) servers. Why? Well, because I connected to it once and someone was helpful to me as a n00b playing the game. I do intend on setting up my own server in the near future and hope to get a following going. If that happens I may register an official clan with Urban Terror as well.

MY DESKTOP

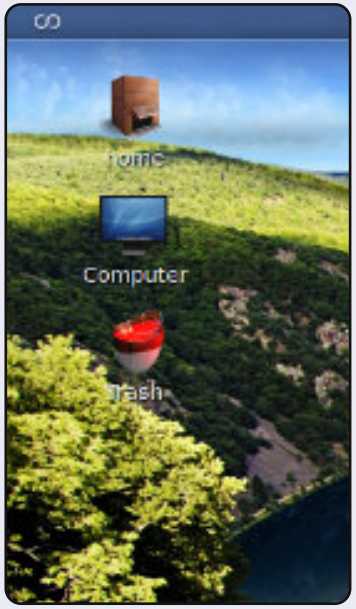
Your chance to show the world your desktop or PC. Email your screenshots and photos to: misc@fullcirclemagazine.org and include a brief paragraph about your desktop, your PC's specs and any other interesting tidbits about your setup.

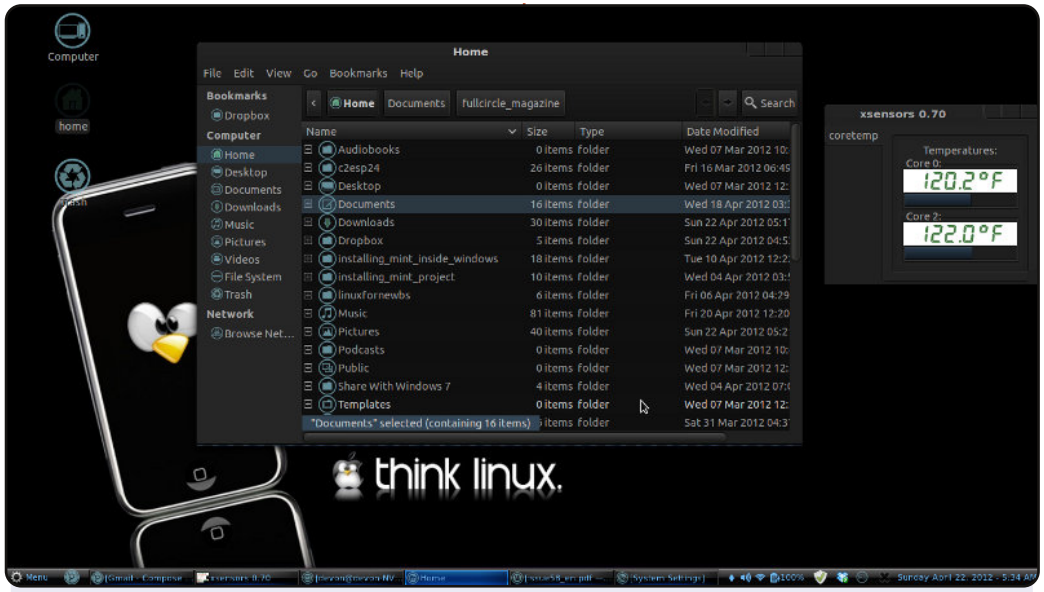
This is my desktop: Linux Mint 12 (Lisa) 32-bit running on an Intel Core 2 Duo 2.93GHz processor with 2GB RAM and 500GB of disk space.

The shell theme is ***zukitwo shell***. The dock below is awn dock, and I also added some screenlets on the right.

The desktop icons are custom. I used to be an Ubuntu user but switched to LM 12 recently.

Anuvab

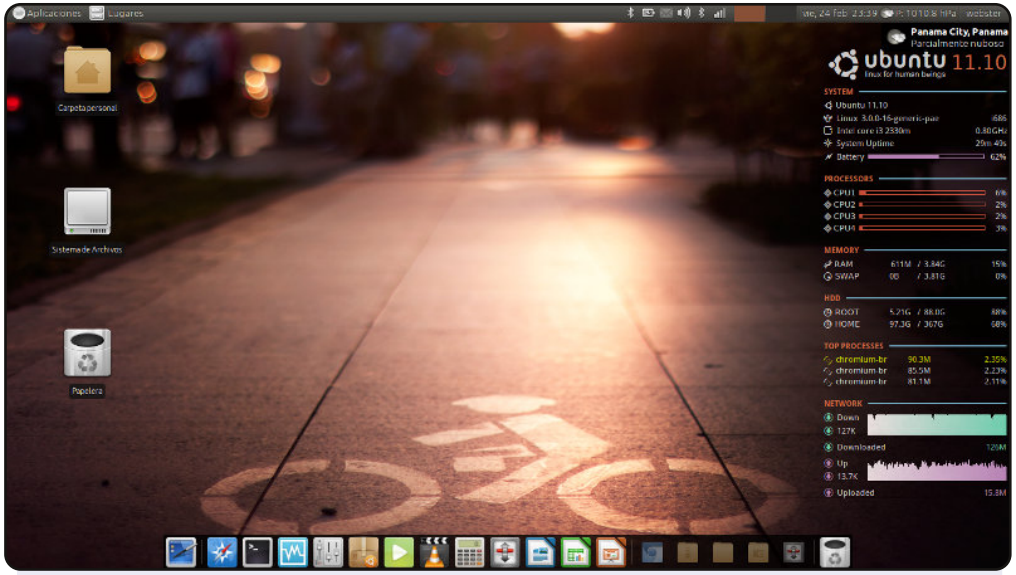




I'm running Linux Mint 12 with the Cinnamon desktop on a Gateway NV59C notebook computer. Specs: Intel Core i3 2.27GHz with 4GB DDR3 RAM - 3.6 Usable, 320GB HDD and 128MB Integrated Intel HD Graphics. I personally prefer dark themes, and, if this theme were in red, I would have it in red. But, the blue looks great too, on top of the black.

Cinnamon Theme: Dark Cold (http://cinnamon-spices.linuxmint.com/themes/view/16)
GTK+ Theme: OMG-Dark (http://gnome-look.org/content/show.php/OMG_Suite?content=149294)
Window Theme: OMG-Light (http://gnome-look.org/content/show.php/OMG_Suite?content=149294)
Icon Theme: malys-uniblue (http://gnome-look.org/content/show.php/malys+-+uniblue?content=146392)

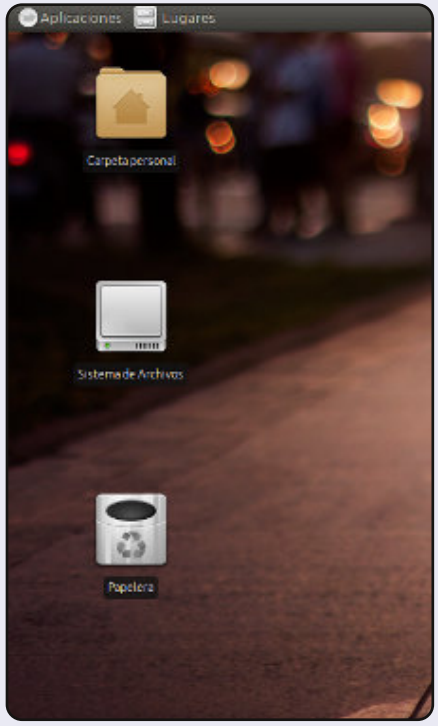
Devon Day

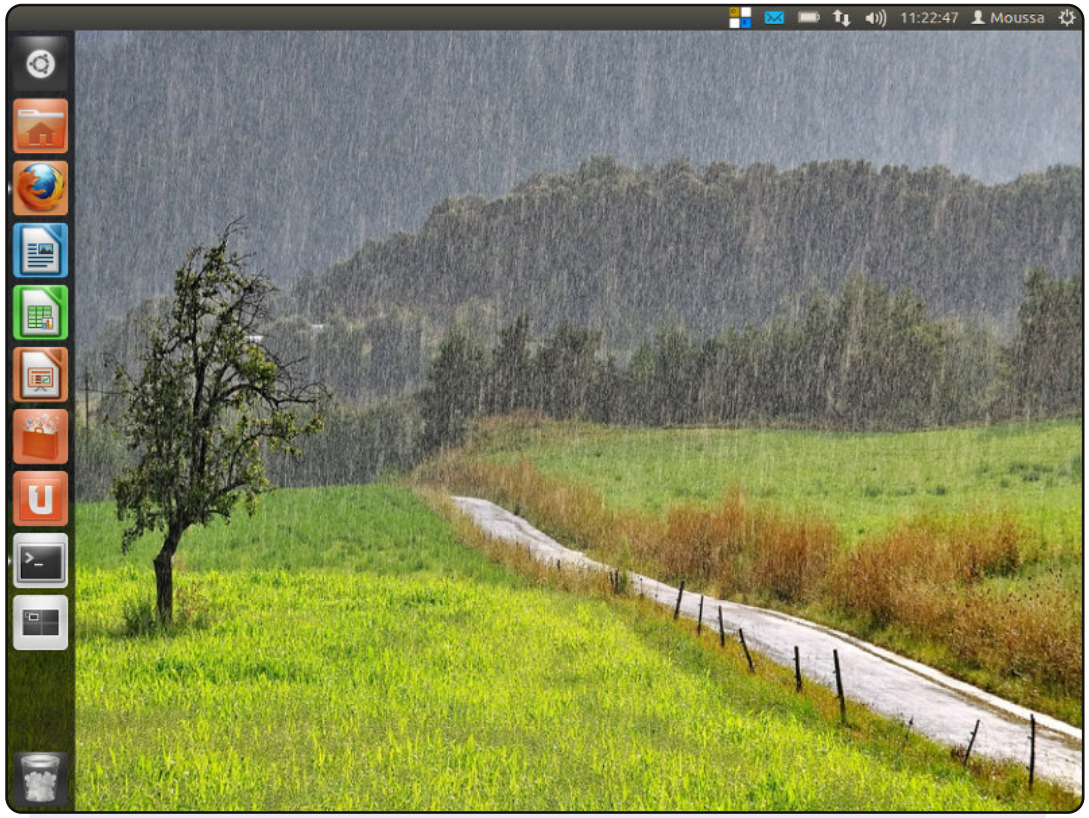


This is my desktop:

OS: Xubuntu 11.10
Theme: Ambiance Orange Xfce LXDE
Icons: Faenza-ambiance
System monitor: Conky (customized)
CPU: Intel Core i3 2330m
RAM: 4GB
HDD: 500GB

Webster Harewood





Hello, I'm Moussa. I come from Côte d'Ivoire. I'd like to use this opportunity to show you my desktop.

I've used Ubuntu since 2008, and I like it.

System specs:
Ubuntu Oneiric Ocelot on Toshiba Satellite Pro M10, 32-bit Intel Centrino 1.6 GHz; 80 GB HDD, 512 MB RAM; graphics, Nvidia Geforce4 420 Go.

I like Ubuntu's philosophy and its slogan: *"Linux for human beings"*.

Moussa

16X16 SUDUKO

6	9	C	0	7	8	3	1	2	4	F	E	D	A	B	5
2	8	E	F	0	6	D	5	A	B	C	3	7	4	1	9
D	1	A	3	B	F	2	4	6	7	5	9	8	0	E	C
7	4	B	5	A	E	C	9	1	8	D	0	F	2	6	3
8	5	0	4	1	D	B	7	E	F	9	C	2	6	3	A
F	2	9	6	4	0	8	A	D	5	3	B	C	E	7	1
B	D	7	A	F	3	E	C	0	6	2	1	4	5	9	8
C	3	1	E	6	9	5	2	4	A	7	8	B	D	0	F
9	B	D	2	C	A	F	8	3	0	6	5	E	1	4	7
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E	C	3	8	2	7	4	D	9	1	B	A	0	F	5	6
4	F	6	7	9	5	1	0	C	E	8	2	3	B	A	D
5	0	4	9	8	C	7	6	B	2	1	D	A	3	F	E
A	7	F	D	3	1	0	B	8	9	E	6	5	C	2	4
1	E	8	C	5	2	A	F	7	3	0	4	6	9	D	B
3	6	2	B	D	4	9	E	5	C	A	F	1	7	8	0

CROSSWORD

B	I	N	S	■	P	A	N	G	O	L	I	N
R	■	A	■	O	■	P	■	U	■	I	■	U
O	C	T	O	B	E	R	■	E	M	A	I	L
W	■	T	■	J	■	I	■	S	■	I	■	L
S	K	Y	P	E	■	L	A	T	E	S	T	■
E	■	■	■	C	■	S	■	■	■	O	■	C
R	I	G	H	T	S	■	A	G	E	N	D	A
S	■	I	■	■	■	E	■	O	■	■	■	L
■	A	G	E	N	T	S	■	T	H	E	M	E
M	■	A	■	E	■	C	■	H	■	T	■	N
E	M	B	E	R	■	A	B	A	S	H	E	D
N	■	I	■	D	■	P	■	M	■	O	■	A
U	N	T	E	S	T	E	D	■	U	S	E	R

CODE WORD

B	L	I	T	H	E	L	Y	■	O	A	F	S
■	E	■	A	■	L	■	O	■	R	■	I	■
P	S	Y	C	H	E	■	U	N	D	O	N	E
■	S	■	O	■	C	A	R	■	E	■	E	■
J	O	T	S	■	T	■	S	T	R	I	D	E
■	N	■	■	■	O	■	■	■	L	■	■	■
O	S	T	L	E	R	■	V	O	Y	E	U	R
■	■	■	E	■	■	■	A	■	■	■	N	■
Z	E	U	G	M	A	■	Q	■	T	W	I	G
■	M	■	I	■	T	A	U	■	W	■	T	■
G	E	R	B	I	L	■	E	L	I	X	I	R
■	R	■	L	■	A	■	R	■	S	■	E	■
K	Y	L	E	■	S	T	O	U	T	E	S	T

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
H	O	P	G	L	J	B	M	D	A	W	Z	X
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
K	R	Y	S	C	V	N	T	I	Q	F	U	E

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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Our thanks go to Canonical, the many translation teams around the world and **Thorsten Wilms** for the FCM logo.

Deadline for FCM#63:
Sunday 08th July 2012.

Release date for FCM#63:
Friday 27th July 2012.