

The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 86

March, 2014

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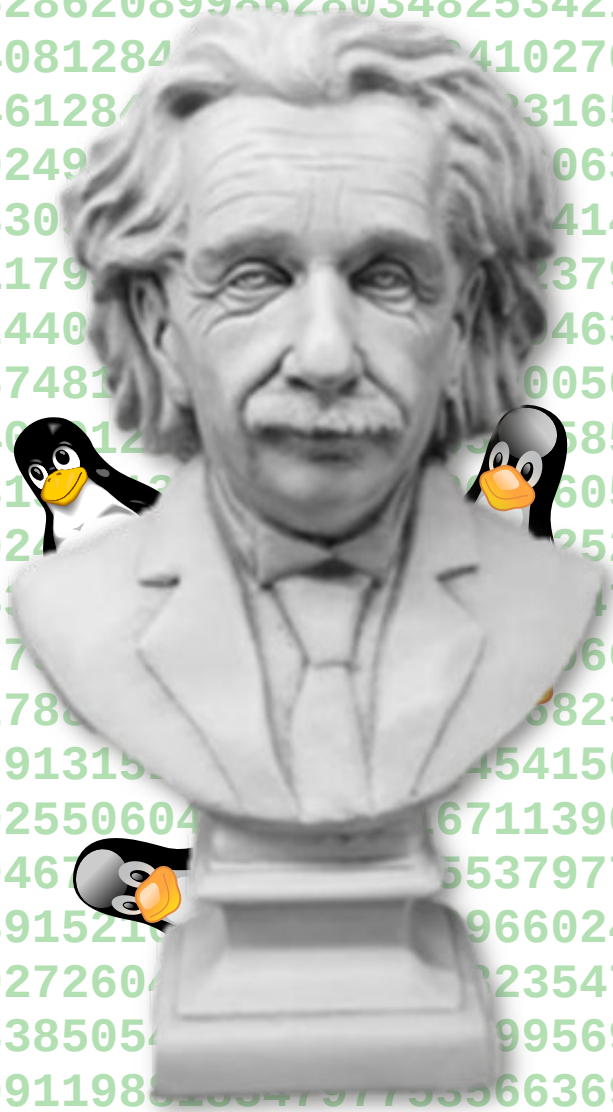
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Welcome From The Chief Editor

This month, let's talk about how Linux is making the Redmond crowd sweat.

First of all, that EVIL empire Microsoft just announced a few days ago that it was slashing the prices of Windows 8.1. Woohoo! Like anyone really cares? I doubt few Tuxinistas – if any at all – really care, or will run right out and pick up their own personal copy. Plus, if any are inclined to run out and pick up a copy, I'm not so sure that the price cut includes retail copies. As far as I have read, Microsoft is cutting the price it charges hardware manufacturers from \$50 per copy, to \$15 per copy. I've seen no mention about price cuts in the retail price that any regular user would pay through normal retail channels.

It certainly does bring up some interesting conjecture. The price cut is reported to be Microsoft's way of combatting the increased competition from low-end tablets and notebooks, notably Google Chromebooks. Only two months into the new year, Google's Chrome OS is being touted as the possible breakthrough to mainstream computing for Linux this year.

I'm sure no Linux user is surprised that Chrome – which is Linux based – offers users an easy and trouble-free computing solution that meets the needs of the vast majority of computer users. Most computer users don't have a need or demand for high power computing. Rather, most of their use is centered around sending email, browsing the web, some light word processing and spreadsheet work, and playing their Facebook games. Every one of those activities can be performed on a web-centric OS, like Chrome. If you're not very familiar with the Chrome OS, this [review](#) will help get you up to speed. You can get a taste for it by pretending that the Chrome browser is the only thing installed on

your system, and trying to do all of your work within that copy of Chrome browser. You can also download and run the open source version, Chromium OS, from [here](#).



Some Chromebooks don't even offer a local hard drive to save work to. Instead, Chrome steers users towards using cloud-based solutions, such as Google Docs and Google Drive, to store their documents. For most users, this is not only sufficient, but it also allows Chrome users to access those documents and files from their Chromebook,

tablet and smart phones as needed and at will. Most users don't give two thoughts about the security of their data (much less allowing Google to have access to all of it), and will see the cross platform access of that data as a huge plus.

For Microsoft to announce such a HUGE price cut must mean that they are feeling the pressure from the climbing success and adoption of Chromebooks. With new computing platforms, such as tablets, grabbing a larger and larger percentage of the computing market, the PC market is shrinking. Since Microsoft lacks a viable or popular mobile computing platform, Microsoft is seeing itself become less and less relevant in the computing world. Markets and paradigms shift, and Microsoft is looking like it'll be the central victim in that shift.

It's a shame that the price cut is only on Windows 8.1. It would be a mega-major story if users could get a reduced price on something like Windows 7. But nooooo ... that's not the case. Instead, I also see this as an effort by Microsoft to cut their losses on a widely unpopular version of Windows. I can hardly read an article or forum thread about Windows 8 without seeing mention of users who are holding out, awaiting the arrival of Windows 9. Windows users simply aren't migrating to Windows 8.

Many other users have stated a desire for Microsoft to release free copies of older versions of Windows, after they've reached end-of-life. This wish has been expressed for years. While doing so would prevent a LOT of computers from filling up landfills, it would also hurt Microsoft's bottom line. People would just keep their existing computers running, hook or crook, for as long as it continued to do what they needed their computer to do. Microsoft has come to rely on users having to buy new hardware to run the

latest version of Windows, or purchasing a new computer with Windows already pre-installed.

Which brings us to the other interesting tidbit of recent information. Recently, [Tech Pro Research](#) recently conducted a poll to see what Windows XP users plan to do once that enormously popular Windows OS reaches end of life status in April. With XP still in use on roughly one third of the computers out there, according to analytics firm Net Applications, 11% of those users are planning on switching to Linux. To keep that in perspective, the survey also showed that 37% planned on continuing to use XP past its end-of-life expiration date, 38% planned to switch to Windows 7, and only eight percent planned to migrate to Windows 8.

While 11% doesn't sound like a lot, that number is quite huge when you consider that Windows XP is still one of the most popular operating systems in use. If all those users who say they plan to switch to Linux actually do switch, that will represent an enormous influx of new Linux users. As a result, Linux will become more than just a blip on the OS radar. It will be a force to be reckoned with, and a market that vendors will no longer be able to ignore. Even if only half of those make the switch, we're still talking about a bunch of new Linux users.

Indeed, 2014 really could be the often hoped for "Year of the Linux Desktop." Until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, serenity and prosperity.



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The **PCLinuxOS** magazine



Welcome From The Chief Editor



The **PCLinuxOS** magazine

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March 14: A Geek's Perfect Holiday?

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Geek. Nerd. Dweeb. Dork. Use whatever name you wish, but March 14 is a day of celebration for many intellectuals.

π Day

First, that day – 3.14 – is the first three significant digits of the mathematical expression more commonly known as π , or pi. The first large scale, organize Pi Day was in 1988, by physicist Larry Shaw when he worked at the San Francisco Exploratorium. Staff and public visitors marched around one of the Exploratorium's circular spaces, consuming fruit pies. In 2009, a non-binding resolution was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, recognizing March 14 as "National Pi Day."

Over the years, the celebration of Pi Day has taken on various celebratory themes. Those include pie throwing, pie eating, discussing the significance of pi, and holding contests to see who can recall pi to the most number of decimal places. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has been known to mail application decision letters to prospective students so that the recipient receives them on March 14.

Here's how [Wikipedia](#) sums up pi:

The number π is a mathematical constant that is the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter and is approximately equal to 3.141592654. It has been represented by the Greek letter " π " since the mid-18th century, though it is also sometimes spelled out as "pi" (/pa /).

Being an irrational number, π cannot be expressed exactly as a common fraction. Consequently, its decimal representation never ends and never settles into a permanent repeating pattern. The digits appear to be randomly distributed, although no proof of this has yet been discovered. Also, π is a transcendental number – a number that is not the root of any nonzero polynomial having rational coefficients. The transcendence of π implies that it is impossible to solve the ancient challenge of squaring the circle with a compass and straight-edge.

Fractions such as 22/7 and other rational numbers are commonly used to approximate π .

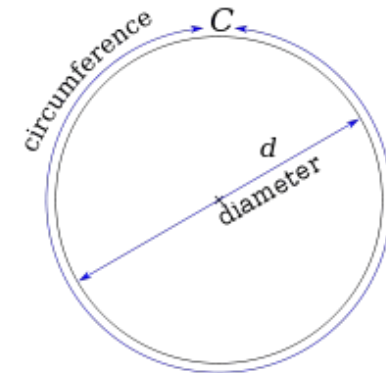
For thousands of years, mathematicians have attempted to extend their understanding of π , sometimes by computing its value to a high degree of accuracy. Before the 15th century, mathematicians such as Archimedes and Liu Hui used geometrical techniques, based on polygons, to estimate the value of π . Starting around the 15th century, new algorithms based on infinite series revolutionized the computation of π . In the 20th and 21st centuries, mathematicians and computer scientists discovered new approaches that – when combined with increasing computational power – extended the decimal representation of π to, as of late 2011, over 10 trillion (10¹³) digits.[1] Scientific applications generally require no more than 40 digits of π , so the primary motivation for these computations is the human desire to break records, but the extensive calculations involved have been used to test supercomputers and high-precision multiplication algorithms.

Because its definition relates to the circle, π is found in many formulae in trigonometry and geometry, especially those concerning circles, ellipses, or spheres. It is also found in formulae from other branches of science, such as cosmology, number theory, statistics, fractals, thermodynamics, mechanics, and electromagnetism. The ubiquitous nature of π makes it one of the most widely

known mathematical constants, both inside and outside the scientific community: Several books devoted to it have been published, the number is celebrated on Pi Day, and record-setting calculations of the digits of π often result in news headlines. Attempts to memorize the value of π with increasing precision have led to records of over 67,000 digits.

π is commonly defined as the ratio of a circle's circumference C to its diameter d .

$$\pi = \frac{C}{d}$$

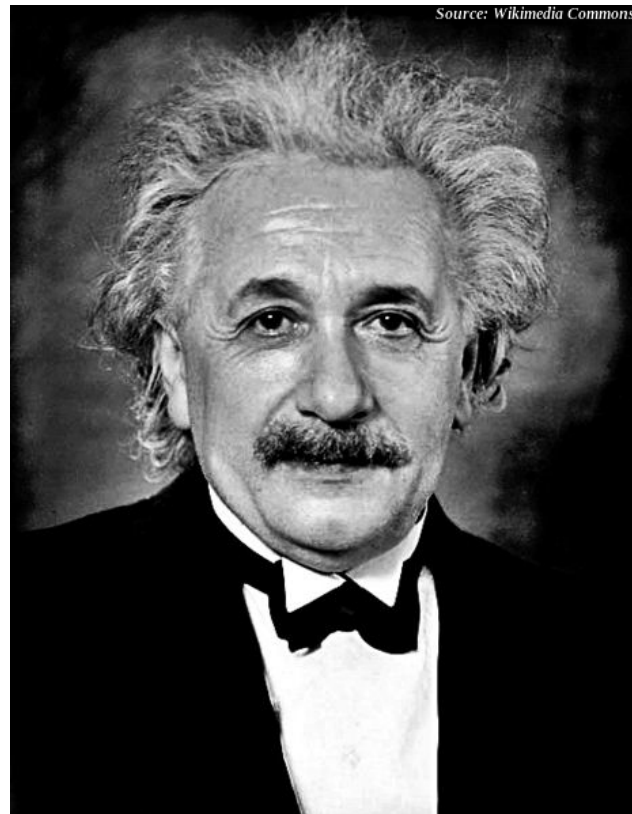


Source: Wikimedia Commons

The ratio C/d is constant, regardless of the circle's size. For example, if a circle has twice the diameter of another circle it will also have twice the circumference, preserving the ratio C/d . This definition of π implicitly makes use of flat (Euclidean) geometry; although the notion of a circle can be extended to any curved (non-Euclidean) geometry, these new circles will no longer satisfy the formula $\pi = C/d$. There are also other definitions of π that do not mention circles at all. For example, π is twice the smallest positive x for which $\cos(x)$ equals 0.

Albert Einstein's Birthday

Is it any wonder that March 14 is the birthday of the greatest physicist ever known to mankind, Albert Einstein (1879 – 1955)? In fact, some have tried to make some great cosmic connection out of Einstein's birthday being on the same day as the first three significant digits of pi.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Einstein is best known for his theory of relativity. His works are still a guiding force in modern day physics. Born in Ulm, Germany, he emigrated to the United States in 1933 to escape the persecution of those born with Jewish heritage by the Nazis. By 1935, he decided to stay permanently, and became a U.S. citizen in 1940.

Undisputedly, he is very well known. He is one of the best known scientists to have ever lived, if not the best known ... period. Many books have been written about him. "Einstein" has even become a synonym for genius. Below are some – a baker's dozen, to be precise – interesting facts you might not have known about him, though.

Albert Einstein played the violin. Albert became passionate about the violin after hearing Mozart. In fact, his favorite piece was Mozart's Sonata in E Minor. Albert would play the violin whenever he got "stuck" in his thinking process. He was also known to play privately for friends, and would join in with his violin when Christmas carolers came to his door. He even named his violin "Lina."

Albert Einstein hated socks. In fact, he rarely (if ever) wore them. He didn't like them, because they were always getting holes in them. He also figured why wear socks *and* shoes, when only one will do.

Albert Einstein loved sailing. Back when he lived in Germany, Albert owned a boat. But on a trip back from the U.S., he found out that his cottage and boat in Germany had been confiscated by the Nazis. Once back in the U.S., Albert pursued his love of sailing. He would often take a sailboat out on days with very little wind, relishing the challenge of capturing even the smallest amounts of power that was available.

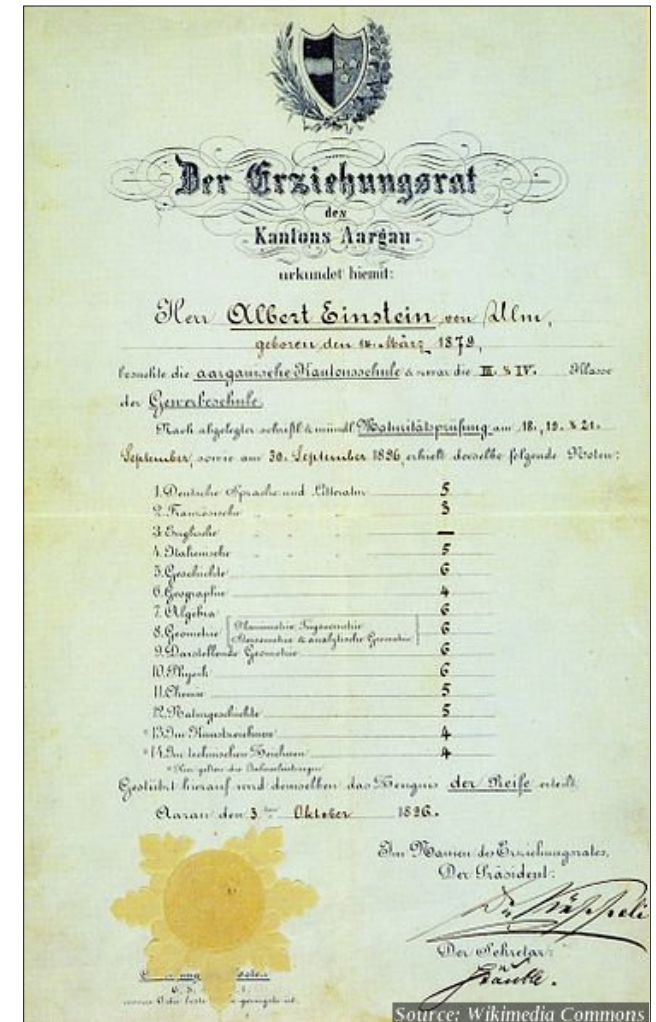
Albert Einstein had an illegitimate daughter. Although not much is known about her, letters from Albert refer to her as Lieserl, a shortened name for Elisabeth. She was born in 1902, and either was either put up for adoption, or died of scarlet fever during infancy. Her real name and fate are unknown, and it is suspected that Albert never saw his daughter.

Albert Einstein was married – twice. With his first wife, Mileva Marić, Albert not only had his illegitimate daughter, but he also had two sons, Hans Albert and Eduard. Married in January 1903, they divorced in

March 14: A Geek's Perfect Holiday?

February 1919, after having lived five years apart. His second wife, Elsa Lowenthal, was also his first cousin on his mother's side and his second cousin on his father's side. They were married in 1919, and Elsa emigrated to the U.S. with Albert in 1933. However, she died in 1936 after experiencing heart and kidney problems.

Albert Einstein has five surviving great-grandchildren. Eduard, nicknamed TeTe by Albert, never had children, suffered from schizophrenia and spent parts of his life in an asylum. Hans Albert,



Source: Wikimedia Commons

however, had a son named Bernhard Caesar Einstein. Bernhard had five children, who are all surviving. They live in California, France and Sweden. Despite the fame associated with the family name, the Einstein family is in [shambles](#).

Albert Einstein didn't talk until he was four years old. Afraid that their son was "retarded," Albert's parents' fears were put to rest when he broke his silence at the dinner table one evening. He uttered the words, "the soup is too hot," according to all accounts. When his parents asked why he hadn't said anything until now, Albert is reported to have replied, "because up until now, everything was in order."

Albert Einstein was not a straight "A" student. Despite his very high intellect, Albert was not a straight "A" student. In fact, he failed his first college entrance exam and had to go to a trade school for a year before reapplying for admission to the university. At the trade school, Albert got pretty good grades (above, previous page), and attended Zurich Polytechnic the following year with a major in mathematics and physics.

Albert Einstein was a pacifist. But he wasn't blind about it. In 1939, a group of Hungarian scientists attempted to warn Washington, D.C. politicians and policy makers about Germany's attempts to build an atomic bomb. Their warnings were dismissed and not taken seriously. One of the group's members urged Albert to lend his name and credibility to the cause, and Albert signed a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It warned him of the German atomic research, including the possibility of developing an atomic bomb, and urged Roosevelt to do likewise. As a result, the U.S. was the only country during World War II to develop an atomic bomb before the end of the war. We now know that Hitler and the Nazis weren't far behind, either. In 1954, a year before his death, Einstein said to his old friend, Linus Pauling, "I made one great mistake in my life — when I signed the letter to President Roosevelt recommending that atom bombs be

made; but there was some justification — the danger that the Germans would make them ..."

Albert Einstein may have hastened his own demise. Albert died on April 18, 1955. He had a second abdominal aortic aneurysm (he had one previously treated, surgically). The doctors suggested surgery, but Albert refused and replied, "I want to go when I want. It is tasteless to prolong life artificially. I have done my share, it is time to go. I will do it elegantly."

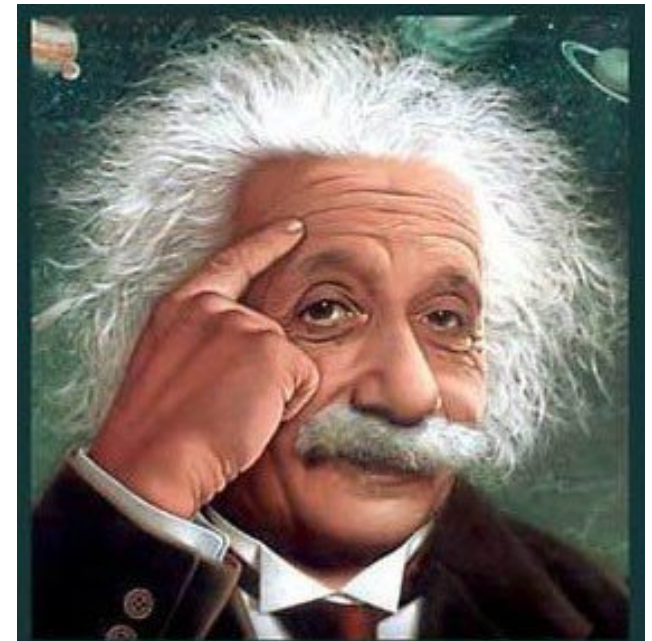
Albert Einstein was a member of the NAACP. Even before Albert emigrated to the U.S. in 1933, he corresponded with W. E. B. Du Bois, one of the founders of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). He campaigned for the civil rights of African Americans. In 1946, Albert called racism America's "worst disease." He later added, "Race prejudice has unfortunately become an American tradition which is uncritically handed down from one generation to the next. The only remedies are enlightenment and education."

Albert Einstein had a bad memory. Albert could not remember dates and phone numbers. In fact, he didn't even know his own phone number.

It all started with a compass. Albert's fascination with science is rooted in a simple compass. When Albert was five years old and laying sick in bed, his father showed him a simple compass. He wondered about what force exerted itself on that tiny needle to make it always point in the same direction. That question would haunt Albert for many years, providing the catalyst for his scientific curiosity that would blossom and last a lifetime.

Summary

Well ... it's probably way more than you wanted to know about **π Day** or **Albert Einstein**, but now you can see why March 14 is such a glorious day for geeks everywhere.



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 ...




2013 LinuxQuestions.org Members Choice Awards

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

The results are in for the 2013 LinuxQuestions.org Member's Choice Awards. In the 13th consecutive year of the annual awards, there are a few surprises. Some perennial favorites slipped in the rankings, while others surged in popularity.

Members were given from December 16, 2013 until February 4, 2014 to vote for their favorite Linux software in 30 different categories. The LinuxQuestions.org forum is a distro-agnostic forum where Linux users can get together to ask questions and have discussions without regard to a specific distro. There are also distro-specific boards in the forum, for those who would like to talk about and ask questions about their specific distro.

To vote, users had to be registered in the forum, have at least one post to their credit, and could only vote once. Users were allowed to skip categories if they had no personal knowledge of the applications, or if they had no opinion one way or another. Below are some of the highlights from the results of the voting, leaving out some of the more obscure categories. Instead, only those categories that are of most interest to desktop Linux users are highlighted. You can view the entire results [here](#), or view the results of each individual category [here](#).



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Audio Media Player Application of the Year

And ... (drum roll) ... the winner this year is ... VLC! VLC captured 120 of 447 votes in this category, giving an almost doubled lead over its second place finisher, AmaroK, which had 61 votes. Audacious came in third, with 57 votes. In fourth place was Clementine, with 55 votes. RhythmBox and XMMS tied for fifth place, with 26 votes each.



Database of the Year

In an area that's currently undergoing a lot of change, the perennial favorite MySQL slid into second place, with only 87 out of 379 votes, giving way to MariaDB, with 138 votes. PostgreSQL finished third in the voting, with 77 votes. Firebird and sqlite rounded out the fourth and fifth top spots, with a tie. Both received 29 votes.



Desktop Environment of the Year

KDE held onto its first place finish, garnering 254 votes (out of 710 votes cast). Xfce held onto its strong second place showing from last year, with 183 votes. Gnome Shell continued to dip in the

rankings (percentage-wise), with only 70 votes. Mate took fourth place with 59 votes, while Cinnamon took fifth place with 55 votes.



Text Editor of the Year

By a nearly 3:1 margin over the second place finisher, Vim took the top honors in this category, with 202 of 663 votes. Kate came in second, with 71 votes. Gedit came in third, with 69 votes. Nano came in fourth, with 60 votes, while Geany came in fifth, with 55 votes.



mozilla
Firefox

Browser of the Year

In similar fashion, perennial favorite Firefox beat out its closest competitor by a more than 4:1 margin, earning 467 out of 735 votes. Chrome placed second, with 102 votes. Chromium, the open source version of Chrome, took third place with 67 votes. Opera placed fourth, with 28 votes. Seamonkey took the fifth spot with 22 votes.



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Mate Desktop



Server Distribution of the Year

The top honors once again go to Slackware, earning 190 of 597 votes for the top spot. Debian took second place honors, with 143 votes. CentOS came in third, with 95 votes. Ubuntu LTS came in fourth, with 76 votes. Red Hat Enterprise Linux rounded out the top five spots, earning 51 votes.



Desktop Distribution of the Year

With 1,119 total votes in this category, Ubuntu took the top honors with 264 votes. Slackware was a very close second place finisher, trailing Ubuntu in the final polling by only 15 votes, earning 249 votes. Debian made a solid third place showing, with 169 votes. Arch came in fourth, with 71 votes. Fedora placed fifth, with 62 votes. PCLinuxOS finished in 11th place.



Video Media Player Application of the Year

VLC doubled down with a decisive win in this category too, earning 354 votes out of 530 that were cast. Mplayer took second place, with 106 votes. Mplayer2 came in third place, with 25 votes. Xine grabbed the fourth place spot, with 12 votes. Dragon Player and DVD-Player (XBMC) tied for the fifth place spot, with 8 votes each.



VoIP Application of the Year

Skype repeated its strong showing from last year, earning the top spot with 89 out of 198 votes cast. Ekiga took second place with 25 votes. Mumble came in third, with 18 votes. Jitsi was fourth with 15 votes, while Empathy rounded out the top five spots with 12 votes.



Programming Language of the Year

Perennial favorite Python repeated the capture of the first place finish, with 148 out of 517 votes. C came in second, with 82 votes, while C++ came in third with 69 votes. PHP came in fourth with 40 votes. Java came in fifth, with 33 votes.



Office Suite of the Year

LibreOffice was the runaway winner here, with 513 of 600 votes. OpenOffice came in a very distant second, with only 62 votes. Calligra had only 25 votes. There were no other entries in this category.



*Where *BSD & Linux Converge*



Messaging Application of the Year

Pidgin was – again – the premiere choice of voters, garnering 121 of 253 votes. Irssi and Xchat tied for second place, with 23 votes each. Kopete took fourth place with 21 votes. Empathy was in fifth place, with 15 votes.



File Manager of the Year

This category should probably come as no surprise, as it mostly mirrors the MCA winners in the Desktop Environment category. Dolphin was the favorite, with 147 of 524 votes. Thunar came in second, with 88 votes. Third place went to Nautilus, with 66 votes. Midnight Commander came in fourth, with 59 votes. Konqueror came in fifth place, with 27 votes.



X Terminal Emulator of the Year

Konsole took the top honors, with 116 of 486 votes. Gnome Terminal came in second, with 67 votes. Xterm came in a very close third place, with 65 votes. Xfce Terminal took fourth place with 58 votes, while Terminator captured the fifth place with 35 votes.



The PCLinuxOS Magazine

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Open Source CMS/Blogging platform of the Year

Unsurprisingly, WordPress ran away with the top honors, getting 101 out of 177 votes. Drupal came in second, with 31 votes. Joomla! took third place with 21 votes. Every other program in this category received barely any votes.



Virtualization Program of the Year

By a 4:1 ratio over its closest rival, VirtualBox came in with 236 out of 434 votes. KVM came in second, with 73 votes. VMware came in third, with 59 votes. QEMU came in fourth, with 26 votes, while Xen came in fifth, with 16 votes.



Window Manager of the Year

Once again, Openbox was the favored window manager, edging out KWin by six votes (Openbox 94, KWin 88). Third place went to xfwm4, with 55 of the 498 votes. Fourth place went to Fluxbox, with 51 votes. Surprisingly, Compiz took fifth place, with 46 votes.



Privacy Solution of the Year

A brand new category this year, Adblock Plus was the first place finisher, earning 76 of 312 votes. GnuPG came in second place, with 63 votes. Tor Browser Bundle grabbed third place, with 54 votes. NoScript came in fourth place, with 52 votes. TrueCrypt came in fifth, with 21 votes.



In other categories, GIMP, a winner every year, was the overwhelming favorite of Linux users in the Graphics Application of the Year. In the Mobile Distribution of the Year, Android ran away with the title. Rsync repeated its performance of past years, capturing the most votes for Backup Application of the Year. Git was the runaway favorite for Revision Control System of the Year. Battle of Wesnoth repeated from last year as the favorite Open Source Game of the Year.

Summary

There are the choices of favorite applications among Linux users. If you missed out on your chance to place your vote, be sure to mark your calendar for the 2014 Members Choice Awards. The 2014 voting should begin around mid-December.



International Community
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KDenLive, Part Four

by loudog

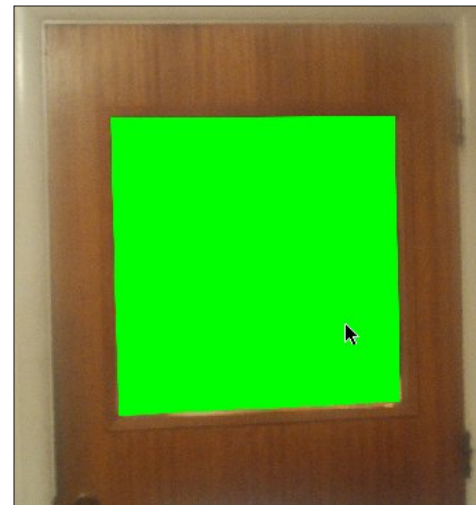
Hello again friends, and welcome to another tutorial on KDenLive. Happy winter ay, (Uhhggg) for those of you residing in the northern hemisphere at least. If you recall, in last month's tutorial I had recommended a little homework so that you could utilise the lesson right away and a fun little lesson it shall be. If you took the time to watch last month's finished video you may have noticed the final see ya later wave from the door window.



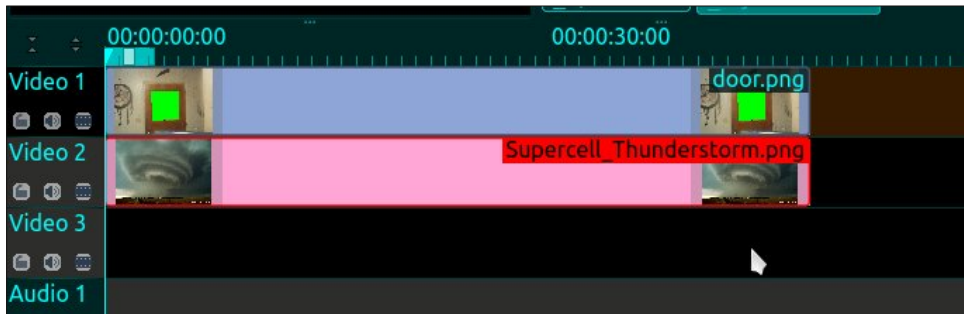
This was shot outside of the house with my video camera. This is what the front door actually looks like in real life.



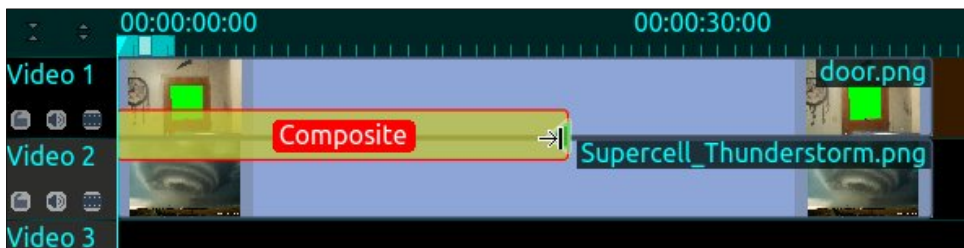
To insert a video into the window we must first cut it out in Gimp, add the transparency layer and fill it with the proper blue screen key color. Alternately you could buy some green paper and fill the window with it. Industry standard for this effect is bright green. Although the effect is called blue screen, any color can be the "key" color. It's just some colors work better than others. You can cut any part of an image out and use this effect with it. Here is the door after I have made the proper edits to it in Gimp.



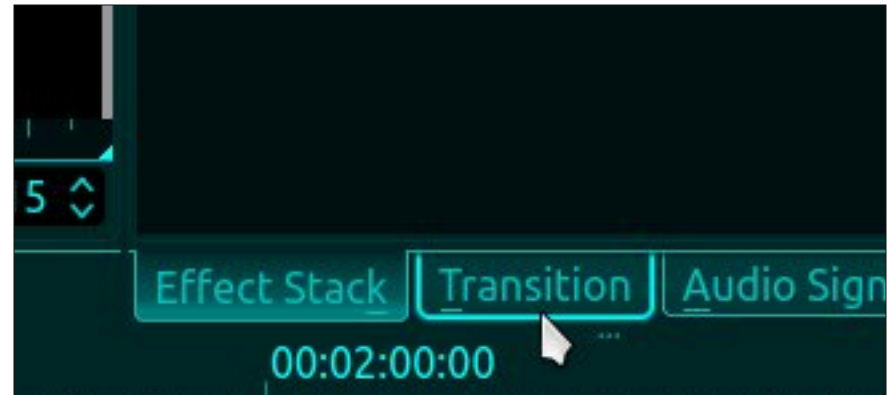
We will now drop this image into video track 1, stretch it out quite long (40 sec or so) as we will just cut it down later if need be. When using this effect, the video that is going to be in the foreground must be in track 1, the clip that will be in the background will be in track 2, doing a multi-layer project, 3,4,5 respectively. This is how Kdenlive layers the files together much like the layers in Gimp. I can now add the background image or video clip into the track 2 position. We will align both clips to the starting point of the timeline instead of the staggering technique we learned in earlier lessons. I will again use the thunderstorm image for this lesson as the see ya later clip is to short for our needs and hey, it's my exit clip after all.



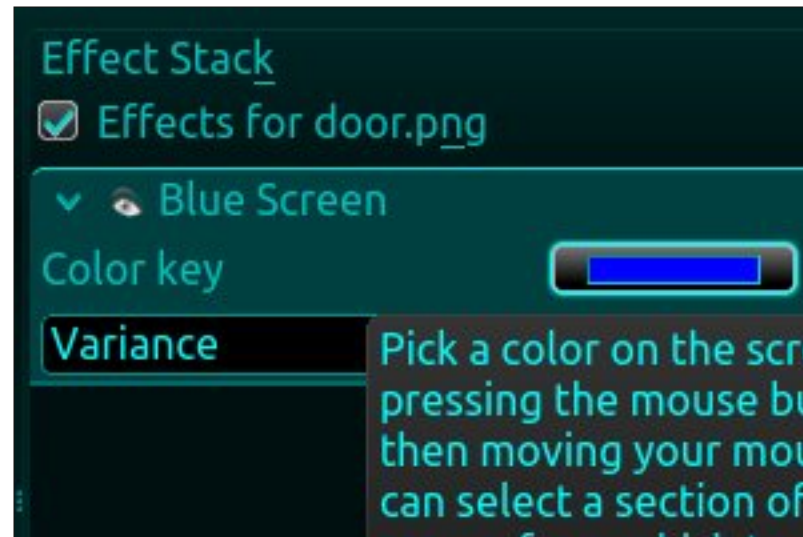
Next, we will select the top video, right click and from the menu select, add transition/composite. Stretch the effect out to cover the videos. The effect will show up in the transitions window, with many controls that are familiar to us and many that are not. Leave all controls at default: a deeper investigation into this effect will be covered in an upcoming article.



Next selecting the top video again, right click and select Add effect/alpha manipulation/blue screen. This will bring up the effect in the effect stack window. I have my effect, transition and audio windows set up in a tabbed arrangement as you see here.



Looking at the effect settings, we see a very simple layout that is fairly intuitive. We also notice the title subheader informing us that this effect is for the door.png clip. It can sometimes get fairly intensive when the effect stack window starts to fill up with effects, so a quick glance at this will ensure you're not editing the wrong clip.

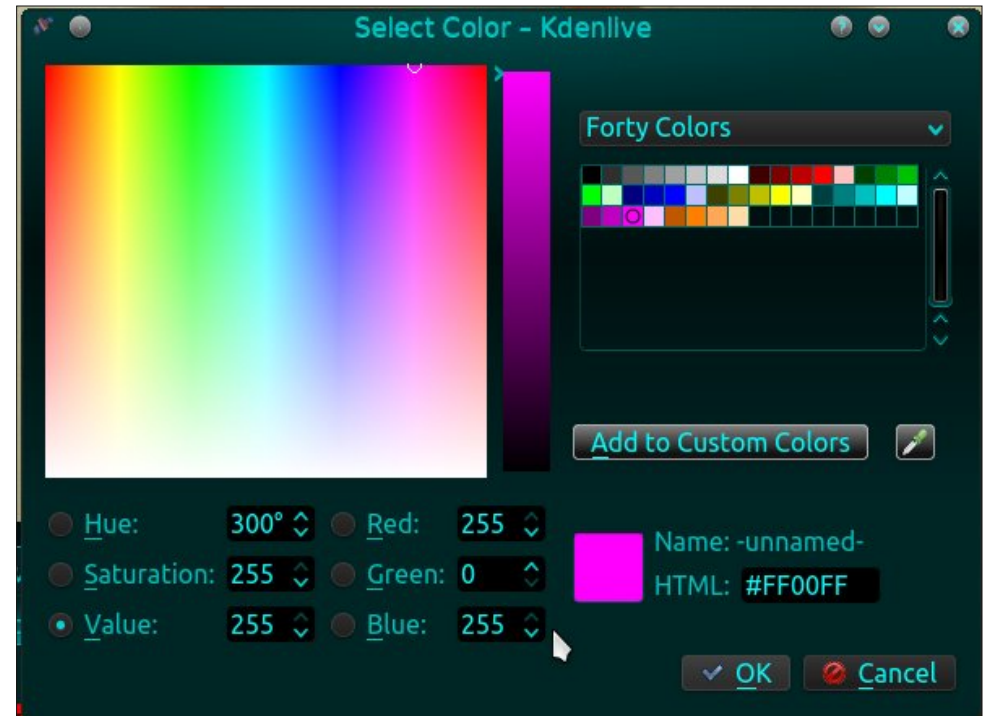


The keyed color is set to "true" blue by default. By "true" I am saying the color contains full blue hue (255), no red or green hue. If you click on the color key selector, it will open a color selection window, but for a quick key color match we will use the eyedropper tool at the right. We simply select the tool, move it over and click on the green in the window. This will change the selected key color to the exact color we are wanting to become transparent. Now we can see the background clip in the door window. If I chose the color of the doorframe that would become transparent, I could even choose both colors. One fun prank to

pull with this setup is to get an image of a friend watching tv. Then, cutting out the television screen add your own video on the set. What? I can't believe you were watching that dude.

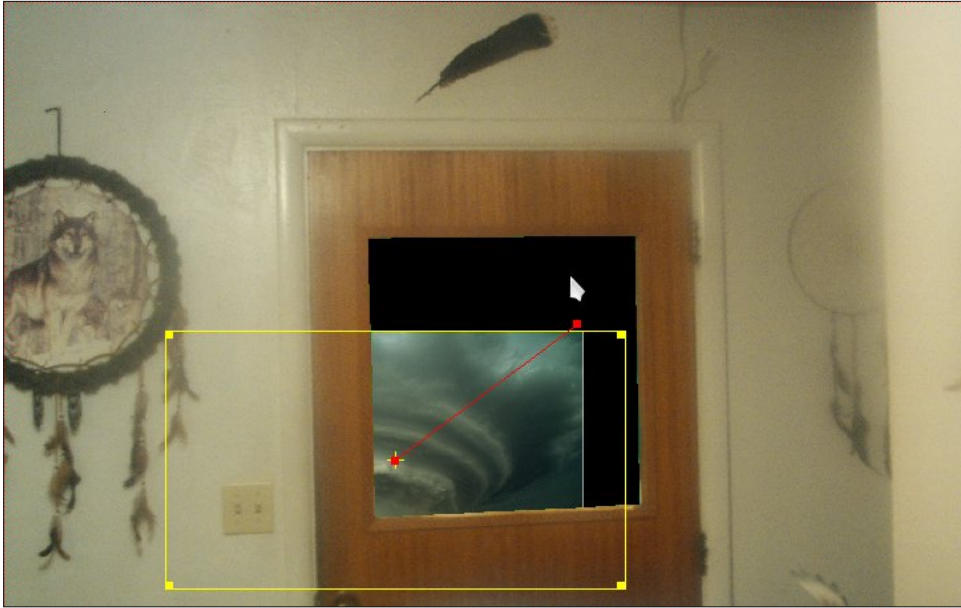


As you can see, some of the green is still visible around the edges. There are two things you can do to help remove this. The first is by using the variance slider. When the mouse is on the word variance in the effect stack, it turns into a slider and varies the amount the key color is spread out over the color spectrum for removal. I have found that 35 is about maximum for this type of blue screen effect and satisfactory for my needs. The second is generally used for a moving figure or object that has been video taped using the standard green screen background Where only the moving object is desired. This technique involves adding another blue screen effect below the first (yes you can add as many as you need to the stack) except to choose the color from the color chart that is the exact opposite of the previous key color and adjust the variance also.

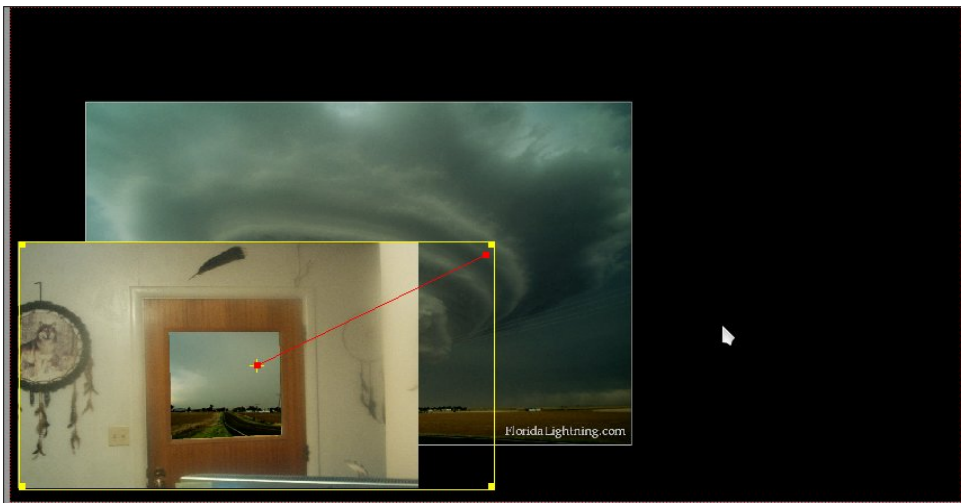


Notice how magenta has full red and full blue but zero green, the exact opposite as green has full green but 0 red and 0 blue. This will not be used here but is very helpful for the moving type of blue screen effect. Now a few tips on this effect. Full green is used mainly for the background of moving objects, called chroma keying and the desired object can easily be voided from having any green on it, if it did these areas would also become transparent when the effect was implemented. The same is true for the still image of the door and window, if there was any green elsewhere in the image this would show as transparent. If you have an image that has some green in it try another key color that is an exact color like blue or red or their respective opposites until you find one that works well. I have worn a bright orange shirt while walking around a green lawn being taped. upon making the shirt transparent with this effect, as I walk around, the background image or video shows through the shirt area. A lightning storm background looked very eerie in this video. With a moving video, the key color is transparent throughout the clip even though it is moving around. The final tip is when you are using these combined effects, it is best to use less processing threads for rendering. If your final rendered file is choppy or jerky this is usually the cause. It does take much longer to render but if you looked at the processing thread's number selection in settings/configure kdenlive/environment you would have noticed it says >1 is experimental. Okay moving on, we will now select the bottom image, add the pan and zoom effect and pan up and left over 5 seconds

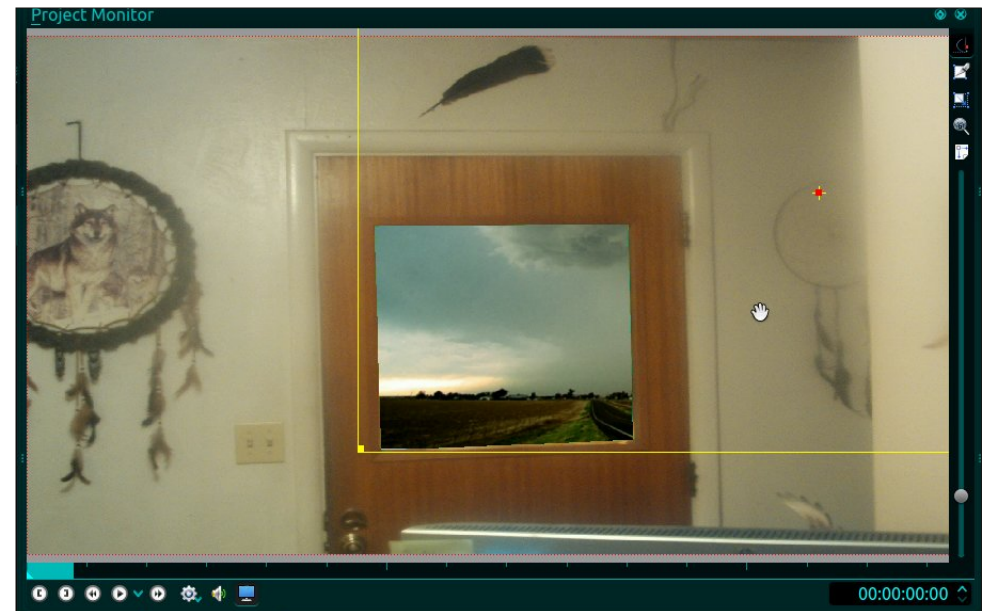
or so while zooming out to 40%. Hitting enter will present you with something like this:



You should be fairly familiar with the things that the pan and zoom effect can do and coupled with this effect, it makes things even more versatile and interesting, to say the least. The yellow box is the background image. Now selecting the top image I will also add the pan and zoom effect and over a 30 second span will zoom out to 50% and pan up and to the right. Upon hitting enter I see this.

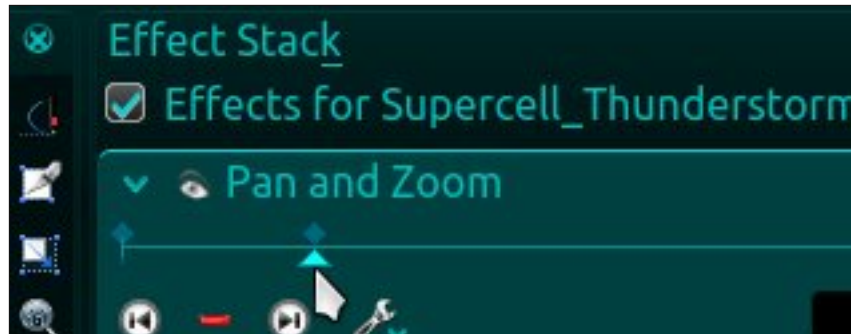


Remember, these two examples were still images, but they could have just as easily been videos. I could have just as easily selected the white walls as the key color, leaving the door intact. Using the zoom, you can also get the proper perspective, making the image in the window look more natural. So let's see just what we can do here with two still image clips and these effects to make them look interesting to the viewer. I know, one fun thing to do is Zoom in on the window until only the storm is showing and then slowly zoom back out on the background image leaving only the storm image remaining. Let's do that. Warning: this can be tedious and time consuming until you have more practice but will eventually become simple. First I have decided that the houses and treeline look fairly natural at this zoom, with the road having the telltale curve away from the view. I will start with the door at 100%, and using the crop and zoom effect on the thunderstorm clip, place the desired section in the window on the first keyframe. Yes, that looks nice.



Notice the similar section of background image in the door window except in full monitor view. Next, I will slowly zoom in on the window until it just fills the screen, ignoring the background image for now because it will not change. It looks good in the review so let's start to manipulate the background clip. Now it becomes a little tedious and tricky. What we are striving for here is the background to look natural in the window as we zoom in. To do that we must decide how much more of the background image will be showing as we get closer and closer and how much zoom to add because things naturally get bigger the closer we get to them. First, in the door effect, set the keyframe cursor on the last keyframe we created,

the one that has the window completely zoomed in. Remember to check what clip you are in (effects for door2.png). Doing this will match the timeline together so that when we switch to the thunderstorm effect stack it will be perfectly matched with the door keyframe. Look at the time readout and title in each image.



I will add this keyframe to the thunderstorm clip, zoom in to 150%, and try to get the image set as closely as it was in the beginning. As the camera zooms in on the window, the background image is also zooming in at a much slower rate giving the appearance or reality of walking to the window to look out. This may take a few tries to get right, just keep reviewing and editing it until you have something you like. While reviewing keep an eye on the yellow border making adjustments to keep it just outside the window border. Now that I am happy with that part, I can now zoom out on the background clip only filling the screen with the full thunderstorm image. Now I will render this and review it before deleting the project, add my intro, exit, audio and render the final project for review. You can view the final video [here](#). Using a window from the outside looking in you can place a person inside the dwelling that was never really there. Now you may begin to understand why I am sceptical about any videos or images on the internet. Well, there ya go, the blue screen; another effect that can be used in conjunction with the others for hours of editing fun. Next month's lesson will not

require homework but will add a little twist to things. All of us that are KdenLive fans are eagerly awaiting the newest release due out soon. Enjoy yourself and good days to all, spring's coming. Until next month, see ya'll.



PCLinuxOS Full Monty ...

Everything you might want or need – plus the kitchen sink!





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Screenshot Showcase



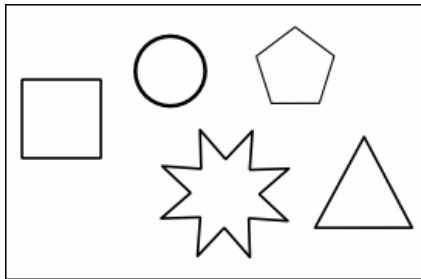
Posted by nymira on 1/29/12 running KDE.

Inkscape Tutorial: Decorative Patterns

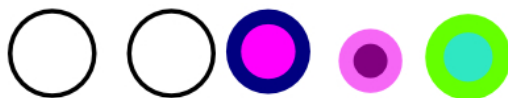
by Meemaw

Sometimes when you are creating a project in Inkscape, you have a need for some little repeating pattern to use. You can create those yourself.

Next month we will start a project that will use some of these patterns. Let's make them now. In this project we will be moving nodes to make the shapes we want from the ones we can draw. Starting a new drawing in Inkscape, use the toolbox at left to draw some basic shapes: square, triangle and circle. Also, draw an 8-pointed star and a pentagon. We'll edit these and develop some more designs.



We can make many other shapes and designs with just these five basics. Let's start with the circle. Just by duplicating, resizing and filling with different colors we can make several different "beads". Choose the circle and make the stroke about 10 and change it to another color. Then fill it with a different color. They can be similar colors or contrasting colors, and whatever colors you want.

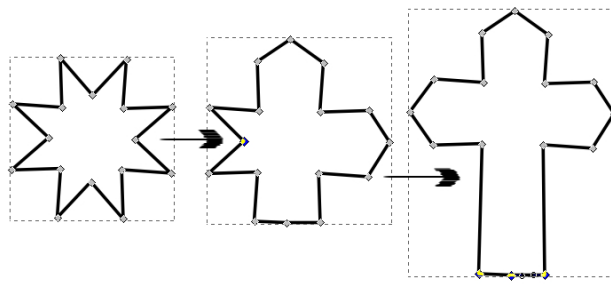


The triangle can be manipulated the same way, increasing the stroke and filling with something different. Remember, the beauty of saving this as an Inkscape svg file is that you can go back next year and change all of these... changing color, size, combination and how they are grouped.

One of my combinations has been to duplicate the triangle, change the stroke to none and the fill to red, and place a white circle inside.

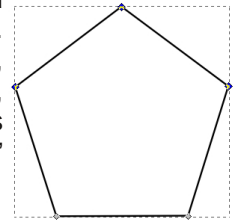


You can reshape these as well, by manipulating the nodes. We used the nodes to reshape our object on the [holiday tree](#) a while back. One thing I did using an 8-pointed star was to pull out some of the nodes and create a cross. The first thing you do after selecting your star is to click **Path > Object to Path**, then select the **Nodes** tool. Pull 3 nodes out of the center to about the same distance, then pull the fourth node out even with the two next to it. Those three nodes we will select together and lengthen for the bottom of the cross. Select one node, then, holding down the shift key, select each of the others. (You can also use your mouse to draw a rectangle around only those three nodes and they will be selected as well.) Placing your mouse pointer (with the nodes tool activated, it will be a long arrowhead) on the center node, pull down. All three nodes should move down together.



Leave it as it is, fill it with color or black, or whatever you want. If you haven't saved any of this yet, you probably should. I just named mine BasicShapes.svg.

One of the good things about nodes is that they can be manipulated in many ways. Besides grabbing the handle and pulling it somewhere else, the lines themselves can be stretched or rounded. Let's use the pentagon to make something like a leaf. Duplicate your pentagon and move it over to an open spot. Click on **Path > Object to Path**, then click on the Nodes tool, and select the top three nodes but using your mouse to "draw" a rectangle around them.

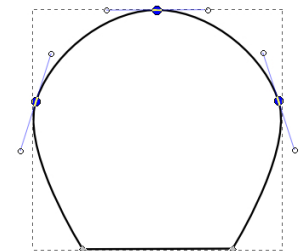


In the Nodes toolbar just above your page, two of the tools look like this:



When you hover your mouse, one tooltip should say "Make selected nodes smooth" and the other should say "Make selected nodes Auto-Smooth". Clicking on the auto-smooth tool will change your pentagon so the top three lines are now curved.

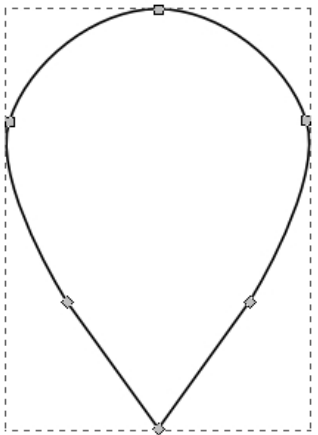
I don't know about you, but my hand is occasionally shaky, so this is a really handy tool to have when you are trying to smooth out a curve you have made. Select the nodes around it and click the Auto-Smooth tool.



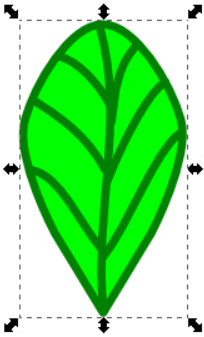
Clicking outside your object will deselect all the nodes, and we can then pull it a little differently. Some leaves are longer and have more of a point where they connect to the stem, so select the bottom two nodes, and click the Add Node tool.



Grab the center node and pull down until your leaf looks right to you.



Clicking back on the selection tool, you can resize and change the width or length. You can also stay with the Nodes tool and pull nodes (or the line segments in between) until it looks the way you want it to look. If you want it to look more like an actual leaf, lines can be drawn inside to represent the veins. Those can be curved as well.

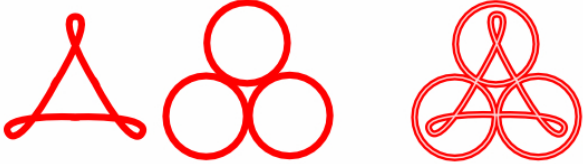


Experiment with your lines: curves will be different depending on where you grab the line. If you grab it in the center, the curve will be fairly symmetrical from the center to the outside, but if you

grab closer to one of the ends, it will look a bit different. Play with them until you get what you want. Remember that as long as the file is an svg, you can always change it, and if you move something and don't like it, you can always undo it with `<CTRL> + Z`.

Yes, I realize I could have started with a hexagon instead of a pentagon and wouldn't have had to add a node, but the more tools we know about, the better, right?

Another combination is something that may look familiar, appearing on the cover of the [February 2014 PCLinuxOS Magazine](#). Using three circles, I combined them with a triangle that I altered with the settings Spoke Ratio 0.300 and Rounded -0.360. I then made the stroke red and size 3 and arranged them this way:



The white lines in the third figure resulted from duplicating the combination figure, changing the stroke to 1 and changing the color to white. All objects were then grouped.

Play with these shapes yourself. I'm sure you can come up with other useful patterns. Next month we'll put them to work.



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A Simple Linux Alarm Clock

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

I doubt many of you are like me, although I'm sure that there are a few. I have no less than seven computers spread throughout the house that remain on 24/7. I'm sure it's a significant factor on my monthly electric bill. Most of those computers are laptops, and as such, the usual configuration with a laptop is that when the computer is turned on, so is the screen.



With one simple command, I can easily turn off the screen on my laptops. Extending that command a bit more, I can create a very simple – yet effective – Linux alarm clock. Simply enter the following command in a terminal session to turn off your laptop's screen:

```
xset dpms force off
```

When you hit the “Enter” key, your laptop's screen will be turned off. Don't despair. The screen will come on automatically again when you strike a key, wiggle your mouse or touch your touchpad.

You can create a simple bash script to perform this for you with just a double click of your mouse. Here's my take on it:

```
#!/bin/bash  
  
sleep 15  
xset dpms force off
```

Why the sleep command? Well, to give you a few seconds to take your hands off of the mouse and keyboard, of course, before executing the command. This may be rather important, since without it, the command will be executed immediately and a keypress or mouse wiggle will cause it to turn the screen back on. Simply create the bash file on your desktop, and don't forget to mark it as an executable file. Now, a double click on the file with your mouse will blank your screen in 15 seconds. Feel free to shorten or lengthen the sleep time value to a value that better suits you and your needs.

As you might imagine, if there's an “off” switch, there's also an “on” switch. As such, the command `xset dpms force on` is the counterpart of the command that turns your screen off. This is what we'll use to create our “Simple Linux Alarm Clock.”

If you want to keep it simple and have it only turn on your screen at a certain time, then it's only a simple matter of executing the “on” command as a crontab job. But just turning on the screen isn't enough to wake most of us from a peaceful slumber.

Many of the various desktop environments under PCLinuxOS have some sort of utility that takes the pain out of having to setup and format a cron command by hand. Under Xfce, I use Gnome Schedule, which provides an easy to use and easy to understand GUI for scheduling tasks. It will run under any desktop, and doesn't pull in a bunch of Gnome dependencies (in fact, if I remember correctly, it doesn't pull in any additional Gnome dependencies). VCron, a.k.a. Visual Cron, is also in the PCLinuxOS repository. It will also run under any desktop environment.

To become a “real” alarm clock, we need some sort of sound to be played as well. For my example, I've chosen seven of my favorite Beatle's songs. Hey, I can hardly think of anything better to wake up to. At any rate, I've combined them all into a *.m3u playlist, so all seven songs are played when my “alarm” goes off. Enter your command for the crontab job, like this:

```
xset dpms force on; play -v 1.0 /home/parnote-toshiba/Music/beatles.m3u
```

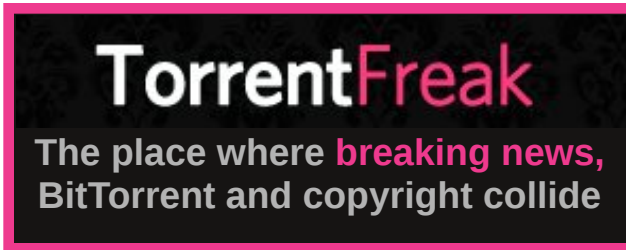
The `-v 1.0` part of the play command will play the file at full volume. If that isn't loud enough for you (I hope you have your laptop's volume turned up), you can set the volume to 1.5 (150% full volume) or 2.0 (double full volume). Just don't blame me if you do that and blow out your laptop's speakers.

If you ever get tired of hearing the same songs over and over again every morning, simply create a new

playlist (*.m3u file), and change your crontab command to point to the new playlist. Just be sure you provide the full path statement to your playlist file, or you'll be greeted with nothing but silence – which isn't too effective for an alarm clock.

To be sure you have the command entered correctly, try it out in a terminal session before entering it as your crontab command. If it works on the command line, it will work as your crontab command.

Of course, the added bonus benefit of using this "simple Linux alarm clock" is that there is NO snooze button, so to shut it up/off, you will need to get up and out of bed. This will help improve the chances of you getting/waking up when you should/need.



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by RobNJ on 2/8/14 running LXDE.



Use ImageMagick To Make HQ Photo Collages

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Many PCLinuxOS users have heard of ImageMagick. It's included in all but the slimmest of "mini" PCLinuxOS ISOs. I'm betting, too, that many PCLinuxOS users avoid using ImageMagick.

ImageMagick is a command line tool that is the swiss army knife of graphic tools. No other graphics tool can rival its power. If you're not familiar with ImageMagick, you should familiarize yourself with at least some of its most basic commands.

Learning to use ImageMagick is intimidating, to say the least. It has so many command line options, and not one of the tools is actually named ImageMagick. Instead, it's a suite of command line tools, each with their own different names and use. They go by such stealthy names as convert, mogrify, montage and composite – to name a few.

Background

During what seems like a lifetime ago – 26 years ago, to be precise – I worked as a professional newspaper photographer. I covered all the typical things you might expect a newspaper photographer to cover: sports (local, high school, college and professional), news, features, advertising, photo essays, etc. I won awards for my work along the way. From the time that I taught myself photography at the age of 12, I succeeded in following my childhood dream of working as a newspaper photographer. The character of "Animal" on the then popular "Lou Grant" television series was one of my favorites.

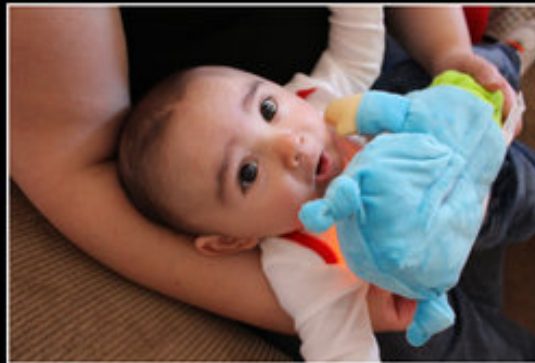
But the low pay, long hours, intense competition and stress of the job – things you never envision in your dreams – caused burnout. Couple that with the somewhat silly desire for food on my table and a roof over my head, I sought out a second career in the medical field, where I've worked ever since.

Fast forward to the present day. In the first two months after our son Ryan was born, we had already spent \$700 on two separate photo packages of him. Given my background, I thought this was a bit steep, especially since I knew I could do it far cheaper with equal (if not better) results. Sure, the pictures were nice, but then so was the price.



Most of my older, 35mm camera equipment ... at least that which remains after having sold some off.

Use ImageMagick To Make HQ Photo Collages



the actual photo quality rating. The old adage “garbage in, garbage out” applies fully when it comes to digital photographs. Respect the limits of each resolution if you want to get the best results from your digital photo equipment.

To summarize the information on the aforementioned chart, a 1MP camera will produce photo quality prints up to 4x6” size. A 2MP camera will produce photo quality prints up to 5x7” size. A 4MP camera will produce photo quality prints up to 8x10” size. A 6MP camera will produce photo quality prints up to 11x14” size. An 8MP camera will produce photo quality prints up to 16x20” size. A camera with 10MP or greater will produce photo quality prints up to and including 20x30” size. (My apologies to my non-U.S. readers ... to convert from inches to cm, simply multiply the inches by 2.54 to reveal the equivalent metric print sizes).

Doing The Math

Since we’re after high quality prints, it’s a good idea to use 300 ppi (pixels per inch) as the threshold for the quality we want. This also makes it easy do our calculations for sizes. Pixels per inch is relative to your image and computer screen, while dots per inch (dpi) is a measurement that’s pertinent to printers. One unit of measure does not necessarily equal the other. We won’t enter the long, ongoing, ad nauseum debate over these terms here. There is plenty of discussion on this topic and their differences on the Internet. As far as I’m concerned,

Pixels Per Inch ↔ Pixels Per Centimeter: Don’t get all knotted up about which unit of measure used here. This measurement is simply to insure that we’re able to get high quality prints from our photo finisher, and will work regardless if your print is output to imperial or metric measurements.

To convert to Pixels Per Centimeter, simply divide Pixels Per Inch by 2.54. Thus, 300 Pixels Per Inch = 118 Pixels Per Centimeter, if you’re using non-imperial (metric) measurements.

creating the photo collages. In fact, each photo collage should be able to be completed in under one minute, on a modern multicore processor.

Doing A Little Homework

Before you can create something like this, you will have to do a little homework. To create decent looking enlargements, you will need to have at least a 6MP camera – minimally. The higher the

resolution, the more data there is in the picture, leading to greater detail and sharper images. My new dSLR produces images with 18MP resolution, which will be more than adequate.

To figure out what resolution you need to produce photo quality prints, I highly recommend checking out the Quality vs File Size chart [here](#). It’s about halfway down the page. You may be able to “milk” more out of each resolution, by settling for good, very good, or excellent ratings, but let’s just focus on

Use ImageMagick To Make HQ Photo Collages

they can fight it out among themselves. I have better/other things to focus my energies on. All I'm interested in is creating high quality prints.

So, for the sake of keeping things simple, let's say we're going to target 11x14" as my print size. Multiply 11 by 300, and you get 3300 pixels as the dimension of the "short" side of the print. Multiply 14 x 300, and you get 4200 pixels as the dimension of the "long" side of the print.

You will also need to know size information about your photos. The photo collage works best with images of the same size. If you install **jhead** from the PCLinuxOS repository, you'll get all kinds of information from the JPG file's Exif header (including the image size). Just type in the command as **jhead -v [filename]**. Jhead also has other uses too, so it's not just wasting the little bit of space it takes up on your root drive. With jhead, you can also strip out all but the most essential information from the JPG Exif header, or you can add extra comments to your Exif header. Enter **jhead -h** on the command line to get a feel for all the stuff that jhead can do.

Next, let's lay out the images like in the collage above. That image is in landscape orientation, with four photos laid out in a 2x2 grid. To keep things easy, let's set 176 pixel spacing around each photo (about one half inch at 300 ppi, to help insure that our "real" images aren't covered by any frame we might put the image into for display), along with an 8 pixel white border around each photo. The latter is optional, but has to be included in our measurements if you are going to include them in your collage, as I have done. That gives us the following measurements, in pixels:

Spacing = 704 pixels

Border = 32 pixels (four image sides, 8 pixels each)

That gives us 736 pixels used by the spacing and border. Subtracting 736 from 4200, we end up with a total pixel count of 3,464 to fit in two images, horizontally. Divide this in half, and we have the

width for each photo. In this case, this results in a horizontal space of a 1,732 pixel width. Double check your math by adding everything back together (3464 + 736). If it equals 4200, then you've done everything correctly. Now, if we divide 1732 by the original width of the image (5,184 pixels), we end up with a sizing factor of 0.3341.

To find the height of each image, take the height of the original image (3,456 pixels) and multiply by our sizing factor (0.3341). This gives us an image that's 1,154.65 pixels tall. We'll round that up to 1155

pixels (it's a bit hard to measure out 0.65 pixels). Since the height of our new image is 3300 pixels, let's calculate how much spacing we will need to evenly space the images out vertically.

Images =

2310 pixels (two images, each 1155 pixels tall)

Border = 32 pixels (four image sides, 8 pixels each)

That gives us a total of 2,342 pixels already spoken for by the images and the 8 pixel white borders. Subtracting 2342 from 3300, we get 958 pixels



remaining. Dividing 958 by 4 (spacing around the top and bottom of each image), we end up with 239.5. So, we round up to 240 pixels as the vertical spacing. To double check our measurements, add them all up. In our case, it's 2310 + 32 + 240 + 240 + 240 + 240, which totals 3302 – just two pixels more than the 3300 pixel size of the “short” edge of our 11x14” image.

So, here is the command I used to produce the collage above (entered all on one line):

```
montage -geometry 1732x+176+240 -tile 2x2
-background black -bordercolor white
-border 8 IMG_0014.JPG IMG_0052.JPG
IMG_0506.JPG IMG_0541.JPG -quality 95%
montage-trial20.jpg
```

We use the ImageMagick command **montage** to perform our magic. The **-geometry 1732x** command sets the width of each image. Notice that we didn't specify the image height. When the height is skipped, ImageMagick will automatically maintain the aspect ratio of the images. The **+176+240** part sets the spacing around each image. Using the **-background black** switch sets the background color to black. Similarly, the **-bordercolor white** **-border 8** switches set the image border color to white and eight pixels wide.

Next, list the original images you want to include in your collage, in the order you want them to appear. The first image listed will be placed in the upper left corner of the 2x2 image matrix, the second image in the upper right corner, the third image in the bottom left corner, and the fourth image in the bottom right corner. To preserve the image quality, we use the **-quality 95%** switch (you can omit the percentage sign, if you wish). Finally, we provide the filename for the output file (in our case, **montage-trial20.jpg**).

Dressing Things Up

By chaining several ImageMagick commands together, we can dress up our photo collage with some custom text. This time, let's do a different arrangement in a 3x1 (three images in one row) grid, like shown on the previous page. This grid works best with three vertical images, preferably all the same size. We'll be using three ImageMagick commands this time: **montage**, **convert** and **composite**. Since we already know the base dimensions in pixels, we'll create another 11x14” image.

Let's start out with determining our horizontal image spacing. To keep things simple, we'll make our horizontal image spacing 100 pixels. So with three images, that makes 600 pixels accounted for. If we use a 10 pixel white border around each of the three images, that accounts for another 60 pixels. That leaves 3,540 pixels to display three images in. Divided by three, that allows for a 1,180 pixel width for each image.

Doing more math, dividing 1180 by 3456 (the width of each image) gives us a sizing factor of 0.3414. Multiply the height of the image (5184) by the sizing factor (0.3414), and you get 1770 (rounded) as the new height of the image. Taking 3302 and subtracting 1770, we come up with 1,512 pixels remaining. We want to center those images vertically. Dividing 1512 by two gives us a vertical spacing of 756 pixels.

Here is the command for this portion of the photo collage, which is very similar to the previous command. This command (entered all on one line) gives us the image above, which we'll call our base image:

```
montage -geometry 1180x+100+756 -tile 3x1
-background black -bordercolor white
-border 10 IMG_0172.JPG IMG_0106.JPG
IMG_0013.JPG -quality 95% montage-
trial2a.jpg
```

A word about colors with ImageMagick: You might have noticed that I've used actual color names when specifying colors in my commands. You can find a full list of colors that are recognized by ImageMagick [here](#). You can also use HTML color statements (e.g., black = #000000, red = #FF0000, green = #00FF00, blue = #0000FF, yellow = #FFFF00, purple = #FF00FF, white = #FFFFFF, etc.), or RGB statements (e.g., black = rgb(0,0,0), white = rgb(255,255,255), red = rgb(255,0,0), green = rbg(0,255,0), blue = rgb(0,0,255), yellow = rbg(255,255,0), purple = rgb(255,0,255), etc.).

While I find it easier to simply use the actual color names, you are free to use whatever method works best

Now, let's create the text to place on the top of the image. Let's dissect the command after we look at it. Again, this is all entered on one line.

```
convert -density 300 -units PixelsPerInch
-background black -font Times-BoldItalic
-fill white -pointsize 100 label:'Christmas
2013' montage-trial2b.jpg
```



Using the ImageMagick **convert** command, we set the resolution to 300 pixels per inch (**-density 300 -units PixelsPerInch**). We set the background color to black (**-background black**). For this text, we're going to set the font to bold italic Times New Roman (**-font Times-BoldItalic**), set the text to white (**-fill white**), set the text size to 100 points (**-pointsize 100**), and set the text to say “Christmas 2013” (**label:'Christmas 2013'**). Finally, save the generated image with the specified filename (**montage-trial2b.jpg**).



A word about fonts in ImageMagick: To use a font in ImageMagick, you first need to know what it's called. This is easier than you might think. As a regular user, simply go to the `/etc/ImageMagick` folder (do this as a regular user, so you can't alter the files and render things royally screwed up), and look for the `*.xml` files that start with the word "type." On my computer, there are four files that start with the word type. Look in those files for the font you want to use, and you'll discover the name that ImageMagick uses for that particular file. Typically, there are separate font files for bold, italic, regular and bold italic styles of the same font ... so make sure you're using the one you want.

We can use a similar command to create the text for the bottom of the image.

```
convert -density 300 -units PixelsPerInch  
-background black -font Arial-Bold -fill  
white -pointsize 50 label:'Ryan, Laura &  
Paul Arnote' montage-trial2c.jpg
```

Ryan, Laura & Paul Arnote

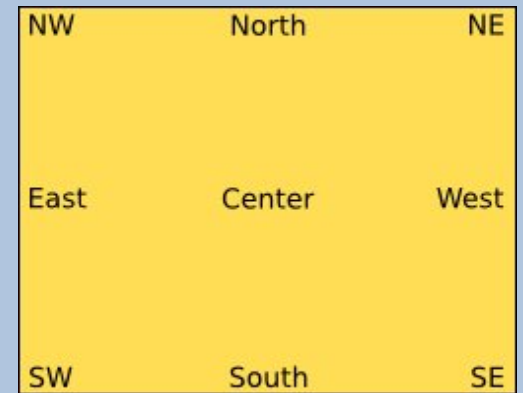
The only differences from the command that creates the text at the top of the image is that we changed to the Arial-Bold font, changed the font size to 50 points, and changed the text.

Now, we need to start putting it all together. We do that with the ImageMagick **composite** command, as below (entered all on one line):

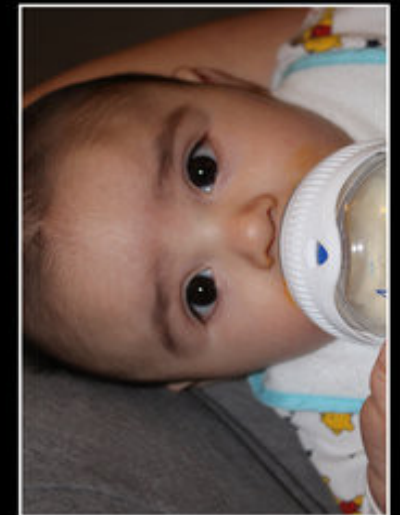
```
composite -gravity north -geometry +0+200  
montage-trial2b.jpg montage-trial2a.jpg  
montage-trial2d.jpg
```

The first command switch is **-gravity north**, which places the overlay image at the top center of the base image. The **-geometry +0+200** tells ImageMagick to not shift the placement of the overlay image horizontally, but to place the overlay image 200 pixels from the top of the base image.

A note about the -gravity command: The `-gravity` command uses a compass point orientation to determine where to place items. That placement is further refined with the `+xxx+yyy` statement (can also be a `-` sign, instead of just a `+` sign) in the `-geometry` command. The graphic at right explains the compass point orientation:



Christmas 2013



Next, you have to list the images you want to use to create the composite from. Pay particularly close attention here. The overlay image (the image containing the text) must be listed first, followed by the base image. Finally, specify the filename for the composited image. Above (previous page) is the image we end up with. This new composited image becomes our new base image.

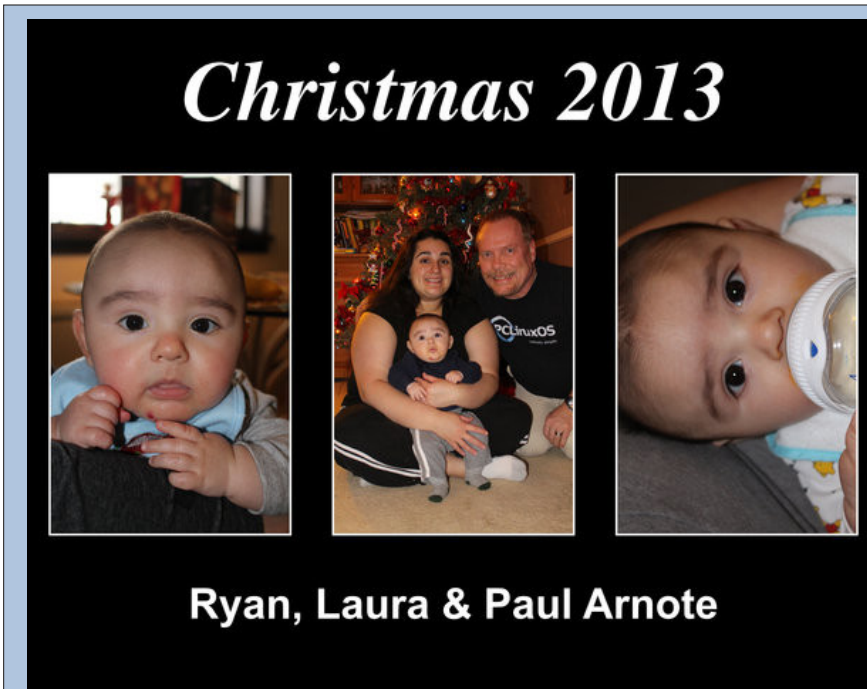
Finally, it's time to insert the bottom line of text.

```
composite -gravity south -geometry +0+300
montage-trial2c.jpg montage-trial2d.jpg
montage-trial2.jpg
```

Similar to the previous command, there are some differences. First, we place the overlay image of the bottom text at the bottom, with the `-gravity south` command switch. The `-geometry` command switch is similar, except that we move it up 300 pixels from the bottom edge of the base image. We list our overlay image filename first, followed by our new base image filename. Finally, we specify our output filename, which is our final image (right, top).

The nice thing is that you can chain all of these commands together, simply by placing a semicolon between each command, like this:

```
montage -units PixelsPerInch -density 300
-geometry 1180x+100+756 -tile 3x1
-background black -bordercolor white
-border 10 IMG_0172.JPG IMG_0106.JPG
IMG_0013.JPG -quality 95% montage-
trial5a.jpg; convert -density 300 -units
PixelsPerInch -background black -font
Times-BoldItalic -fill green -pointsize 100
label:'Christmas 2013' montage-trial5b.jpg;
convert -density 300 -units PixelsPerInch
-background black -font Arial-Bold -fill
red -pointsize 50 label:'Ryan, Laura & Paul
Arnote' montage-trial5c.jpg; composite
-gravity north -geometry +0+200 montage-
trial5b.jpg montage-trial5a.jpg montage-
trial5d.jpg; composite -gravity south
-geometry +0+300 montage-trial5c.jpg
montage-trial5d.jpg montage-trial5.jpg
```



As you can see, I've dressed it up a little more by making the top text green and the bottom text red. All I did was change the color passed to the **-fill** command switch to create the desired color.

Also, instead of making the background color of the text overlays black, you can change the **-background black** command switch to **-background none** to create your text overlay with a transparent background. However, should you choose to do that, you will have to change your file type from JPG to PNG, since JPG files do not support transparency. I've found it easier to just create my overlay images with the same color as the base image, then save it as a JPG file (same as my base image), to help avoid any confusion with file types.

Summary

Without a doubt, this task is absolutely ripe for the creation of a custom bash script. I haven't yet decided how much flexibility to build into the script. I don't want to overly complicate the process, but I definitely want to automate it. If I take care, I think I can build in just enough flexibility so that I can automate the task.

As you can see, ImageMagick is a VERY powerful tool. But with that power comes a lot of complexity, mostly on account of the many, many options that are available. I've used the ImageMagick commands a lot over the past few years. With the exception of a few Thunar Custom Actions that I published in the Xfce Power User Tips & Tricks series, I've not really written much about the ImageMagick suite of command line tools. Specifically, I avoided writing about ImageMagick commands for the same reason that many users avoid using it: its perceived (and real) complexity.

Still, I've yet to find anything that the ImageMagick commands can't handle. I used the `convert` command to extract the still images that appeared in

last month's issue of the magazine from the animated GIFs.

Just as soon as I've created the custom bash script, I'll publish it here in the magazine. Meanwhile, let

your imagination (and your math skills) run free, and create some custom photo collages from your personal images. After all, it'll make your personal images all that much more "personal."

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Smileeb on 2/2/14 running KDE.

ms_meme's Nook: Tux Tango



MP3

OGG

*My OS is new and my desktop so blue
I love to compute and see that bull so cute
I'm glad I switched*

*My OS is faster and soon the Konsole I'll master
Tex is my inspiration I feel such liberation
With PCLOS I'm bewitched*

*Here we are in the forum posting phrases
We will never lack for praises
Of the system we love*

*PCLOS is alluring you will find it assuring
It's time to get Linux and meet that fellow Tux
Then you will have the best*

New Life – Literally – For Old Laptops

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

It's no secret that my regular, full-time job is in the medical field. I've worked as a respiratory therapist for 26 years, working with patients suffering from all sorts of respiratory problems. Part of my job is responding to "Code Blues" in the hospital, which is what is called to alert us that a patient needs resuscitation. So, as you might imagine, one aspect of my job is to stay informed and up-to-date on various aspects of my trade. As such, one aspect that I must remain current on is advances in the area of resuscitation.

It's indisputable that the availability and use of AEDs – automated external defibrillators – save lives in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest occurring outside of the hospital setting. You can often find AEDs in schools, auditoriums, stadiums, restaurants, and other places where the public gathers. In just the U.S., approximately 1,000 people per day experience sudden cardiac arrest. The early use of AEDs can drastically improve survivability, especially in the "out of hospital" cardiac arrest situations.

One of the more common causes of sudden cardiac arrest is a condition called ventricular fibrillation. This is where the main pumping chambers of the heart (the ventricles) start to quiver in an uncoordinated rhythm, instead of beating in their usual coordinated rhythm that allows it to pump blood out to the rest of the body. Brain death can start to occur in as little as four to six minutes after the heart has stopped pumping blood. For every minute that goes by until defibrillation, the victim's chance of survival decreases by seven to 10 percent. Getting the heart out of that uncoordinated rhythm of ventricular fibrillation – defibrillation – is where an AED excels.

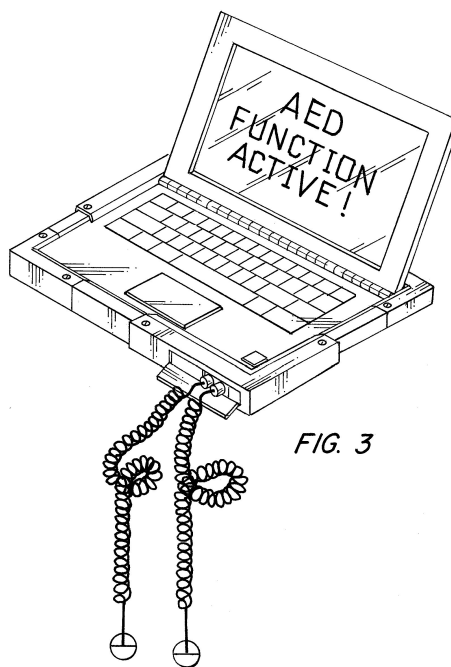
The problem is, however, their relatively high cost. Head on over to the [AED SuperStore](#), and you will find that they cost anywhere from around \$1,400 to nearly \$3,000 (U.S. dollars). Even as good as the devices are, many businesses, schools and communities simply cannot afford them, especially in the current financial climate with their strapped budgets.

Wouldn't it be nice if there were a way to recycle or reuse old laptops and tablets as AEDs? That is exactly the goal of one U.S. company, Florida-based [Babric Life Science Innovations](#). They envision a universal adjustable frame containing the AED

elements to adapt old laptops and tablets to affordable AEDs. They call their device [Com-To-Life](#). (The previous link takes you to the patent information on Google Patents.)

One of the reasons for the high cost of new AEDs is the rigorous bench testing that the companies have to do on each device before it leaves their factory. Couple that with the enormous pile of FDA regulations that each device must meet or surpass, and it's easy to see why these devices cost so much. The Com-To-Life device is still in the early stages, and a prototype is currently being built. The device will still have to survive enormous regulatory hurdles before ever seeing the light of day in the marketplace.

There is no word about what operating system the laptops or tablets might run, but it certainly sounds like a use that's tailor made for Linux. Using Linux would not only help keep the cost down, but it would also be the most reliable and secure solution. Additionally, this endeavor sounds like a great plan to breathe new life – literally – into old laptops, keeping them out of landfills. This is something that Linux has done for years, by breathing new life into older computers, albeit with a different goal in mind.



Source: Google Patents



Instead, it would keep them in productive use, saving lives.

AED technology continues to grow and advance, and it is interesting to watch this burgeoning technology blossom before our very eyes. However, in the absence of an AED, performing proper CPR is the key to surviving an out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest. If you have not been trained in bystander CPR, you should seriously consider taking the course. The life you save could be that of a complete stranger, or the life of a loved one.

Some information for this article came from [MedPage Today](#), and the [Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation](#).



Screenshot Showcase



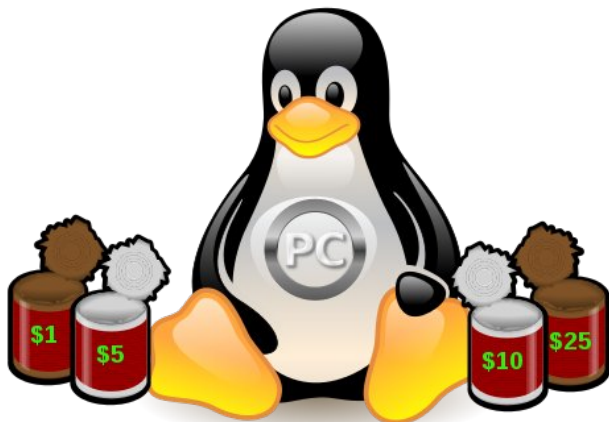
Posted by tbschommer on 2/1/14 running KDE.

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PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight: pags

as told to Smileeb

I hope you'll forgive me if I seem less than forthcoming in all my personal details. This is not intended as any kind of slight to any reader, but a perceived (by me) necessity to avoid the public disclosure of a potentially excessive amount of information in any one, readily accessible place. And so, without further ado...



I am 45 years old, the youngest of seven, and sometimes still have trouble thinking of myself as an adult. I am married, with two daughters. We have quite a large, extended family (on both sides), so there is rarely a time when I may not be helping someone out, or trying to promote the benefits of Linux; although I'm not the only IT oriented person among my siblings, so it doesn't take **all** of my time.

We live in Hamilton, Ontario (about an hour west of Toronto), and most of our family is within a 10 hour drive (and most of **them** are inside 3 hours). Family is important, and I hope I am gifting my children with the same perspective. It is one of the alluring aspects of the PCLinuxOS forum that may have kept me around. It is much like a family. I haven't been this dedicated to an online community since the mid-eighties, on a local BBS (before I even had my dialup Freenet access that first introduced me to the Internet.

Southern Ontario is a nice area, with a good mix of urban and rural options. Four distinct seasons (although it has seemed more and more like three, as the years go by...we're having a pretty colourful Autumn this year, however), mediated by the presence of the Great Lakes, specifically Lake Ontario, of which it is on the westernmost tip. The water does, however, add humidity in the Summer (which can push into the high 30's, and feel like 40's) and squalls in the Winter (which can approach the low -20's).

The city straddles the Niagara Escarpment (which is actually a fault line), dividing the city into "lower" and "upper" halves. The upper half is officially referred to as the "Hamilton Mountain". The mountain that isn't. This results in what has been called "The City of Water Falls" (<http://cityofwaterfalls.ca/>).

I'm currently employed in an IT capacity in a non-IT industry (steel processing), and have been in the same employ for a little over 22 years (which spanned a company purchase), although my original field of study was animation. I also did hardwood floor refinishing in my late teens, as well as working in my parent's grocery store, at the time. Things don't always work out as planned. The store is long gone, and I refinish floors only very occasionally now, usually as a favour. I'm highly autodidactic, and most of my professional on-the-job knowledge has been acquired as such. Post-secondary courses of study have included (in addition to arts and animation): physics; mathematics and computer science.

I've always had an interest in computers, with the majority of my exposure being through PCs (my own or family members' machines), including – but not limited to: TRS-80 Model III; Commodore 128

and Amiga (2000 and 4000); Atari; Compaq; Amstrad; Intel generics (such as my current Dells, Gateways, etc.). With this interest, there was also a desire to explore alternative OS options. My first inkling of an "alternative" OS was actually an alternative to AmigaOS. Just out of interest, not because the current implementation was perceived faulty. I toyed with NetBSD and FreeBSD on the Amiga, but lacked the hardware (MMU) to fully exploit it. As Commodore approached bankruptcy, while I was using my Amiga for digital graphics, I acquired a Pentium 120 and ran Windows 95 and Paint Shop Pro. I had already had exposure to MS-DOS and Windows 3.1(.x), and would soon be using Windows NT (3.5x) at work (when I first started working, the system was a centralized mini with green screen dumb terminals – my Amiga was head and shoulders above that). My interest in alternative OS's led me to research available options, including BeOS (the most "Amiga-like" OS on x86 I've used), GEOS (which, I feel, reached it's pinnacle when released for the C-64), and many Linux distros (I remember DragonLinux, which installed an image on the Windows filesystem via UMSDOS and loopback, and boot from there; and TomsRtBt, which was a complete system that ran from a single 3.5" floppy disk, among others). I bought a boxed version of OpenCaldera 2.2 from Costco (as I didn't have the bandwidth at the time to download a CD's worth of data), and that install provided me the tools to get copies of Mandrake, which led me to Texstar's RPMS (as well as Knoppix, VMWare, and other sundry tools); all of which I included (or, attempted to include) in my day to day job functions, as well as my hobby.

Speaking of hobbies, in addition to the above computers and original computer and traditional graphic arts, I'm also an avid, amateur photographer.

Although I do not update it nearly as much as I would like, I have a few samples at <http://jpaglia.deviantart.com/>. I've also used Minus to post some images publicly: <http://pagminus.minus.com/>. My biggest issue with my hobbies is my lack of time to dedicate to them (although, I wouldn't give up time with my family in trade...that would be too high a price). Perhaps, one day I'll have the time I desire. For now, there are children to raise and household chores to be done (currently halfway through replacing a shower in a second bathroom).

For time with family, while we do enjoy traveling (and we've even taken the kids camping once, and plan to do more so), time and expense can be a consideration. Luckily, my in-laws have a cottage on the shores of Lake Erie, and the girls enjoy it very much, so we do get out for weekends in the Summer. Add to that trips to see family, and there isn't much left in the way of available vacation time.

Although I've been a forum member since July 2009 (just checked my Profile), I've been visiting it much longer than that. Joining just seemed like one way to give back to this community that has risen around PCLinuxOS, which is personally used, on a regular basis, on at least 9 PCs/laptops in my household. Regrettably, one still runs Windows. I was setting up a TV tuner card to create a PVR, and was having some trouble getting the driver to function under PCLinuxOS (it's an HVR-1600, which I used with great success before...my guess is there was an undocumented chipset change). It's running now, so being a "production" machine limits the time I get to do additional testing, but I do plan to, at some point, with all the updates since this was done. At least it's just a backend system.

Learning and growth go hand in hand. I hope to continue to do both, both online and in real life. In so doing, I look forward to a long and prosperous relation with the rest of the PCLinuxOS family.

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

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



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by alex25502 on 2/1/14 running mate.

PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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

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

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

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

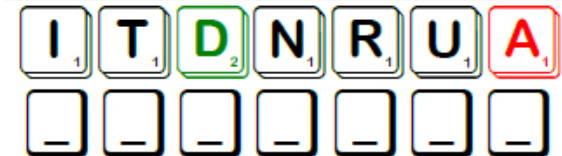
Each block must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same block of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.



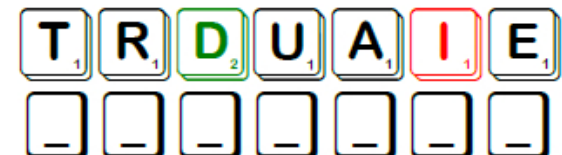
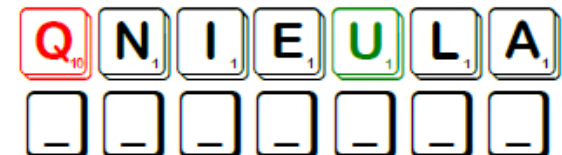
SCRAPPLER RULES:

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

Tux Scrapper



Triple Word



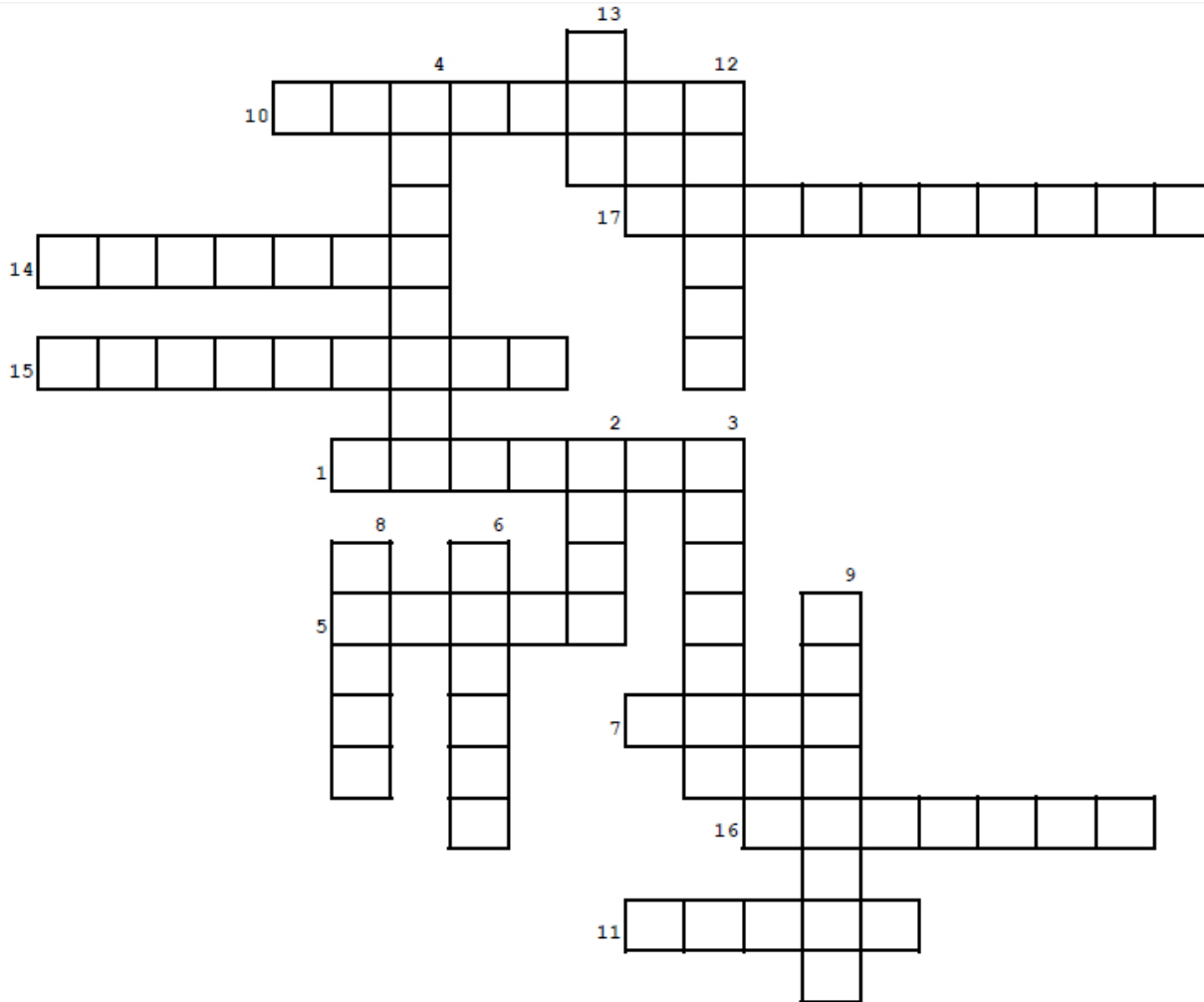
Double Word

Possible score 214, average score 150.

Download Puzzle Solutions Here!



PCLinuxOS Crossword Puzzle: March 2014 Spring



1. We all check this first to see if it's going to be a nice day.
2. One icy item you don't want to see.
3. Colorful vision seen after a rain.
4. No clouds and lots of _____.
5. 4th month.
6. A beautiful little purple flower.
7. A sport that can be played year-round but generally is started in the spring.
8. 3rd month.
9. This flower is generally yellow.
10. This team game starts in the spring.
11. Cup-shaped flowers of many colors.
12. Purple flowers with a nice smell.
13. 5th month.
14. You might wear one of these if it isn't warm enough yet.
15. People dig up the yard to take up this pastime.
16. Twister!
17. Children play here.

[Download Puzzle Solutions Here!](#)



Spring Word Find

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

APRIL
BASEBALL
BIRDS
BLOSSOM
CROCUS
DAFFODIL
FLOWERS
GARDENING
GOLF
GROW
HAIL
HATCH
JACKETS
LILACS
MARCH
MAY
MELT
NEST
PLANT
PLAYGROUND
RAINBOW
SHOWERS
SPRING
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SUNSHINE
TORNADO
TULIP
WARM
WEATHER
WIND

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Testimonial: Return of the Prodigal Son

by wyzwyk

Please forgive me for straying from the fold. I've been away, that is, away from PCLinuxOS, and now that I've seen the error of my ways, I've returned. It's true, all that glitters is not gold! Often times in life you encounter situations where you are presented a tough choice, and sometimes you make the wrong one. This is the story of one of my bad choices.

When I started checking out Linux some years back, I, like so many others, hopped around looking for that "special" distro that would meet all my needs. At PCLinuxOS, I stopped and settled in. Could this be what I was searching for? It had a polished looking KDE desktop, was a rolling release, had a nice selection of applications in the repository, a friendly and helpful forum, a great monthly magazine, and was maintained by a cool and competent Texan who would even converse with users.

Wow! I pinched myself, wondering if this was real. It was real, and I was quite happy with my new home. Everything was going along fine, and then things started to unravel. PCLinuxOS users got word that Texstar needed to take a sabbatical for an unspecified length of time, and that other people needed to step up and take the reins until his return, if he ever returned. Others did come forward and, under very difficult circumstances, did a remarkably good job at maintaining the various distributions. However, as good as they were they weren't Texstar.

Time passed and I started to wonder if the caretakers were capable of keeping the distro going long term to the high standard everyone was used to. Too new to Linux, and certainly too new to PCLinuxOS, I lost faith when applications were slow on being released, when the KDE desktop hadn't



been upgraded in almost 1 1/2 years, and when the 64 bit repository long promised was nowhere in sight. Sadly, I thought I was witnessing the slow death of my favorite distro, and I wasn't going to stick around to see it into the grave. Reluctantly, I decided to leave PCLOS and look for another home. In my confused state of mind, to justify leaving, I stupidly played down all of the distro's great qualities and emphasized its shortcomings. Off I went to another distro. Was I happy with it? It was ok and had a number of nice features, but I knew inside it couldn't hold a candle to the old PCLinuxOS.

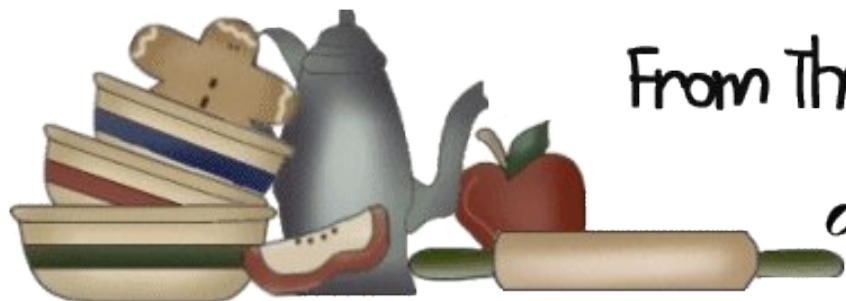
For over a year I used this other distro, and then something very strange happened that turned the Linux world I knew on end. A new release of that distro came out and I immediately upgraded to it, or should I say tried to upgrade to it. There was some problem, possibly an incompatibility issue, that prevented me from installing the distro. Try and try as I did, I couldn't get it to work. What was the problem? Videocard? New kernel? Missing file or library. I had no clue.

What was really weird was when I tried to install other distros, I often encountered the same problem, especially with KDE and Cinnamon. I never experienced any problem with Xfce or Mate. Now I'm out in the cold again, homeless and looking for a quality KDE distro to use. I won't go into the trials and tribulations of finding that new home other than to say it was time consuming and fruitless.

Then one day, I accidentally opened a bookmark for PCLinuxOS on Twitter and, lo and behold, there were a few posts from Texstar. New ones, at that. Could he be back? My curiosity was stirred and I immediately went to the forum. Yes, there were posts from him there too. It didn't take long to discover that not only was he back, but there were now 64 bit apps in the repository and that a new ISO had been released with an updated KDE desktop. Hallelujah! My search was over and now I could go home. After my initial elation subsided, I was left feeling ashamed and embarrassed that I jumped from the PCLinuxOS ship on first sight of a little water in the hold.

Well, thirteen months adrift in a sea of second-rate distros has certainly set my head straight again. Truth be said, I questioned whether Texstar was strong enough in body and will to ever return. Nor did I believe those who took his place would have the ability and energy level to keep the distro going long term. Lastly, I grossly underestimated the heart and resolve of the PCLinuxOS family to keep the ship afloat through a time of adversity. I was wrong in so many ways, and truly regret losing faith in all of you. Here I'm standing in the doorway to the PCLinuxOS house, asking to come home much like the return of the prodigal son. The question begs, will my father and brother take me in?

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner



From The Kitchen of
You Can Too

Rose Bouquet with Ham and Cheese

Ingredients

3.2 cups all purpose flour
½ cup milk + 1 Tbsp
0.42 oz yeast
1 tsp sugar
3.38 tbsp olive oil
1 egg
2 tsp salt

For the filling:

ham
cheese (any kind you like)

Start by mixing the yeast in the milk with a tsp of sugar.

Now put your flour in a bowl and add the milk/yeast mixture that you've prepared and mix everything a little. I used a mixer but you can use your hands for the whole recipe if you don't have one.

We have to prepare another mixture now:

Put your egg in a bowl, add the olive oil and 2 tsp of salt. Mix everything with a fork and add it to the rest of the ingredients. Continue to mix everything together until you obtain a homogeneous dough.

Let your dough rest for a couple of hours, leaving it in a covered bowl to make sure that it will rise.

After your dough has risen, spread it on a table using a rolling pin, until it becomes a big rectangle, about ¼ inch thick.

Lay your slices of ham and cheese on the rectangle and begin to roll it starting from one of the longest sides. Try not to make the roll too tight.

Prepare a round cake pan, spreading some oil or putting parchment paper in it.

Now you have to cut your roll into sections, about 1 ¼ inches. (These sections will be the roses of your bouquet :) Place them in the pan trying to keep them a little distant from each other because they are going to grow some more (top, right).

Let them rest for another 45 minutes, or until doubled in size (right).

Brush some milk over the top, and bake at 350F for about 35 minutes (bottom, right).



It's ready!!!

Doesn't it look tasty??

Your First Article, Made Easy

by loudog

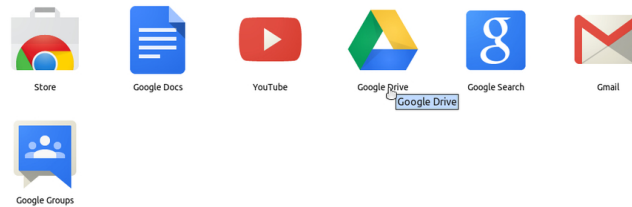
Most of us who read the magazine simply enjoy learning something new about PCLinuxOS at our own pace and at our leisure. Many, many topics have been covered since the magazine's first release years ago. You may think that most all the topics have been covered but in reality programs have new releases with many improvements, sometimes even including drastic changes to the gui and are now different than when they were first presented in the magazine. There are many things in the tips and tricks section that have never been featured in the magazine and would be fantastic additions.

Another aspect that I have not seen covered is a recurring question that gets posted over and over in the forum such as the HDMI issues and of course the sound issue that usually accompanies that. With a short article on the problem/solution, they could be directed to the magazine for additional help and insight.

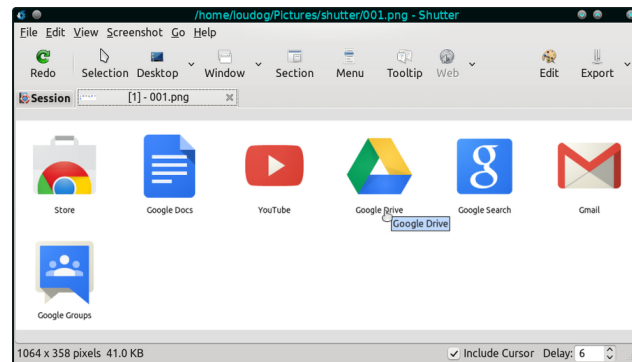
In this article, I'm going to show you how simple a little tip article can be written for your favorite Linux distro's magazine. First, read the magazine requirements from [here](#). While the font and program that you use to write it with are important factors to consider, the magazine staff and editors will accept articles in just about any format they can access – even written on the back of dinner napkins.

I personally was not too interested in signing up for the Google account at first, being pro privacy and all but I will tell you the Google Drive and Google Docs have made the articles so much more simple to access, edit and share with the magazine group.

I could not imagine doing it the other way now, although I did use LibreOffice when I began. It is simply a joy to write since implementing these tools. Here is what the standard Google account page looks like. You probably understand that my having the YouTube account at my fingertips has added a new aspect to my articles, being able to provide a link to the video that compliments the article.

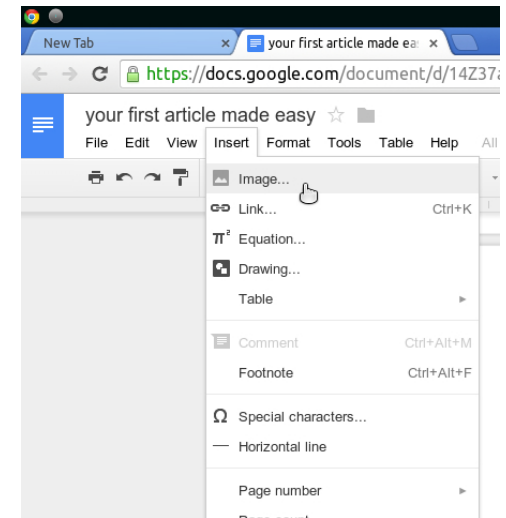


While I write, I use a screenshot program, taking the pictures I want and adding them as I go. I use Shutter, as it has all that I require, but you may prefer another. When I reached the end of the introduction segment, I took a quick snapshot of the Google page and inserted it. Shutter's GUI looks like this when it opens and you can see the screenshot selection I chose in the preview window.



The first thing to do is rename the image to a simple one, for the sake of the editing staff. If you forget,

that is ok, but if you continually forget, like me, you will soon receive a plea for mercy from the staff to try to remember the next time. I use a simple 001.png, 002.png etc (now that I remember) so I know that the number corresponds to the order the image appears in the article. I also use a separate folder for each article. This has helped me identify the images quickly for insertion into the document and made the editing staff's job easier for them. To make things simple, take the snapshot as soon as you're ready to insert it into the document, this helps to keep the flow of thought and creativity fluid.



You can drag and drop the image, or like me, open the upload manager to select the image from the file manager. When using the upload manager it will default to the last opened folder it used before, making it quick and simple to write some, take a snapshot, insert the image, write some more, take another snapshot, insert another image, etc. This is exactly how I am creating this article at this very moment.

Drag an image here

Or, if you prefer...

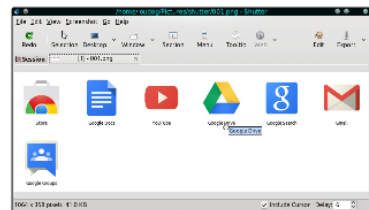
Choose an image to upload

When adding an image leave an empty line before the image and after. Do not indent the image or center it on the page. Also, do not left or right justify the images, with the text flowing around them. I do not indent the text for paragraphs, either. It is much easier for the editing staff to do their thing on as raw a format as you can give them. It will look like this. See, my spelling is atrocious, just like my 7th grade English teacher said.

reality programs have new releases with many improvements, sometimes even including drastic changes to the gui and are now different than when they were first presented in the magazine. There are many things in the tips and tricks section that have never been featured in the magazine and would be fantastic additions to the body of the magazine. Another aspect that I have not seen covered is a recurring question that gets posted over and over in the forum such as the HDMI issues and of course the sound issue that usually accompanies that, with a short article on the issue they could be directed to the magazine for additional help and insight. In this article I'm going to show you how simple a little tip article can be written for your favorite Linux Distro's magazine. First read the magazine requirements from the forum. The font and program that you use to write it with being the most important. I was not interested in signing up for the Google account at first but I will tell you the google drive and google docs has made the articles so much more simple to access, edit and share with the magazine group I could not imagine doing it the other way but I did use Libre Office when I began. It is simply a joy to write now. Here is what the standard Google account page looks like. You probably understand my having the YouTube account at my fingertips has added a new aspect to my articles being able to provide a link to the video that compliments the article.

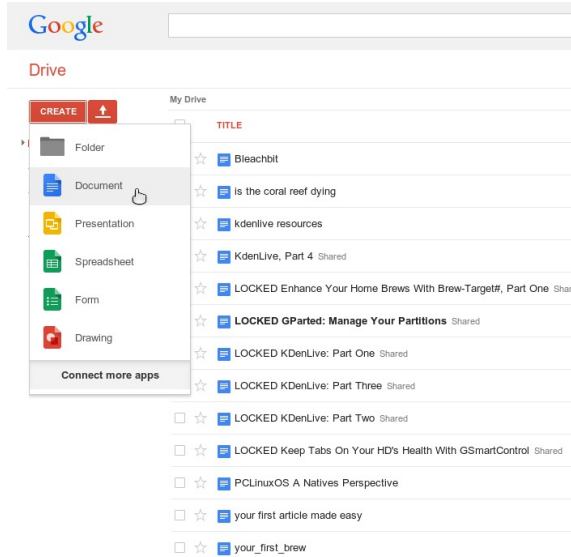


While I wrote the introduction I used a screenshot program, taking the pictures I wanted and adding them as I went. I use Shutter as it has all that I require. When I reached the end of the introduction I took a quick snapshot of the Google page. Shutter's gui looks like this when it opens and you can see the selection I chose to include in the image. The first thing to do is rename the image to a simple one for the sake of the editing staff. If you forget that is ok but if you continually forget like me you will soon receive a plea for mercy from the staff to try to remember the next time. I use a simple 001.png, 002.png etc (now that I remember) so I know that the number corresponds to the order the image appears in the article. This has helped me identify the images quickly for insertion into the document.



To make things simple, take the snapshot as soon as your ready and insert it into the document, this helps the flow of thought and creativity to stay fluid.

Let's take a quick look at my Google Drive contents. Here you will see a list of the articles I have already written, and the ones I'm still working on.



I have opened the Create menu in the image to show you what Google Docs has to offer. As I was writing, I stopped, took the screenshot, renamed it, and inserted it as I went. This is as simple and easy as it gets. Let's do one together from scratch so you understand the simplicity of the magazine article creation process. First, I will go to the Create tab and select Document. I will then name the document for reference later. The name does not have to be the title. I will name it "gwenview quick tip". I will now write my introduction.

"Often times we need a simple little edit on an image but don't want to use a full fledged image editing program such as Gimp for reasons of expediency. One program I use often for this very thing is Gwenview. When you" (the use of we, us, you and your, gives the reader a feeling of being included and that's exactly how they should feel) "open your image in Gwenview you will be presented with the image and some options in the side menu." I will now open the image in Gwenview, open my

screenshot program, select the style of snapshot I desire, position the cursor on the thing I want to stand out or draw attention to and take the snapshot.

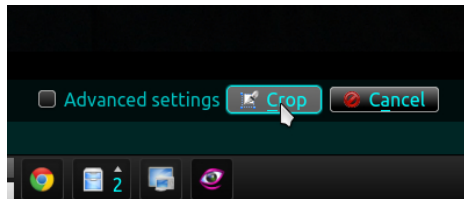


The next thing I do is rename the image (so I don't forget). In this article this will be renamed 007.png, being the seventh image in line, but for the sake of the example we will call it 001.png. Next, I will immediately insert it into the document.

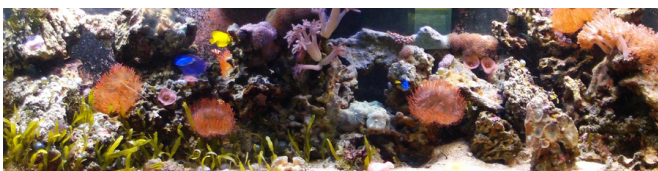
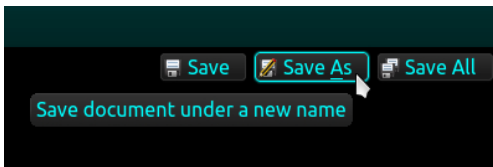
Then I continue on with the text: "You will notice I have selected the "crop" option from the edit menu. What I need to do quickly is crop the outsides of the image away so it looks like we are looking at a natural coral reef. Although I love my creatures and dearly strive to give them the most natural and healthy environment possible, some of the man made life support system equipment just doesn't fit in and needs editing". (It is desirable to put a little personalness somewhere in the body of the article, this gives it warmth, and after all, these are fellow PCLinuxOS patrons we are writing for.) "The crop tool looks easy enough with the telltale adjusting blocks at the corners and sides." I take the next snapshot, rename it 002.png and insert it (next page, top left).

Continuing on, "Now that I have the selected part of the image cropped I will need to select "Crop" from the bottom of the screen." I will take a little screenshot of that and insert it (next page, left).





Continuing on, "Now I need to save the edited image but I also want to save the original. If you select "save" it will save the edited image under the same name the original was and delete the original. To save the original also we will select "save as" and name the edited image accordingly." I will take a snapshot of this also and add it along with the final edited image.



Continuing on I will close with something positive, "Now I have my required image and it took all of a minute. Looks pretty good as well. The things you can do with the programs that come default in PCLinuxOS are virtually endless, with many a little tip or trick you can share with the community. Wish you all well, quicker tipper."

At this point do the spell check (a must every time for my crummy spelling) and grammar check. Take

the time to read it over after you have let it sit for a few hours or day and add things you forgot to mention (happens to me every time) or change the context to make it feel more natural if it doesn't sound quite right. When you're confident it's ready, submit it to the editors or the "PCLinuxOSmagazine" group.

How about that? Short, simple, painless. Now, how much easier could it get? I know many of you Adepts out there have tips and tricks to fill pages upon pages, so now it's easy for you to do. These kinds of little tip articles would be invaluable for filling out the magazine and they are easy enough for anyone to do because they're so short and to the point. I am looking forward to seeing your tips and tricks shared with the friend's and the PCLinuxOS community, until next month, think spring, (Please!)



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 ...

International Community PCLinuxOS Sites



Game Zone: Estranged: Act I

by daiashi



About The Game

Estranged tells the story of a lone fisherman, whose ship is stranded on a mysterious island during a violent storm.

Explore the rich environments and meet the curious inhabitants of the island as you find a way back to the mainland. Face both danger and intrigue in this perilous adventure, where you will soon find that not everything is as normal as it seems.

Features

Original Gameplay and Story - The game features around an hour of story driven gameplay. It includes a completely original cast, with a carefully crafted script to bring the Estranged world to life.

Amazing Graphics - Estranged is built on the same engine Half-Life 2 runs, with some additional features. The company has extended the dynamic lighting system to allow them to illuminate levels in a realistic manner, and have included effects such as film grain and lens flare to help create the atmosphere for the game.

Original Soundtrack - The soundtrack was written especially for Estranged, and was designed alongside the game's levels. The music matches gameplay, and helps to bring together the atmosphere in Estranged to bring the story to life.

System requirements:

Fully updated PCLinuxOS and Steam

Hardware:

- * Minimum:
- * OS: PCLinuxOS
- * Processor: 2.2 GHz
- * Memory: 1 GB RAM
- * Graphics: NVIDIA GeForce 8 or higher, ATI X1600 or higher
- * Hard Drive: 6 GB available space

About The Company

Alan Edwardes is the creator and lead developer for Estranged.

Alan is a 22 year old student living in the UK, with 1 years' industry experience in software development, currently studying his final year of University.

Many folks are responsible for bringing this part of the game to its final stages, so it would be better to provide a link to see for yourself. <http://www.iamestranged.com/team/>

I believe after playing through this free standing mod that Alan and his team show that with some passion and motivation you can develop a game that is on par with the big developers out there.

Some Gameplay Screenshots

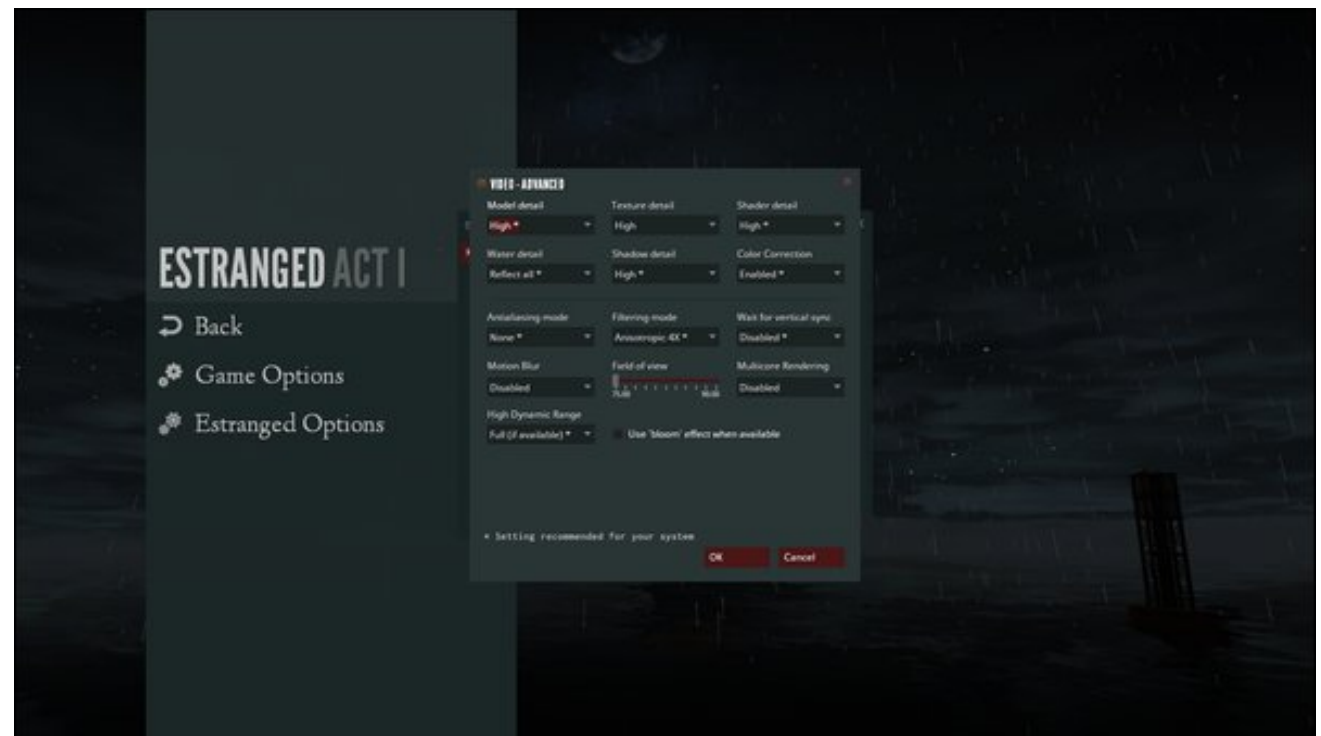


<http://store.steampowered.com/app/261820//>

Act 1. Click on and download the game. After you have updated your system, including graphics drivers, you may need to disable multicore rendering to keep it from crashing when loading the first chapter.



To disable multicore rendering,



Getting It To Run

Install Steam (if you don't have it installed already), then start it. You will need to create a new account, if you do not already have one. Once you have Steam up and running, go to the store tab. Click on the Linux tab if you wish and search for Estranged:

Streamline Your Instant Messages With Pidgin

by Meemaw

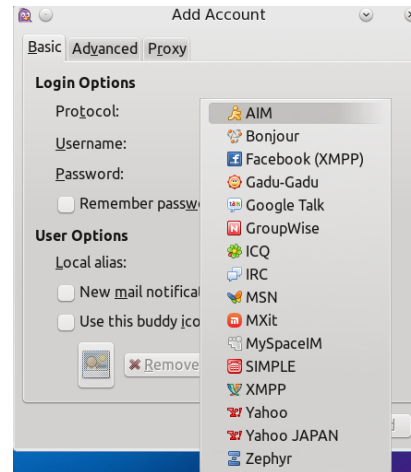
I don't know about you, but I have used instant messaging programs almost as long as I have used computers. Back then, I used Windows, and installed AIM and Yahoo Messenger. I installed them both because, like everyone else, I had friends that used one or the other. Soon I got tired of having multiple programs open all the time, and looked for something that would run more than one IM client. The first program I found was a Win program called Trillian, and used it for a while. However, when I converted to Linux in 2006, I had to find a different program. Pidgin has filled that need very nicely, and it's easy to use. Since I have to use Win at work, I'm happy to have a version of Pidgin there as well.



Let's walk through the configuration. First, of course, install Pidgin from the repo. When you first open it, you will see a Welcome window which tells you to add your accounts.



When you click on the Add button, the Accounts window will appear so you can start. Click on Add Account. Another window will appear. The first item you should select is the protocol you are using. By that, I mean that if you use Yahoo Messenger, you should choose Yahoo from the list.



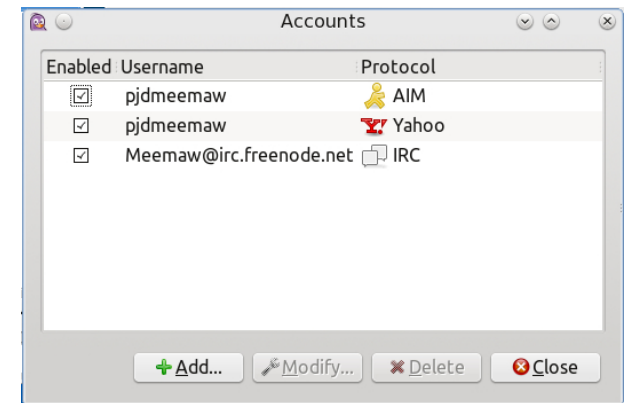
From there, your window may change according to the data that protocol needs to connect and allow you to message someone. For many protocols, the tabs are as shown above: Basic, Advanced & Proxy. I haven't got Facebook configured here, but I notice that there is an extra tab, called Voice & Video.

The Basic tab is where your sign-on information is entered. After choosing the protocol, you should enter your Username and Password in the next two places, and, if you wish, check the box that says Remember password. If you are configuring IRC, you also need to enter the IRC server you are wanting to use (the PCLOS channels are all on Freenode, so enter irc.freenode.net)

Generally, that's really all I really ever enter. Depending on your system or internet, you may

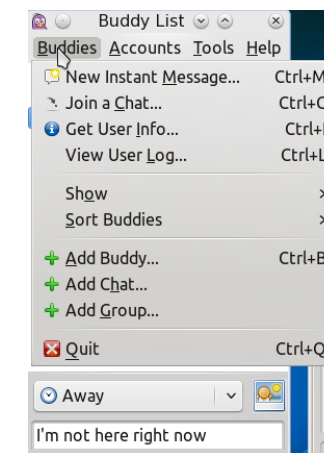
have to alter the defaults that are already there, but I haven't ever needed to alter any of it.

After you add accounts, your account window will have each of them listed.



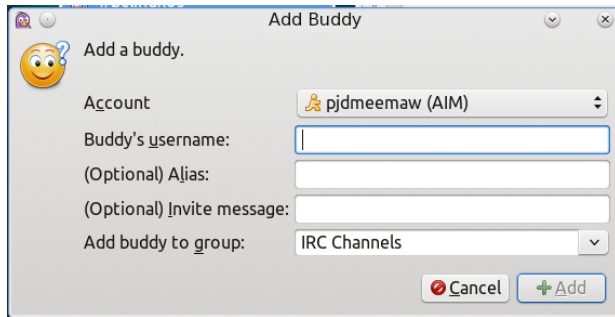
This is good, since you have to open this window and choose Modify when you change your passwords.

Now that you have your accounts established, you



need to add the people you are going to chat with. In AIM and Yahoo, you will Add Buddies. In IRC, you will Add Chats. You need to go to your Buddy List. Your Buddy List is the main window for Pidgin. This window shows the Buddies menu. It is here that you will add people that you can chat with.

From the menu, choose Add Buddy... and the Add Buddy window will open.

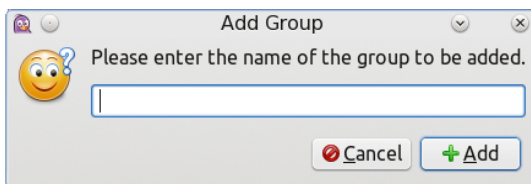


Choose the instant message account your friend is using, and fill in your friend's username on that messaging protocol. Also, choose the group you want to add your friend to, and click Add. My groups are Friends and Family, and I think those are the defaults. We'll add another group later.

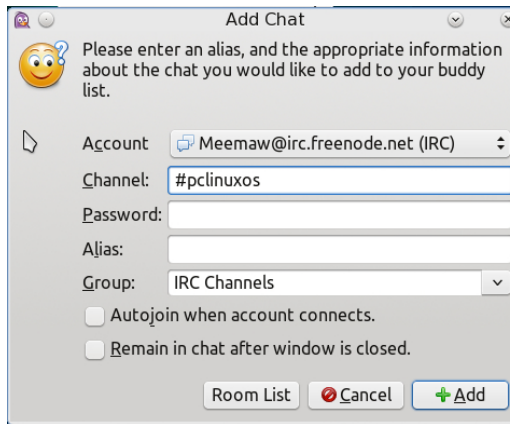
Be aware that when you add a buddy, a message will be sent to them inviting them to add you to their IM client so you can chat. If you want to include some sort of custom invite message, you can do it in this window.

When you have both added each other, you can chat in Pidgin. A simple right-click on a buddy's name will give you a drop menu that includes "IM". When you choose that, a window will open and you can type back & forth to each other.

I want to add some IRC channels. Rather than adding them to friends or family groups, we can add a separate group for them. From your Buddies menu, select Add Group... and when the window appears, simply type in the name for your group. I used "IRC Channels".



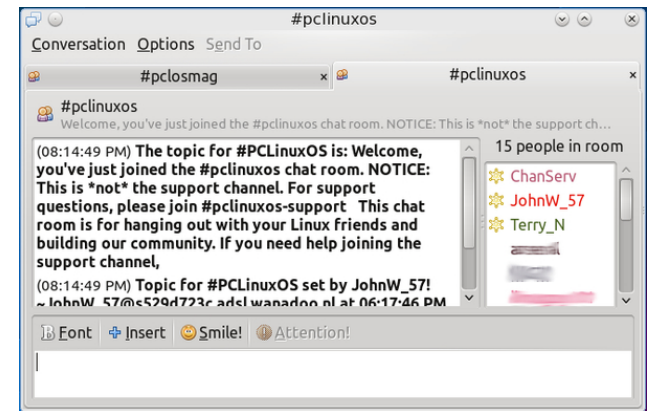
Then, to actually add a channel, choose Add Chat... from your buddies menu. The following window will appear:



Choose the IRC account you added, then add the name of the channel. Since your account settings already have your password, you can leave it blank. Make sure you choose the group you want as well. Also, if you want to join the channel every time you start Pidgin, check "Autojoin when account connects". If you aren't sure about the channel name, click on the Room List button. Bear in mind, it takes a minute or so for Pidgin to generate the room list. All rooms begin with the symbol #, so the main PCLinuxOS room is #pclinuxos.

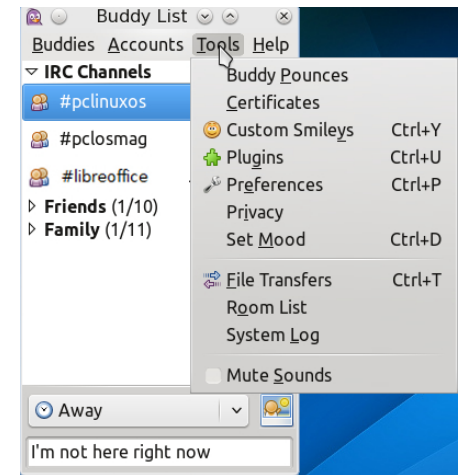
When you get your accounts, buddies and chats added, you can talk to whoever you want. All you need to do now is right-click on your buddy's username and choose IM, or click on a channel name and choose Join. Here is an example of the window that will open. This is two of the PCLinuxOS IRC channels. Each of them will have a list at the right which tells who is in the channel at present (top, right).

If you choose to IM a buddy, another tab will appear at the top of that window with your buddy's name and you can IM from there. I like the fact that there's only one window and it doesn't clutter my desktop. If



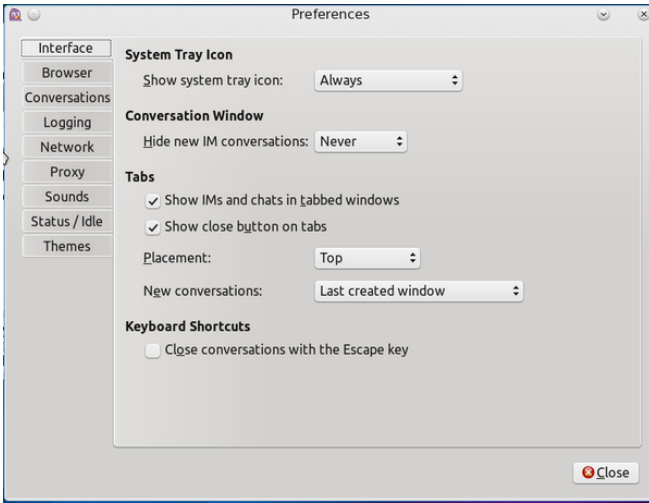
you want different windows, you only have to right-click a tab and choose Detach this tab.

Eventually, you are going to want to change the way your windows look or see what kinds of plugins Pidgin has. For that you should open the Tools menu.



From there you can open the Preferences window (next page, top left).

You may want to change the way your conversation looks. The Conversations tab will let you alter the font of your conversation. Uncheck the box that says Use system font, and pick out a font of your own.



You can also set your text window (the section in which you type your comments) to be a set number of lines, have your system flash the Pidgin icon when you get a message, and even let you know if your buddy is typing a reply. I set my text window to be three lines high, but you might like yours bigger. You can have your system play a sound when you get an IM, from the Sounds tab of Preferences. In the Status/Idle tab, you can set the time interval until Pidgin automatically changes you from Available to Away.

Feel free to experiment with things to get your window just right, being careful not to change settings that might affect the connection. I don't mess with the Network or Proxy tabs, since the defaults have always worked for me.

I enjoy talking to PCLinuxOS friends, and I also chat with several friends and relatives, all from Pidgin. It's nice that, no matter which messenger my friends or family use, I can chat with them all on Pidgin.



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by daniel on 2/15/14 running LXDE.



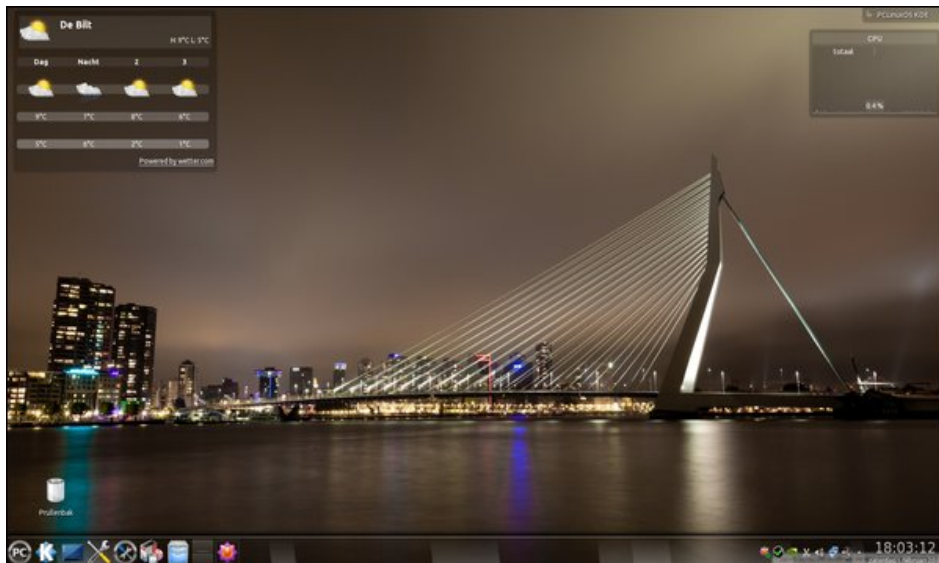
More Screenshot Showcase



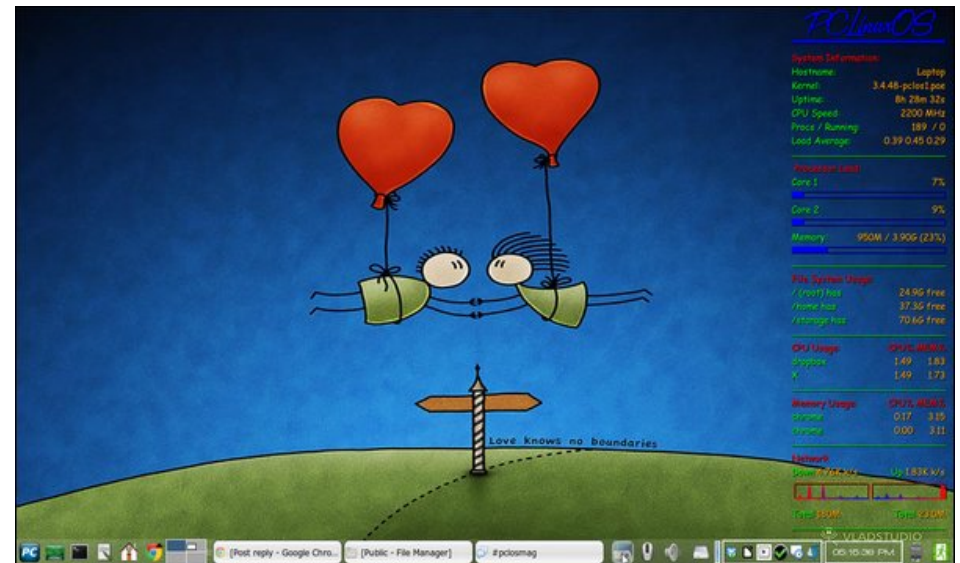
Posted by ff103 on 2/1/14 running KDE.



Posted by francescobat on 2/1/14 running icewm.



Posted by JohnW_57 on 2/1/14 running KDE.



Posted by Meemaw on 2/14/14 running Xfce.