The PCLinuxOS magazine
Volume 96
January, 2015

Happy New Year!

R.I.P. Mike Harris, a.k.a. Wildman 1945 - 2014

JPEG Just Got Some REAL Competition

GIMP Tutorial: Quick Neon Text Using G'MIC

Inkscape Tutorial: Creating A Personal Calendar

I'm Not A Gamer, But ...

Game Zone: Millie

PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight: vorteggs

Installing Your Own Forum With SMF

Testimonial: Hello From A Completely New Linux User

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The PCLinuxOS magazine

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

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Welcome From The Chief Editor

Say what? Sony got HACKED? Yeah, sure, everyone that uses a computer has heard about this by now. I know that I have been following it. Your take on it is likely to fall into a few distinct categories.

Just in case you've been hiding under a rock – or just been consumed with all the activity that surrounds the holiday season – Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) planned a release of a comedy movie starring Seth Rogan and James Franco on Christmas day, called "The Interview." In that movie, a hack television tabloid news "reporter" (Franco) and his producer (Rogan) travel to North Korea to "interview" North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Once the "news" of their impending interview is announced, they are approached by members of the CIA to assassinate the North Korean leader.

As a result, the SPE servers were hacked and TONS of sensitive personal data – including emails, passwords, user IDs, Social Security numbers, etc. – was released to the public. Sony threatened "legal action" against those reporting the news of the attack on their servers, and the subsequent release of sensitive, private data. What's even more astonishing (almost unbelievably so) is that all the user IDs and passwords were reportedly kept in a folder on one of the servers with … wait for it … the name of "Passwords." The contents of that folder were supposedly text files, word processing files and PDF files – all unencrypted – with lists of user IDs and their corresponding passwords.

The FBI blamed the North Koreans for the "cyberattack." North Korea has denied having any role in the attack. Meanwhile, a group called Guardians Of Peace has claimed responsibility. President Obama promised retaliation for "North Korea's actions." Within a week or so, the entire North Korean internet went dark and offline for a few days. Meanwhile, the North Koreans have suggested that the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is what the North Koreans refer to themselves as) and the U.S. work together to expose those who are REALLY behind the cyber attack on the SPE servers.

"Terror attacks" on theaters showing the movie were threatened, and most of the "big name" U.S. cinema chains backed out on showing the film. Some independent theaters forged ahead, at least until Sony cancelled the Christmas day release of the film. Sony was chastised for cancelling the release of the movie from just about every pundit around.

Heck, Sony's decision created pundits where no pundits previously existed. Everyone was a critic, and everyone seemed to have an opinion. After all, Sony just couldn't give in to the hackers' demands.

In the end, the movie was released in theaters on Christmas day. It was shown to sellout crowds. It was also released in the Google Play store and on YouTube, where it became the most watched video on this past Christmas day.

What a soap opera, huh? (Here in the U.S., we call the sappy, overly dramatic, overacted daytime television serials "soap operas," since in their early days, they were sponsored by advertisers of soap). I don't know about you, but for me, the longer this plays out, the more ridiculous and absurd this whole thing looks.

In the first distinct group, your beliefs parallel the "official" story. You believe that North Korea hacked the Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) servers in retaliation of their planned Christmas day release of the movie. If that was the case, North Korea gave this B-movie a level of free advertising that quite simply couldn't have been purchased for any amount of currency. Most "cybersecurity" experts doubt North Korea's involvement in the cyber attack.

In the second distinct group, you believe that it all was a publicity stunt, planned to drum up interest in the movie's release. If this was the case, it worked exceptionally well. The sellout opening day crowds at the cinemas, along with the online downloads, attest to that.

In the third distinct group, you believe that an outside, third party hacking group (like the Guardians Of Peace) was responsible. The FBI claims that the language in the tools and scripts was written in Korean, as if that really proves anything. Anyone could write the text in the tools in any language they wanted, and would be an especially easy ploy to use to throw the "investigators" far off the track. The FBI also claims that the tools used are similar to another prior North Korean hack of South Korea (as if North Korea has exclusive use of those "types" of tools). The FBI also claims that it traced the attack back to a North Korean IP address (even though we all know how easy it is to hack, falsify and spoof IP addresses). Most "cybersecurity" experts agree that this is the most likely scenario.

I think you will have to agree that this whole thing appears rather suspicious, and reeks as bad as last week's catch left out in the sun.

This isn't the first rodeo for Sony either. Back in 2011, their Playstation network was hacked and taken offline. Back in the early 2000's, Sony faced significant backlash from computer users when they attempted to thwart copying of audio CDs by placing a damaging rootkit on audio CDs. You would have thought that Sony would have learned something from all of their previous bouts of being a target of someone's wrath.

At the very least, this whole ordeal has highlighted why security of our online data is so important. It has, at the very least, brought computer security concerns back to the foreground. If you need to review some sound computer security practices, take a look at our November 2013 issue. If you need to review some sound practices regarding your use of passwords, take a look in our September 2013 issue.

Until next month, I bid you peace, serenity, happiness and prosperity. Oh, and here's to hoping you have the very best 2015!

R.I.P. Mike Harris, a.k.a. Wildman: 1945 - 2014

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Once again, the PCLinuxOS family has lost one of their beloved family members. Mike W. Harris, who more commonly went by Mike in the PCLinuxOS forum and who formerly went by Wildman, passed away November 30, 2014, after a lengthy illness. Mike would have been 70 years old on January 20, 2015.

ms_meme's caricature of Wildman, a.k.a. Mike Harris

Mike's last post in the PCLinuxOS forum was in the early morning hours of November 27, 2014. It read:

"HAPPY THANKSGIVING To All" and be thankful for what you have!

Mike joined the PCLinuxOS forum on January 22, 2006, just two days after his 61st birthday. Over the course of most of the next eight years, he became a prolific poster, with 8015 forum posts to his credit. Ironically, Mike only started eight forum threads himself. In addition, he never started a poll, and he only once ever voted in a poll. As is the case with many users, the majority of Mike's posts were in the Sandbox. During the 65 days, 23 hours and 36 minutes he spent logged into the forum, most of his forum activity occurred between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m., peaking around 9 p.m.

Mike lived in the United States, in Julian, North Carolina, just southeast of Greensboro. He lived northeast of Rudge, and the two would talk often about planning a fishing trip.

"I assumed that his proximity to the lake (Lake Norman) made him a prime suspect as a fishing buddy, so a long time ago, when I found out where he lived, I contacted him via "PM" to see if he was interested," said Rudge.

"Well, he WAS interested but his failing health already made it a pipe dream," continued Rudge.

"This was about three years ago and we fantasized about our fishing trip and how much beer we would need "etc." jokingly off and on about it right up until very recently.

"It was also that we shared almost exactly the same weather patterns so if he got snow, I got snow. If it was unbelievably hot for me, same was true for him and we shared jokes and information about that sort of thing.

"Sadly, I never made the trip to actually meet Mike in person. In retrospect, he probably would have loved meeting JRex," said Rudge.

Personally, I had several correspondences with Mike. He was a huge supporter of The PCLinuxOS Magazine, and he would occasionally send private emails to me following the release of one of the issues of the magazine to congratulate us on the job we had done. He also sent well wishes for the birth of my son about a week before Ryan was born.

Mike's humor and thoughtfulness permeated his posts on the PCLinuxOS forum. To say that he was a well liked and highly respected member of the forum would be an understatement. He was quick to lend assistance whenever and wherever he could, helping fellow PCLinuxOS users overcome roadblocks and obstacles. His levity and sense of humor brought smiles to the faces of many.

Below is his official obituary, from the George Brothers Funeral Service:

Mr. Michael W. Harris, 69, of Julian, passed away November 30, 2014, at his residence.

A graveside service will be held 2:00pm Tuesday, December 2, at Guilford Memorial Park with the Reverend James Sweeney officiating.

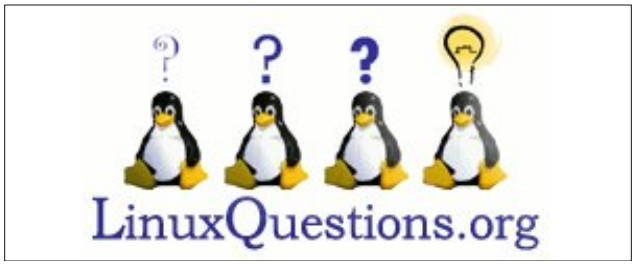
Mr. Harris was born January 20, 1945, in Durham, North Carolina, to the late Paul and Virginia Isley Harris. He worked for many years in the HVAC industry and was formerly employed with Johnson Controls. He was preceded in death by his son, Jason Harris.

Mr. Harris is survived by his wife of thirty-nine years, June J. Harris of the home; daughter, Misty Maness and her husband Michael of Star; grandchildren, Thomas,

Abigail, Chloe, and Zachary; son, Michael Jeffery Harris; brother, Ronald Harris of Greensboro and sister, Susan Sweatt also of Greensboro.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro, 2500 Summit Avenue, Greensboro, North Carolina, 27406.

Mike will be sorely missed by his PCLinuxOS friends. We extend our deepest sympathies and condolences to Mike's family.



Does your computer run slow?

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Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Crow, on 12/01/14, running KDE.

JPEG Just Got Some REAL Competition

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

The JPEG group (Joint Photographic Experts Group) was originally formed in 1986, and it was charged with creating a “standard” for digital still picture coding. The first formal JPEG standard was approved in September 1992. Yes, almost 23 years ago.

Over those two-plus decades, the JPEG file format has become universally accepted in the digital graphics world. You can scarcely visit any website that doesn’t have some JPEG graphics files on its page. The JPEG file format has become the defacto standard for the storage of graphics files on digital cameras. There are a lot of positive aspects to the use of the JPEG file format.

But as with everything, there are aspects of the JPEG format that aren’t so good. Sure, using its lossy compression algorithm, it can compress images 10:1, making the images 1/10th of the size of their uncompressed counterparts. But it is within that ability that the JPEG file format falters. If you compress it too much, or if you resave the image over and over again using the same compression settings, too much of the image information is discarded. This results in a loss of detail in the image, and can result in pixelation and bad color reproduction. Sure, you can circumvent this image degradation by first saving a first generation JPEG file as a PNG file (which uses lossless compression, and doesn’t discard any of the image information), performing your edits, and then re-saving the PNG file as a JPEG file again. While not a huge deal breaker, it illustrates the problems inherent with the JPEG file format.

Despite preserving 100% of the image quality, the PNG file format never really emerged as a strong threat to the JPEG file format’s dominance. Without a doubt, it has managed to carve out its niche in the digital graphics world, and most web browsers support the display of PNG graphics. But it never really gained the momentum to unseat JPEG files from the “throne.” This is because of the JPEG file format’s ability to produce much smaller file sizes, and in a world where speed counts when visitors access a website, the smaller JPEG files download much faster than the larger, but albeit higher quality, PNG files.

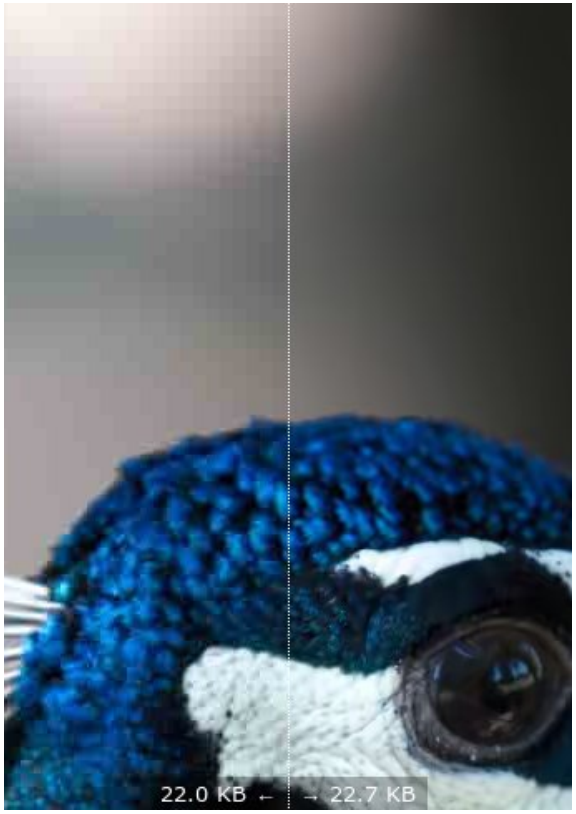
Now, fast forward nearly 23 years, and finally there is a bona fide competitor to the JPEG file format. Unless you run in certain small circles, you most likely have never heard of Fabrice Bellard. For those who are unfamiliar with him (and I suspect that’s the vast majority of people reading this article), Bellard is the genius behind the immensely successful FFMPEG multimedia library, and the genius behind the QEMU virtualization hypervisor. He has now lent his talents to creating a better graphics format with compression as good as or better than the stalwart JPEG file format.

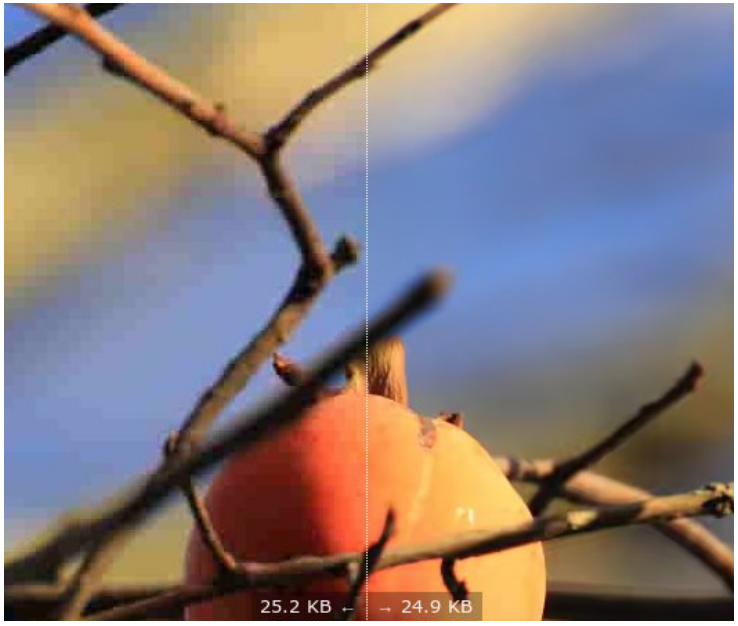
JPG on the left, BPG on the right, with similar levels of compression and similar file sizes. Notice the pixelation of the image background on the JPG side, and the total lack of pixelation on the BPG side. Also take note of the increased clarity and detail on the BPG side of the image.

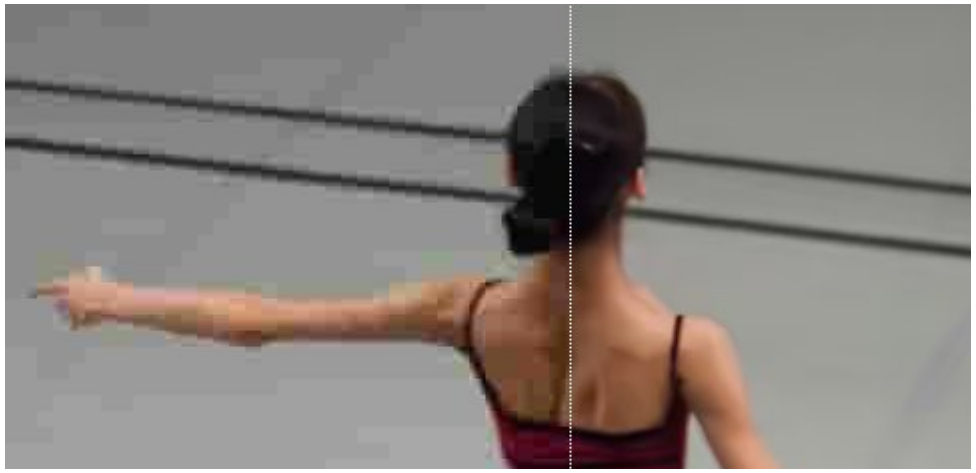
Bellard’s new format is called **BPG**, which is short for Better Portable Graphics. While the older JPEG format uses 8 bits per channel, Bellard’s new BPG format uses 14 bits per channel, and even supports transparency and alpha channels. As a result of the higher bit count per channel, Bellard is able to achieve the same level of compression as the JPEG file format, but without the significant image detail loss that besieges the JPEG format. Additionally, there is an option in the BPG format for lossless compression, similar to how the PNG format works.

Bellard’s BPG format is based on a subset of the HEVC (High Efficiency Video Coding), the slated successor to the H.264/MPEG-4 AVC format currently used by Blu-Ray discs. Besides supporting all of the same chroma formats as the JPEG format, it also supports RGB, YCgCo and CMYK color spaces.

Here are some other examples comparing MozJPEG to BPG. JPEG is on the left side of the divider, BPG is on the right side of the divider. Both formats are set to display images of a small file size, which translates into higher levels of compression.







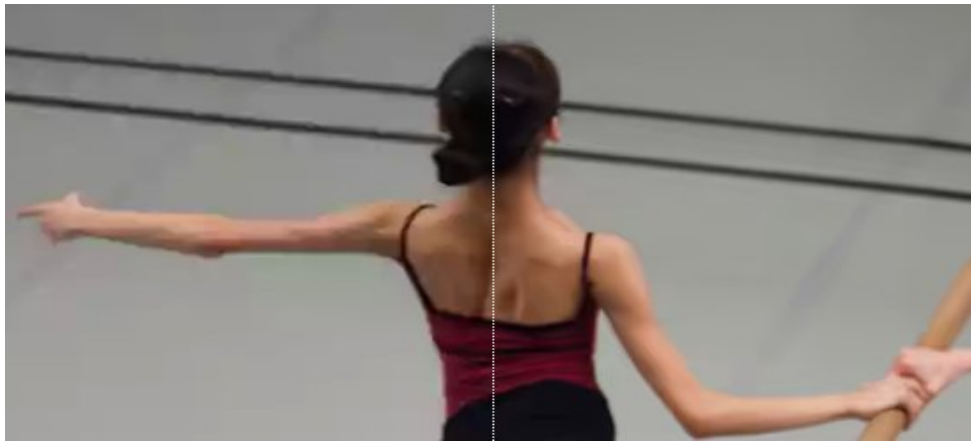
Don't expect to see much of BPG around, at least here at first. There are a few reasons. First, BPG is so new that there are little to no software titles that support it. Bellard hopes that browser and graphics application developers will include support for it in the future. Bellard has written an open source encoder and decoder for Linux and Windows, along with a small JavaScript decoder that can be used in most modern day browsers. Bellard is also hopeful that the HEVC support that is being included into some chipsets will allow for hardware decoding of the BPG images, allowing software vendors to skirt around any licensing issues.

Second, there are the licensing issues themselves. HEVC is controlled by MPEG LA, the patent consortium of content providers – 23 companies in the case of HEVC – who will undoubtedly be pursuing royalties from any vendor who includes HEVC support. Since MPEG LA holds the licensing reins for HEVC, it is demanding a $0.20 royalty per HEVC product after the first 100,000 units, per year, with an annual cap. This is the reason that hardware decoding becomes so attractive. Instead of each graphics application developer and each browser developer having to pay royalties, the royalties would (conceivably) be paid only when a graphics card with HEVC support is purchased. Of course, the royalties would be embedded into the price that the end user pays for the graphics card, and the end user would be none the wiser.

Not The Only Competitor

There are other competitors working to supplant the JPEG format as the de facto go to graphics format. Google has its **WebP** format, which is based on the VP8 video compression codec Google inherited when it purchased On2 Technologies in February 2010. WebP is a subset of Google's WebM multimedia codec, and is released under a BSD license.

WebP supports both lossy and lossless compression. Google claims that WebP images are 40% smaller than the same file stored in the PNG format, and 28% smaller than a PNG that has been optimized with pngcrush and pngout. Since WebP also supports animation, Google claims a 64% reduction in file size using lossy compression over the same animated GIF, and a 19% reduction in file size when using lossless compression.



WebP (left side of the divider) comes closest to matching the quality of BPG files (right side of the divider), but there is still a noticeable difference. BPG files still come out on top with superior quality.

Google Chrome and Opera already have native support for the display of WebP graphic files, as do most other browsers based on WebKit. On Linux, ImageMagick and XnView have native support among graphics programs. GIMP supports WebP via a plugin. As you can imagine, nearly every Google service (Gmail, Google+, Picasa, Google Image Search, etc.) supports the use of the WebP format.

Meanwhile, over in the Mozilla camp, they have abandoned trying to support WebP. Instead, they have sunk their efforts into producing a superior JPEG encoding library, called MozJPEG. Originally released in March 2014, a much improved MozJPEG 2.0 library was released in July 2014. The original version shaved 10% off of file sizes, and version 2.0 cut file sizes by another five percent. Mozilla achieves its results by utilizing trellis quantization, which improves compression for baseline and progressive JPEGs, without sacrificing compatibility. Originally, version 1.0 of the MozJPEG library only worked on JPEG files that were progressively encoded. Facebook has contributed $60,000 (U.S.) towards the development of MozJPEG.

Summary: Explore The Differences Yourself

Overall, BPG outperforms any of the other graphics formats, which is what makes it newsworthy. But you don't have to take my word for it. You can go take a look yourself. Point your browser over to the BPG sample page, and you can directly compare files encoded with MozJPEG, WebP, JPEG2K, BPG and the original image. Moving your cursor over the picture moves a reference line across the image. On one side of the reference line is one graphic format, and another graphic format is on the other side. This allows you to make direct comparisons between the formats.

Let's all hope that a way can be found around the licensing obstacles that are bound to crop up. Sad though it might be, the greed of the MPEG LA members may succeed in hindering its widespread adoption, at least until those applicable patents expire. Still, it's nice to know that something exists on the horizon to give us much improved rendering of our digital images.

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Created with Scribus

Inkscape Tutorial: Creating A Personal Calendar

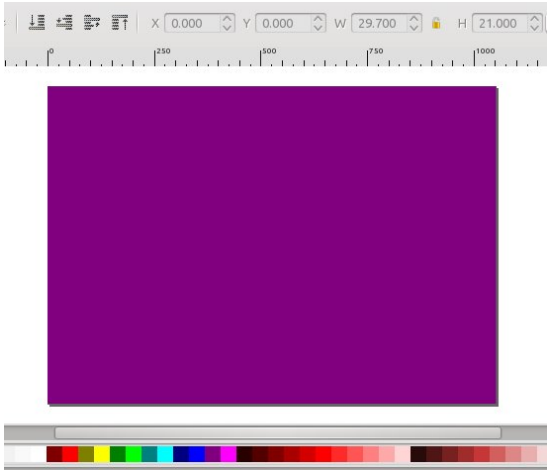
by Khadis

Hurray! The new year is here and there must be a lot of wishes, right? How was your party to welcome this new and “fresh” year? I do hope that the party was awesome and cheerful.

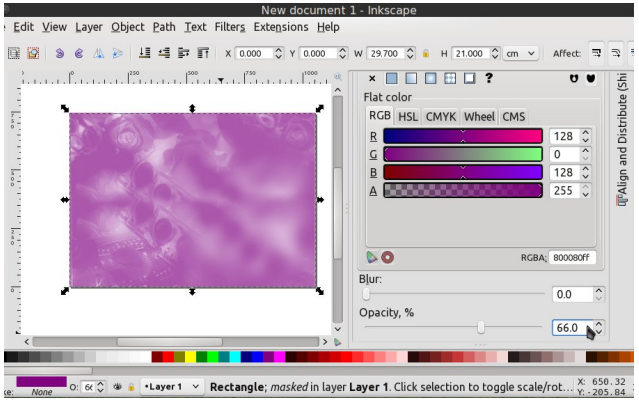
In this edition, I would like to show you a little trick to improve your creativity in using Inkscape. As we know, Inkscape has some superiorities compared to the similar graphic design software. The extensions module is one of the superiorities that its competitors don’t (always) have. One of the modules collection I’d like to use is “Calendar,” which will help us to create an instant personal calendar. Now, let’s go!

1. Start your Inkscape engine and then create a landscape document with your own preferred size (**File – Document Properties** or **Ctrl + Shift + D**). Mine is A4 landscape.

2. Create a rectangle with the same size as the document size (29.7 cm x 21 cm). Color it with purple (or any color you like).

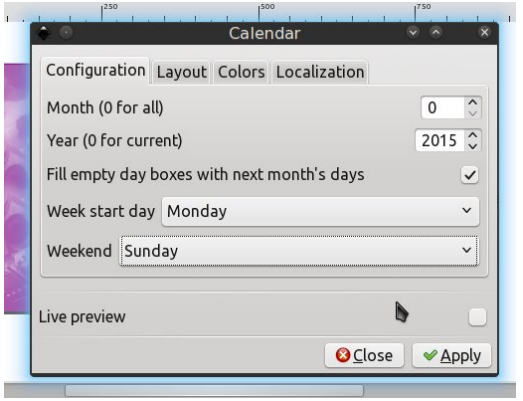


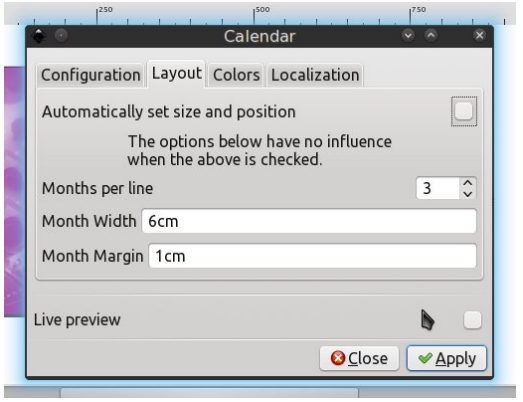
3. Import an image (**Ctrl + I**) to be used as a background. I picked a random image collection in my computer. Of course, you can find better image(s) over the Internet. Set the image as large as (or bigger than) your rectangle. Put it in front of the rectangle, select all (**Ctrl + A**), and then go to **Object – Mask – Set**. The image should now be inside of the purple rectangle. You can set the opacity lower than 100% to get better color (**Ctrl + Shift + F**).

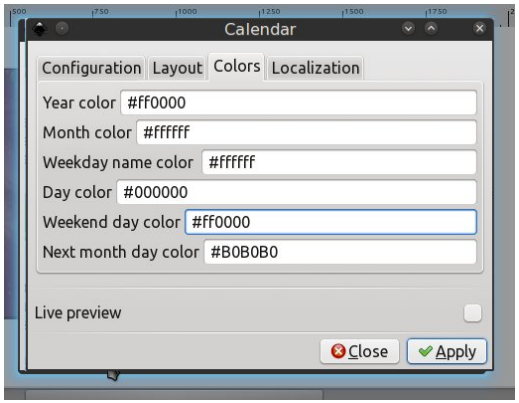


4. Go to **Extension – Render – Calendar** menu. The Calendar window will appear in your screen. It has some parameters that you can adjust, such as the year number, number of month in each page (e.g. 12 months per page for 1 page calendar, 6 months per page for 2 pages calendar, etc.), the starting weekday and weekend, the months and days name in your local language, etc. You can activate **Live Preview** to get the preview before you apply your settings.

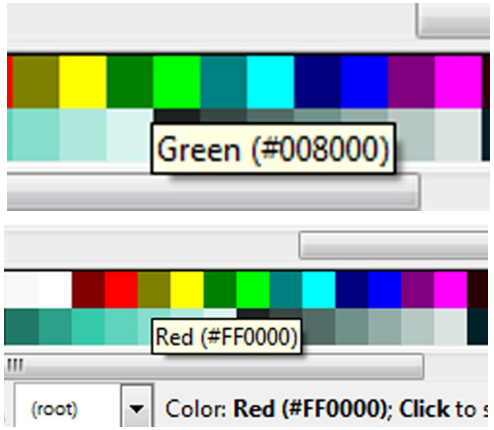
5. I set the parameters as follow (Indonesian style, especially the starting week day and the name of the days):







Note: In this part, you can set the color by seeing in the color bar. There, you will see the name of the color and the pattern (e.g. green = #008000, red = #FF0000, etc.).



6. Click **Apply** and **Close**. Resize to fit the page and **make it center on horizontal axis** (**Ctrl + Shift + A**).

7. If you want to change the font type or edit a single object inside of the calendar, e.g. to edit the year number's font, just double click your calendar, then double click the year number, then change the font type/color/size. Each double click will "temporarily" ungroup your calendar into single editable object.

8. Create another rectangle as a background of each month. I chose white color with 66% of opacity. Duplicate it (**Ctrl + D**) and resize it (see the picture at top right) and give different color. In this case, I chose green.

9. Make these two rectangles' corners rounded by using **Edit paths by nodes** tool (F2). After that you may group them first, or just select them, then move them lower (behind the calendar item) using Page Down button on your keyboard. You may need to hit the button twice or three times. Or you can select the calendar item then hit Home button so it will directly on top of all the objects.

10. Duplicate these rectangles and put them behind the other months (right).

11. You can then put photos, create decorations (by combining circles, rectangles, stars, hexagons, etc.), or place texts (next page).

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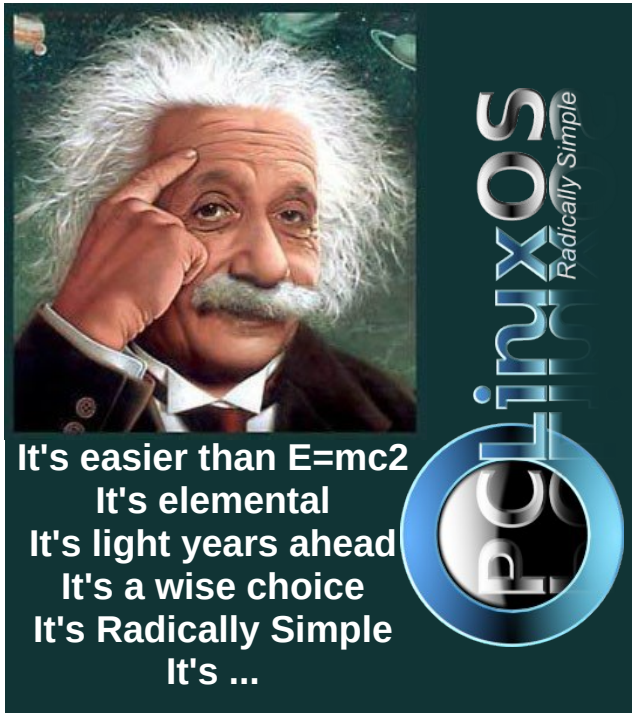


Screenshot Showcase

Posted by cstrike77, on 12/06/14, running KDE.

Game Zone: Millie

by daiashi

About The Game

A joyful, casual puzzle game that will tease both your wits and your memory!

You've always dreamt of flying. Roaming high in the clouds, free from all worries. Just gliding through air like a bird. Unfortunately, you were born as a millipede, and your best chance of launching to the sky is probably in some crow's mouth … or is it?

Rumor has it that the local Aviation School is accepting new recruits for a pilot course. Seeing an opportunity to make your dreams come true, you seize the moment and embark on a journey of your life. Your path is full of dangers, mazes and obstructions, but the end goal is more than worth it!

So rise on your feet, all 100 of them, and get going!

Control a millipede, roaming through over 90 diverse levels. Solve the elaborate mazes laying on your way. Gather and use multitude of power-ups that will help you with your struggles. Enjoy three types of immersing mini games. Grow bigger and bigger; and remember: try not to eat your tail.

- Almost a hundred challenging and diverse levels
- 3 totally different environments.
- Tons of power-ups and helpers
- Varied and colorful levels
- Immersing mini-games
- Really enjoyable, casual gameplay

This game is a combination of Pac-Man and the old snake game. You eat dots while enlarging your body. Just be careful - your path or the length of your body can get you stuck.

Hope you enjoy the game. It's good to jump on and pass some time.

System requirements:

Fully updated PCLinuxOS and Steam

Hardware:

Minimum:
OS: PCLinuxOS

Processor: 2 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo

Memory: 1 GB RAM

Graphics: Open GL 2.1

Hard Drive: 288 mb for demo

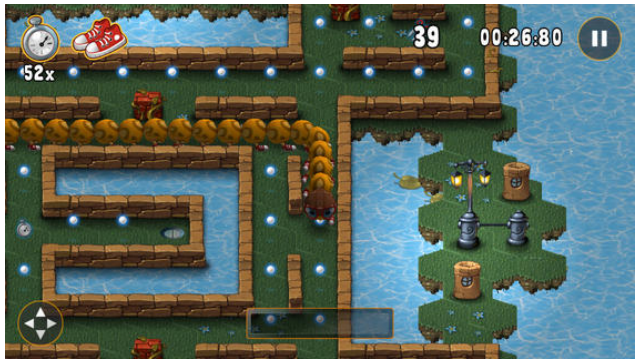
About The Company

They are a developer and publisher of video games and various applications for all available platforms (iPad, iPod, Nintendo, PS VITA, Android system etc.). The company was founded in 2010, nevertheless, it is worth noticing its very fast development - they have already two daughter companies, NCM Entertainment Corp. based in Tokyo (Japan), and Madman Theory Games S.A. based in Gdynia (Poland). We also possess holdings in Pastel Games Sp. z.o.o with its register office in Krakow (Poland). Furthermore, since January 2011, **Forever Entertainment S.A.** has been listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange.

Products created by them are designed for markets all over the world. However, the most important for the company are Asian markets, in particular, Japan and China. As for projects created by our specialists, they feature characters from cartoons popular in Poland and around the world. At the same time, we concentrate on plans connected with family projects and older users. Beyond production activity, the company is also engaged in distribution. Our achievements in this field, among other things, is acquisition of rights to distribute 'Ciacho' film in Asian countries.

Owing to many years of the staff's experience, the company achieves its main goals: credible and professional products and reliable customer service. Thanks to cooperation with many experienced specialists, it is able to meet expectations of the most demanding multimedia entertainment lovers.

Some Gameplay Screenshots



Getting It To Run

Install Steam (if you don't have it installed already), then start it. You will need to create a new account, if you do not already have one. Once you have Steam up and running, go to the store tab. Click on the Linux tab if you wish and search for "Millie." Click on and download the demo. You will need to check keyboard under options. It defaults to joystick, unless that is how you play.

http://store.steampowered.com/app/294230/

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by francesco_bat, on 12/23/14, running KDE.

Installing Your Own Forum With SMF

by YouCanToo

What is SMF? Simple Machines Forum – SMF in short – is a free, professional grade software package that allows you to set up your own online community within minutes.

It's powerful custom made template engine puts you in full control of the lay-out of your message board.

SMF is written in the popular language PHP and can use MySQL, PostgreSQL or SQLite databases, depending on the version of SMF. It is designed to provide you with all the features you need from a bulletin board, while having an absolute minimal impact on the resources of the server. SMF is the next generation of forum software and best of all it is completely free to use!

So, do you want to setup and run your own forum using SMF software?

Let's start by getting the required programs.

NOTE: *This has only been installed on a 32bit system, as that is what I run. I have not tried installing this on a 64bit system, though the installation for the SMF software should be similar.*

The forum software itself can be found here. The current version as of this writing is 2.0.9. Save it to your downloads folder. For those who prefer not to install software from outside of the repository, version 2.0.4-1pclos can be found in Synaptic.

Next, we need to install some software from synaptic. We need the following files and any dependencies.

apache_base
apache-mod_deflate
apache-mod_perl
apache-mod_php
apache-mpm-prefork
gd
gd-bundled

mysql
mysql-client

phpmyadmin or webmin for administering the mySQL database.

Now that you have the above software installed, let's begin!

Start out, as the root user, by creating a smf directory in your /var/www/html folder using the following command.

```
mkdir /var/www/html/smf
```

Now copy the SMF software you downloaded earlier, to the /var/www/html/smf folder using the following command.

```
cp /home/username/Downloads/smf_2-0-9_tar.gz /var/www/html/smf
```

Lets extract our smf package. In your /var/www/html/smf folder we will use the following command.

```
tar zxvf smf_2-0-9_tar.gz
```

Once you have extracted the files, we need to change some permissions to the folders and files. In a console window, as the root user, enter the following commands.

Note: Make sure you are in the folder /var/www/html/smf

The following files and folders need their permissions changed. In a console window, as the root user, use the command in the following format.

```
chmod 777 filename
```

where filename is replace with the actual folder or file name.

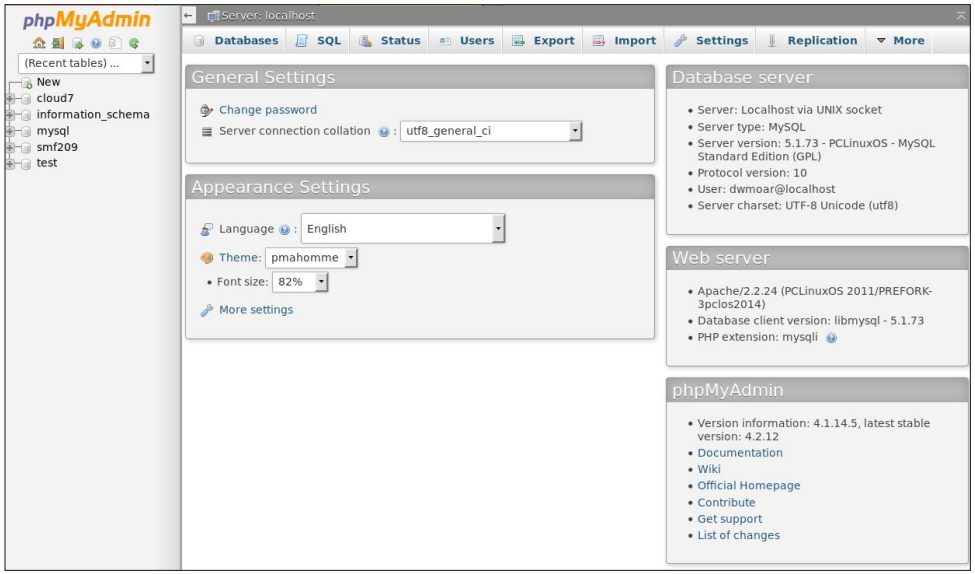
Permission	File or Folder name
777	attachments
777	avatars
777 -R	Packages
777	Smileys
777	Themes
755	agreement.text
755	Settings.php
755	Setting_bak.php
755	install.php

Create a new database using phpMyAdmin

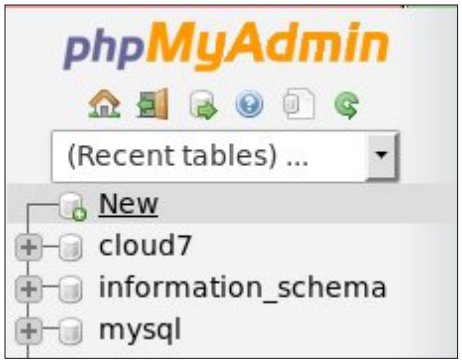
Open your favorite web browser and point it to http://localhost/phpmyadmin.

You should be greeted with the following window.

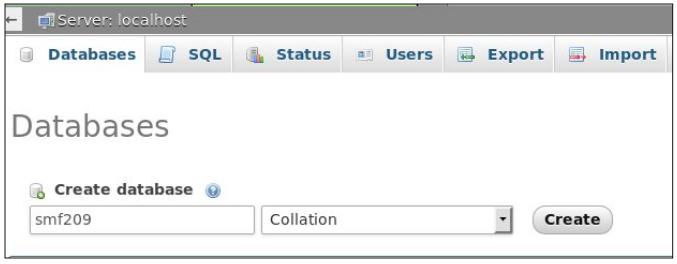
The login by default with phpmyadmin is root using no password. Once logged in you should see this page.



Now lets create our new database. In the left hand pane, click on new.

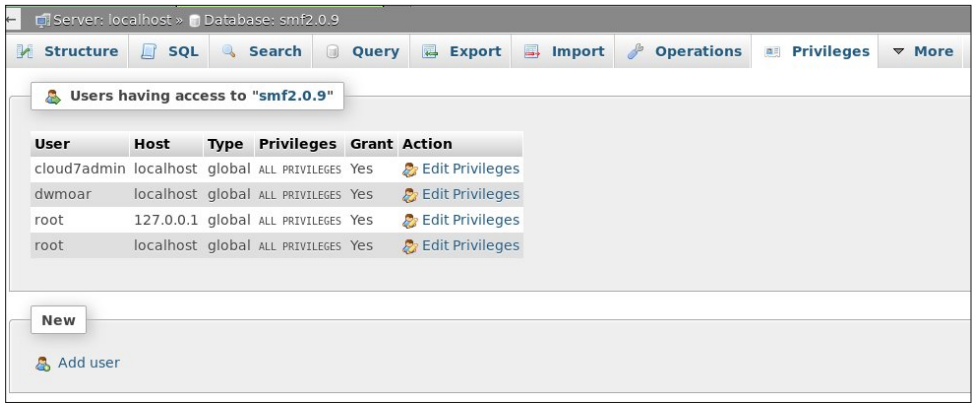


We now need to give our database a name. For this tutorial, I chose the name smf209.



Once you have entered your database name, press CREATE.

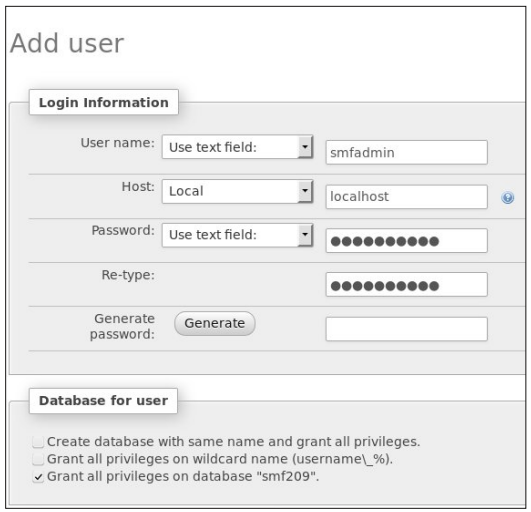
Now that your database has been created, you need to select it from the left hand pane. You will then see an area to create a table(s). We are not going to create any tables, but we are going to click on the **Privileges** tab. You will then see this window.



Under “New” click on the Add user link. We now are greeted with the following screen.

Here is where we setup a username and password for our database.

WARNING: Make sure that you copy your username and password down and store it in a safe place. If you should forget it, well, let’s just say you are not going to be very happy!



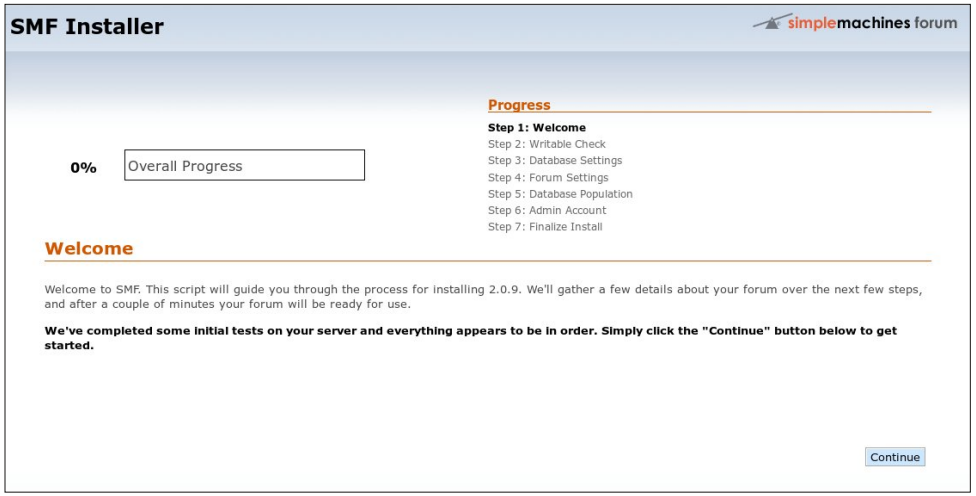
When you are finished, be sure to scroll down to the bottom of the window and click **SAVE**.

Now that we have finished creating the required database with username and password, let’s install the SMF software itself.

Installing the SMF software

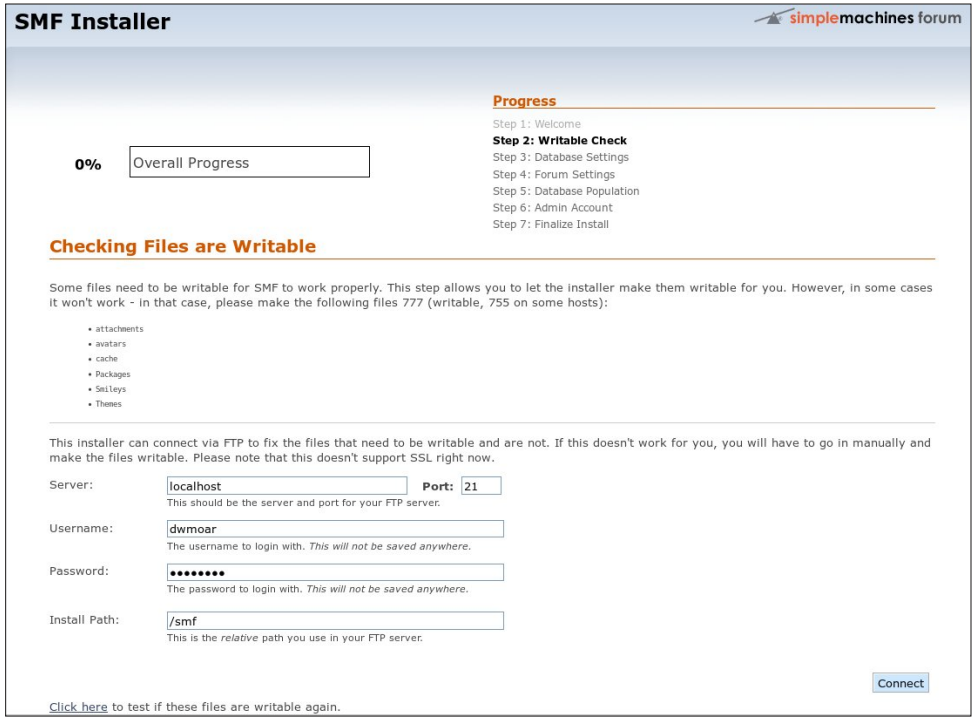
Again using your favorite web browser, point it to the smf directory http://localhost/smf/install.php. You will be greeted with the SMF installer. It will perform a series of seven (7) steps to get the forum software up and running properly.

STEP 1. It is going to gather some data about our server and software. If there are any issues found, they will be displayed.



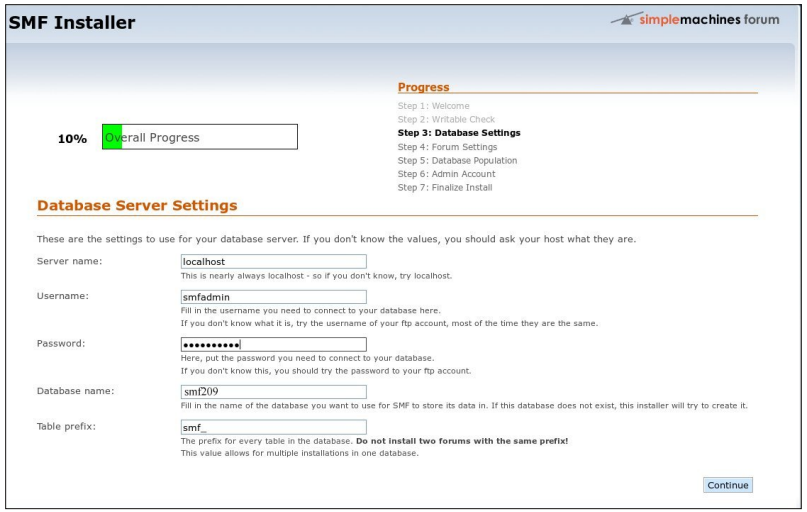
Great! We can move on. Click on the **CONTINUE** button.

STEP 2. The installer is going to check that it indeed has the necessary write permissions for the files and folders. It is now going to ftp into our system. If you do not have an ftp server installed, stop, and install one using Synaptic. vsFTPD is a very secure and easy to setup FTP server. If you do not know how to setup an ftp server, please ask in the forum.



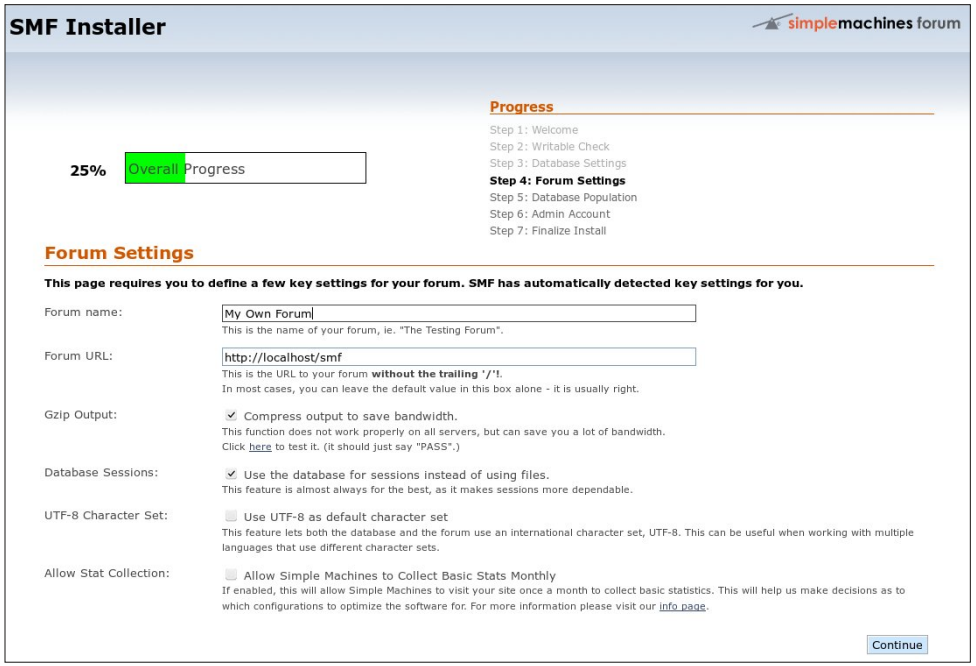
We did well and were sent to the next step. If any of the permissions were wrong, it would have displayed a warning box.

STEP 3. We now need to tell the program about our database - username-password.



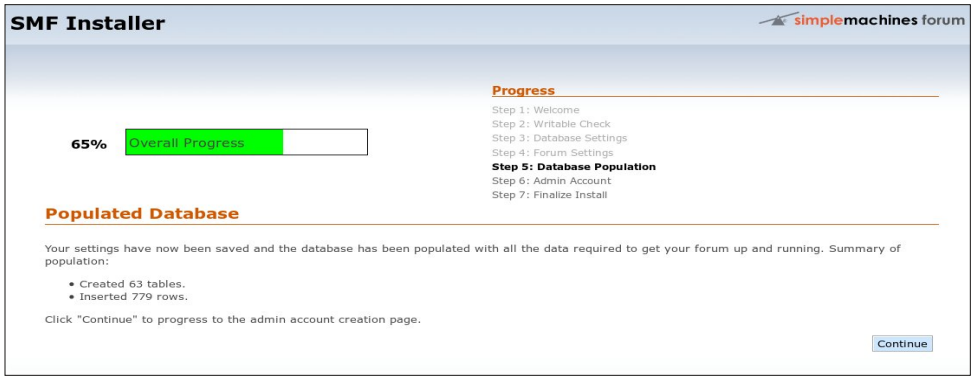
Again, make sure that you make a copy of your username and password and keep it somewhere safe. Once you have entered the information above, click **CONTINUE**.

STEP 4. You will be asked to enter some general forum settings, like the name of your new forum and the url of your forum.



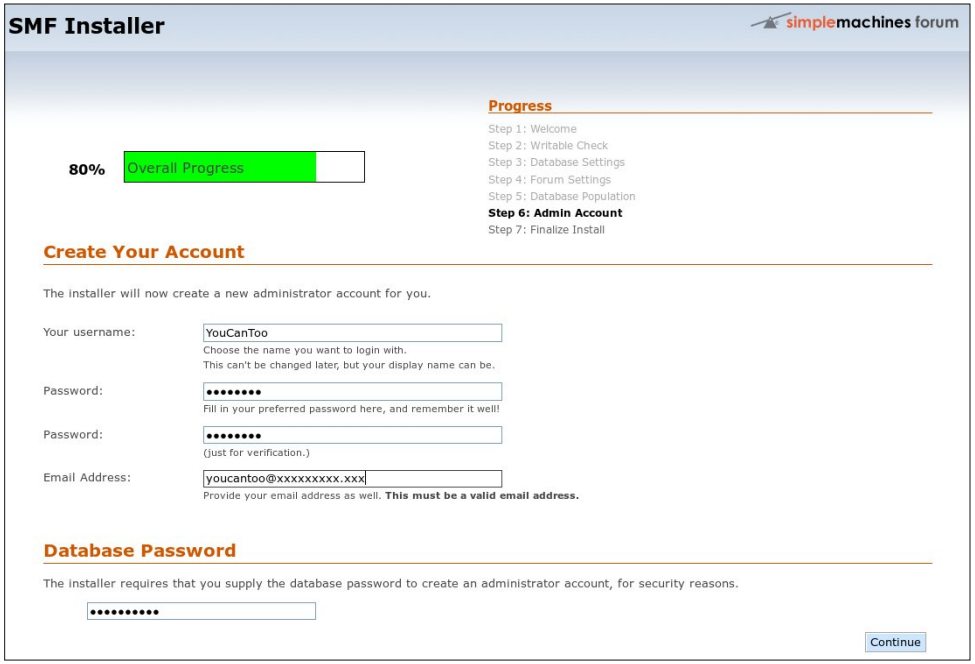
In our case the URL of your forum should be http://localhost/smf. Again, when you have finished, click **CONTINUE**.

STEP 5. This is the population of your new database with its tables and other necessary files.



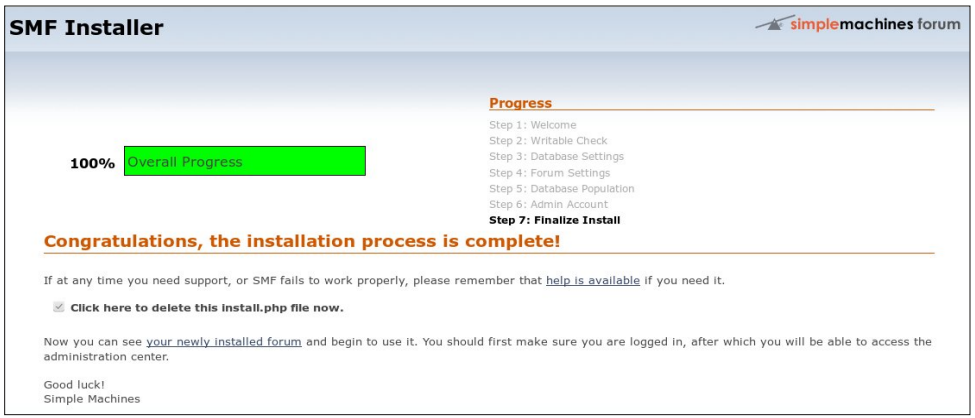
When you have finished, select **CONTINUE.**

STEP 6. Here we add an administrator for our new forum. This is the username and password that you will use to login to your forum.

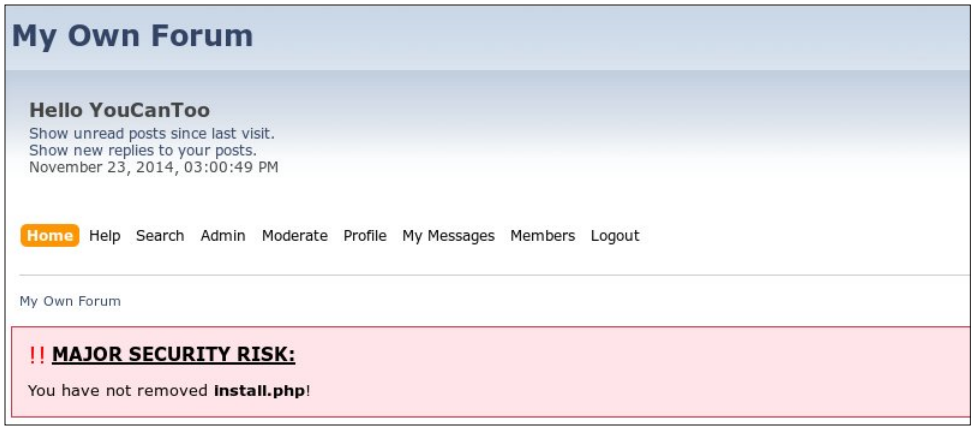


See, I told you that you needed to remember that database password! When you are finished, click **CONTINUE.**

STEP 7. This is our final step in setting up our forum software. Be sure to checkmark the box about deleting the install.php file. Leaving it is a ***SECURITY RISK.***



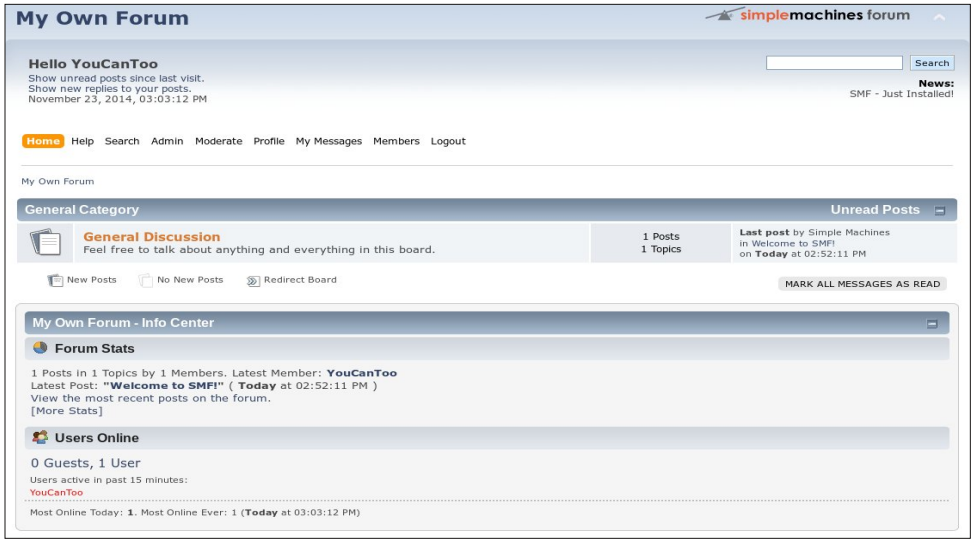
Now just click on the link “your newly installed forum.”



What’s this! It appears that the installer DID NOT remove the install.php from from the smf directory. Don’t worry, this isn’t a big problem. To remove the install.php file, simply open a console window as the root user and cd to /var/www/html/smf. Once you are in that directory, enter the following command:

```
rm -f install.php
```

I told you it wasn’t a big problem. Now go back to your web browser and press refresh (or F5), and you should now see your new forum.



Ahhh, that’s better. You can access your forum by simply pointing your web browser to http://localhost/smf or by IP address if you have one at http://youripaddress/smf.

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Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Ika, on 12/26/14, running Xfce.

ms_meme's Nook: My Christmas

Christmas always is at my house
Nobody else ever wants to clean
They say it's always been this way
And why break the routine

I wanted to dine at a fine restaurant
Hubby wouldn't spend his pennies
If I want to eat a meal out
It's a burger and fries at Denny's

We ended up eating hot dogs
Didn't even have a cake
Hubby put it all in the oven
But forgot to turn on bake

The mashed potatoes were lumpy
The dressing looked like mush
When I called the folks to eat
Not a soul was in a rush

I was left doing all the dishes
Everyone else took a snooze
Next year I'm not serving champagne
Let 'em all just drink cheap booze

The fruitcake never did arrive
It was to be delivered by UPS
But the aroma of the nuts and rum
Made the driver eat it I guess

I suggested cards for entertainment
Thought I could make a buck or two
But Great Uncle stacked the deck
I lost ten when the game was through

I received a diamond bracelet
For my arm a curled snake
But when I looked at those jewels
I found they all were fake

The poinsettia leaves all faded
Somebody forgot to water that plant
When I reminded hubby to do it
He replied I'm busy now I can't

The guests have finally left
Wrapping paper covers the floor
Ribbon and tinsel everywhere
And the wreath's fallen off the door

Now that Christmas is over
And the tree's been taken down
I'm grateful for my family and friends
And glad they're always around

Testimonial

Hello From A Completely New Linux User

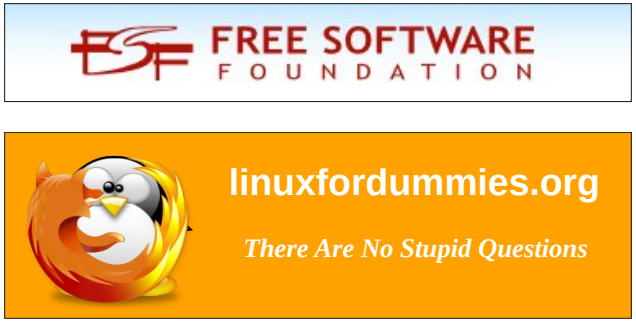
by m14x

I've just started my Linux journey, coming over from Windows XP. It's been about a week now, and most of that time has been spent trying to get the wireless to work (on another distro) with this old Netbook (a Samsung N130). Being a newbie, it has been daunting being thrown in the deep end having to 'backport' and compile drivers etc., but I am glad of the experience it has given me in the shell. In the end though, for all my efforts, I was unable to get it to work. So, I had to start looking for another distro that did support my device (Realtek RTL8192SE) and PCLinuxOS came highly recommended.

But having now seen PCLinuxOS in action, I'm so glad I did have problems, because otherwise I would not have discovered this wonderful OS. I have never seen such a gorgeous UI as this has (the MATE desktop), and my Netbook has never been so fast and responsive, even when it was on Windows. With Windows, I usually had to wait three or four minutes after turning it on before it was in a usable state (having to wait for Kaspersky to load, etc.), but this takes just one minute (I timed it).

I decided, perhaps recklessly – time will tell – that it was time to make a clean break from Windows, so I backed up all my files and then installed the first distro on top of it, rather than alongside it, burning my bridges as it were so there was no going back. But so far, I'm not missing it at all, and am looking forward to becoming proficient in all things Linux. It is fascinating reading about it, and from all rational points of view, it is the best thing to do. To change from 'the evil monopoly' to open source, from paid software to free, from antivirus to no antivirus. But nonetheless, I have become very dependent on Microsoft over the years, so it is a scary leap to have taken.

One thing though, I'm just coming to grips with this idea of software repositories and the fact than in PCLinuxOS you're only supposed to use one, and not get your software from anywhere else. However I found that out after I had installed some third-party software – the real Google Chrome – because I just wanted at least one thing that was familiar. So what I want to know is whether I am breaking any rules by installing that, or whether those rules are just guidelines? Because if necessary, I'll uninstall it, but I hope I don't have to, because it's working fine, and it does come from a trustworthy source (Google).



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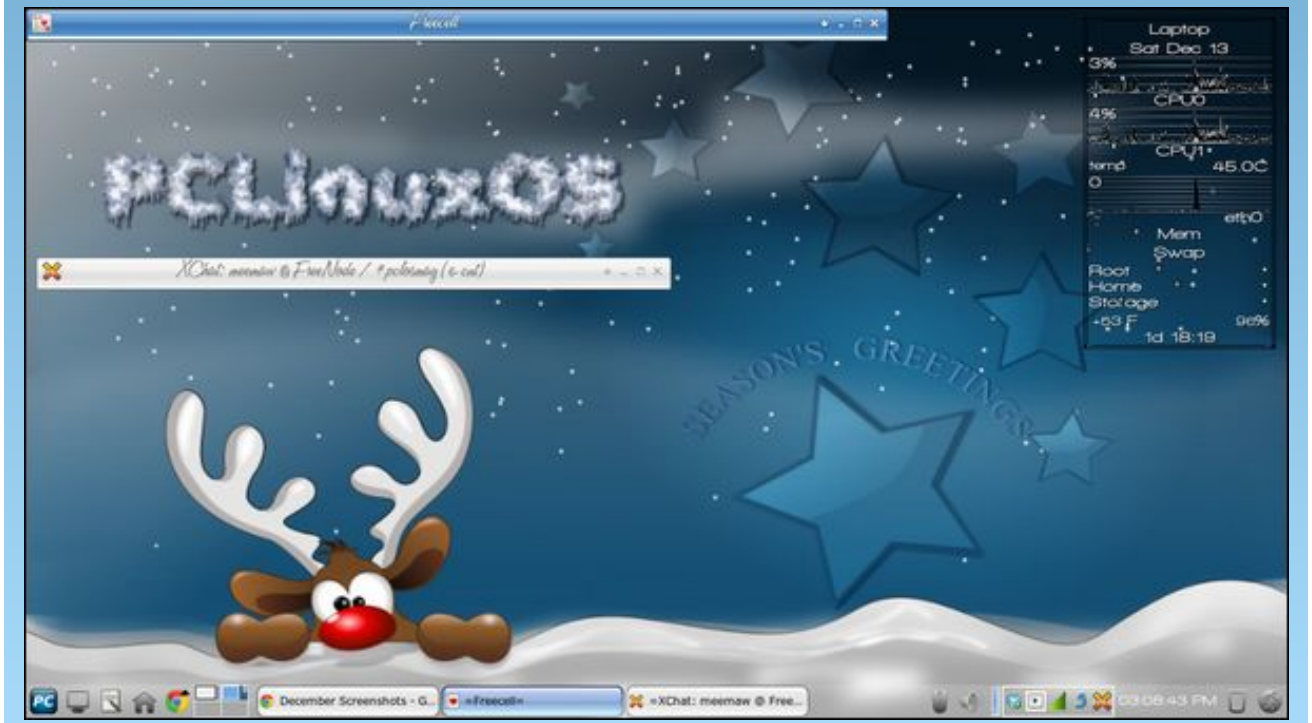
Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Meemaw, on 12/13/14, running Xfce.

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner

Hash Brown Casserole with Bacon, Onions, and Cheese

Ingredients

6 bacon slices
4 extra large eggs
1 cup chopped onion
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 (32-ounce) frozen Southern-style hash brown potatoes
1 cup (4 ounces) pre-shredded Classic Melts Four Cheese blend, divided
1/2 cup chopped green onions or substitute with chives
1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 can condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
Cooking spray

Options: Sliced sauteed mushrooms - O'brien potatoes - crumbled sausage - garlic

Preparation

Cook bacon in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat until crisp. Remove bacon from pan, and crumble. Discard drippings in pan. Add 1 cup onion and garlic to pan; cook for 5 minutes or until tender, stirring frequently. Stir in the potatoes; cover and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Combine crumbled bacon, 1/4 cup cheese, green onions, sour cream, eggs, salt, pepper, and soup in a large bowl. Add potato mixture; toss gently to combine. Spoon mixture into an 11x7-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Sprinkle with remaining 3/4 cup cheese. Cover with foil coated with cooking spray.

Preheat oven to 350°

Bake casserole, covered, at 350º for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 10 to 15 minutes or until thermometer inserted in center reads 160°F. Should be bubbly around the edges and golden brown.

A whole meal in a single dish!

Linux Forums

Visit Us On IRC

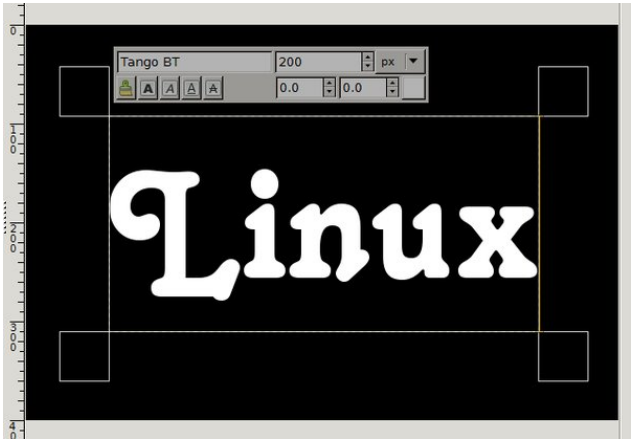
- Launch your favorite IRC Chat Client software (xchat, pidgin, kopete, etc.)
- Go to freenode.net
- Type "/join #pclosmag" (without the quotes)

GIMP Tutorial: Quick Neon Text Using G'MIC

by Meemaw

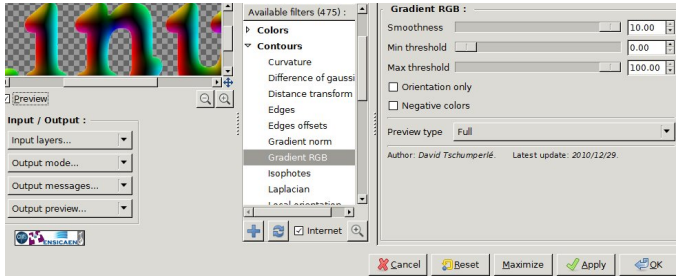
In this tutorial, we can create a simple neon text with G'MIC. G'MIC is a program you can use online or as an add-on to Gimp. You can install it from Synaptic.

Open GIMP and create a new project. You can make it whatever size you want. Mine is 600 x 400 px. The background should be black. Choose your **Text** tool and write your desired text. You can use whatever font you want, but the neon effect looks really good using some sort of rounded font (the tutorial I found used Arista but I used Art Brush and Tango BT). Highlight the text and change the color to white and the size to 200 pt or so, depending on the font. Change tools back to the moving tool and move your text to the center of your drawing.



Right-click on the text and choose **Layers > Layer to image size**. Go to the Layers tab. Right click on the text layer and choose **Alpha to Selection**.

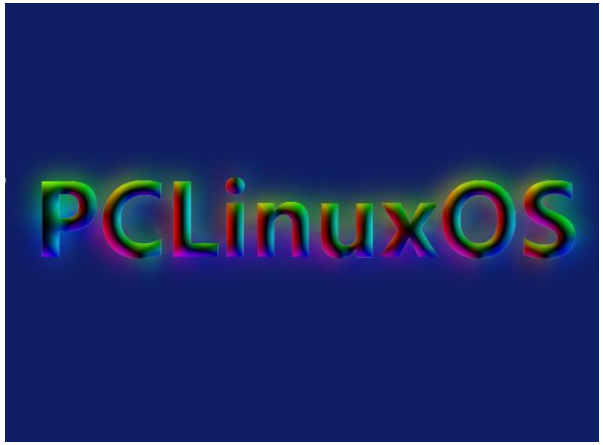
Click on **Filters > G`MIC**. A window will open that shows a list of filters.

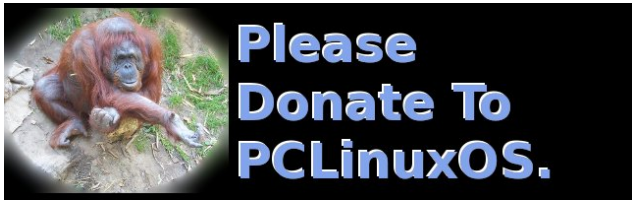


The filter we will use is **Contours > Gradient RGB**. From the sliders that appear, set the smoothness to 10 and max threshold to 100, then click OK. Click **Select > None**.

Duplicate this layer and, choosing the lower text layer, click on **Filters > Blur > Gaussian Blur**. Increase the Blur Radius to about 60. Then choose **Hue/Saturation**, and change the Saturation to 100 and Lightness to 70.

Quick, huh? You can change the background if you wish, and should merge the layers before exporting..





Screenshot Showcase

Posted by luikki, on 12/04/14, running KDE.

PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight: vorteggs

as told to smileeb

How old are you?
I am 55 years old.

Children, grandchildren?
Gave birth (or breath?) and lived with a son and a daughter in/from 1981 and 1987. I still like them. Hope they like me too. We are living together at this moment.

Retired or working and for how long and at what?
Scientist working in Bulgarian Academy of Science in physics and chemistry fields.

What is the area you live in like. Weather, Quietness, Scenery?
Bulgaria, living in Sofia.

Are you handy with your hands and have any hobbies?
What I am doing right now?
I am cooking now runner beans. Here in Bulgaria we say "green beans". And I am doing yogurt (we say "sour milk"). I like cooking and I almost don't like to cook. (The milk was almost over and I took it off to cool down)

Do you like to travel, go camping?
What do I like? I like human conversation at this time of my life. It seems to me it is the only thing you can really gain.

As for hobbies, I like reading very much. I have recently read "Hunger" from Knutt Hamsun. Before that, I read an American SciFi from the 1950's. Next, I will read about the Ancient Greek Sceptics.

I liked photography and I played volleyball. Now I am playing life.

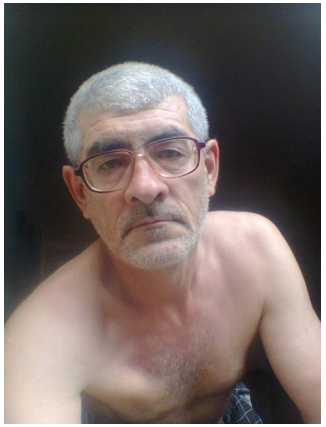
I am a part of i2p network running it 24/7 on Odroid U3. I roll and smoke cigarettes and I drink alcohol.

What caused you to try Linux and join this forum?
Why I am here? Well, even if I was on Windows and found this forum I would be here. But once upon a time, I became angry on Windows and tried GNU-Linux. The first brand was the Knoppix LiveCD. Me and my daughter, 13 years old at the time, looked at this and said: Hm-m-m, looks tasty! At this point we switched to GNU-Linux. I installed the most favourite GNU_Linux brand called Ubuntu. My daughter and I were happy, initially. But not long after that, I got angry with Ubuntu. You can see this in their forums under my nick "UncleV."

At that time I was ready to come back to Windows but my daughter told me "Hey, calm down"! Then I saw there a mention of PCLinuxOS. I installed it and I am happy with it right now. Thank you PCLInuxOS'ers and especially Texstar!

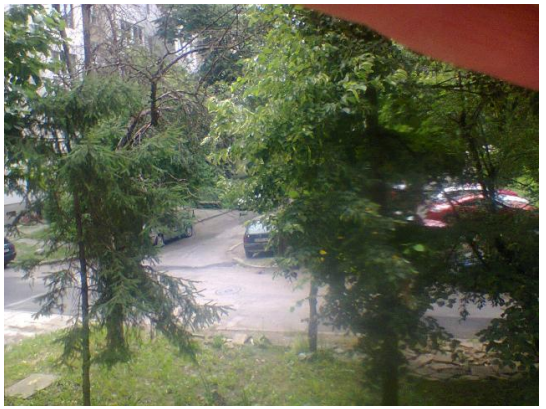
I am running LXDE on a 14 years old computer at work and KDE on 5 year old computer at home.

Why do I like PCLinuxOS? No other popular operating system is so reliable.



Here, I took a picture of myself. I hung out of the window and pointed the phone on me.

What you can see from that window is here:



PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight is an exclusive, monthly column by smileeb, featuring PCLinuxOS forum members. This column will allow "the rest of us" to get to know our forum family members better, and will give those featured an opportunity to share their PCLinuxOS story with the rest of the world.

If you would like to be featured in PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight, please send a private message to smileeb in the PCLinuxOS forum expressing your interest.

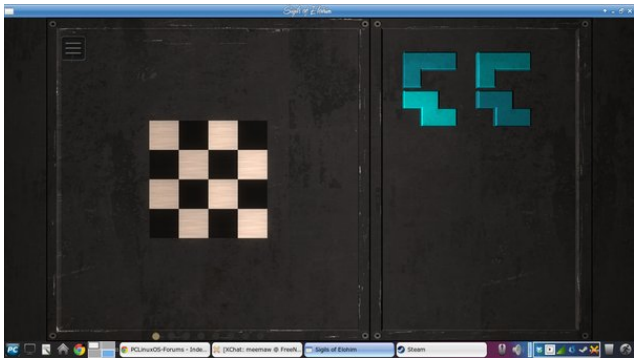
I'm Not A Gamer, But....

by Meemaw

I'm not really a gamer, but I thought I would give Steam a try and see if there were any games I would enjoy. I found a free game called Sigils of Elohim.

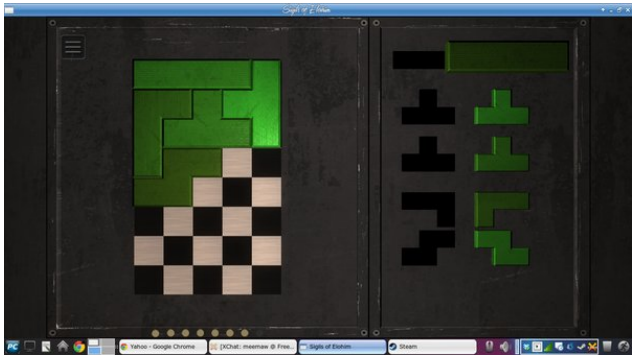
Sigils of Elohim is a free mini-game prelude to Croteam's upcoming first-person puzzler The Talos Principle that challenges players to solve dozens of challenging sigil puzzles under the watchful eye of Elohim.

Sigils Of Elohim is a puzzle game where to use arrangements of squares to completely cover a larger shape, generally a square or rectangle. The further you go through the levels, the more pieces are used and the larger the end result is. The screenshot below shows the first puzzle in the series.



Game control is easy. When you get the game installed in Steam, click on the first level (shown above) and the board will load. Click on a puzzle piece to pick it up and right-click to rotate it (90 degrees on each click). Place it in the position you want and click again and the piece will be placed. Repeat with all pieces until the black & white board is covered. If you decide you need to move a piece you already placed, just click on it again to pick it up and move it.

This screenshot is the most recent board I have solved. As I mentioned, the boards get bigger and the number of pieces increases.



Sigils of Elohim has 32 levels. At the end of each set of 8, you will receive codes to use in the new game The Talos Principle, to which this game is a precursor. From the Steam site:

The Talos Principle is a philosophical first-person puzzle game from Croteam (Serious Sam), written by Tom Jubert (FTL, The Swapper) and Jonas Kyratzes (Infinite Ocean). Solve complex puzzles woven into a metaphysical parable about intelligence and meaning in a doomed world.

From what I can gather from the trailer, you solve the same sort of puzzle to unlock doors and levels. It hasn't been released yet, but the release date now says December 11, 2014. Depending on the cost, I hope to play it when it comes out.

Wow! Steam is cool, with the right game. I'm not a gamer, but I do like puzzles.

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PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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

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.

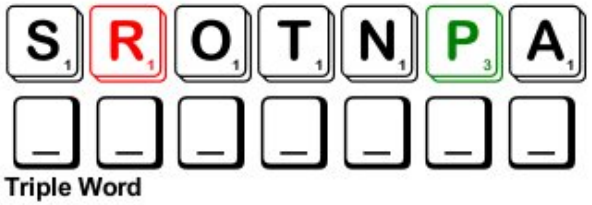
Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

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:

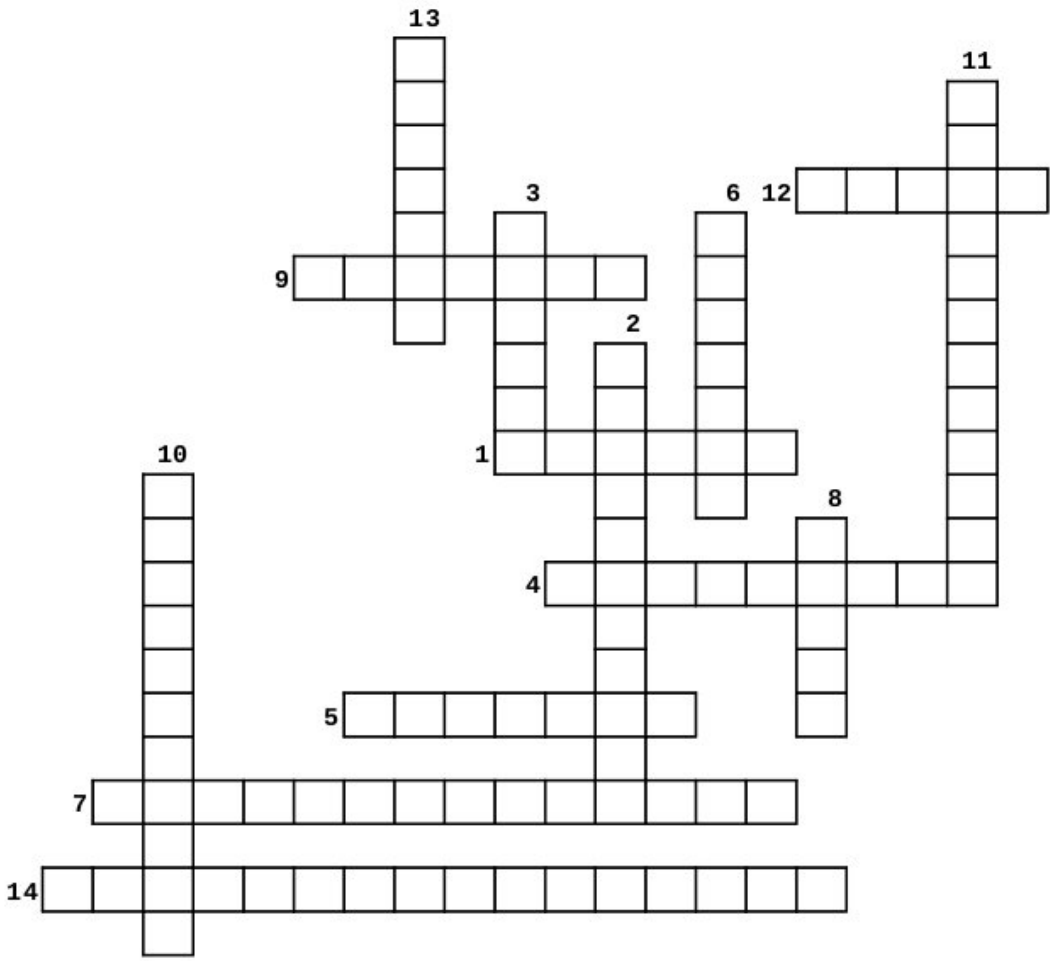
1. Follow the rules of Scrabble®. You can view them here. You have seven (7) letter tiles with which to make as long of a word as you possibly can. Words are based on the English language. Non-English language words are NOT allowed.
2. Red letters are scored double points. Green letters are scored triple 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!

Download Puzzle Solutions Here



Possible score 215, average score 151.

PCLinuxOS Crossword Puzzle: January 2015 Winter



1. For your hands
2. To keep your head warm
3. Winter sport on snowy hills
4. Helps reduce the heating bills
5. Keeps the house warm
6. Keep your neck warm
7. Sporting events with most countries competing
8. Ice and rain mixture
9. Helps keep one warm when sleeping
10. Ride one of these
11. Yummy warm drink
12. A favorite article of winter clothing
13. Build one of these out of snowballs
14. An extra layer worn to keep you warm

Download Puzzle Solutions Here

Winter Word Find

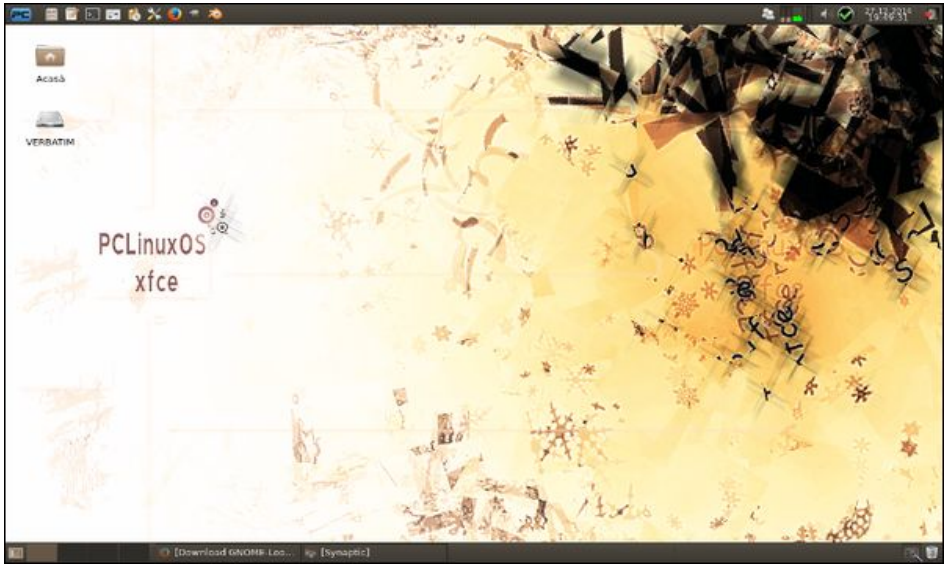
H D I S L A E P A B Z S V B O W E Z O V J K J D S G S B X M
S R X D B J U L I A F E G W H Z S E N G D J W K X Z F N Z D
R J V U L T G S I M O Y X K A Y R Z A T G N I G X C K N F C
W U T I H U H C Q E R R L K K N T D T B J I U M L J X T E A
Y Q S T O C K I N G C A P N C G O H I U N E O A F S K W O Q
O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

Blanket
Boots
Coats
Cold
Deer Hunting
Fireplace
Furnace
Gloves
Hot Chocolate
Ice Skating
Scarves
Skiing
Sledding
Sleet
Snow
Snowball Fight
Snowman
Snowmobiles
Stocking Cap
Sunshine
Thermal Underwear
Windy
Winter Olympics

Download Puzzle Solutions Here

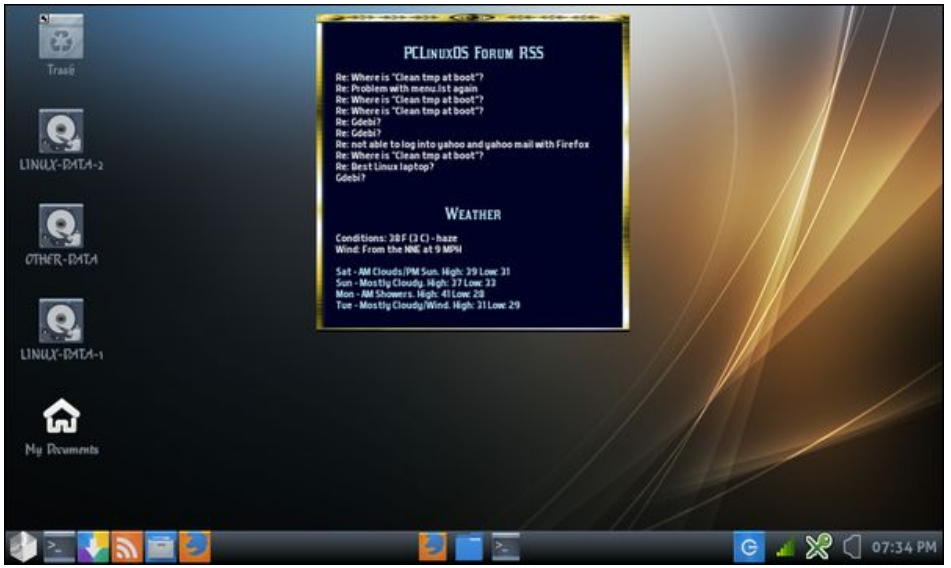
More Screenshot Showcase

Posted by nymira, on 12/24/14, running MATE.



Posted by OrionH, on 12/27/14, running Xfce.

Posted by present_arms, on 12/01/14, running KDE.



Posted by Yankee, on 12/05/14, running LXDE.