PCLOS

>digital magazine

PCLinuxOS FACTORY

mini me

gnome

PCLOS based Distros

EDITORIAL

Greetings,

Your friendly Assistant Editor here this week with the newest issue of PCLinuxOS Magazine and we have an exciting issue this week. Chapter 5 of the KDE User Guide is here and this month we start our Gnome User Guide series for all of those out there that use the Gnome Version of PCLinuxOS.
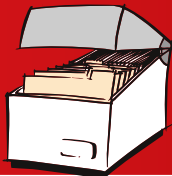
In this issue you will find ways to speed up Firefox and learn about an old computer that was given new life by TinyMe and one of our community members. We also have a round up of media players with much more
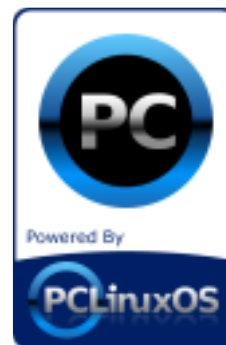
articles.

Enjoy the Magazine and remember to keep using PCLinuxOS the best and easiest Linux out there.

CONTENTS

PCLOS

DISCLAIMER

There are some more settings in Firefox that can be changed to increase the speed of loading web pages.

If your using Firefox on a broadband connection...this will speed up your browsing significantly.

1.Type "about:config" into the address bar and hit return. Scroll down and look for the following entries(open a new window to do this) :

network.http.pipelining

network.http.proxy.pipelining

network.http.pipelining.maxrequests

Normally the browser will make one request to a web page at a time. When you enable pipelining it will make several at once, which really speeds up page loading.

2. Alter the entries as follows: (double click the entry to change)

Set "network.http.pipelining" to "true"

Set "network.http.proxy.pipelining" to "true"

Set "network.http.pipelining.maxrequests" to some number like 30. This means it will make 30 requests at once.

3. Lastly right-click anywhere and select New-> Integer. Name it " nglayout.initialpaint.delay " and set its value to "0". This value is the amount of time the browser waits before it acts on information it receives.

Welcome to part 2 of our Linux Media Player Roundup. Today we'll be covering a few more Linux Media Players and showing you each of them and what makes

them special. But first, I'd like to add a few clarifications from part 1. One of our readers was kind enough to point out an extra feature in Amarok that I was unaware of the first time I tested it. It has the ability to add "pluggable" back end

support for a variety of different multimedia engines, such as Xine, Gstreamer and more. I didn't find this the first time, or simply overlooked it, but I did find it the second time, which means that its issues with media playback should be solvable by simply changing the multimedia engine that it uses.

The second comment was that I had mentioned about how BMPx would eventually rival Amarok, iTunes and more. To clarify why I had said that, I believe that BMPx will eventually rival them based on its layout. The way it

handles files, albums, playlists and more is not only logical, but it's also more intuitive and much easier to navigate through. BMPx feels so comfortable upon first use that anybody could pick it up and use it right away with no troubles at all, and no need to go through any kind of learning curve. Just start, click, and enjoy. It's so much easier to get where you want to go and do what you want to do that I feel it'll easily overtake the other media players similar to it, such as the aforementioned iTunes and Amarok.

Ease of use will trump complex features any day because it doesn't matter how powerful a media player is. If it's not easy to use, most people will opt for an equal, or even lesser featured player that's easier to use. Why do you think so many of the greatest features ever produced have also been some of the least used? Because despite their power, they were too difficult to use for the average individual. Simple, yet powerful is always best, and I feel BMPx has done a splendid job of achieving that. Now that I've clarified those things, let's look at our next batch of Linux Media Players.

Banshee

Banshee is somewhat of the new kid on the block. Currently at version 0.12.1, it's still very green around the gills and has a long way to go before it's ready for prime time, but it's an upcoming superstar in the Linux Media Player world. Initially, it started off as nothing more than a basic media player. Then, as it has grown, new features have begun to appear, such as a podcasts feature, streaming radio broadcasts (which doesn't yet work and will cause some ugly crashes to occur), as well as a better, more enhanced media information system.

The box appears and disappears, based on which song you're playing and whether

or not it has any information to show you that's related to the current song being played.

The information is quite good at this point, and looks to grow even more detailed in the future. Playback is decent, although I don't think it'll win any medals just yet. It does, however, have a decent list of supported formats that should grow as it grows, although it currently only appears to be able to properly handle wave, ogg and mp3, as well as some limited streaming formats.

It also comes with a complete plugin system to allow you to connect to last.fm, do music sharing, cd burning, podcasting, and much more. It's ability to be expanded is quite good, making the player very flexible, and opening up a large range of possibilities for the future. The interface also lends itself to a great deal of "ease of use", which for the average person is great. There's

also a plugin to allow Banshee to be minimized into a very small player so that it's out of the way, while still being right at hand should you need it.

Right now, I don't suggest this media player for regular daily use, but I do highly recommend that you install it anyway. Why? Because the developers would loveyour feedback, and the best way to provide that is to use it regularly. How else are you going to suggest new features or report existing bugs?? So help out the developers and take it for a regular spin. You may even fall in love with it. I know I'm looking forward to seeing where this goes.

Click here for the Banshee Media Player homepage.

Decibel Media Player

This player is one of the new kids on the block (currently at version 0.06.3) as far

as Linux media players are concerned. Despite its early alpha state, the player itself is fairly stable. It might take a little bit of fussing to get it installed, as you'll have to install it from source, but it can be done if you'd like. The biggest premise of the player is that simplicity is best and that's exactly how the player works. It's very simple to use, and the interface works nicely, although the program itself is a bit flaky at this point. However, that's to be expected from an early alpha.

As it matures a bit more, it should not be surprising to find that it'll slowly lose its simple interface, but gain many great features that will make it a must-have

player for those who like to organize their media but don't need a lot of pop and fluff in their player in order to do it.

FEATURE

Currently the only supported formats appear to be wave, mp3, ogg and

possibly flac but I couldn't get the last format to play. It does support last.fm

streaming, and includes an instant messenger option to update your online status indicating what you're listening to although I'm not sure where it sends that information. My guess would be your last.fm page.

The player itself is light and simple, so much so that there's really not much tosay about it. There's the normal play, pause, shuffle, sort and other common features you'd expect in a media player but little else. The only real distinguishing features are its UI layout and the file manager on the left side of the play window, but I wouldn't let that stop you from trying it. The only thing that should stop you at this point is if you need it as a full time media player since it's still in its early alpha stages. However, if you'd like to help in the development of this project,

then by all means head on over to the homepage and see what you can do to help the developers out! Even something as simple as digging up and reporting bugs is welcome.

Exaile

The Exaile media player is a Linux music player that has so much in common with Amarok that it's actually surprising. The biggest difference is how the player front-end is laid out. Otherwise everything is pretty much the same. It does album art, connects and interacts with last.fm, has artist and album information, etc.

There are some things that Amarok has that Exaile doesn't, like an integrated

Magnatune store and a context function, but Exaile makes up for that by providing you with several distinct features, such as the ability for you to download song lyrics, tabbed playlists, a built in shoutcast directory browser, and blacklisting of tracks.

There are a few other tools that are included with the program that can provide you with some useful options such as iPod and iTunes interactive support but that's really about it. Format support is also fairly typical with just wave, mp3 and ogg formats supported. The program is currently in early alpha development stage, the latest version of which is 0.2.11, so if you try it, you may find some stability issues with the player.

For more information on this Linux media player, check out their homepage.

JuK

JuK is a simple jukebox application found in KDE. It has the full set of features

users have come to expect in a media player, but also allows for basic

management of playlists, updating ID3 tags for both MP3 and Ogg, delete or

renaming of files based on their ID3 tags, search and a few other things. The

tagger is interesting because it operates in a similar manner to ID3-Tagit, but not

with as many features. It's not as powerful, but it still does a decent job.

Its design is focused around simplicity, only giving you what is believed by the

developers to be the bare minimum you need in a player. It tries its best to be

unobtrusive and does so very well. It

also does automatic importing of playlists via directory scanning, or m3u files. Really, it's the only player so far I've found that supports the Winamp m3u file.

It also supports an intriguing history feature that tells you which files you have played and when. I'm not sure why you'd want that, but I can see where it might come in handy for some people. JuK supports MP3, Ogg and Flac media formats. JuK is part of the KDE Multimedia Package and comes with KDE by default if you also install the Multimedia Package.

Summary

Well, that's all for part 2. In part 3 we'll be diving deeper into the rabbit hole and

bringing you more media players, but not just audio players this time. We've got a few to show you that are multi-purpose players (will play DVD's, movies, and much more.)

TinyMe™ Because **BIGGER** isn't always _better..._

TESTIMONIALS

Attention

Have you ever gotten tired of looking at those "Designed for Microsoft Windows" stickers on your PC or laptop when you know it is "Powered by PCLinuxOS?" If you are like many other PCLinuxOS users and myself, you can now do something about it. Thanks to the efforts of lgross1949, and Gryphen (graphics), you can now order yourself as many as you need to replace them, and every cent of profit goes to Tex & the Ripper Gang to help fund the continuing development of our beloved OS. Below you can see what they look like.

You can order these by e-mailing lgross1949 at: lgross1949@yahoo.com (the first letter is an l (el)) or lgross1949@powerc.net. After you have placed your order he will send you a billing statement through PayPal and you can pay with Credit or Debit Card, or Checking Account. You don't have to have a PayPal account to use it. I would prefer PayPal for payment, but can accept a money order.

The price for them at this time will be for quantities of 1-49 = $2.60 ea.

50-99 = $2.00 ea. and 100+ = $1.50 ea. in US dollars. Please add $1.00 to each order (not each sticker) from outside the U.S., Canada & Mexico.

I will have the first 500 of these available on January 4, 2008 (Friday) I should be able to start invoicing and shipping immediately after that. So let's get with it and order yours today!

Preface

This user guide is meant as an introductory guide for a user to use a modern personal computer (PC) running the Linux operating system. The main aim is to provide a self-learning guide on how to use a modern Linux desktop system. It assumes that the user has no prior knowledge of Linux or PC usage. After going through this guide the reader should be in a position to start using a

Linux desktop for both personal and office use. In particular he/she should be able to:

access the Internet and use the WWW and Internet email

manipulate and manage files, folders and the file system produce and print simple documents and presentation materials

advance to become a power user by further self-learning and exploring

Chapter 1 – Getting Started

I've updated this guide to reflect the desktop environment called Gnome. It will be very unfamiliar to anyone used to working in a Microsoft Windows environment. Once you have learned how Gnome works you will wonder why you ever used Windows (my opinion). I've taken the screenshots from my computer, which is a standard install of PCLOS Gnome 2008.1 (Gnome 2.21.2) with no modifications. You can find more information about this particular Linux distribution (distro) and download the LiveCD image (.iso file) at:

http://linuxgator.org/

In order to start using your system you will usually have to perform what is known as a user login. This procedure is necessary to identify yourself to the system. The system allows multiple users to use it concurrently and so it has to be able to identify a user in order to grant them the necessary privileges and rights to use the system and applications. Each user, upon successful login, will be assigned to his home directory (folder). Some systems may have been set up so that upon power-on, a default user is logged in automatically. If this is so, then you will not be presented with a login screen or prompt as described in the section below. You may skip on to the section entitled "Basic Navigation using the Mouse on the Desktop". I wouldhowever, recommend reading this section in case you ever have to log out and log back in.

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Note:

There is a special user called root or superuser (this user is usually created during the system installation) which has unlimited access and rights to all the system files and resources.

You should never need to login as root as all system level administrative tasks can be carried out by granting yourself temporary root privileges from your (the user) desktop. This is to prevent you from accidentally damaging the system by deleting or modifying important system files. When you first power on your computer after you have installed PCLOS Gnome 2008.1 or if you are running the LiveCD for the first time you will be presented with a login screen that looks like the one below:

When you reach this screen, type in your user name, click on your user name or click on "guest" if using the LiveCD. You will now be asked to Enter (type) your password. Type in your password (guest if using the LiveCD) and press Enter (return). This will bring up a splash screen showing your desktop being loaded. When the splash screen finishes loading your desktop you will now see your Gnome desktop.

Text Based Login Prompt

To login, Enter the user name followed by the Enter key and when the password prompt appears, Enter the password followed by the Enter key.

Starting the Graphical Desktop

If you have logged in from the graphical login screen, the graphical desktop will be started automatically for you. The graphical desktop presents a Graphical

interact with the system and run applications. If you have used the text-based screen login, you will have to start the graphical desktop manually by entering the command startx, followed by the Enter key.

Note:

The graphical desktop that we will be using throughout most of this guide is

called the Gnome Desktop. There is another desktop environment in popular use

on Linux systems – the KDE Desktop. I have previously written a KDE User Guide based on PCLinuxOS 2007 which you can find at the PCLOS Mag website.

For the rest of this user guide, when we refer to the graphical desktop or

Desktop we shall be talking about the Gnome Desktop unless stated otherwise.

Using the Mouse on the Desktop

Proper usage of the mouse is essential in order to have a rewarding and productive experience on the graphical desktop. Most Linux graphical desktops re-designed for use with a 3-button mouse. If you are using a 2-button mouse, during installation, it should have been configured to emulate the middle-button of a 3-button mouse by pressing both buttons simultaneously. To click on a file the left button is depressed. (A mouse configured for a left-handed user will will need to have it's right button depressed). The right (or left button for a left-handed mouse) and middle buttons are usually used to invoke

User Interface (GUI) for the user to special or specific features of the GUI and instructions to do so will be explicitly

given.

The term "clicking" on the mouse means that you click on the mouse once. The term "double clicking" means that you click twice in succession on the mouse.

To "select" an item means clicking it once with the mouse.

The term "drag and drop" means that you will have to click on an item and

while continuing to hold the mouse button down, drag the item to another place and on reaching its destination drop it by releasing the mouse button.

Exercises

Open the Home folder from the Desktop. Close the Home folder window by clicking on the close window button at the top right-hand corner. Right-click on the trash icon, view its properties and close it. Move the trash icon to another location on the desktop by using the mouse to drag it to the new location and releasing the mouse.

Main Components of the Desktop

There are 3 main components to a Gnome desktop. They are:

The Control Center
The Panel
The Desktop Itself

The Control Center

The Control Center is a collection of applications that allows you to customize your GNOME environment. It is similar in function to the Kde Control Center. As you can see in the screenshot below you have an option to change virtually anything you desire.

FEATURE
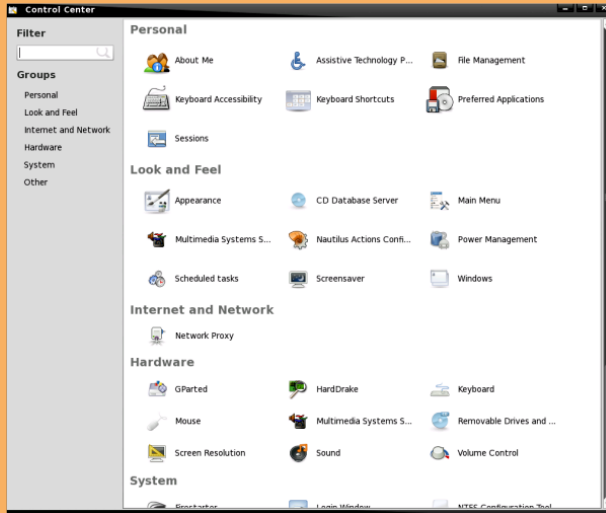
can find the Control Center by opening the System menu at the top left of your desktop. Once you have opened the System menu navigate to Preferences which will show you most of the options available in the Control Center. You will find the Control Center located at the bottom of the Preferences sub-menu as seen below:

Since we have opened the System menu let us finish exploring the Gnome menu system. The Gnome menu system consists of three parts, Applications, Places, and System.

From the Applications menu you can start many of the applications installed on your Linux system. When you open the Applications menu you will find Accessories, Graphics, Internet, Office, Other, Programming, Sound & Video, and System Tools. Note that the Applications menu consists of a Home folder, the Desktop, and all mounted partitions on your computer. You can also access bookmarked and local network connections, connect to a remote computer or shared disk, search for files or open recent documents.

The Panel

The long bar across the top of the desktop screen is called the Panel. The Panel contains the three menu items, application launcher icons, a notification

area and applets. There is also a Panel at the bottom of your Desktop that displays any open windows and your Workspace switcher.

Installed by default are several application launcher icons on the Panel. Clicking on one of these will run that particular application. Commonly accessed applications can be added to the Panel and those that are less frequently used can be taken off. The notification area holds alert icons so that the user can be alerted to critical messages.

Applets are small applications that run on the Panel. These usually perform useful and informative tasks like setting the sound level of the sound card, time and date, etc.

The Workspace Switcher

The graphical desktop can be regarded as a workspace drawing an analogy with the working area on a real physical tabletop. Programs are run, documents displayed and files opened on the workspace. To cut down on workspace clutter and to

enable the user to organize his/her workspace more efficiently, the graphical desktop environment allows the usage of multiple workspaces. Each workspace can be considered as a virtual desktop.

By default the user has 4 desktop workspace areas to work on. The workspace switcher represents each workspace as a small square and shows the applications running in each of them. To access a workspace click on the square with the mouse.

The Taskbar

The Taskbar applet is located next to the workspace switcher and shows thetitles of all the running applications in a virtual desktop (a workspace).

The Desktop Space

The Desktop space refers to the rest of the screen. It contains icons which are graphical representations of short-cuts to application launchers, file folders, file and peripheral devices like floppy disks, CD-ROM drives and printers. Double-clicking on an icon representing an application will launch or execute the application. Commonly used applications and/or files/folders are usually placedon the desktop space.

To end this chapter, you can exit your session on the desktop by performing what is known as a logout. If you do not want to use the system any more, you can turn it off

by performing a system shutdown.

Logout

When you have finished working on the system, you will need to logout. Logging out will inform the system that you are no longer using the system's resources. All the files opened and programs run by you will be closed and/or stopped unless you have specifically informed the system to keep them open or running for you.
To logout, at the System Menu select:
Log Out <your username>

Shutting Down the System

When you have finished using the computer and want to power it off, you will have to perform a system shutdown. To shutdown, at the System Menu, select Shutdown. You will also have the option to "Restart Computer", Suspend, Hibernate, or Cancel

Note:

It is very important that a proper system shutdown is performed. You should not just turn off the power switch of the computer to shut it down. Failure to observe this may lead to system software and data corruption and failure.

by Papawoob

Just thought I would try and bring everyone a list of currently active PCLinuxOS based distros. If I have missed any, I apologize. If anyone knows of any others that are being actively developed please drop me a note at the Magazine website or at Papawoob@pclosmag.com.

AmaroK Live

amaroK Live is a stripped-down live CD of the GNU/Linux operating system, based on PCLinuxOS, with a fully functional amaroK music player. It is meant to display the features and power of amaroK. The goals of this project are: create something cool to promote amaroK, offer an easy way to introduce people to amaroK, provide a way to demonstrate the new features of amaroK when a suitable Linux installation is not available, and make it easy to remaster the live CD.

ArcheOS

ArcheOS is an acronym for Archaeological Operating System. It is a GNU/Linux live DVD distribution, based on PCLinuxOS, with specialist software for archaeological purposes.

CAElinux

CAElinux is based on PCLinuxOS and is designed for computer aided engineering. Based on the open-source CAE softwares Salomé & Code_Aster, you can load STEP / IGES geometry in Salomé and start partitionning and meshing your problem in just 5 minutes.

Granular Linux

Granular Linux is an easy-to-use, desktop Linux distribution based on PCLinuxOS. Its main features are a carefully selected set of applications for common tasks, the ability to customize the distribution, and the inclusion of two popular desktop environments - the flexible KDE and the lightweight Xfce.

Karoshi

Karoshi is a free and open source school server operating system based on PCLinuxOS. Karoshi provides a simple graphical interface that allows for quick installation, setup and maintenance of a network.

Ruby on Rails

Rails Live CD is a specialist distribution providing a pre-configured and fully operating Ruby on Rails development environment on a bootable CD. The distribution is derived from PCLinuxOS.

SAM Linux Desktop

SAM Linux Desktop, a live and installation CD based on PCLinuxOS, is an easy-to-use, fast and clean XFce Linux desktop for home users. The distribution is enhanced by several

popular non-free applications, such as Macromedia Flash plugin, Java and RealPlayer.

VideoLinux

VideoLinux is a PCLinuxOS-based distribution with focus on DVD backups, video encoding and transcoding, DVD authoring, format conversion and pretty much anything else you want to do with video.

TinyMe

TinyMe is a scaled down version of PCLinuxOS 2007. The latest version is delivered as a 177 MB liveCD and features the Lightweight X11 Desktop Environment, Synaptic, and the PCLinuxOS Control Center. It comes with a few applications, so it could be a really light version of PCLOS for older computers or a foundation on which to build your own system as you choose.

PCFluxboxOS

PCFluxboxOS is a series of remasters of PCLinuxOS catering for different end-user needs. All the following remasters are installable live-CDs and all come with the i586 'Legacy' Kernel 2.6.18.8 for increased compatibility with older hardware. Newer kernels can be installed via Synaptic.

TinyFlux - Version 0.5b out now for testing (released 15 August 2007)

A minimal desktop experience within a tiny ISO of 225MB.

Main applications: Opera (inc Flash 9); Sylpheed (e-mail); Thunar (file manager); Audacious (XMMS/WinAmp clone); mtPaint (image manipulation); Grafburn for CD/DVD burning; Synaptic (package manager); PCLOS Control Centre; guided installer.

See TinyFlux downloads page for full details

MidiFlux - release expected September 2007

A large selection of applications in a relatively small ISO expected to be about 350MB in size

FullFlux - release expected September 2007

A huge selection of apps in a whopping 700MB full live CD

NanoFlux - release expected October 2007

A miniscule distribution stripped down

to Fluxbox and Synaptic. Add your own apps to build your perfect system!

RescueFlux - release expected November 2007

A small ISO containing all the apps you might need to prepare for, or rescue an installation.

Keldix Linux

Keldix is a Linux distribution primarily for the Small business Office and Home Office (SOHO) market. Keldix is a live-dvd built on PCLinuxOS.

PCLOS Gnome

All new bootsplash, backgrounds, and really nice features, upgraded to a great looking operating system and the best out-of-the-box look, and user experience possible!

Business Edition Linux (BEL)

BEL or Business Edition Linux is a business implementation of PCLinuxOS 2007. Our goal is to provide solutions for small business needs using one of the easiest to use Linux Distributions available.

MythTVOS

MythTVOS 2008 is based on MiniMe 2008 and has MythTV and all plugins installed and (pre)configured.

Just boot from the livecd, select your TV / SAT / CABLE card and scan for channels…

EeePCLinuxOS

EeePCLinuxOS is a PCLinuxOS remaster specifically for the EeePC.

PCLinux Educator

We are working on an educational meta-package, for PCLinuxOS2007.

According to our development team

educational software, or even an educational distro, goes further than kde-edu, childsplay and gcompris.

MiniMe

This is a minimal LiveCD that is bootable, plus it can be installed. Add in your own background, window decoration, localizations, preferred applications and supporting libraries to fully trick out your desktop. In addition you can remaster your own custom version of PCLinuxOS. Have fun! You can find the .iso image under the Downloads button at: http://www.pclinuxos.com/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

Linux EduCD

The site is in Polish and I was unable to translate it.

Help with documentation

From the PCLinuxOS Documentation Wiki

Another good source of information for anyone new to PCLinuxOS is the Wiki. If you have any howtos, tips, or tricks, you can send them on to me at: papawoob@pclosmag.com and then go to the Wiki and post them there also. This will benefit our readers and by posting them in the Wiki it will benefit everyone who uses PCLinuxOS. Below you will find several links to places where you can lend a hand in many different ways.

Sign up here: sign up to these forums for a login to the forums and this wiki and then you can:

Make changes to this Wiki. =)

The main Wiki page is located here

If you want to participate more heavily,

post a note in 'add me to a project' to request documentation channel access and let us know your interests.

Subscribe to the documentation mailing list

sign up to the main pclinuxos.com forums (if you have not already) since this Wiki will be moved over there soon.

Help with to do items

Discuss or help with the todo list. It's very helpful to hear your opinions, because it lets us know what's important to you.
Edit and discuss pages

Just check out a page or two, edit it and contribute a little. Even a spelling correction is a big boost. At the top of every page is a 'discussion' tab. Click it to visit that page's "talk page" and add your comments. Sign your comments

with four tilde characters: ~~~~ and your signature will be automatically added.

Be a Gnome

Wiki gnomes are always around without being underfoot. They fix typos, answer questions, and are the magical element which makes a Wiki work well. These are the things you can do to be the best gnome you can be:

We are also trying to move as many of the articles that have been published in this magazine that are howtos, tips, tricks, etc to the Wiki so that both the Wiki and the Magazine will get more exposure and provide more useful information to more PCLinuxOS users. If you are interested in helping with this project please contact me at:

papawoob@pclosmag.com

To volunteer "create account" at the Wiki, then login and start at the "PclosMag2wiki" page. It is as simple as that.

Doing any of these things listed above will be a service to everyone who uses PCLinuxOS and make it that much easier for anyone who wants to convert from Windows or even another Linux or BSD distro. This is an opportunity to contribute to the community and to those who are where you were once. I hope to see some of you there soon!

Papawoob

While the holy grail of office computing may well be the paperless office, for many users, it is often desirable and indeed sometimes necessary to be able to put in hard copy the information available on the computer. The printer allows you to do that. The printer is essentially an output device with which you are able to output text and graphics onto paper from digital data stored on the computer. To complement this, the scanner is an input device with which you can transfer text and graphics from paper to the computer and store it in the form of digital data which can then be further manipulated by other software applications.

The Printer

Printer Setup and Configuration

If you have a printer attached to your system you will need to configure and set it up before you can use it properly.

Note:

To enable the system to detect your printer properly, you should turn on the printer before trying to configure it.

When you want to install a new printer, click on the PCLinuxOS Control Center (PCC) button located in your Panel. You will then need to enter the root password since you are now attempting to set and change some system parameters and configuration files. Choose the Hardware tab and then select; Setup the printer(s), the print job queues,... This will bring up a window that looks like this:
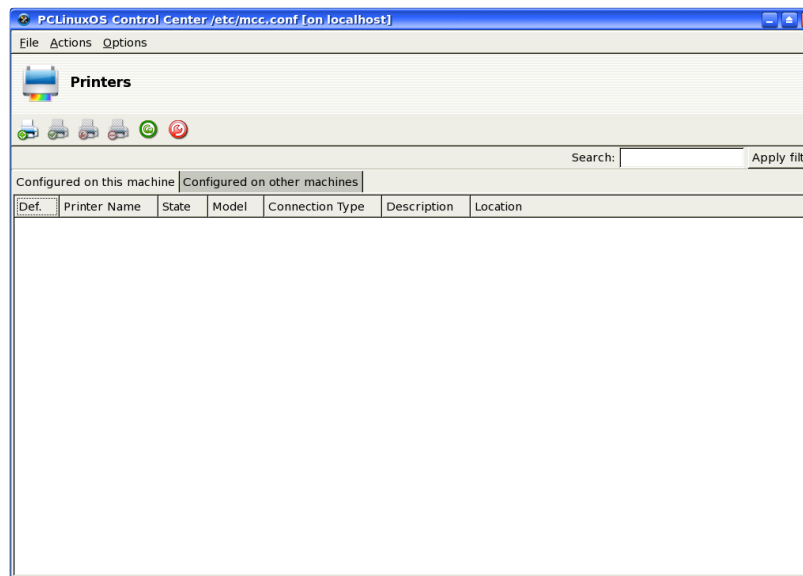
If all goes well you will see your printer listed in this screen. If so, you will need to click once on your printer to highlight it and choose the Edit selected printer icon. Choose Make Default and click on Do It. You are now ready to print. If this does not happen then while at the printer configuration screen click on the Add a new printer to the system icon to add and configure a new printer. A new window will be opened that looks like this:

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This screen will explain your options for having the printer wizard auto detect any printers that are attached to your computer, or attached to another computer on your network. There is also an option to auto detect a printer attached to a computer running Microsoft Windows. Click on the Next button and the auto detection will be run. When it is finished you will be presented with a window that looks like this:

By clicking Next, the detected printer will automatically be configured for you. You also have the option to configure your printer manually yourself, but this option should be used only if you know all the specifics necessary or if your printer was not found during the auto detection process.
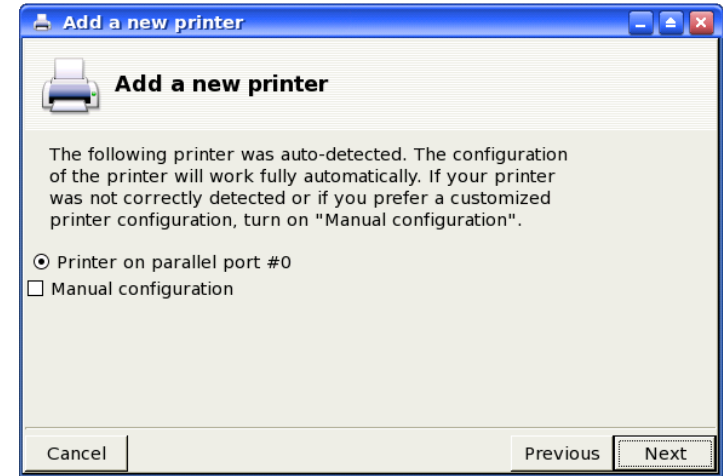
If you choose manual configuration and click Next a new window will appear. Select the manufacturer of your printer, and then scroll down to find your specific printer. When you click Next, you will be taken to a screen that will show you the default settings for the selected printer. Clicking Next again will allow you to name your printer or you can go with the default name. Click Next one more time and you will be asked if you want to make this printer the default printer for your system. Choose Yes or NO and click Next again. You will now see a window where you can print either a text or photo test page. Go ahead and try one or the other or both and see if your printer is configured correctly. After your test page has printed and you are happy that your printer works correctly, click Next one last time. This will bring up a congratulation page that tells you that your printer is configured correctly. Click Finish and you are ready to print.

FEATURE

Managing Print Jobs

When you send something for printing from your application, the data to be printed is stored in the print spooler area and a print job is added to the print spooler queue. In this way many printing jobs can be carried out without waiting for the printer to finish printing a job first before accepting another printing job. The Print Manager is used for managing the print jobs associated with a given printer. The Print Manager can be found by going to Menu > System > Configuration > KDE > Peripherals > Printers.

The Print Manager can be utilized to check on the status of the printing jobs that you have submitted to the printer and to cancel jobs still in the queue if you need to. To do this, launch the Print Manager and then click on the Jobs tab. A list of current print jobs in the queue is displayed. To cancel a print job, highlight the job in question

and then right click on the Remove button on the menu bar on top.
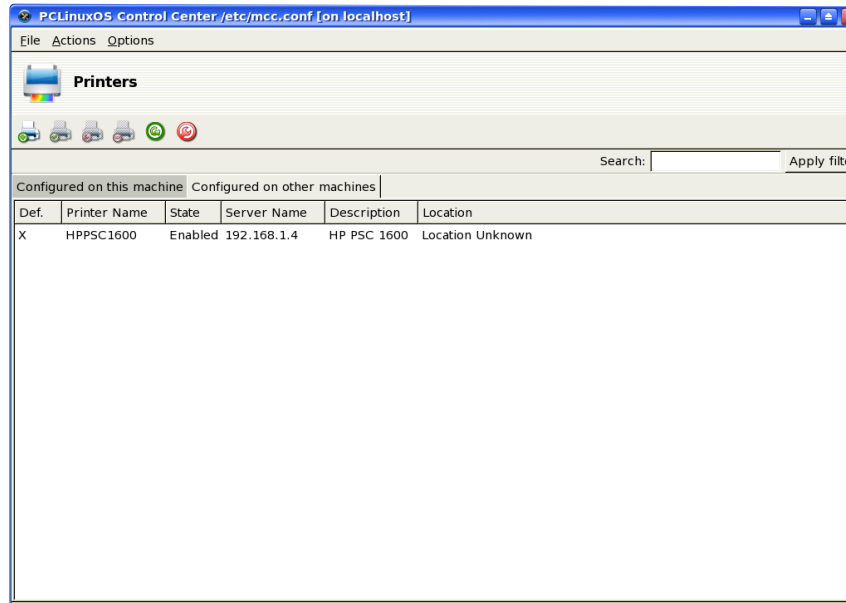
Using the Print

Normal usage of the printer from an application is straightforward. Select the printing function from your application and a print job is then automatically submitted to the printer queue.

The Scanner

The scanner is a device which allows you to convert analog graphics e.g. a photograph or a printed page into digital format where it can be stored on the computer and further manipulated by appropriate software. Flat-bed scanners for personal use are quite common nowadays.

Most scanners connect to the computer using the USB, SCSI or parallel ports. To use the scanner, suitable software to control and drive it is required. The SANE back-

end drivers may be used to drive the scanner hardware while the XSane GUI front-end acts as the end-user interface. To check whether the scanner you have can be used, the SANE website at http://www.sane-project.org should be consulted.

Using the Scanner

You can start the scanning software on the Desktop, from the Main Menu,

Main Menu > Multimedia > Graphics > Kooka

This will invoke the Kooka program; the main window in Kooka consists of three frames. At the top, see both icon and a menu panels. Use the mouse to enlarge or reduce the windows as needed.
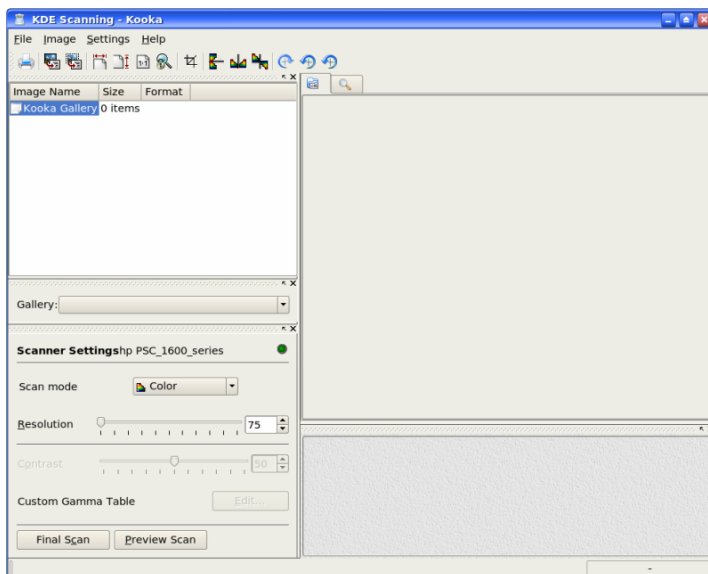
The navigation window consists of two tabs, which allow you to switch between the Preview and the integrated file browser called the Gallery. The working folder is displayed in the lower part of the window along with the folder where the scan will be saved.

Make your scanner-dependent settings, which are dependent on the scanner you have connected, in the lower left window. Usually, these are settings for resolution, brightness and contrast, scanning mode (e.g., color, gray, or binary), and for gamma values. Configure your settings here first.

Preview

Before the actual scanning of an image takes place, the preview operation is usually carried out to preview the scanned image. To perform the preview, place the image to be scanned into the scanner and initiate the preview scan with Preview. If the Preview tab in the upper window is selected, see the results there.

Select the various formats in the preview image itself to define the final dimensions. The User setting is recommended for this, so you select the area to scan in the

preview display with the mouse.
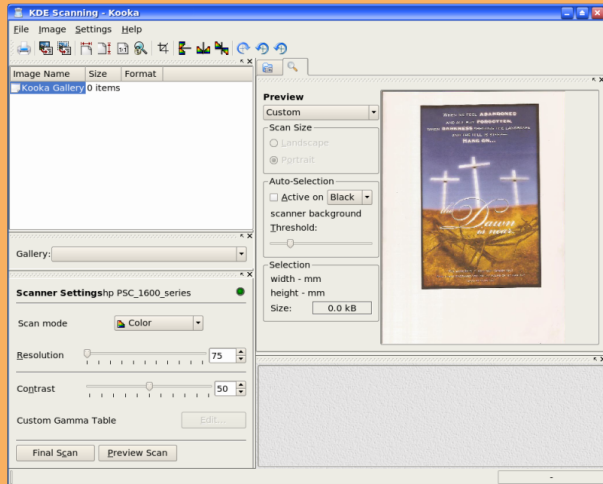
As the scanner will scan its entire scanner bed by default, if you are scanning an image which occupies only a part of the bed you will want to select only the area which holds the image to be scanned. This can be done from the Preview window in several ways. One way is to manually select the scan area frame by pressing and holding the left mouse button to define one edge, moving the mouse so that the area to scan is completely inside the frame (which is marked by a dashed white line) and then releasing

the mouse button. Another way is to select the Autoraise button and then clicking on the image to be scanned. A frame is created to mark the scan area. The mouse may be used to adjust the scan area if it is not fully correct.

Scan

After the appropriate scan area has been chosen in the Preview window, the image can be adjusted and/or enhanced for color correction, contrast, and brightness. The gamma value, brightness and contrast can be adjusted manually in the scan window before performing the scan.

After a satisfactory image is seen in the preview window, perform the actual scan by clicking on the Final Scan button. The scan will be performed and the scanned image displayed in the Viewer window.

Save

The method for saving an image is somewhat different in Kooka than in many other applications. Click the Gallery tab to open a small file browser. This is the folder ~/.kde/share/apps/ScanImages/ In the lower portion of the window, your current subfolder in the gallery is shown. This is where all scanned images are first saved as files. When starting Kooka for the first time, you will only see the ScanImages. Create subfolders by right clicking this folder. The selected folder, highlighted in blue, is the first save location of the scanned images. The scans are labeled in

ascending numerical order as in kscan_0001 and kscan_0002.

To save an image permanently, left click the name. Next, give a new name and the appropriate ending for the image format chosen when scanning. If you enter a different extension, you will get a message that it does not correspond to the scanned format. Although you can still save the image under this name, it will retain its original format. At present, On-the-fly conversion is not offered.

If you do not want to use this method of managing your images in ~/.kde/share/apps/ScanImages/, you can, of course, save them to another location. To do this, right click the image name and select Save. Choose any path here. In addition, close or permanently delete images here.

Help

More detailed information on how to use the scanner software as well as changing the default configuration can be obtained by clicking on the Main Menu and then on More Applications, Documentation, and then KDE Help Center. After the KDE Help Center opens choose KDE User Manual and scroll down to III. KDE Components > 6. The Base KDE Applications > Graphics and then scroll down to Kooka.

Exercises

Perform a scan of an entire photograph containing several people or objects.

Using the same photograph as for the previous exercise, this time perform the scan for only the image of one person or object.

1) Installation of the necessary language packages

We need to install some packages which are not on the MiniME2008 Live-CD, so set up your Internet connection first and make sure it works. Then start Synaptic: Start System Configuration Packaging Synaptic Package Manager and enter your root password. At first, you will only see the packages from the CD and we need to click on the "Reload" button to inform the system about all the other additional and new packages of the PCLinuxOS repository. Then we want to make the system up-to-date. Before we do that, and because we will need all of these downloaded packages later on, we want to tell Synaptic to not delete them. Go to: Settings Preferences, go to the tab "Files", select "Leave all downloaded packages in the cache". (Another useful setting in Synaptic is to enable in the tab "General" the options "Show package properties in the main window" and "Consider recommended packages as dependencies" but this is up to you to decide.) A final click on "Apply" and "OK" and we are back in the main window. Here, we click on the "Search" button to search for and mark the following three packages for installation: locales-it, glibc-i18ndata, kde-i18n-it. Then we click on "Marl All Upgrades", let Synaptic do the job and finally close Synaptic.

Note: The same procedure can of course also be done with the brilliant alternative package manager Smart (see also PCLOS MAG 200804). The command to keep downloaded packages in the default directory /var/lib/smart/packages/ is:

smart config --set remove-packages=false

and the head of the file "installedRPMS.list" should read:

#! /bin/bash

smart update

smart reinstall <your rpm-list>

After that you can reset Smart to delete downloaded packages using:

smart config --set remove-packages=true

and it might be a good idea, yet not mandatory, to rebuild the rpm database after all that using the command:

rpm –rebuilddb

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Uriel Unleashed (or the Rebirth of an older Computer)

When the Pentium chip was first announced one of my thoughts was that some day in the future it would be possible to purchase one of these machines for the remarkably low price of $5.00!

Now just a few days ago I was able to purchase a tower which contained a Dell OptiPlex GX100 for the sum $5.00. Of course I realized that at this price the unit might not be functional, however, as an electrical technician I have built up quite a supply of spare parts. (Or as my wife likes to refer to it a bunch of useless junk.) Fortunately, just as I arrived home with my new purchase she told me that I was wanted at work as soon as I could get there. So it would now be several

hours before I could determine if the machine would actually function. At the same time, because I would be returning from work after midnight she would be asleep and not likely to comment about me bring in another piece of junk.

Now all through the shift I was anxious for the day to be over so that I might learn if the machine would boot. Midnight arrived and the store was locked. Soon the unit was lugged into the front room and a monitor, keyboard, and mouse attached. The moment of truth had arrived. The power switch was pushed and......NOTHING!!! My experience with my Dell Dimension had taught me to look at the front of the tower for a button which would release a side panel for easy access to the guts of the beast. Taking my volt meter in hand the unit was again connected to electricity and the voltage checked across the black/red and black/yellow for the required 5volts and 12 volts respectively. Instead the voltages showed in the microvolt range. Diagnosis a burned out power supply. Now I realized that I could easily strip the machine of its hard drive and sound card and any other items. However, this step would only increase my spare parts inventory. I had a Dell power supply among the power supplies in my "electrical sandbox."

The Reconstruction Period

Shortly after the tools for the repair were assembled, the old power supply was stripped from the machine and a replacement Dell mounted. Now all the connections from the old non functional power supply were cut and placed in a cigar box. Now once again the moment of truth had arrived and the monitor, keyboard and mouse were attached. The power button was pushed and the machine began to

boot up into Windows XP Professional. The machine reported that it knew that the side panel had been removed and that someone had been tampering with the system. Now to protect my data the machine would shut down!!! So I knew that my surgery was a success and with some more work I should soon have a functional system.

The next boot was preceded by pressing the F2 key to enter setup. Going through the many items revealed that the machine only had 64 MB of RAM far below that required for any modern Linux version full install. I also found the item which detected the side panel being removed and disabled the system from reporting this information. (It is after all fairly difficult to operate on the machine and also not remove the side panel!!!) My next boots reported that the hard drive was not boot able. The boot sequence was altered to make booting from the CD Rom take first priority. Now my supply of Linux distributions was tried. With

only 64 MB of ram most booting attempts resulted in a Grey screen. I was able to boot into Puppy Linux and DSL. Also Partition Magic was able to analyze the hard drive and revealed that it contained 15 gigs on a MAXTOR hard drive.

Neither DSL nor Puppy Linux gave me the results I wanted to learn. I wanted to know just what was in Pandora s Box. Neither of these allowed gaining access to the contents of the hard drive. Now it was June first and I wanted to learn if my latest article was yet on the net. So a trip to www.pclosmag.com revealed a note from Papawoob noting that there was a new version of PC Linux out called Tiny Me which only took 200 MB!! Perhaps this could be used. Starting several installs yielded only the blank Grey screen until I tried the council mode. Now I had the text only screen and could log in as either root or guest. Next as root I could mount the hard drive as hda1 and see the contents of the drive at /media/win_c. Soon I had explored the My Documents area and learned the contents of the Program Files and Windows directories. Mission accomplished.

My next goal was to make the machine completely functional. I realized that my spare parts also had some untried memory modules and that the machine had two memory banks, one of which contained a 64 MB module. The other bank had one of the clips broken off but if installed correctly a module should work. I located one of the modules which reported that it contained 128 MB and inserted it into the bank. Next we have another boot into the Windows XP and the system immediately reports that the amount of system memory has been changed. Of course it was still reporting that the hard drive partition was non bootable and it was shutting down. A reboot into Setup confirmed that the system now contained 192 MB ram which is more than on my Dell Dimension which successfully runs many versions of Linux

and the XP Professional version of Windows.

Next I found a spare hard drive and made the system have dual hard drives and the single CD-Rom which came with the system. However, the power connector would not reach the second hard drive so some more surgery would be needed to set up a second drive. Here the step of cutting all the wires from the failed power supply gave me the raw materials to splice a power connector on to the too short connector of the machine. One simply cuts off the old connector, strips the wire on both ends, tins the wires then uses electrical tape to wrap the connection. Now the surgery on the system is complete. We are now ready to teach the machine how to be a Linux Box.

Installing PC Linux 2008 (Tiny Me)

The install of the latest version of PC Linux was a snap. Also because this version is only 200 MB instead of the more than 600 MB of my earlier installs of PC Linux 2007, it is also much faster. Once the install icon is pressed a wizard guides you through the entire process. Because I never intended to use a wounded Windows, the 'use entire disk' option for partitioning was selected. The wizard allocated the 14 gigs on the Maxtor hard drive as it assigned some 9 gigs for the root (/) system and 5 gigs for /home. I setup a root password and created user accounts for my wife and myself. Then the system reported it was time to remove the CD from the drive and make my initial boot into the system.

The initial boot was what one would call an "On First Looking Into Chapmans' Homer" moment. The features all seem to be different. What is really cool is that the side of the machine reports the amount of file system used and available for both the root system and the home partition. The amount of CPU usage is monitored continuously and the activity on the Internet connection is revealed.

The familiar Firefox is replaced by Opera as the default browser. I could not seem to get the system to play Cd's using the detected player and soon used Synaptic to get Amarok for me. Also the system seems reluctant to keep the four desktops and seems to revert to only two desktops on each initial boot. Of course it is very simple to get four desktops just right click on the desktop and select add another desktop then repeat the process and you now have four desktops. Instead of being numbered these have names John, Fred, Sam etc.

Fine Tuning the system

Once the initial install is accomplished one may easily use synaptic to download any software which might be needed. The Opera browser lets you create blogs, upload pictures, and belong to another community. As the operation is a little different from Firefox one may wish to first use the tutorials provided. (Or if you wish the repositories may be added and there is a beta version of Firefox 3 which you are invited to try.) So for an investment of $5.00 for a junk computer and a little help from my spare parts bin and lots of effort I have a system which is 100% PC Linux only and it is ready for a 'Powered by PC Linux OS' sticker.

Now because all of my systems are named after guardian angels, and as this system is now completely functional. I need to get the name of another guardian angel for this new one. My others are: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Eronstuc so Uriel is now unleashed.

Here we have the back of the Dell OptiPlex GX100 system obtained for the grand price of only $5. Of course its going to take a ittle work to get it into shape.

Here we see the second hard drive being installed. Because the connector would not reach, the power connector removed from the failed power supply is used to splice into the machines wiring harness. The old connector was clipped off. Also note that the data cables are not on the drives. I overlooked this and my next boot reported correctly that it could not find a primary drive and attempted to boot from the floppy.
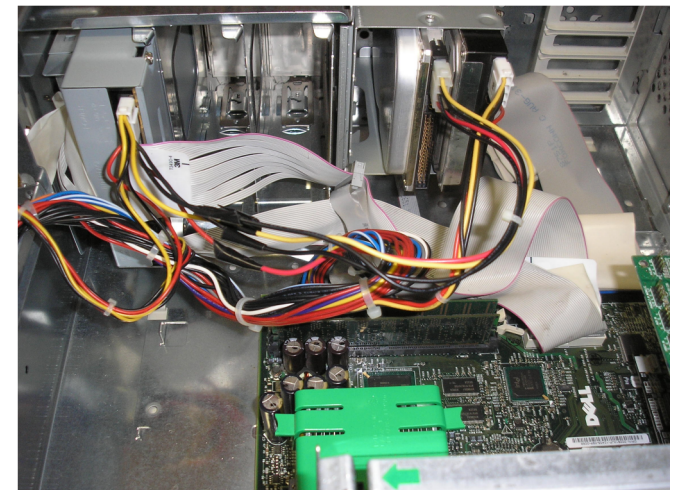
With sufficient memory a boot from the CD-Rom yields a graphic instead of a text only display. However, knowing how to use the commands available for bash enabled a correct diagnosis of the system to know what to repair to get a functional system.
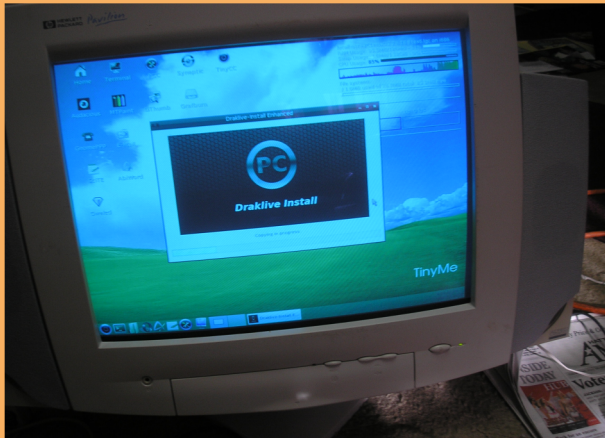
The install wizard makes installing the latest version of PC Linux a snap. Note that several features are monitored in real time. In the default install this is always available. After some additional programs are installed using synaptic. The system offers a wide choice of which desktop environment you might wish to use.
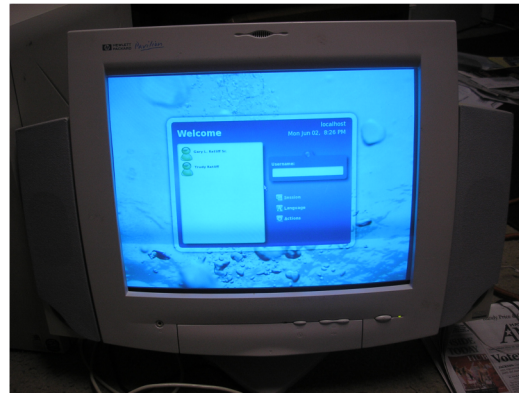
Here we have the initial boot into Tiny Me. This is on June 2. On June 4 as I am writing this we are celebrating being married 37 years. Sure she is going to get rid of my junk computers and I'm stubbing my toes on all her petrified wood but as all old married couples know its all just talk.

Everything looks good, corrected some spelling and grammar mistakes. The Pictures didn't come through

Same again. I did some minor corrections only. I did not see any technical flaws (being a technician.) I made the Title more relevant (I feel)