

The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 198

July, 2023



ICYMI: Don't Be Too Quick To Trust That Blue Gmail Checkmark

***GIMP Tutorial:
Removing Objects
From A Photo***

***PCLinuxOS Forum
Family & Friends: parnote***

***The FTC Forces Ring To Take
User Privacy Seriously***

***Installing The Latest Version Of
Money Manager EX Via Flatpak***

PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

***PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner:
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The PCLinuxOS magazine

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The PCLinuxOS Magazine is a monthly online publication containing PCLinuxOS-related materials. It is published primarily for members of the PCLinuxOS community. The magazine staff is comprised of volunteers from the PCLinuxOS community.

Visit us online at <http://www.pclosmag.com>

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From The Chief Editor's Desk

So, just in case you're not aware, the website for The PCLinuxOS Magazine was struck by ransomware in mid-June. Other than just pure, criminal extortion, there was no reason to strike the magazine's website. The magazine website does not use trackers. The magazine website does not collect any PPI (personal private information). The magazine website does not sell anything. Everything there is offered up FOR FREE. There was literally NOTHING for the attackers to profit from. No customer data, nothing. Attacking the magazine website is just pure criminal extortion.

For the entire time that I've been the Chief Editor of the magazine – all 14 years – we've had the same "budget." You want to know what that budget is/was? \$0.00. Yep. That's right. Zero. Zilch. Nada.

Our staff is TOTALLY composed of VOLUNTEERS from the PCLinuxOS community. Everyone DONATES their time and talents to produce the magazine. No one gets paid, and we use FOSS software to publish the magazine. All of that software is available to any PCLinuxOS user from the PCLinuxOS repository.

The criminal wanted a ransom of 0.1 BitCoin to "unlock" all of our files. At the time of the attack, that amounted to nearly \$2,600 (U.S.). Of course, anyone who has even an inkling of knowledge about ransomware knows there's a



high likelihood that even if the ransom is paid, you'll never hear from the attacker again, and you'll never receive the means to unlock the captive files.

That forced us to "restore" the magazine site using an old backup from 2018. That was the

newest backup we had that we knew to be "clean." That meant that we "lost" everything from December 2018 until June 2023. Since we are all volunteers, spread out across the globe, we were able to fill in most of the missing files. The PDF files were restored pretty much the same day that the ransomware attack occurred.

The ebook files were restored a day later. The CrankyZombie, a.k.a. YouCanToo, had all of the HTML files, and had them restored in short order.

The only files we weren't able to recover were the "log files" that kept track of page visits and download counts. Que sera sera. We can live without those files.

The real urgency was to get the site back up and functional as quickly as possible. Between myself and Meemaw, we had all of the PDF files backed up on our computers. PCLinuxOS forum member The Chief sent me all of the missing ebook files, which I uploaded to the server. I was able to quickly recreate all of the missing cover art files from the collection of PDF files, using a special bash script that I had written and forgotten about.

Yes, it was a LOT of unnecessary work, thanks to some jacka\$\$ looking to extort money from an all volunteer magazine that has a budget of \$0. But, at the same time, it was necessary work, so that we could get the website back up and functional as quickly as possible.

We have yet to do a full postmortem on the ransomware attack, and it remains unclear how much information we will be able to obtain from that postmortem. Oftentimes, there is little left to go on when such attacks occur. As far as we were concerned, the really important thing was to return the website to full functionality as quickly as we could.

As much as I'd like to say what measures we've taken to help eliminate any future attacks and outages, I'll just leave it to say that measures have been taken. There's no need to advertise what measures we've taken, other than the fact that we HAVE undertaken additional measures to secure the files that make up the magazine website. All of our measures have been undertaken on our end, and will be completely transparent and unknown to the visitors of the magazine website. If there is a next time, it won't be as much of a scramble to restore the website to full functionality.

This month's cover image was created by Meemaw, from two images found on Pixabay. It celebrates camping, a popular summer activity, with the 4th of July holiday here in the U.S.

Until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, serenity, prosperity, and continued good health!

*Looking for an old article?
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**PCLinuxOS Magazine's
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The **PCLinuxOS** magazine

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ICYMI: Don't Be Too Quick To Trust That Blue Gmail Checkmark

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

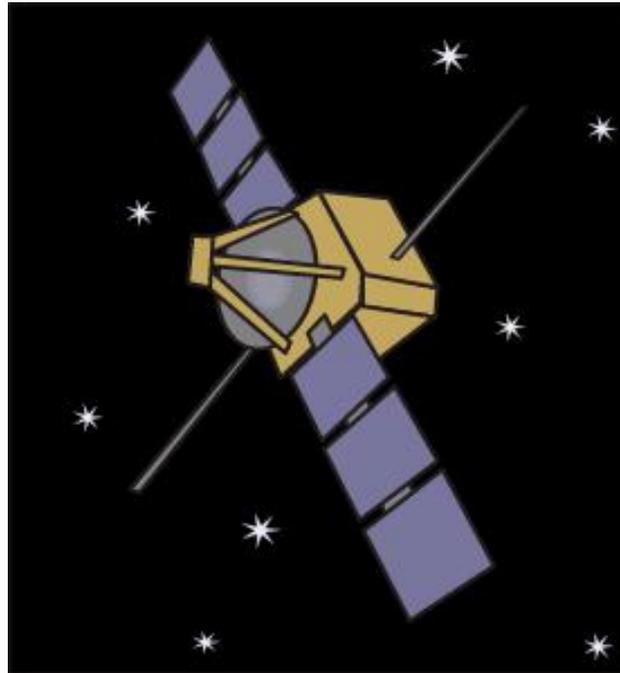


To say that Rust is the programming language of the future, as many people in the industry have [claimed](#), is not an overstatement, according to an [article](#) on Lifehacker. Rust has been quickly growing in popularity and demand since its official public launch in 2015, and computer programming is a highly desired skill to have in the job market today. If you've never taken a crack at it, this might be a great opportunity for you to try it out: **Google is launching a new free online course for people to learn how to use Rust**, a programming language designed to be safe, concurrent, and efficient. To access the [course](#), simply go to GitHub to get started. There is no need to register or login to begin.

The security of Gmail has always been one of its biggest selling points, but now one of its most important new security features is actively being used by hackers to scam users, according to an [article](#) from Forbes. Introduced last month, the [Gmail checkmark system](#)

highlights verified companies and organizations to users with a blue checkmark. The idea is to help users discern which emails are legitimate and which may have been sent by impersonators running scams. Unfortunately, scammers have tricked the system.

Scientists have repurposed human stomach cells into tissues that release insulin in response to rising blood sugar levels in a breakthrough that promises an effective way to manage conditions such as type 1 diabetes, according to an [article](#) on Science Alert.



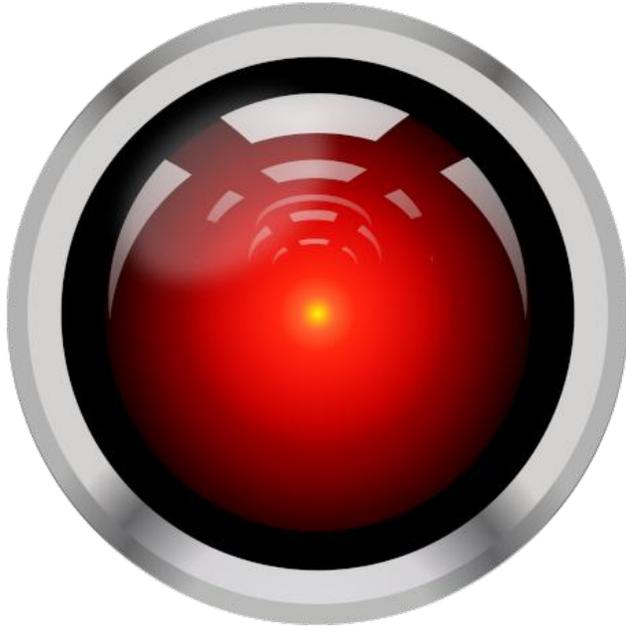
Remember how in last month's ICYMI article, we told you about Japanese researchers seeking

to "beam" electricity from solar panels in space back to Earth? It appears someone else beat them to it. **Researchers at the California Institute of Technology have reportedly beamed solar power from space to Earth without a single wire** — and they say it's a first, according to an [article](#) from Gizmodo.

A new report from researchers at the IT security solutions firm Dr. Web found that **over 100 Android apps that collectively have over an astounding 421 million downloads are infected with a new malware strain**, according to an [article](#) from Fox News. Hmmmm ... imagine that?! Google's "Play Store" seems to have turned into the Wild, Wild West. Or would that be the "Hacker's Playground Store?"

Google has removed 32 malicious extensions from the Chrome Web Store that could alter search results and push spam or unwanted ads, according to an [article](#) on BleepingComputer. Collectively, they come with a download count of 75 million. The extensions featured legitimate functionality to keep users unaware of the malicious behavior that came in obfuscated code to deliver the payloads.





The Center for AI Safety, a nonprofit founded in order to “reduce society-scale risk” from AI, **released a statement on AI development** designed to open up discussion and to foster wide adoption, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. The 22-word statement reads, “Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war.” Tech leaders Bill Gates, AI pioneer Geoffrey Hinton, and Google DeepMind CEO Demis Hassabis are among those signing the statement.

Verizon’s recently released 2023 Data Breach Investigations Report shows the **continued effectiveness of business email compromises (BEC)**, according to an [article](#) on TechRepublic. The study, which tracked incidents occurring between November 1, 2021 and October 31,

2022, found that BEC attacks doubled and represented more than 50% of social engineering attacks. The global study included incidents in the Asia-Pacific regions, EMEA, North America, and Latin America.



Reddit has proposed a new policy that could change the site as we know it, according to an [article](#) on Lifehacker. **Reddit recently announced that they will begin charging third-party apps to access their API.** In many cases, those charges are ree-dic-u-lous. The developer of one popular app, Apollo, has announced that the app will be discontinued, as the developer points that his “charge” will be about \$20 million. In protest, many subreddits will be “going dark” on June 12-14. [Here](#) is a list of subreddits that intend to “go dark” during this period (and a list of smaller subreddits [here](#)), and the list continues to grow. At the time of the writing of this article, over 2,000 subreddits planned to participate in the protest. This move comes atop Reddit’s plan to lay off 5% of its workforce, making this appear as if Reddit might be experiencing some cash flow problems and they plan to bolster their finances with this move

A small survey has revealed to researchers that **bedtime sex/orgasm is better than sleeping pills for some people**, according to an [article](#)

from MedPage Today. The findings were presented by Douglas Kirsch, MD, of Atrium Health in Charlotte, North Carolina, at the annual SLEEP meeting in Indianapolis, IN, hosted jointly by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the Sleep Research Society.

A new [paper](#) (PDF) from a trio of computer scientists at North Carolina State University claims that **users of Strava are susceptible to anyone finding their personal information**, despite the app’s efforts to allow users to anonymize things such as their home addresses, according to an [article](#) on Bicycling. A recent summary of the [report](#) points out that, while users start and end points (which are often their homes) can be hidden from the routes they post, the [app’s heatmap function](#) can be used to find what the report calls a “privacy loophole.”



NordVPN has released its list of the most common passwords of 2022, and it isn’t pretty. As much as has been said about using secure passwords, not using them on multiple sites, etc., etc., etc., people either aren’t getting the message ... or they just don’t care. I know that within the pages of The PCLinuxOS Magazine, we’ve addressed this issue far more times than I can count accurately. So, if you find

ICYMI: Don't Be Too Quick To Trust That Blue Gmail Checkmark

your password on this list, you might want to think about changing it, before some hacker or malcreant holds your personally identifiable private information hostage, or before they drain your meager/not-so-meager bank account. You. Have. Been. Warned. Ad Nauseum.

Sooo ... **which mobile platform has the largest market share, Android or iOS?** Well, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic, the answer may surprise you. Here's a hint: it depends on where you live.

Microsoft's planned \$69 billion purchase of video game company Activision Blizzard was temporarily blocked by a federal judge, giving more time for an antitrust review of the deal, according to an [article](#) on Fortune, and widely reported in the news media. U.S. District Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley in San Francisco ruled in support of a temporary restraining order sought by the Federal Trade Commission that will stop Microsoft from closing the deal.

this [article](#) on TechRepublic. A [report](#) from the Microsoft Defender Experts reveals a new multi-staged adversary in the middle phishing attack combined with a business email compromise attack targeting banking and financial institutions. The complex attack abuses trusted relationships between vendors, suppliers and more organizations involved in financial transactions.

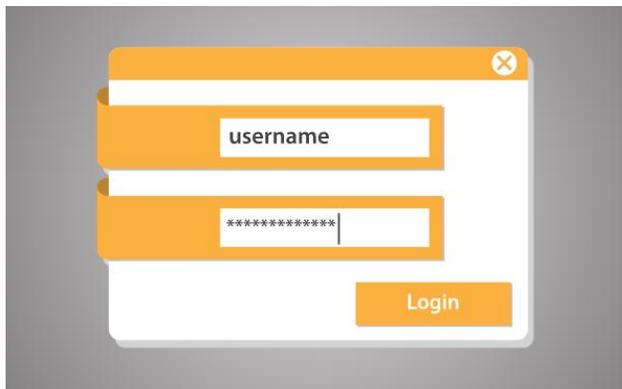
According to a [report](#) from CNN, **several US federal government agencies have been hit in a global cyberattack by Russian cybercriminals** that exploits a vulnerability in widely used MOVEit software, according to a top US cybersecurity agency. The US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency "is providing support to several federal agencies that have experienced intrusions affecting their MOVEit applications," Eric Goldstein, the agency's executive assistant director for cybersecurity, said in a statement.

A poll of security software buyers shows 39% of small and medium-sized businesses lost customer data due to cyberattacks, according

to an [article](#) on TechRepublic. More than half of small and medium-sized businesses in the U.S. and U.K. faced a successful cyberattack in the last year, according to a June 2023 study from security company BlackFog.



Instant Brands, the company behind the Instant Pot, has filed for bankruptcy, the latest in a growing string of one-time pandemic success stories to flounder as people have returned to their normal lives, according to an [article](#) on the Fast Company website.



New phishing and business email compromise campaigns increase in complexity, bypassing 2FA/MFA, according to



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She was 200 meters from the peak of Mount Everest, then turned back. Here's why, from an [article](#) on NPR (National Public Radio).

Elon Musk made waves in March when he called for a pause on A.I. development, joining hundreds of other tech luminaries in signing an open letter warning of the dangers of advanced artificial intelligence, according to an [article](#) from Fortune. **But he never thought anyone would heed the call, apparently.** “Well, I mean, I didn’t think anyone would

actually agree to the pause, but I thought, for the record I just want to say, ‘I think we should pause,’” the Tesla CEO [said](#) (YouTube video) yesterday at the VivaTech technology conference in France.

European lawmakers moved closer to passing a pioneering law on artificial intelligence, advancing legislation that aims to set a benchmark for the rapidly evolving — yet minimally regulated — technology, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic.

Chris Froome, 38, who has won the Tour de France four times (2013, 2015, 2016, 2017), has not been chosen as part of the Israel Premier Tech’s team for the tour this year, according to an [article](#) on Bicycling. After suffering extensive injuries from a [horrible crash](#) during the Critérium du Dauphiné in June 2019, Froome has struggled to get back to his highest level of racing. The Tour de France should be underway as this article is published.

Elton John gave what is expected to be his last-ever performance in Britain. It was “rock history in the making,” according to an [article](#) from The Guardian. The 76 year old performer is in the midst of his “Farewell Yellow Brick Road” tour.

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As if we don’t already have enough “supply chain” issues, **UPS workers are gearing up for a potential strike that would be the biggest U.S. labor walkout since the 1950s,** according to an [article](#) on CBS News. Members of the Teamsters union, which represents about 340,000 workers at the package delivery company, voted overwhelmingly to strike if no agreement is reached with UPS by the time the current contract expires on July 31.



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While Driving.

***Put Down Your
Phone & Arrive Alive.***



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by astronaut, on June 1, 2023, running openbox.

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner



Steak and Potato Foil Packets

serves 8

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 beef top sirloin steaks (1-1/2 pounds each)
- 3 pounds red potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper

DIRECTIONS:

Prepare the grill for medium heat or preheat the oven to 450F. Cut each steak into 4 pieces, for a total of 8 pieces. In a large bowl, combine steak, potatoes, onion, rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper.

Divide mixture among eight 18x12-in. pieces of heavy-duty foil, placing food on dull side of

foil. Fold foil around potato mixture, sealing tightly.

Place packets on grill or in oven; cook until potatoes are tender, 8–10 minutes on each side. Open packets carefully to allow steam to escape. If desired, sprinkle with additional rosemary.

TIPS:

Can you bake steak and potato foil packs in the oven?

Bake the steak and potato foil packs in a 400F oven for about 20–25 minutes.

Can you make steak and potato foil packs ahead of time?

If you want to simply throw the foil packs right on the grill without any prep immediately beforehand, you can assemble the packs up to 8 hours ahead of time. Keep them in the fridge until you're ready to cook.

NUTRITION:

Calories: 348 Carbs: 29g Fiber: 3g
Sodium: 677mg Protein: 40g



The FTC Forces Ring To Take User Privacy Seriously

by **Matthew Guariglia**

Electronic Frontier Foundation

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Amazon’s surveillance doorbell company Ring has reached a [settlement](#) with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission which will [require](#) the company to pay \$5.8 million over its inability to keep private footage and audio collected from users’ homes.

This action stems from a collection of privacy violations that occurred between 2017 and 2020. Ring customers brought a class action [lawsuit](#) in December 2019 after dozens of people had their Ring devices accessed by malicious actors using brute force and credential stuffing attacks, “despite warnings from employees, outside security researchers and media reports” to implement standard security measures to protect customer information. The FTC alleged that in 2017, one Ring employee had, “over several months viewed thousands of video recordings belonging to female users of Ring cameras that surveilled intimate spaces in their homes such as their bathrooms or bedrooms.” The FTC also claimed that “Ring failed to take any steps until January 2018 to adequately notify customers or obtain their consent for extensive human review of customers’ private video recordings for various purposes, including training algorithms.”



EFF has long [maintained](#) that Ring—with its centralized control and storage of millions of cameras across the United States—is one massive privacy headache, especially since millions of private cameras store footage remotely and can be used as a tool of mass surveillance. Now, the FTC has put some much-needed restrictions and oversight on the surveillance company. Under the [settlement](#), “Ring will be required to delete data products such as data, models, and algorithms derived from videos it unlawfully reviewed. It also will be required to implement a privacy and security program with novel safeguards on human review of videos as well as other stringent security controls, such as

multi-factor authentication for both employee and customer accounts.”

Despite this settlement, there are still many other things the company needs to show it is taking user privacy seriously, like [ending](#) police ability to get access to footage without a warrant or user consent, turning on [end-to-end encryption](#) by default, and ending [audio collection](#) by default.

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PCLinuxOS Forum Family & Friends: parnote

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

I've "resisted" writing this article for quite a while. The way I looked at it, people probably know enough (more than they probably wanted to know?) about me from my contributions to the magazine over the past 14 years as the Chief Editor of The PCLinuxOS Magazine.

But, the July 2023 issue marks the 14th year of me at the helm of the magazine, so I figured now might be a good time to eliminate my "resistance" and go ahead with this article.



Me guiding the magazine for 14 years was never a part of the "plan." But, it has played out that way. Here's a little history about how that happened.

Back in 2009, there was some "turmoil" within PCLinuxOS. Texstar had taken a sabbatical from the role of leading PCLinuxOS to take care of some other life issues. He left control in the hands of those he thought he could trust. Except certain individuals among that "trusted group" tried to wrestle control of PCLinuxOS away from Texstar. Texstar re-established himself in the lead role, and those

Left: At the "Daddy-Daughter Dance" at their elementary school

responsible for the failed mutiny left PCLinuxOS to establish another (now defunct) distro. It split the PCLinuxOS user base into two opposing camps. In the largest camp were those loyal to Texstar and his vision for PCLinuxOS. A smaller group either openly sympathized with the mutineers, or even followed them to the new distro.

My "predecessor" was firmly entrenched in the latter camp. Prior to the ruckus, he had changed the magazine from a monthly publication to a bi-monthly publication, claiming that there just wasn't enough to write about. But even after changing the magazine's publication frequency, the magazine would go months without an issue being published. In June 2009, enough articles had been amassed to allow the publication of another issue of the magazine. Included with that issue were multiple ads for a version of PCLinuxOS ... except that version had switched allegiance to the group that splintered away from PCLinuxOS, and was now being based on the "new" distro. Still "stinging" from the near-mutiny, Texstar asked that the offending ads be removed from the June issue.

Instead of complying with Texstar's request, my predecessor decided to attempt to hold the magazine hostage, and to even "kill" it. Many of us present at the time pretty much had the same idea: "Not on our watch!"

Archie led a campaign to revitalize the magazine, and return it to its previous status as a monthly publication. I joined in and offered my services, since I had a background in journalism. Prior to my 35 year career as a respiratory therapist, I had a previous 10 year career as a professional photojournalist. After numerous discussions, I threw my name into the hat to serve as the NEW magazine's editor. Archie assured me then that it would only be for a year or two. I, obviously, accepted the position. AND ... here we are, 14 years later.

Prior to accepting the position, I saw myself learning to package for PCLinuxOS. That was my goal. To this day, I still haven't learned how to

package for PCLinuxOS. Instead, much of my time is spent trying to keep The PCLinuxOS Magazine “on track” month after month. And, for there being “nothing to write about,” we have NEVER missed a monthly issue. In fact, we’ve even created numerous “special editions” of the magazine. We’ve created recurring monthly or bi-monthly regular columns. Some things haven’t worked out as envisioned, while others have “stuck.” You never know how it’s going to go until/unless you give them a try.

Although you never really know what’s in store for the future, I don’t have any plans to step away from the leadership role for the magazine. Being in this role allows me to draw upon my journalism background and marry it with my love for PCLinuxOS. It allows me to, at least in some way, contribute back to the community surrounding PCLinuxOS.

So, below are “my answers” to the questions asked of everyone who has ever “participated” in this column. ***For what it’s worth, this column was conceived as a way for the run-of-the-mill, every day PCLinuxOS user to tell their story, and to give them a voice. So, if you’re interested in (or willing) being “profiled” in the magazine, contact YouCanToo/The CrankyZombie! We are cognizant of every person’s right to and expectation of privacy, so it’s up to you (the subject of the article ... within reason) to determine how much information you want to tell about yourself. By “within reason,” I mean just try to not be so obscure about things that we know little more about you than we did before the profile article.***

What is your name/username? It’s Paul Arnote, a.k.a. parnote. I know ... real original. It’s just my first initial and my last name.

How old are you? I turn 63 years old in August.



What is your marital status?

I’m married to a wonderful woman named Laura. I used to be her respiratory therapy instructor. She was the biggest “flirt” I ever had in class, but I pretended to not notice her flirting. I think that eventually she realized that nothing could happen with her being a student. So, she waited until a week after she graduated, and then she asked me out (she wasn’t a “student” any longer). I agreed, and the rest, as they say, is history. She is 25 years younger than me, and that age difference bothered me WAY more than it did her, at first. The age difference is

something that never comes up. We’re just a great fit for one another.

Do you have any children or grandchildren? If so, how many of each?

Ok, I got a late start in the “kid” department. We faced infertility issues (basically, blocked fallopian tubes), trying for seven years to conceive a child. Any time someone would ask, I’d tell them we’re “stuck on the fun part ... making them.” Finally, after seven years of trying, we found out “we” were pregnant. I was almost 53 years old when Ryan was born. After that, we didn’t do anything to prevent another pregnancy, allowing whatever happens to happen. Three years later, when I was almost 56 years old, we were blessed with our daughter, Lexi (short for Alexandra). We decided to not tempt fate, and decided to stop after having two children.



Interestingly enough, they were both conceived on the same day (three years apart), and they both had the same “due date” ... my birthday! I have jokingly told my wife that we can’t sleep in the same bed on that day ever again. Both of them were what’s medically called “late term preterm” babies, both coming a bit early, so they don’t have to share dad’s birthday. However, their birthdays are only six days apart, so they’ve become accustomed to “sharing” a common birthday party. Privately, we celebrate each of their birthdays separately, but the shared birthday party works best for family members who have to drive from out of town. So, August is a BUSY month for us with birthdays, with Ryan’s, Lexi’s and my birthdays coming around.

Do you have pets, what is your favorite? Oh my! Do we ever have a menagerie! We have six indoor cats, one outdoor cat, 13 backyard chickens (various breeds ... Rhode Island Reds, Sapphire Gems, Easter Eggers, Golden Laced Wyandottes), a green anole lizard (Lexi’s), and a pink-toed tarantula (Ryan’s). I often joke that my six indoor cats all have the same name at times ... MOVE. My wife really wants to have goats, but (fortunately?) they are not allowed where we live (in the city). Maybe one day, if we’re ever able to move out to the country, my wife will have her goats.

I can’t really say that any member of our little zoo is a favorite. I like them all ... mostly. We do have one feral cat that we took in as a kitten. He’s always in a bad mood, and never changed from his feral ways. We’ve committed to providing him a good home, but we also decided that when “his” time comes, we won’t be doing any heroic measures at the end of his life.

Are you retired or working, and for how long and at what? I retired at the end of December 2022 after working for 35 years as a respiratory therapist. I worked in quite a few different hospitals as a staff therapist. I miss the beside interactions with my patients, and I especially miss my neonates. I was a NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) respiratory therapist, but I also spent a LOT of time working in the ER and adult ICUs. I was a NRP (neonatal resuscitation program) instructor, and held certifications in BLS (basic life support) and ACLS (advanced cardiac life support). I also taught respiratory therapy for a local college for six years (which is where I met my awesome wife).

Prior to that (it feels like a literal lifetime ago), I worked as a professional photojournalist for 10 years. I worked as a photo stringer for the Associated Press, United Press International, the Kansas City Star (and the now defunct Kansas City Times), the Independence Examiner and the Blue Springs Examiner. For the latter two, both daily newspapers, I was a full-time staff photographer. Even though I won awards for my photos, I don’t miss the grind and low pay that those positions typically afford.

I was honestly *burned out* with the photojournalist gig (as the low pay and grind is typically apt to do), and it took the emergence of digital photography to reignite my passion for photography years later. That allowed me to “marry” photography with my other “new” fascination, computers. My love for photography goes back to when I was 12 years old. I literally taught myself photography by reading every book in our local library on photography that I could get my hands onto.

By the time my last photography job ended, I was ready for something else. My brother-in-law, who was already a respiratory therapist, knew someone who knew someone who was looking for an on-the-job-trainee



(this route is no longer possible, due to licensure laws in most of the states). Having long possessed a keen interest in “all things medically related,” it sounded like something I’d like to try. They took me on, and trained me. The hospital where I got my start paid for my formal training. I coupled my keen interest with my resourcefulness, and was picking up the finer details in no time. Any time I found something that I didn’t recognize or know, I’d go “look it up” so I could learn about it. I never quenched that desire to learn. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Now, I’m enjoying the most important job of my entire life: being a dad, and being the best dad I can be for my kids.

Where do you call home? What is it like? IE: weather, scenery. I live in Independence, Missouri. That is the hometown of the former U.S. President Harry S Truman. His [Presidential Library](#) is located here in Independence (it’s a super cool stop if you’re ever in the area on vacation!), as well as his primary [residence](#), where he lived until his death in 1972 (and tours of it are available from the National Park Service). I was born less than 20 miles west, in Kansas City, Kansas.

Independence is also the start of the three main trails west in the westward expansion of the U.S. Those three trails are the Santa Fe, California, and Oregon trails. A huge celebration every year for four days over the Labor Day weekend is called [SantaCaliGon Days](#), drawing more than 300,000 visitors annually. (Uhm, there are some local residents around here who avoid the crowds at SantaCaliGon like the proverbial plague). So, as you



Harry S Truman's home



Harry S Truman Presidential Library

might expect, celebrations around these parts focus heavily on the history of the region. Frank James, the brother of fellow outlaw Jesse James, is buried – literally – three doors down from my house, next to his wife, Annie Ralston.

Being dab smack in the middle of the country, we get all four seasons. We have a colorful fall season, a cold and moderately snowy winter, an invigorating spring, and a quite warm summer. While the east coast and the gulf have hurricanes, and the west coast massive fires (annually it seems) and earthquakes, we live in the infamous “Tornado Alley.” So, we get severe thunderstorms roll through fairly regularly, along with the occasional tornado watches and warning. Having grown up here, it’s just a routine part of life.

I have previously lived in Northwest Indiana for about four years, central Missouri for about three years, and Phoenix, Arizona for about eight months. I’ve always come back “home” to the Kansas City area, where most of my friends and family are.



Where did you go to school and what is your education level? I have a Liberal Arts bachelor’s degree from the University of Kansas. I also have separate formal training (Associate’s Degree) in respiratory therapy.

What kind of things do you like doing? hobbies, travel, fishing, camping? Oh, wow! This might take a while! I love just about anything outdoors. I love to fish, camp and hunt, but don’t get nearly enough time to do any of them as much as I would like. I do, however, try to fit time in for them all, at some point throughout the year, hopefully several times. We just bought a camping trailer last summer, and don’t get enough time to take it out ... yet. I enjoy working in the yard, along with

gardening. I also enjoy woodworking and building “things.” The last “major” thing I built was our chicken coop and chicken run from plans I had in my head.



The High Trestle Trail, between Woodward, Iowa and Madrid, Iowa.

We typically do the fishing, camping and hunting as a family. But, we also love bicycle riding. Before the kids came along, my wife and I would ride

30 to 50 miles at a time on our bicycle rides. Having kids dampened those distances considerably. On our latest “bike ride,” we went 11.7 miles (mind you, with a six and nine year old) on the [High Trestle Trail](#) in central Iowa. We like to ride from Woodward, Iowa to Madrid, Iowa, and back. It’s the kids’ favorite bike trail. They love riding over the half mile long bridge over the Des Moines River, which is 13 stories up in the air over the river. It’s the “trestle” that gives the High Trestle Trail its name.

Of course, I love computers and tinkering around with them. Oh, and photography. I also love writing bash scripts and increasing my knowledge of Linux.

What caused you to try Linux and join this forum? Back around 2005 or 2006, I had a Windows laptop running Windows XP. It was my first laptop, and even as a refurb, it set me back about \$800. Then in 2007 (or so), Windows Vista came out, and I discovered my new laptop wasn’t up to the task of running Vista without costly upgrades that I couldn’t afford. I thought to myself, “there has to be something else.”

Around the same time, I had sent off for a free Ubuntu installation CD. I installed it as a dual boot with Windows XP on my desktop computer. I ran it for a few months, but I was never all that happy or comfortable with the Gnome desktop that came as the default for Ubuntu. I then sought out and tried Kubuntu, OpenSuse, Puppy Linux, and several others that I forget the names of. Fortunately, I discovered PCLinuxOS at the end of that journey.

I purchased an older IBM ThinkPad T23 off of eBay for a reasonable amount of money. It had a Pentium III processor, with 512KB of RAM. I installed PCLinuxOS (KDE 3.4 at the time) on that budget laptop, and was amazed and enamored by its performance and its ease of use. Even back in 2007, PCLinuxOS’s hardware recognition was light years ahead of most of the other distros. I was hooked, and I never looked back ... or elsewhere. I’ve been here ever since.

For a while, I dual booted WinXP and PCLinuxOS, as most Windows refugees do with whichever version of Windows they are familiar with. I wasn’t quite ready to commit to PCLinuxOS totally. I had those Windows

programs that I thought I just couldn’t live without. Finally, it dawned on me that I was able to complete the vast majority of my computer tasks in PCLinuxOS (you just have to put forth the effort to learn a new way of doing things), and that I rarely booted into Windows. When I did, it felt foreign and awkward.

In due time, I wiped out the Windows partition, and committed to PCLinuxOS completely. Although I always had to run Windows on the computers at the hospital, I found my Windows knowledge shrinking with every “new” release (use it or lose it). Today, I don’t have a single need for Windows (personally ... my kids run Windows to access Xbox Live, so they can play Minecraft, Roblox and other games on their computers). I’m of little use these days at troubleshooting Windows problems, beyond the most obvious solutions.



Joining the PCLinuxOS Forum was, for me anyways, a no-brainer. It gives me the chance to associate with others who are also using PCLinuxOS.

What specific equipment do you currently use with PCLinuxOS? I use a hodge-podge collection of computers, all running PCLinuxOS exclusively. To be honest, I haven’t bought a “brand new” computer in years. The last “new” computer I “bought” was the components for the custom desktop build I did several years ago. These days, I buy used and refurbished computers from Newegg.com or eBay. Since Linux runs so nicely on these computers, I end up saving considerable money by using these perfectly capable computers. My

“main” computer these days is a Lenovo IdeaPad 320, with an AMD A12 quad core processor and 8GB RAM, which I purchased as a refurb on eBay. My best friend purchased a new Lenovo computer recently (a \$950 computer on sale on Amazon for \$350), and the first thing he had me do was to wipe the SSD and install PCLinuxOS.

For what it’s worth, I **love** the Xfce desktop. It’s modern, sleek and fast, without a bunch of eye candy getting in my way. I can customize it to my heart’s content, and I’ve got it tweaked to exactly how I like it and the way that works best for my needs.

Do you feel that your use of Linux influences the reactions you receive from your computer peers or family? If so, how? I **used** to be the “go-to” computer guy in my circle of friends and with family, but not so much any more. As I previously mentioned, my Windows knowledge has been on a downward spiral with every passing release of that commercially available albatross of an operating system. So, I’ve stopped “supporting” Windows, in a way. If they want to install PCLinuxOS, I’ll give them all the help and assistance they could ever want or need. They no longer ask me to “support” their Windows installations, though.

My best friend runs PCLinuxOS on his new computer (he knows I can’t/won’t support that “other” OS, and I’m his primary support person). My youngest brother used PCLinuxOS on his desktop for a while, before he just stopped buying computers (he just uses his

phone now). My six-year-old daughter has one of my older computers with PCLinuxOS installed, and she uses it to watch “her YouTubers.” My wife also uses/runs PCLinuxOS, when she’s not using her phone. I’ve “recruited” several of my former co-workers as PCLinuxOS users in the past, as well. None of them ever joined the forum (AFAIK), since I was their primary “tech support” person.

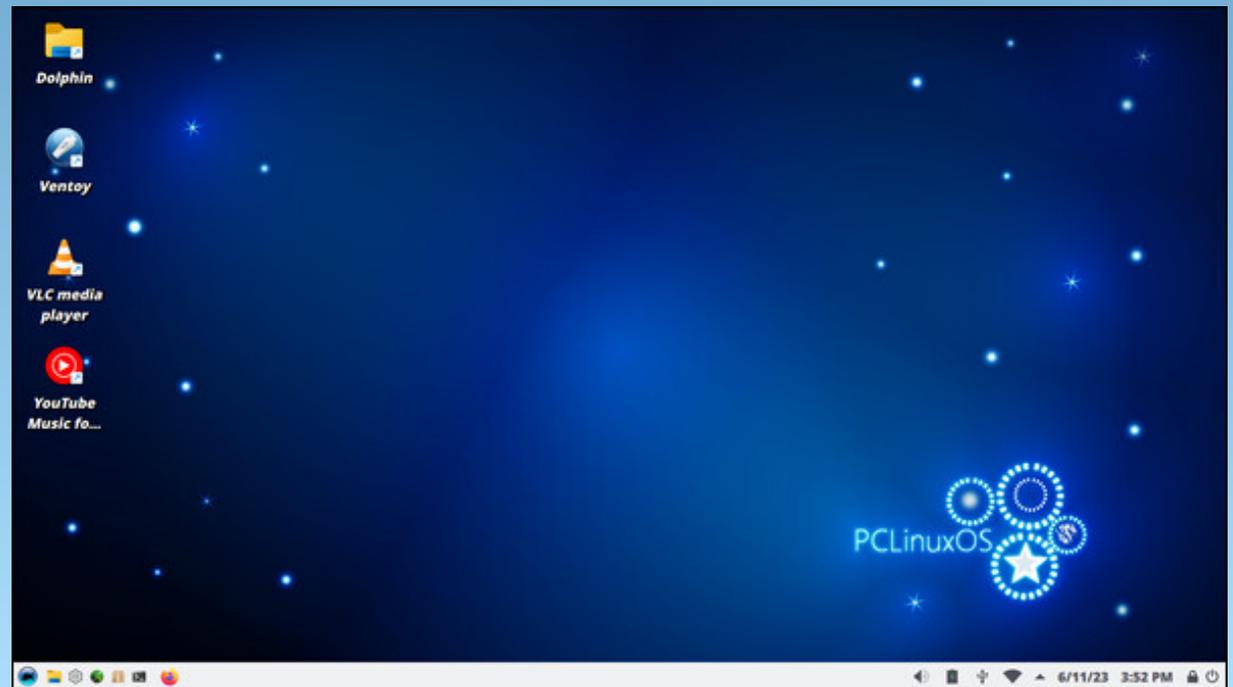
What would you like to see happen within PCLinuxOS that would make it a better place.

What are your feelings? As far as I’m concerned, PCLinuxOS is as good as it gets. Texstar and his merry band of packagers keep things updated exceptionally well. The forum is friendly and engaging. I’ve been around for a while, so I view many members of the PCLinuxOS community as if they are family. I might at times wish for PCLinuxOS to be more popular, but then there’s a whole other set of problems that brings with it, too. I like PCLinuxOS just as it is.



**The PCLinuxOS Magazine
Created with Scribus**

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by bones113, on June 11, 2023, running KDE.



Installing the Latest Version of Money Manager EX Via Flatpak

by David Pardue (kalwisti)

Introduction

Money Manager Ex (abbreviated as "MMEX") is an open-source, cross-platform personal finance manager which uses single-entry bookkeeping. The program has a long history -- having been first released in February 2006 -- and is actively developed by a team of about thirty contributors. MMEX was awarded the "Community Choice" Project of the Month in July 2020.

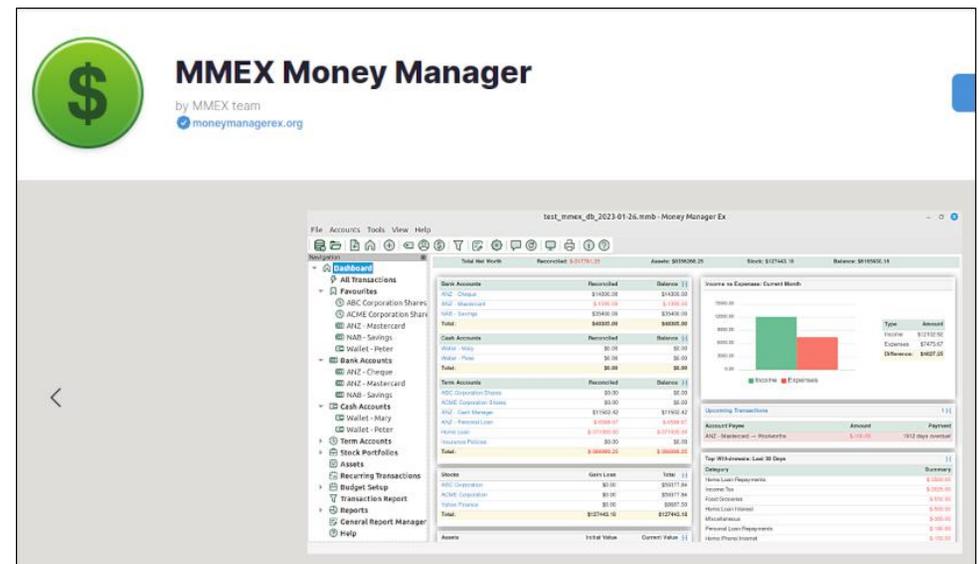
The program's interface is straightforward and intuitive, yet highly customizable (in terms of categories, searches and reports). It is secure, as the data is stored in a non-proprietary SQLite database with AES encryption. On the project's [Wiki page](#), the developers state that Money Manager Ex "includes all the basic features that 90% of users would want to see in a personal finance application. The design goals are to concentrate on simplicity and user-friendliness -- something one can use every day."

I began using MMEX a year and a half ago, as an experiment on Linux Mint. I found it to be accurate, stable and well suited to my needs. The program is easy to set up, thanks to its use of built-in wizards. It also has a detailed User Manual (available in thirteen languages).

MMEX ver. 1.6.4 was released on June 20, 2023 -- including as a verified app on Flathub for the first time. Due to two reasons mentioned below, I have not installed the Money Manager Ex version from the official PCLinuxOS repository. Therefore I was interested in trying to install the Flatpak on PCLinuxOS and seeing if it would work correctly. I am pleased to report this MMEX Flatpak installed without a hitch on my PCLinuxOS LXQt system as well as on my MATE system. I have been testing it by

entering my usual checkbook transactions and the app has been behaving normally.

If you would like to take the Money Manager Ex Flatpak for a spin, this mini-tutorial explains how to install it.



Why Use the Flatpak?

The package in the official PCLinuxOS repository -- moneymanagerex 1.4.0-0.1alpha7 -- dates from early 2020. The 1.4x series was an alpha release with many new features. According to discussions on the project's GitHub page, there were insufficient resources to support continued development, so its development [was suspended in April 2020](#). This version is obsolete and the MMEX 1.4x series no longer appears under their Releases on GitHub.

Installing the Latest Version of Money Manager EX Via Flatpak

In the PCLinuxOS Forum, there is a [discussion thread](#) about installing the latest Money Manager Ex version on PCLinuxOS. Although members Revoluz and Toroka provided some instructions, I was unable to successfully install the program despite multiple attempts.

You are probably aware that one of the cardinal rules of PCLinuxOS is that installing packages/software from outside the official repository is discouraged, so that users can avoid borking their systems. However, in this situation, I believe the best option is to use the MMEX Flatpak. Since the Flatpak package format is self-contained and sandboxed, and Flathub.org is a trustworthy online repository, Money Manager Ex does not pose a security risk.

Installation Steps

First, you must install the Flatpak utility via Synaptic from the official PCLinuxOS repository. The current version (at the time this article was written) is **flatpak 1.15.4-1**.

The procedure outlined below is the simplest way to install the MMEX Flatpak directly from Flathub. This will install the app and its runtimes system-wide, so Money Manager Ex will be available to all users on your system.

As root user, you need to add the Flathub repository and initialize it before installing the MMEX Flatpak on your system. Open a Terminal and type the following (this is all one line):

```
# flatpak remote-add --if-not-exists flathub  
https://flathub.org/repo/flathub.flatpakrepo
```

Note: Restart/reboot your computer. After that, you can proceed with actually installing the Money Manager Ex app.

Open a web browser and go to the Flathub page for MMEX:

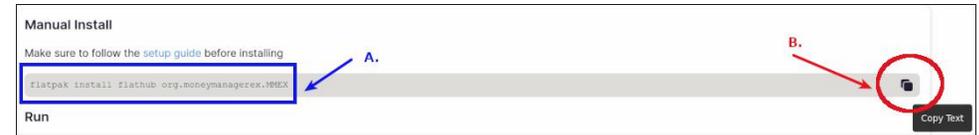
<https://flathub.org/apps/org.moneymanagerex.MMEX>

As shown in the screenshot below, there are two methods of copying the command you need to install MMEX:

Option A: Copy the "Manual Install" CLI command from the Flathub.org webpage, and paste it into a Terminal. (You must have root privileges):

```
# flatpak install flathub org.moneymanagerex.MMEX
```

Option B: You can click on the "Copy Text" icon to copy the command to your clipboard, then paste it into a Terminal (as root user):



(In case you are curious, here is a partial gloss of the command's syntax:

```
# flatpak install flathub org.moneymanagerex.MMEX
```

The third element ("[flathub](#)") is the remote repository, i.e., [flathub\[.org\]](#).

The final element is the ID of the application.

Identifiers have a three-part structure, e.g., [com.company.App](#). In this instance, we have "org" since it is a non-commercial entity. The "[moneymanagerex](#)" is the name of the developer. "[MMEX](#)" is the object's name, i.e., application name.)

Answer "Y" ("Yes") to the prompts in the Terminal, as shown in this series of screenshots (next page, top left):



Installing the Latest Version of Money Manager EX Via Flatpak

After installation, the binary files will be found in the `/var/lib/flatpak/app` and `/var/lib/flatpak/runtime` directories.

```
[david@lenovo-pc ~]$ su -
Password:
[root@lenovo-pc ~]# flatpak install flathub org.moneymanagerex.MMEX
Looking for matches...
Required runtime for org.moneymanagerex.MMEX/x86_64/stable (runtime/org.gnome.Platform/x86_64/44) found in remote flathub
Do you want to install it? [Y/n]: Y

org.moneymanagerex.MMEX permissions:
ipc          network     fallback-x11  wayland     x11         dri
file access [1]

[1] home

ID                               Branch      Op          Remote      Download
1. org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 22.08      i          flathub     < 143.1 MB
2. org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 22.08-extra i          flathub     < 143.1 MB
3. org.freedesktop.Platform.VAAPI.Intel 22.08      i          flathub     < 13.4 MB
4. org.freedesktop.Platform.openh264    2.2.0     i          flathub     < 944.3 kB
5. org.gnome.Platform.Locale           44        i          flathub     < 340.5 MB
6. org.gnome.Platform                   44        i          flathub     < 326.4 MB
7. org.moneymanagerex.MMEX.Locale       stable    i          flathub     < 1.8 MB
8. org.moneymanagerex.MMEX               stable    i          flathub     < 55.1 MB

Proceed with these changes to the system installation? [Y/n]: █
```

You can monitor the progress of the installation:

```
ID                               Branch      Op          Remote      Download
1. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 22.08      i          flathub     142.9 MB / 143.1 MB
2. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 22.08-extra i          flathub     16.2 MB / 143.1 MB
3. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.VAAPI.Intel 22.08      i          flathub     13.6 MB / 13.4 MB
4. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.openh264    2.2.0     i          flathub     1.2 MB / 944.3 kB
5. [✓] org.gnome.Platform.Locale           44        i          flathub     160.1 MB / 340.5 MB
6. [✓] org.gnome.Platform                   44        i          flathub     329.0 MB / 326.4 MB
7. [✓] org.moneymanagerex.MMEX.Locale       stable    i          flathub     1.3 MB / 1.8 MB
8. [✓] org.moneymanagerex.MMEX               stable    i          flathub     54.2 MB / 55.1 MB

Installing 6/8... ██████████ 24% 9.5 MB/s 00:34
```

You will be notified when the installation finishes:

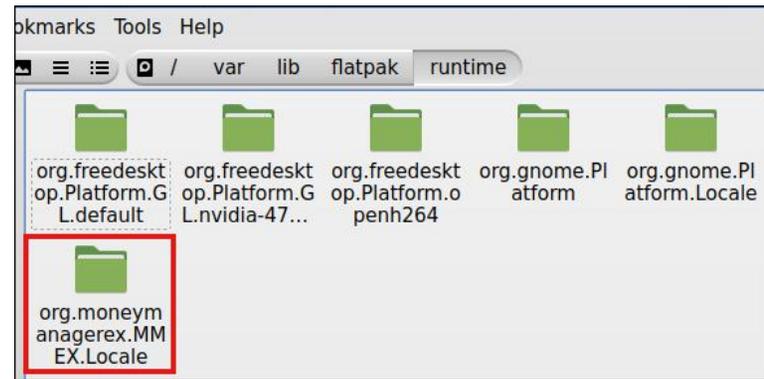
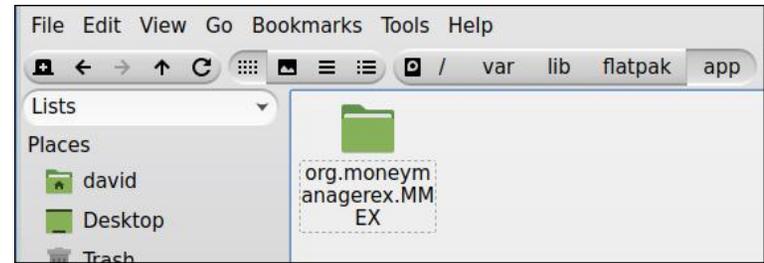
```
ID                               Branch      Op          Remote      Download
1. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 22.08      i          flathub     142.9 MB / 143.1 MB
2. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 22.08-extra i          flathub     16.2 MB / 143.1 MB
3. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.VAAPI.Intel 22.08      i          flathub     13.6 MB / 13.4 MB
4. [✓] org.freedesktop.Platform.openh264    2.2.0     i          flathub     1.2 MB / 944.3 kB
5. [✓] org.gnome.Platform.Locale           44        i          flathub     160.1 MB / 340.5 MB
6. [✓] org.gnome.Platform                   44        i          flathub     329.0 MB / 326.4 MB
7. [✓] org.moneymanagerex.MMEX.Locale       stable    i          flathub     1.3 MB / 1.8 MB
8. [✓] org.moneymanagerex.MMEX               stable    i          flathub     54.2 MB / 55.1 MB

Installation complete.
[root@lenovo-pc ~]#
```

After the installation is complete, close / exit from the Terminal.

I did **not** have to log out of my current session and log back in, for MMEX to appear in my LXQt menu, under **Office > MMEX Money Manager**.

On my PCLinuxOS MATE system, however, I had to exit my session and log back in. Afterwards, it appeared in the menu under **Office > MMEX Money Manager**.



According to QDirStat, the Flatpak's total installed size -- including the necessary runtimes -- is 2 GB; therefore, you should consider whether you have sufficient disk space available. Flatpaks tend to be very large because they are self-contained and have all of their dependencies enclosed/bundled within them.

Name	Subtree	Percentage	%	Size	Items	Files	Subdirs
/var				2.5 GB	59874	50480	4498
lib		91.8%		2.3 GB	58982	49735	4361
flatpak		88.9%		2.0 GB	58402	49307	4209
runtime		50.5%		1.0 GB	32854	26004	3718
repo		46.2%		957.7 MB	25014	23042	300
app		3.3%		68.8 MB	494	241	176
exports		0.0%		78.8 kB	35	19	11
<Files>		0.0%		0 Bytes	1	1	
rpm		4.5%		105.1 MB	38	37	1
texmf		4.5%		104.0 MB	123	108	15
apt		1.1%		26.1 MB	12	10	2
mysql		0.9%		20.8 MB	76	74	2
samba		0.1%		2.8 MB	30	25	5

flatpak/	
Type:	Directory
Subtree	
Total Size:	2.0 GB
Items:	58402
Files:	49307
Subdirs:	4209
Last Modified:	6/25/23 4:02 PM
Directory	
Own Size:	4.0 kB
User:	root
Group:	root
Permissions:	drwxr-xr-x 0755
Last Modified:	6/25/23 4:02 PM



Installing the Latest Version of Money Manager EX Via Flatpak

If you change your mind and wish to uninstall the MMEX Flatpak:

Open a Terminal and become the root user (with " su - "). Type:

```
# flatpak uninstall org.moneymanagerex.MMEX
```

Some Helpful Flatpak Commands

To check your Flatpak version:

```
$ flatpak --version
```

```
[david@localhost ~]$ flatpak --version  
Flatpak 1.15.4
```

To list your remotes (i.e., remote repositories) and determine whether they were added system-wide or locally:

```
$ flatpak remotes
```

```
[david@localhost ~]$ flatpak remotes  
Name Options  
flathub system
```

To list all the Flatpaks installed on your system:

```
$ flatpak list
```

```
[david@localhost ~]$ flatpak list  
Name Application ID Version Branch Installation  
Mesa org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 23.1.1 22.08 system  
Mesa (Extra) org.freedesktop.Platform.GL.default 23.1.1 22.08-extra system  
Intel org.freedesktop.Platform.VAAPI.Intel 22.08 system  
openh264 org.freedesktop.Platform.openh264 2.1.0 2.2.0 system  
GNOME Application Platform version 44 org.gnome.Platform 44 system  
MMEX Money Manager org.moneymanagerex.MMEX 1.6.4 stable system  
[david@localhost ~]$
```

Or, to list only installed applications:

```
$ flatpak list --app
```

```
[david@localhost ~]$ flatpak list --app
```

```
Name Application ID Version Branch Installation  
MMEX Money  
Manager org.moneymanagerex.MMEX 1.6.4 stable system
```

Summary

If you are searching for a personal finance manager that is lighter and simpler than GnuCash, but has all the functionality needed by the average user, Money Manager Ex is an appealing option. It has worked dependably for me. One feature I like is its impressive reporting capability. The "Where the Money Goes" report generates a color pie chart which shows the dollar amount and percentage I spend in each of my Expense Categories. Although I do not use them, MMEX can handle scheduled transactions and also has budgeting features. MMEX's main drawback is that it is an entirely offline app; it cannot link to online banking services.

Money Manager Ex's Flatpak package allows you to install the program's current version with minimal fuss and run it safely. I hope this tutorial will save you some time if you decide to experiment with MMEX. In addition to the program's User Manual, you can request support in MMEX's official discussion [forum](#).



Congress Must Exercise Caution In AI Regulation

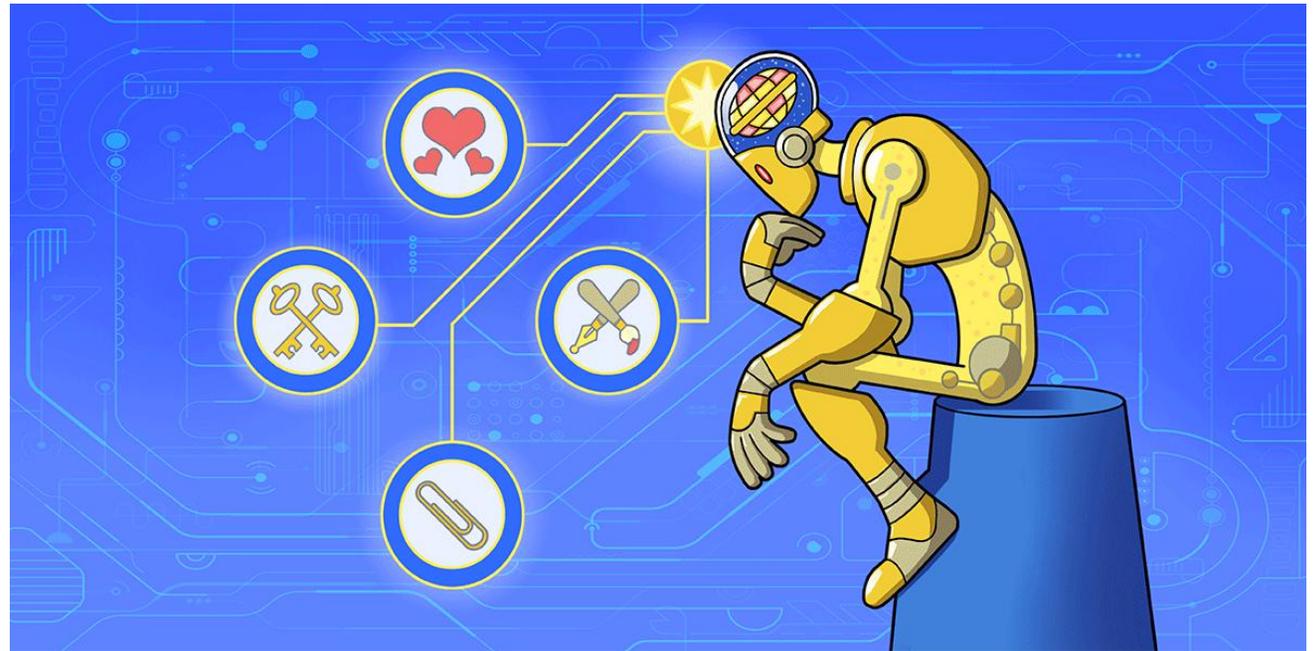
by **Ernesto Falcon**
Electronic Frontier Foundation

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Artificial intelligence technologies (AI) are all the rage in Washington D.C. these days. Policymakers are hearing stories of utopian opportunities and certain doom from technologists, CEOs, and public interest groups and trying to figure out when and how Congress should intervene.

Congress should be paying attention to AI technologies. Many are tools with extraordinary potential. They can help users distill large volumes of information, manage numerous tasks more efficiently, and change how we work – for good and for ill, depending on where you sit. Influential corporate and government actors recognize the ability of AI to redistribute power in ways they can't control, which is one reason so many are seeking Congressional intervention now.

But Congress should regulate with extreme caution, if at all, and focus on use of the tools rather than the tools themselves. If policymakers are worried about privacy, they should pass a strong privacy law. If they are worried about law enforcement abuse of face recognition, they should restrict that use. And so on. Above all, they must reject the binary thinking that AI



technologies are going to lead to either C-3PO or the Terminator.

Unfortunately, policymakers seem more inclined to move fast and break things.

AI Technologies Should Not Be Regulated by a Commission

At recent hearings, several Members of Congress proposed creating an independent government commission with extraordinary powers over AI technology, including the ability to license AI technology development.

This is a bad idea. Historically agencies like these are created when an industry has reached a center level of maturity and is an essential part of our society and economy. For example, independent commissions oversee telecommunications, medicine, energy, and financial securities. AI technologies are in early stages of development and are integrated in many industries. As a practical matter, it's hard to imagine how a single agency could operate effectively.

What is worse, forcing developers to get permission from regulators is likely to lead to stagnation and capture. An army of lobbyists

and access to legislators through campaign contributions and revolving doors will ensure that such an agency will favor only the most well-connected corporations with licenses.

Expanding Copyright Will Undermine AI Potential

The same holds true for another set of proposals focused on copyright reform. Rightsholders insist that they are owed compensation for things like the use of training data, even though the use of training data is likely protected under fair use. Much of this stems from a major misunderstanding of how AI generative tools work, which we explain [here](#). Simply put, machine learning does not rest on copyright infringement.

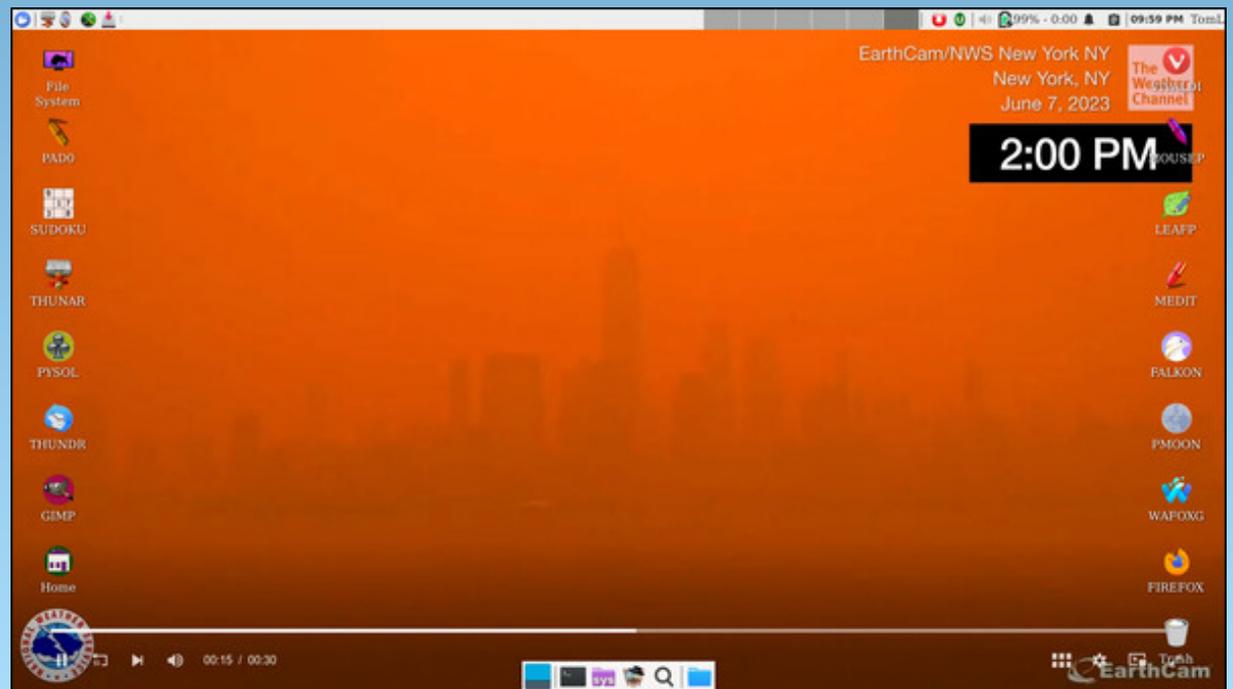
Others may realize as much, so they are looking to change the law to make it so. We've seen this before in broadcast television and cable systems. Broadcasters claimed they had a copyright in the free over the air broadcast signal that cable companies were using for free on cable TV. The Supreme Court disagreed and found no copyright interests rests in the broadcast signal, so TV broadcasters got Congress to create a new right to compensation for "retransmission."

But even if Congress were to do that for AI training data, who should get paid, and how much? Training data could touch billions of points of information to formulate an output that's worth very little money. No one wants to

believe they will only be given 1 millionth of a penny or less per use, which is what happens if you divide the value of the output with the vast volume of inputs. And no one will be able to create an AI tool that relies on billions of data points if the costs to do so are increased to unsustainable levels.



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by DrMop, on June 9, 2023, running Xfce.

GIMP Tutorial: Removing Objects From A Photo

by Meemaw

We do a lot of things with GIMP, but much of what we do with GIMP is edit photos. Sometimes we think that our photo would look lots better if that (insert object here) just wasn't in the picture. Let's explore some ways to remove an object from a photo.

Resynthesizer Filter

One method is the resynthesizer. This is an add-on that is in the repo. Open your photo and, using the lasso tool (or one of the other select tools), draw around the object you want to remove. In the tool settings, choose the mode Add to the current selection. In this photo, I wanted to get rid of the tan-colored area under the tree.



Make sure you close the curve at the end so you see the moving dashes in your curve. Clicking on **Filters > Enhance > Heal Selection**, you'll see this window (below):



You can adjust the pixel size you want, choose the place you want to sample from (All Around, Sides, or Above and Below) and Filling order (Random, Inwards toward center, and Outwards from center). The settings above are the default, and that's what I kept. Then click OK.



This scene is from one of my ATV trips, and it was dusty. I think it looks good - it even kept some of the flying dust. Bear in mind, you may have to use the heal tool to even some things out, but it will be much more minor.

Clone or Heal Tool

Many people just use the clone tool or the heal tool. They are good, but should be used to remove small items, like small objects in the distance, or blemishes on a face, or even spots in a photo, like dirt on the camera lens or raindrops on the window you're shooting through. Way back in [December, 2012](#), I did an article where I cloned the background of a photo to remove a traffic sign. In [January, 2023](#), I did an article about using the heal tool to remove some blemishes on a person's face (right).



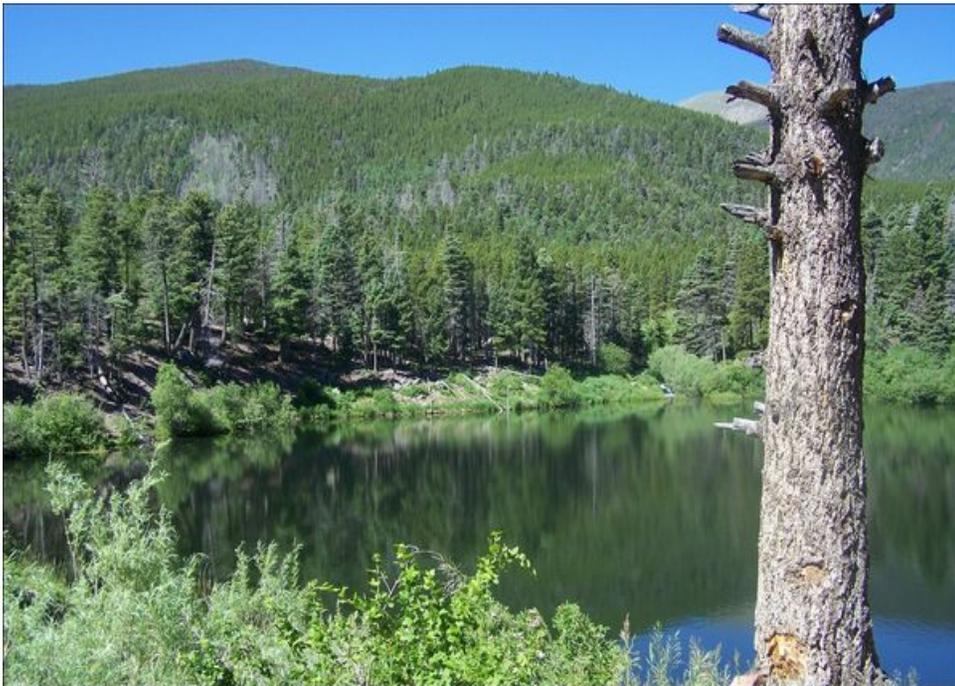
GIMP Tutorial: Removing Objects From A Photo

Using the clone tool, you choose an area you want to clone, and GIMP takes that specific area and copies it to the area you click on next. It works pretty well, but if your specific area doesn't exactly match the area you're putting it in, then you might have a mess.

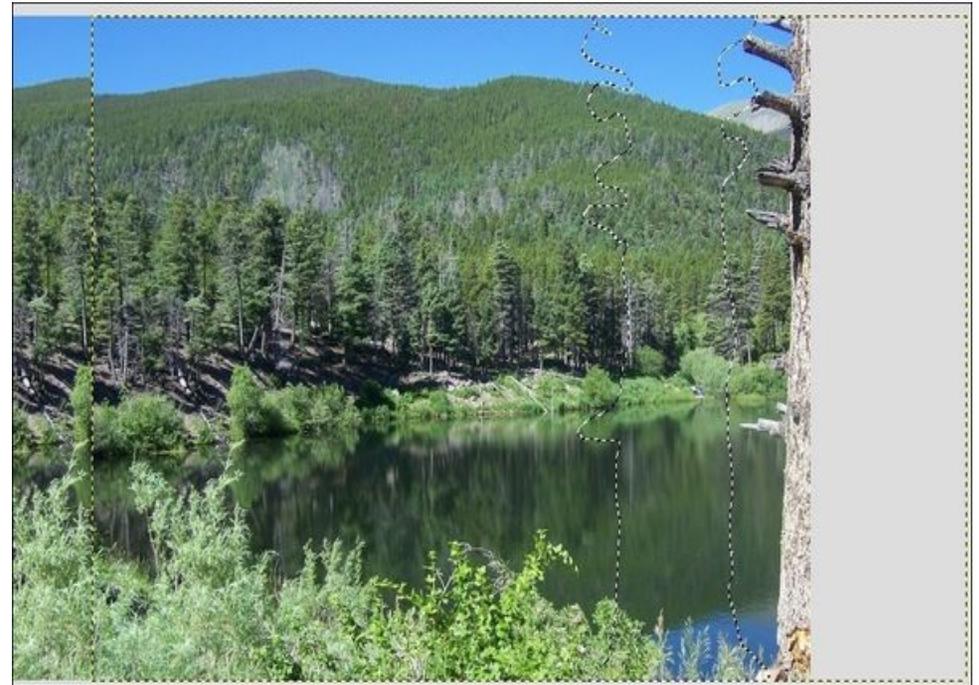
The heal tool is a bit different. It lets you select a specific area, but instead of copying the exact area you chose, it picks samples from in and around your choice and uses them. Most of the time, that allows you to do a better job.

Layer Mask

Another method is using a layer mask. Load your photo into GIMP and select the area you want to remove. I have this beautiful lake photo that has a really ugly tree in the foreground.



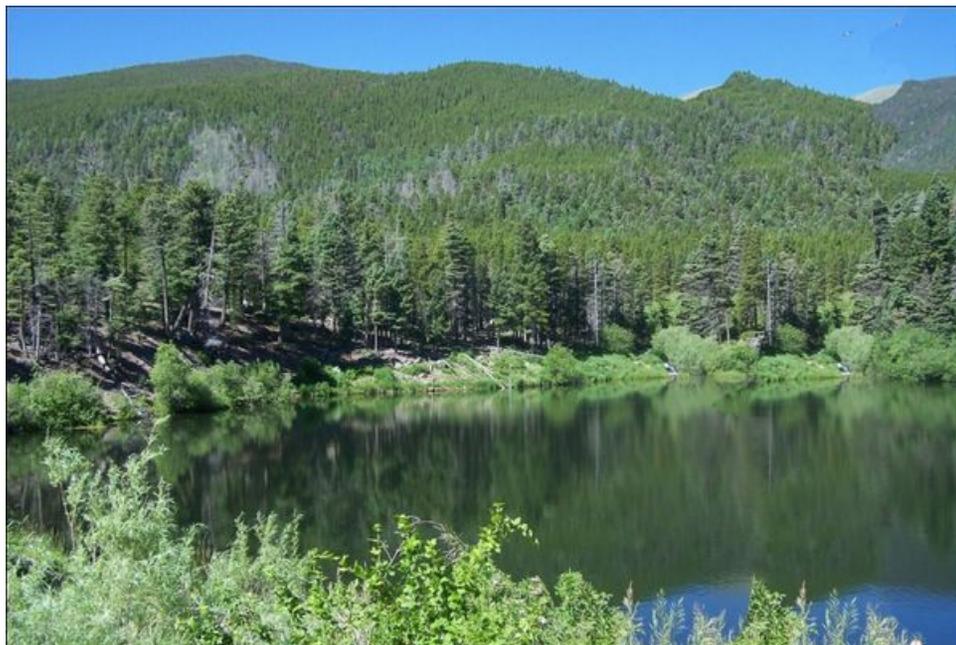
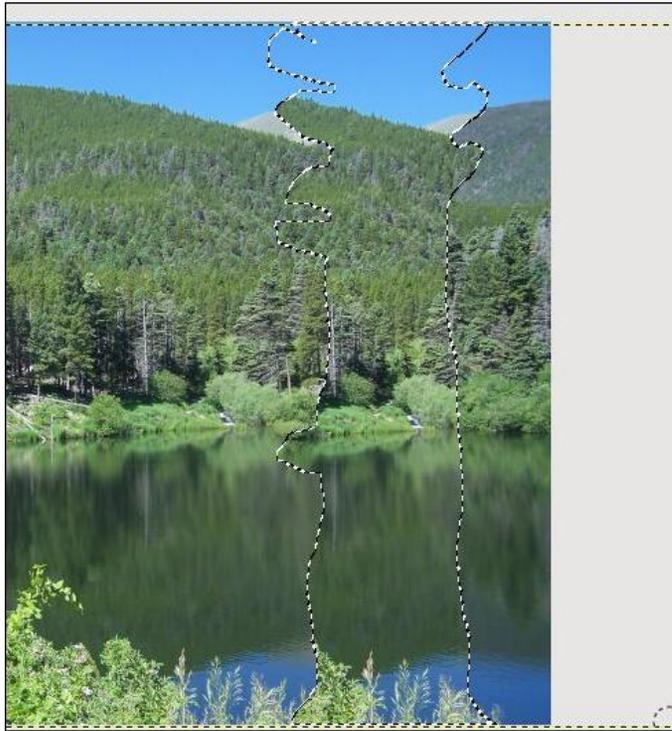
I'm going to select the tree with the lasso tool, just like I did before. However, now I'm going to duplicate the layer. I'll get two layers that are the same. Using the top layer (most probably the copy), with your move tool, grab that layer and move it over so your selection outline doesn't have the object in it anymore. Below you can see that I moved the tree away from the selection.



Right click and add a Layer Mask: Selection. You will see what is on the copy rather than the tree (next page top).

I'll have to fix the hill at the top, and can probably use the clone and heal tools for that, but it's much easier than putting all that background in with the clone tool. You may find that you have to do a little work in the water as well to even things out (next page bottom).

According to [Davies Media Design](#), there are two more methods for removing objects. Let's look at them later.



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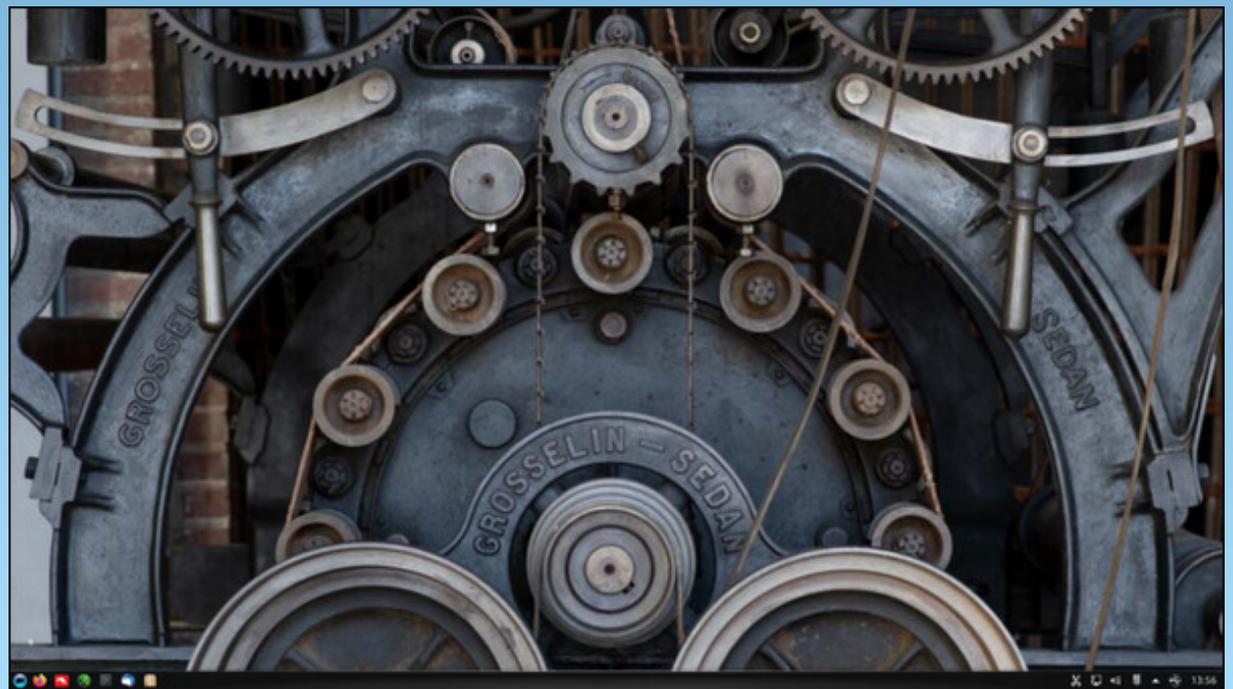


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Instant Messaging Server



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Screenshot Showcase

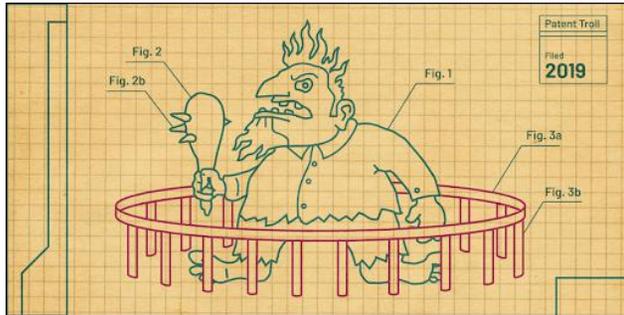


Posted by luikki, on June 9, 2023, running KDE.

Our Right To Challenge Junk Patents Is Under Threat

by [Joe Mullin](#)
[Electronic Frontier Foundation](#)

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The U.S. Patent Office has proposed [new rules](#) about who can challenge wrongly granted patents. If the rules become official, they will offer new protections to patent trolls. Challenging patents will become far more onerous, and impossible for some. The new rules could stop organizations like EFF, which [used this process](#) to fight the Personal Audio “podcasting patent,” from filing patent challenges altogether.

If you have a personal experience with patent troll attacks, please mention it. Comments are not anonymous and you should use your real name.

TAKE ACTION: Tell USPTO To Work For the Public, Not Patent Trolls

We need EFF supporters to speak out against this proposal, which is a gift for patent trolls. We’re asking supporters who care about a fair patent system to file comments using the federal government’s public comment system. Your comments don’t need to be long, or use fancy legalese. The important thing is that everyday users and creators of technology get a chance to state their opposition to these rules.

Below this paragraph you can see a simple proposed comment you can cut-and-paste to express your opposition to the rules. It’s even better if you add one sentence or more to the comment, especially if you can mention your own experience with the patent system. Of course, you can also write your own original comment.

Sample comment:

I am opposed to the USPTO’s proposed rules changes for inter partes review (IPR) and other patent challenges. These proposed rules should be withdrawn, and the IPR process should remain open to all. The USPTO should follow the rules Congress set out, and consider all patent challenges, including IPR petitions, on their merits.

IPR Is The Best Process For Limiting Bad Patents

The Patent Trial and Appeal Board, or PTAB, is one of the [only places](#) in the nation where patent trolls can be held to account for the outrageous and harmful claims they make in their patents. Congress created the “inter partes review” (IPR) process, which is overseen by specialized PTAB judges, more than a decade ago. “Inter partes” simply means “between the parties,” and the IPR process allows members of the public to challenge patents that never should have been granted in the first place.

The IPR process is one of two main ways to challenge patents, along with challenging them in district court. The big difference is that the IPR process, while not simple or cheap, is much faster and cheaper than going to trial in federal court. Invalidating a patent in court can cost millions of dollars, while even a complicated IPR process costs a fraction of that.

Through IPR, thousands of patents have been thrown out. The patent challengers who have kicked out some of these wrongly-granted monopolies have protected not just themselves, but countless other hobbyists, software developers, small businesses, and nonprofits, who could no longer be threatened with some of the worst patents to slip through the cracks.



- A patent troll called WordLogic tried to [shake down Wikipedia](#) for \$30,000. Once PTAB gave its initial ruling—that WordLogic’s patent was likely invalid—WordLogic got smart and settled the case. The lawsuits WordLogic was pushing against Wikipedia, and many other organizations, were dropped.
- A patent troll called SportBrain Holdings [sued more than 80 companies](#) on a patent they said covered getting user data, then sharing it over a network and providing feedback. The patent did not hold up to serious analysis. When a panel of PTAB judges looked at it, they canceled all claims. SportBrain was challenged by Unified Patents, a membership-based for-profit company that will be explicitly banned if the USPTO enacts these troll-friendly rules.
 - Shipping and Transit LLC (formerly [Arrivalstar](#)) filed for bankruptcy in 2018 after [more than a decade](#) of litigation and 500 patent lawsuits. Shipping and Transit sued a vast array of retailers and shippers, claiming its patents covered almost any type of delivery notification. In its court filings, it valued its own portfolio of 34 U.S. patents at \$1. IPR filings against Shipping and Transit, together with court fee orders, were a critical part of ending this onslaught against small business.

The IPR process hasn’t eliminated patent trolling. But it’s been so [effective](#) that patent trolls and their pro-patent protectors absolutely hate the process. That’s why they are pushed so

hard for these proposed rules, and are celebrating their arrival.

The Proposed Rules Deliberately Sabotage The IPR System

USPTO Director Kathi Vidal has already tried to walk back responsibility for these rules. She said in Congress last month that the rules “giving stakeholders a chance to shape the rules.” But the only “stakeholders” who seem to have had a hand here are patent trolls and large patent-holders.

Many patent trolls would be exempt from IPRs altogether. The USPTO would prohibit anyone from challenging the patents of “small entities” and “under-resourced inventors.” But it’s trivially easy for even the most litigious patent trolls to portray themselves as “small inventors.” It happens [all the time](#), and the USPTO rules buy into this sham. Many “inventors” are patent attorneys who have learned to game the system; they haven’t invented anything other than patents. Patent trolls that have sued [hundreds](#) of small businesses, and even public transportation systems, including Shipping and Transit LLC and various Leigh Rothschild entities, have claimed to be “inventor owned” businesses.

If these rules were in force, it’s not clear that EFF would have been able to protect the podcasting community by fighting, and ultimately winning, a patent challenge against

Personal Audio LLC. Personal Audio claimed to be an inventor-owned company that was ready to charge patent royalties against podcasters large and small. EFF crowd-funded a patent challenge and [took out the Personal Audio patent](#) after a 5-year legal battle (that included a full IPR process and multiple appeals).

TAKE ACTION: We have a right to fight back against patent trolling

The Idea That People Challenging Patents Are Abusing The System Is Absurd

The rules create an upside-down world in which people who work to challenge patents are treated as the abusers of the system, rather than the patent trolls they’re up against. For instance, the rules would punish groups that file “serial petitions” or “parallel petitions” by simply denying them access to the PTAB. It also creates new rules denying petitions “to ensure that certain for-profit entities do not use the [] processes in ways that do not advance the mission and vision of the Office to promote innovation.”

But it’s the patent office’s own wrongly granted patents—each one a 20-year government-granted monopoly—that often inhibit innovation. USPTO patents have allowed [business models](#) like Lodsys, the company that sent out hundreds of threats to small app developers demanding royalties for using basic, off-the-shelf in-app payment systems. The office

has done nothing to rein in patent trolls; but now that there's a system that can occasionally challenge them.

This is wrong. It's in the public interest to challenge patents and test which ones are wrongly granted. All properly timed and filed patent challenges should be heard on the merits, whether they are filed by for-profits, non-profits, large entities or individuals. That's what Congress envisioned when it created the patent challenge process.

The Rules Are A Direct Attempt By USPTO To Overturn Congress's Power

The IPR process was created by Congress in 2013 to resolve certain patent disputes more quickly and efficiently than courts could. When evidence is presented that there is "prior art," or previously existing technology, that should have prevented the patent from issuing, the IPR process allows for a relatively quick quasi-judicial process that can result in patent claims being revoked.

The IPR process was created after a long debate by elected representatives. If Congress wants to change the system, they're able to do so. But USPTO officials must not be allowed to cripple patent challenges from the inside.

As USPTO's [own statistics](#) point out, it's actually a tiny sliver of "live" patents that are even challenged, much less invalidated. In the last fiscal year, the USPTO partly invalidated

350 patents. Compare that to the 300,000 patent grants USPTO is handing out every year.

The U.S. patent system remains wildly imbalanced—in favor of patent owners, not

patent challengers. These proposed rules show that USPTO has it backwards. Please join us and speak out through the public comment process. No one should tolerate a patent troll takeover at PTAB.

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by francesco_bat, on June 4, 2023, running icewm.

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner Bonus



Copycat Girl Scout Samoa Cookies

Makes about 30 cookies



INGREDIENTS:

1 cup butter, room temperature
1 cup granulated sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

TOPPING:

1-1/2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut
2 (11-ounce) bags soft caramel candies,
unwrapped
1/3 cup heavy cream
1-1/2 cups dark or semisweet chocolate
1 tablespoon coconut oil

DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Sift together dry ingredients. In a medium mixing bowl stir together the flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

Step 2: Mix dough in a bowl, cream together the butter and sugar for 4–5 minutes until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg and vanilla, then slowly stir in the dry ingredients until fully incorporated.

Step 3: Turn the dough out onto a clean surface and shape it into a flat disk; about 1 inch thick.



Wrap tightly in plastic and then chill for at least 1 hour, or overnight. Don't skip this step – it's important to chill your cookie dough.

Step 4: While the dough chills, toast the coconut. Spread the coconut in a single layer in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Stirring continuously, toast the coconut until it is fragrant and golden in color. Remove promptly to a bowl and let cool.

Step 5: Preheat oven to 375F. Remove the dough from the fridge and roll it out, using a rolling pin, to 1/4-in. thick. Use a 2-1/2-in. doughnut cutter (or two round biscuit cutters sized 2-1/2 in. and 1/2-in.) to cut out the cookies.

Re-roll any scraps and continue to cut out cookies until all the dough is used.

Step 6: Arrange the cookies, 1 inch apart, on a parchment-lined baking sheet, leaving an inch between each one. Freeze for 15 minutes. Bake for 10–11 minutes until just barely golden around the edges. Remove and let cool completely.

Step 7: While the cookies cool, melt the caramel candies in a saucepan over medium-low heat until smooth. Stir in the heavy cream, then remove from the heat and let cool slightly. (You could also make your own soft caramel candies.)

Step 8: Transfer 3/4 of the caramel to a bowl and gently fold in the toasted coconut.

Step 9: Use the remaining caramel to spread the tops of each cookie with melted caramel.

Then, take 1–2 tablespoons of coconut-caramel topping and spread it gently onto the top of each cookie. Let the caramel set.

In testing, we found spreading an initial thin layer of plain melted caramel on the cookies helps make spreading the coconut-caramel mixture onto the cookies much easier (and less messy).

Step 10: In a double boiler, melt the chopped chocolate until smooth (or try one of these tried-and-true methods to melt chocolate). Stir in the coconut oil until fully incorporated, and then remove the chocolate from the heat.

Step 11: One at a time, dip the bottom of each

cookie into the melted chocolate, shaking off any excess so a thin, even coating remains. After dipping, place the cookies (chocolate-side down) on a clean piece of parchment paper to set.

Step 12: Transfer any remaining chocolate to a piping bag or quart-sized zip-top bag with the tip snipped. Then, pipe an even drizzle of chocolate stripes over the top of each cookie. Allow the chocolate to set completely, then enjoy!

TIPS:

Once the chocolate is fully set, store your homemade Samoa cookies at room temperature in an airtight, covered container for up to 1 week. If they last that long....

NUTRITION: per 2 cookies

Calories: 142 Carbs: 19g Fiber: 1.3g
Sodium: 53mg Protein: 1g



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Newly Public FISC Opinion Is The Best Evidence For Why Congress Must End Section 702

by [Aaron Mackey](#)

[Electronic Frontier Foundation](#)

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A surveillance court order unsealed last week that details massive violations of Americans' privacy by the FBI underscores why Congress [must end or radically change](#) the unconstitutional spying program enabled by Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA).

The [opinion](#) recounts how for years the FBI illegally accessed a database containing communications obtained under Section 702 and other FISA authorities more than 278,000 times, including searching for communications of people arrested at protests of police violence and people who donated to a congressional candidate. Section 702 authorizes the surveillance of communications between people overseas. But when a person on U.S. soil is in contact with one of these surveillance targets, that leaves their side of the exchange sitting in a database and vulnerable to these warrantless FBI searches. As the opinion says, "Notwithstanding this foreign directed targeting, the extent to which Section 702 acquisitions involve U.S. persons should be understood to be substantial in the aggregate."

The pervasiveness of the FBI's failure to comply with even the most modest reforms



designed to limit the agency's surveillance powers reveals two problems that Congress must address as it considers the Administration's request to reauthorize Section 702.

First, the FBI is incapable of policing itself when it comes to trawling through the communications of Americans without a warrant. "There is a point at which it would be untenable to base findings of sufficiency untenable on long promised, but still unrealized, improvements in how FBI queries Section 702 information," the court wrote. That point is now. The FBI simply cannot help but violate the law.

Second, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) is incapable of protecting Americans from the FBI's unconstitutional searches of their communications. Since passage of Section 702 in 2008, Executive Branch leaders have [argued](#) that judicial oversight would ensure that the FBI and other spying agencies would not illegally intrude on people's constitutional rights. That has never been true. Yet despite a series of well-documented violations by the FBI, NSA, and CIA, the FISC has consistently approved and reapproved the agencies' ability to use Section 702. The newly released opinion is just the most recent, and

Newly Public FISC Opinion Is The Best Evidence For Why Congress Must End Section 702

perhaps most egregious, example of a judicial rubber stamp.

Congress can fix both problems by prohibiting the FBI from using Section 702 to engage in “[backdoor searches](#).” Ending this practice will protect the constitutional rights of Americans to be free from warrantless surveillance and provide meaningful oversight of the FBI’s lawless domestic surveillance program. At minimum, the opinion reveals how badly Congress must [reform](#) Section 702, including by implementing better transparency measures to enable timely disclosures of agencies’ misuse of the law and a meaningful way for victims to challenge the government’s illegal surveillance.

Secret court kicks oversight can down the road

The FBI’s penchant for [violating](#) the Fourth Amendment and other limits on when it can query Americans’ communications obtained under Section 702 and other parts of FISA is [well known](#). Since at least 2015, the FBI has consistently failed to comply with basic limits to prevent its agents from accessing people’s communications without a warrant.

Witnessing this [well-documented](#) pattern of lawlessness, the federal court charged with ensuring FISA surveillance is lawful has essentially given the FBI unlimited mulligans for all of its unconstitutional acts.

After recounting a series of disturbing queries that targeted protesters, people involved in purely criminal activity, and those who had donated to a political campaign, the court recognized that “compliance problems with the FBI’s querying of Section 702 information have proven to be persistent and widespread.” Although the court suggested that further incidents might prompt limiting who within the FBI could access information obtained under Section 702, it imposed no other restrictions on the FBI besides those proposed by the agency itself.

The court wrote that it was “encouraged” by the FBI’s woefully [inadequate](#) changes to how it queries data, new practices and training, and greater record-keeping and internal audits. And the court once more approved the FBI’s ability to search through Americans’ communications swept up by Section 702.

The FISC’s failure to impose any significant restrictions on the FBI despite its pattern of violating Section 702 and the Constitution is damning. It shows that the FISC appears unwilling or unable to protect us from the FBI’s illegal surveillance, putting to lie the idea that the judiciary can impose real checks on the Executive Branch’s mass surveillance programs.

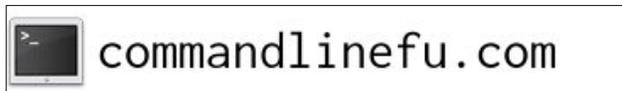
Congress must recognize the opinion as a failure of the judiciary’s ability to protect people’s privacy rights. And it should not continue to wait for the FISC to take up that role. Instead, Congress must step up and end this

unconstitutional surveillance by refusing to renew Section 702 without critical reforms.

Delayed disclosures hamper basic understanding, oversight

The opinion is also a great example of how the Executive Branch can delay disclosure of its illegal acts and obfuscate basic public understanding of its Section 702 surveillance powers. That ultimately benefits the government, as lawmakers and the public struggle to understand basic details about spying at the same time Congress considers reforming FISA.

For example, for all the information disclosed in the FISC’s opinion, we still do not know how many times the FBI queried Section 702 using search terms that identify Americans. The opinion describes the FBI querying a database of FISA material that appears to come from Section 702 and other parts of FISA that authorize other forms of surveillance. It thus appears that the court could not say—likely because the government never did—what portion of those queries were for data obtained without a FISA warrant under Section 702. The opinion references a complicated web of FBI databases and recordkeeping systems. In instance, users were directed to document queries on a “separate SharePoint site,” because the system itself could not support that feature. Unsurprisingly, there was a “systemic compliance issue involving the failure” to make this documentation.



Newly Public FISC Opinion Is The Best Evidence For Why Congress Must End Section 702

The inherent secrecy the government employs here means that neither the court nor the public have answers to basic questions like how many times the FBI queried Section 702 information improperly in a given period. And as the back-and-forth documented in the opinion recognizes, the government will often supplement its initial issues after finding other problems. That slow trickle of detail means that no one outside the Executive Branch has a clear picture of Section 702 and any abuse by federal agencies.

Another problem is the time-warp. The FISC issued its opinion recounting the FBI's abuses on April 21, 2022. It took more than a year for the government to declassify and release the opinion, coming out just as Congress is considering whether to renew Section 702. So although the FISC, Executive Branch, and likely some members of Congress have known about the opinion for some time, the American public is just learning about this now.

That sort of delay between when major misuses of the FBI's mass surveillance are discovered and when they are made public is anathema to basic democratic governance. EFF and ACLU have worked for years to make FISC [opinions](#) public, via FOIA suits like the ACLU filed earlier this year seeking the [disclosure](#) of Section 702 FISC opinions. But that litigation takes time and a lot of resources. The public cannot understand, much less advocate against, the government's mass surveillance programs in these circumstances.

Greater transparency and more timely disclosures of the government's mass surveillance programs are sorely needed. At the same time, Congress does not need any more reports or declassified opinions to see what's

really happening here: routine misuse of Section 702 to violate people's Fourth Amendment rights. Congress can and should put a stop to this.

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by yogurtmen, on June 2, 2023, running Mate.



The PCLinuxOS Magazine
Created with Scribus



PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

		4						6
	7							1
1					9		5	7
			9	7		2	1	
4					8	6		
	5				2		7	
		3		9				
	1	6	5		4			
					1			

SUDOKU RULES: There is only one valid solution to each Sudoku puzzle. The only way the puzzle can be considered solved correctly is when all 81 boxes contain numbers and the other Sudoku rules have been followed.

When you start a game of Sudoku, some blocks will be prefilled for you. You cannot change these numbers in the course of the game.

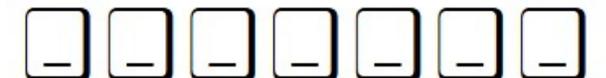
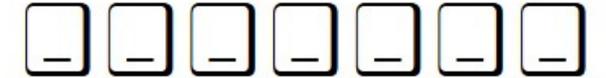
Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

Each block must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same block of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.



SCRAPPLER RULES:

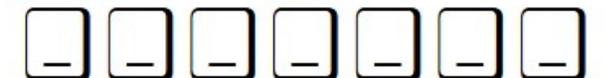
1. Follow the rules of Scrabble®. You can view them [here](#). You have seven (7) letter tiles with which to make as long of a word as you possibly can. Words are based on the English language. Non-English language words are NOT allowed.
2. Red letters are scored double points. Green letters are scored triple points.
3. Add up the score of all the letters that you used. Unused letters are not scored. For red or green letters, apply the multiplier when tallying up your score. Next, apply any additional scoring multipliers, such as double or triple word score.
4. An additional 50 points is added for using all seven (7) of your tiles in a set to make your word. You will not necessarily be able to use all seven (7) of the letters in your set to form a "legal" word.
5. In case you are having difficulty seeing the point value on the letter tiles, here is a list of how they are scored:
 - 0 points: 2 blank tiles
 - 1 point: E, A, I, O, N, R, T, L, S, U
 - 2 points: D, G
 - 3 points: B, C, M, P
 - 4 points: F, H, V, W, Y
 - 5 points: K
 - 8 points: J, X
 - 10 points: Q, Z
6. Optionally, a time limit of 60 minutes should apply to the game, averaging to 12 minutes per letter tile set.
7. Have fun! It's only a game!



Triple Word



Double Word



Download Puzzle Solutions Here

Possible score 255, average score 179.



July 2023 Word Find

Camping

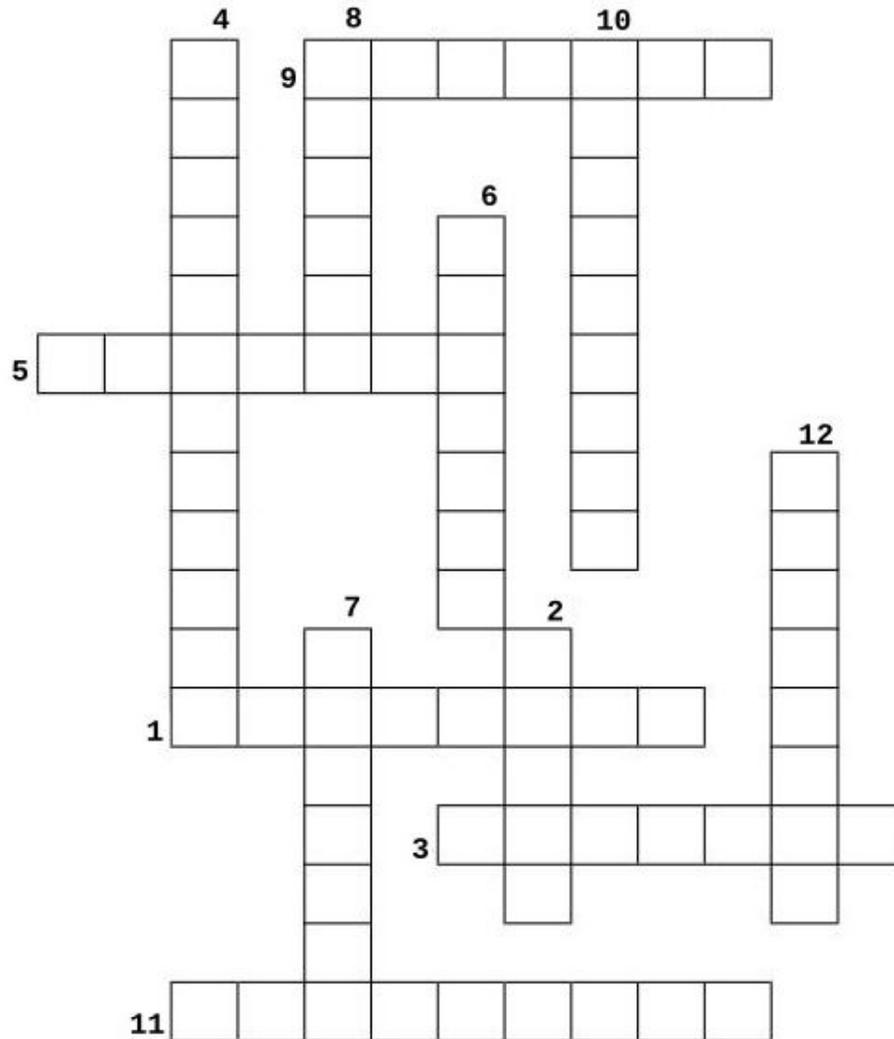
V L W C S S A P M O C O L Q U E R E E O W G B P I A I M X K E
 C I U W I L D L I F E N Q H B T R R S Y S X D P T N T S I Q
 D E P N K C F L N Q S I G G N I H S I F E S H T N E T P U P
 Q R Y E L D D A P U B R Y G F W Q N Y O X E T M G E Q H U W
 F N N I Z A D P U B C A M P G R O U N D Z E G K H R P K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

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| BACKPACK | BOOTS |
| CABIN | CAMPFIRE |
| CAMPGROUND | CANOE |
| CANTEEN | CARAVAN |
| COMPASS | DEHYDRATED FOOD |
| EQUIPMENT | EVERGREEN |
| FISHING | FLASHLIGHT |
| FOREST | HAMMOCK |
| HIKING BOOTS | HUNTING |
| INSECT REPELLENT | KAYAK |
| KNAPSACK | LAKE |
| LANTERN | NATIONAL PARK |
| NATURE | PADDLE |
| PARK | PUP TENT |
| ROPE | SCENERY |
| SLEEPING BAG | STARS |
| STATE PARK | SUNSCREEN |
| TENT | TRAIL |
| TREES | WATERFALL |
| WILDLIFE | WOODS |

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July 2023 Crossword Camping



1. Another name for a backpack
2. A boat consisting of a light wooden frame covered with watertight skins except for a single or double opening in the center, and propelled by a double-bladed paddle.
3. A hanging bed or couch made of canvas, netted cord, or the like, with cords attached to supports at each end.
4. An area of land reserved by the national government for recreational use.
5. A light and its protective or decorative case.
6. A flask for carrying liquids (as on a hike)
7. A single file of vehicles or pack animals.
8. A usually wooden implement that has a long handle and a broad flattened blade and that is used to propel and steer a boat
9. A wedge-shaped tent; usually without a floor or windows.
10. A plant having foliage that remains green and functional through more than one growing season
11. A cream or lotion used to protect the skin from the damaging ultraviolet rays of the sun.
12. A sturdy bag designed for carrying articles, having shoulder straps and often mounted on a lightweight frame.

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Mixed-Up-Meme Scrambler



What the carpenter did when he entered the hammering contest...

He " _____ " _____ .

NEVET

--- --

LADLY

--- ---

CUDINT

--- --

CIMTRE

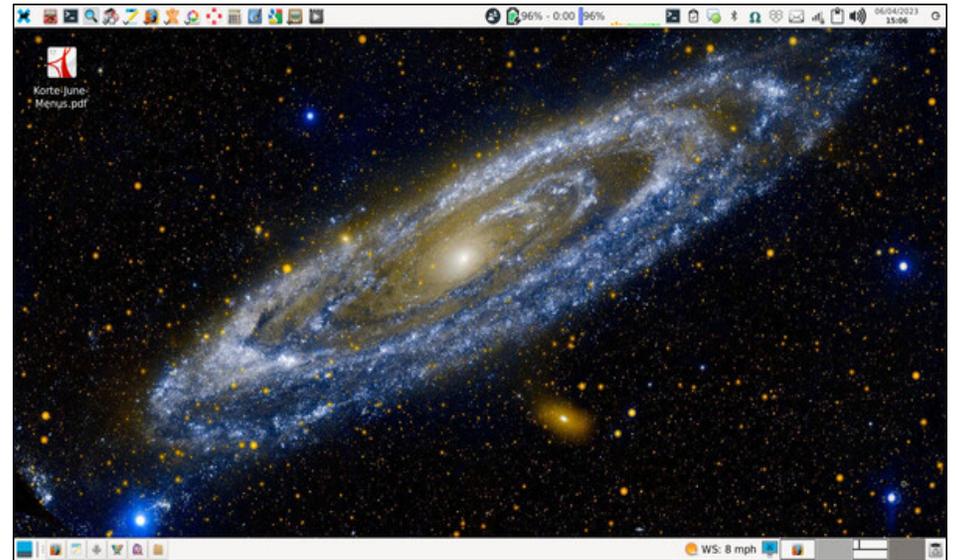
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