The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 59

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Happy Holidays

From PCLinuxOS & The PCLinuxOS Magazine

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Welcome From The Chief Editor

Another holiday season has once again found PCLinuxOS users scrambling to find gifts for family, friends and loved ones. Whichever holiday you celebrate – Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or some other holiday I have not mentioned – it's important to keep the true meaning of the season in our sights. Because of the variety of different holidays celebrated around this time of the year, coupled with the wide number of different persons celebrating those holidays, they tend to have different meanings for different people.

Meanwhile, to help you with the gift buying for that favorite PCLinuxOS user on your holiday shopping list, we have expanded the magazine's annual holiday gift guide this year to include gift suggestions from three magazine staff members – me, Meemaw and Gary Ratliff, Sr (a.k.a. eronstuc).

We also continue our coverage of the Gnome 2.32 desktop, with three more articles. Efstathios Iosifidis provides updates on the recent happenings in the Greek PCLinuxOS community. Our coverage of the "Ladies Of PCLinuxOS" continues this month, and Archie focuses the spotlight on yet another PCLinuxOS forum member in the "Forum Friends & Family" column.

We also reprint an article from Free Software Magazine columnist Gary Richmond about the rush to replace the more common BIOS found on new computer hardware with UEFI (Unified Extensible Firmware Interface) – and how it might affect Linux users. Just in case you've been residing under a rock, or just been busy with life, Windows 8 will presumably *require* UEFI to "bolster its security" in an attempt to plug its three foot wide security holes with a wine cork.

Darrel Johnston includes another installment in his Alternate OS article series, covering Minix3 this month. As many of you might remember, Linus Torvalds loosely based Linux on Minix3.

Of course, we also have your regular features: two entries in ms_meme's Nook, Forum Foibles, and Double Take & Mark's Quick Gimp Tip.

As you prepare for the forthcoming holidays, I hope that you all enjoy a safe and sane holiday season. I also wish each and every one of you peace, tranquility, serenity and happiness.

Happy Holidays!

Forum Family & Friends: YouCanToo

by Archie Arevalo (Archie)

David Moore is a long-time PCLinuxOS regular who goes by the handle, YouCanToo. He is 56 years old, single and lives with his peek-a-poo "Dudley Doo-Wright". Many of us who have been hanging out in the forum would say YouCanToo shines with his unselfishness to mirror the PCLinuxOS repository and his more recent venture, the Knowledge Base. But he is more than just a geek ... he's a geek in a white hat!

We corresponded for this interview, and I asked the following questions.

Your forum avatar proudly displays you as a baker. How did you end up being one?

In the early 80's, I moved to Florence, OR to help my dad in his bakery. I had been working as a Sous Chef in Hawthorne, Nev. Being a baker was not my first choice as a career, but my dad needed the help so I moved and started working in the bakery. About two years later, he sold the business and I ended up in Portland, OR working for Motorola — repairing cell phones. The "Brick" (model H) was the hot cell of the day. It wasn't until 2005 that I started baking again.

Have you always lived in Lebanon, Oregon?

No, I moved to Lebanon from Portland in 2006. I am originally from Nevada. I have also been to Vietnam, Okinawa, Japan, Korea, and the Antarctica while in the service. I was an SP5 in the Army ... a 26V2T (Microwave radio repairman/instructor).

You have been using Linux (on and off) for quite a while, what got you started?

Actually, I started using Linux in 1998, but it wasn't until later that I found out about the Linux Counter and signed up, #188967. I started out using an Atari TT030 ($2,995) running TOS, DOS and Minux. In early 2000, I bought a 386 clone and used my first version of Linux, Red Hat 5. I then moved to Mandrake 5.3 (now Mandriva) and stayed with them until version 9.2, which at that time I started using PCLinuxOS only! Somewhere along the line, I gave Ubuntu a try since I had received a free CD from them. Well, that lasted less than a day and I reloaded Mandrake. I am not really a distro hopper at all.

Overall, how was your trip on the FOSS landscape?

It has had its ups and downs. Overall, I have to say I am glad I stuck with it. I have seen many friends that have bought that other OS and seen the roller coaster ride they have had. It seemed they were always paying for the next release, or the latest version of some software. If they weren't paying for it, they were getting copies and using them.

And what is it about PCLinuxOS that you like?

I like the idea of a rolling release. Why does one have to continually reinstall their system like with most of the other Linux distros? I like the idea of "it is ready when it is ready" ... I would much rather have software that is mostly bug free than having something rushed out the door and then discover the problems. I like the overall feel of PCLinuxOS. It is clean and polished. Overall for me, it has been very stable and bug free. I just can not imagine using any other distro.

You are also hosting PCLOSusers.com, which is also an integral part as a mirror for PCLinuxOS RPMS and SRPMS, for a few years now ...

I started it on March 27, 2007.

and more recently the PCLinuxOS Knowledge Base ...

Launched on February, 2011.

Would you explain your ideas behind these websites?

When I started the pclosusers.com repository, there weren't but a few repositories at that time. There was no standard in sync times, so you never knew if they would be in sync or not. I don't remember there being a PASS server at that time ... so I started pclosusers.com so I could update my own system and some of my friends. It was also a way to give back something to the distro and community that I have grown so fond of. I chose to sync it 3 times daily at 6 AM, and at 2 and 10PM PST.

As for the Knowledge Base, we've had a wiki for sometime and it kept being spammed. Eventually, the maintainer(s) got tired of it and tossed up their hands at doing the job. Then one day in the forum, someone posted about how we needed a knowledge base. Shortly after reading that post, I decided to take it on, as it would be an asset for the distro and the community as a whole. On February 09, 2011, I posted a request/poll for a name for the new knowledge base ... and the rest is history in the making. Thus, pclinuxoshelp.com was born.

I have also recently acquired the MyPCLinuxOS community projects domain (http://mypclinuxos.com), and I am planning to get it back up and going.

What about Linux For All?

It's a users group I started shortly after moving to Lebanon in 2006. (http://linuxforall.com) It is currently inactive due to poor turnout.

Let's go back to the Knowledge Base. How is the progress?

It has been slow but steady. As we have but a handful of folks that are doing any work on it, and making sure that the information is as accurate and error free as possible. Another important point we consider is to make sure that information is easy to find.

There's just a handful of volunteers ... besides myself, Sling-Shot has been the most active. But I also want to thank Coffeetime, Ericthered, Metzner

and Russell.eberhardt for their contributions. Also, a big thank you to everyone who signed up with the Knowledge Base. Without all of you there would be no Knowledge Base!

Currently we have 128 registered members. For more statistics on the Knowledge Base, visit our status page at
http://pclinuxoshelp.com/index.php/Special:Statistics

If any readers of this interview wants to contribute, what should they do first?

The first thing to do would be sign up for a user account. To do this either PM Sling-Shot or myself, with a username you wish to use and your email address. Right now, due to spam on the Knowledge Base we have to manually setup your account. When we have done this we will email you a password so you can log into the knowledge base. Once logged into the Knowledge Base, you can change your password to whichever password you choose.

The second thing would be to choose an area that you would like to work on or make changes to.

We can always use people to double check our work. Lastly, if nothing else, I would ask you to make suggestions or submit information for inclusion to the Knowledge Base.

Will you give discounts to PCLinuxOS users who would buy bread from you?

Of course. When ordering just enter "PCLOS" in the coupon code box. I am not sure if it would be cost effective to order bread and have it shipped. The cost of the shipping will be more than the cost of the bread, since all bread is shipped either overnight or second day air depending on your location.

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by tschommer, November 1, 2011, running KDE4.

Gnome 2.32: Sail Through Your Files With Nautilus

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

It's quite fitting that it's named after the infamous ship in Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea. The Gnome native file manager, Nautilus, is a powerful tool for navigating and working with the files on your Gnome installation.

Looking at the screen shot, it's hard to distinguish Nautilus from any other capable Linux file manager. It looks a lot like KDE's Dolphin, Xfce's Thunar, or LXDE's PCManFM. Plus, in a lot of ways, it also functions similarly to all of its desktop brothers.

At the top left section of the Nautilus window, you have access to your home partition, the file system, any extra partitions or drives (such as USB flash

drive, USB extermal hard drives, or optical disks), and any network drives.

At the bottom left section of the Nautilus window, you have quick, one-click access to frequently used folders. To add additional folders to the quick access area of Nautilus, just drag the folder icon from the right window pane into its new location in the lower left corner of the Nautilus window.

The right section – literally the rightmost ¾ of the Nautilus window – is dedicated to showing your files and subdirectories.

There are quite a few "hacks" for Nautilus running around out there, but "hacks" might not be the best term here. More than anything, there are quite a few hidden or not-so obvious settings you can adjust that will make it more useful, and that will customize how it displays file data.

One such place is Tech Drive-In, with their "8 Not-So-Common Nautilus Hacks & Improvements" article. They also have another article that reveals a Nautilus script that will send documents to Google Docs. Just do an Internet search, and you will be flooded with results. Just don't be surprised when you see an overabundance of Ubuntu related results, given that Gnome is the main desktop environment of Ubuntu. Ubuntu-related or not, you will still find much of the information just as pertinent to Gnome running on PCLinuxOS.
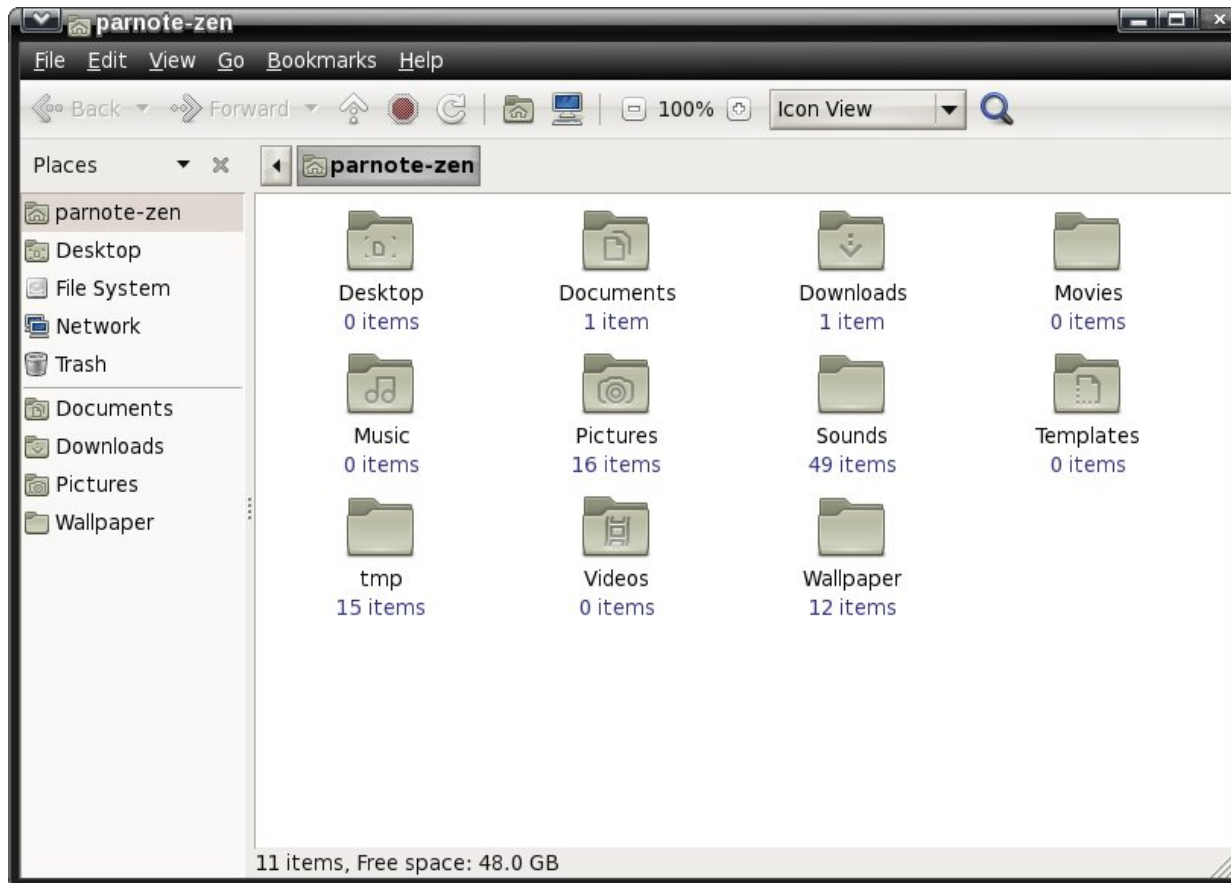
Beyond Aesthetics: Extending Nautilus's Functionality

Just as with KDE's Dolphin and Xfce's Thunar (sorry, but PCManFM doesn't yet have this ability), you can extend the functionality of Nautilus's right-click context menu. The tasks you can perform this way are truly only limited by your imagination, and can make file management tasks go from being a chore to being super simple and fast.

It's very easy to extend Nautilus's functionality. Basically, anything you can imagine using a bash script for can also be used with Nautilus. That's because Nautilus uses bash scripts as the basis for its extensions.

To facilitate the use of bash scripts, Nautilus will set some special parameters (known as environment variables) to the bash script that's being called. These environment variables help making bash scripts to extend Nautilus's functionality even easier to create and work with. They are listed below.

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_SELECTED_FILE_PATHS: newline-delimited paths for selected files (only if local)

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_SELECTED_URIS: newline-delimited URIs for selected files

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_CURRENT_URI: current location

NAUTILUS_SCRIPT_WINDOW_GEOMETRY: position and size of current window

So, you can use traditional ways of enumerating file names or data sent to a bash script, or you can make use of the environment variables set by Nautilus. The choice is entirely up to you, as either will work perfectly fine.

Probably the best way to customize Nautilus's context menu is to find pre-made Nautilus scripts. There are plenty of them out there on the 'net for you to choose from. Below, I've listed just a few of the sites that I've found.

G-Script: this site is dedicated to Nautilus scripts, and has several freebie scripts, separated into categories. You might also want to visit the **FAQ** there, to learn more about creating your own Nautilus scripts.

My Nautilus Scripts: a collection of useful Nautilus scripts. The scripts are available as *.deb files (for Ubuntu and Debian), or as *.tar.gz archives. PCLinuxOS users will need to download the latter.

125 Nautilus Scripts To Simplify Nautilus: This is a collection of 125 Nautilus scripts, available in a *.tar.gz file. While some are overly simplistic, there are quite a few in the collection that should be useful to you.

Once you have your scripts in hand, you need to place them in the the hidden .gnome2 directory, in your home directory (/home/username/.gnome2), under the /nautilus-scripts subdirectory. Just the mere presence of the script in the appropriate folder is not sufficient. You will need to restart Nautilus for the script to be recognized.

Also, all of the directions say to make the script executable (easily done via the file properties "Permissions" tab). However, I've not done this to any of the scripts I've placed there, and they all seem to work just fine without the file being marked as executable. I don't know if this is a weird anomaly on my system, so if your script isn't working, you might want to check to make sure that it's marked as executable.
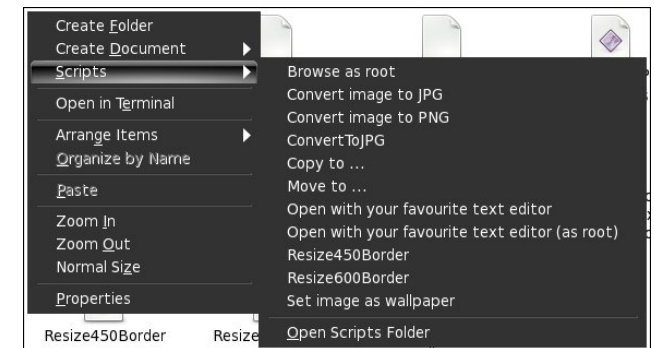
After you restart Nautilus, then your script will then appear in the Scripts context menu, as shown in the screen shot above.

These three aforementioned sites should give you a good start on finding pre-made Nautilus scripts. If you want to find more, just do an Internet search, using "nautilus scripts" as your search term.

Roll Your Own

If you feel so inclined, you can edit and further customize the pre-made Nautilus scripts to perform

tasks that give you even more functionality. You can even write your own script from scratch, if you find that more to your liking. Personally, I find it advantageous to alter the pre-made Nautilus scripts to do what I want them to.

Having worked on The PCLinuxOS Magazine for as long as I have, there are a few things that I like to do that help me streamline the production of the magazine. Some of those tasks involve resizing images and placing a one pixel black border around images. Rather than open up an image editing application such as Gimp or MTPaint to perform those simple tasks, it's much easier to be able to perform these tasks from a special context menu item right from the file manager.

Because my requirements for these tasks are rather precise, I usually have to "roll my own" special functions to get them accomplished from a file manager context menu. So, I looked and found a Nautilus script that used ImageMagick's "convert" command. The script I found converted any image into a *.jpg file. I then changed the script so that it resized the selected images *and* placed a one pixel border around the image, all in one step.

Here is the script, in its original form:

```
#!/bin/bash

while [ $# -gt 0 ]; do
    picture=$1
    jpg_file=`echo "$picture" | sed
's/\.\w*$/.jpg/'`
    /usr/bin/convert -quality 75 "$picture"
jpeg:"$jpg_file"
```

```
    shift
done
```

Here is the script after I modified it:

```
#!/bin/bash

while [ $# -gt 0 ]; do
  picture=$1
  convert -resize 598 -bordercolor Black -border 1x1
"$picture" "600-$picture"
  shift
done
```

Since I'm not interested in changing the file to a *.jpg file, I completely eliminated the line that starts with "jpg_file." Next, I altered the "convert" line to resize the image to 598 pixels, then place a one pixel black border around the entire image, resulting in an image that's resized to 600 pixels wide, and renamed with 600 appended to the beginning of the resized image file name – all in one quick and easy step.

I saved the file to the /home/username/.gnome2/ nautilus-scripts directory as Resize600Border. Upon restarting Nautilus, my new script is displayed by its name in the Scripts context menu. So, right clicking on an image file, I can select the script from the Scripts menu, and the image will immediately be

resized to 600 pixels wide, with a one pixel black border surrounding it.

Summary

Nautilus is a very capable file manager, and one that is very easily extended with Nautilus scripts. If you are installing Nautilus on a desktop other than Gnome, be forewarned that it pulls in a literal TON of Gnome dependencies.

If you are a Gnome or Nautilus user, you owe it to yourself to explore the possibilities that are available to you, via Nautilus scripts. There are pre-made Nautilus scripts to perform all kinds of actions – from audio and video file conversion, to managing archive files, to sending files via email, to just about anything else that you might be able to imagine. You don't have to be a scripting guru to make good use of Nautilus scripts. Yet, if you are a script guru, there's virtually no end to what you might be able to accomplish.
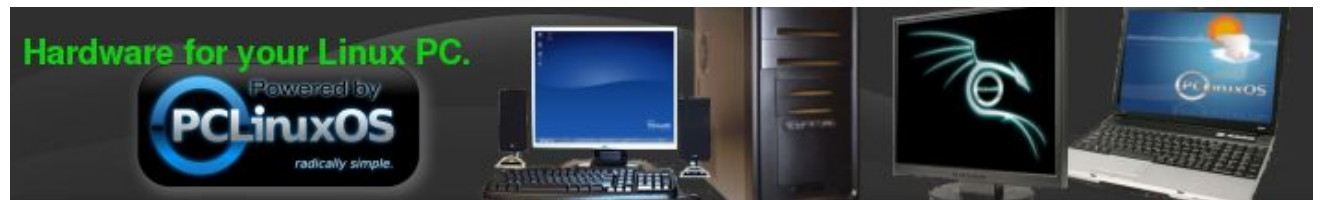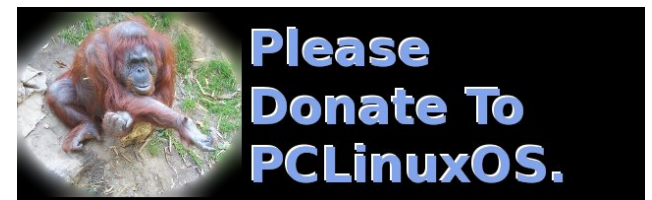
ms_meme's Nook: Deck The Forum

MP3

OGG
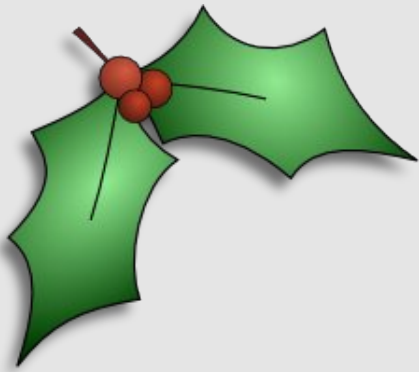
Deck the forum with threads so jolly
PCLO LO LOS
Tease the mods with our folly
PCLO LO LOS
Don we now our gay avatars
PCL PCL OS
Drink a toast to ol' Texstar
PCLO LO LOS

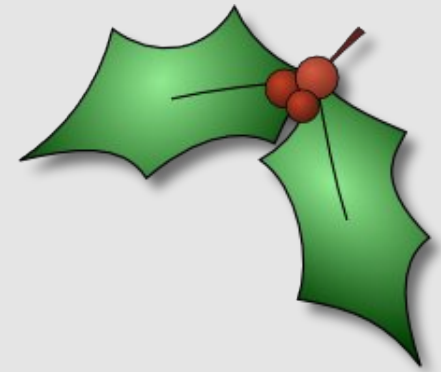See our desktops how they glow
PCLO LO LOS
Linux is never status quo
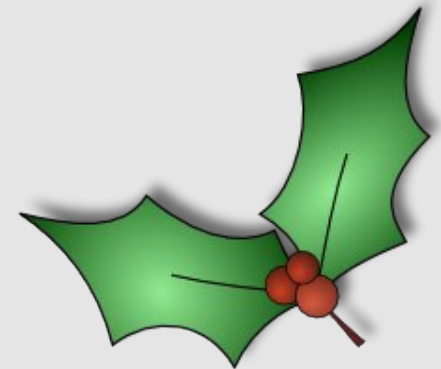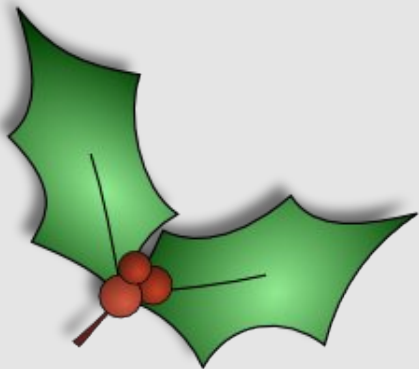*PCLO LO LOS*
Many choices for your pleasure
PCL PCL OS
Forum friends are a treasure
PCLO LO LOS

Double Take & Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

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Find at least seven differences between cartoons.

Answers on Page 30

## Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

The other day, after scanning a George comic strip, I needed to crop it to size. The last panel was open. That is, there was no border to serve as a visual reference. Since I draw my comic strip 13 inches long, I wanted to crop to just over 13 inches. Luckily, Gimp has a very nice measure tool that's up to the job. Simply select the measure tool by clicking on the compass icon in the toolbox. To bring the measure tool up through a keyboard shortcut, use **Shift + M**. You can then choose the unit of measure (pixels, inches, centimeters, etc.). The measurement readouts are available on the status bar (distance, position, and angle). To measure, just click the mouse and drag. **Shift + click** starts a new measure from the last measure point. **Ctrl + click** constrains the measure (a nice feature if you want to keep the measurement line exactly straight). To complete my task, I pulled a couple of vertical guides across the artwork and used the measure tool to find the distance where I'm just beyond 13 inches. I then adjusted the guides and used the crop tool to crop to size.
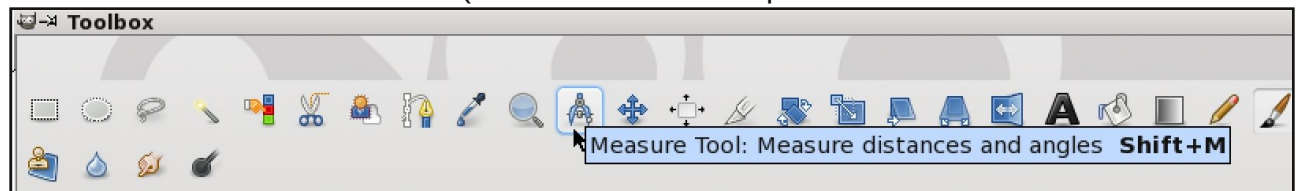
-Mark Szorady is a nationally syndicated cartoonist with **georgetoon.com.** He blogs at **georgetoon.com/blog.** Email Mark at **georgetoon@gmail.com.**

PCLinuxOS
Radically Simple

Gnome 2.32 Control Center, Part 2

by Meemaw

In the first part of this article we looked at the first two sections of the Gnome Control Center, **Personal** and **Internet & Network**. In this part we will look at the remaining three sections of the Control Center: **Hardware, System** and **Other.**

Hardware

Hardware has five sections:

Keyboard

When you open this, you get 5 tabs.

General sets your preferences for actions to be taken if a key is held down, and how fast the cursor blinks.
Layout lets you add another keyboard layout (default is whatever you picked during install) and set options for your layout.
Accessibility sets options for 'sticky' keys, 'slow' keys and 'bounce' keys.
Mouse Keys lets you set your desired keys to use use the keyboard to move the cursor, if you wish.
Typing Break lets you set a timer to enforce a "timeout" from using the computer. Check the Lock screen to enforce typing break option to enable the other options. Work Interval lasts is how many

minutes to use the computer. Break interval lasts sets the number of minutes for the timeout. Check the Allow postponing of breaks option to optionally override the typing break options when the work interval has expired.

Monitors

Allows you to set your screen size, monitor refresh rate, and screen rotation to either landscape or

portrait mode. There is also a Detect monitors button for multiple monitors.

Mouse

Two tabs are in this section. *General* lets you configure pointer speed, click speed, drag & drop and designate if you need a left- or right-hand mouse. *Accessibility* allows for some extra options for easier mouse operations.

Power Management

This is where you set your options for hibernate and sleep modes.

Sound Preferences

This section has five tabs;

Sound Effects - Here you can set not only the volume level for your default sounds, you can set a sound theme and a different volume level for alerts.
Hardware will let you configure your hardware, if needed.
Input lets you choose the hardware you want to use, plus other input settings.
Output lets you choose the hardware you want to use, plus other output settings.
Apps lets you configure settings in different audio programs. The program has to be running.
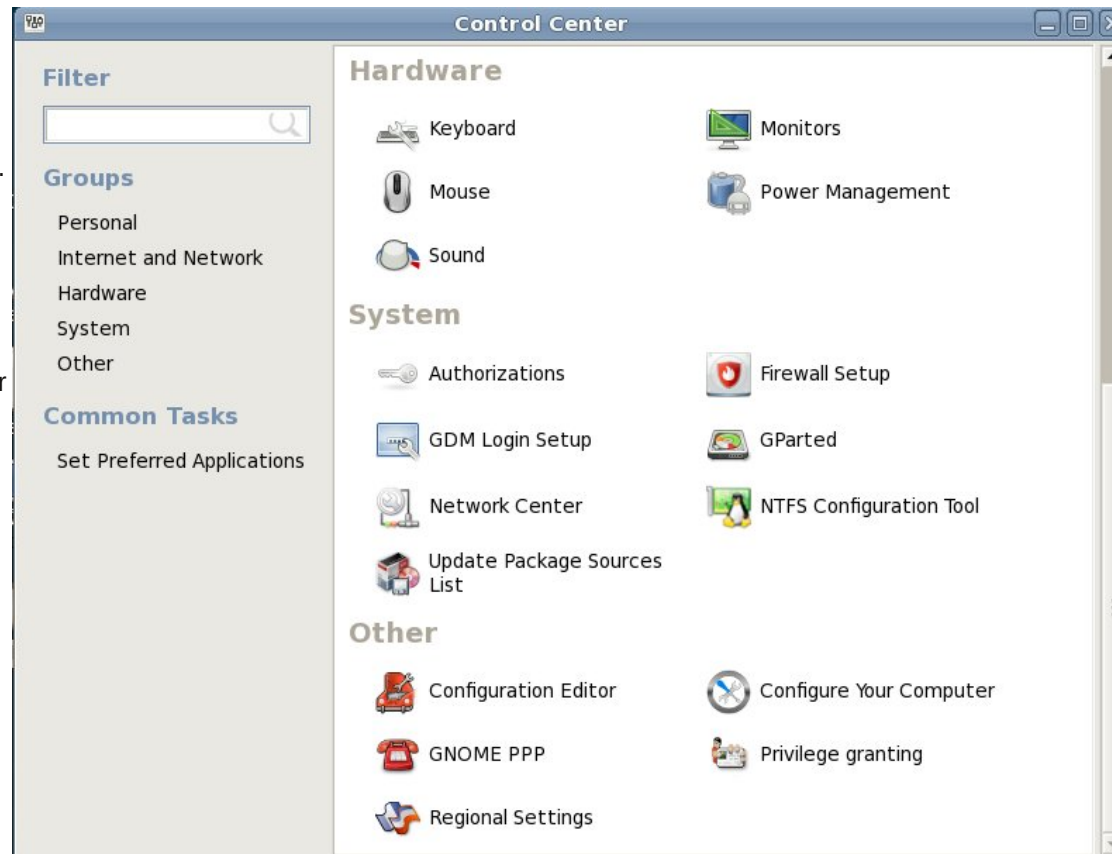
System

The sections here match the sections in PCLinuxOS Control Center. **Authorizations** (designates whether a user can perform a certain action or if only root can do it), **Firewall Setup** (configures a firewall), **GDM Login Setup** (everything from the login theme to enabling remote login), **GParted** (partitioning your drive), **Network Center** (configuring you Internet connection), **NTFS Configuration** (configure Windows compatibility) and **Update Package Sources List.**

Other

Configuration Editor is an editor for the GConf Configuration System.

Configure Your Computer This is another link to the PCLinuxOS Control Center.

Gnome PPP is for the configuration of dialup connections

Privilege Granting asks you to designate whether you use 'su' or 'sudo,' and will let you designate whether screen grabbing is allowed during root password entry, which means that your running programs are paused any time you are asked to give your root password.

Regional Settings lets you change your language settings.

Questions about Gnome programs can always be answered on the Gnome forum.

Screenshot Showcase
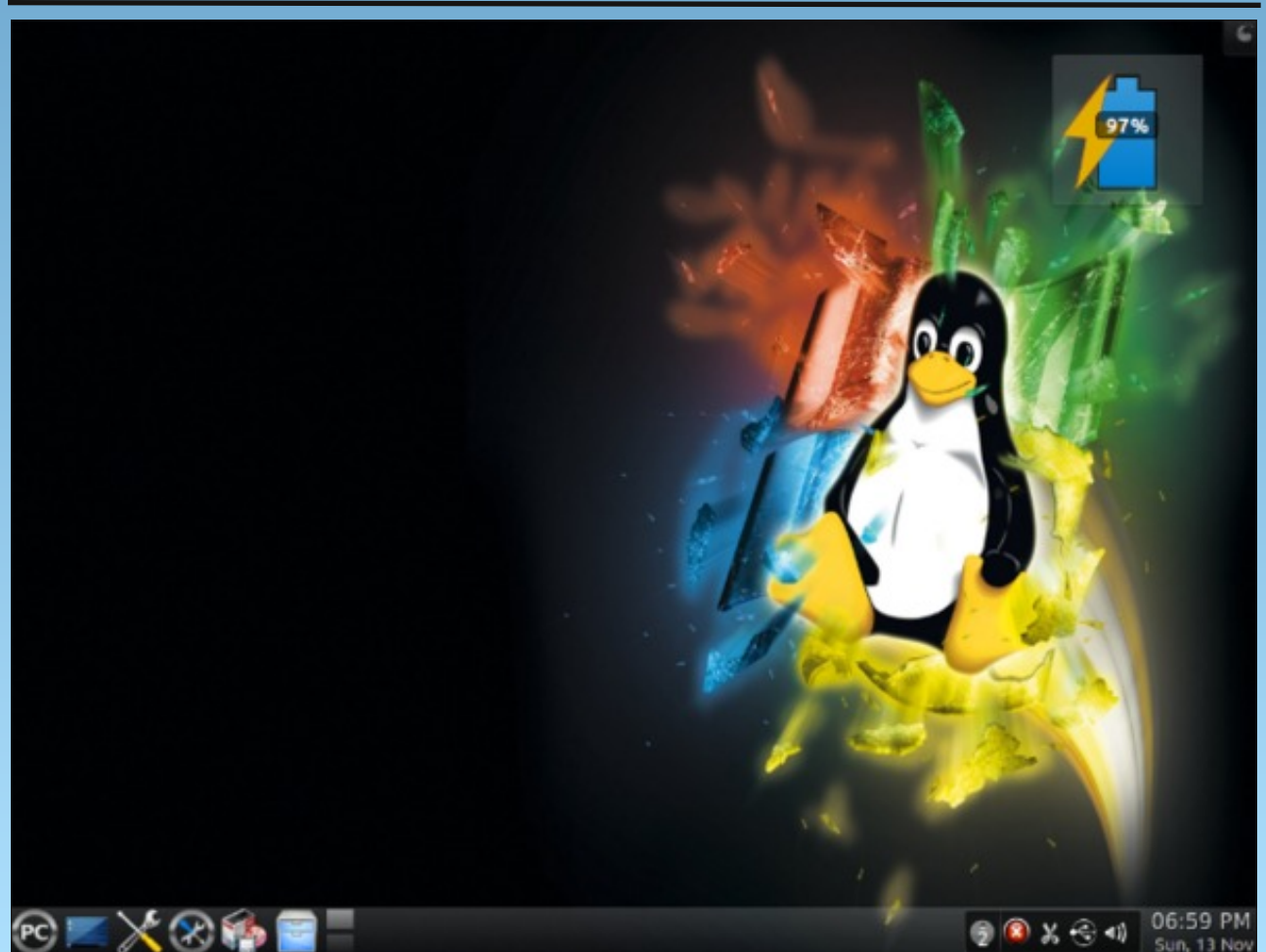
Posted by billy7720, November 14, 2011, running KDE4.

parnote's Holiday Gift Suggestions

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

During this holiday season, the magazine staff has decided to make this year's holiday gift guide a multi-person affair. For previous holiday gift guides, I was the sole author. With input from multiple people, you get some different viewpoints on what makes a suitable gift during this gift-giving time of year.

Our requirements were fairly simple. First of all, the items had to be what each of us thought might have broad appeal to PCLinuxOS users. Secondly, the selected gifts had to be affordable and able to fit in with even modest budgets. Third, we had to insure that the techie items we feature work with Linux. We're not going to have you waste your money on items that only work with that "other" poor excuse of an operating system.

So, without wasting any more time, let's get on with going through some holiday gift ideas. Keep in mind that all prices are given in U.S. dollars, and shipping costs can add up quickly.

IOGEAR USB 2.1 Bluetooth Micro Adapter GBU421

Price: $11.93 from Amazon.com

Despite it's widespread availability on portable devices from mobile phones of all types and tablets, not every laptop or netbook today comes with Bluetooth connectivity. The IOGear USB 2.1 Bluetooth Micro Adapter adds that Bluetooth connectivity at a reasonable price.

Sure, you can find Bluetooth adapters for a cheaper price. However, the old adage "you get what you pay for" applies here. I was able to find less expensive Bluetooth adapters, sometimes even 80% cheaper, but the reviews were awful and there were many reports of devices that didn't work with Linux. So I opted for this adapter, which had several reports of working well with Linux.

So why would you want to add a Bluetooth adapter to your PC? Well, for one thing, if you have a cell phone, many wireless carriers allow for wireless Bluetooth transfer of files from your cell phone to your PC, making Bluetooth an easy way to transfer your photos and videos recorded with your cell phone to your PC. Secondly, you can add a Bluetooth keyboard and/or mouse, allowing you a cord-free computing experience. Third, once you have a Bluetooth adapter, you can use a Bluetooth headset to make phone calls via your PC's VoIP software. You can even listen to your music collection, if you have a Bluetooth stereo headset or headphones.

The small size of the device means that you can plug it into your PC and leave it plugged in all of the time, since it won't typically intrude into your work space and is small enough to leave inserted when putting a laptop or netbook away in a case.

Requires an empty USB 2.0 port.

Motorola H720 Bluetooth Headset (89382N)

Price: $21.99 from N1Wireless.com

To be perfectly honest, I have ulterior motives for including this item in my holiday gift list. One of my pet peeves are people who drive down the highway with one hand on the wheel and the other hand with their cell phone glued to their head. In today's cell phone market, it's difficult to find a new cell phone that doesn't have Bluetooth connectivity. The Motorola H720 Bluetooth Headset allows you to drive and continue your phone conversation with both hands on the wheel! Some studies have likened the driving skill exhibited by talking on your

cell phone handset while driving to be equivalent to driving while intoxicated.

Trust me on this one. I use a very similar model Motorola Bluetooth headset when I need to take a call while I am driving. It feel that it definitely increases my awareness of what's going on around me on the road. Both of my hands are on the wheel, instead of trying to balance a cell phone up to my head. Your attention tends to follow your hands. As such, you have a large potential to increase your safety on the road by using a hands free device, such as a Bluetooth headset.

Certainly, there are less expensive Bluetooth headsets available. However, I can attest to the quality of this Bluetooth headset. The sound quality is exceptionally good. It also has a nice feature that allows you to end or make calls right from the headset. By pressing the center button on the headset, you can either end your current call, or you can redial your last called number. If you have voice dialing on your cell phone, you can also use the Bluetooth headset to voice dial your phone.

Additionally, when coupled with a Bluetooth adapter on your PC (like the previous item we featured), you can use it to make phone calls over your PC with your VoIP software.

Pixxo KA-9E9E Black 6 Function Keys RF Wireless Slim Keyboard

Price: $18.99 from Newegg.com

Cut the cords with this wireless keyboard and mouse combo. Featuring a 2.4 GHz small profile wireless USB transmitter, you can move up to 25 feet (8 meters) away form your computer and have your keyboard and mouse within effective range.

This would be ideal for a high performance multimedia computer connected to your HDTV, allowing you to sit across the room from the HDTV while surfing the web or chatting with your friends.

IOGEAR GKB601B Black Multi-Link Bluetooth Mini Keyboard

Price: $44.99 from Newegg.com

I know what you're thinking. What? Wait a minute. Another keyboard?

The short answer is, "Yes!"

Well, just think about it for a minute. This Bluetooth keyboard will pair with the Bluetooth adapter we featured as the first item here. The advantage of this Bluetooth keyboard, over the USB RF Wireless Keyboard and Mouse above, is this: you can also pair it with your smart phone or tablet, giving you a real keyboard to use with those devices!

Anyone who is accustomed to using a laptop keyboard will find this keyboard just as easy to use and navigate. The keyboard layout mimics the layout of at least two of my laptop keyboards.

Rosewill RNX-EasyN1 Wireless-N 4.0 Dongle

Price: $19.99 from Newegg.com

Are you wanting an easy and inexpensive upgrade path to the faster 802.11n wireless technology? Look no further. This inexpensive USB adapter is reported to work out of the box with various Linux distros, using WEP, WPA and WPA2 encryption.

While this wireless N adapter will connect to a wireless N router at 154 Mbps, the connection speeds will also fall back to connect to a G router at 54 Mbps and a B router at 11 Mbps.

If you're not in any hurry to purchase this item (not wanting it for the holidays – maybe you're just filling out your wish list for the year?), keep an eye on Newegg's ads. Sometimes, you can find this for $10 off, for only $9.99, making this that much more of a sweeter deal.

Ion TapeExpress USB Cassette Player

Price: $59.99 from ThinkGeek.com

If your age is more than 25 years old, chances are high that you have a collection of some really great

music stored on stereo cassette tapes. You could go out and re-purchase all of that music in more current formats and spend a whole lot of money. But probably much cheaper than that, you can convert all of those cassette tapes into MP3 files with the Ion Tape Express USB Cassette Player.

Using a quality audio recording package, such as Audacity in the PCLinuxOS repository, you can record from your audio tapes and enhance those recordings into the peerless gems you remember cruising to while travelling down the highway with the windows open.

Ion already has a good reputation for creating other USB recording devices, having a strong reputation for their USB turntables for the playback and archiving of old vinyl records.

Power Bullet Charger

Price: $14.99 from ThinkGeek.com

This has got to be the handiest, most versatile USB charger that I have ever seen. Not only is it capable of charging two USB devices at one time, it can also switch between use with an AC plug or your automobile's accessory plug as the power source. The latter feature makes this exceptionally handy if you travel much. The ability to charge two cell phones at one time (yours and your wife's?), or to charge your cell phone and power your GPS unit simultaneously helps make the most out of a limited number of power sources to plug your USB chargers into.

Star Wars R2-D2 Peppermill

Price: $19.99 from ThinkGeek.com

Suitable for any Star Wars fan on your holiday gift list, this pepper mill will dress up any dinner service. This item is a licensed Star Wars collectible imported

from Japan. Simply fill R2D2 with peppercorns and twist his head around on the top to get fresh ground pepper out of the bottom.

After all, droids do make the best pepper.

Star Trek: U.S.S. Enterprise Haynes Manual

Price: $26.99 at ThinkGeek.com
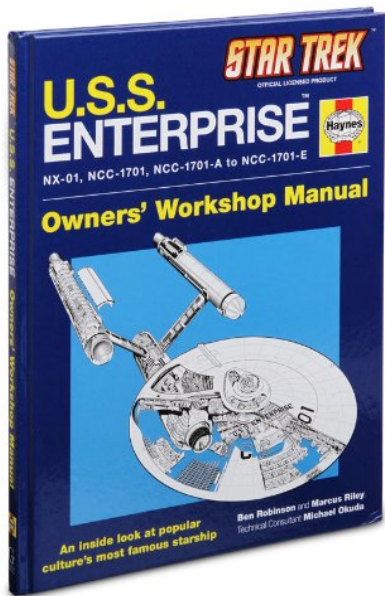
Modelled after the popular line of do-it-yourself car repair manuals by Haynes, the U.S.S. Enterprise Owner's Workshop Manual is what every serious Trekker needs in his or her library. Authorized by Star Trek scenic art supervisor Michael Okuda, this book gives detailed information about every starship

in Starfleet that bears the name Enterprise, from the NX-01, commanded by Capt. Archer, to 1701-E, commanded by Capt. Picard.

The book includes histories of each vessel, technical information about their systems, and discussions of key technologies, such as transporters and warp-speed travel.

Official PCLinuxOS Store

Price: variable, from $3.99 to $25.99 at the Official PCLinuxOS Store on CafePress.com

Certain to be a hit with any PCLinuxOS user, a visit to the official PCLinuxOS store on CafePress.com will find a choice from 20 different PCLinuxOS items. These include t-shirts, a golf shirt, hats, boxer shorts, a thong, stickers, mouse pads, child and infant clothing, and even a thong.

The bonus to purchasing these PCLinuxOS items is that all the profits go to help fund Texstar's further development of PCLinuxOS. So, you can thrill your favorite PCLinuxOS user and help support further development, all at the same time.

From the members of The PCLinuxOS Magazine staff, we'd like to wish each and every one of you a very happy and safe holiday season!

It's easier than E=mc2
It's elemental
It's light years ahead
It's a wise choice
It's Radically Simple
It's ...

Meemaw's Holiday Gift Suggestions

by Meemaw

The best thing about finding gifts for family and friends is that there is always a big selection of items you can buy! However, finding just the right gift for someone is a difficult task. Even if you are close friends, your preferences can vary greatly. Hopefully, the following ideas will be good for anyone. (Note: All my prices are in U.S. Dollars, and please bear in mind that shipping charges on any of these sites can add up quickly.)

Two of our oldest friends gave us a Digital Photo Frame for our 40th anniversary. We really like it! While you can buy one almost anywhere, I was on Newegg's site recently and found this one:

Digital Photo Frames can be set to run slideshows or single picture views from SD cards or USB drives. It's a great method to show off those vacation pictures, but can be turned off afterwards. On this site, the cost was $25 & up depending on size and storage, but you may find it less expensive elsewhere.

You can also buy a portable one! This Digital Photo Keychain is $12.99. I should tell you that while the one I bought charges from a Linux computer, it is another device that is not recognized in Linux (well, it was recognized as an AUDIO device with no audio files on it, but it wouldn't mount under Linux so pictures could be transferred to it.) It does work in Windows, however.

While I was at Newegg, I also found a couple of other interesting gadgets. One is a Projection Alarm Clock for $64.99. It will give you the time, but also the temperature and weather report, and will project the current time onto the wall or ceiling of the room.

I also found a handy little item for you grill-masters. The Digital Wireless Meat Thermometer will allow you to venture away from the grill while still monitoring the cooking. The range is 100 feet. This one is $39.99.

Some people prefer to hand-make their gifts. My sister-in-law knits constantly and has given afghans and stocking caps on occasion. I have seen a stuffed Tux on another forum, and found a pattern at http://www.free-penguin.org/

While you <u>can</u> make it yourself, I did find a knitted penguin at Land's End for $39.50. It is 12" tall and very cute! (below)

Land's End is just one of the hundreds of sites that a person can visit to find gifts for family and friends. You will find clothes, jewelry and even Christmas wreaths.

I like Land's End because the flannel shirts I get for my husband seem to last longer and shrink less than others bought elsewhere.

One of the other sites I like is Wolferman's. You can order your choice of yummy muffins & gift sets. They started with muffins but have expanded to all sorts of food items, even a few breakfast sets that come with bacon or ham and coffee. You can have something sent to each of your friends if you wish!! Prices range from $21.95 to over $300 depending on what you order. You can even have fresh fruit sent to someone every month, if you like.

Something goofy I found was a set of Keyboard Key Caps. These can be put on selected keys to "liven up" your desktop keyboard. There are 8 keys for $19.99 at Computer Gear.

I don't know about your family, but my daughter and granddaughter want a way to distinguish their cellphones from everyone else's, so they get colorful cases to decorate their phones. Many of the cases are silicone, so they have the added advantage of being extra protection for the phone. Amazon has a big selection; you just need to know what phone your friend or relative has in order to order one which is the right size and shape. You can also get screen protectors for the touch-screen phones. Prices are fairly low for most of them.

Another thing you can do these days, from nearly every store, is get a gift card. Some stores even have e-gift cards which allow you to email the gift card directly to your friend or relative. Many of these have no shipping charges at all.

Hopefully, the only challenge you will face this time of year is staying within your budget!

Happy Holidays!

eronstuc's Holiday Gift Suggestions

by Gary L. Ratliff Sr. <eronstuc>

Around this time last year, the magazine published an article about what types of goodies could be found for your computer. So, I wish to share with you some of my recent finds, which I located at the local Walmart store. Since I live in a very small town in Mississippi, you should have no problems locating these items at your own local store. They can all be found in the electronics department.

Now if you have been reading my articles on computer languages, you also know that my hard drive containing 14 distributions of Linux has failed. In an effort to get something to backup this material on, I first purchased a **2 Tetrabyte Seagate Go Flex Disk** system. This was only $99.00 and it holds 20 times the storage space of the 100 gig drive which came with my HP system, which is now about six years old.

When I first tried the machine, I was disappointed that all it did was make a backup of the files in my own area of the drive. However, once I installed the Full Monty System, I soon learned that this was recognized by this system and also my Knoppix 6.5 system. These are the only functioning Linux systems I have at the moment.

I plan to write another article sometime in the future, which will show how to save material on these drives using Dolphin.

Next I learned that my son took my webcam. He left his, but I had no driver for it. Some tech from Gear Head told me that for $38.00, he would show me how to get the driver and the camera working. Well, as much as we like free software, you can imagine this did not sit well with me. I found a **Logitech C510 HD webcam** at the store for $18.88. I really think the clerk gave me the wrong price, as I later checked back to learn the $18.88 system was really much smaller than the camera I purchased. It makes movies in HD to the same resolution as my HD TV system.

The cashier rang up $44.88, but when she called electronics, the clerk told her that the price she told me for the camera was $18.88!

The very next week, my printer told me it was out of black ink. The store was out of the 92 Black ink cartridge. (The 92/93 combo pack sells for $38.97) However, I wound up buying a new **HP 1000 DeskJet**, which has a 61 black and 61 tricolor as part of the deal and this was only $29.00, or about $10 less than getting ink.

I have often wondered why it was cheaper to throw away the old printer and buy a new one, instead of purchasing ink. However, this is shown to be the case.

Here is a photo of these items:

The camera is found and usable by WXCAM, which comes with the Full Monty. The printer installs with CUPS and prints (many printers still do not work with Linux) and the 2 TB hard drive is easily used by the Full Monty, despite the data sheet from Seagate only stating compatibility with Windows and the Mac operating systems.

Have a happy holiday, and may your holiday wishes be filled with holiday gift goodies.

Screenshot Showcase

Support PCLinuxOS! Get Your Official
PCLinuxOS
Merchandise Today!

Posted by ruel24, November 28, 2011, running KDE4.

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

There are a few dropdown quake-like terminals available for Linux users. Yakuake is the one associated with the KDE desktop, and has quite a few Qt4 dependencies. Tilda can be used with most any desktop, and basically has only libconfuse as a dependency. Tilda's last package was released on June 29th, 2006, and is no longer in the PCLinuxOS repositories.

Terminator creates a window in which you can arrange multiple terminals in a grid. Version 0.95 is in the repositories. Version 0.96 has dropdown capabilities, but is still only available as testing packages and source code.

stjerm-terminal is another quake-like dropdown terminal. The source is available from Google code. vterminal is described as "a dock and DE independent terminal applet for the masses." The source is available from SourceForge.

YeahConsole turns an xterm into a gamelike console. This means it will slide down from top of your screen if you hit a shortcut key. It is associated with the YeahWM project and is available as source code.

In addition, there are web tutorials on how to configure gnome-terminal, konsole, xfce4-terminal and urxvt into dropdown terminals. We will be looking at the guake terminal, which is commonly associated with the Gnome desktop, and is available in the PCLinuxOS repositories. It has few

dependencies, mostly python packages, and works well on almost any desktop.

My guake terminal is shown below. It usually has two tabs open with a folding@home client running in each tab. It also has some translucency, as well as text in the color I chose. The icon showing on the far left of the bottom window frame is simply a decorator. The buttons to the right of it are tab selectors. Each time a new tab is opened, an associated tab button is generated. The button to the far right is for adding a new terminal tab to the window.
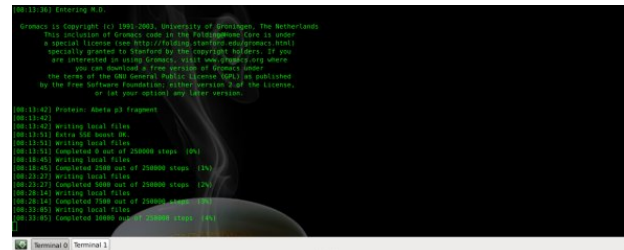
The guake terminal has a few options. The first time the application is launched, the Guake properties window will be launched. The window has 5 tabs, each tab having a different set of configuration options. After configuring guake and closing the window, the terminal will be running. Further configuration can be done by either selecting More Applications > Terminals > Guake Preferences from the main desktop menu, or by right-clicking on the running guake terminal and selecting Preferences.

Copy, paste, close tab and quit are other options selectable by right-clicking on the running guake window.
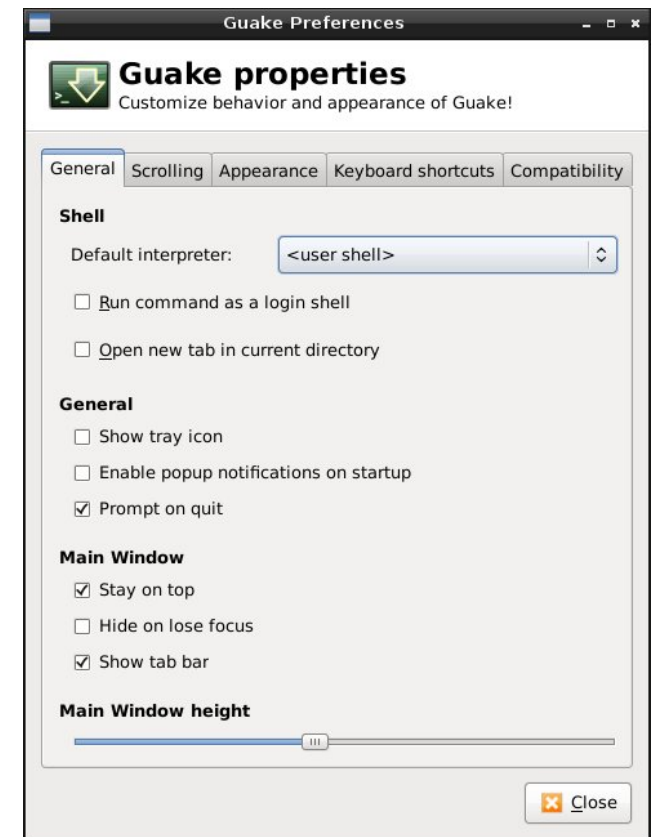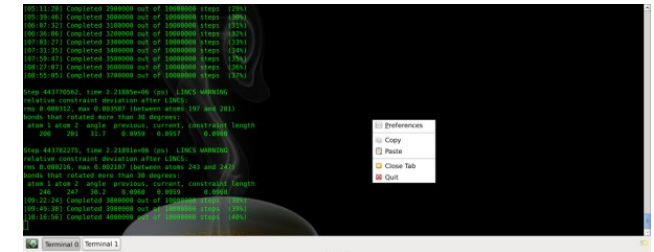
Beginning with the General tab, we first have the shell options. Default interpreter has a dropdown list of all installed user shells, with user shell being the default option. On PCLinuxOS, the user shell is generally /bin/bash unless the user changes it. Run command as a login shell is an option to do just that, login as a different user via a terminal emulator. Open new tab in current directory will begin the guake session with two tabs open, the second one being in the user's desktop directory. I imagine this is for those users who download executables to their desktop and wish to run the executables from a terminal.

In the general options section, the first is an option to show a guake icon in the system tray or not. Enable popup notifications on startup will show startup messages on the desktop when guake is started. The next option is whether or not to prompt the user when the application is closed.

In the Main Window section, the stay on top option determines whether the window is above or below other windows on the desktop. Hide on lose focus determines whether the window will disappear when the desktop or another window is clicked. If unchecked, the same keybinding that drops the window down will also hide it. Show tab bar is whether or not to show the bottom window decoration panel.

The Main Window height is set by using a slider bar.

Selecting the Scrolling tab, we have two main sections. In the General section, the show scrollbar option determines whether we have a method to

scroll backwards through the screen. The number of scrollback lines can be selected.
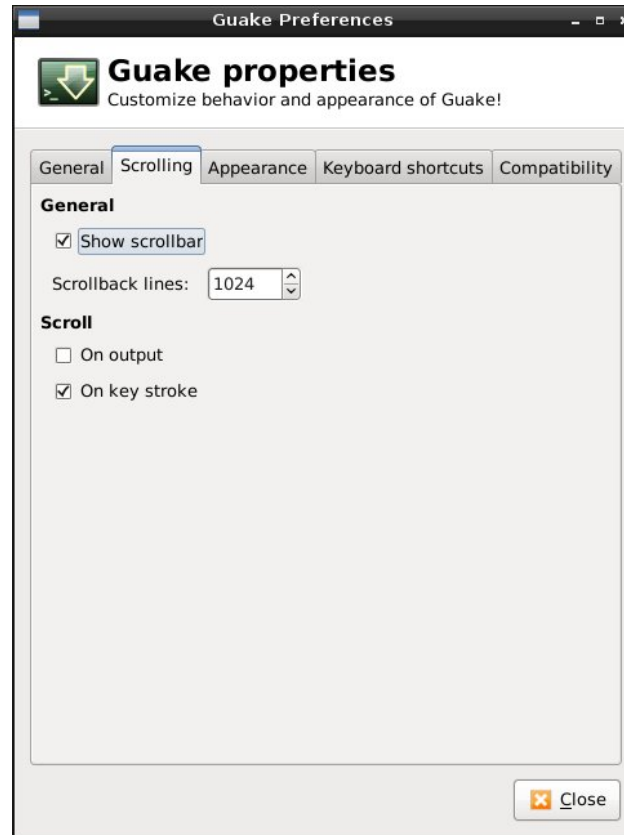
In the Scroll section, I'm not sure what scrolling on output option does. The text scrolls down the window normally without this option selected. Scrolling on keystroke determines whether or not the mouse can be used to scroll backwards through the screen's output.
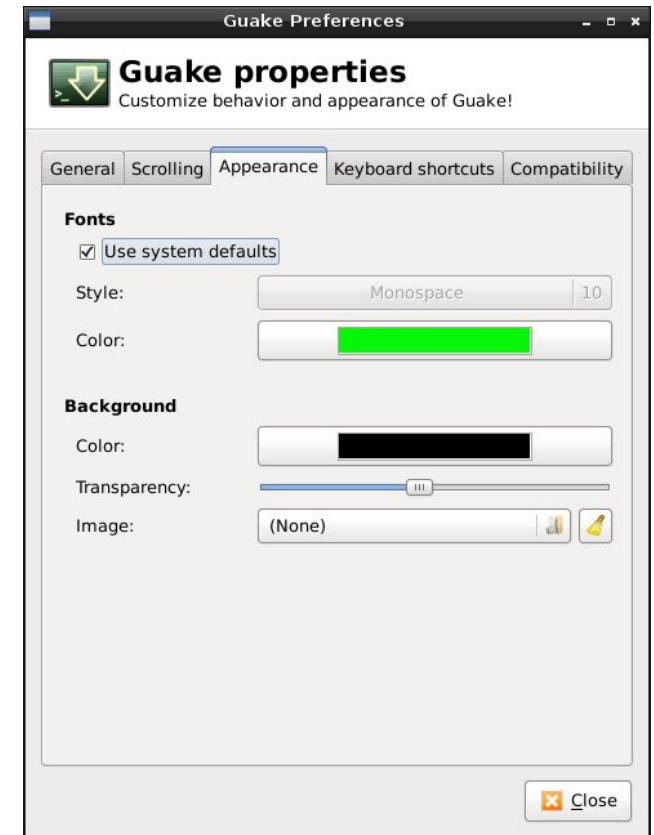
Selecting the Appearance tab, we have two main sections. In the Fonts section, selecting use system defaults determines whether or not to use the system's default terminal fonts or custom ones. If the option is unchecked, the style button can be used to select both the font type and size. Selecting the color button gives us a color chart to choose from.

In the Background section, the color button gives us the same color chart to choose the background color

from. The window's transparency level is selected using a slider bar. Selecting the image button gives us a file requester window from which to select a custom image for the window's background.
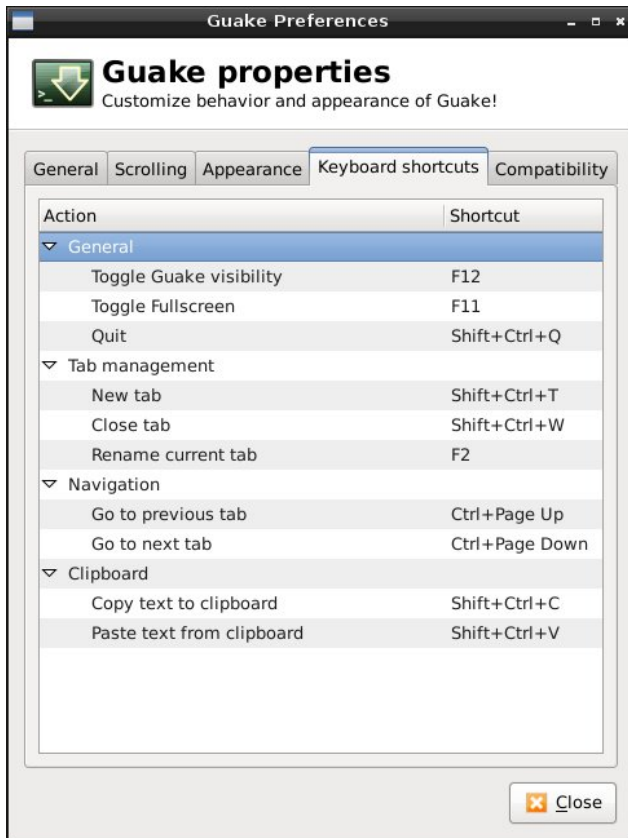

hThe Keyboard shortcuts tab gives us the keybindings window. All the actions shown are the only ones available for guake. Double-clicking one of the keyboard choices allows us to input the key binding to be used from the keyboard.
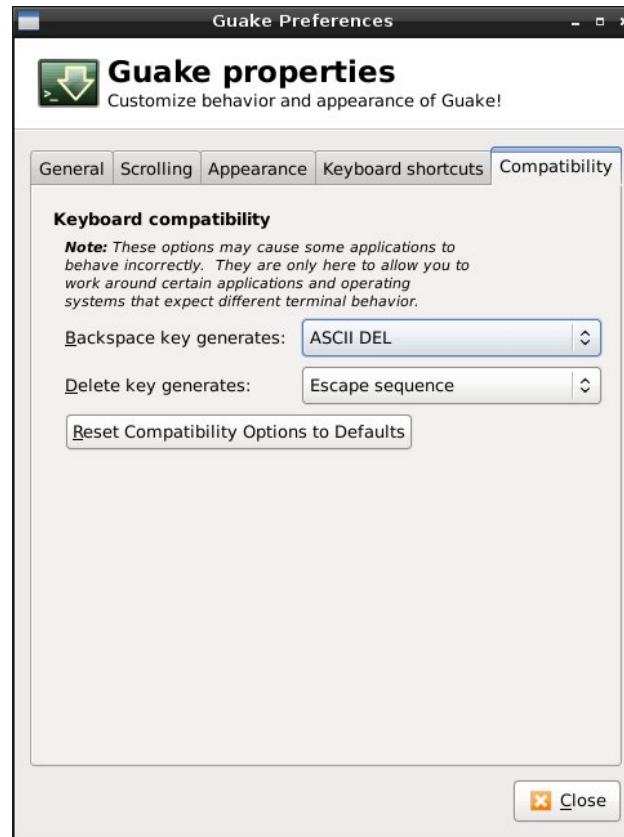
The Compatibility tab has only two item choices. Both the backspace key and delete key buttons have the same three options: ASCII delete, escape sequence or Control-H. ASCII delete removes the character ahead of the cursor's position. The escape sequence can be useful when connected to a remote system which does not recognize the delete key as input. For example the VT220 terminal uses the key sequence ESC [3 ~ to send a destructive

backspace character. The destructive backspace removes the character behind the cursor's position. A Control-H keyboard sequence is used by some systems as either a delete key or a destructive backspace. An ASCII 8 is a backspace character and an ASCII 127 is a delete character.

As you can see, guake can be customized to your personal preferences and to the situation the terminal is meant to deal with. Being able to reassign key bindings means that you can select ones that don't conflict with the keybindings of other applications.

The NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine

Created with Scribus 1.3.9
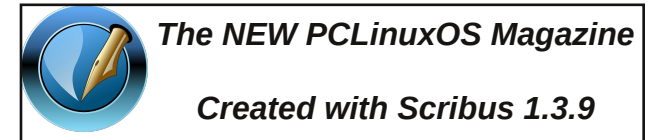
Forum Foibles: Winter Cookbook Edition

December is for Holidays

You know you just can't wait

To go to all those parties

And fill up high your plate

Imagine the sweet cookies

Cream pies tarts and cakes

Chocolate fudge and peppermint candy

All those goodies your spouse bakes

Our cookbook for December

Is full of yummy sweets

Enjoy reading all the recipes

Of our favorite holiday treats

ms_meme

There goes the diet!!!

Cheers. raycleve

Recipes? Don't use'em...I just pick the size bowel I want to use and start puttin' stuff in...when its full, I cook it...so far so good. Mom taught that to me. She said if you have to measure it with anything but your eye and hand, it's not real cooking. **Mike**

I believe I will have to go non banana in my recipe. **joechimp**

A chimp who doesn't eat bananas? **djohnston**

I love bananas but it seems everyone else has a banana recipe this round. I have an alternative instead. **joechimp**

Banana? Put it in a blender with milk, sugar and cinnamon powder, add a Snickers Chocolate; turn on until done. Drink. Recipe from friends of my son, never did in this house, never will. Only God knows the number of calories on that, a real hook to the liver. **Crow**
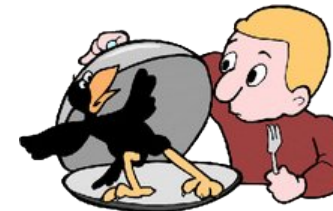
Kolachi   (family traditional recipe)   old-polack

1 lb butter	6 cups flour	1/2 pkg dry yeast
1 tsp salt	1 tsp real vanilla	1/2 pint whipping cream
1 tbsp sugar	1 whole egg	3 egg yolks

Apricot and prune pastry fillings

Scald cream, cool to lukewarm. Add sugar and yeast; stir until smooth. Set aside for half an hour. Mix butter and flour as for pie crust. Beat egg and yolks together, add cream, salt, vanilla, and blend well. With mixer at slow speed, add liquid ingredients to flour mixture; blend until smooth. (about 30 seconds)

Remove dough from mixing bowl, shape into ball, place in a covered bowl, and refrigerate overnight. Remove from refrigerator, let warm only enough to roll out smoothly.

On a sugared board, roll out dough to 1/8 - 1/4 inch thickness. (I tend to the thinner thickness) Cut into 4 inch squares. With table tea spoon, place 1 tsp pastry filling in a circle around center of each square, but not actually in the center.

Fold the four corners in to the center, slightly overlapping the tips, and seal by pressing all four cornets down into the center with a finger tip. (won't seal well if pastry filling covers center)

On greased cookie sheet, bake at 400 degrees until golden. (approx 15 minutes)

Cool on wire cookie racks.

Place a single layer on a serving plate, alternating by filling content, sprinkle with powdered sugar using a sifter. Add another layer, and again, sprinkle it with powdered sugar. Repeat until all kolachis are neatly stacked and sprinkled, in a roughly pyramid shaped stack, ready to serve.

Alternatives:

For looks, as well as taste, and to help with the sealing, a single whole pecan half can be pressed into the center of each kolachi before baking.

While apricot and prune pastry filling is traditional, I find pecan pastry filling also delightful. For family, Thanksgiving and Christmas, I bake a triple batch; one with each flavor, reserving the center whole pecan half for just the pecan filled kolachis.

Stuffed Bananas   **Neal**

1 pound Bananas   1/4 cup Cinnamon powder
1/4 cup Chocolate syrup   Thick batter

Cut a V shaped slice out of each banana, which will leave a cavity for your stuffing. Set aside the cut out portion to use in creating the stuffing.

Mash up the cut out portions in a bowl, add the cinnamon powder and mix together. Fold in the chocolate syrup.

Using a spoon, fill the cavity in each banana. Be generous. Pack it in.

Dip each banana in the batter. You'll want a thick coating.

Deep fry at 350 until golden brown.

Serving suggestions:
1 Sprinkle with powdered sugar and a light dusting of cinnamon.
2 Drizzle on chocolate syrup.
3 Combine 1 and 2.
4 Serve with ice cream or plain.

Microwave Fudge   **MeeMaw**

Put paper muffin cups into muffin tin or lightly grease 9 x 13 pan.
1 16 oz. box powdered sugar
1 12 oz. bag semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 can sweetened condensed milk (14 oz.)
(Not evaporated)
1 tsp. vanilla   1/2 to 3/4 cup chopped nuts
Put all ingredients in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave on high for 2 minutes. Stir to mix thoroughly and spoon into muffin cups or pour into pan. (Can be reheated if difficult to handle.) Refrigerate overnight. Fudge will be firm but may soften if left out of the refrigerator. Enjoy!!!   It's addictive!

Date Nut Cookies   **parnote**

2 cups packed brown sugar
1 stick margarine   2 slightly beaten eggs
1/2 cup orange juice   3 cups flour
1 tsp baking soda   1 box pitted dates
1 cup chopped pecans   Dash Nutmeg   1 Tsp Vanilla

Cream the brown sugar and margarine. Add the eggs and orange juice. Sift the flour and baking soda together and add to mixture. Add dates, pecans, nutmeg and vanilla to mixture. Mix well.
Spoon out on cookie sheet with teaspoon
Bakin in 375 degree oven for 10-12 minutes

Ottumwa Salad   larnote

1 Pkg Lemon Jello slightly firm
1 Can Crushed Pineapple, drained (save juice)
1 cup small marshmallows
3 Bananas, sliced
2 Tbsp Flour, level
1/2 Cup Sugar
1 Egg
1 Box Dream Whip Topping Mix
4 oz Cheddar or Colby Cheese, grated

Mix pineapple, marshmallows and banana slices into the slightly firmed lemon jello. Place in refrigerator to allow to fully set up.

Add water to saved pineapple juice to make 1 cup total liquid. Put in saucepan. Add Flour, sugar and egg. Cook until thick over medium heat. Set aside and allow mixture to cool.

Add cooled mxture to Dream Whip (fold in). Spread over top of jello mixture. Grate Colby or Cheddar Cheese over the top. Put back in refrigerator overnight before serving.

Servings: 15
Prep Time: Approximately 60 minutes

Homemade Mocha   Neal ManBear

Ingredients:
Coffee   Milk   Chocolate syrup
Optional: Whipped cream   Shaved chocolate

Brew your favorite coffee at usual strength.   In 16 ounce coffee mug, add 1/4 cup milk and 1 tablespoon chocolate syrup. Stir to mix. Add coffee. Stir again.   Enjoy your mocha.
* note: for stronger chocolate flavor, add more chocolate syrup. To make it a more "special" treat, add whipped cream and sprinkle a little shaved chocolate on top.

Grasshopper Pie   ms_meme

Crust: Crush 1/2 lb chocolate cookies with 1/2 cup melted butter and pat into a 10 inch pie pan.

Filling: In top of double boiler heat 1/2 cup milk and 30 large marshmallows cut into small pieces. When marshmallows melt, remove from the heat and cool. Beat 1/2 pint whipping cream until stiff and fold into cooled mixture. Add 1 jigger of creme de menthe and 1 jigger creame de cacao. Pour into crust. Shave chocolate or cookie crubs over pie. Freeze before serving.

Pecan Pie — Molly & Rudge

This is for the filling only. I use frozen pie crusts, follow the directions on your crust.

  5 tablespoons unsalted butter
  1 cup packed light brown sugar
  3/4 cup light corn syrup
  1/2 teaspoon fine salt
  2 cups chopped toasted pecans
  1 to 2 tablespoons bourbon
  2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
  3 eggs, lightly beaten
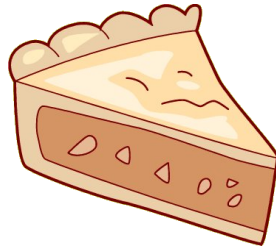
In medium saucepan, combine the butter, brown sugar, corn syrup, and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat, and stirring constantly, continue to boil for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and stir in the nuts, bourbon, and the vanilla. Set the mixture aside to cool slightly, about 5 minutes. Whisk the beaten eggs into the filling until smooth. Put the pie shell on a sheet pan and pour the filling into the crust.

Bake on the lower oven rack at 375 until the edges are set but the center is still slightly loose, about 40 to 45 minutes. (If the edges get very dark, cover them with aluminum foil half way during baking.) Cool on a rack.

Serve slightly warm or room temperature.

Cranberry Cruisers — joechimp

6 bananas
1 can "whole" cranberry sauce
3 ounces butter
brown sugar
casserole dish large enough to hold 6 bananas
Vary the ingredients to make a larger batch. The recipe is simple and quite flexible.

Peel 6 bananas and split them lengthwise. Place them into the casserole dish. Melt the butter in the microwave and pour it over the bananas. Use more butter if needed. Cover the coated bananas with brown sugar. Take the prepared casserole dish and put into a preheated 350 degree oven. Cook for approx. 10 minutes. Don't over cook. Remove from oven. Take opened can of whole cranberry sauce and spread it over the brown sugar coated bananas.
Put back in oven for approx. 5 more minutes.
Times might vary so keep an eye on it.
Make sure the mixture is hot.

As an added treat add a scoop of ice cream or whipped cream.

Serve and say YUM!
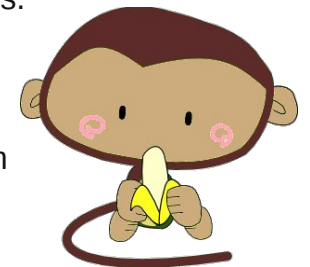
Ladies Of PCLinuxOS: Laura Arnote

Can you start off by introducing yourself, and telling us a little bit about yourself? (Real name, where you live, marital status, children/grandchildren, hobbies/interests, etc).

Hi there! I'm Laura Arnote, Paul Arnote's wife! I live in Independence, Missouri, a suburb of Kansas City. We have no children yet, but we're hoping to change that soon. I'm interested in cooking, baking, gardening, bicycle riding, music, and I'm an animal lover. I like all kinds of music, with the exception of rap and hip hop. I was into the performing arts. I played multiple instruments, such as the french horn, trumpet, flute, and some piano. I played mainly the french horn for concert band and the trumpet for jazz. I played from the time I was 10 to the present.

I was going to major in performing arts, but soon changed my mind towards the medical field, where I could make a better living. I went to school at Concorde Career College and received my associates degree in Respiratory Therapy. It was there that I met my husband, Paul, who was an instructor at the time. It wasn't until a week after I graduated that I called him up and asked him to dinner. And we all know how that ended! :)

How did you get started in computers?

I got my start when I was around 10. I really couldn't tell you what kind of computer it was, just that it was a big and bulky desktop. This was around 1995, so of course we had dial up. Looking back, I can't believe how far we've come with everything. I used to be able to start the dial up process, leave to go start laundry or something, come back and it would just be finishing connecting.

What drew you to Linux?

My husband. Had it not been for him, I would still be forever running Windows. Looking back at that nightmare, I don't know how I went so long without Linux!

What was the first Linux distro that you used?

PCLinuxOS, of course. Paul installs everything on my computers. He tells me what it is and everything, but he loses me in the computer talk. I'm running Phoenix currently on my laptop, but still have KDE 3.5 installed on my netbook. Paul keeps saying he's going to install Phoenix on the netbook, but he hasn't found the time to get it done.

When did you first start using PCLinuxOS? What attracted you?

I was laid up in the hospital after I developed an infection following an exploratory laparotomy a little over two years ago. My netbook, an Acer Aspire One, had Windows XP on it. Since the hospital had free wifi, I was trying to get onto Facebook so I could play my games to help pass the time. However, I was getting frustrated because my netbook was running slower and slower and slower. Paul rebooted my netbook with a Live USB of KDE 3.5.10, and my little netbook ran faster than it ever had. Plus, I could play my Facebook games!

I really didn't know all that much about it, other than the fact that Paul ran it on his computers. Myself, I just wanted my computer to do what I wanted it to do, without too much fuss. Other than that, I had no idea what it was. But after learning a little about it, I

like the fact that I don't have to download and run anti-virus software. It's just so much more secure.

With Linux having a reputation of being a realm predominately populated by males, do you feel that your being a woman has an impact on your treatment by the rest of the community? If so, in what way?

Nope! In fact, with the realm predominately populated by males, there is less room for drama. I've learned that in an environment full of estrogen, there is more tendency for pointless drama than actually getting to the issues and getting things done.

Do you feel that your use of Linux influences the reactions you receive from your computer peers or family? If so, how?

Well, when they complain about viruses and how slow their computer is I tell them, "You should have installed Linux, and you wouldn't be having those problems!" Then, when they ask me how to do it, I refer my husband to them so he can take care of their little Windows problem. The thing is, he doesn't "do Windows" either, but will offer to install PCLinuxOS for them and help them get going with it.

How do you feel you contribute to the PCLinuxOS community?

I support my husband, who does a lot with the magazine. A couple of months ago, I had the sad task of announcing Joble's tragic death to those in the #pclinuxos-mag IRC channel. I had gotten to know Joble through his frequent visits to the magazine's IRC channel. He and Paul would spend countless hours chatting, and it would frequently

veer to Joble flirting with me. Joble and I were also friends on Facebook, through the Vampire Wars game. I think Paul detailed how all of that went down in the November issue of the magazine, so I won't repeat it here. Joble sure will be missed, and didn't deserve what happened to him.

I also support PCLinuxOS by telling people about it. So many people are so shocked to learn that it's

free! Of course, they usually think it's one of those "it's too good to be true" things, but I assure them it's not, and I love it!

Which desktop environments have you tried? Which one appeals most to you, and why?

Xfce. It's aesthetically appealing!

What aspect of PCLinuxOS most appeals to you?

No Viruses! No Spyware! No Malware! Yup, i think that's about it.

Would you recommend PCLinuxOS to a friend?

Yes, and I have!

Have you helped install PCLinuxOS on a friend's or family member's computer? What has been their response to PCLinuxOS, after having time to learn and adjust to the new OS?

Nope, that's what Paul's for. I just use it! :)

Screenshot Showcase

International Community PCLinuxOS Sites

Netherlands

Turkey

Denmark

Czechoslovakia

Italy

Poland

Posted by Linuxera, November 12, 2011, running e17.

UEFI & Windows 8: Is This Bad News For GNU/Linux?

by Gary Richmond

There are times when I think that there is a special, darkened room at Microsoft peopled by a bunch of guys who seem to have nothing better to do than sit and think up some new wheeze to nobble the opposition. The rap sheet is an indictment in itself: trusted computing, Internet driving licenses, DRM, bullying hardware vendors and attempting to strong arm sovereign nation states. You wouldn't think the list could get any bigger. It just has; but then, recidivism is incurable. It may not, as has often proved in the past, come to anything but if it does, it would be problematical for GNU/Linux. The irony is that it may not actually be intentional, but then, the universe is littered with the victims of the law of unintended consequences. So, what's the Hydra's latest head? UEFI. That's what.

Whenever you need to amend the boot order of your computer, say, to configure a newly installed hard drive or to ensure that the CD drive boots your live Ubuntu disk first then you'll be on familiar ground. That of course is the ubiquitous BIOS where you can tweak to your heart's content. If you're adventurous you can risk a flash upgrade. The worst you can say about the BIOS is that, compared to the point-and-click eye candy of today's all singing, all dancing bloated desktops, it looks like it's stuck in a time warp – but at least it does just what it says on the tin.

UEFI: what it is and why Microsoft likes it

When you first get your first glimpse of UEFI (United Extensible Firmware Interface. It started life an an Intel specification called just EFI), it looks like somebody dragged the BIOS into the 21st century. Tom's Hardware site has some nice screenshots to give you a flavour. It's point and click pretty and it is claimed that compared to the traditional BIOS, it is virtually an instant-on boot up. It was also designed to boot large disks (greater than two terabytes), be CPU-architecture independent and modular. So far,

so reasonable. However, it still does not solve the problem of the traditional BIOS requiring two drivers – one for the operating system and one for the firmware.

It gets interesting however, when you see/sense the proprietary wolves beginning to circle and – surprise, surprise – the leader of the opportunistic pack is none other than our old friend Microsoft (a member of the UEFI forum along with Apple). Even if they don't actually innovate a new, restrictive technology, they never miss an opportunity to jump on the bandwagon of one that does. Enter UEFI. So, exactly why would the behemoth of Redmond be so enthusiastic about it? Because mooted changes to the UEFI firmware specification contain the implicit possibility that GNU/Linux would effectively be an "unauthorized" operating system and incapable of booting because those changes would require a digitally signed image derived from a key chain rooted in keys built into a computer and Microsoft would love dearly to make this mandatory. The user could not override this. Those digitally-signed keys would only be available from Microsoft and the OEMs and GNU/Linux won't boot without them. That would require a *signed* copy of the keys and while the OEMs *might* play nicely, Microsoft would be sure to decline (whilst also pressuring the OEMs to withhold signed keys to open source operating systems).

This "secure booting" aspect of UEFI presents a potential threat to the open source community and it's inconceivable that Microsoft is unaware of this — despite their own gloss on the matter. You might just be thinking that this is a rerun of the
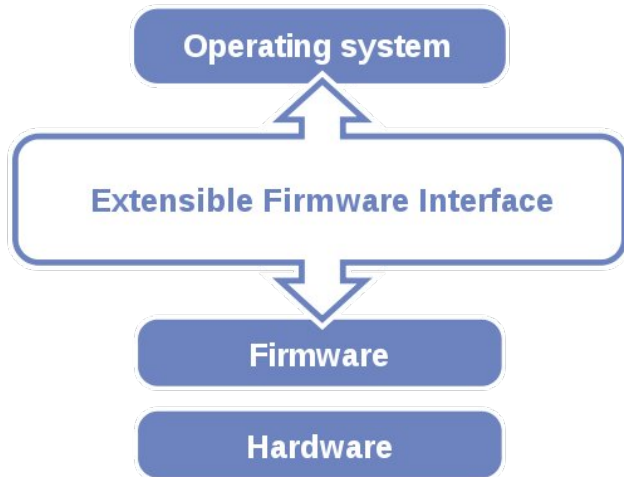
Trusted Computing saga earlier last decade but at least you could run GNU/Linux in that environment.

Much as it galls me to say it, for once Microsoft's motives may not be intentionally sinister. Essentially, the technology is designed to protect against rootkits, malware and other low-level attacks by preventing executables and drivers from being loaded unless they carry a cryptographic signature courtesy of a dedicated UEFI signing key. This would not constitute a specific attack on GNU/Linux as such. After all, secure booting won't allow even Windows users to load Windows 7 either. So, anyone who doesn't want/like Windows 8 won't have the option, unlike its predecessors, to revert to an earlier release as people did with Vista and XP. See the electronic landfill sites fill up. (It would be interesting to know if using WUBI or EasyBCD to get the Windows bootloader to dual boot GNU/Linux

distros would work with Windows 8. Askubuntu thinks so).

On that reading, Microsoft is spitting in the eye of their own customer base and it occurs to me that Microsoft's secure boot would also prevent Windows users from using recovery and diagnostic software too (though frankly, I can't muster much sympathy for people who pay for the privilege of being persistently shafted. They're being digitally bitch slapped.) Even people who do not use GNU/Linux (or even proselytize for it) will have spotted straight away that European anti-trust laws forbid abuse of market dominance in one area to obtain it elsewhere. Already Linux Australia is considering petitioning the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) on the basis that it is anti-competitive. OEMs will be in the picture too if they lock down secure booting (even if under duress from Microsoft). Cartels aren't popular. Or legal. It has even be mooted, that "hacking" the UEFI may even breach the DMCA.

Now, the eagle eyed amongst you might say: hang on a minute, why single out Microsoft? They're not the only culprits. True. Google's Chromebooks come with verified boot to prevent malware at boot up, but at least Google allows the user the option to disable it by entering developer mode. Another case of trusted boot is the One Laptop per Child XO laptop, which will only boot from software signed by a private cryptographic key known only to the OLPC non-profit organization. However, the laptop and the OLPC organization provide a way to disable the restrictions, by requesting a "developer key" unique to that laptop over the Internet, waiting 24 hours to receive it, installing it, and running the firmware

command "disable-security". The idea is to deter theft of laptops from children or via distribution channels, by making the laptops refuse to boot, making it hard to reprogram them so they will boot and delaying the release of developer keys to allow time to check whether a laptop requesting keys has been stolen.
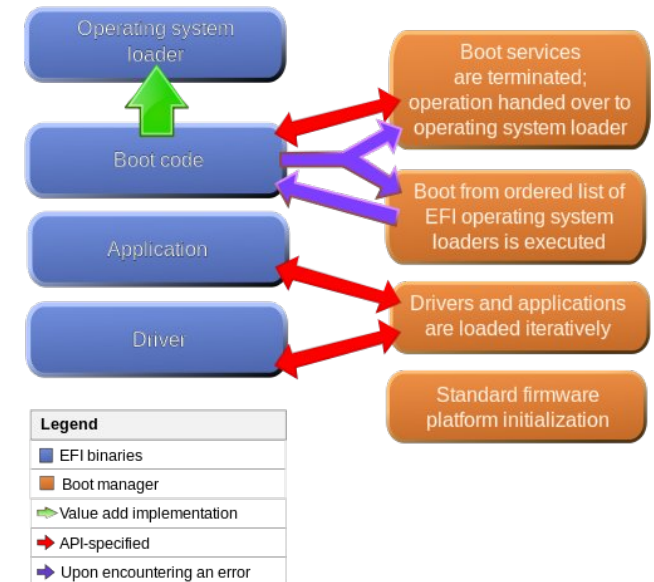
To balance up things a bit, it has be argued that this is all an hysterical over-reaction; a piece of FUD from the FOSS community. Ed Bott thinks so. He argues that Microsoft has no need to trifle with OSes like GNU/Linux that occupy less than five percent of the market, that it will always be niche and that the inability to boot it under UEFI will generate a deluge of irate calls to hardware vendor's support helplines and thus seriously erode razor-thin profit margins on each PC they sell. I actually think that's a very fair

point but it fails to address that fact that if Microsoft insists that vendors will not be able to ship Windows 8 without their logo unless they enable secure boot *and* lock it down then profit margins really would nosedive. They would evaporate.

Bott's article was interesting and challenging. It was just a pity that he chose to quote part of Microsoft's response, a response which included a line which fairly brightened up a wet, dreary autumn day: *"At the end of the day, the customer is in control of their PC. Microsoft's philosophy is to provide customers with the best experience first, and allow them to make decisions themselves."* Priceless. For everything else there's GNU/Linux. The title of Bott's article (Why do Linux fanatics want to make Windows 8 less secure?) rather misses the point. GNU/Linux users (fanatics or otherwise) don't want to make Windows less secure. By and large, they don't want to use it at all. Not using it makes them more secure.

GNU/Linux and UEFI: problems and possible solutions

The first thing that needs to be said is that Ubuntu and Fedora, for example, support both UEFI and BIOS firmwares and have done so for some time. Both Canonical and Red Hat are also members of the UEFI Forum, so it is inconceivable that they are not fully aware of the implications of Microsoft's thrust but only Red Hat and Canonical sent representatives to the most recent bi-annual plugfest (held at Redmond). An open source input is critical to ensure that Microsoft or Apple don't exert vendor hardware or proprietary software lock in. That said,

Microsoft has the kind of financial clout that can reduce a forum to a mere talking shop, a point made by Red Hat's power management and mobile Linux developer, Matthew Garrett. GNU/Linux vendors simply can't match it and therefore influence whether or not hardware vendors release their UEFIs with secure boot locked or disabled. That's the tactics and strategy side of things. What about the technical end of things?

The nub of the problem is that secure booting with Windows 8 effectively means having to run signed code and that's where the open source nature of FOSS comes in: The problem involves GRUB and GRUB 2 bootloaders. They would need to have a signed key included in the bootloader but that would mean embedding proprietary code in those bootloaders, and because they are released under the terms of the GPL, such modifications would not be permitted. Has the launch of Kernel 3.0, which incorporates GRUB, changed anything? Well, tinkering with GRUB just isn't on regardless of where it is run from. Even so, the Kernel does include closed binary code (from various vendors) which makes source code unavailable. That includes device drivers and modules. Certain distros, like gNewSense, pride themselves on having exorcised all the binary blobs but secure booting will present problems.

What's really required is the ability to disable 'secure boot' – which could or could not be allowed by the OEMs. You'd need a signed boot loader for Linux and have the key that it is signed with shipped on the system … which is unlikely to happen. Further, Microsoft's new rule for Windows 8 is that any vendor shipping with that logo/device must enable

secure boot (but at least, so far, have not insisted that it be locked). I predict that it will only be a matter of time before someone puts up a website listing hardware vendors that offer buyers the option to switch off secure boot (before having their collars felt by the long arm of Redmond).

Ubuntu supports both UEFI and BIOS firmwares

Linux officially support both the UEFI and BIOS firmwares. However Windows supports UEFI only with Vista SP1+ x86_64 and only with GPT partitioning, so the open source community is ahead of the game. However, all Dell laptops have bugs in their UEFI firmware preventing them from booting, but at least this can be remedied by using the newly released Kernel 3.0, which contains the necessary patches. A problem would arise, potentially, if users wanted to roll their own kernel. Would it automatically include the signed keys? What about booting a GNU/Linux distro running virtually inside a Windows session?

It may also be that the real target is not so much desktops and laptops but smart phones and tablets (at which Windows 8 will be targeted). Given the success of Android on both those platforms, it would make sense for Microsoft to try and circumvent anyone attempting to jailbreak those devices to run either their own versions of a GNU/Linux or Android, including dual booting. However, hacking has always been a digital arms race and it is an absolute certainty that whatever locks either Microsoft or hardware vendors invent will be circumvented. That's a given, and whilst it will not deter the seasoned and hardened GNU/Linux users, it will

represent yet another obstacle to newcomers adopting it - and all the uber eye candy in the Unity desktop won't get round that initial problem.

One option to get round all of this is to abandon the GRUB boot loader that uses a GPL license and settle for LiLo (Linux Loader) that uses a BSD license. This enables proprietary code to be incorporated without compromising the terms of the license and, although I haven't used LILO since Redhat 9 and early SuSE days, it's still available and under active development. However, although LILO might bypass license issues by using a BSD license rather than the GPL3, it does appear to have significant technical issues with UEFI.

The other option is design a public key for the boot loaders that can be used with the GPL-licensed boot loaders. The computer will be configured to allow these keys but the problem with this approach is that the malware makers will find about this key and the whole idea of secure boot would become non-existent. Don't forget that signed malware is not impossible (for example, the DigiNotar CA compromise). You can envisage a situation where the signed malware gets in, blacklists the official Windows keys and then proceeds to whitelist its own, resulting in a system where you can't remove the virus .. unless you re-jailbreak it. The truth of the matter is that this kind of "security through obscurity" just never works. Sooner or later the code is hacked and they have to build a a better mousetrap.

One final thought: it might not be a bad idea to "stockpile" one very high spec laptop/desktop with a traditional BIOS to temporarily stave off the evil day when you have to bite the UEFI bullet. That should

at least future proof matters for quite a few years and if things turn out well the UEFI hurdle will be cleared. I had planned to postpone a purchase of a new laptop until November next year. I might just bring that date forward.

In the meantime, I agree with the runes of the blogsphere in the last few weeks. UEFI is a clear and present danger, intended or otherwise. We should be worried but it's not yet quite time to hit the panic alarm and start shouting rape. Not just yet. It all comes down to how the OEMS react so I'm keeping my batteries (and my bank account) fully charged. Just in case.

Biography

Gary Richmond: An aspiring wanabee-geek whose background is a B.A.(hons) and an M.Phil in seventeenth-century English, twenty five years in local government and recently semi-retired to enjoy my ill-gotten gains.

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ms_meme's Nook: Using PCLOS

Ms_meme sings are you listening
Linux swings it's a glistening
Our forum's a beautiful site
We're happy tonight
Using PCLOS

Gone away are those Windows
Here to stay we're all amigos
Our forum's a beautiful site
We're happy tonight
Using PCLOS
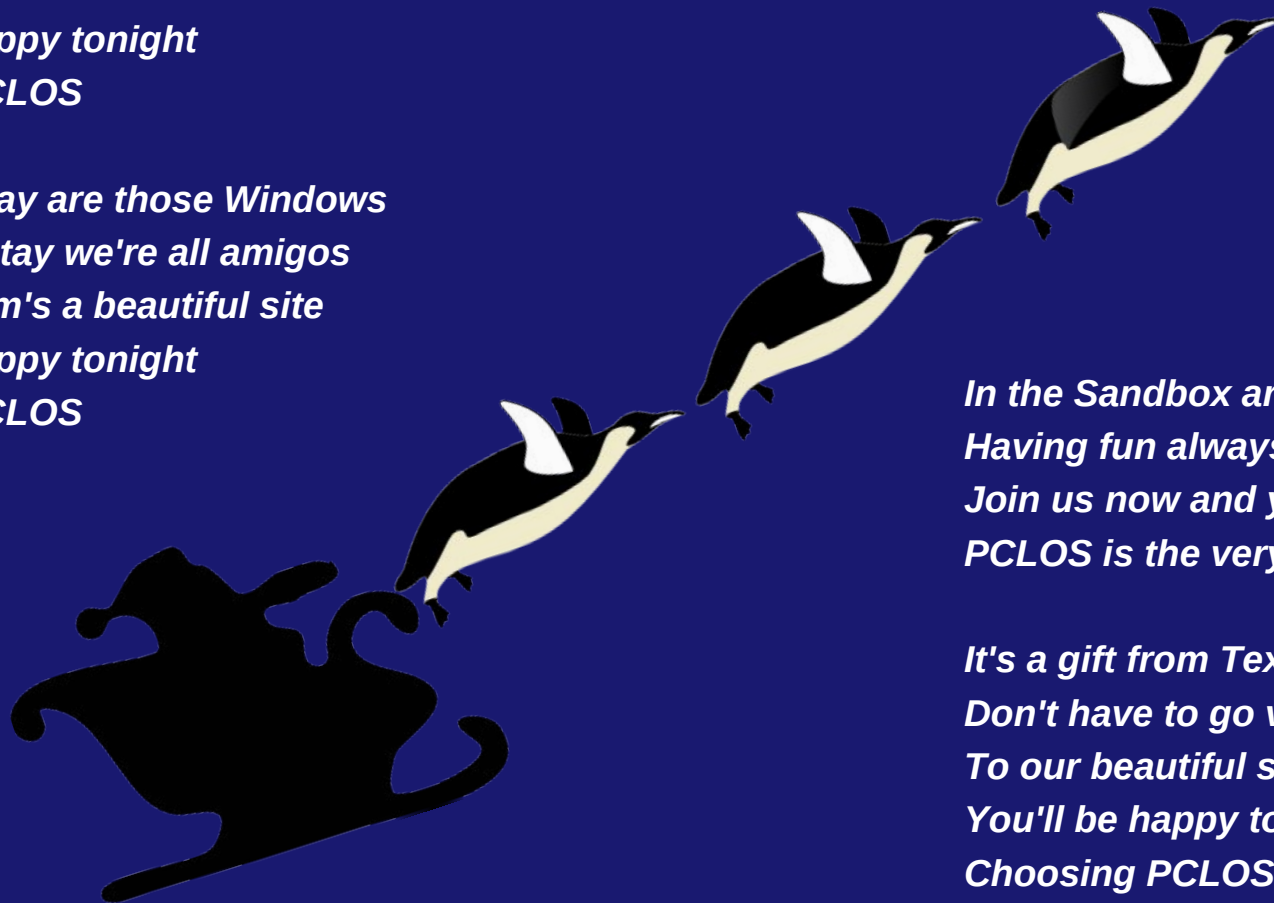
MP3

OGG

In the Sandbox are the happy users
Having fun always full of zest
Join us now and you will find
PCLOS is the very best

It's a gift from Texstar
Don't have to go very far
To our beautiful site
You'll be happy tonight
Choosing PCLOS Using PCLOS

Time For PCLinuxOS-Mania In Greece

by Efstathios Iosifidis (diamond_gr)

As Greece gets mired in its terrible financial crisis, maybe it is time to let Linux grow! As far as I know, many people have been using PCLinuxOS as a "second" distro.

We PCLinuxOS lovers in Greece started grouping and organizing ourselves. Our goal is to form an "official" local community. Here what we've achieved so far:

1. We've setup our page-blog under http://www.pclinuxos.gr

2. We have our mailing list (https://groups.google.com/group/pclinuxos-el), Twitter (pclinuxos_el), identi.ca (pclinuxosgr), a Facebook page (http://on.fb.me/utFOw3) and Google Plus page (http://bit.ly/ruwflT).

3. We added our site at http://planet.ellak.gr (check the above – we have a banner). For those of you who don't know, Planet is the place where every FOSS projects show their work.
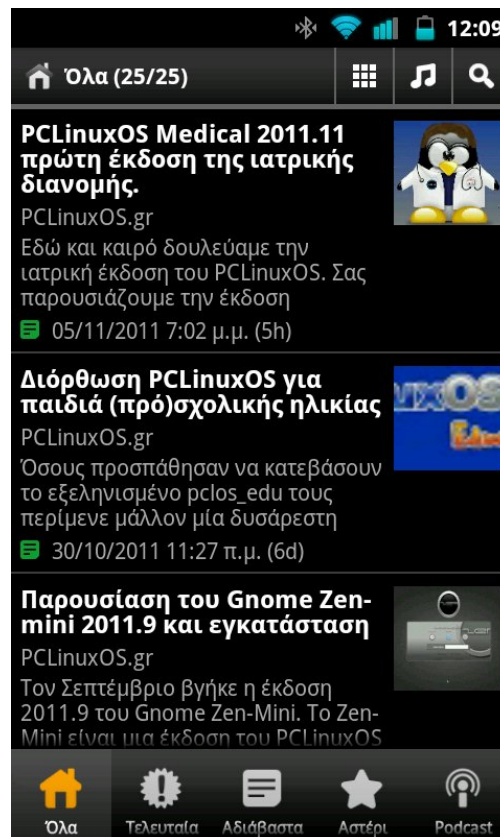
4. I created an Android application that gets the RSS from our page so you can read our site on your mobile. You can download it from Android market (https://market.android.com/details?id=com.pclinuxos.gr)

5. George created an education remix of PCLiinuxOS http://pclosgr.blogspot.com/2011/10/pclinuxos_30.html

6. I created a medical version based on PCLinuxOS. You can discover more about it at http://pclosgr.blogspot.com/2011/11/pclinuxos-medical-201111.html, or at the forum by visiting http://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,99092.0.html.

Both remixes were "published" to many forums and blogs and many people were interested. The only Greek Linux magazine (Linux Inside http://www.linuxinside.gr/) asked me to write an article about medical version and promised one or both ISO files will be included in the DVD distributed with the magazine.

The only thing that we lack right now seems to be a single Greek PCLinuxOS forum where people can ask for help and get it. Currently, we now use three different ones and, maybe have an IRC channel!

I would like to thank Meemaw and George for the logos they created for us. Tell us your opinion and comments, so we can use them to help guide future growth. You can reach us by sending email to pclinuxosgr@gmail.com, or by using our mailing list.

Screenshot Showcase
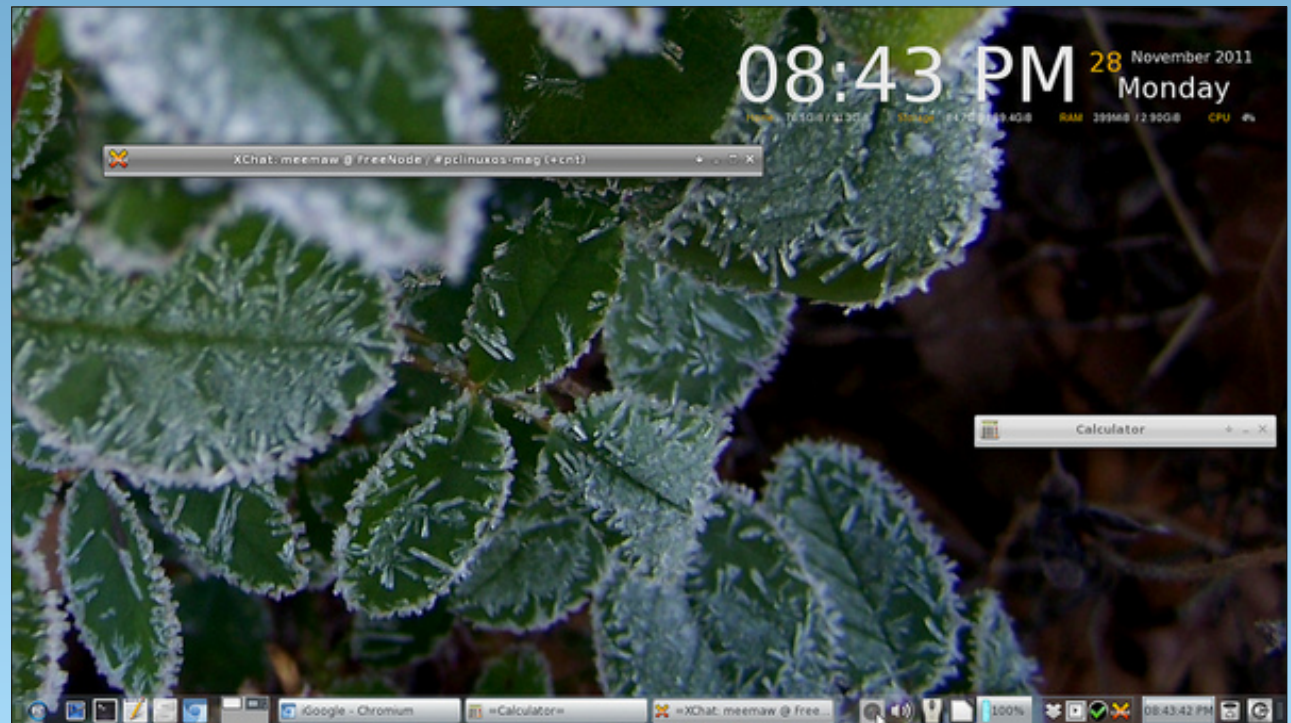
Posted by Meemaw, November 28, 2011, running Xfce.

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

MINIX is a UNIX-like computer operating system based on a microkernel architecture created by Andrew S. Tanenbaum for educational purposes. He created MINIX at Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam to exemplify the principles conveyed in his textbook, Operating Systems: Design and Implementation (1987). Tanenbaum originally developed MINIX for compatibility with the IBM PC computers available at the time. MINIX 1.5, released in 1991, included support for IBM PS/2 systems and was also ported to the Atari ST, Commodore Amiga, Apple Macintosh and Sun SPARCstation computers.

MINIX 2.0, released in 1997, was only available for the x86 and SPARC architectures. It was the subject of the second edition of Tanenbaum's textbook, co-written with Albert Woodhull and was distributed on a CD-ROM included with the book. MINIX 2.0 added POSIX.1 compliance, support for i386 and later processors in 32-bit mode and replaced the Amoeba network protocols included in MINIX 1.5 with a TCP/IP stack.

At the time of its original development, the licensing fee of $69 was very small compared to those of other operating systems. Although Tanenbaum wished for MINIX to be as accessible as possible to students, his publisher was not prepared to offer material that could be copied freely. So a restrictive license requiring a nominal fee, included in the price of Tanenbaum's book, was applied as a compromise. This prevented the use of MINIX as the basis for a freely distributed software system.

When free and open source Unix-like operating

systems such as Linux and 386BSD became available in the early 1990s, many volunteer software developers abandoned MINIX in favor of these. In April 2000, MINIX became free/open source software under a permissive free software license. But, by this time other operating systems had surpassed its capabilities, and it remained primarily an operating system for students and hobbyists.

MINIX 3 is comprehensively redesigned to be "usable as a serious system on resource-limited and embedded computers and for applications requiring high reliability." It currently supports only i386 PC compatible systems. It is available in a live CD format that allows it to be used on a computer without installing it on the hard drive.

Version 3.1.5 contains the X11 window system and over 650 UNIX programs. With the addition of X11, this version marks the transition away from a text-only system. It can also withstand driver crashes. In many cases it can automatically replace drivers without affecting running processes. In this way, MINIX is self-healing and can be used in applications demanding high reliability. MINIX 3 also has support for virtual memory management, making it suitable for desktop OS use. Desktop applications such as Firefox and LibreOffice.org are not yet available for MINIX 3, however.

Early Linux kernel development was done on a MINIX host system, which led to Linux inheriting various features from MINIX, such as the MINIX file system. However, Linus Torvalds' design deviated from the MINIX architecture in significant ways, most notably by creating a monolithic kernel instead of a microkernel. Many Linux users are familiar with the

ongoing debate between Torvalds and Tanenbaum over the merits of a microkernel versus a monolithic kernel.

For this installation, I started by downloading the latest iso available, version 3.1.8, from the Minix download page of their website. I originally allocated 2 GB of hard disk storage for the VM. According to Minix's main page, "for a hard disk installation, 50 MB is needed as a minimum, 600 MB minimum if you want all the sources." While installing packages, I discovered I had not allocated enough disk space. I ended up allocating 8 GB of disk space, for good measure. Booting from the iso, we see the following screen.
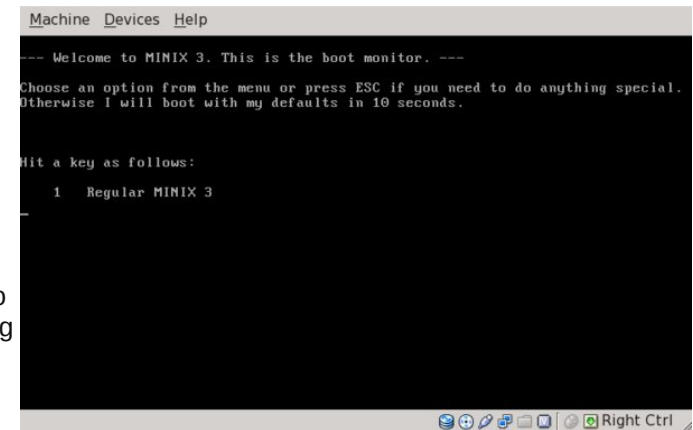
After booting Minix, we see instructions on how to install Minix to the hard drive. At this point, only the root account exists, so we login at the prompt as root. After starting the installation procedure, we see some additional notes.

Machine Devices Help

```
Welcome to MINIX 3.1.8.

The system is now running and many commands work normally.  To use MINIX
in a serious way, you need to install it to your hard disk, which you
can do by typing 'setup' while logged in as root.  Then just follow the
on-screen directions.

After setup is complete, type 'shutdown' and when the boot monitor
starts, boot your new system by following the instructions at the end
of setup.

Minix  Release 3 Version 1.8  (console)

minix login: root
# setup

Welcome to the MINIX 3 setup script.  This script will guide you in setting up
MINIX on your machine.  Please consult the manual for detailed instructions.

Note 1: If the screen blanks, hit CTRL+F3 to select "software scrolling".
Note 2: If things go wrong then hit CTRL+C to abort and start over.
Note 3: Default answers, like [y], can simply be chosen by hitting ENTER.
Note 4: If you see a colon (:) then you should hit ENTER to continue.
```

Pressing [ENTER] at the colon prompt, we are instructed to select a keyboard type. [us-std] is the default type.

Machine Devices Help

```
Minix  Release 3 Version 1.8  (console)

minix login: root
# setup

Welcome to the MINIX 3 setup script.  This script will guide you in setting up
MINIX on your machine.  Please consult the manual for detailed instructions.

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Note 3: Default answers, like [y], can simply be chosen by hitting ENTER.
Note 4: If you see a colon (:) then you should hit ENTER to continue.
:

 --- Step 1: Select keyboard type -----------------------------------

What type of keyboard do you have?  You can choose one of:

    dvorak      latin-america   russian           us-std-esc
    french      olivetti        scandinavian      us-std
    german      polish          spanish           us-swap
    italian     russian-cp1251  uk
    japanese    russian-cp866   ukraine-koi8-u

Keyboard type? [us-std] _
```

Next, we need to partition the hard drive. Pressing [ENTER] here will select automatic mode for partitioning.

Machine Devices Help

```
 --- Step 3: Create or select a partition for MINIX 3 -----------------

Now you need to create a MINIX 3 partition on your hard disk.
You can also select one that's already there.

If you have an existing installation, reinstalling will let you
keep your current partitioning and subpartitioning, and overwrite
everything except your s1 subpartition (/home). If you want to
reinstall, select your existing minix partition.

Unless you are an expert, you are advised to use the automated
step-by-step help in setting up.

Press ENTER for automatic mode, or type 'expert':

 --- Substep 3.1: Select a disk to install MINIX 3 --------------------

Probing for disks. This may take a short while......... Probing done.
The following disk was found on your system:

    Disk [0]:  /dev/c0d0, 2048 MB
        Free space              (2047 MB)

Enter the disk number to use: [0] _
```

We select /dev/c0d0 to install to.

Machine Devices Help

```
Probing for disks. This may take a short while......... Probing done.
The following disk was found on your system:

    Disk [0]:  /dev/c0d0, 2048 MB
        Free space              (2047 MB)

Enter the disk number to use: [0]

 --- Substep 3.2: Select a disk region ------------------------------

Please select the region that you want to use for the MINIX 3 setup.
If you select an in-use region it will be overwritten by MINIX. The
following region were found on the selected disk:

    [0]  Free space              (2047 MB)

Enter the region number to use or type 'delete': [0]

 --- Substep 3.3: Confirm your choices ------------------------------

This is the point of no return.  You have selected to install MINIX 3
into region 0 of disk /dev/c0d0.  Please confirm that you want
to use this selection to install MINIX 3.

Are you sure you want to continue?  Please enter 'yes' or 'no': yes
```

I chose to make the /home partition 1GB in size and accepted the default 4KB file system block size. (top right)

Minix's automatic installer has chosen to create

Machine Devices Help

```
This is the point of no return.  You have selected to install MINIX 3
into region 0 of disk /dev/c0d0.  Please confirm that you want
to use this selection to install MINIX 3.

Are you sure you want to continue?  Please enter 'yes' or 'no': yes

 --- Step 4: Reinstall choice ---------------------------------------

No old /home found. Doing full install.

 --- Step 5: Select the size of /home -------------------------------

MINIX will take up 162 MB, without /home.
How big do you want your /home to be in MB (0-1884) ? [376] 1024

1024 MB Ok? [Y] Y

 --- Step 6: Select a block size ------------------------------------

The default file system block size is 4 kB.

Block size in kilobytes? [4] _
```

three partitions, /, /home and /usr. The partitions are created and the filecopy portion of the installation begins.

Machine Devices Help

```
Block size in kilobytes? [4]

You have selected to (re)install MINIX 3 in the partition /dev/c0d0p0.
The following subpartitions are now being created on /dev/c0d0p0:

    Root subpartition:  /dev/c0d0p0s0   64 MB
    /home subpartition: /dev/c0d0p0s1   1024 MB
    /usr subpartition:  /dev/c0d0p0s2   rest of c0d0p0

Creating /dev/c0d0p0s0 for / ..
Creating /dev/c0d0p0s1 for /home ..
Creating /dev/c0d0p0s2 for /usr ..

 --- Step 7: Wait for files to be copied ----------------------------

All files will now be copied to your hard disk. This may take a while.

Remaining: 11171 files.  [==[--------------------------------------]
mkdir /mnt/lib/m2
cp lib/pwdauth ..
cp lib/pwdauth ..
mkdir /mnt/libexec
mkdir /mnt/log
mkdir /mnt/man
```

I had initially set the VirtualBox emulated network card to be an Intel PRO/100, which turned out to be a mistake. It should be set as PCnet-FAST III, which corresponds to item #7 in the network menu, AMD LANCE. I changed the setup later, as I could not get a network connection with the emulated Intel

ethernet card. The network IP address method was set to DHCP.

Minix has now unmounted the hard disk partitions. Note that we are instructed to enter "shutdown". I encountered file system check errors on next boot by shutting the system down this way. The best method I found is to enter "poweroff". You will be left at a system prompt from which you can manually power off the VM.

After detaching the CD from the Minix virtual machine, I booted from the new hard drive installation. Logging in as root, I set the root password by running the passwd command. By browsing the contents of the /usr/share/zoneinfo/US directory, I determined the correct designation for my timezone is US/Central. I set the timezone by entering:

echo export TZ=US/Central > /etc/rc.timezone

After rebooting, I checked it by entering:

echo $TZ

Next, we need to add the wheel group to the list of groups by issuing the command:

echo 'wheel:*:12:' >> /etc/group

I added the user darrel as a member of the wheel group, with /home/darrel as the user's home directory. Then I entered a password for the user darrel.

The package manager for Minix is pkgin. To get the current list of packages, we enter the command 'pkgin update'. If we have a working network connection, the package list will be updated, as shown below.

To install the entire Minix package base, we can install the package minix-all. At this point, I discovered the 2GB size allocated for the hard drive was not enough.

After changing the size to 8GB, I was able to install the minix-all package.

I received an error that the package smcgit-base, listed in minix-all, is not in the repository.
I proceeded with the installation, anyway.

After installing all the packages, I decided to remove any orphaned dependencies with the 'pkgin ar' command. p5-Error package was removed.

I decided to try a full upgrade with the 'pkgin fug' command.

p5-Error and scmgit-base are to be reinstalled, but scmgit-base is not in the repository. Seems to be a circular package dependency error or a bad repository list. I elected not to proceed.

We need to set up the X server. Login as root, and run the following command:

Xorg -configure

This command should create a xorg.conf.new file in /root.

In Section "Screen" from xorg.conf.new file, make sure to remove all SubSection "Display", except the one containing: Depth: 16.

Add the desired screen resolution. Possible screen resolutions can be found in /var/log/Xorg.0.log. Search for Modes: containing BitsPerPixel: 16. This is important!
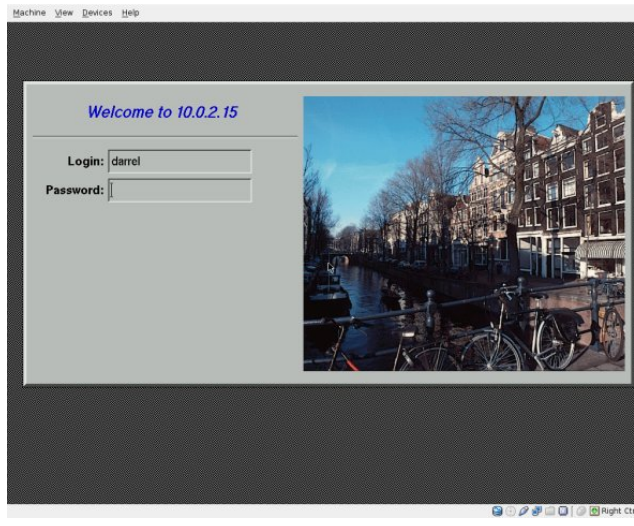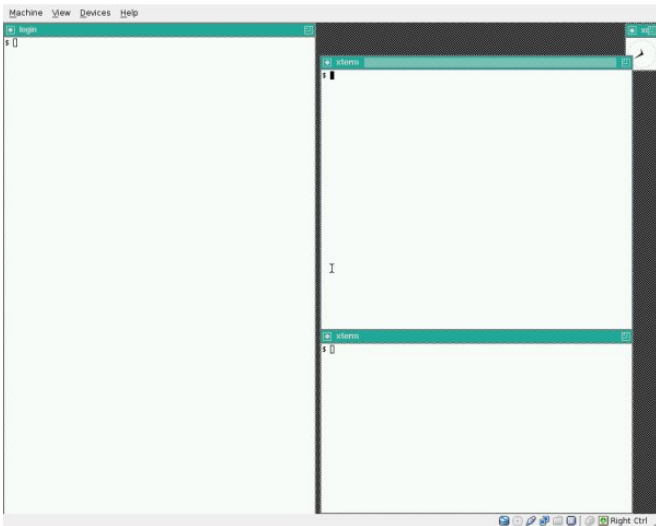
Example:

```
        SubSection "Display"
                Viewport   0 0
                Depth    16
                Modes "1024x768"
        EndSubSection
```

The xorg.conf.new file can then be moved or copied to /usr/pkg/X11R6/lib/X11/xorg.conf.

After logging in as user darrel and issuing the startx command, I get the following displayed. It is a login terminal, two xterm windows and a clock. (top left, next page)
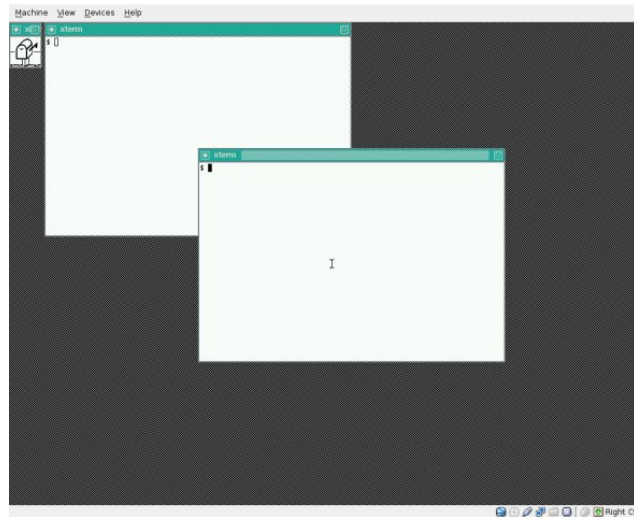
If I login as user root, I can issue the xdm command and get the X display manager login screen.

manager and today's desktop environments. I read that the Equinox Desktop Environment was available for Minix version 3. It has a much more
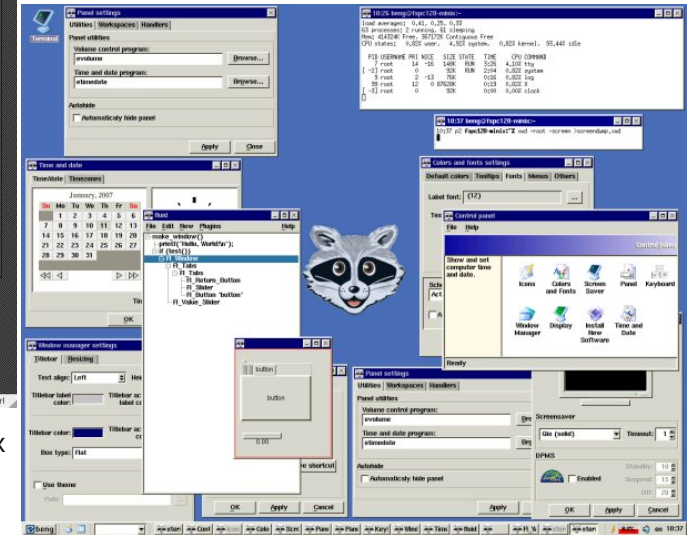

This time I have two xterm windows and one mailbox window. Not exactly what I was hoping for, considering the capabilities of the X window
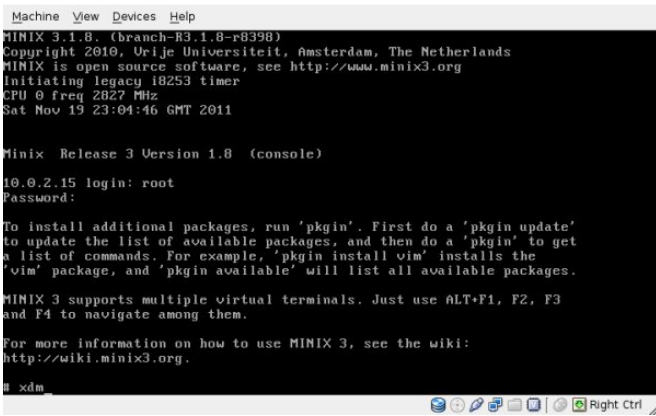
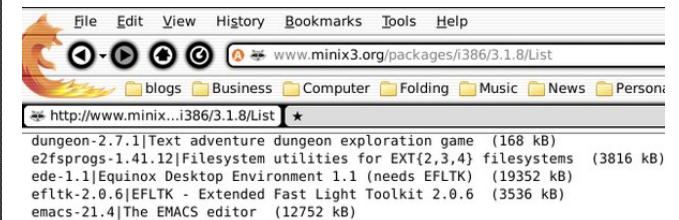If I login as user darrel from here, I get a slightly different display.

user-friendly GUI. An example is shown below. I went in search of the Equinox Desktop Environment for installation. I searched a current Minix 3 repository and found the ede package, as well as its only required dependency, efltk.

However, pkgin indicates that neither packages are in the repository. The repository pkgin is using is

ftp://ftp.minix3.org/pub/minix/packages/3.1.8/i686/All/. The ede and efltk packages are not listed there. I have yet to find where Minix 3 stores the pkgin repository sources list. It is not listed in the Minix 3 User's Guide.

I created a user account on the only Minix forum I could find and posted the following:

Problem with pkgin

I have installed Minix 3.1.8. I see the ede and efltk packages listed. When I do:

pkgin update
pkgin install ede efltk

I get a message that the packages are not available in the repository. In addition, I installed the package minix-all, as it was listed when I did:

pkgin available

However, minix-all (meta) package is not listed on the 3.1.8 repository list page. And 1 package that should have been part of the group, scmgit-base, is not installable. When I do:

pkgin ar

to autoremove orphan dependencies, the package p5-Error is removed. Then when I do:

pkgin fug

to upgrade all packages, pkgin wants to re-install the p5-Error package (previously removed) and the scmgit-base package (not installable).

I had to wait 10 days for my post to be approved for publishing on the forum. There have been a few views to date, but still no replies, almost a month later. My Minix 3 installation in VirtualBox has not been upgraded any further. I suppose I could attempt to do some programming. However, that seems to be fraught with errors, as well.

Well, they are looking for a systems programmer. Do you suppose they'd consider hiring Linus Torvalds?

It's easier than $E=mc^2$
It's elemental
It's light years ahead
It's a wise choice
It's Radically Simple
It's ...

PCLinuxOS
Radically Simple
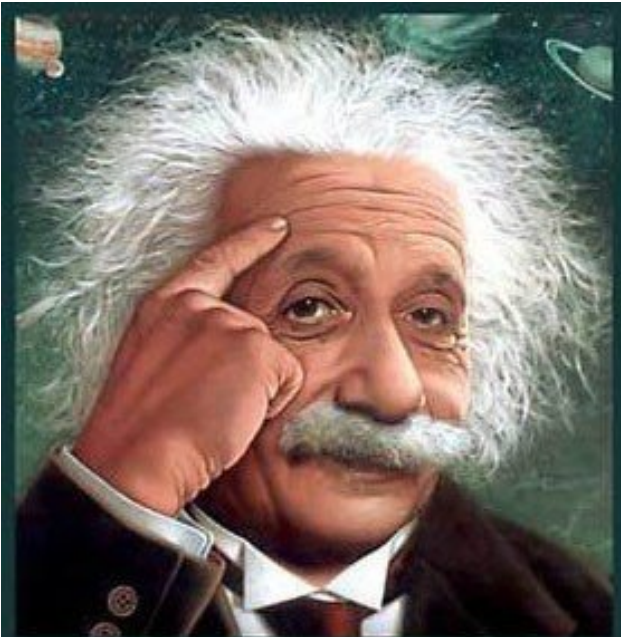
Screenshot Showcase

Posted by john030655, November 5, 2011, running KDE4.

Game Zone: Stronghold Crusader

by glamdring
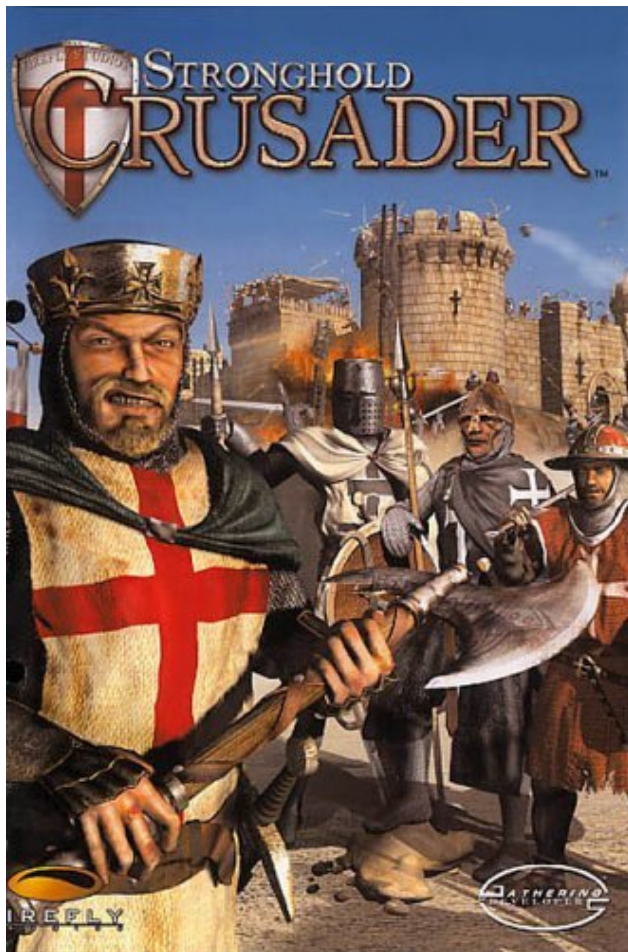
From the Developer

Journey to distant lands renowned for brave warriors and fearsome weaponry in FireFly Studios'

Stronghold: Crusader. This highly anticipated successor to the bestselling Stronghold combines the finest aspects from a city builder and a real-time strategy game. Lead a determined group of crusaders, forged by centuries of barbaric conflicts, or wage war against a powerful foreign invader amidst the haze of the desert heat.

Within impenetrable walls beats the heart of a thriving society full of fletchers, brewers, and armorers, while outside stalk enemy assassins, mighty war engines, and the constant threat of fire. As European nobles or Arabian warriors, conquer this unforgiving wasteland, defend desert fortresses, and lay siege to fearless enemies during the legendary crusades of the 11th and 12th centuries.

Requirements (Windows 2000/98/ME/XP)

|	
Processor:	300mhz (550mhz+ preferred)
Memory:	64MB
Hard Drive:	850MB
Video:	4MB DirectX 8.1 Compatible
Sound:	DirectX 8.1 Compatible
CD Rom:	8x Speed
Modem:	56k (for Internet Play)
Price:	$14.99 from Amazon.com
	$9.99 at GOG (DRM Free)

Installation

You will need Wine to play this game, so load up Synaptic and download Wine, if you don't have it already installed. If you have the CD edition, I

suggest you copy the entire disc onto your computer, so you don't have to use the disc every time you want to play. You do not need to save it as an ISO. Just copying all files will work just fine.

After you have successfully installed Wine and either copied the CD or have a digital copy on your computer, open up the "Stronghold Crusader" folder and launch "Stronghold Crusader.exe." Stronghold will now start.

Game tips: Getting started

If you play through the campaign, it will give you a tutorial. However, if you just want to jump in make sure you build a granary, market, and add stockpile tiles as soon as the game starts.

Game tips: Food

If you are limited on oasis on the specific map, I would suggest focusing on wheat. This is a small farm and can develop the most food. The down side is the time it takes to produce food is much longer. After wheat is grown, it must be milled before it can be baked into bread. If you have an abundant amount of resources, dairy farms are the most useful farm, they can provide you with food, leather, and cows to launch.

Game tips: Resources

If you have enough wood, you will want to build all the iron mines and stone quires you can immediately. The resources never deplete and are valuable. Iron is very valuable in both crafting and sale. Stone is your first line of defense, you need it to build every piece of wall and tower. There are

other resources too, like pitch and wood. I don't focus to much on pitch, other than as a money maker, if you learn to use pitch correctly it can be a great defense, but it takes much more time than simpler alternatives. Wood is one of those resources you will often find your self running out of, so get lots of it.

Game tips: Attacking

The best way to learn what works good is to play around with units. Some key things to use in an attack are units that don't get hurt much by archers. The down side to these units is that they are very slow and prone to fire, so watch out for pitch around castles. To test for pitch, I often use horsemen and run around the castle to get the enemy to light the pitch before making my assault. Because this game is rather old, the enemy will always build similar castles, depending on which character they are, so pay attention and you will learn what the best attack method is. When assaulting a base with lots of archers, you can try and use assassins to climb the walls and kill the archers in the towers. Also, if you can build a tower close enough to the enemy base, put a catapult in it and tell it to keep attacking that area. It will fling rocks at the base, which continues to destroy parts of walls and killing people.

Game tips: Defense

Your first line of defense is your walls. Make them thick and try to put some wall around the outside of towers to help protect against sieges. Don't' use

stairs unless needed. The minute the enemy gets on your walls they will kill archers fast! Try to place towers sticking out a bit, so archers can shoot at units attacking the wall. Remember to place fires in the towers to give your archers fire arrows. Also, siege equipment can be placed in the towers that can deal heavy damage to attackers. Use dog cages around the walls to attack enemy units, but remember the dogs can die. Spike traps work good, but require excess amounts of wood. You can also build wood cutting huts far outside your base. As the civilian takes the job, they will attempt to travel to it along the way, attacking any enemy they see.

Summary

Additional game play screenshots are available here. Be sure to look at the previous web site for online extras and additional downloads to supplement your copy of the game. There are many more things you can learn like using fear or making your people happy, but I don't want to give the whole game away. So have fun!

Testimonial: Greetings From VA, USA!
Wow! So You're All Not From Texas!

by newbit

On a July 4th, we declared our independence from the rat race and moved from NYC to NASCAR territory, southern VA. After a decade, people realized we're here to stay and don't yell "go home Yankee" anymore, and we're now introduced as "our international yankee-turned red neck friends."

I also left behind a long relationship with Microsoft and Windows. I was among the first resellers supporting Windows, and am long done with it. I used to build custom PCs, but hadn't owned one for years.

Last year, I got a mini and this used laptop with most of Linux Mint 9 on it and passwords I didn't know. It still thinks it's on Pacific time and refuses to accept Eastern time. I checked out Distrowatch and other bookmarks. I found in order to ask a question, you have to register first, so now this is the third and final place I've registered. I still can't partition the harddrive, access admin or terminal, and still don't know how to wipe and start anew with an OS I'd like. I found several, and found hat Linux users are smart and friendly and definitely decided to stay.

PCLinuxOS has at least three styles I really like. Full Monty is like something I tried to do in Windows and IBM did with "Rooms," a carousel style layout. It makes sense to me, a desktop for each major

function and project done in it. Looks awesome! Openbox sounds better for me though. It's more minimalist; add the essentials and appreciate the speed.

So, I gotta share this. Years ago, a friend showed me an OS with a bull on the main page. He said it was made by some rich guy in Texas and I never

saw it again, but never forgot it. I thought it was slick, beautiful, and I happen to like Texas, as does my uncle, who lives there. So this year on my OS quest, I re-discovered it and again was reminded it was made in Texas and limited to English according to a review, so it made me think it was a little known local distro that really needed more attention because it was great! Now I have four or five OSes I like. Three of them are PCLinuxOS and make the most sense. The other distros I like are loud and maybe a bit immature, or have way too much stuff or a bit too different. The ones here are more polished, quiet and dignified, and give a sense of ease and stability. Kinda like the difference between a custom-painted, blown Honda with big rims … or a plain Mercedes.

So I was happily surprised to find people from everywhere on this welcome center! I can no longer afford to travel, but did so when I could. I have been to most of Europe and some of N. America. I miss meeting all the wonderful people of this world, and they are really mostly wonderful. It's a shame that it's always the noisy stinkers of the world that make the news. I now work applying some English-Spanish skills and make enough to eat and be happy. I am even happier now to find this international bunch of people and am feeling at home.

Thank You.

Top Left: *Posted by Jerry_th, November 1, 2011, running KDE4.* Top Right: *Posted by Crow, November 1, 2011, running KDE4.* Bottom Left: *Posted by coffeetime, November 7, 2011, running LXDE.* Bottom Right: *Posted by Leiche, November 14, 2011, running LXDE.*
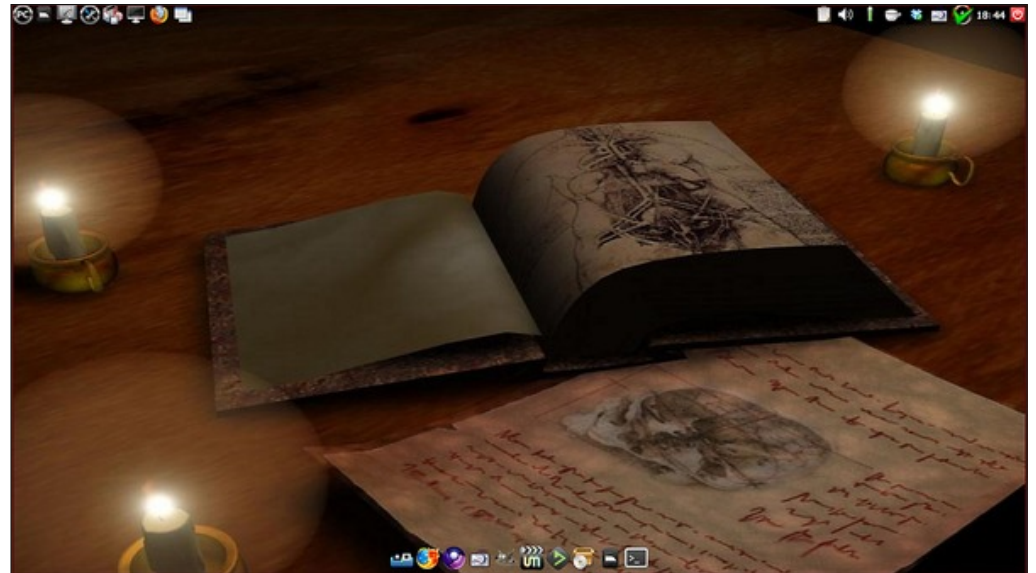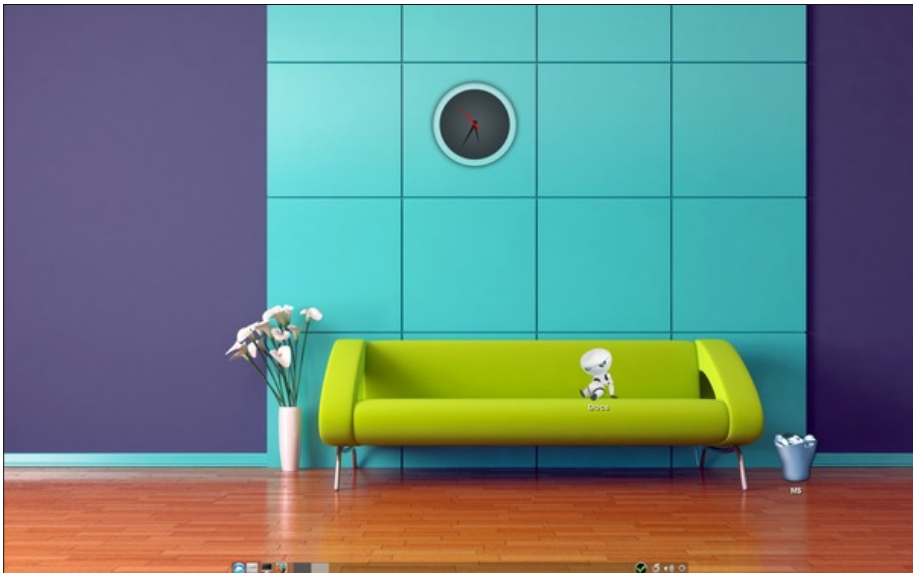
2011
December

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