Happy 15th Birthday, PCLinuxOS!

In This Issue ...

From The Chief Editor's Desk ...

WOW! That pretty much sums up how much more awesome it is to be running the new laptop. The quad core AMD 12 processor with 8GB of RAM has PCLinuxOS purring along like a kitten. The onboard AMD Radeon R7 video is fast and responsive. I haven't noticed any slowdowns due to the use of the swap partition that I had become accustomed to on my older computers. In fact, issuing the top command from the command line shows none of the swap partition in use. This latter factor has made an extreme difference.

Even as I'm writing this, I have 18 open tabs in Firefox, along with Scribus, a terminal window, HexChat and Thunar running at the same time. I'm also connected to my VPN via OpenVPN, running Dropbox, RuneStorm, and a whole host of panel plugins and background processes. My CPU usage (from one of my Xfce panel plugins) is running between nine and 12 percent.

We had been talking about replacing my nine-year-old Lenovo G530 for about a year now, but never seemed to have the money available. When we did have the money, we chose to spend it on the kids … or needed to spend it on the kids. Or, we'd spend the money on some long neglected project around the house. Or, we'd spend the money on a new project that populates yet another list.

But the $250 (U.S.) spent on the new laptop was well worth it. I can now get things done much more efficiently, especially time-wise. Sure, it may not be "brand new," but it is way newer than the nine-year-old laptop it replaced. This newer laptop is only about a year old, and will meet my needs quite well for quite some time to come. The college student I purchased it from took quite good care of it, even restoring Windows 10 to it before shipping it to me.

Nailing down roof shingles on one of our new projects: building a chicken coop.

I did boot into Windows 10, had a good laugh (or three, or more), then installed PCLinuxOS. I am a huge Xfce fan, so Ika's Xfce community remaster was my choice. I like that it's a lightweight desktop, yet easy on the eyes. I like that it's easy to extend the functionality. I've worked with those qualities, and developed my way of making that all work for me over the years. I have lots of special bash scripts that extend the functionality of Thunar, taking care of routine tasks quickly and efficiently.

There's nothing "wrong" with the other desktops, but Xfce is the best fit with how I work with the computer.

For me, KDE is too flashy and glitzy, at the expense of efficiency. Mate is just the "old" Gnome with another name, and I could never get comfortable with Gnome. LXDE is too lightweight for my tastes, and I feel handcuffed by it. Enlightenment is intriguing, but doesn't feel stable enough. Openbox is another lightweight desktop that I might consider using on a computer with limited resources, since it has a lot of flexibility and options for customization. It's the same story for Trinity, which is essentially an updated KDE 3 desktop, and one that is dear to me since that's what I started with when I first came to PCLinuxOS.

Isn't it nice that Linux users have choices? The choice of a desktop environment in Linux is a very personal one for many users. Try finding those choices in ANY of the commercial operating systems that are available. Don't spend too much time; they don't exist, for the most part. Those that do exist are only accessible after jumping through hoop after hoop after hoop. They are also either extremely resource intensive and/or very unstable. So, most users won't want to use them on a computer relied on for daily production and use.

So, until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, serenity and prosperity.

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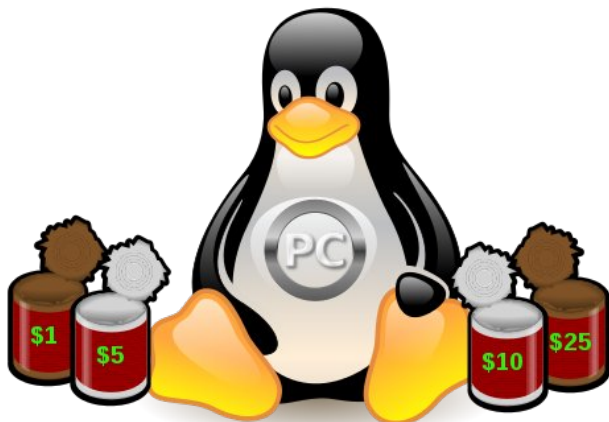
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October Is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Plus...

by Meemaw

We've done articles similar to this in past years, but this year, I'm going to do something different. Yes, cancer is a horrible disease that kills thousands every year, but there are many other diseases that do as well. Many of these you've already heard of, but I thought that this year I would summarize a few others along with the "big C". The main definition of each (in italics) is from Wikipedia.

Cancer

Cancer is a large group of diseases involving abnormal cell growth with the potential to invade or spread to other parts of the body. Possible signs and symptoms include a lump, abnormal bleeding, prolonged cough, unexplained weight loss and a change in bowel movements. While these symptoms may indicate cancer, they may have other causes. Over 100 types of cancers affect humans.

Breast cancer is one of the most devastating forms, especially for those who get it. Many times the person has to endure major surgery to remove the affected area, plus reconstructive surgery to restore the appearance of normality. Men as well as women can get it. Cancer can strike anywhere in the body and spread anywhere else.

With the advances in cancer research, more and more people are surviving. One resource is The American Cancer Society https://www.cancer.org/ Their statistics say that there will be 1,735,350 new cases of cancer this year and 609,640 deaths. One of their infographics states that being overweight or obese increases your risk of getting 13 different types of cancer because it negatively affects your immune system and certain hormones.

MS (Multiple Sclerosis)

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a disease in which the insulating covers of nerve cells (myelin) in the brain and spinal cord are damaged, causing a range of symptoms. Specific symptoms can include double vision, blindness in one eye, muscle weakness, trouble with sensation, or trouble with coordination. MS takes several forms, with new symptoms either occurring in isolated attacks (relapsing forms) *or building up over time (progressive forms). Between attacks, symptoms may disappear completely; however, permanent neurological problems often remain, especially as the disease advances.*

The specific symptoms are determined by the locations of the lesions within the nervous system, and may include loss of sensitivity or changes in sensation such as tingling, pins and needles or numbness, muscle weakness, blurred vision, very pronounced reflexes, muscle spasms, or difficulty in moving; difficulties with coordination and balance (ataxia); problems with speech or swallowing, visual problems (nystagmus, optic neuritis or double vision), feeling tired, acute or chronic pain, and bladder and bowel difficulties, among others. Difficulties thinking and emotional problems such as depression or unstable mood are also common. Most with MS end up in a wheelchair.

Main symptoms of
Multiple sclerosis

Central:
- Fatigue
- Cognitive impairment
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Unstable mood

Visual:
- Nystagmus
- Optic neuritis
- Diplopia

Speech:
- Dysarthria

Throat:
- Dysphagia

Musculoskeletal:
- Weakness
- Spasms
- Ataxia

Sensation:
- Pain
- Hypoesthesias
- Paraesthesias

Bowel:
- Incontinence
- Diarrhea or constipation

Urinary:
- Incontinence
- Frequency or retention
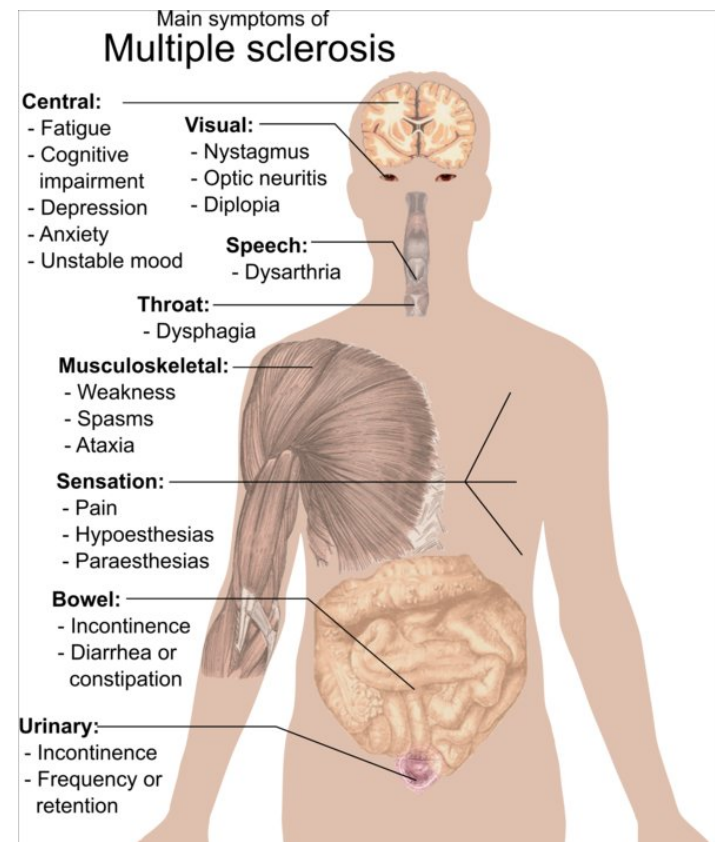
There is no cure for this disease. MS affects approximately 2.3 million people worldwide. One resource is the National Multiple Sclerosis Society https://www.nationalmssociety.org/What-is-MS

Scleroderma

Scleroderma *is a group of autoimmune diseases that may result in changes to the skin, blood vessels, muscles, and internal organs. The disease can be either localized to the skin or involve other organs in addition to the skin. Symptoms may include areas of thickened skin, stiffness, feeling tired, and poor blood flow to the fingers or toes with cold exposure.*

This disease causes problems in all systems. Scleroderma involves an overproduction of collagen. The tissues of involved organs become hard and fibrous, causing them to function less efficiently. In systemic sclerosis, the hardening may occur in the internal systems of the body. Another sign is Raynaud's syndrome, where a spasm in the arteries causes the blood flow to be affected, causing the fingers (usually) to get very cold. They will turn white then blue for a bit, even up to several hours, then when the spasm ends and the circulation is corrected, they will turn red and seem to burn. The patient can also have skin lesions, rash and even digestive problems, along with muscle aches, lung disease and even Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. (Carpal Tunnel Syndrome doesn't always seem too serious, but can be very painful.) The lungs are affected later, breath getting shorter. The patient may have more trouble swallowing because the tissues of the esophagus have gotten harder.

It is estimated that 300,000 people suffer from scleroderma. There is no cure for this disease, but there are several drugs that can help ease the symptoms. One resource is the Scleroderma Foundation http://www.scleroderma.org/site/PageNavigator/patients_whatis.html

Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's disease (AD), *also referred to simply as **Alzheimer's**, is a chronic neurodegenerative disease that usually starts slowly and worsens over time. It is the cause of 60–70% of cases of dementia. The most common early symptom is difficulty in remembering recent events (short-term memory loss). As the disease advances, symptoms can include problems with language, disorientation (including easily getting lost), mood swings, loss of motivation, not managing self care, and behavioural issues.*

I'm sure you've known someone with Alzheimer's whether you knew they had it or not. Many sufferers can no longer tell the wonderful stories that used to come naturally, or while telling the story, forget the simple words they've used for years. Others get lost going places they have been many times, or don't recognize longtime friends or relatives. In later stages, speech is gone as well, or you see that they are awake, but there is no action or reaction to requests or conversations. They are sitting there, seemingly awake, but that's all.

Alzheimer's is the leading cause of Dementia. Alzheimer's is a progressive disease, where dementia symptoms gradually worsen over a number of years. In its early stages, memory loss is mild, but with late-stage Alzheimer's, individuals lose the ability to carry on a conversation and respond to their environment. Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States.

There is no cure for this disease. One resource is the Alzheimer's Association https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/what-is-alzheimers. You can find many brochures, and a handy checklist of signs.

ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or Lou Gehrig's Disease)

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), *also known as **motor neuron disease (MND)**, or **Lou Gehrig's disease**, is a specific disease which causes the death of neurons controlling voluntary muscles. Some also use the term motor neuron disease for a group of conditions of which ALS is the most common. ALS is characterized by stiff muscles, muscle twitching, and gradually worsening weakness due to muscles decreasing in size. This results in difficulty speaking, swallowing, and eventually breathing.*

ALS can start in the area of the spinal cord which controls speaking and swallowing (called bulbar onset) or in the area controlling the arms and legs (called limb onset). Limb onset is more common, with the patient eventually confined to a wheelchair. Bulbar onset seems more dangerous, with speaking, swallowing and breathing being affected (imagine chewing and swallowing being affected and choking on your food several times at every meal). The patient may need to supplement their meals because eating is so difficult, and progress to using a feeding tube because they can't swallow any more. Later, they may need a trachea tube to allow them to breathe. Speech is gone and they need outside help, like a speech assistant or writing board to communicate. Whichever onset is first, the other eventually follows. While all this is going on, the brain is just as sharp as ever. 10% of ALS cases are inherited.

It may not be as prevalent as some of the other diseases, but it's no less devastating for those who have it. I think the worst feeling might be knowing it is familial (inherited) in your family and your father had died from it. The prognosis for this disease is approximately 2 to 5 years (although some have lived longer), and there is no cure. It is estimated that at least 20,000 suffer from this disease.

WHAT IS ALS?

a·myo·tro·phic lateral sclerosis | noun

ALS IS A PROGRESSIVE NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE THAT AFFECTS NERVE CELLS IN THE BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD.

ALS usually strikes people between the ages of 40 and 70, and approximately 20,000 people in the U.S. have the disease at any given time.

Although there is not yet a cure or treatment that halts ALS, scientists we fund through our global research program have made significant progress in understanding what causes ALS. But their work is not done. Together, we work toward a cure.

Healthy motor neurons stimulate muscles to contract

Motor Neuron (a type of nerve cell)

Muscle

ALS kills motor neurons, causing muscles to weaken

Dead Motor Neuron

Nervous System

FACTS ABOUT ALS

5,000+ people are diagnosed per year

10% — 10% of cases are inherited through a mutated gene

2-5 YEARS is the average life expectancy

90% of cases occur without family history

Every **90 MINUTES** someone is diagnosed and someone passes away

$250,000 is the estimated out-of-pocket cost for caring for a person with ALS

Only **3 DRUGS** are currently approved by the U.S. FDA to treat ALS (Riluzole, Nuedexta, and Radicava)

$2 BILLION is the estimated cost to develop a drug to slow or stop the progression of ALS

There is **NO CURE** for ALS

SYMPTOMS

Progressive loss of muscle control

ALS gradually prohibits the ability to:
· Speak   · Grasp objects
· Swallow   · Move
· Walk   · Breathe

DIAGNOSIS

Difficult to diagnose
· ALS is often diagnosed by ruling out other diseases, which may take months or years

MILITARY

Veterans are 2x as likely to get ALS
· ALS affects veterans who served in peacetime and war
· ALS impacts veterans, regardless of the branch of service or the war they served in

The ALS Association Core Values: COMPASSION - INTEGRITY - URGENCY

ALS ASSOCIATION

One resource is the ALS Association http://www.alsa.org/about-als/what-is-als.html.

Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a long-term degenerative disorder of the central nervous system that mainly affects the motor system. The symptoms generally come on slowly over time. Early in the disease, the most obvious are shaking, rigidity, slowness of movement, and difficulty with walking. Thinking and behavioral problems may also occur.

It usually starts with some sort of muscle tremor, many times in the hand while at rest, which can go away if the hand is moved. It progresses to tremors throughout the body, and affects all movement. Walking becomes shuffling, and speech is very difficult. Eventually, the patient can't walk or talk. Cognition, mood, behavior and thought can be affected as well.

There is no cure for this disease. It is thought that Parkinson's affects approximately 10 million people worldwide. A resource is the Parkinson's Foundation http://www.parkinson.org/understanding-parkinsons/what-is-parkinsons. One page has an explanation of ten early signs of Parkinson's, which was interesting.

Also, any of these diseases affecting swallowing also have the danger of the person aspirating food rather than swallowing it. Food particles in the windpipe/lungs can cause "aspiration pneumonia" (where the particles of food cause infection), and many people die from this before their disease can kill them.

Some really horrid diseases exist these days, many that it seems we can't defend against, even by taking care of ourselves: eating right, exercising, etc. I hope none of these happens to you or any of your family or friends.
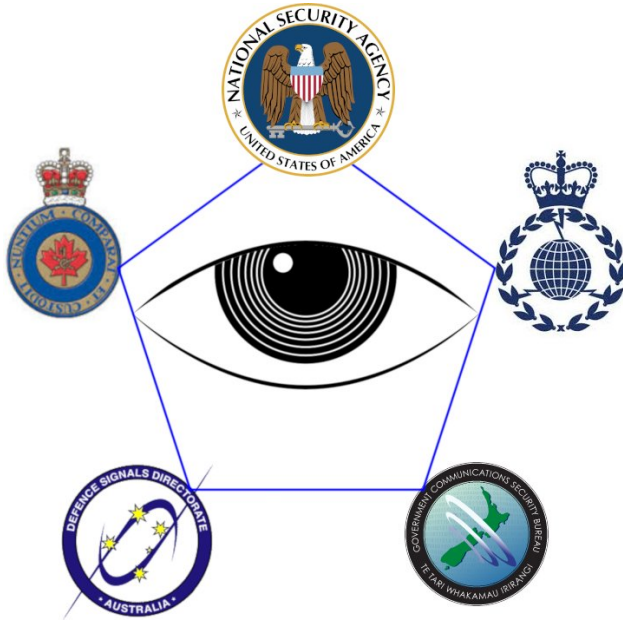

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Short Topix: Flash To DIE By End Of 2020

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

'Five Eyes' Government Spy Agencies Give Tech Giants Ultimatum

Many of us have never heard of the term "Five Eyes" used in relation to government spy agencies. Well, that is until TechCrunch reported in early September about a memo from the "Five Eyes" countries that was quietly released.

So, just who are the "Five Eyes" countries, often referred to as FVEY? While you might think that the group points to a particular intelligence organization in each country, au contraire. That particular group is comprised of several spy/intelligence agencies of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. These include the NSA, FBI, CIA, MI5, MI6 and GCHQ, among others listed

here. The rest of the Wikipedia entry on FVEY is not only quite revealing, but quite troubling, as well.

The memo attempts to make the case for backdoor access to private and encrypted data from the tech giants. Amidst the language used, they gush forth on understanding the need for encryption, pontificate about their understanding of the need to protect the privacy of common citizens, blabber on about the need to protect their citizens, and wax on about "appropriate oversight."

While the language of the memo might seem innocent and very respectful of citizen's rights to privacy, just wait until you read the last paragraph of the memo. Contained therein is a not-so-subtle, non-veiled threat to get the backdoor access to the data they desire, come hell or high water.

Here's the final paragraph of the memo:

"Should governments continue to encounter impediments to lawful access to information necessary to aid the protection of the citizens of our countries, we may pursue technological, enforcement, legislative or other measures to achieve lawful access solutions."

These are the same intelligence agencies (and governments) who routinely circumvent the restrictions and "appropriate oversights" put into place by their respective legislative bodies. They have the other four agencies or governments collect the data that the one is "restricted" from gathering on their citizens, and then sharing that "restricted" data with the fifth agency or government. It definitely is not keeping within the spirit of the restrictions and "appropriate oversights" placed into the laws governing their behavior.

So, given their track record (not to mention the data breaches they've been victims of), do these guys sound like good, trusted "stewards" of your private data?

Even more troubling is their desire to collect all data that is collectible. Instead of performing investigations the old fashioned way, they want to simply sit back in an easy chair and browse through every bit of data they can vacuum up.

Personally, if given the choice between a false sense of security (for example, the NSA's mass collection of its citizens private data or metadata has NEVER netted or revealed any terrorist plots in the past 17 years since it has been doing so … at least, legally) and freedom, I'll choose freedom. Every. Single. Time. It is, quite simply, worth the "risk" to live my life free and as I choose. Die having lived a free, happy and fulfilling life, or die scared, afraid and cowering from every "threat," real or perceived? Now you know my answer.

Google Chrome Gets Long Overdue Update

Despite having become the most popular web browser on the planet, Google Chrome has looked pretty much the same for much of the past decade, ever since it was first released. But on September 4, Google Chrome 69 was released, celebrating its 10th birthday. This is considered a major release, and provides not only come cosmetic changes, but also applies some security fixes and adds some new features.

Probably the first thing Chrome fans will notice is that the trapezoid shaped tabs that have been present since Chrome's initial release have been replaced with rectangular tabs with rounded-off corners. Closely following will be users noticing how utterly sparse and minimalist the Chrome window looks.

Chrome also adds password management to its repertoire. Chrome's password manager will help make unique passwords for each website you visit (that wants, needs or asks for them), and stores them in the cloud. Of course, you have to be logged into your Google account in order to save your passwords. There are also reports that Chrome's password manager will not allow you to use the same password across multiple sites, which from a security standpoint, is an excellent decision.

Going hand in hand with our next topic in Short Topix, Google Chrome 69 will start weaning users off of Flash. Most browsers now ask for your permission to run Flash content, and Google Chrome is no different. Except starting with Chrome 69, it will not remember your preferences, even if you visit the same site every day or several times a day.
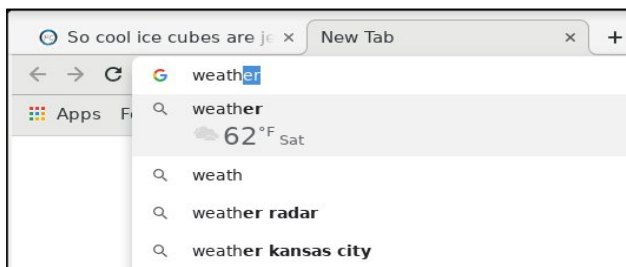
Users can also use the Omnibox (known as the address bar in every other browser) to search for information more quickly. You can type, for example, "current weather in Des Moines" and get the current weather conditions in Des Moines, IA. Or, as another example, you can type "Royals-Twins game score" to get the most recent score of the Kansas City Royals and Minnesota Twins baseball game. Or, as in the example above, just type the word "weath" in the Omnibox (the remaining "er" letters of the word will autofill), and the current conditions for your location will be displayed, along with other web-based resources for you to check out.

Some of the changes are OS-specific changes, like utilizing native Win10 notifications, and two finger swiping on Windows computers via the touchpad or touchscreen.

Over the past 10 years, and especially over the past five years, Google Chrome has taken considerable heat for being a memory and storage HOG (Sou-Weee!), increased battery drain on laptops, weak ad blocking (don't forget that Google's primary source of revenue is serving up ads to you), and general privacy concerns (there are multiple reports of Chrome "phoning home" to Google with *everything* you do). There are (at the time this article was written) no reports whether or not those deficiencies have been addressed.

There are some "under the hood" changes, as well, though. Most importantly, Chrome 69 addresses some 40 security vulnerabilities, including seven that

were marked "high." Google offered a bounty to anyone who could find the bugs. They put their money behind it, paying out over $31,000 to researchers who discovered 16 of the 40 patched bugs.

Not everyone is happy, and the Chrome 69 rollout didn't happen as smoothly as the Chrome team would have liked. According to an article on the Digital Trends website, users are reporting websites that are dimmed or grayed out, Chrome downloading SWF files instead of playing them, lagging when scrolling, websites that simply won't load, sync issues, crashes and freezes, problems logging in, displaying the wrong language, not saving passwords, and crashing when opening tabs or bookmarks.

Additionally, users aren't too happy about how Chrome 69 is now hiding not only the http:// and https:// part of a web address (the address bar displays "Not Secure" with the former, and a "padlock" with the latter, just to the left of the displayed URL), but it's also now hiding the "www." part of the web address, as well. Some users feel like it's Google's attempt to push their AMP (accelerated mobile pages) technologies to replace URLs. Google even admits to looking for a replacement for URLs. Google has temporarily backed off from obscuring the http://, https:// and www parts of the URL, thanks in part to user pushback. Don't fear … they plan to implement their changes at a later date.

I was able to confuse Chrome 69, with ease. Entering just "pclinuxos.com" in the Omnibox, Chrome 69 connected me with the unsecure http:// version of the page. The "Not Secure" message was displayed to the left of the URL. But, when I entered "https://www.pclinuxos.com" in the Omnibox, I was immediately connected to the secure version of the PCLinuxOS homepage. The "padlock" was displayed to the left of the URL. So, it would seem that Chrome 69 still isn't connecting to the preferred https:// version of a site, over the more insecure

http:// version. That's odd, since Google has been a HUGE proponent of https:// over http://.

Still not enough for you? You won't have long to wait. A new version of Google Chrome comes out every six to seven weeks. Google Chrome 70 is expected to be released the week of October 14. As for me, it'll not be enough until the deficiencies listed previously are addressed in a serious way.

Adobe Officially Killing Flash by End of 2020

The angels have sung HALLELUJAH from up on high! Flash is dead! Flash is dead! Flash is dead!

Well, not quite yet. But, the end is definitely near. And it's way, way, way overdue. Adobe Flash, that **scourge** of the internet since 1996, is being killed off by Adobe at the end of 2020.

In the beginning, Flash was fun and exciting. There literally wasn't anything else like it, or that possessed its capabilities. But it soon lost its luster. Too many security vulnerabilities to count, too many bugs, and too many crashes all doomed it to its final resting place. At one point, it seemed there was another Flash update every single week to address yet another of its shortcomings. For some users (like myself), the frustration with Flash caused avoidance

of any website that relied on its use. Besides the constant stream of faux paus from Flash, Apple started the "fall from grace" for Adobe Flash when they refused to support Flash on iOS when it was released. Since then, Flash's appeal has been on a rapid, meteoric descent.

HTML5, WebGL and WebAssembly have matured to the point that only about 5% of websites now use Flash to play music and/or videos. Both Google and Netflix have embraced HTML5 as the new standard for delivering their content that might have otherwise used Flash.

Adobe made their announcement on their blog back in 2017, but I've only recently learned of it. I have been waiting for this announcement for a very long time, so I'm not sure how I missed its announcement 15 months ago. You can read the announcement here, but below is a couple of relevant paragraphs from that announcement (just in case you want just the highlights).

"But as open standards like HTML5, WebGL and WebAssembly have matured over the past several years, most now provide many of the capabilities and functionalities that plugins pioneered and have become a viable alternative for content on the web. Over time, we've seen helper apps evolve to become plugins, and more recently, have seen many of these plugin capabilities get incorporated into open web standards. Today, most browser vendors are integrating capabilities once provided by plugins directly into browsers and deprecating plugins.

Given this progress, and in collaboration with several of our technology partners – including Apple, Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Mozilla – Adobe is planning to end-of-life Flash. Specifically, we will stop updating and distributing the Flash Player at the end of 2020 and encourage content creators to migrate any existing Flash content to these new open formats."

Adobe was begged **for years** to open source the Adobe Flash code, or at least the portions that

weren't proprietary and protected. The open source community felt that they could help end the endless stream of security issues, performance issues and bugs. But, it has been theorized (and unofficially verified by former Adobe employees) that the Adobe Flash code was an unmitigated mess, and that by open sourcing the Adobe Flash code, it would have exposed Adobe's ineptitude at maintaining a proper code base and proper coding practices. In short, it would have most likely been an embarrassment to Adobe had it open sourced the Adobe Flash code.

However, had they open sourced the code, Adobe Flash might have been fun – and relevant – again. Had they open sourced the code, they could have exited on a high note, rather than the lowly plague it is currently viewed as. Just maybe, had they open sourced the code, Flash might have been able to continue, right alongside the other, newer technologies.
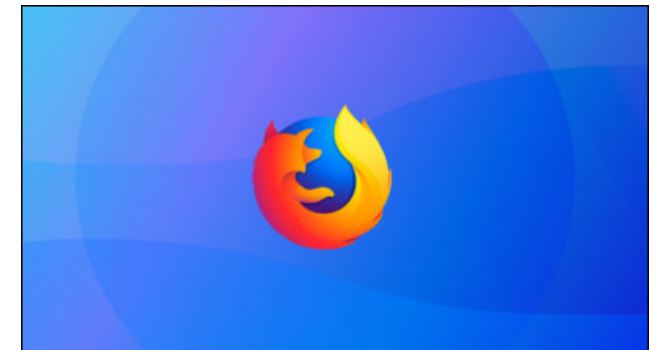
Block Ad Trackers From Following You On Firefox

Are you tired of targeted advertising when you browse the web? How about slow web performance? What about unchecked data collection by ad trackers? Well, if you fit into any of these categories – or all three – some new features in upcoming releases of Firefox are for you.

The features, already in the Firefox Nightly build, work to speed up page loads by blocking trackers that slow down webpage loading, strip cookies and block storage access from third party tracking content, and prevent/remove cross-site tracking.

Users can expect to start seeing these new features make their way to the mainstream release of Firefox, starting with Firefox Quantum 63. Others may not show up until Firefox Quantum 65. An August 30, 2018 Mozilla blog post contains all the details. The first enhancement will come to Firefox Quantum 63, provided that the "shield study" beta testers perform during the month of September shows what the Mozilla Firefox developers are certain it will, that automatically blocks third party trackers that slow webpage load times.

Here is the blog post:

Anyone who isn't an expert on the internet would be hard-pressed to explain how tracking on the internet actually works. Some of the negative effects of unchecked tracking are easy to notice, namely eerily-specific targeted advertising and a loss of performance on the web. However, many of the harms of unchecked data collection are completely opaque to users and experts alike, only to be revealed piecemeal by major data breaches. In the near future, Firefox will — by default — protect users by blocking tracking while also offering a clear set of controls to give our users more choice over what information they share with sites.

Over the next few months, we plan to release a series of features that will put this new approach into practice through three key initiatives:

Improving page load performance
Tracking slows down the web. In a study by Ghostery, 55.4% of the total time required to load an average website was spent loading third party trackers. For users on slower networks the effect can be even worse.

Long page load times are detrimental to every user's experience on the web. For that reason, we've added a
new feature in Firefox Nightly that blocks trackers that slow down page loads. We will be testing this feature using a shield study in September. If we find that our approach performs well, we will start blocking slow-loading trackers by default in Firefox 63.

Removing cross-site tracking
In the physical world, users wouldn't expect hundreds of vendors to follow them from store to store, spying on the products they look at or purchase. Users have the same expectations of privacy on the web, and yet in reality, they are tracked wherever they go. Most web browsers fail to help users get the level of privacy they expect and deserve.

In order to help give users the private web browsing experience they expect and deserve, Firefox will strip cookies and block storage access from third-party tracking content. We've already made this available for our Firefox Nightly users to try out, and will be running a shield study to test the experience with some of our beta users in September. We aim to bring this protection to all users in Firefox 65, and will continue to refine our approach to provide the strongest possible protection while preserving a smooth user experience.

Mitigating harmful practices
Deceptive practices that invisibly collect identifiable user information or degrade user experience are becoming more common. For example, some trackers fingerprint users — a technique that allows them to invisibly identify users by their device properties, and which users are unable to control. Other sites have deployed cryptomining scripts that silently mine cryptocurrencies on the user's device. Practices like these make the web a more hostile place to be. Future versions of Firefox will block these practices by default.

Why are we doing this?
This is about more than protecting users — it's about giving them a voice. Some sites will continue to want user data in exchange for content, but now they will have to ask for it, a positive change for people who up until now had no idea of the value exchange they were asked to make. Blocking pop-up ads in the original Firefox release
was the right move in 2004, because it didn't just make Firefox users happier, it gave the advertising platforms of the time a reason to care about their users' experience. In 2018, we hope that our efforts to empower our users will have the same effect.

How to Manually Enable the Protections
Do you want to try out these protections in Firefox Nightly? You can control both features from the Firefox Nightly Control Center menu, accessible on the left-hand side of the address bar. In that menu you'll see a new "Content Blocking" section. From there, you can:

1. Enable the blocking of slow-loading trackers or cross-site tracking through third-party cookies by clicking "Add Blocking…" next to the respective option.

2. In the "Content Blocking" preferences panel:

 1. Click the checkbox next to "Slow-Loading Trackers" to improve page load performance.

 2. Click the checkbox next to "Third-Party Cookies" and select "Trackers (recommended)" to block cross-site tracking cookies.

 1. You can disable these protections by clicking the gear icon in the control center and unchecking the checkboxes next to "Slow-Loading Trackers" and "Third-party Cookies".

Inbox is signing off. Find your favorite features in the new Gmail.

Google Is Pulling The Plug On Inbox

Like many Google services that came before it … Picasa, iGoogle, Google Wave, Google Buzz, Google URL shortener, etc., etc. … the list marches onward for over a mile … Inbox is having its plug pulled at the end of March, 2019.

Originally launched on October 22, 2014 on an invitation-only basis, and released to the public on May 28, 2015, Inbox was a playground for the Gmail team to work on new features, some of them probably a bit too "radical" for the typical Gmail user. Most of the new features Inbox delivered have already been migrated to Gmail. The remaining Inbox features that haven't yet been migrated to Gmail will most likely be introduced to Gmail users well before Google shutters the Inbox service.

With many of Inbox's new features having already found their way into the newly revised/enhanced Gmail, Google wants to focus solely on Gmail. Smart Compose is one Inbox feature that has found its way to the new Gmail. One Inbox feature, though, that hasn't been seen in the new Gmail is the "trip bundles." This feature gathers all your flight, hotel, event and car rental information into a single bundle, making it easier to access that information quickly. There is some speculation that Google plans to bring bundles to Gmail shortly after the first of the year, plenty of time before Inbox puts out the closed sign.

Strangely, it does seem that Google appears to be willing to introduce new, experimental features directly into Gmail. It makes more sense to use Inbox for the purpose it was intended (as a test bed for new Gmail features), and to roll them out there first to work out any bugs and niggles with Inbox's smaller user base, rather than to roll them out to the over 1 *billion* Gmail users en masse.

Many users have already commented that they are going to miss Inbox's clean user interface, as well as its handy features. Of course, features like the bundles make security and privacy concerned individuals very nervous, for obvious reasons. Meanwhile, Google has provided a guide of sorts to help users move from Inbox to Gmail.

You already have Microsoft Edge – the safer, faster browser for Windows 10

Open Microsoft Edge | Install anyway

Don't want to be warned in the future? Open settings >

Microsoft Bullies Chrome, Firefox Users With FUD

Let's just imagine that you're a Windows 10 user. Who knows … maybe some of you dual boot PCLinuxOS with Windows 10. Maybe others of you run Windows 10 in VirtualBox. Or, maybe some of you are forced (perhaps at gunpoint) to use Windows 10 at your place of employment.

Well, Microsoft has sunk to a new low. They have been testing a new popup message (like there aren't enough in Windows, already) for their upcoming October 2018 update for Windows 10. Whenever a user tries to install a rival web browser (rather than using Microsoft Edge), users will get a scary warning message, pictured above.

The message appears whenever a user attempts to install the Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome web browser/browsers, according to an article at The Verge. I know many PCLinuxOS users have multiple web browsers installed simultaneously. Linux is about choice, after all. I have five web browsers installed, myself … Firefox, Chrome, Midori, Opera, and Slimjet.

There are many reasons to install "rival browsers" in Windows 10 (or any other OS, for that matter). First, Microsoft doesn't necessarily have the best reputation for putting out a secure, feature-packed, fast browser. Eleven-plus releases of the buggy, security nightmare Internet Explorer should make users nervous and skeptical. But users may already have used and installed a rival browser on another computer, and they want to sync their activities and bookmarks across multiple machines and platforms. Some may use a rival browser on their mobile device, where Edge won't/can't run. So, it makes sense to use something that can sync data across devices and platforms.

What Microsoft probably doesn't realize is that this tactic makes them look desperate, at least to informed users. It makes it seem that Microsoft will stoop to untold, lowly levels to keep or maintain their share of the browser market and their (lowly) position in the browser wars. To the many, many uninformed users, it may cause panic and doubts about installing a rival browser.

Shameful, Microsoft! This is just shameful behavior, and even you, Microsoft, should feel ashamed to have sunk to such a low level. Just to even consider this action is asinine, at best.

User reaction must have been bad among testers, because Microsoft has stated (at the last minute) that the warning will not be appearing in the October 2018 Windows 10 update, after all. So, Windows 10 users have been spared yet another Windows annoyance … for the time being. But, I wouldn't be the least bit surprised to see the "warning" … or another similar to it … appear at a later date, in a later update.

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by golf4fun, September 2, 2018, running KDE.

ms_meme's Nook: I Love Linux

I love Linux in the springtime
I love Linux in the fall
I love Linux in the winter
very pleasing
I love Linux in the summer
not a teasing

I love Linux every moment
Every moment everywhere
I love Linux why oh why
Do I love Linux
Because my friends are there

MP3

I love Linux when I labor
I love Linux when I play
I love Linux on my laptop
very handy
I love Linux on my desktop
user friendly

I love Linux every moment
Every moment everywhere
I love Linux why oh why
Do I love Linux
Because my friends are there

OGG

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner

From The Kitchen of
YouCanToo

Chili Macaroni

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 pounds ground beef
8 oz of elbow macaroni
2 medium onions, diced finely
1 red bell pepper, diced finely
6 garlic cloves, minced
2 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon cumin
1 teaspoon hot pepper powder of choice (optional -
   I used chipotle!)
1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
14.5 oz can diced tomatoes
28 oz can tomato puree
3 cups colby jack cheese, shredded

You'll also need a 9x13 baking dish.

DIRECTIONS:

Step 1: Boil the pasta and reserve 3/4 cup of the cooking water.

Boil 8 ounces of elbow macaroni in well salted water - add at least a tablespoon of salt to it!
Once it's al dente (you want it to be a little bit underdone since we'll be baking it later) use a glass measuring cup to pull out 3/4 cup of the pasta water.

After you've got the 3/4 cup of cooking water set aside, pour the pasta in a colander and put it to the side until we're ready to mix everything together. :)

Step 2: Saute the onion and pepper and add the spices

In a large heavy bottomed pot, heat a bit of oil over medium heat. Add in the bell peppers, onions, and a pinch of salt and cook until they're nicely softened. You don't want to brown them, so make sure to stir them frequently. This will take between 5-10 minutes. Once that's done, add in the garlic, chili

powder and cumin. Stir this around for a couple minutes until you can smell the spices and the garlic and everything is evenly distributed.

Step 3: Cook the ground beef

Now you'll want to add in the ground beef. Break it up into small pieces as it cooks. All we're looking to do here is cook it through until you can't see any pink pieces left.

Step 4: Add in the tomatoes, sugar and cooking water

Open both cans of tomatoes and dump them into the pot. You'll also want to add the tablespoon of brown sugar and the reserved 3/4 cup of cooking water. Stir everything together. Once this starts to bubble, turn the heat down to low. Now you'll want to simmer this chili with the lid cracked for at least 20 minutes. As always, longer is better, so just do whatever you have time for. Stir it every few minutes.
You'll also need to preheat the oven to 400F / 205C.

Step 5: Season and assemble everything in the baking dish

Once the chili has simmered for 20 minutes or more, you're ready for final seasoning! Turn off the heat and give it a taste - add more of whatever you need. I added in some chipotle pepper powder and more salt. Just make sure you don't go overboard on the salt, because there will be lots of cheese in it soon! Pour the elbow macaroni out in the 9x13 baking dish and top with the chili. Stir this together, breaking up any big lumps. Now we'll add the first round of cheese! Add in 1 1/2 cups of colby jack cheese and stir it around really well. Once that's done, top with another 1 1/2 cups colby jack. Now we're ready to bake!

Step 6: Baking the chili mac

Baking for this is fairly fast - you really just need to melt the cheese and warm everything up. The chili mac might seem a little "liquid-y" when you first put it in, but I promise the cheese and the pasta starch from the cooking water will firm it up while it bakes. Pop it into a 400 F oven for 15-20 minutes or until the cheese on top is nice and gooey. Pull the pan out and let it rest on a cooling rack or the top of the stove for ten minutes or so before cutting into it. (just for ease of cutting - otherwise it just falls apart!)

And there you go! Enjoy! It's great with cilantro, jalapenos and hot sauce.

The PCLinuxOS Magazine Created with Scribus

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by OnlyHuman, September 14, 2018, running e22.

Happy 15th Anniversary, PCLinuxOS!

by Meemaw

October, 2018 marks fifteen years of PCLinuxOS greatness! The "official" date of creation for our distro is October 24, 2003. While very few of us have been here from the very first day, some of us have come close. I got interested in Linux in 2004 after my older brother told me about using it. By then the Live CD concept was established and I tried all of my prospective distros using Live CD's. I settled on PCLinuxOS in 2005 and by 2006 was using it exclusively and was a forum member. There are a few forum members who started with PCLinuxOS when it was brand new, but many of the forum members I know and love came along after I did. However, we're all still here, simply because **PCLinuxOS is that good**.

It is amazing that such a small group of programmers, packagers and testers has made this wonderful distro, without the support that many of the other distros have, some even being financed by millionaires. It is a credit to Texstar and all involved that we have such a wonderful operating system, configured just the way we love it, and so good, **It Just Works**.

PCLinuxOS has been around longer than Ubuntu (2004), Mint (2006), openSUSE (2005), Android (2007), Mageia (2011), Fedora (2004) and CentOS (2004), which is also very amazing to me. Our group is very dedicated.

I know many of our veteran forum members know this story by heart, but I am including it for the benefit of our newcomers. The PCLinuxOS story, straight from our wonderful Texstar:

In the summer of 2003, I became interested in Live CD technology after looking at Knoppix and a fresh distribution from a fellow named Warren, called Mepis. I was interested in helping Warren with Mepis at the time, but I had no clue how to build DEB files. Coming from 5 years of packaging RPMS and not really wanting to learn a new packaging system, I happened to come across a South African fellow by the name of Jaco Greef. He was developing a script called mklivecd and porting it to Mandrake Linux. I, along with Buchanan Milne (Mandrake contributor) and a few others, began working with Jaco to help debug the scripts. I got an idea to make a livecd based on Mandrake Linux 9.2, along with all my customizations, just for fun. I had previously provided an unofficial 3rd party repository for the users of Mandrake for many years, but had since parted ways. Since Mandrake was a trademarked name, myself and others decided to name the Live CD after our news site and forum, pclinuxonline, thus PCLinuxOS.

Preview .3 was my first attempt to make a livecd. I distributed it initially to about 20 people to get their reaction and feedback. Everyone who tested it loved the livecd but there was one thing missing. There wasn't a way to install the thing to the hard drive! srlinuxx from tuxmachines.org came up with a novel way to copy the livecd to the hard drive and posted it on our forums. Jaco utilized this information and inspiration from the Mepis installer and wrote a pyqt script to make the Live CD installable, thus the birth of a new distribution.

On October 24, 2003, PCLinuxOS Preview .4 was released as a fork of Linux Mandrake (Mandriva) 9.2 utilizing mklivecd scripts from Jaco Greef, a multimedia kernel from Thomas Buckland (2.4.22-tmb) and a customized KDE (3.1.4-tex). Preview .5 through .93 were built upon on previous PCLinuxOS releases. After three years of updating one release from the other using the same gcc and glibc core library, we found too many programs would no longer compile or work properly against this aging code base.
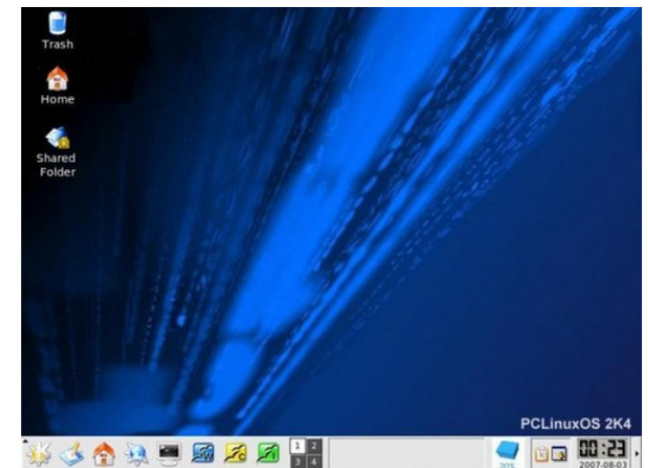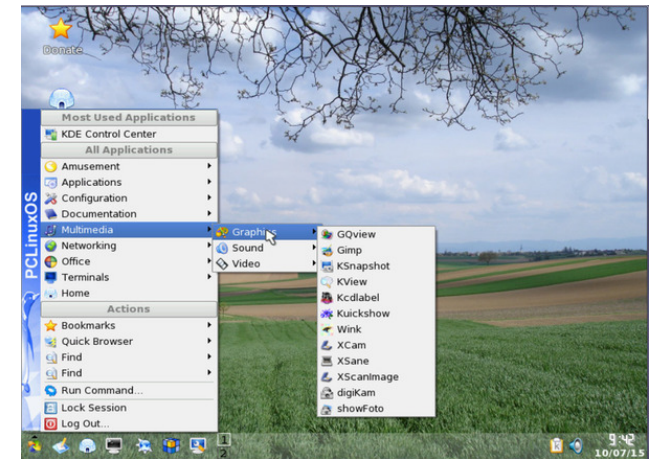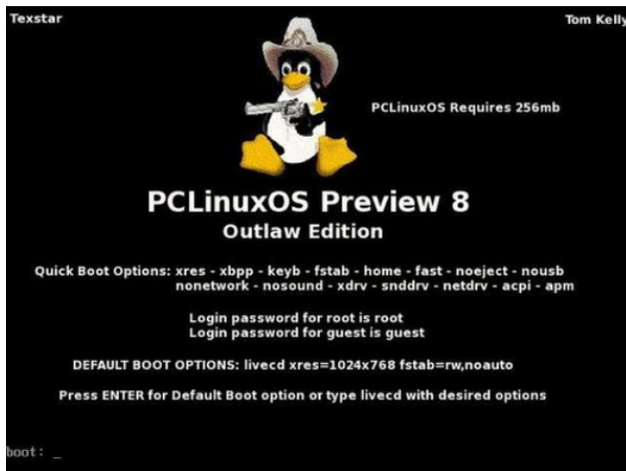
Main screen from the first release

Main screen showing KDE Control Center from Preview 7

PCLinuxOS .91 Start screen

Menus in PCLinuxOS .93 Big Daddy

Thac and Neverstopdreaming. Development continues as work is being done for a Minime release and an international DVD. A future release of PCLinuxOS will feature an updated kernel, KDE 4, fresh Xorg server and all the latest applications. All in all it has been a great ride and we have made many friends along the way. Some have gone on to other distributions and many are still here from our first release. As I've always said, we're just enjoying Linux technology and sharing it with friends who might like it too. We hope you have enjoyed the ride as well.

Live CD boot screen from Preview 8, which was Tex's favorite because of Tux with hat & gun.

In November 2006, we utilized a one time source code snapshot from our friends at Mandriva to pull in an updated glibc/gcc core and associated libraries. We spent the following 6 months rebuilding, debugging, customizing, patching and updating our new code base. We pulled in stuff from our old code base, utilized patches/code from Fedora, Gentoo and Debian just to name a few. This is why you will never see me distro bashing, as it would be hypocritical to do such a thing.

PCLinuxOS .92 Boot screen

We are still dependent in many areas on other distros development processes due to our limited but hard working volunteer development team.

On May 20th, 2007, we felt we had reached a pretty stable base and released PCLinuxOS 2007. It utilized our own kernel from Oclient1, KDE built by MDE developer Ze, updated mklivecd scripts from IKerekes & Ejtr, a heavily patched Control Center, graphics from the PCLinuxOS beautification team, and many application updates from

PCLinuxOS 2007 Live CD Boot screen

PCLinuxOS Preview .4 was released as a fork of Linux Mandrake (Mandriva) 9.2. Since that time, PCLinuxOS has matured into its own independent Linux distribution. While PCLinuxOS may have been originally forked from Mandriva, it also borrows from openSUSE, Fedora, Ubuntu, Knoppix, Mepis, Debian, Slackware, Arch and just about any/every other Linux distro around. Another example of open source benefiting everyone!

With Texstar's recent announcement on the forum, some new users (and possibly some long time PCLinuxOS users, too) may be worried about our favorite distro. Please know that Tex is still packaging and testing, but also that he has taken action to make sure that PCLinuxOS continues, no matter what.

Happy Anniversary, PCLinuxOS!

Falkon: A New Kid In Town

by alex25502

Move over Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome. There's a new kid in town! Its name is Falkon (yes it is spelled correctly, a "k" intead of a "c"). The Falkon web browser claims to be a free, fast, and secure browser. More on that second descriptor later! Falkon was conceived back in 2010 as a research project. It was originally written in Python but, in 2011 it was rewritten in C++. Originally, it was named QupZilla. It was based on the QtWebKit. In the spring of 2016, Qupzilla 2.0 was released. It also marked the transition from QtWebKit to QtWebEngine.

On 10 August 2017, QupZilla's developer David Rosca announced that QupZilla had become a KDE project. After the release of Qupzilla 2.2, the project was renamed Falkon. KDE Falkon 3.0 was released on 27 February 2018.

Now to my experience with Falkon. Several weeks ago, I needed to download a HUGE (3.3 GB) file from the internet. I attempted to complete the task with both powerhouse browsers. After trying twice with each browser, I became irate due to the time needed to download it. Firefox displayed 2+ hours, and Chrome informed me of 2 hours. I felt there had to be a better solution.

I opened Synaptic Package Manager in hopes of finding relief. I used the search function inside Synaptic. I typed "web browser" into the search box and was provided with a heaping handful of browsers to choose from. The description for Falkon in Synaptic is as follows:

"Falkon - Web browser based on QtWebKit
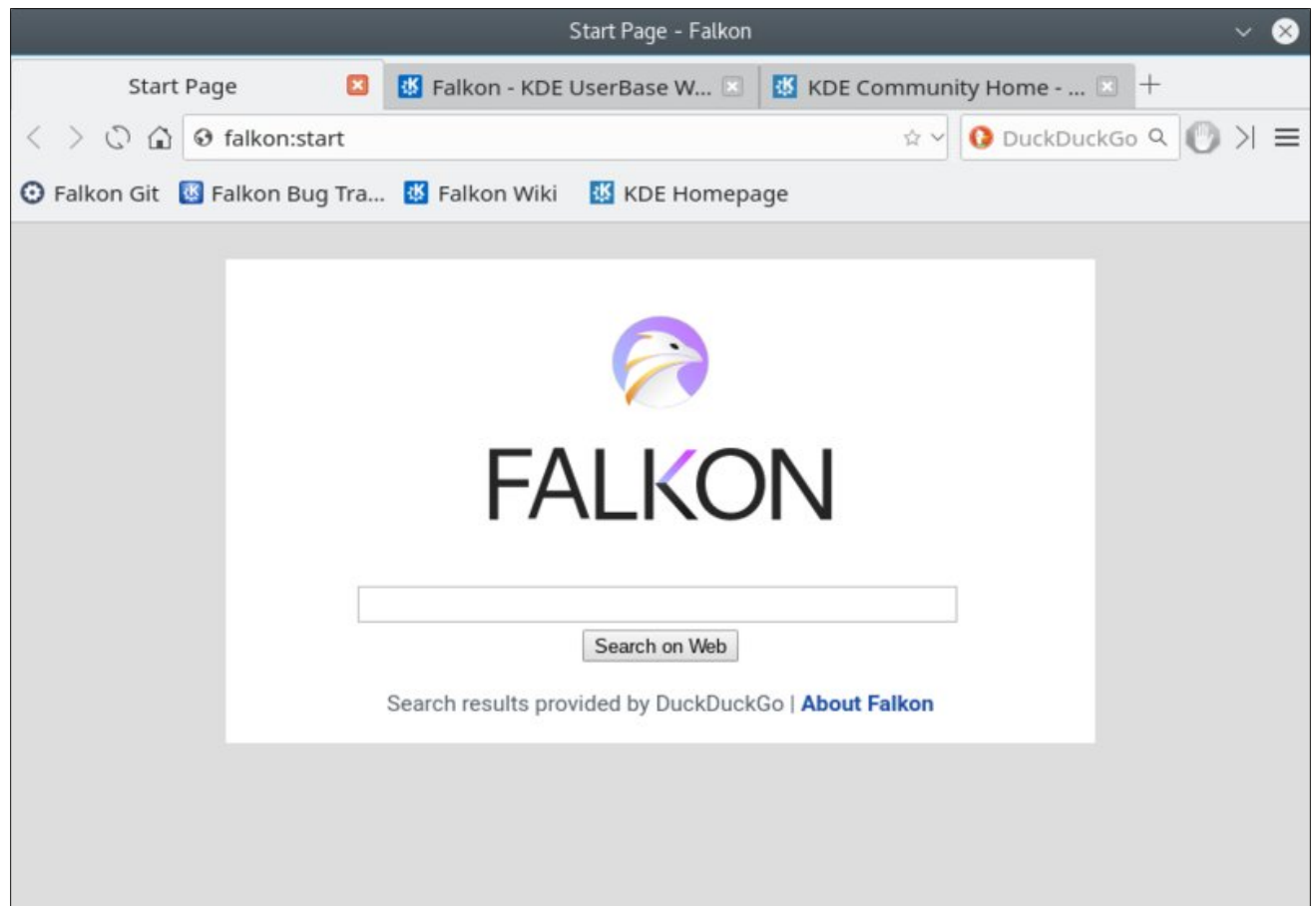
Falkon is a new and very fast World Wide Web Browser which uses Qt Framework and its QtWebKit rendering core. It is a lightweight browser with some advanced functions like integrated AdBlock, Search Engines Manager, Theming support, Speed Dial and SSL Certificate manager."

The phrase "very fast" caught my attention, so I downloaded it. I figured what do I have to lose? If it doesn't meet my expectations, I can always remove it and move on.

Last Thursday, I went to my local Tim Horton's coffee shop because of their very fast (upper 900 Kb/s) public wi-fi connection. After buying my small black coffee, I found my favorite chair and table available. It's a little secluded due to a 4-foot tall partition that wraps partially around the table and chair. Most customers cannot see me while I'm there. Plus, there is an electrical outlet within arm's reach! I plugged in and fired up my netbook. I opened Falkon and disabled AdBlock in order to maximize the fastest possible download speed. I went to the download page of my desired file.

After clicking the download button, and selecting my flash drive as my destination folder, Falkon's Download Manager informed me of a download time of ONE hour! Woo-hoo! Luckily for me, the connection didn't time-out during the download. During the process, I didn't open new tabs to look at different web-sites because I didn't want to dilute the download speed of the transfer. When the Download Manager informed me that the download was finished, I opened my flash drive to verify the task was complete. The file size in the Properties dialog box matched the file size on the web-site. Success! I then wrapped up my web session and gulped down my coffee! Yes folks, I'm one of those weird people who likes their coffee at room temperature!

If you haven't guessed by now, Falkon is now my go to browser! Firefox and Chrome are going into the closet! If you're experiencing a similar situation, I highly recommend getting Falkon! It's just as fast on

any file size, big or small. If it doesn't meet your expectations, you can always remove it. For more info, their website is: http://www.falkon.org.

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by weirdwolf, September 11, 2018, running LXDE.

Using Virtual Box To Play Games With DirectX, Easily

by Agent Smith (Alessandro Ebersol)

Well, you can use VirtualBox to play games. Not that it is common, since usually one chooses Vmware player to play games. However, the advances of VirtualBox can not be ignored: if correctly configured, VirtualBox can perform very well, rivaling in certain cases with Vmware player.

Also, VirtualBox has one advantage: it can work with recent Linux kernels, while Vmware player does not (it does not support kernels 4.14 and higher).

But how do you configure VirtualBox to play with 3D effects and with DirectX? In fact, the DirectX to be used is the 9C version, from 2010, which is supported by VirtualBox. DirectX 10 and 11 are not supported.

So how to do it? Easy, just follow this recipe.

To begin, you need to understand some concepts.

Para-virtualization interfaces.

Starting with version 5.0 of VirtualBox, there was the introduction of para-virtualization support, bringing increased performance and time accuracy for supported guest operating systems (Hyper-V on Windows and KVM on Linux). Support is now included for the NDIS6 driver API, which is used by default in Windows, starting with Vista. In addition, VirtualBox has a new audio back-end for better support.

But what do these para-virtualization (Hyper-V and KVM) interfaces mean?

Hyper-V is the Windows Server para-virtualization interface. With this interface enabled, it improves the speed of execution of Windows guests on Linux hosts.

KVM is the interface for Linux kernel virtualization. With this interface enabled, it improves the speed of execution of Linux guests on Windows hosts.

That is, do not enable the Hyper-V interface if you are emulating a Linux guest on a Linux host. But if you are emulating a Windows guest, it is this interface that you should enable.

The instructions, step by step.

Install the latest version of VirtualBox in PCLinuxOS (5.2.18), doing the normal installation with the GetVirtualBox script.

The Hyper-V interface is recognized by Windows 7 and above. In Windows XP it may work, but 7 is currently more supported.

If you already have a virtual machine, remove the guest additions (right, top).

After the guest additions have been removed, shut down the virtual machine.
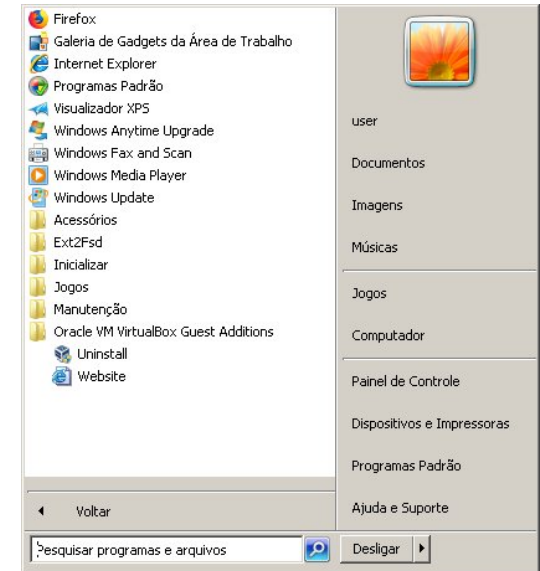
Now go to the Settings and in the System section, Acceleration tab, configure Hyper-V Interface, enable VT-x/AMD-V.

The next step is to set up the video card for the Windows guest. Do as shown in the figure below with 256 MB (the maximum that VBox currently supports).

Once these settings have been done, turn on the virtual machine and press F8 to enter safe mode.
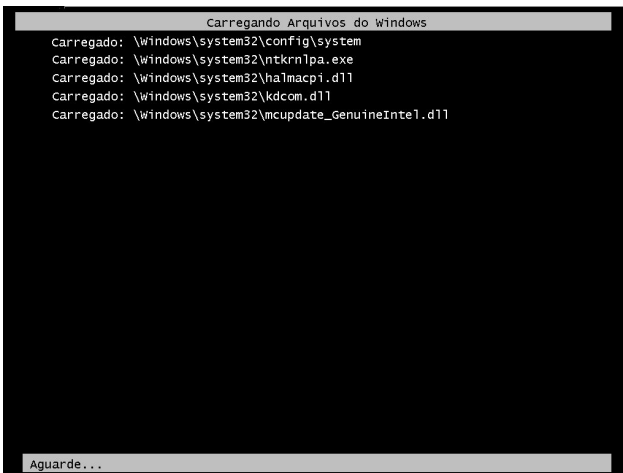
After the machine has booted, in the VirtualBox devices bar, click "insert guest additions disk" and start installing guest additions (center, top).
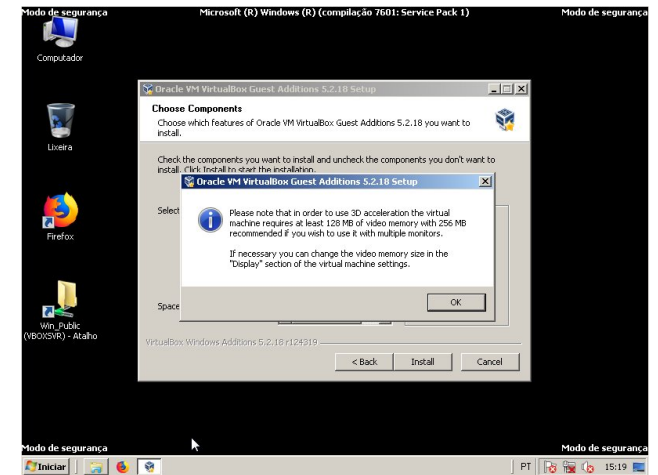
During installation, check the [] Direct3D Support (Experimental) and [] Start Menu boxes Entries (center).

Now, look at the figure below and proceed accordingly (center, bottom).

When the installer asks if you would like to install Direct3D Basic support, click NO.
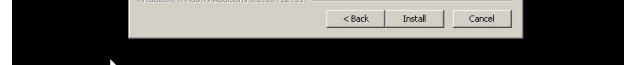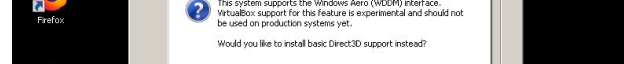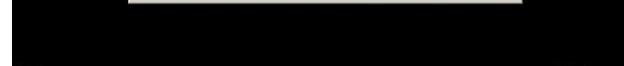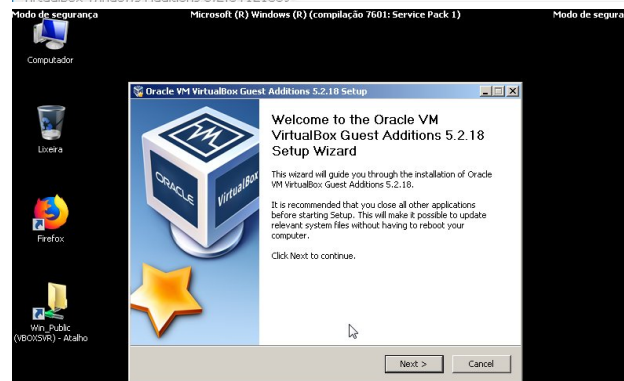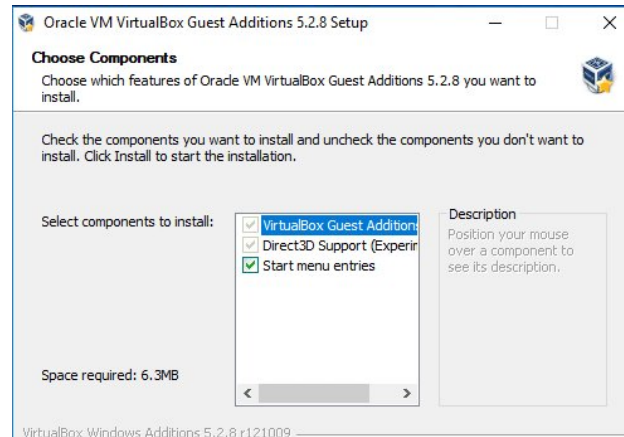
The installer will then display the following message.

Just click Ok and continue the installation.

If all went well, you can now install DirectX9C and enjoy good accelerated games on the Windows virtual machine you own.

I was able to play **Need For Speed III** without problems, with the Modern Patch applied, with sound, the in-game movies and songs, without major problems, in a Windows XP VM.
There are reports that **League Of Legends** also runs with good performance in virtual machine in this case, saving the pains and tribulations of WINE. Programs such as **AutoCAD** and **Photoshop** can run fine with pre-activated 2D and 3D acceleration, of course, depending on the amount of video memory, CPU cores, and RAM allocated to the virtual machine.

But, note: If you have an old computer (Core2Duo and alike), do not run Windows 7 on the virtual machine. The performance is very poor. I prefer Windows XP, which was the one I did the tests with and everything went well. If you have a more powerful machine, both in terms of processors and memory, then you can use heavier Windows systems.

I hope you have enjoyed, and have good games on your Windows virtual machines, inside your PCLinuxOS!

Until next month!

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by tuxlink, September 4, 2018, running KDE.

Inkscape Tutorial: How To Vectorize A Bitmap

by Meemaw

OK, say I'm creating a magazine cover and I just HAVE to use a certain piece of clipart. The problem is, when I enlarge it to the size it needs to be, it gets all fuzzy. For example, maybe I'm doing something for New Year's, and want to use this noise maker clipart:

However, for what I'm doing, it needs to be bigger:

Well, look at it now, kinda grainy and the edges aren't as smooth as the smaller image… is there anything we can do about that? We could vectorize it.

Vectorizing it means that we will convert it from a bitmap to a scalable vector image, which can be resized without losing any quality. Scalable Vector Graphics are defined in a text file rather than with pixels, like many other graphics formats. When you enlarge a pixel graphic (the image up above is a png), the pixels enlarge, which allows the image to lose quality and get grainy. An svg, on the other hand, is described using an xml text file. The text will be exactly the same no matter how big you enlarge the image, so it definitely has advantages.

So, can we convert this grainy thing to an svg? Yes! Let's do it!

Open your image in Inkscape. Select your image, and click **Path > Trace Bitmap**. You'll see a window like this:
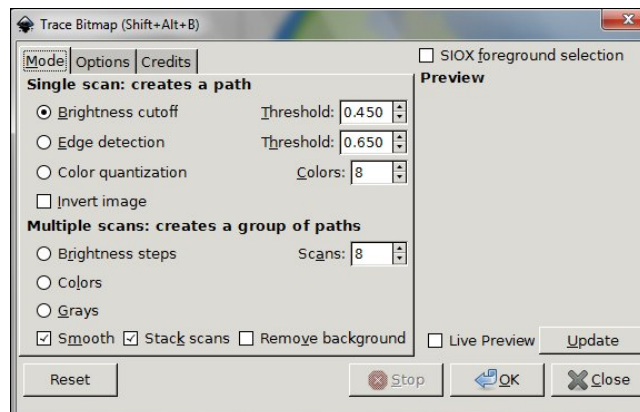
The first time will be a single scan, which will give us a black & white image (just for illustration). Make sure **Brightness Cutoff** is chosen (and check **Live Preview** if you want). You might have to play with the settings, but the default is pretty good, or you could go up to 0.500. Click **OK**. The svg will appear over the original, but I moved it to the right.
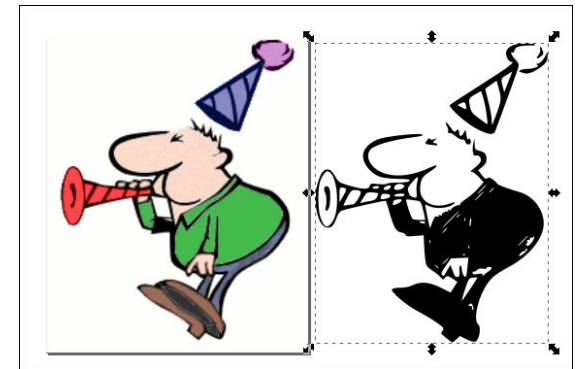

The black and white image can be saved as an svg.

(Rats! I wanted a color image!) OK, let's do it again, and do multiple scans. In your Trace Bitmap window, choose **Colors** down under **Multiple scans**. Also, at the bottom, uncheck **Smooth**, as it seems to improve the quality. The selected image on the right is the trace. This can now be saved as an svg.
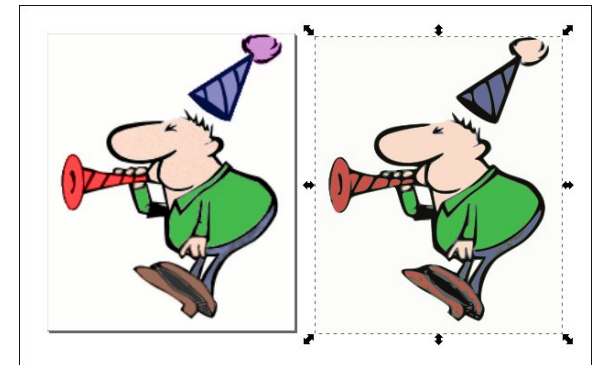
Look at the difference when I enlarge them both. The png is on the left. You can see how the png is fuzzy, but the svg isn't.
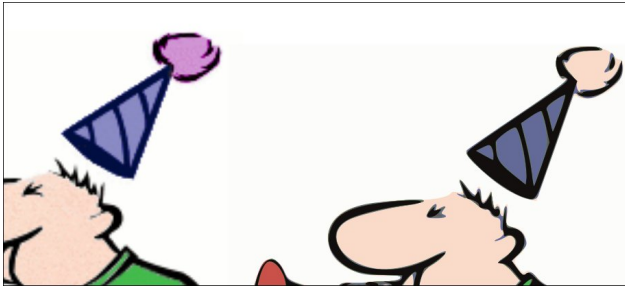
While the colors aren't exact (probably the person running the program rather than the program itself), they are very close, and the drawing edges are much smoother when the image is enlarged.

While this particular image was fairly easy, I have found a few that are much harder. I think it's a matter of finding the right settings for the image you are using. If your image has a highlight on it, things are a bit harder. I did this globe as well. As you can see, the highlighted area looks choppy now, even with the number of layers increased to 30. I'll have to experiment with the settings more, but it seemed to smooth out when I increased the layers.
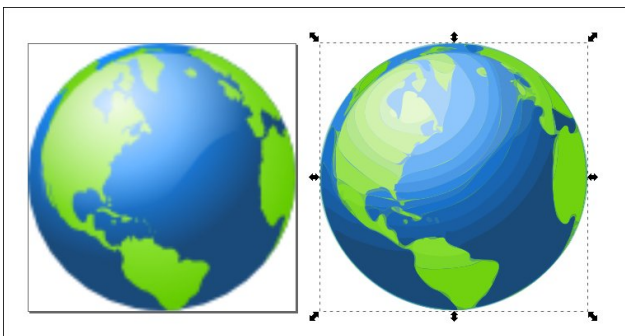
I hope this will prove useful to you. I thought it was fun besides. Your newly made svg's can be made as big as you need for your artwork.

Linux Docs
Linux Man Pages

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by parnote, September 4, 2018, running Xfce.

Google's Easter Eggs: A Full Basket Of Fun
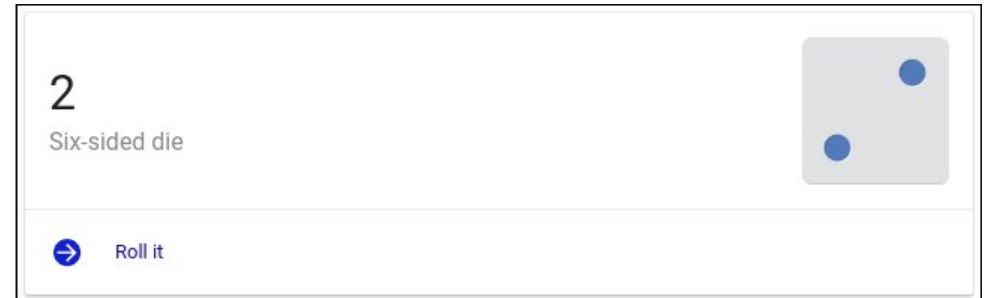
by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Love 'em or hate 'em, Google is firmly and deeply entrenched in our online lives. And, for all the bad press that Google gets, "they" do have a sense of humor. You can get a sense for their sense of humor by checking out the Easter Eggs that they have made available to their users.

Shall We Play A Game?

Do you have a little time to kill? Fire up the Google search page, and type "solitaire" as your search term. You will be presented with an opportunity to play the classic solitaire card game to while away your time, right there in your browser. Not a big card game fan? You can enter "tic tac toe" as your search term, and you will be given a chance to play the classic tic tac toe game. Certainly everyone knows that the game is not winnable, but it can go a long way to filling up some empty time you might have. It sure beats sitting there bored out of your mind.

Take A Chance

Sometimes, it's best to leave some choices in life up to chance. Google can help you do that, too. Enter "roll a die" into the search box and you will be given a chance to roll a six sided die. Enter "spin a dreidel" and you will be presented with a spinning dreidel. If you're looking for a more clear cut choice with fewer outcomes (maybe just a "yes" or "no" answer), enter "flip a coin" into the search box.

Give It To Me Straight?

If you enter "askew" as your search term, the entire results page will be displayed askewed … or crooked. It is a fun one. Want a mind melter? Take a look at the page source. There's a LOT of ciphering going on in the background.
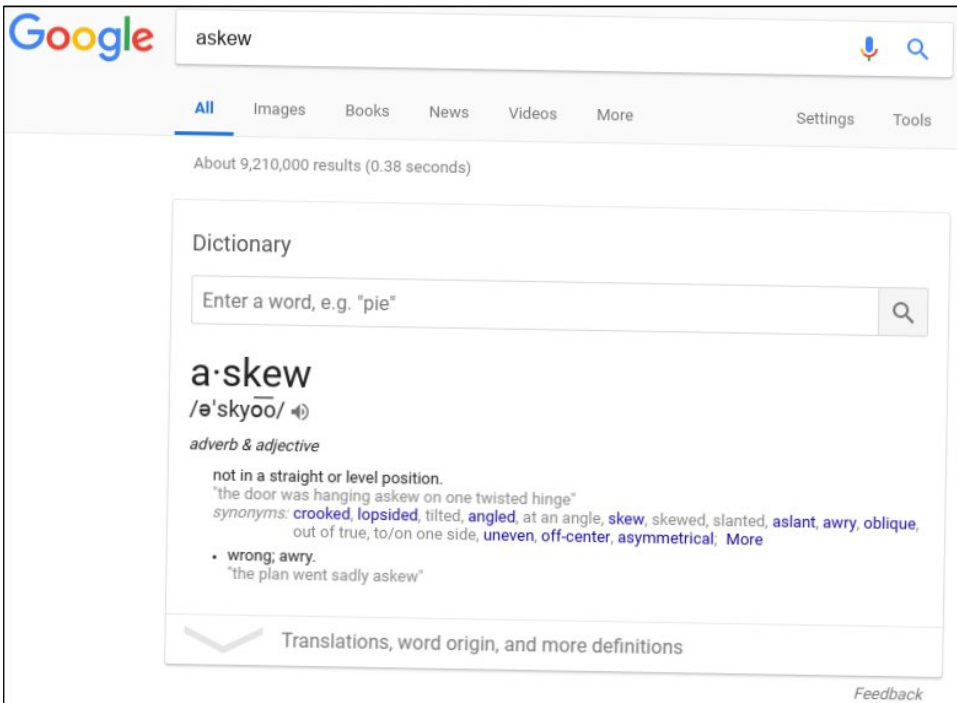
Spin It!

Google puts you in the pilot seat, so to speak, with this Easter Egg. Enter "do a barrel roll" into the search box, and watch your screen literally perform a barrel roll … just as if you were in an airplane.

Anagrams
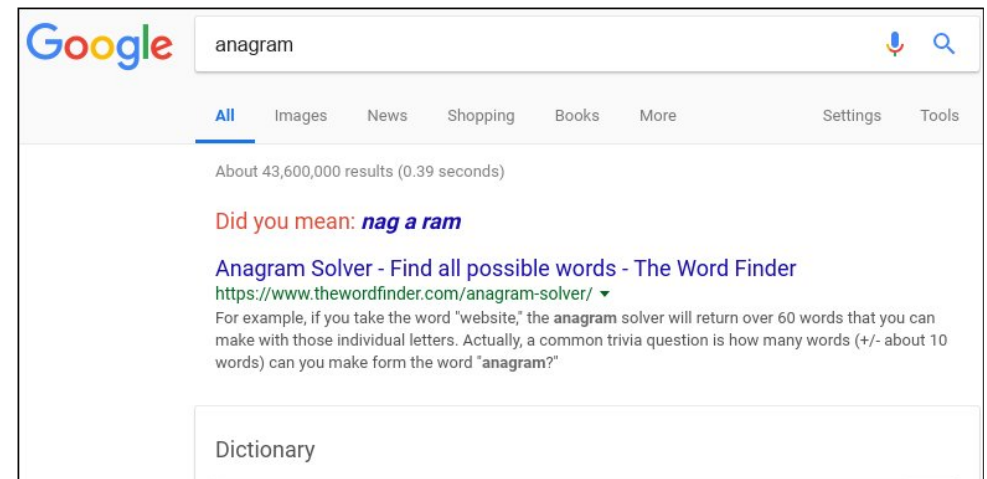
Google is notorious for offering up suggestions when it thinks you might have misspelled a word in your search phrase. But Google will also look for anagrams, which are other words that can be made from another word, just by rearranging the letters. Enter "anagram" into your search box, and Google will ask you if you meant "nag a ram," which is the letters of anagram, rearranged. Another example of an anagram is iceman, which will make the word cinema when rearranged.

Down On The Farm, Sorta
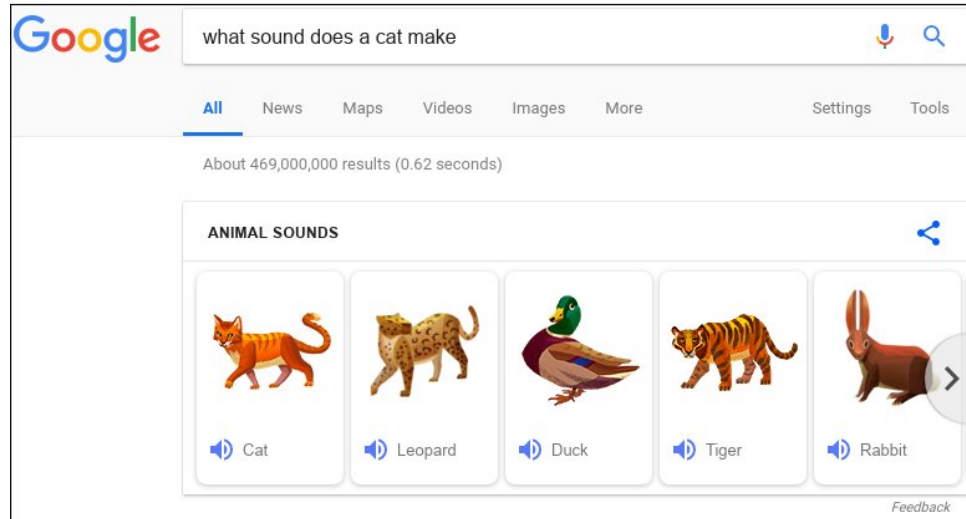
Enter "what sound does a cat make" into the Google search bar, and you will be presented with a panel that offers up sound recordings of different animals. The first 11 animals are presented in the panel, and when you select "More Sounds," a total of 29 different animal sounds are offered up in a popup window. This is particularly fun with young children, to help teach them the sounds of different animals.

Trivia Buff's Delight!
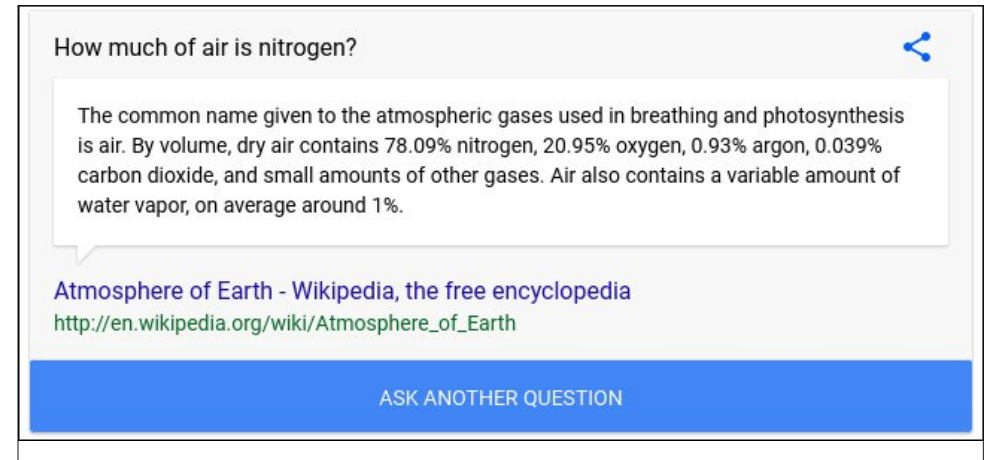
If you like trivia, you'll love typing "fun facts" into your Google search bar. Google will randomly present to you a tidbit of trivia, along with a link to further satisfy your appetite for more knowledge. Keep pressing the "Ask Another Question" button at the bottom of the box to have Google randomly feed you more "fun facts."

Games From The Golden Age Of Computers

Type "super mario" into your Google search bar, and a brief synopsis of the game will show up on the right side of the screen. Clicking on the flashing question mark button will also play the familiar coin sound from the game. But, the fun doesn't end there. Check your search results, and you will most likely find a place to play your favorite game somewhere online, to help you waste a little free time.

There is something similar for Sega's character, Sonic The Hedgehog. Clicking on Sonic will have him spinning to your heart's delight.

Don't Rush It!
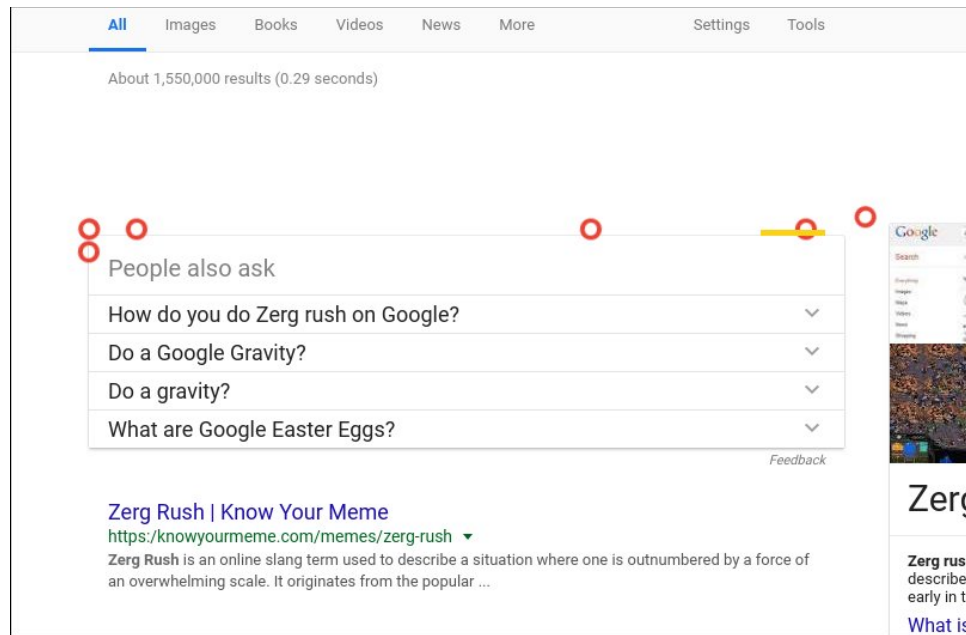
By entering "zerg rush" into your search bar, you will see a bunch of o's falling from the top of the screen. Before long, they will devour almost everything on your screen. If you're not familiar with the term zerg rush (don't worry … I wasn't either), it "is a term used in several real-time strategy games (RTS) to describe an overpowering attack by a player against his opponent, usually early in the game. This term was popularized by "StarCraft"."


PAC-MAN!
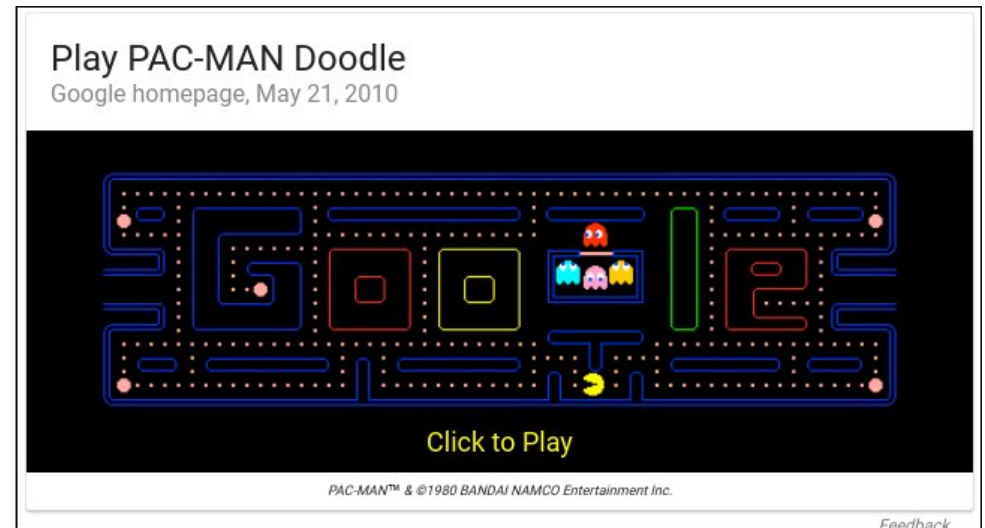
Google is famous for many of their Doodles that commemorate various items from history. Back in 2010, Google made a Pacman Doodle that you can actually play, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the release of Pacman. Just type "pacman" into your Google search bar, then click the "Click to Play" button on the Doodle. It can be a bit challenging at first, but you'll soon get the hang of it. Before you know it, you'll be wasting all kinds of time on the Google branded version of the classic arcade game.

Breakout!
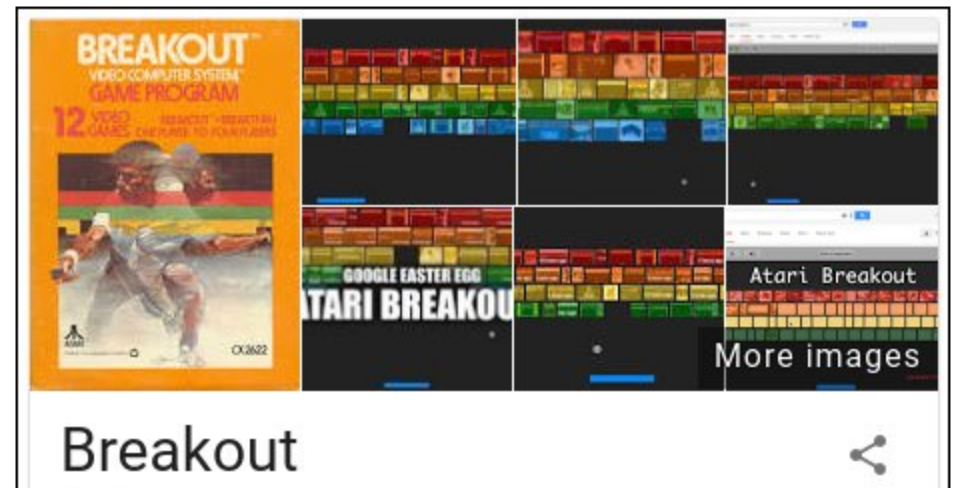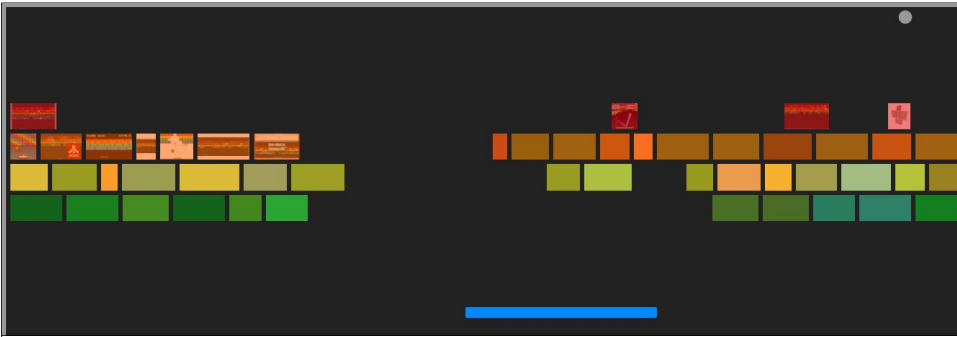
I can remember wasting SO many hours of my teenage years playing the Atari game Breakout! Well, you can waste many hours of your time now playing Breakout. Enter "atari breakout" into the Google search bar, then click on the first of the images that appear on the right side of the screen. You can then play a game (or 20) of Breakout!, right there in your browser window.
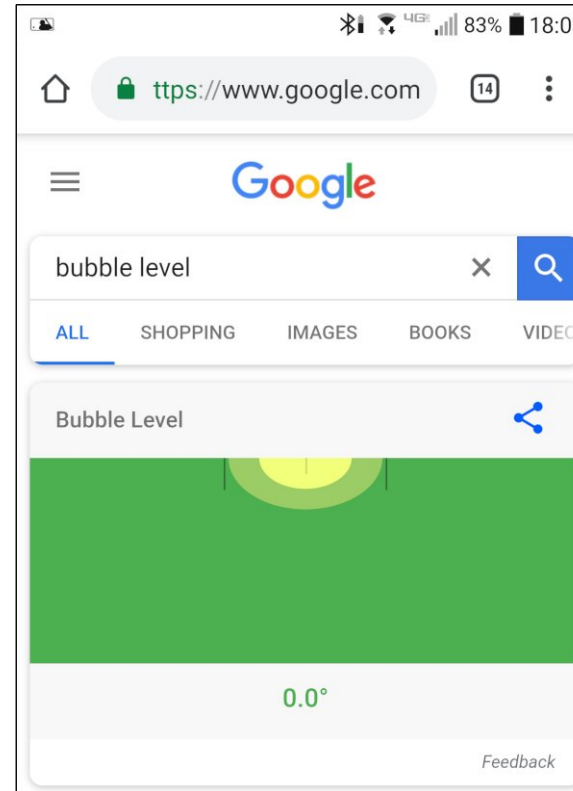
Keeping The Beat
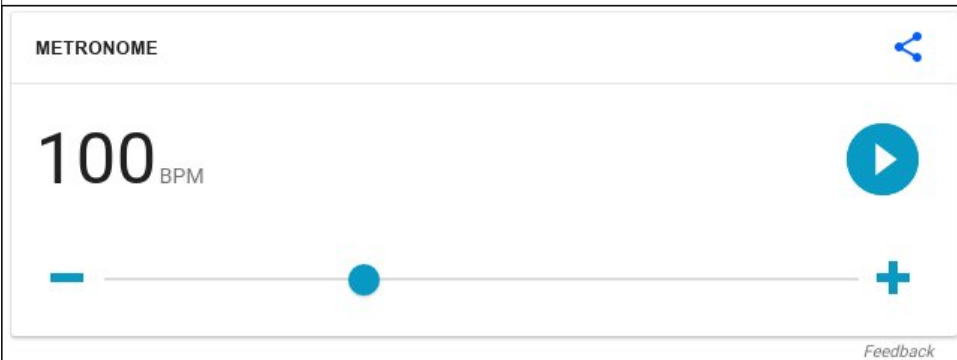
For all you musicians out there, Google offers up a little assistance. Just enter "metronome" in your Google search bar, and Google will provide you a fully adjustable metronome to help you keep the beat. It defaults to 100 beats per minute, but can be adjusted as slow as 40 bpm, and as high as 218 bpm.

On The Level

This one is only available on your mobile device (phone or tablet). Just type "bubble level" into the Google search bar, and Google will display a bubble level in the browser window. But not just any browser will work. From what I've been able to test, this ONLY works in the Google Chrome browser … at least, on my

Android-based LG phone. This will NOT work in the Firefox browser (which was the first one I tried). The bubble level will also show you the angle down below the bubble (pretty steady hands, huh, to maintain that 0.0 degree angle while taking the screenshot?!). So, you can also use the bubble level to help find an angle. I wish I had known about this when I was building the roof of my chicken coop! It would have saved me a LOT of headaches and wrong calculations. Of course, if you need a bubble level on your mobile device but don't want to use the Google Chrome browser, you can always download and install a bubble level app from your device's app store. At least this method works without installing anything extra on your mobile device.

Texting Before Texting Was Popular
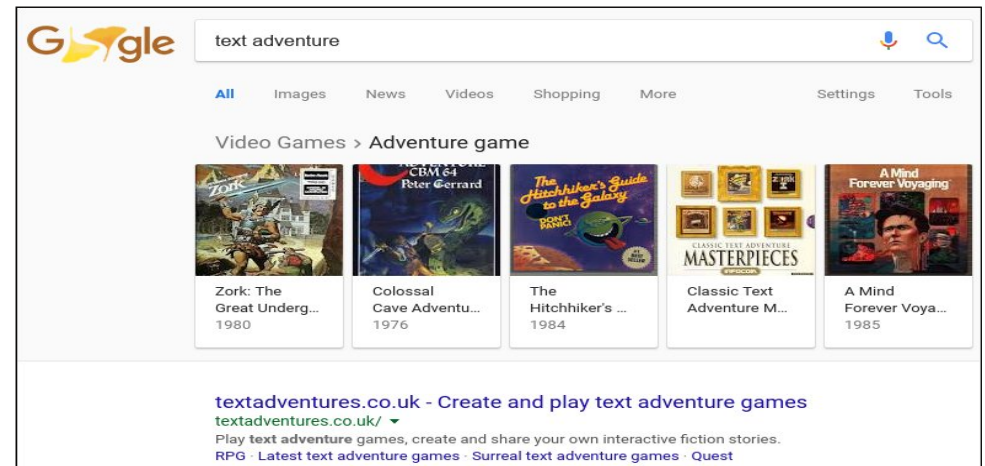
This is the latest one, discovered very recently by a Reddit user. Those who have been around computers for a while will remember text based adventure games, like Zork. I remember playing Hunt The Wumpus way, way back in the early 1970s when my father would bring home a very expensive and very large "terminal" from his work (he repaired complex mechanical and electronic office machines) that connected over a 110 baud modem that the telephone handset was cradled in, connected to some large mainframe computer located in some far away, distant city.

To access the hidden Google Easter Egg text adventure, first search for "text adventure" in the Google Chrome omnibar. Sorry Firefox and Opera users (and users of other browsers), but it appears this only works in Google Chrome.

Next, from the 3-dot hamburger menu, select More Tools > Developer Tools. In the window that opens, select the "Console" tab.

You should see "Would you like to play a game? (yes/no)" in the Java console (last line displayed in the image above). Answer "yes" to start the game.
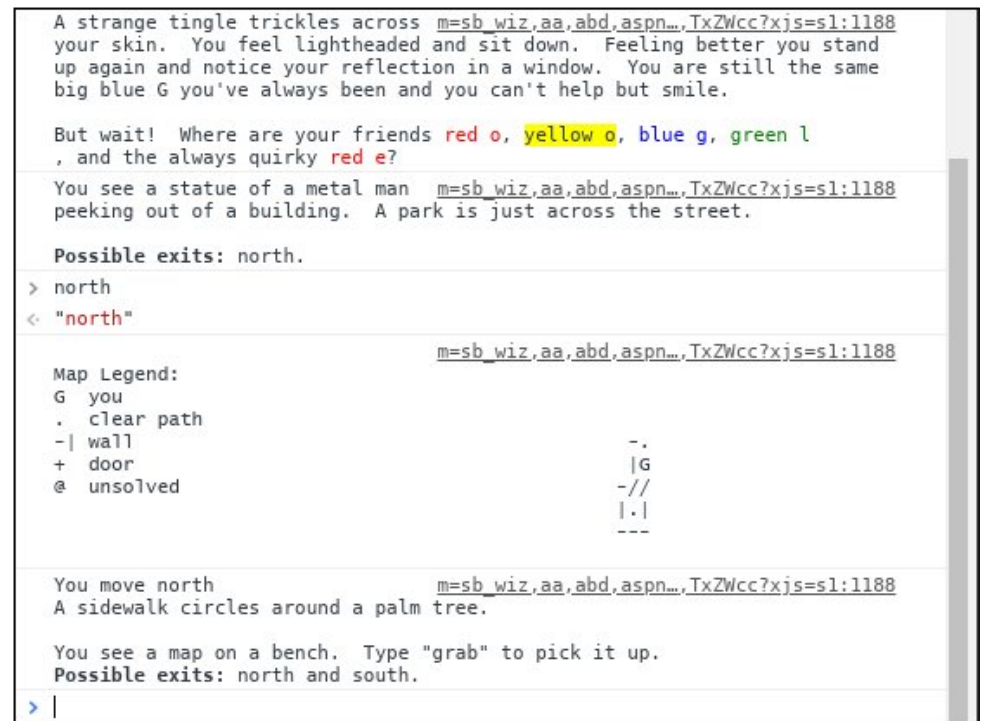
You are the large blue "G" displayed in the third image above. The goal of the game is to search the landscape, using the single word commands in the third image above, to find your "friends" red "o", yellow "o", blue "g", green "l", and red "e". You, of course, are the first blue "g". If you haven't figured it out by now, by "finding" your "friends," you spell the word g-o-o-g-l-e.

Ha! And as if you needed help to find another time waster!

Summary

Google is always adding new Easter Eggs to their products. They are fun, and certainly, they are a distraction from the monotony of many tasks. They are also a distraction from the worries about what Google has become, as well as what they are becoming. Google has taken a LOT of heat lately for many of their decisions and actions, and deservedly so. They have brought that scrutiny and those harsh opinions upon themselves. But, it is nice to know that these "distractions" exist, for those times when we would welcome a distraction.

There are several more Google Easter Eggs than the ones I've highlighted here. To see a full list of the known Google Easter Eggs, go here. Some only work during certain times of the year, some are no longer active, but most are, if nothing else, entertaining.

Repo Review: Gnote

by Cg Boy

Looking for an easy way to capture your thoughts in a digital note? Out of the various note taking applications in the PCLinuxOS repository, I have chosen to review one called **Gnote**, because I personally prefer it to some of the others.

The interface is simple and nicely designed. On the left are the notebooks, which can have notes assigned to them. Notes can also be marked as important, and will then appear in the Important notebook. And on the right are the note entries themselves. To add new notes, just click the + button in the top left corner. To delete notes you have to right click on them and select Delete. You can also search for notes.
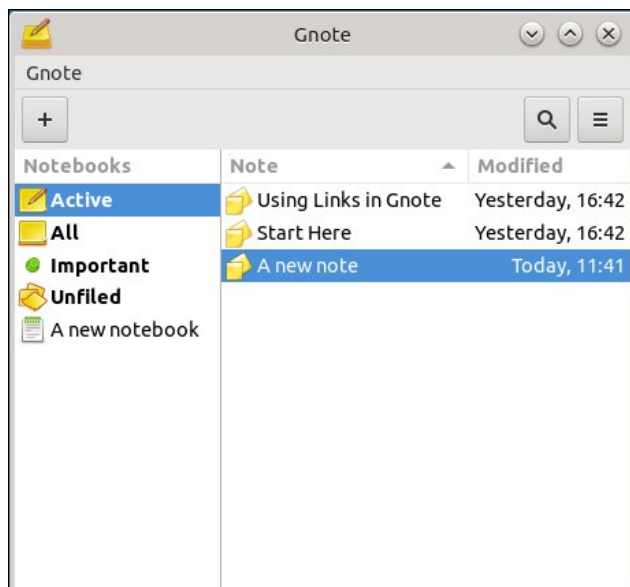
Creating new notes is really easy. You can set a few formatting options like font size, bold, italic, underline, etc, and you can also create bullet lists. One cool feature of Gnote is that you can add links to other notes by selecting some text and then clicking Link to New Note in the menu. Also, if you just type the name of an existing note, it will automatically create a link to it. Now, in the manual for Gnote, it says that there's a spell checker, but for some reason, when I used Gnote there was no spell checking. I'm not sure why. Gnote does also have the ability to print notes.
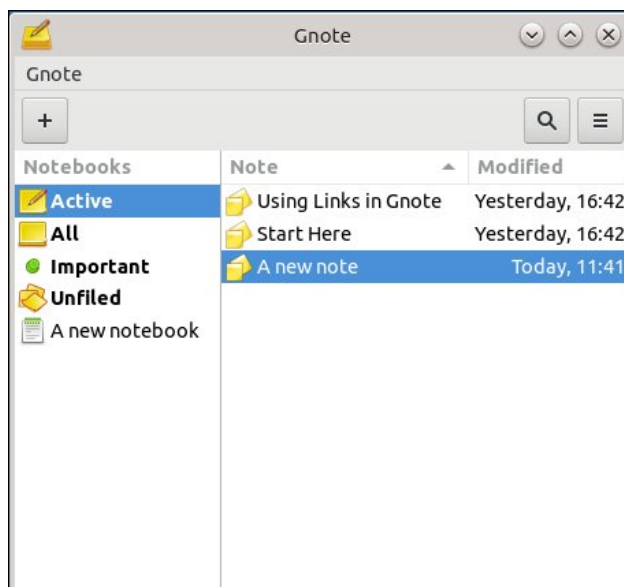
Gnote can be set to synchronize your notes to either a local folder, or a WebDav server. You can set it to automatically synchronize every 10 (or any number you choose) minutes.

Gnote comes with a number of plugins that can be enabled. Unfortunately, I didn't have time to try them all out for this review. There are plugins for exporting notes as HTML, adding a table of contents to notes, inserting a timestamp, and various others that I just didn't have the time to test. Sorry.

Summary

Compared to a few other note taking applications in the PCLinuxOS repository, I found that I liked the simplicity of Gnote a lot. If all you need is a simple way of writing down your thoughts, Gnote is a pretty good choice.

PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight: Lifeless_User

As told to YouCanToo

What is your name/username?
Lifeless web user because it's important to minimize the ego to remember who we really are - ever present immortal beings of consciousness.

How old are you?
I was born in the mid 90s.

Are you married, single?
I'm single and I will never get married. I do not need another person to feel whole.

How about Kids, Grandkids (names and ages)?
I will never have children, not in a world like this. Every child affects the environment in massive ways as the amount of food and energy required by every person is vast. Also the world and environment of these times are awful places to raise children, and then there's the education system that teaches children how to be slaves to corporate overlords.

Do you have pets, what is your favorite?
Unfortunately not. I wish I had a bulldog or a cage of reptiles.

Are you retired, still working and if working, what do you do?
I stay at home and work on my own projects and education.

Where do you call home? What is it like? IE: weather, scenery
I live in Manchester England and I hate it. There's too many cars, too many people and too [much] dependence on roads. It isn't pedestrian or cyclist friendly at all. It's also covered with allergenic trees which makes the city a nightmare for those with hayfever. The weather is okay though. I don't like too much sun, and I prefer rainy and overcast days to sunny days.
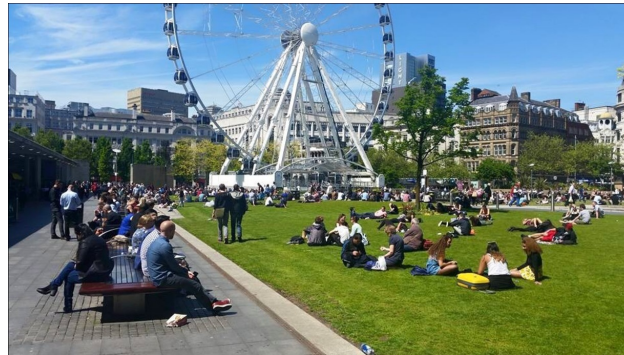
Pickadilly Gardens

Manchester Skyline

Where did you go to school and what is your education level?
I went to secondary school and a couple of colleges and got A-levels. I'll never go to university, which is only good if you want to become somebody with lots of debt.

What kind of things you like doing? hobbies, travel, fishing, camping?
Travel, fishing and camping sounds like a blast but I've never done anything that adventurous. I don't have the money for traveling or the transport and experience for camping. I do my hobbies at home. I compose music, play the piano, draw and I'm just getting into electronics. I just got a microcontroller and I'm trying to build a machine with it.

Why and when did you start using Linux?
I started using Linux six years ago, and used Ubuntu, then Mint. I just tried it because it was different to Windows.

What specific equipment do currently use with PCLinuxOS?
Just a weak laptop.

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

No, not really. Some of my family might think it looks cool though. I've told one of my brothers about Linux, but he wouldn't be willing move away from Windows with all the software it has.

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

I think Texstar and all of the others do a fine job with PCLinuxOS. I have no complaints.

PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight is an exclusive, monthly column by YouCanToo, featuring PCLinuxOS forum member. 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 youcantoo, parnote or Meemaw in the PCLinuxOS forum expressing your interest.
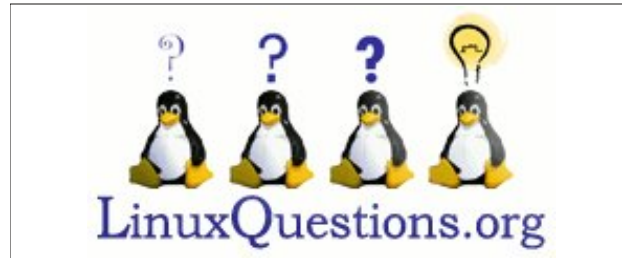
Screenshot Showcase

Posted by tbschommer, September 19, 2018, running KDE.

Tip Top Tips: How To Prevent Powered USB 3.0 Hubs Causing System Malfunction

This month's tip comes from **davecs**.

Before I built my new computer (recently), I had added a USB3 card to a PCI slot. Data transfer speeds were far in excess of USB2, if you had the right hardware. The problem was that the sockets weren't in the best place (round the back), and as I planned to build a SFF PC, I would be needing a hub due to a lack of sockets in a convenient place. I sent off for a cheap 7-1 hub on Ebay, which came with a DC-input socket and a mains transformer.

After I had connected it all up, I turned the PC on. Nothing. Totally dead. Or was it? I got closer and found that there was the slightest fan noise coming from it, and it was the PSU fan that was rotating. I used the hard switch, then pulled out the kettle lead, and still the fan was blowing gently. It dawned on me that the only source of power was the USB hub, so I disconnected it and all was well. The computer booted up and worked. However, when I plugged in the USB hub after starting the computer, things plugged in via the hub were not recognised, until I withdrew the mains-to-5v supply. Then everything worked properly.

I bought another USB3 lead (A to Micro-B) and used it, without the mains. On the original lead (because it was flat style), I sliced off a little insulation, enough to get access to the red wire (which carries the 5v) and cut it. Then I could use the modified lead with the power supply, and the new lead without.

When I built my new SFF PC, I found that things were a little different. With the unmodified lead, having the mains connected did not prevent the computer from booting, but it did stop the hub from working! Nothing I plugged in it was recognised. Without the mains, it worked fine, but I want it to act as a USB charging post when the computer is off! With the modified lead, the hub didn't work either way, powered or not.

I had already done some reading, and sent off for a Schottki Diode. Actually, 10 Schottki Diodes all the way from China. They were rated at 5A forward current, 100v reverse blocking. 10 for 99p sterling! They finally arrived yesterday, and today I soldered one across the break in the red wire, cathode (the end with the stripe around it) at the hub end, anode at the computer end.

The outcome is that now I can leave the hub powered so I can use it to charge when the computer is off, it does not backpower the computer, and the USB hub works properly when it's on. And if there are a number of devices using the USB hub at
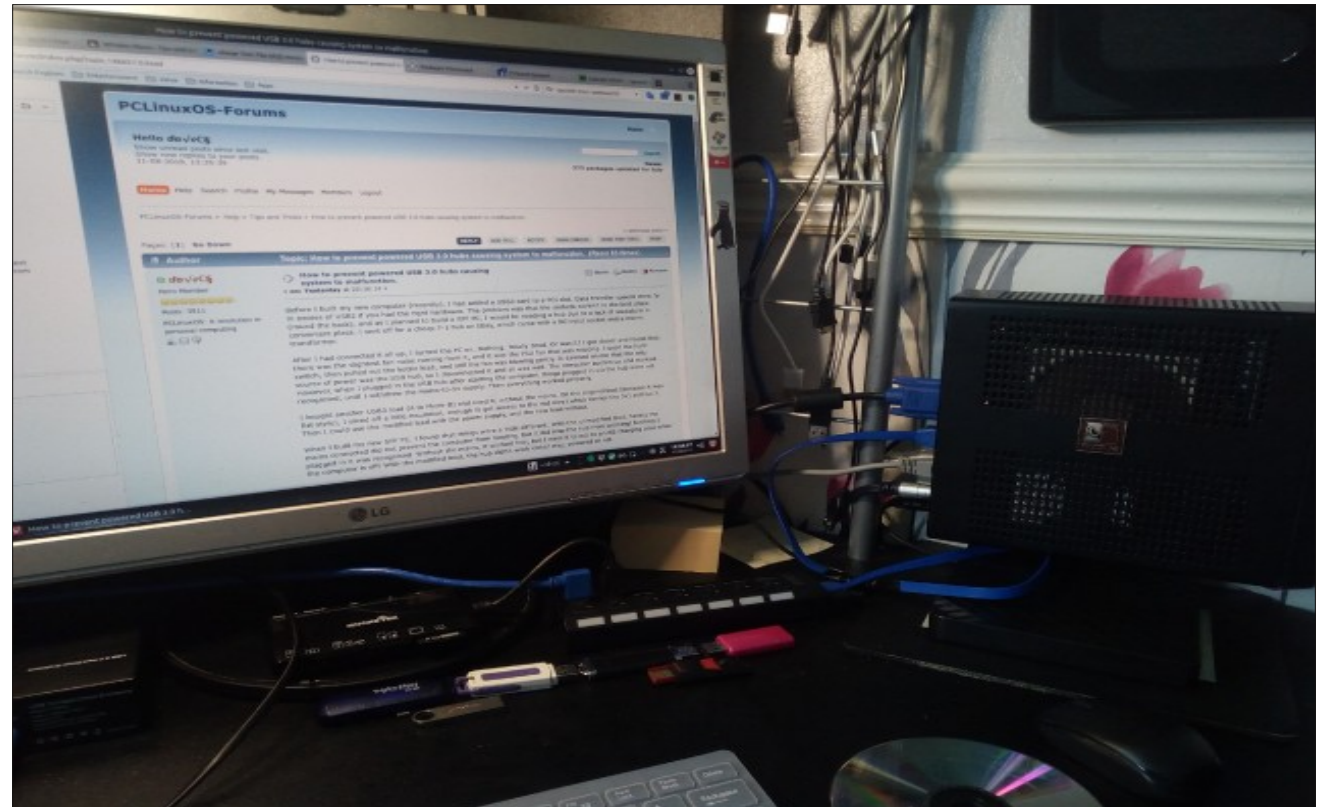
once, they will all receive enough power. Problem solved.

The price differential between these cheap powered USB hubs, and expensive ones which ought to have backpower protection built in, can be as much as 4:1 and all it takes is a cheap diode, a couple of blobs of solder and a few minutes work.

EDIT: A look at my desktop — you can see where everything is to hand. A DVD-RW under the computer, and, from right to left, the hub, a card reader, and on the left, an external drive (for backup). The black tape around the lead from computer to hub, is the visual reminder of the alteration to the lead.
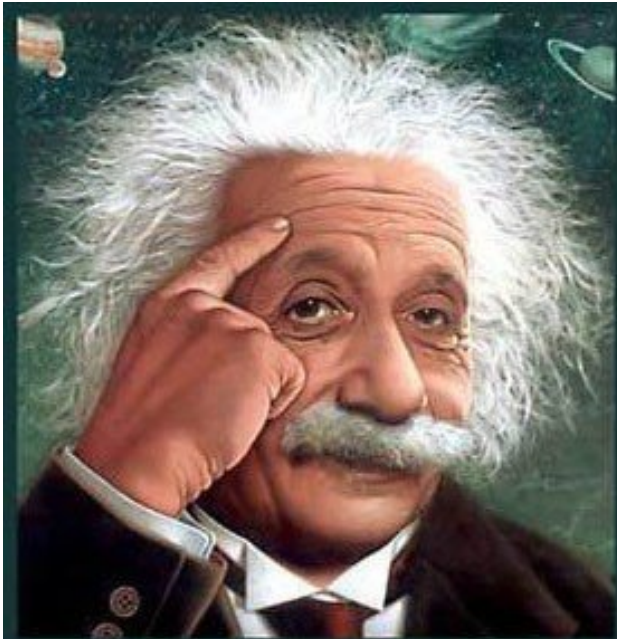
It's easier than E=mc²
It's elemental
It's light years ahead
It's a wise choice
It's Radically Simple
It's ...

PCLinuxOS
Radically Simple

ms_meme's Nook: Billy Boy

Oh where have you been Billy Boy Billy Boy
Oh where have you been charming Billy

I been working on my distro
Trying to make me some dough
So you'll have an OS like no other

Oh who will it be for Billy Boy Billy Boy
Oh who will it be for charming Billy

I will make it for my pals
All the guys and all the gals
Soon you'll have an OS like no other

Oh what will you call it Billy Boy Billy Boy
Oh what will you call it charming Billy

I'll call it PCLOS
It will be the very best
Soon you'll have an OS like no other

Oh what will it cost Billy Boy Billy Boy
Oh what will it cost charming Billy

I will make all it for free
But please send a check to me
Or you'll have no OS like no other

MP3   **OGG**

PCLinuxOS Bonus Recipe Corner

From The Kitchen of
YouCanToo

One-Pot French Onion Soup Rice Skillet

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb ground beef
1 small yellow onion, diced
1 cup uncooked regular long-grain white rice
2 1/2 cups Beef flavored broth (from 32-oz carton)
1 package (1 oz) onion soup mix
1/2 cup grated Gruyère cheese

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat 12-inch skillet over medium heat; add beef and onion. Cook until beef is no longer pink, crumbling beef as it cooks; drain.

2. Stir in rice, broth, and onion soup mix. Heat to boiling; reduce heat to simmering. Cover and cook about 15 minutes, stirring halfway through, until rice is tender.

3. Remove from heat; stir in cheese. Cover; let stand about 2 minutes or until melted.

TIPS:
Swap in mozzarella cheese for the Gruyère, if that's what you have on hand!

PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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

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

When you start a game of Sudoku, some blocks will be prefilled for you. You cannot change these numbers in the course of the game.
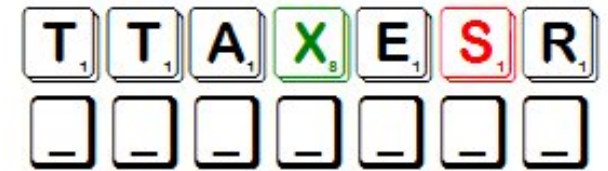
Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

Each block must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same block of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.
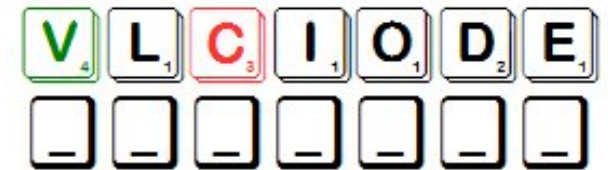
SCRAPPLER RULES:
1. Follow the rules of Scrabble®. You can view them here. You have seven (7) letter tiles with which to make as long of a word as you possibly can. Words are based on the English language. Non-English language words are NOT allowed.
2. Red letters are scored double points. Green letters are scored triple points.
3. Add up the score of all the letters that you used. Unused letters are not scored. For red or green letters, apply the multiplier when tallying up your score. Next, apply any additional scoring multipliers, such as double or triple word score.
4. An additional 50 points is added for using all seven (7) of your tiles in a set to make your word. You will not necessarily be able to use all seven (7) of the letters in your set to form a "legal" word.
5. In case you are having difficulty seeing the point value on the letter tiles, here is a list of how they are scored:
  0 points: 2 blank tiles
  1 point: E, A, I, O, N, R, T, L, S, U
  2 points: D, G
  3 points: B, C, M, P
  4 points: F, H, V, W, Y
  5 points: K
  8 points: J, X
  10 points: Q, Z
6. Optionally, a time limit of 60 minutes should apply to the game, averaging to 12 minutes per letter tile set.
7. Have fun! It's only a game!

Download Puzzle Solutions Here

T T A X E S R
_ _ _ _ _ _ _

E R S T T E O
_ _ _ _ _ _ _
Triple Word

V L C I O D E
_ _ _ _ _ _ _

R A R U O M F
_ _ _ _ _ _ _
Double Word

S M R E M E B
_ _ _ _ _ _ _

Possible score 241, average score 169.

PCLinuxOS Word Find: October 2018
PCLinuxOS Anniversary

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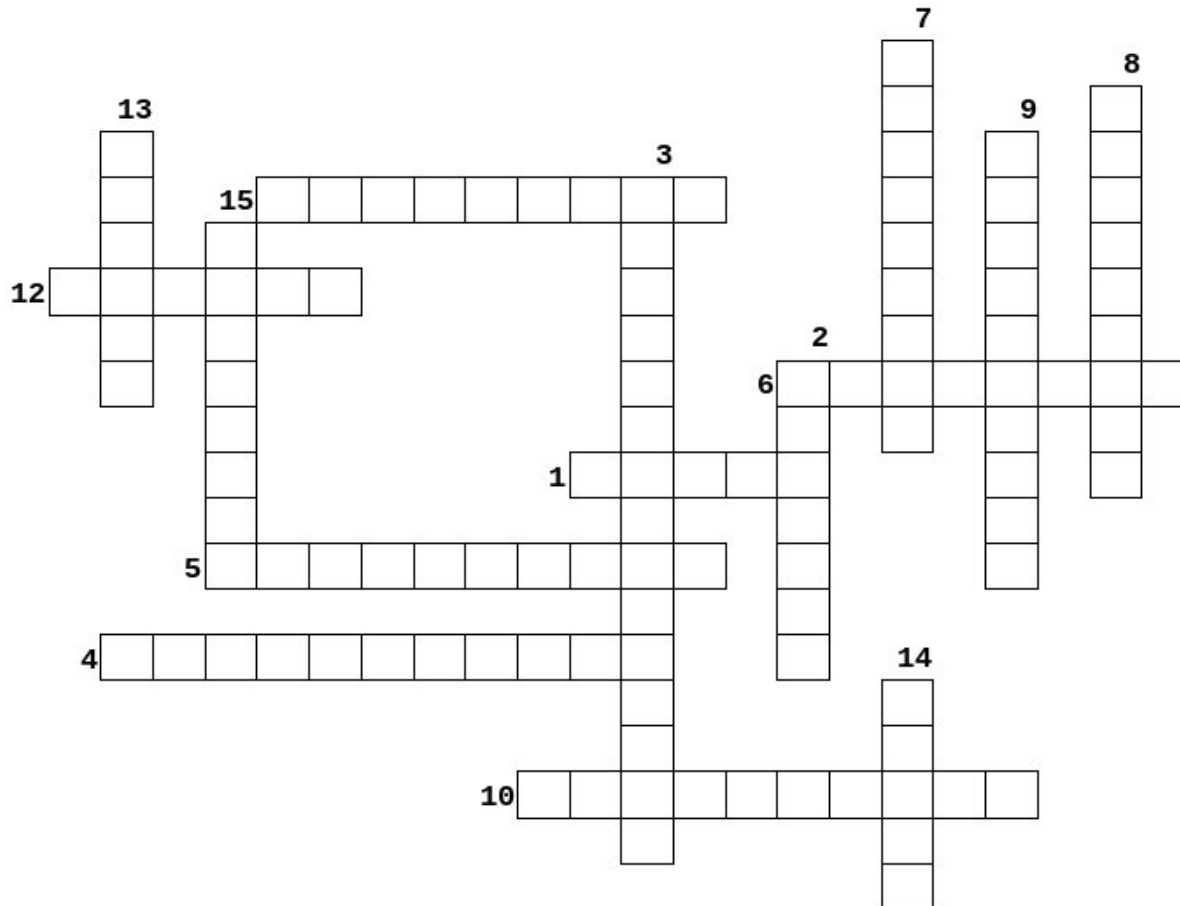Anniversary   Celebrate

Compile   Configure

Developers   Distribution

Fifteen Years   Forum

Kernel   Linux

LiveCD   Members

Mklivecd   Multimedia

Open Source   Operating System

PCLinuxOS   Repository

Snapshot   Software

Technology   Terminal

Testers   Texstar

Users   Website

Graphical User Interface

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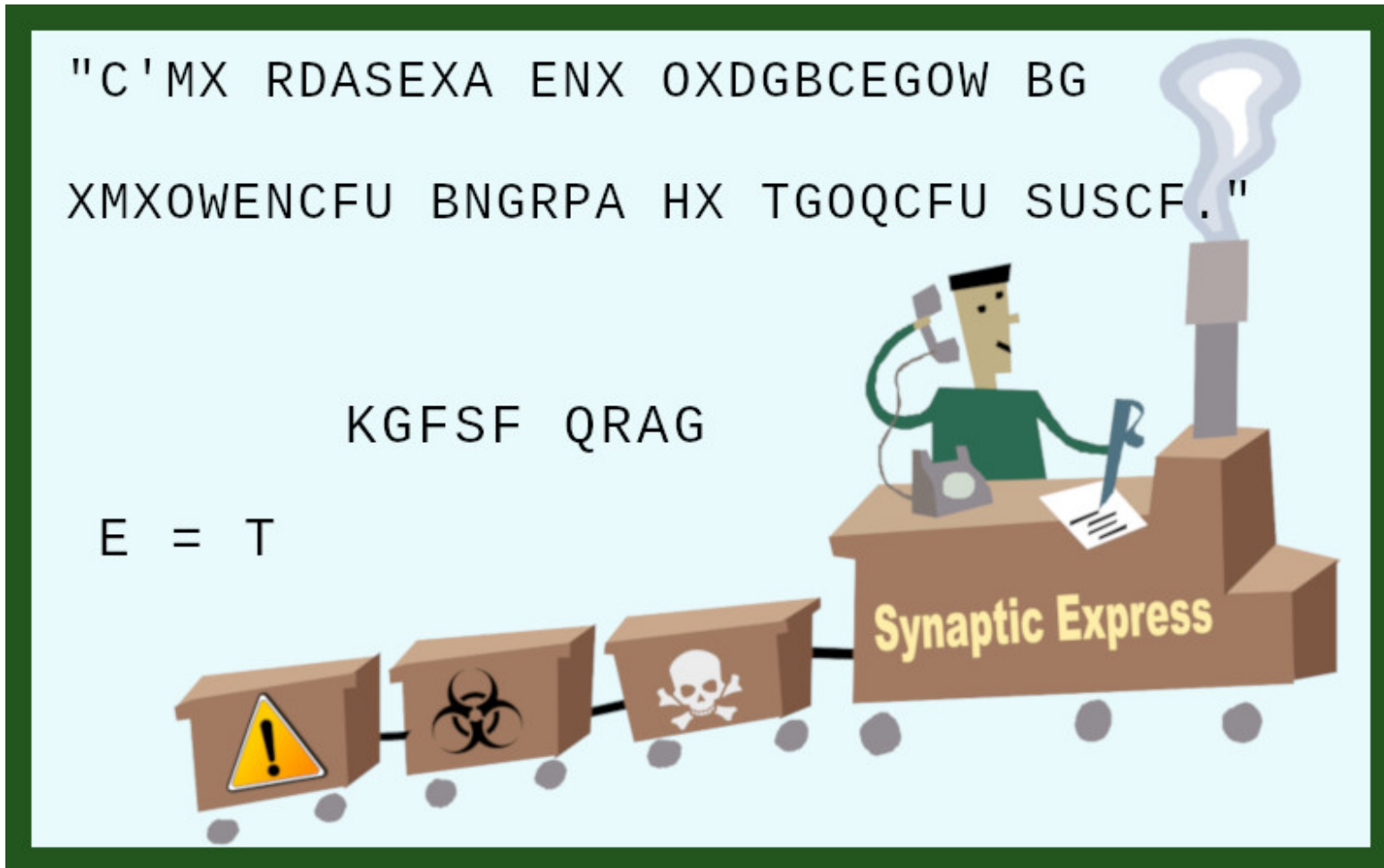
PCLinuxOS Anniversary Crossword

1. an open-source operating system modeled on UNIX
2. our favorite distro creator
3. the software that supports a computer's basic functions, such as scheduling tasks, executing applications, and controlling peripherals.
4. the date on which an event took place in a previous year.
5. the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes, especially in industry.
6. a device at which a user enters data or commands for a computer system and that displays the received output.
7. arrange or order a computer system or an element of it so as to fit it for a designated task.
8. acknowledge a significant or happy day or event with a social gathering or enjoyable activity.
9. a central location in which data is stored and managed.
10. software for which the original source code is made freely available and may be redistributed and modified.
11. a copy made of a disk drive at a specific moment in time.
12. a computer program that is the core of a computer's operating system
13. a bootable cd containing a version of PCLinuxOS
14. a place, meeting, or medium where ideas and views on a particular issue can be exchanged.
15. our favorite operating system
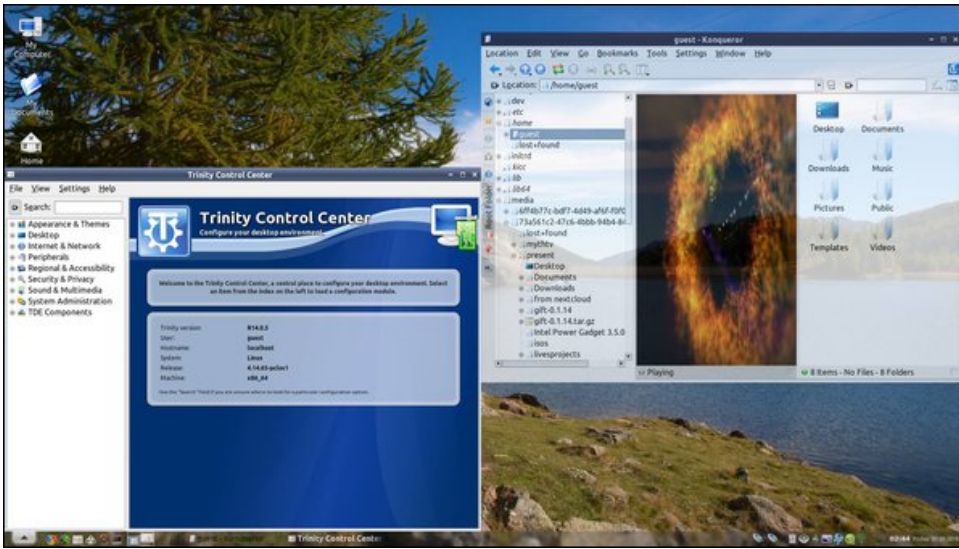
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Cryptograms

From the computer of ms_meme:

Everyday I work the daily crosswords and cryptograms in the paper. I like the cryptograms as they are wise/silly sayings of famous people. The magazine article about secure passwords made me think of the cryptograms. We have people in the forum who are always posting famous/wise/silly sayings. I have made a few into cryptograms, and hope our readers will enjoy them.

"C'MX RDASEXA ENX OXDGBCEGOW BG

XMXOWENCFU BNGRPA HX TGOQCFU SUSCF."

KGFSF QRAG

E = T

Synaptic Express
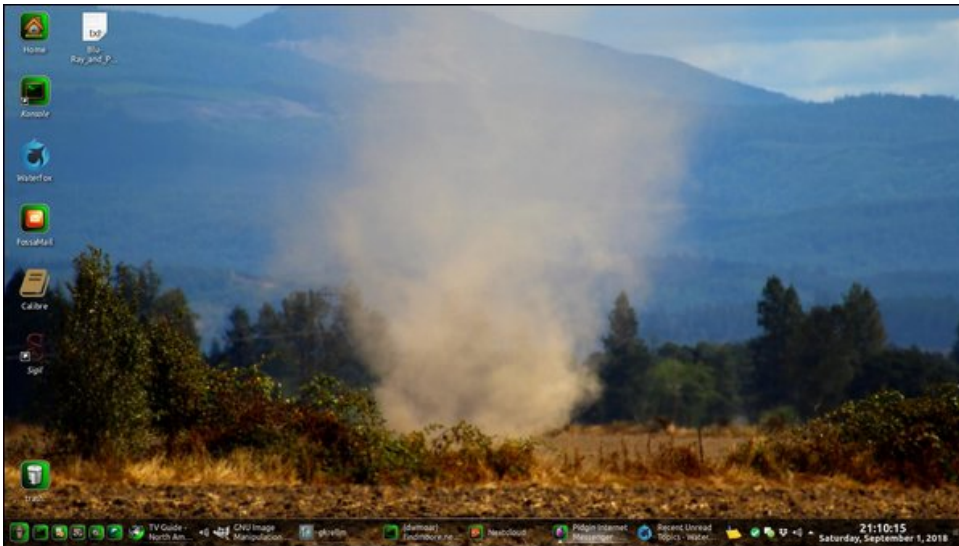
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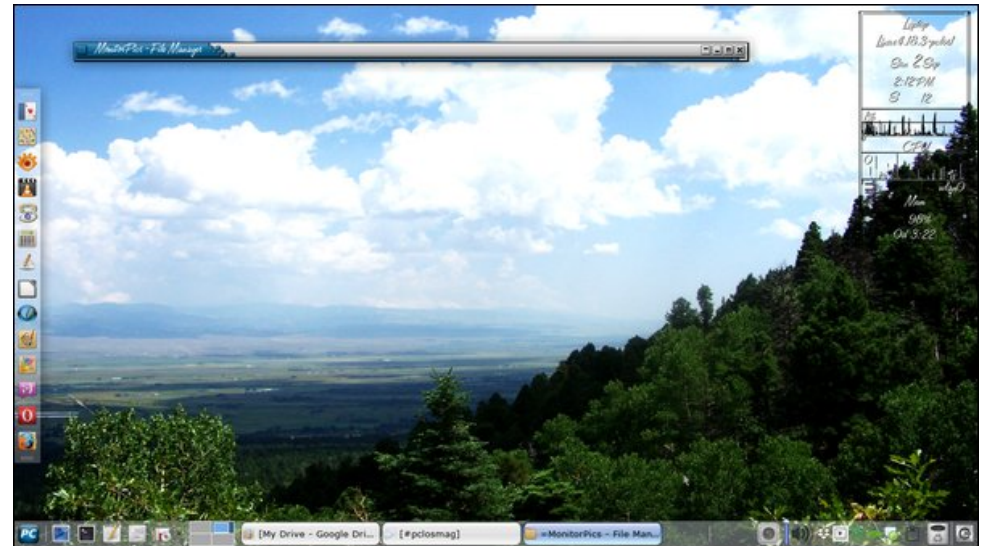
More Screenshot Showcase

Posted by present_arms, September 9, 2018, running Trinity.

Posted by OnlyHuman, September 6, 2018, running e22.

Posted by Mr Cranky Pants - YouCanToo, September 1, 2018, running KDE.

Posted by Meemaw, September 2, 2018, running Xfce.