The PCLinuxOS magazine

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The PCLinuxOS magazine

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From The Chief Editor's Desk...

Both of my kids, Ryan and Lexi, are in Cub Scouts. They thoroughly enjoy their Cub Scout experience. Just last weekend, they both competed in their second Pinewood Derby race.

Their first time was two years ago. A lot has changed over the past two years. The COVID pandemic forced the cancellation of last year's Pinewood Derby race. But, they competed the previous year. Ryan was a Lion Cub Scout, and Lexi, too young to be an "official Cub Scout," entered a car in the sibling category. Ryan won second place in his den with his Bumblebee car, and Lexi won first place in the sibling division with her Cruz Ramirez car.

The pandemic was hard on the kids' original Cub Scout pack. Through the attrition caused by the pandemic, their pack was merged with another pack in town. So this year, Ryan is a Wolf Cub Scout, and Lexi is old enough to be an official Lion Cub Scout.

Their cars this year didn't fare as well as they did the previous time they participated in the Pinewood Derby. And dad learned a lesson, as well. Get the cars as close as possible to the five ounce (about 140 grams) weight limit without going over. I tried to keep it under the five ounce weight limit, just in case the official scale at the weigh-in was off from my scale at home (they are both digital scales, so there shouldn't be that much variance). I undershot the weight limit by too large of a margin, which sacrificed speed.

Of course, there's a whole "science" to making the Pinewood Derby cars so they go as fast as possible. Just search on YouTube, and you'll find a lot of videos devoted to just this very topic. Applying slight bends to the axles, using graphite lubricant on the axles, raising one wheel ever so slightly so there are only three wheels in contact with the race track,

placing your weights just so, paying attention to the center of balance. The list could go on and on and on.

During this year's "cut-out-athon" where the kids cut out their car shapes on temporarily donated band saws, we were unable to attend. My wife was in quarantine for a breakthrough COVID infection (that me and the kids, thankfully, never showed any symptoms of having). That left me with the prospect of hand cutting/carving the cars, or buying my own band saw. I mentioned to my wife about getting the band saw to cut out the cars, and she said "I can't even count how many times you said you wish you had or needed a band saw, so go ahead and get it." Score! This year's Pinewood Derby netted dad the band saw he's needed for so long.

Ryan's car this year was an homage to Optimus Prime. While not in the shape of Optimus (that would be a bit hard to pull off in a Pinewood Derby car and still be competitive), the paint job was blue with red flames. Ryan's car came in fourth (out of four cars) in two of his heats, and second (out of four cars) in the other two of his heats. Lexi's car this year was a purple monster. It was actually a very slender wedge shaped car, painted a color-shifting pearlescent purple paint. Her car came in fourth (out of four cars) in all four of her heats.

Still, even though they didn't "win," they had a good time and learned a lot about fair competition and good sportsmanship. I wouldn't miss it for the world!

Until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, serenity, prosperity, and good health. Oh … and Happy Valentine's Day!

The PCLinuxOS Magazine

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Inkscape Tutorial: Create A Text Portrait Effect

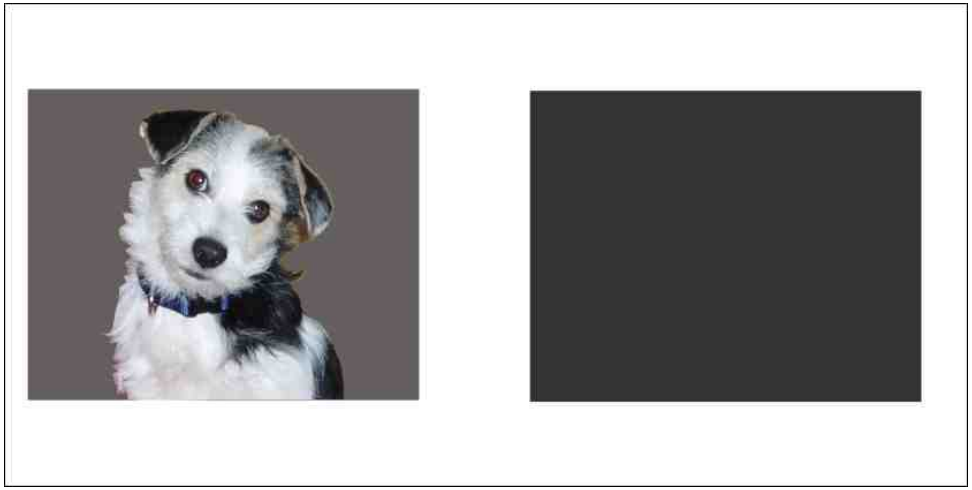
by Meemaw

I go to YouTube occasionally and watch graphics tutorials. A couple of my favorite posters are Logos by Nick and Davies Media Design. I saw one on Logos by Nick the other day that looked interesting so I thought I'd recreate it here. This might be a neat effect for a different artwork piece to give as a gift or something that might advertise your graphics skills.

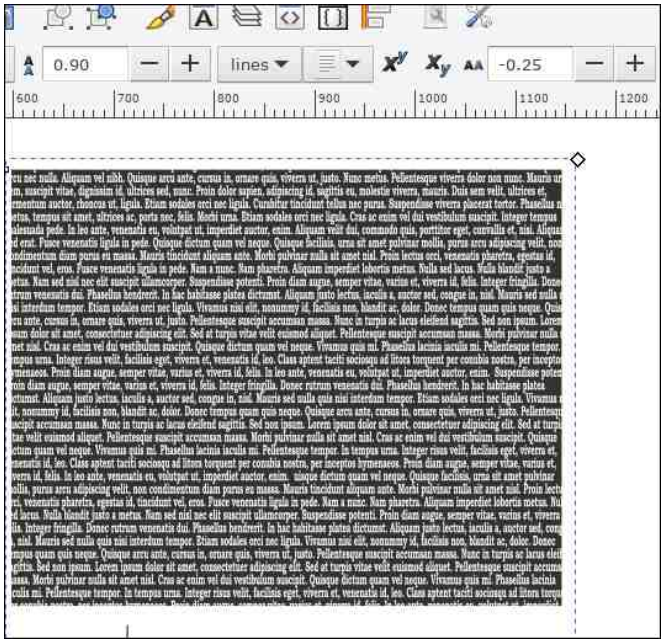
You want to start out deciding what photo you want to use, and what text you need. For this project, I'm going to use a photo I have, but I'm going to use the lorem ipsum generator in Inkscape.

First, after opening Inkscape, import your image (my brother has the cutest dog!) I edited this one so the background was a single color.

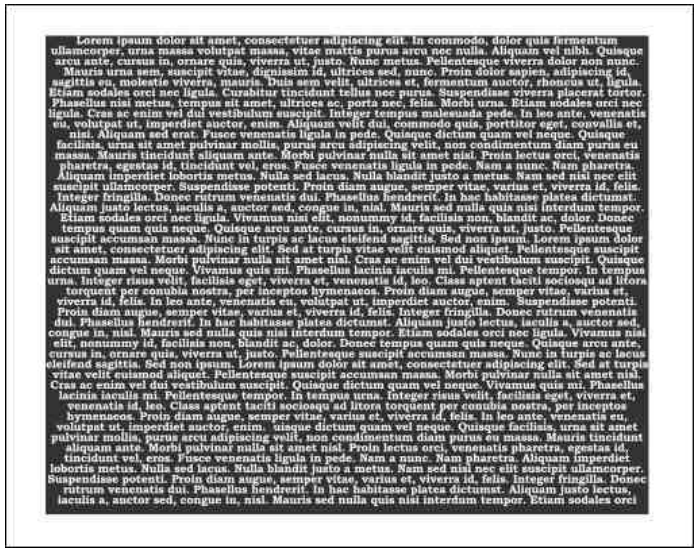
Make a rectangle the same size as your image. The way to make sure of that is to select your image, then click **Edit > Copy**. Create a rectangle - just make sure the corners are square instead of rounded. Now, click **Edit > Paste Size > Paste Size** and your rectangle will change to the same size as your image. I filled mine with a dark grey.



Now we want our text. If you have text you want to use, that's fine, and you can copy and paste it into a text box. I'm going to use a text generator in Inkscape. Click **Extensions > Text > Lorem ipsum**. It will make its own text box. While you have a text box open you want to change to a thick font, and make it bold, at least 10 pixel size. (I used Bookman Old Style, but you can use whatever looks good to you.) You also want to "compact" the text by changing the settings on the letter spacing and line spacing. I used -0.25 on the letter spacing, and 0.90 on the spacing between lines, but depending on which font you use, it could be different.



When you have it the way you want it, hold the **Shift** key to also select the rectangle, then select **Text > Flow** into frame. Deselect the two items, then select only your text, center it and make it white.



Select your image, and click on "**Raise To Top**" to make sure it will be above your text. Holding the Shift key, now select your text - ONLY your text, not the rectangle under it. Now open the **Align and Distribute** dialog, and using **Last selected** in the "**Relative to**" dropdown, center your two items horizontally and vertically.

Now, select **Object > Mask > Set**. WOW! I think that's cool!

I'm sure yours will be just as awesome.

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Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Alistair Einstein Izzard, January 3, 2022, running KDE.

Brave Browser: False Privacy?

by Alessandro Ebersol (Agent Smith)

"**Three times faster than Chrome. Better privacy by default than Firefox. Uses 35% less battery on mobile.**" This is how Brave Browser presents itself. But, is it really true?

Brave browser was created as a derivative of Chromium, the open source version of Google Chrome Browser. It was released in 2016, and came with many promises: Privacy, speed, and rewards for users, BAT's (Basic Attention Tokens), a form of cryptocurrency, which, according to the browser's creators, rewards creators and users.

Brave, designed to be a browser that respects the user's privacy

The Brave browser uses the motto: "You are not a product". It focuses on improving the privacy and security of its users. Brave also brings a new approach to the advertising ecosystem, ensuring that both advertisers and users benefit from ads by decreasing the amount of disruptive ad content. Advertisers are introduced to a more relevant range of users, while users are offered the opportunity to convert their advertising experience into a source of revenue.

However, over time, the mechanics of the Brave browser have gradually changed in a way that exposes the personal data of its users, and ultimately betrayed their trust, in Brave's initial motto.

Strange practices began to surface

On February 10, 2019, a Twitter message directed to Brendan Eich asked what a significant change in Brave's source code meant:

And the change was

This whitelist variable is associated with code in the tracking_protection_service.cc file that adds various Facebook and Twitter hostnames to the whitelist variable so that they are not blocked by Brave's Tracking Protection feature.

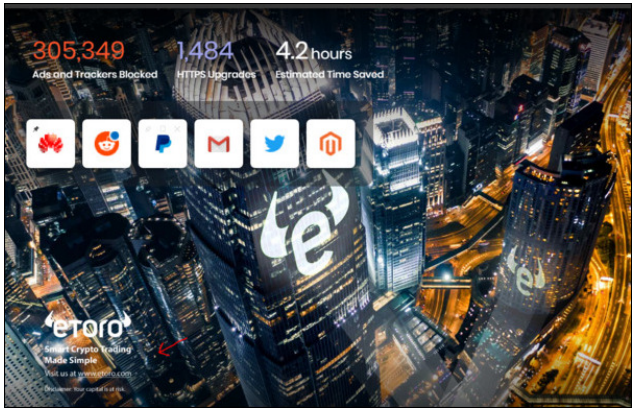
The list of whitelisted URL's is:

- connect.facebook.net
- connect.facebook.com
- Staticxx.facebook.com
- www.facebook.com
- scontent.xx.fbcdn.net
- pbs.twimg.com
- scontent-sjc2-1.xx.fbcdn.net
- platform.twitter.com
- syndication.twitter.com
- cdn.syndication.twimg.com

The response from the Brave browser team was that the developer team decided to whitelist Facebook and Twitter tracking scripts because blocking them would affect the functionality of many sites. One of the Facebook features that would be broken includes Facebook logins.

Now, that was a very convenient response, which has a basis in truth. However, such trackers, being left off the hook, can also identify and deliver users' browsing habits to third parties. And, Facebook (Meta now) is known to abuse the personal data of its users.

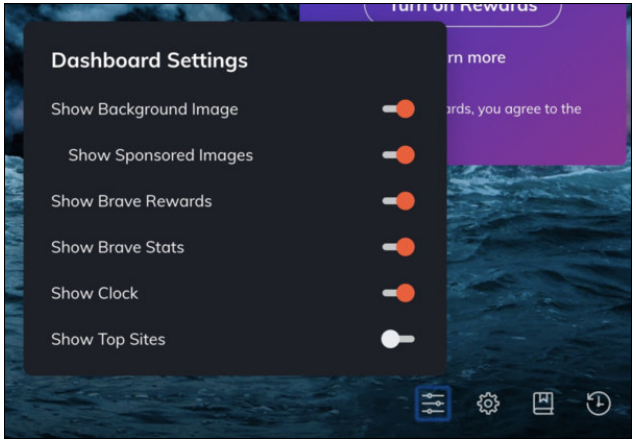
But, that's not all. With the involvement of the company Brave Software, Inc. with cryptocurrencies, other "strange" incidents have happened.



The browser has started showing, on its homepage or new tab, a new form of monetization for Brave: sponsored images. Sponsored images were introduced in 2020, and according to Brave's blog "These branded images will appear in the form of

large, beautiful background images within our new tab. The sponsored images will bring in additional revenue to support Brave's mission and give users a new reason to turn to Brave Rewards so they can be compensated for their attention. These images will begin appearing in our mobile and desktop browsers in the coming months."
However, there was no opt-out setting for this Etoro cryptocurrency system, with the user who opted in to Brave Rewards automatically being taken to the Etoro affiliate program.

It turns out that it was only thanks to the opening of a ticket on github about this "problem" that there was a change to make it an opt-in.



And the ad blocker?

According to Werwolf from the Black Gnu website: "Their ad blocker is just a fork of uBlock Origin, which is not necessarily bad, but another reason to avoid using Brave is that uBlock Origin works best in Firefox and there is nothing Brave can do about that.

Another side effect of using a browser that is made by Google is that Google will make decisions that benefit its advertising business, such as making it impossible to use ad blockers in any Chrome-based browser. And, of course, this will affect Brave."

However here, doing a deeper analysis, although Werwolf's statement is true, at its source, there are advantages to Brave's integrated ad blocker: "Since Brave's ad blocker is integrated directly into the browser (i.e. it's not an extension), the limitations of Manifest V3 don't apply." - according to user wmitty, from the Hacker News site.

The controversy with Tom Scott

In 2018 there was a serious controversy with British YouTuber Tom Scott. Popular British YouTuber, Tom Scott, prides himself on not asking for donations or crowdfunding on any platform.

However, in 2018, he discovered that Brave browser was using his name and image to collect donations on his behalf. Since Scott had not requested or consented to this, he asked Brave to stop, and to refund any donations made. Brave replied that "we will see what we can do," but that "refunds are impossible."

Of course, refunds should really be impossible, given the alleged anonymous nature of Brave's tips. But asking for donations "for" someone, without their consent, is highly questionable, if not downright fraudulent. It really doesn't help that the pop-ups, which appear on Scott's YouTube channel and personal website, are so deceptively designed.

Conclusions: To use or not to use Brave?

Well, with several arguments against Brave, and further checking the technical nature of several problems, I still think Brave is better than Google Chrome.

It consumes less memory, is faster, does not load the system as much, and with some adjustments, it can become better than it already is.

And how to do that?

Let's see.

Tweaking Brave to decrease sending data to third parties

The first thing to do is to disable the automatic sending of data to Brave, Inc.

How? Do this: Go to **Settings -> Advanced settings -> Privacy and security -> Automatically send totally private product reviews to Brave.** Set it to **disabled**.

Also, in the same section, disable "**Send usage statistics to improve Brave browser**".

Now to block those strange URLs we can do one thing: Edit the hosts file in /etc.

The hosts file intercepts known addresses and translates them into IPs, without the need to consult a DNS server. It already has one address registered, which is the ip of localhost (127.0.0.1).

So we can add the following addresses to the list:

127.0.0.1 static.brave.com
127.0.0.1 crlsets.brave.com
127.0.0.1 brave-core-ext.s3.brave.com
127.0.0.1 safebrowsing.brave.com
127.0.0.1 static1.brave.com
127.0.0.1 laptop-updates.brave.com

127.0.0.1 variations.brave.com
127.0.0.1 grant.rewards.brave.com
127.0.0.1 api.rewards.brave.com
127.0.0.1 rewards.brave.com
127.0.0.1 p3a.brave.com
127.0.0.1 go-updater.brave.com
127.0.0.1 componentupdater.brave.com

Of course it must be done with a pure text editor, and as root. After adding the addresses, save the hosts file and Brave will never phone home again.

I hope you enjoyed this review of the Brave browser, and don't be scared of Brave browser stories. It is a pretty good browser, and with a little tweaking it gets even better.

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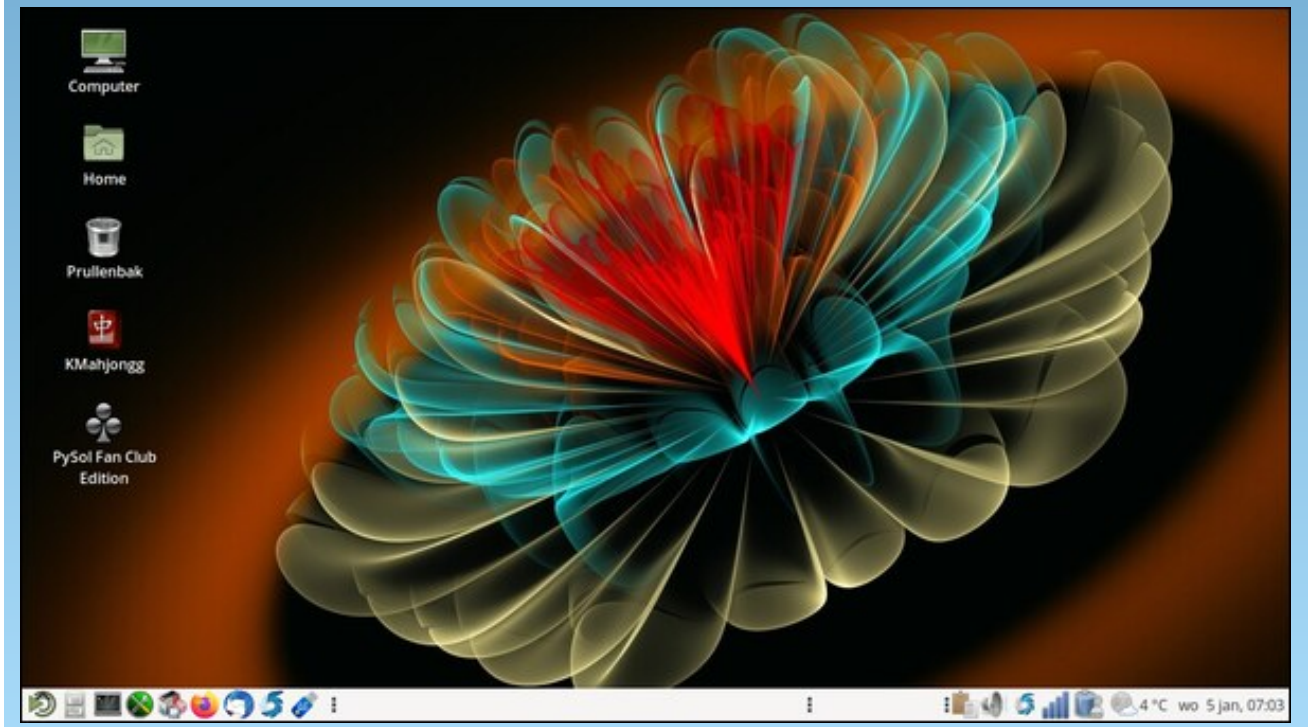

Posted by mutse, January 5, 2022, running Mate.

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner

Easy Slow-Cooker Lasagna

Serves 8

Ingredients:

1 lb. lean ground beef
1 (26 to 28-oz.) jar tomato pasta sauce
1 (8-oz.) can no-salt-added tomato sauce
1/2 (9-oz.) pkg. (about 8) no-boil lasagna noodles
1 (1-lb.) jar Alfredo pasta sauce
12 oz. (3 cups) shredded mozzarella cheese
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Brown ground beef in a large skillet over medium-high heat until thoroughly cooked, stirring frequently. Drain.

Spray 4 to 5-quart slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray. Spread 3/4 cup of the tomato pasta sauce in the bottom of the sprayed slow cooker. Stir remaining tomato pasta sauce and tomato sauce into ground beef (center, top).

Layer 3 lasagna noodles over sauce in a slow cooker, breaking noodles as necessary. Top with 1/3 of the Alfredo pasta sauce, spreading evenly.

Sprinkle 1 cup of the mozzarella cheese. Top with 1/3 of the ground beef mixture, spreading evenly (right, top).

Repeat layering twice, using 2 lasagna noodles in the last layer. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over top.

Cover; cook on Low setting for 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 hours. If desired, cut into wedges to serve.

Nutrition:

Calories: 388 Carbs: 43g Fiber: 4g
Sodium: 1119mg Protein: 27g

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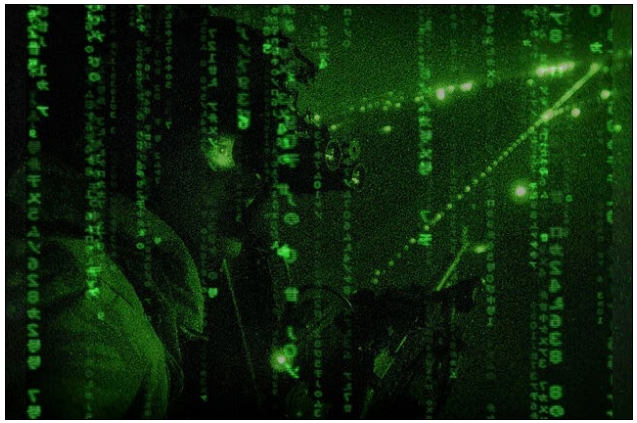
Short Topix: Mapping How Facebook Tracks You

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Assault On Your Privacy: Monthly Update



Kaspersky has discovered a new **MALWARE THAT CAN SURVIVE EVEN A REINSTALLATION OF THE OPERATING SYSTEM.** According to an article on PCMag, the Windows-based malware installs itself to the UEFI firmware on the computer, isolating it, even in the event of a reinstallation of the operating system. Called MoonBounce, it was designed to retrieve additional malware payloads to be installed on the victim's computer. Hmmm … and we were told when we were all forced to switch from the old BIOS system to UEFI that it was more secure. Oooops!

In early January, Google rolled out another **SECURITY UPDATE TO PATCH ANOTHER 37 SECURITY VULNERABILITIES IN GOOGLE CHROME.** According to a Google blog report, only one security vulnerability was classified as critical, with 10 classified as high threat, 10 classified as a medium level threat, and at least three classified as a low level threat. You can read about the security vulnerabilities at the previously linked blog report above. The "Use After Free" (UAF) exploits are maintaining their "favored use" status as hackers' favorite attack vector. If you are a Google Chrome user and have not updated your browser in a while, you might want to take a moment to do so.

RESEARCHERS AT INTEZER DISCOVERED A NEW CROSS-PLATFORM BACKDOOR MALWARE that attacks Windows, Linux and MacOS computers alike. While the methods differ slightly between the platforms, the end result is the same, according to an article on BleepingComputer. The malware, named SysJoker, remains largely undetected by antivirus software. Once installed on its host computer, the backdoor malware can then download additional malware, execute commands on the device, or command the backdoor to remove itself from the device. The last two instructions have yet to be implemented, though. On an infected Linux computer, the files and directories are created under "/.Library/" while persistence is established by creating the following cron job: @reboot (/.Library/SystemServices/updateSystem).

We have a new champion on the block, but I doubt you'll see Google crowing about this distinction. **IN 2021, GOOGLE DRIVE TOOK OVER THE TOP SPOT FOR MALICIOUS DOWNLOADS OF MALWARE FROM MICROSOFT'S ONE DRIVE,** according to an article on TechRepublic. So, exercise caution when downloading files from Google Drive, and only download files from those you trust (if you really even trust anyone, anyhow).

PCLinuxOS Connect
All your PCLinuxOS connections in one convenient location!

Mapping How Facebook Tracks You

Facebook tracks people. Facebook tracks EVERYONE. Even non-users. As it tracks you across the web, it vacuums up as much of your private personal data as it can, as fast as it can. Facebook … er, "Meta" … tracks your and my movement across the web by embedding small, invisible, 1x1 tracking pixels on web pages. When those pixels are loaded on a web page, they vacuum up all kinds of data that you probably don't want shared, and that you have no idea may even be available.

Well, a group of journalists from The Markup have teamed up with Mozilla researchers to try to map Facebook's pixel-based tracking network. They want to try to gain an understanding of just what of your private personal data is being collected. The journalists from The Markup will use the anonymized

data for an investigative report about the kinds of information Facebook, and where it collects it all from. The "study" runs until July 13, 2022.

Facebook's "privacy policy" (there's an oxymoron) states that Facebook may collect information about you as you travel across the web, even if you don't have a Facebook account. Now exactly how that's legal is beyond me, since non-users (hello! … I'm over here!) never agreed to Facebook's "privacy policy" or data collection mechanisms.

According to the web site, this study will collect:

- The data sent to Facebook pixels as you browse
- The URLs of the web pages you browse
- The time you spend browsing pages
- The presence of Facebook login cookies in your browser
- A study survey that the user completes
- **Metadata on the URLs your visit:**
  - The full URL of each webpage that you are on
  - Time spent browsing and playing media on each webpage
  - How far down the webpage you scrolled

Additionally, your participation in the project will guarantee you the following protections:

- This study will not share granular measurements data with third parties.
- All efforts to aggregate and analyze the data will be done in Mozilla's secure analysis environment. After completion of analysis we will delete all raw data.
- All reporting by The Markup will only use aggregated, anonymized data.

Anyone in the U.S. 19 years old or older can join the study. Simply follow this link, read through the page, and click the "Launch Mozilla Rally" button at the bottom of the page. Who knows. Maybe the information that is uncovered could lead to laws and regulations to better protect your private personal data. Wouldn't you feel good to know that you played a role in helping that come about?

Sorry Windows Users. This One Is For Linux Users ONLY.

Thanks to Intel, Linux users will soon experience BIOS/UEFI updates in the background … without requiring a reboot, according to an article on the HotHardware website. Traditionally, BIOS and UEFI firmware could be updated, but required a reboot for the update to take effect. This can be problematic for servers, which are expected to be up and running 100% of the time … or as close to 100% as you can get. Couple in the fact that Linux runs the vast majority of the servers, and you have a huge issue.

Intel has been working on a new ACPI specification called Platform Firmware Runtime Update and Telemetry (PFRUT) for a while now. The upcoming "pfr_update" driver is scheduled to make its debut in the Linux kernel 5.17. Once that happens, systems administrators will be able to patch their hardware without the downtime that was formerly required.

It's still not clear if this will be a server-only feature, or if this will find its way into desktop configurations. Keeping in mind the open source nature of Linux, it's quite likely that desktop Linux users could also reap the benefits of PFRUT. And, since PFRUT is a part of the ACPI specification, Windows users may also … eventually … see it implemented.

Wine 7: Even Better At Running Windows Programs

There are multiple ways to run Windows programs. You could just dual boot with a version of Windows, with Windows on its own disk partition, and your copy of PCLinuxOS on another. But that's a major hassle. You can't just switch back and forth between Windows and PCLinuxOS. You have to reboot into

one or the other. Plus, it's fairly wasteful when it comes to disk space. You could just run a copy of Windows in VirtualBox (or other virtual machine program). That's a little better, since you never really have to leave PCLinuxOS to run your copy of Windows. But, this can be quite resource intensive, consuming a lot of CPU and RAM cycles. Or, you can run Wine, an open source Windows emulator, which allows you to run Windows programs directly on your PCLinuxOS desktop.

On January 18, Wine 7 was released. With the release of the program that allows running Windows programs on Linux computers, comes several improvements. One of the most notable improvements comes in the notably improved 64-bit support.

Other improvements include:

- Most modules converted to Portable Executable (PE) format.
- New light theme.
- WoW64 (Windows on Windows) architecture implemented.
- Better graphics support.
- Improved Direct3D support.
- Support for multiple displays.
- Improved D3DX support.
- Improved audio support.
- Improved joystick support.
- Better support for Mono/.NET.
- Improved builtin registry tool.

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If you're like most Linux users, you arrived at Linux after wallowing in the Windows mud pit for a while. As a result, you may have some Windows programs that you became fond of. So, if you have a copy of WordPerfect 7.0 that you just can't part with, you should be able to run it on Linux … via Wine. Typically, Wine is the least resource-intensive way to run Windows programs, compared to either dual booting or running Windows in a virtual machine.

Want to know if any of your Windows programs run on Wine? Never fear, because WineHQ has a database of over 15,700 Windows programs (often, multiple versions of each), with reports on how it runs under Wine. Oddly, some Windows versions of programs are listed that also have Linux versions, such as 0 A.D. and AbiWord. I'm not sure why anyone would run a Windows version of a program that has an equal version in Linux. It would make much more sense to just run the Linux version.

Humble Bundle Dropping Linux, MacOS Support

Humble Bundle

Since its launch in 2010, Humble Bundle has been a popular source for games on Linux, MacOS and Windows. The concept was pretty simple. Users could pay what they wanted and download the games to their computers. There were also different levels for monthly subscription plans.

Well, starting February 1, 2022, Humble Bundle is dropping support for Linux and MacOS. Starting then and going forward, the Humble launcher will ONLY work for Windows titles. Apparently, the folks at Humble Bundle "listened to their users" and simplified the subscription levels to just one level, and are dropping Linux and MacOS.

It should come as no surprise that Windows users' voices would drown out the voices of Linux and MacOS users. They do make up a considerable part of the gaming market. But that isn't the whole story. Over Humble Bundle's history, Linux users paid, on a pretty steady average, ***twice*** the amount of money for the Humble Bundle packages (remember, pay what you want for the games) as Windows users.

Obviously, in dropping support for Linux and MacOS users, Humble Bundle is okay with leaving money on the table, so to speak. Maybe that money will be enough to attract another, new player in the gaming supply world to court Linux and MacOS users. That forthcoming void is still just that, at this point: a void. Hopefully, it's a void that is filled quickly for Linux gamers.

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PCLinuxOS Short Topix Roundup

I'm going to try a more brief approach to these this month, just so I can fit more of them in here.

One Linux kernel developer, Ingo Molnar, is **trying to clean up the kernel's "dependency hell,"** according to an article on ZDNet. After 30+ years of development, the Linux kernel has collected its fair share of excess baggage. That's going to mean 2,200 commits to clean up the 10,000 or so header (*.h) files used when compiling the kernel. The cross-dependencies between them all are (in)affectionately known as "dependency hell."

Y'all know the difference between RAM and storage, right? I would certainly hope so, if you've gotten this far in your computing life. Well, according to an article on PCWorld, a recent **breakthrough could see RAM and storage merged into a single unit** that they are calling UltraRAM.

The new Google **Chrome 97** should be out, and it **sports some new features** ~~for hackers to exploit~~, according to an article on LifeHacker. Under the "Privacy and Security" settings, you can set for Google Chrome to erase all information stored by websites you visit (but I'm sure not before all of that information is sent home to Google). Web developers will also be able to check to see if your display supports HDR video. Also, web apps can now use a previously verboten piece of real estate: the top app bar. So now, the web apps actually look like they belong in Chrome.

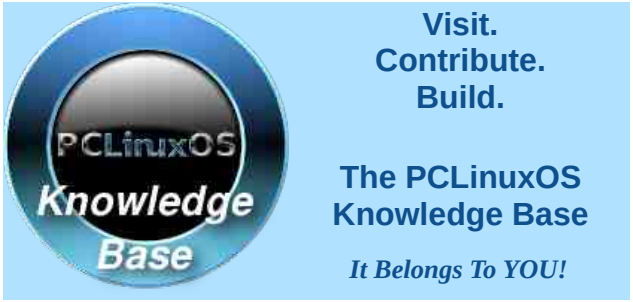
Samsung's new Eco Remote, besides being charged by solar cells, can now recharge itself by harnessing the RF waves of your wifi signal, according to an article on The Verge.

Even though Omicron is the dominant COVID-19 strain circulating around the globe, with declining numbers, you might not want to let your guard down just yet. There just may be yet another variant just around the corner. **Researchers in France have identified a new strain,** according to an article on the Firstpost website. Officially named B.1.640.2, the new variant has been dubbed the IHU strain, because of where it was discovered. At the time of the article's writing, only about 12 people had been infected with the new variant. The WHO has not labeled the new variant a "variant of concern" yet.

With NetworkManager working so well for so many Linux users, the Linux ifcfg tool that has helped manage network connections for all of these years may have become unnecessary and superfluous. According to an article at Phoronix, **Fedora 36 is doing away with ifcfg,** and has made a proposal for its elimination altogether. The 130,000 lines of code that comprise ifcfg have been frequent sources of bugs, and consumes valuable system resources. By eliminating the code, you eliminate the bugs and gain back the use of the system resources it consumed.

I bet you thought (like I did) that tape drives were all but dead. But **Japanese tape drive vendor Unitex has released a new tape drive** – with a USB connection (USB A 3.0, to be specific) – that will backup 18TB of data in less time than it takes to back the same amount of data to the cloud, according to an article on TechRadar. The 18TB tapes cost about half of 18TB hard drives. But, the tape drive itself – the hardware part – is expected to command a price in excess of $6,000. Backing up 18TB of data over a USB 3.0 connection can be expected to take around 17 hours. But backing up 18TB of data over a broadband connection will take far, far longer, depending on the throughput speed of the broadband connection. Users could always "rent" the expensive tape drive for a day to perform updates, which might help mitigate the high cost of the new tape drive.

Users of a **Chromium-based browser** (Chromium, Edge, Brave, Chrome, Opera, Vivaldi), **will soon lose the ability to remove search engines** from the default list of available search engines, according to an article on PCMag.



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Screenshot Showcase

Posted by tuxlink, January 7, 2022, running KDE.

Skrooge Revisited: Tips For Beginners

by kalwisti

Background

As a New Year's resolution, I am taking baby steps to learn KDE Plasma 5.23.5, after installing Tex's Darkstar minimal ISO (2021.11) on our trusty Dell Latitude E4300 laptop. I also decided to use this chance to reacquaint myself with Skrooge, the KDE-based personal finance program.

I previously used Skrooge (ver. 0.6.0) as a stopgap in 2010, while KMyMoney became a bit stagnant as its developers ported the KDE 3 version of KMM to KDE 4. Skrooge served me well but I stopped using it when I moved away from KDE. Enough time has elapsed that I have forgotten many of the program's finer points.

The current version of Skrooge is 2.26.1. Skrooge was launched in March 2008, so it has been actively developed for 13 years. Its main developer is Stéphane Mankowski, a French engineer / programmer who works as a manager at Airbus, the multinational aerospace corporation. Mankowski is assisted by Guillaume de Bure, a programmer and engineer who is also an Airbus employee.

Skrooge's unusual name was inspired by Ebenezer Scrooge, the protagonist of Dickens' A Christmas Carol (1843). Some people might also catch the reference to Scrooge McDuck, the cartoon character created in 1947 for The Walt Disney Company.[1] Ebenezer Scrooge, of course, needs no introduction in the English-speaking world, as the tale of his redemption by three spirits has become one of our most beloved Christmas stories. For non-comics readers, Scrooge McDuck (who happens to be Donald Duck's uncle) is famous for his extreme thriftiness; he is reputed to own three cubic acres of cash which is stored in a skyscraper-sized Money Bin.

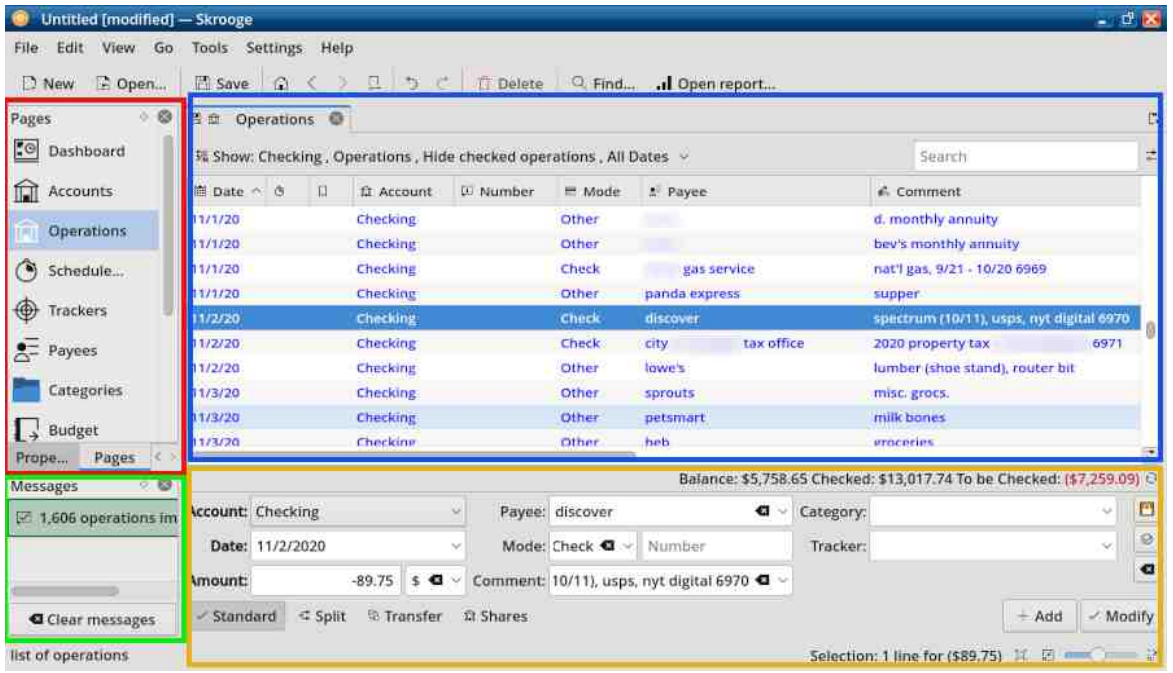
Skrooge uses single-entry accounting (like HomeBank or Quicken) rather than double-entry principles (GnuCash or KMyMoney). The Skrooge Handbook clarifies that the program is not designed to manage taxes, nor does it have small-business functionality.[2] However, Skrooge is robust and perfectly adequate for home / personal accounting.

A complete tutorial is beyond the scope of this article; if you would like an in-depth presentation of Skrooge, please consult the "Additional Resources" section on the last page. Today I will limit myself to discussing some features not covered in the current documentation, or which I didn't fully understand until I began experimenting with them.

User Interface

Probably the first thing that newcomers to Skrooge will notice is its unorthodox appearance. The use of docks -- which are a subpart of an application window -- such as the Page Chooser and the Messages panel, means that the GUI does not look like a traditional bank ledger (such as GnuCash). Although the design is rather "busy," the developers put careful thought into it; as a result, Skrooge's interface is very customizable.

In the screenshot below, I have color-coded the UI's main components. The two docks are the Page Chooser (outlined in red) and Messages (green). The Main area is outlined in blue, and the Editing panel is indicated by an orange rectangle.



Data Entry

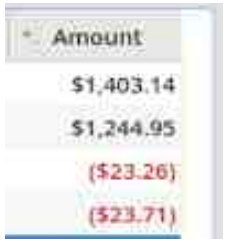
Despite Skrooge's excellent import capabilities, I decided the cleanest way to begin was by manually entering 90 "fresh" transactions from our new bank. (Our regional bank was acquired by a larger national bank in mid-October 2021). I am preparing a continuation of this article which evaluates importing other file formats – .xhb [HomeBank], .gnucash [GnuCash], QFX and CSV – into Skrooge, for those who might be interested in the topic.

Operations Panel Basics

The Operations area and its Editing panel is where you will do the bulk of your work, viz., entering transactions into the register. You just need to keep a few points in mind:

When creating a debit, in the Amount box of the Editing panel, add an initial minus sign (-) before the amount, e.g., " -89.75 ":

In the Main area of the checkbook register, debits appear in parentheses in a red font, e.g., ($23.26); credits appear in black: **$1,244.95**:

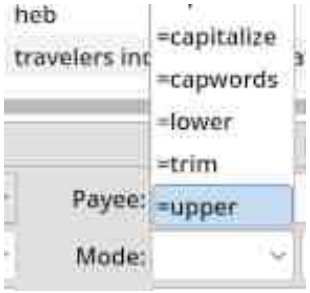


After adding / entering a transaction, you need to develop the habit of clicking the Clean editor button. This will clear the Editing panel and give you blank fields to enter a new transaction:

Auto-fill is active to save you keystrokes. For instance, typing "gr" in the Category box will pull up **Food > Groceries**.

Mode

When you begin entering data in this field, no options are listed from the drop-down menu. There are a few semi-cryptic terms which appear; I am guessing that they might be internal program instructions (so I ignored them):



Through trial and error I learned that you can type in whatever you want. I used standard terms such as **Check, Debit, AutoDep, Credit, Deposit, Withdrawal, Interest.**

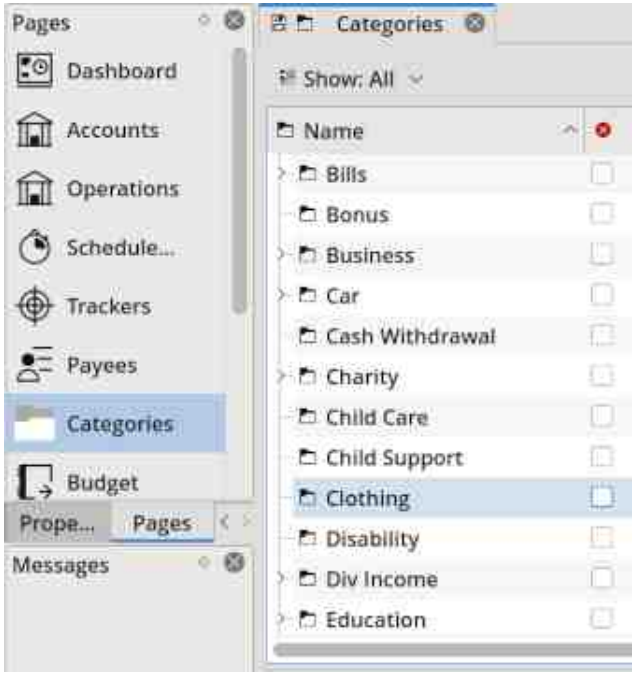
After you input the terms, Skrooge will remember them and offer them as a choice in the drop-down menu.

Categories

Skrooge includes an assortment of standard Categories which is very similar to HomeBank's. Nevertheless, you may modify them to meet your individual situation (top, right).

To view them, from the Page Chooser, select **Categories**:

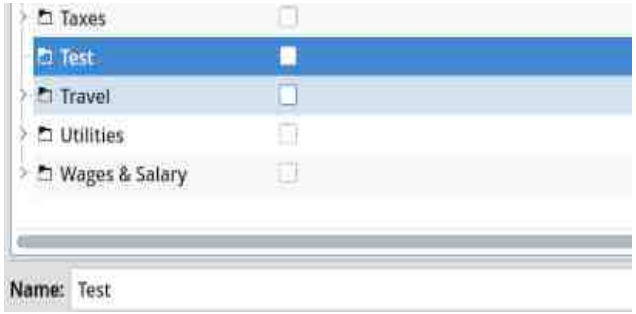
Skrooge allows an infinite number of Categories levels, so you can be as granular as you wish with tracking expenditures.



Add A New Subcategory (The Short Way)

If you need to create a new subcategory, it can be done easily. In the Category field of the Editing panel, type in your desired subcategory name, preceded by a " > ". For example:

- Household > Lawn-Yard
- Other Income > Transfer from Savings



Add A New (Sub)category (The Longer Way)

If you wish to create a new primary / main Category:

- From the Page Chooser > select Categories.
- In the Name box, type in < *New category name* >
- Click on the + button to add it.

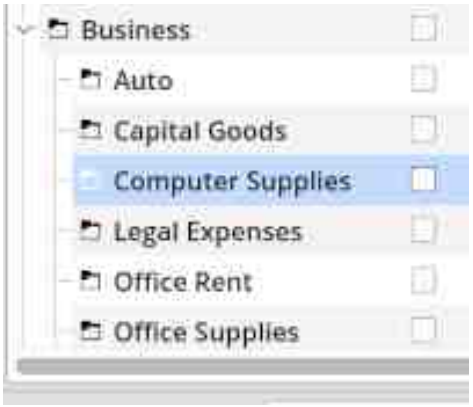
Once the category has been created, if you want to delete it:

- Highlight the Category's name.
- Right-click > then choose Delete.

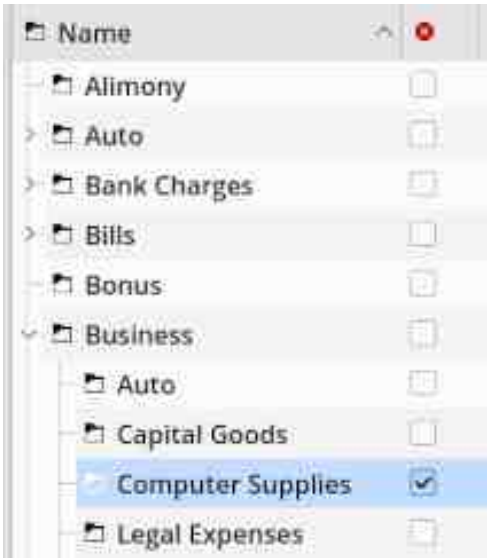
To add a new subcategory to an already existing category:

- Select your parent category. In this example, Business is the parent category.
- In the Name box, type in <*Name of new subcategory*>

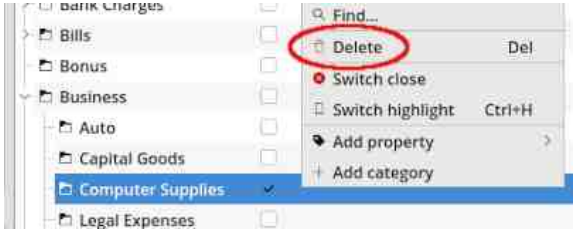
- Click on the + button.
- The new subcategory will be created:



To delete it, highlight the subcategory's name. Tick/check the box under the "Closed" column (identified by a red circle with an "x"):



Next, right click and choose Delete.



Split Transactions

A split transaction – also known as a "split" – is a transaction that can be assigned to more than one (expense) category. Some financial apps make entering split transactions cumbersome; however, Skrooge handles them capably.

In the Editing panel of the Operations area,

1. Click on the Split button.

This will switch Skrooge into its split operation editing mode. The fields Category, Comment and Tracker are replaced by a table. To edit a cell in this table, double-click on it:

2. Highlight the line entry.
3. Click under the Category column.
4. Enter/choose your desired category:

5. Click on the Amount column.
6. Change the amount as necessary for the transaction's first expense category:

7. Skrooge will automatically recalculate. In this example, the app subtracted the amount spent on groceries [$60.01] from the total transaction amount [$90.01], leaving a difference of $30.00.

8. Click under the Category column for the remaining amount.

9. Enter/choose your desired category:

10. Click on the Add button:

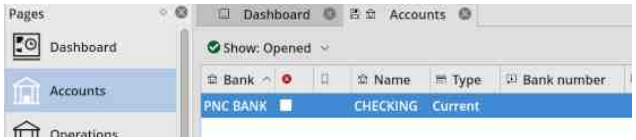
In the Main area above (i.e., the ledger), notice there is a "Split" icon/symbol:

Hovering your cursor over it will cause the Split amounts to display:

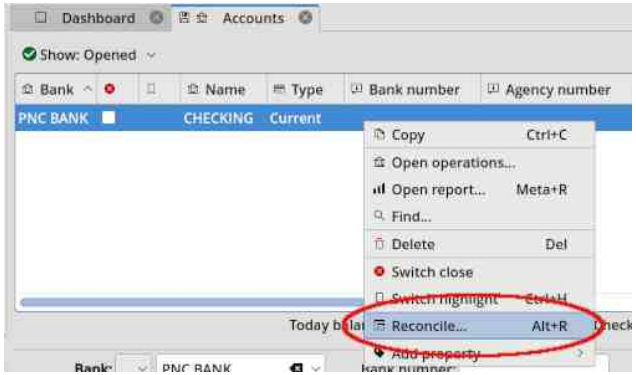
Reconciliation

Although The Skrooge Handbook covers Reconciliation,[3] the procedure was a bit abstract for my comprehension. Browsing the Skrooge forum, I found a clearer explanation offered by Stéphane Mankowski, then added some simplified details of my own.

- Open your Skrooge file.
- Type **Ctrl+2** to open the Accounts page / window.
- Select one account you wish to reconcile, by highlighting it.



Right-click and choose Reconcile to open the Operations page in Reconciliation mode. (Or, you may type **Alt+R**):



Enter the final (ending) balance from your bank statement in the box.

As you work through the transactions listed in your statement, click on the corresponding transactions in Skrooge's Operations window to mark them as "Pointed."

"Pointed" means 'flagged (for pending reconciliation)'.

The box next to each amount will turn blue and have an ellipsis (three dots) in the box.

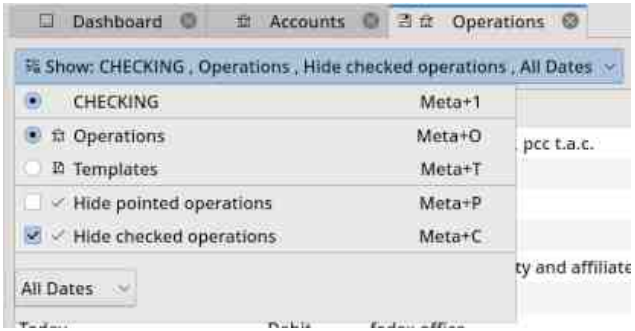
At the end of the process, the Delta value should be 0.00.

Click on the big check mark to finalize the reconciliation.

The large check mark has a tooltip that clarifies it will "Validate pointed operations."

A pop-up message will appear, stating that "The account [X] has been reconciled."

If you chose the option to 'Hide checked operations', the "checked" (i.e., reconciled) transactions will disappear from the Operations window and become hidden (next page, top left).



Congratulations! You're done.

If reconciliation is not possible for some reason, you can create a fake operation that -- in combination with the other operations you pointed -- sets the Delta to 0, thus allowing you to complete the reconciliation process. To accomplish this, click the "Add" button in the reconciliation mode toolbar.

Search and process Function

Skrooge has a nifty bulk edit feature that allows you to act on multiple transactions – or payees -- simultaneously. (GnuCash currently lacks this feature, even though users have requested it several times). If a payee's name appears with various permutations – such as Kroger's, Kroger, Kroger's Grocery – you can standardize the name without having to manually edit transactions.

In this hypothetical example, there are two variations of "Hy-Vee" in my Payees list: hyvee and hy-vee. (I enter my checkbook information in lowercase letters, to make typing faster and allow me to concentrate on inputting the numbers correctly).

I would like to clean up that inconsistency; Skrooge can do it easily:

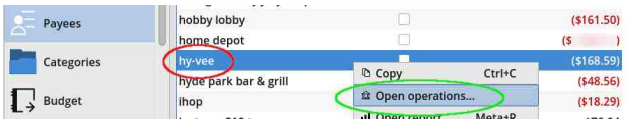
Open the Payees page (center top).

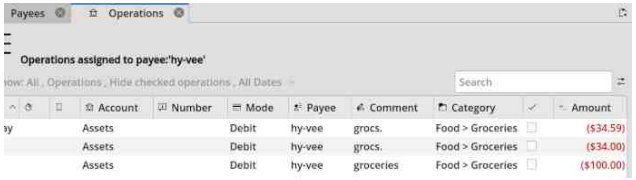
Click on the misspelled payee (i.e., hyvee):

Drag it and drop it on the correct one (i.e., hy-vee).

All operations with the incorrect "hyvee" payee will be updated with "hy-vee," and the misspelled "hyvee" will be removed.

Double-clicking on the hy-vee payee (or, right-clicking on it > then choosing Open operations) will show that all the associated transactions have been fixed:

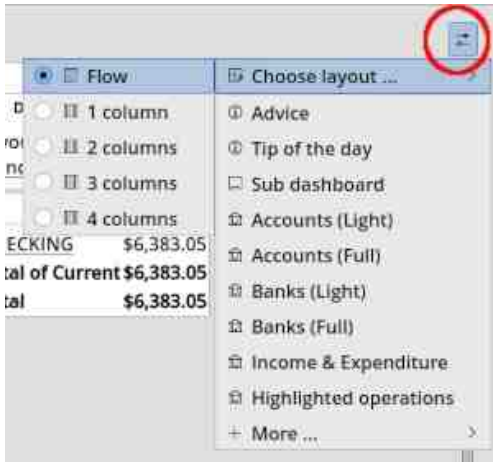


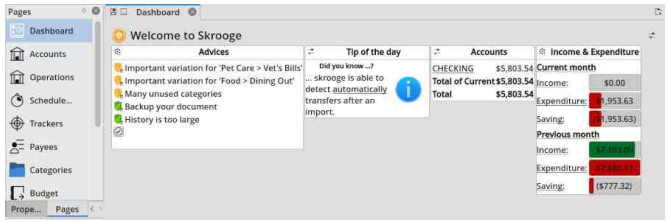


Configuring the Dashboard

The Dashboard displays an overview of your accounts and financial situation. You can add different widgets here, as well as changing the layout, by clicking on the Configuration icon (right, top):

For my purposes I found the Accounts (Light) and Income & Expenditure widgets helpful (as shown at right):

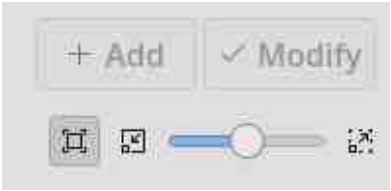




When you have adjusted the layout to your liking, keep your changes by going to the View menu > then choosing Save page state. (As an alternative you can type **Ctrl+Alt+S**).

Adjusting the Window Zoom

The Zoom feature allows you to set the font size to suit your taste:



From left to right, the button functions are: Fit zoom | Zoom out | Custom zoom (slider bar) | Zoom in.

Reports

I would be remiss if I did not mention Skrooge's ability to generate a variety of impressive reports and graphs. The best way to familiarize yourself with reports is to experiment, by choosing different options and values, and seeing which data visualization is most suitable for your particular analysis.

From the Page chooser > select the Report option, then choose the **Data** criteria you wish to use for your report:

- Under Lines, e.g., you have the options of Category, Payee, Mode (check vs. debit card), etc.
- Under Columns > choose Date, Week, Month, Quarter, Year, etc.
- Under Mode > choose Sum of operations, Percent of columns, etc.

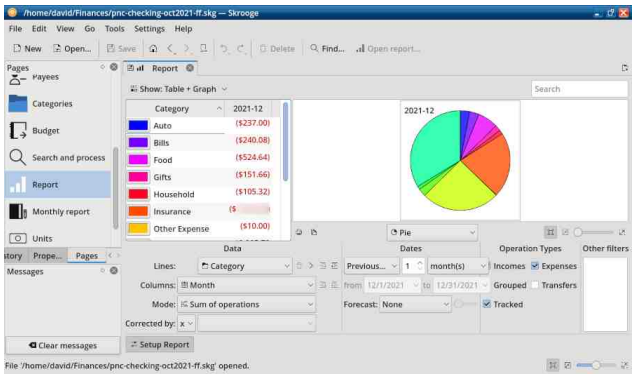
Next, decide on the type of graph you want: Pie, Histogram, Line, Bubble, etc.

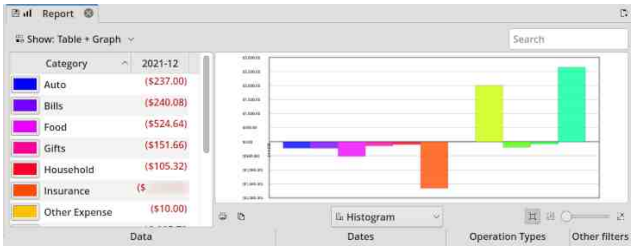
As the final step, you select the **Dates** to be included in your report. There is a wide range of options available: Previous (or Current); Month (or Day, Week, Quarter, Year).

The screenshots at right show some examples of graphs for Category during the previous month (December 2021): a pie chart; a histogram; and a bubble chart.

Monthly Report

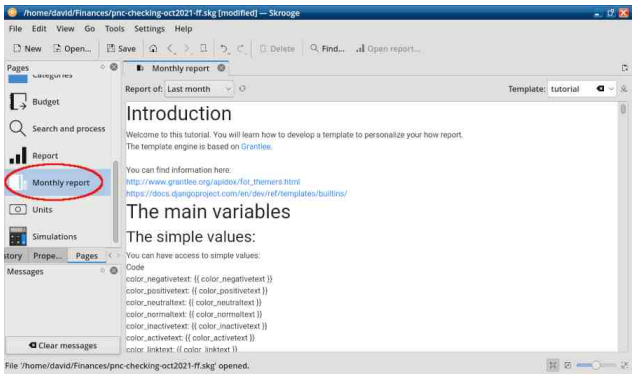
Skrooge has another practical feature: the **Monthly report** (also accessed from the Page chooser). It provides "at a glance" summary information for the time period you choose (Last month, Last quarter, Last year, etc.). I found it confusing because when

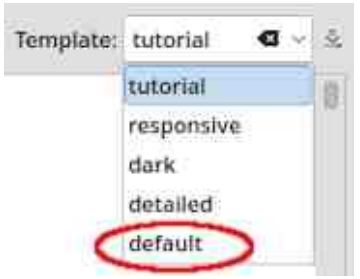




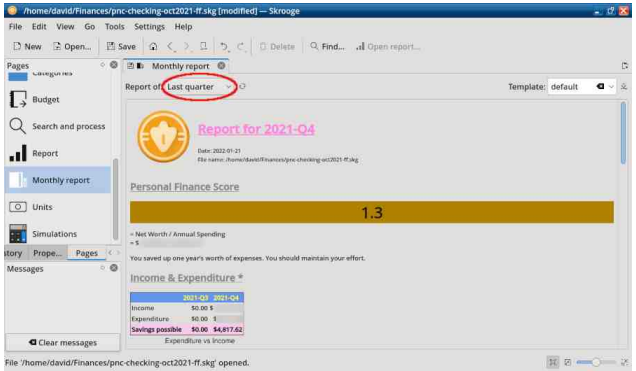
the panel opens, the default Template is called "tutorial." At first glance, it appeared that some sort of scripting/coding magic was necessary to run a personalized report (right, top):

(I should mention that I had already fulfilled the stated report requirements by creating one account [checking], adding operations [transactions] and categorizing the transactions). After further exploration, I discovered the drop-down menu associated with Template; among the choices offered, the default option was most helpful for me (right):





The screenshots below illustrate the data summarized in this quarterly report: Personal Finance Score; Income & Expenditure; Budget (if already defined); 5 main categories of expenditure; 5 main variations; and Amounts in accounts.



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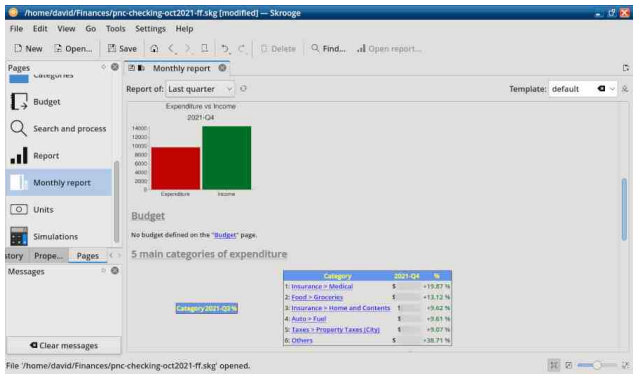
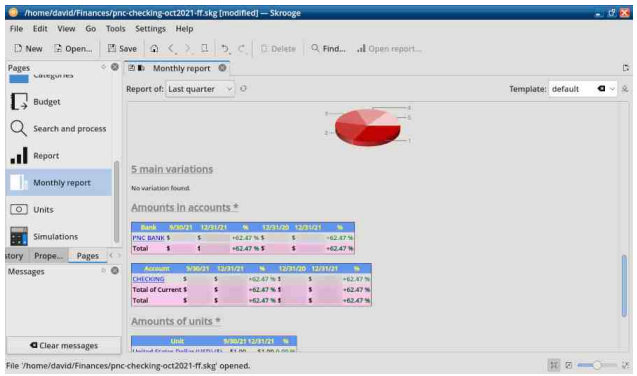


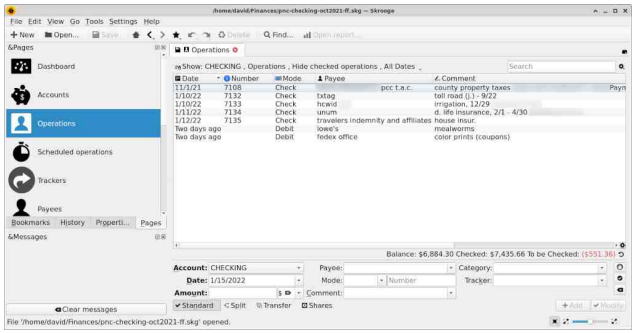


Conclusion

If you are already a KDE user and would like to manage your personal finances with an application that belongs to the KDE ecosystem, I encourage you to give Skrooge a try. I enjoy using the program again; it is full featured and I have confidence in its accuracy. Skrooge will help count your "three cubic acres of cash" better than Ebenezer Scrooge, Bob Cratchit and Scrooge McDuck – combined.

Non-KDE users (Xfce or MATE) should be aware that installing Skrooge will pull in 55 KDE packages as dependencies. As a test, I added Skrooge to my Xfce system; the download was only 38 MB but it occupies 140 MB of disk space after installation. (After the installation finished, I logged out of my user account and rebooted the PC as a safeguard).

Although Skrooge runs fine under Xfce, the icons and theme – unsurprisingly – look mismatched compared to their appearance in KDE:



Additional Resources

Alistair George, who is a moderator of the Skrooge forum, uploaded three video tutorials to Vimeo in 2011. Although the version discussed is old, neither the user interface nor Skrooge's behavior has changed drastically. Novices can still benefit by seeing the program in action:

https://vimeo.com/27796633
"Skrooge Accounting Tutorial #1." 16 Aug. 2011. (17 min., 57 sec.)
Provides an overview of Skrooge's main features, including data entry / creating transactions in the Operations panel. It also briefly discusses the use of templates (for recurring, scheduled payments).

https://vimeo.com/27808880
"Skrooge Tutorial #2." 17 Aug. 2011. (15 min., 31 sec.)
Demonstrates an alternative to using the "wallet" for cash accounts, via a Split transaction. It also covers the Tracker field, which provides a means of keeping records of a designated project's cost.

https://vimeo.com/27893118
"Skrooge Tutorial #3." 19 Aug. 2011. (8 min., 57 sec.)
Demonstrates the Reconciliation process. It also covers Payees and Categories, showing how to view a full report of all the transactions (operations) associated with them.

Meemaw wrote an introduction to Skrooge in The PCLinuxOS Magazine (2012), as the final article in her "Linux Financial Apps" series: https://pclosmag.com/html/Issues/201209/page02.html

You can ask Skrooge-related questions in the Office section of the KDE Forum: https://tinyurl.com/57a6b7zk

Last but not least, The Skrooge Handbook is a valuable reference source: https://docs.kde.org/trunk5/en/skrooge/skrooge/index.html

1. https://userbase.kde.org/Skrooge#What_a_strange_name.21

2. https://docs.kde.org/trunk5/en/skrooge/skrooge/index.html
As a historical aside, a brief sketch of Luca Pacioli (1445-1517), the "inventor" of double-entry accounting, was featured on NPR's Planet Money podcast. The hosts interviewed Jane Gleeson-White, who wrote a biography of Pacioli.

3. https://docs.kde.org/trunk5/en/skrooge/skrooge/operations.html#reconciliation

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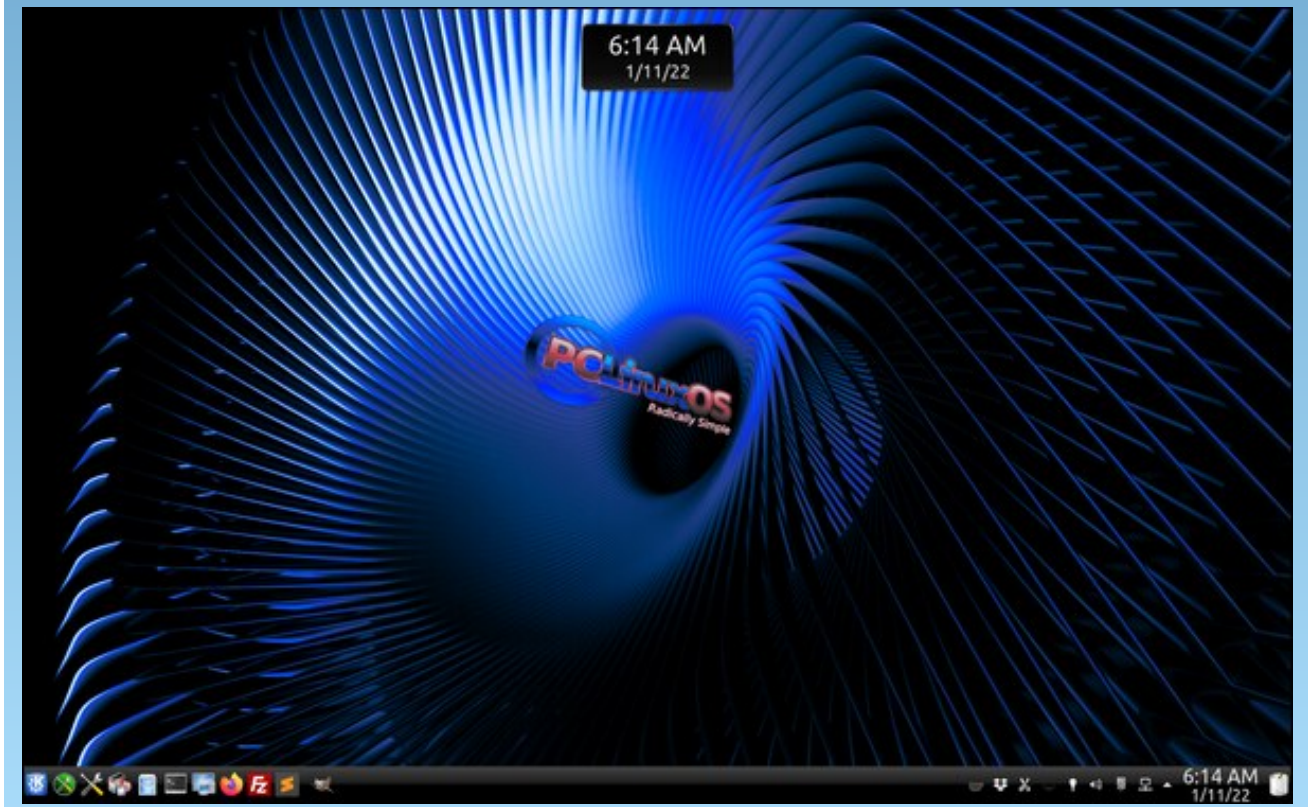


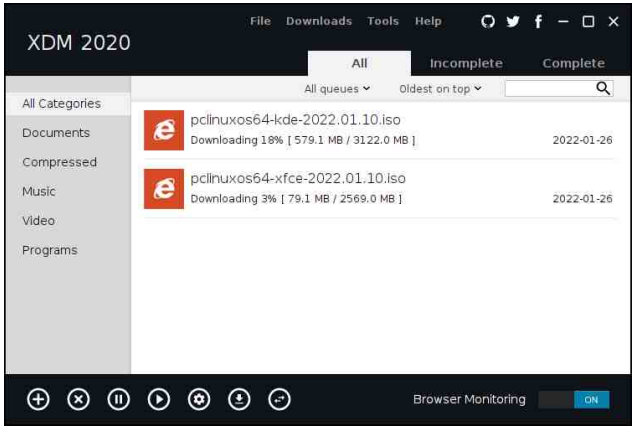
Posted by Ramchu, January 12, 2022, running KDE.

Repo Review: Xtreme Download Manager

by CgBoy

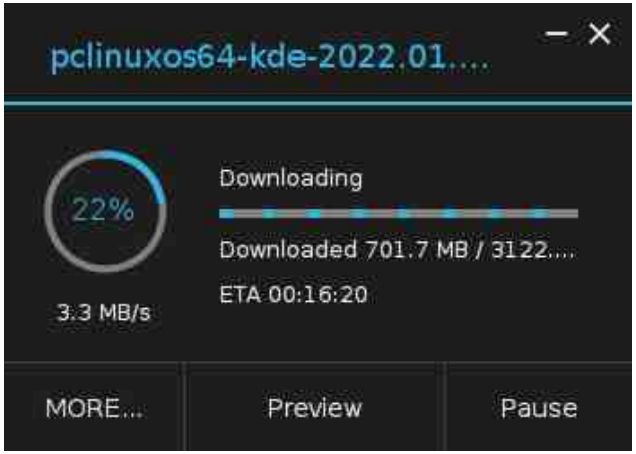
Xtreme Download Manager is an advanced and feature-full download manager that's designed to accelerate your download speeds by using a dynamic file segmentation system. It provides integration for most popular web browsers (Firefox, Chrome, Opera, Vivaldi, etc) through the installation of an addon. Xtreme Download Manager also supports downloading videos from YouTube and other streaming sites.

Xtreme Download Manager's interface has a very modern look, and is fairly easy and straightforward to use. On the left side are several categories to help you sort your downloads into their different file types. From the top-right corner, you can set the filters to show only complete, incomplete, or all downloads. From down in the lower-right corner, you can use a switch to enable and disable the web browser integration.

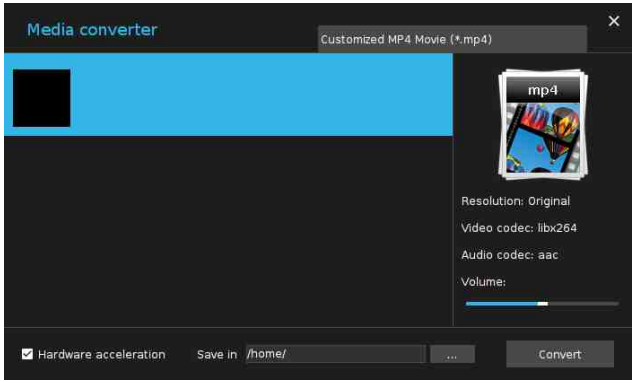


To begin downloading a file, just go ahead and click on the Add URL button down in the lower toolbar. This will open a small popup window where you can provide the link for the file you wish to download, as well as set a location to save the file to. You can also choose to simply add the download to a queue, if you wish. If you want to save a video, just hit the Download Video button in the toolbar. Then you can provide a link to the video you want to download, and also set the video resolution options.

Once you start a download, another small window will popup, displaying the current progress of the download. To hide this window, click on MORE… and then click Hide. From the toolbar at the bottom of the screen, you can pause, resume, and delete the currently selected download. When downloading a video, you can also opt to preview the partially downloaded video file.



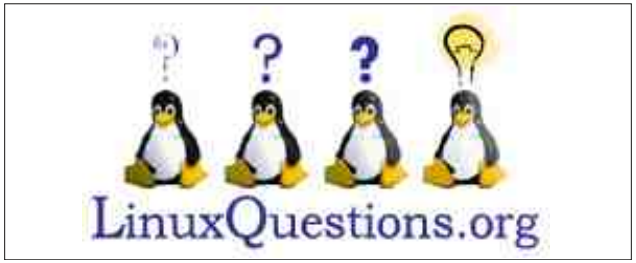
Xtreme Download Manager also has a built-in media converter, which you can use to convert videos that you have downloaded. Just select a completed video in the download list, then click on the Media converter button to open the converting window. Here, you can choose from a list of video and audio conversion presets, or manually set your own parameters. Then, simply choose an output location, and hit Convert.



Xtreme Download Manager also allows you to schedule download queues. Simply open the Downloads menu at the top of the screen, and click on Queue and scheduler. From this page, you can manage your download queues, and schedule them to start and stop at any time and date you choose, as well as be repeated on certain days, if need be.

Summary

Xtreme Download Manager provided great download speeds, and in general worked very well during my use of it. I did, however, encounter some issues when trying to download YouTube videos, though this may have just been a problem on my system. All in all, Xtreme Download Manager is a great choice for anyone who needs a fast and powerful download manager.



Good Words, Good Deeds, Good News

compiled by Meemaw

6 Year-Old Made Honorary Ranger

The Make A Wish Foundation is a nonprofit corporation that helps children with "critical illnesses" realize a wish. Their mission says, *"Wishes are more than just a nice thing. And they are far more than gifts, or singular events in time. Wishes impact everyone involved—wish kids, volunteers, donors, sponsors, medical professionals and communities. For wish kids, just the act of making their wish come true can give them the courage to comply with their medical treatments. Parents might finally feel like they can be optimistic. And still others might realize all they have to offer the world through volunteer work or philanthropy."*

In November, six-year-old Trinity was able to visit Ft. Benning, GA's recruiting battalion in Tampa, FL, and visit with the Army Rangers. Trinity is battling cancer, but voiced a desire to see the rangers. While she was there, they made her an honorary ranger.

Boston Terrier Signals Parents

Jeff & Kelly had taken their 9 month-old daughter to Urgent Care over the weekend, and intended to take her to her regular doctor come Monday. During the night they noticed their dog, Henry, going to their daughter's room and head-butting the door open, even though this was not normal behavior for Henry.

When they checked on their daughter they discovered that she couldn't breathe, prompting them to rush her to the hospital, where they cleared her airway. She is doing well now.

Jeff is still rewarding Henry! *"He was allowed to sleep in bed with me last night, and he's got a steak in his future,"* he said.

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KFC And Rapper Join Forces

After the devastating tornadoes that swept through Kentucky in mid-December, Rapper Jack Harlow and the restaurant Kentucky Fried Chicken joined forces to donate $250,000 to feed the victims of the terrible damage.

They donated the $250,000 to the American Red Cross for the direction of the funds to where they are most needed. The Western Kentucky Red Cross also mounted a campaign for further donations.

"At the heart of the partnership is the shared love for Kentucky, so today, KFC and Harlow are coming together to support communities across western Kentucky who were ravaged in the deadly Dec. 11 tornado event," a spokesperson for KFC and rapper Harlow announced.

FREE SOFTWARE FOUNDATION

Eight Year-Old Boy Saves Veteran's Burning Home

Justin was watching a movie at 2:30 a.m. on January 1st and suddenly noticed flames coming out of his neighbor's roof. His neighbor Bob was out of town at the time, but Justin alerted his parents that the house was burning, and they called 911. Firefighters were there quickly and put the fire out before the house was much more damaged.

The Spring, Texas Emergency Services groups had a ceremony to honor the eight year-old for his quick thinking. According to a local news outlet, *Justin received a 911 Kid Hero Award, a Bravery Award, a proclamation for an act of bravery worthy of recognition, and children's firefighter gear.*

Community Honors Teen With Birthday Parade

Jocelyn has been like any other teenager, dancing and cheerleading in her 8th grade class in Ohio. A few months ago, however, she experienced some breathing problems, and when the diagnosis was reached, it was T-Cell Acute Leukemia Lymphoma, which is a cancer affecting the blood. She's gone through chemo ever since.

For her birthday earlier this month, neighbors and friends got together and had a parade to wish her a happy birthday.

"I'm just happy I get to see everyone and I just wasn't expecting it. I was very surprised," Jocelyn told a news outlet.

Trooper Saves Accident Victims

A trooper for the Oklahoma Highway Patrol was driving the Turner Turnpike when he noticed the vehicles slowing, and discovered that a semi had jackknifed and overturned. He ran up to the truck and found that the occupants were still inside. He had to climb up on the trailer and make his way to the truck. Luckily, the door still worked and he was able to get the two people out of the truck.

A passing driver noticed him on the truck, and snapped a photo, then shared it on social media. *"I don't know his name, but THIS is what a hero looks like to me!!! He came upon this seconds before we did this…Traffic, including semis, was going crazy in all directions trying to shut down, but this man was on a rescue mission to save lives!" the user continued.*

The trooper said he was glad to be in the right place to help them. *"I just tried to clear the road and help the people,"* he added.

Linux Forums

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Introduction & Testimonial From rlcopple

Compiled from The PCLinuxOS Forum

Greetings & Salutations from Denver metro area by Rick Copple (rlcopple)

Howdy, folk.

Though I currently live in the Denver metro area, I'm originally from Texas. The longest that I've ever lived in a city was Marble Falls, TX for 18 years. (Growing up, we moved a lot!) At any rate, my "computer history" starts in the mid to late 70s, my Mom had an old Kaypro computer, with an old "distro" called "CP/M". Anyone remember that one? I immediately became interested in it.

My Mom must have noticed, because in the early 80s, she gave me a TI-994a console. It had cartridges that you could insert to play various games, mostly. If I'm recalling correctly, it boasted a 4KHz processor, along with a hefty 16K of memory. I used my TV as the monitor. I learned "Basic" programming on that computer. One of the first programs I ever wrote on it was a game: Yahtzee. I had a general idea of how to do it, and the crazy thing is, it actually worked! Though it did stress out the processor to go through the 5-nested loop to verify that it actually was a long straight, before awarding the points. Usually it took around 5 minutes -- time enough to get a cup of coffee and go to the bathroom.

From there I had my first IT experience at a gas measurement company, working on a Digital RS11 (if I remember that correctly) that had about 6-7 VT100 terminals connected to it. Though, as in most jobs I've had, that wasn't my only duty, often, not even my primary one. (I was a bookkeeper from 1996 - 2011, mostly.) That's despite the fact that all that I know comes from experience, not classes or any degree (my college degree was in Religion).

Obviously, since I was a bookkeeper during those years, I was locked away into the Windows systems, since everyone I worked for used QuickBooks and that program could only run on Windows (as well as Macs, but I never used those much). That said, I did fiddle with Linux during those days. In 2001 or 2, I "attempted" an install of Debian from a stack of CDs I had ordered (that was back in the modem days, it would have taken a couple of days back then, tying up the phone lines, to even think of downloading 1 Gig, much less the 2-3+ of most ISOs now days). I failed to get it up and running, however, mainly because I was looking for starting up the X server, which I did. However, no graphical menu popped up! (Shows you how much I knew about Linux). Indeed, I did get it to boot up into the X environment, but I couldn't do anything in it. Then, around 2006, I successfully installed Ubuntu onto my old laptop, played around with it for a while, but it was only a passing interest at that time. Around 2011, when my last client who used QuickBooks ended their professional relationship with me, I was free to think more about actually moving to Linux. I discovered dual-boot, so I did, installing Lubuntu alongside Windows. It took me around 2-3 months to figure out how to configure it to my liking, from shortcut keys to replacement programs. The hardest was a replacement for inventory as in Quickbooks. I never did find one, so I created a spreadsheet for it, which I'm in the middle of updating. That was also the time I first met Peter Patterson Mint Spider who I know resides on this forum. {waves} Hi Peter!

At any rate, I've used several different distros since then, and reviewed several on my YouTube channel which I started in August of 2018. Then I came across BDLL, and the community there, and they have gratefully sucked me into their collective. Obviously, that is where I met Alie, or Aris. I mixed those two up as I didn't realize they weren't the same person until just yesterday. Hi! But if my memory serves me well (and frequently, it doesn't) I believe it is Alie. Well, my introduction to PCLinuxOS was on that channel, where we recently, like 3 or 4 weeks ago, reviewed PCLinuxOS. Which has led me here, to this community.

I currently have 8 computers (two of them my sons, and one of them the original computer I first installed Lubuntu on.) My "daily driver" computer is a fairly new Framework computer. I've installed PCLinuxOS BigDaddyTrinity on my son's Lenovo Legion Gaming Desktop, out in our living room. More about that in Testimonials.

So, I hope to be able to contribute here some, as well as learn some more about this distro. Thanks for inviting me to come here and post my questions, Peter.

May the Linux force be with you all!

A Trinity BigDaddy PCLinuxOS install gone right!
by Rick Copple (rlcopple)

I just wanted to give some kudos to Alie and whoever else would be responsible for the Trinity DE version of PCLinuxOS. I was one of the guys on BigDaddyLinuxLive, the one who experienced the most install issues. I did get the TrinityDE BD PCLInuxOS successfully on my testing distro (a Lenovo ThinkCenter), with a few "hacks" as the suggested ones didn't work for me. Basically, I found the install would go through using the safe boot option, with the caveat that I would then need to edit the grub config file to replace two needed commands for everything to work right, then update the grub menu to get full working desktop back, once I had successfully installed the distro. Likewise, I was also able to install it on a virtual machine on my Acer Aspire Thin 5, using the same trick. However, on my brand new Framework laptop, I was never able to install it in a virtual machine no matter what I tried, and I tried a lot of things. Hum, makes me wonder if I should try it again now?

At any rate, my son became disgusted with his brand new Lenovo Legion Gaming Desktop computer (LLGD for short from here on out), which comes with a dedicated Nvidia GPU. He wanted his gaming laptop back, which I had Garuda installed on and it appeared to be working fine. So I switched them out with the intention of working on it later. Well, "later" arrived for me a couple of days ago. After messing with it, I determined that the wifi adapter wasn't working very well on it, so I disabled it in the system settings of KDE and plugged in an Ethernet cable. That has appeared to have solved the problem with the wifi issues he was having, which was his main gripe about his system, especially when he was watching videos on it.

But I needed to install a different system on it. I had Garuda on the 1 T Mvne drive (or whatever those letters are on that drive) and I had a copy of PoP OS installed on his 2T SSD drive. I decided to overwrite the PopOS with something different, especially since

I knew Garuda worked fine on it, I wanted a good fallback option. So first I tried to install Solus Budgie on it, thanks primarily to Peter's influence, and it almost worked. I say almost because once I installed it, the desktop defaulted to an insanely high resolution that made everything tiny. So naturally I went to the Display settings of Budgie and switched it to a 1920x1080 resolution, one that's worked on it before. But instead of making the screen look ok, it made it still small text, but just gave me half a screen! It was then that I made a "fatal" mistake. I saw the switch that said something to the effect of "Use a TV" or something similar. Once I clicked that, I could barely move my mouse around. So much so that I had to do a cold boot to exit the system. So, realizing that I had really goofed up my system, I tried more than once to reinstall Solus Budgie, but each time it gave me an error when it attempted to create the partitions.

So, since I use a Ventoy 32G flash drive for all my installs of ISO, I rebooted onto it to figure out what distro to try next on it. As I scanned through my options, I saw Sparky Gameover edition, so I decided to install that. However, it had a problem when it came to creating the partitions as well. It then dawned on me that I had probably corrupted the partitions on the drive when I did the cold boot. So I looked for gparted, or something like it on Sparky's Live iSO, but I couldn't find anything, not even Disks. As I scanned down my list of distros on Ventoy, I said in my head stuff like, "Arch? No, that would be hard for him to keep updated properly. Debian? Didn't even boot into the live ISO last time I tried it. Same for Fedora. Hum? I wonder . . .' as my eyes fell upon the TBDL version. I had not downloaded a new ISO that I recall, so after my previous experiences, I didn't hold out much hope. But I shrugged my shoulders and decided to give it a spin. Just to see what would happen. So I booted into it to be greeted with a more updated grub menu, even though it was the same ISO that gave me a more text-based menu before. I almost thought I should start with the Safe boot, but decided to try the regular boot first. And to my surprise, at the spot right before the language selection menu appeared that it would crash all the time previously, the menu appeared. I thought, "Hey, this just might work!" And low and behold, it did boot into the live environment.

So I did find gparted in the menu, and used it to delete out the partitions. Then, once that had gone smoothly and I had one big empty disk, I started the install. I was a little worried about the nVidia GPU, because I had heard how difficult it is to install the drivers right. However, I didn't have a single problem with that aspect of it. After the install, I saw that the nVidia drivers were installed without so much as me even telling the installer that I needed them. I was very impressed! The whole installation process was as smooth as silk. As a matter of fact, I spent most of the day looking for the spot where I could change my display resolutions and make them stick. It appears that there are three display screens one can encounter, and only one of them has the box to click to enable the selected settings to take effect on startup, as well as today I finally figured out how to set the display to not disappear after a period of inactivity. But all that said, the installation for me

went very smooth. Which makes me wonder what else the installer might work on that previously it wouldn't. Hum, I wonder . . .

Thanks Alie, and anyone else on his team, assuming there is a team, for all the work you did in getting this ready for prime time. I've gone from my initial "I'm having issues with this distro" all the way to "this is a great distro!"

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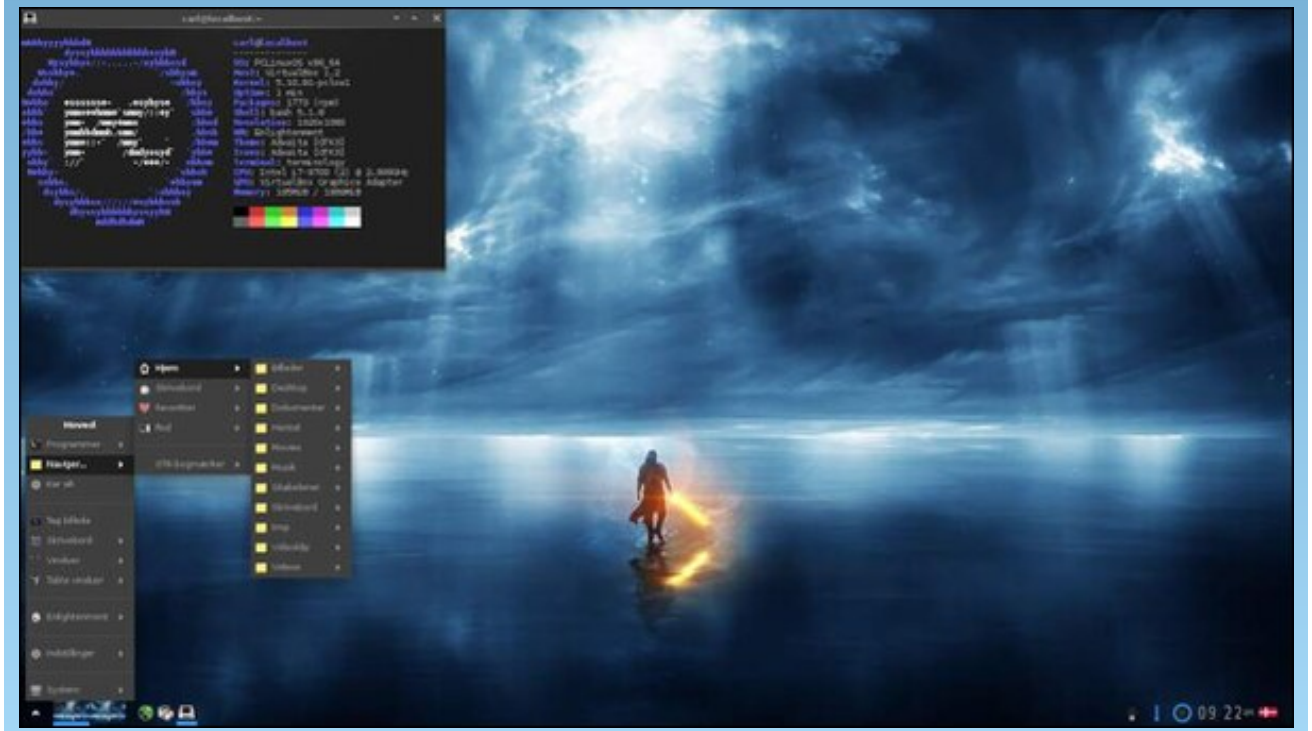


Posted by Snubbi, January 1, 2022, running e25.

PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner Bonus

Huevos Rancheros Hash Brown Skillet

Serves 4

Crispy hash browns take center stage in this skillet breakfast topped with eggs, salsa and plenty of cheese. Who wouldn't love this tasty take on a favorite Mexican breakfast?

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped (1 cup)
1 tablespoon chili powder
3/4 teaspoon salt
6 cups frozen shredded hash brown potatoes (from 30-oz bag)
4 eggs
1 cup Thick 'n Chunky salsa (from 16-oz jar)
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese (4 oz)
Sour cream, sliced avocado, chopped red onion, cilantro leaves, additional Thick 'n Chunky salsa, if desired

Directions:

In a 12-inch nonstick skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium heat. Add onion; cook 3 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until softened. Add chili powder and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt; cook and stir for 1 minute.

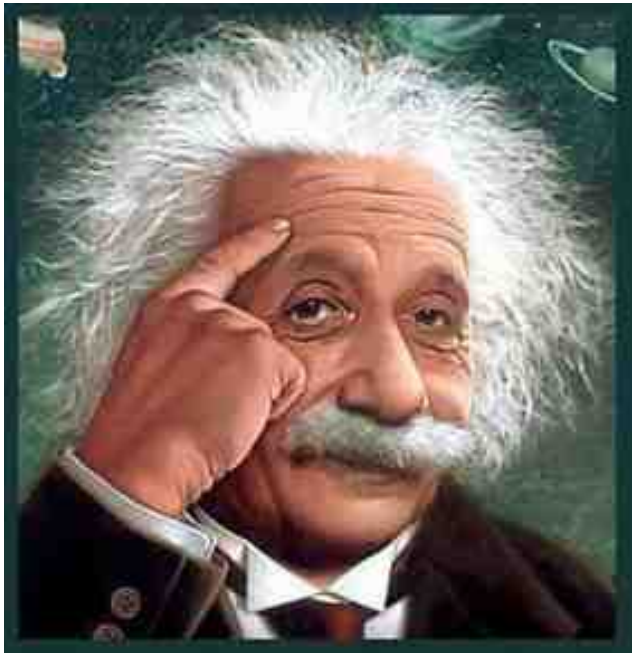
Add frozen hash brown potatoes and remaining 2 tablespoons oil to skillet; stir to combine. Spread hash brown mixture evenly in skillet. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until the bottom starts to brown. Using spatula, working in sections, turn hash browns over so the browned side is on top. Use a large spoon or spatula to make four indentations in the hash brown mixture; crack 1 egg into each hole. Sprinkle eggs with remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt.

Spoon 1 cup salsa around eggs; sprinkle cheese over salsa. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook for 10 to 12 minutes or until egg whites and yolks are firm, not runny and cheese is melted.

Serve with remaining ingredients.

Nutrition:

Calories: 590	Carbs: 70g	Fiber: 7g
Sodium: 1220mg	Protein: 18g	



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

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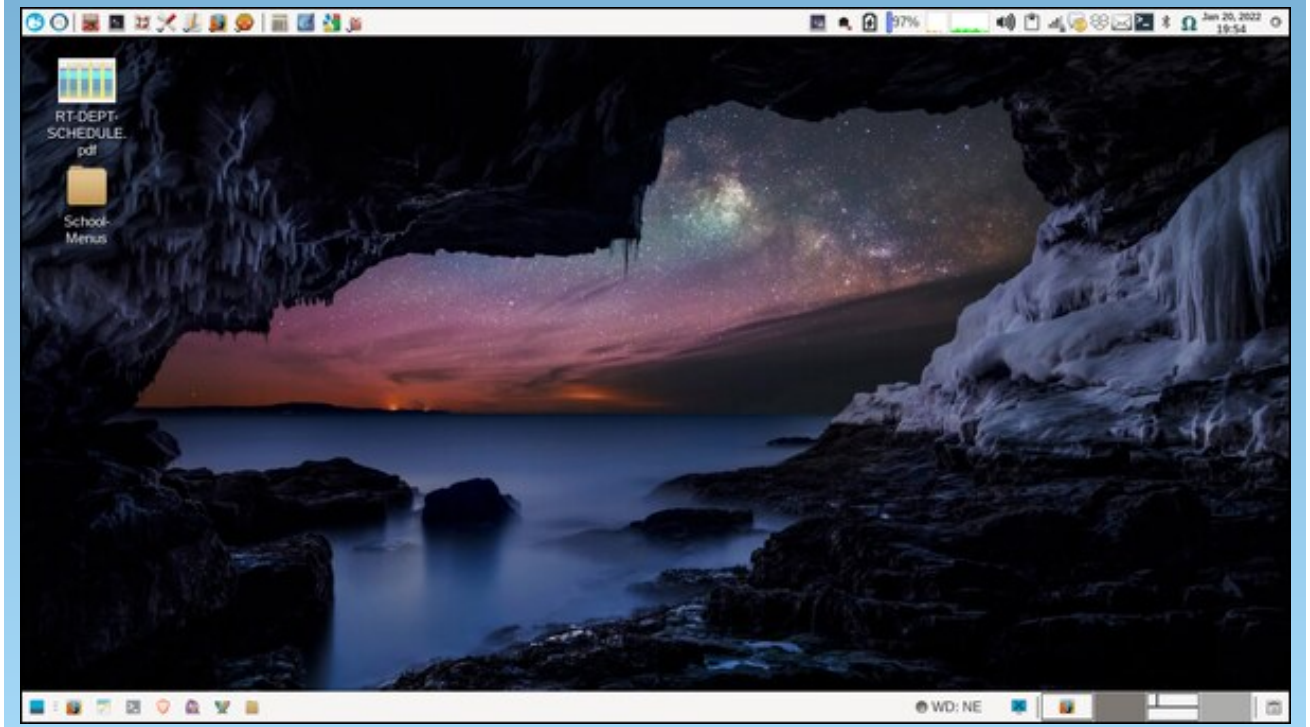


Posted by parnote, January 20, 2022, running Xfce.

PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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

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

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

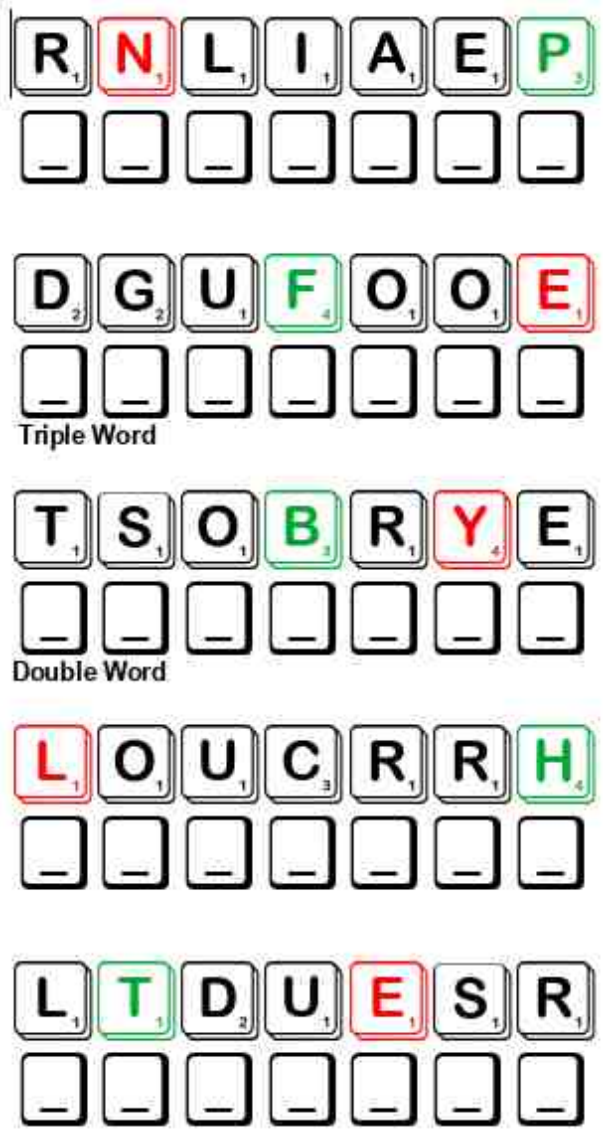
Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

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

SCRAPPLER RULES:

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

Download Puzzle Solutions Here



Possible score 231, average score 162.

PCLinuxOS Word Find: February, 2022 Desserts

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

AMBROSIA	APPLE CRISP
BAKLAVA	BANANA SPLIT
BISCOTTI	BLACK FOREST CAKE
BOMBE	BOSTON CREAM PIE
CANNOLI	CARAMEL APPLE
CHEESECAKE	CHERRY PIE
CHURRO	CINNAMON ROLL
COFFEE CAKE	CREPE SUZETTE
DOUGHNUT	ECLAIR
FLAN	FUDGE
HOT FUDGE SUNDAE	MACAROON
MOUSSE	NEAPOLITAN ICE CREAM
NOUGAT	PANNA COTTA
PEANUT BRITTLE	POPSICLE
POUND CAKE	PRALINE
RICE PUDDING	SCONE
SORBET	SOUFFLE
SPONGE CAKE	SPUMONI
STRUDEL	TRIFLE
TRUFFLE	ZABIGLIONE

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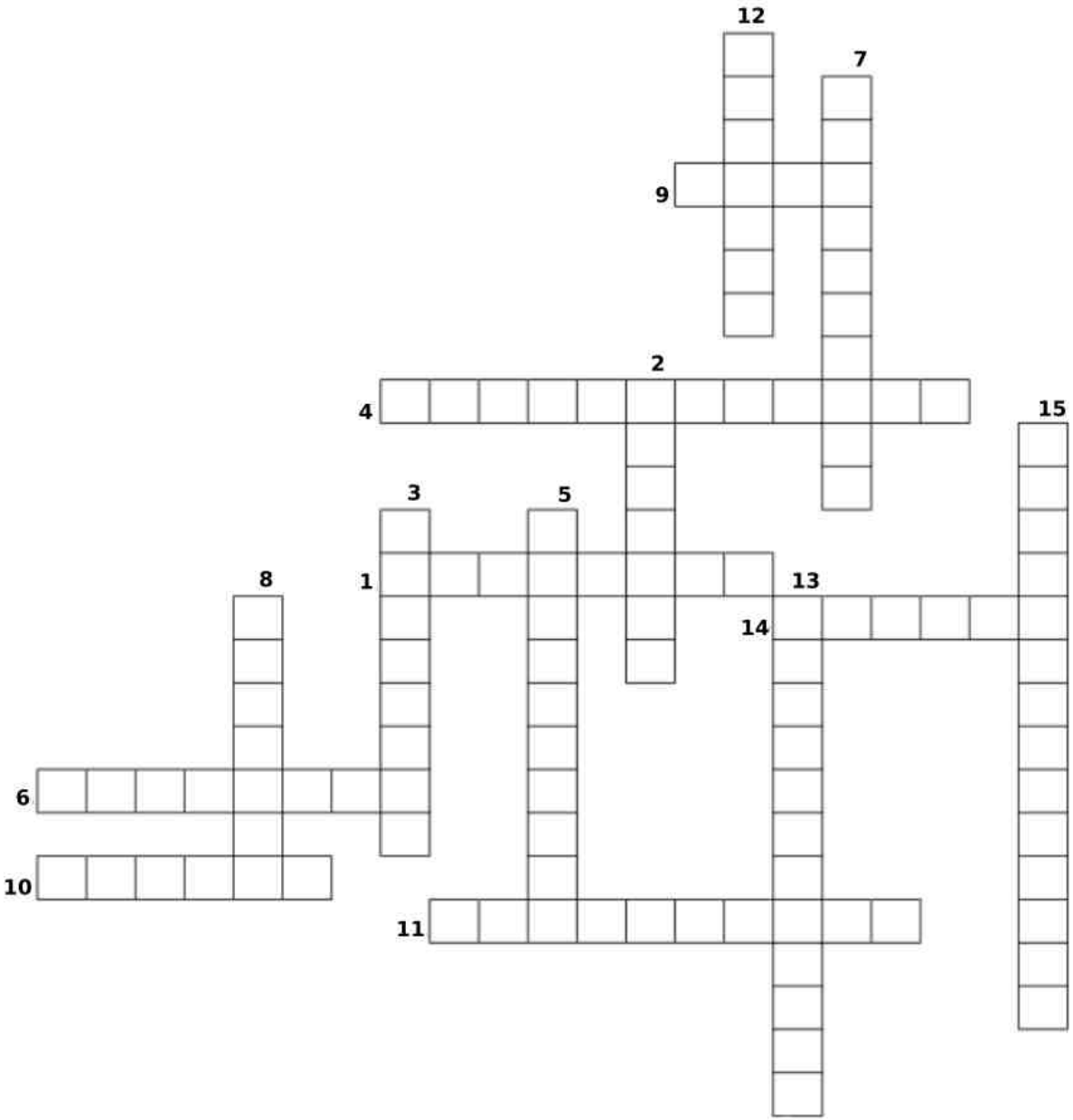
Desserts Crossword



1. A chewy cookie made with sugar, egg whites, and almond paste or coconut.
2. An Italian style of ice cream dessert, usually with layers of different color and flavor.
3. A dessert containing primarily oranges and flaked coconut.
4. A rolled or folded thin pancake, heated in an orange-flavored liqueur, and set on fire when served.
5. A foamy, custardlike mixture of egg yolks, sugar, and Marsala wine, usually served hot or chilled as a dessert.
6. A hard, usually nut-flavored biscuit, derived from the Tuscan cantucci.
7. An Italian dessert consisting of flavored cream set with gelatin.
8. A tube of fried pasta, filled with ricotta or similar cream cheese, and flavorings, eaten as a dessert.
9. A custard that is baked in a caramel-lined mold and served chilled with the caramel side up.
10. An oblong chocolate covered creme filled pastry.
11. A dessert consisting of a creamy filling usually containing cheese baked in a pastry or pressed-crumb shell.
12. A dessert made of paper-thin layers of pastry, chopped nuts, and honey.
13. An apple that is covered with a candy-like substance (usually caramel).
14. A Spanish and Mexican pastry resembling a doughnut, made from deep-fried unsweetened dough and sprinkled with sugar
15. A round cake that is split and filled with a custard or cream filling and usually frosted with chocolate.

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Mixed-Up-Meme Scrambler

"Remove this

— — — — — — — — —!

I need more available space"

Dull
NROBIG

Season
TIWERN

Cunning
TYCIRK

Siesta
TNCAPA

Use the clues to unmix the letters to make a new word. Remix the letters in the red boxes to solve the puzzle.

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