

# The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 201

October, 2023

## HAPPY HALLOWEEN



**ICYMI: ENABLE AUTOMATIC  
TRANSLATIONS IN FIREFOX 117**

**INKSCAPE TUTORIAL:  
CREATE A LANDSCAPE**

**THUNAR CUSTOM ACTION  
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The **PCLinuxOS** magazine

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# From The Chief Editor's Desk

I know most of you have probably all received the “support” calls from someone located in India telling you that your computer is “rejecting” updates, and there is a “security issue” with your computer as a result. In fact, I would be surprised if a majority of readers of this article haven’t received these kinds of spam calls. “They” claim to have attempted to send “updates” to your computer three times, and the “updates” have been rejected all three times.

Does this sound familiar? Or at least, something similar? I’m betting it does. I hadn’t received this particular type/genre of scam call in a while, but this particular call happened a little more than half way through September.



There is NO QUESTION that these idjits are scammers. I’ve never met an Indian person by the name of “Eric.” You can tell they are from India merely by their accent. Call it whatever you want, but it is what it is.

Of course, they all assume that you are using Windows. My job ... no, my mission ... is to mess with them and play along. When you’re retired, you have plenty of time for such “fun pursuits.” I remember enough about Windows (which, aside from when I was working) that I can easily play along. Never mind that I haven’t been a true Windows user since Windows XP. I’ve retained enough information from those days to make my “play” convincing.

So, I consider it my “public service duty” to keep these morons on the phone for as long as I can, preventing them from calling and scamming someone else. On this particular call, I managed to keep them on the phone for about 10 minutes before I “pulled the trigger” that ended the call.

The first scammer lays the groundwork, telling the call recipient about how their computer is rejecting updates, and is now a security risk. I “play along” by answering their questions about which icons I see on the desktop. I usually tell them I see my C:\ drive, Adobe Reader, Microsoft Word, a few games, and a link to Mapquest. She asks me what problems I’ve noted with my computer. I tell her that my computer has been running slower and slower over the past couple of months.

That scammer then “escalates” my call to a “computer support technician,” who proceeds to lay out the whole scenario again, and who again asks what icons I see on my desktop. I tell them my computer is about nine years old, and I’m running Windows 10. I also usually throw in there that I “just ran updates” last week. I also reiterate that my computer has been running slower and slower over the past couple of months.

Undaunted, the “computer support technician” proceeds to have me press the Windows Super key, and the “R” key at the same time, all in the simplest of terms so that a complete computer moron could follow along. Now, on a Windows computer, that key combination brings up the “Run” dialog box. But, since I’m on PCLinuxOS running the Xfce desktop, that particular keystroke combination brings up “Application Finder.”

Hehehe ... this is where I set the trap. He asks me what I see on my computer screen. I tell him the window says “Application Finder.”

Convinced that I hadn't done it correctly, the “computer support technician” had me close that window, and repeat the keystroke combination. Again, he asks me what the window title is after pressing the keystroke combination. And again, I tell him it says “Application Finder.” Sounding concerned, I ask him if this means my computer has been hacked or if I have a virus. He quickly sidesteps the question.

Meanwhile, you can hear the frustration mounting in his voice. The volume of his voice goes up a few notches, and his questions are becoming more and more “terse” (for the sake of a better word).

Now he has me do the Win + R keystroke combination, and type “run” in the box. To be perfectly honest, I have no idea what he's trying to achieve with this set of instructions, since even under Windows, this isn't going to produce usable results.

He asks me what I see. I tell him the window says Application Finder, and “run” appears in the text entry box, with a small red “X” icon to the left of it.

His vocal volume increases further as he becomes increasingly frustrated. At this point, I figure I should spring the trap I had previously set before he strokes out.

I asked him, “Does it matter that I'm running that Xfce desktop on PCLinuxOS?” He stumbles and stammers, asking me “What?! You are running Linux?!”

I replied “Well, yes I am, S-C-A-M-M-E-R!”

The. Trap. Has. Been. Sprung.

I repeat “scammer” into the phone a few more times, and he responds with the best American curse words he can conjure up in his Indian mind.

Success! I kept them on the phone for about 10 minutes, satisfied that I had helped prevent someone else (who may be more gullible) from becoming one of their victims.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you think COVID is done, over with, and is now in our past, you had better think again. In last month's issue, Meemaw wrote the “Welcome” column. That was because my wife got infected with COVID at the hospital where she works, and managed to spread it to the rest of us.

She went to the urgent care center and was prescribed the Paxlovid antiviral regimen. I tested positive the following Monday, and I also went to the urgent care center, where I was also prescribed the Paxlovid antiviral regimen. I started my antivirals on the same day that my wife was taking her last day of antivirals.

Ryan tested positive, and even though Lexi tested negative twice, she had all of the symptoms. Fortunately, the kids have a younger, more robust immune system, so their symptoms weren't nearly as severe. They both had to stay out of school for the rest of the week (it was only the second week of the new school year), though.

The predominant COVID strains right now are BA.5 and Eris, and Omicron is still around as well. We don't know which strain we were “lucky enough” to contract, but I can tell you that we felt AWFUL for several days. Personally, I spent most of my time sleeping in bed ... after taking double doses of nighttime cold medicine ... in the middle of the day.

The antivirals worked very well, but there are two side-effects. First, the antivirals gave me a metallic taste in my mouth, as if I was sucking on a piece of copper tubing. Second, they warned us that there was a good chance for “rebound” with the antivirals. That means that although the virus has been killed off, the symptoms — head congestion, stuffy nose, cough, general malaise, scratchy throat — all return with a vengeance. We both suffered the “rebound” after finishing the antiviral medications.

Now here's what really made me mad. I worked throughout all of the initial pandemic, caring for patients with COVID, and never contracted it. And I was in close, prolonged contact with these patients. Now, eight months after retiring from bedside care in the hospital setting, I get COVID. We are fully vaccinated (including the kids), but we had chosen to "skip" the later rounds of "booster" shots. We do, however, plan to get the newer round of "booster" shots, probably sometime in October.

\*\*\*\*\*



This month's cover image is by [Anja](#) from [Pixabay](#) and celebrates Halloween.

\*\*\*\*\*

Until next month, I bid you peace, happiness, serenity, prosperity and continued good health.

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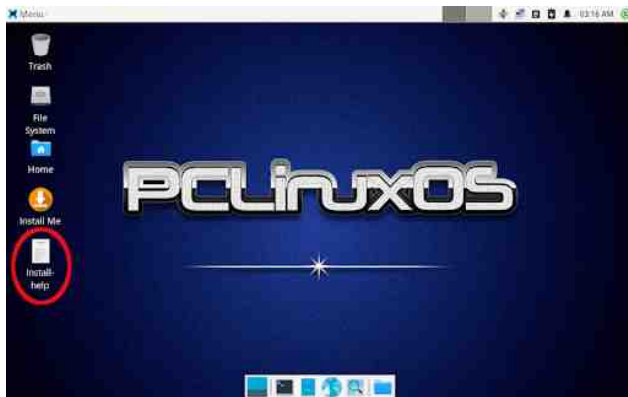


# "mylive-install" Help Guide Now Available In Thirteen Languages

by David Pardue (kalwisti)

As of July 2023, PCLinuxOS releases ship with the "mylive-install" installer (aka 17g installer) rather than the old "draklive-install" which was the default for many years. To help both newcomers and experienced PCLinuxOS users, I wrote an illustrated guide which walks through the installation steps.

This was [posted](#) in the "Tips and Tricks" section of the forum, and a more detailed overview was [published](#) in the September 2023 issue of The PCLinuxOS Magazine. Beginning with the 2023.08 official releases (KDE, KDE Darkstar, MATE and Xfce), Texstar includes a Help file, named "Install-help" (in PDF format) on the Live desktop for reference. "Install-help" is an updated version of my guide with editorial improvements, courtesy of tbs (Torsten).



(PCLinuxOS Community Releases, such as Trinity Big Daddy, Openbox and LXQt, do not include "Install-help" by default.)

For the benefit of our international users who might not be comfortable reading English, I thought it would be worthwhile to translate the Help Guide into various foreign languages represented in the "International" section of the PCLinuxOS Forum. I produced draft translations using a combination of DeepL Translator, Google Translate (GT) as well as my familiarity with assorted languages. Next, I posted links to the draft translations and asked for volunteers to revise the documents.

## Fully Revised

Five collaborators responded to my request, and they graciously corrected mistakes and offered stylistic improvements. I appreciate their language skills and community spirit. The seven translations below (ranked in descending order of forum activity) have been fully revised:

French:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160350.0.html>  
(Revised by sarthi)

Dutch:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160280.0.html>  
(Revised by Rinus)

Polish:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160278.0.html>  
(Revised by kikim)

German:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160281.0.html>  
(Revised by tbs)

Spanish:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160283.0.html>  
(Revised by sarthi)

Portuguese (Brazilian):  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160282.0.html>  
(Revised by The Cat)

Catalan:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160329.0.html>  
(Translated by sarthi)

## In Need of Revision

The draft translations below have not yet been revised. If you are a native speaker of one of these languages and would like to help your compatriots, please take out your red editor's pencil and correct any mistakes that you find!



## "mylive-install" Help Guide Now Available In Thirteen Languages

Italian:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160324.0.html>

Czech:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160279.0.html>

Swedish:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160347.0.html>

Danish:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160345.0.html>

Norwegian:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160362.0.html>

Finnish:  
<https://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,160348.0.html>

### Brief Comparison of DeepL and Google Translate

As a language buff, I enjoyed working on this project. It gave me a chance to experiment with machine translation (MT), which has significantly improved in the last few years – although it is nowhere near achieving the utopia of "perfect universal translation."

Based on my (unscientific) experience, DeepL Translator produced slightly more accurate and

"natural-sounding" results than Google Translate (GT). Although GT's translations were good overall, it seemed that they required more post-translation editing.

DeepL (<https://www.deepl.com/en/translator>) was launched in 2017 as a service exclusively for European languages. It currently covers around thirty languages and is still Eurocentric (although it does offer Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indonesian and Turkish). DeepL was developed by a Cologne-based team of approximately twenty people. It uses a neural machine translation (NMT) model trained on manually translated text.

One of DeepL's advantages is that it draws from Linguee's massive corpus of human-translated sentences, idioms and text snippets. (Linguee [<https://www.linguee.com/>] is an online concordance that searches for translations on the Internet.) Another benefit of using DeepL is that if you know both your target language as well as your source language, DeepL allows you to tweak / change the translated output.

If you create an account and sign up for their Free version, you may translate three uploaded files per month. (The file format is limited to .pdf, .docx or .pptx with a file size limit of 5 MB.)

However, DeepL is not flawless; I found that when I uploaded the Help Guide, it sometimes "forgot" parts of sentences. So you must carefully check the translated output.

Google Translate needs no introduction, as it is the most popular machine-translation tool. It was created in 2006 and currently covers over one hundred thirty languages. In 2016, GT switched to an NMT model. It uses a mix of digital resources for its sources. (GT's original database drew heavily on the Europarl Corpus, a collection of human-translated documents from European Parliament proceedings.)

Google Translate can translate uploaded files – in .docx, .pdf, .pptx or .xlsx format – without requiring you to create an account. Unlike DeepL, GT can translate websites, provide pronunciation help and supports image translation (for thirteen languages). If you use Google Chrome, GT has the convenience of fully integrating with the browser.

If you would like to take a deep dive into Google Translate, I will recommend Martin Benjamin's fascinating *Teach You Backwards: An In-Depth Study of Google Translate for 108 Languages* [2019] (<https://www.teachyoubackwards.com/>). Dr. Benjamin is an anthropologist who has been involved with lexicography and language technology since 1994, when he launched the [Kamusi Project](#), using what would come to be called crowdsourcing as a tool for compiling lexicographic data in the Internet Living Swahili Dictionary. Kamusi is the Swahili word for 'encyclopedia' or 'dictionary', and grew into the world's most-used resource for the Swahili language, with more than 60,000 entries and over a million lookups per month. Kamusi also includes other African languages.

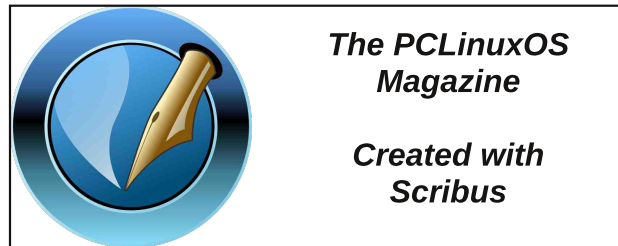


One caveat to keep in mind: With their free version, both GT and DeepL retain the history of the text being translated. So you probably should **not** use these services to translate confidential and/or customer information.

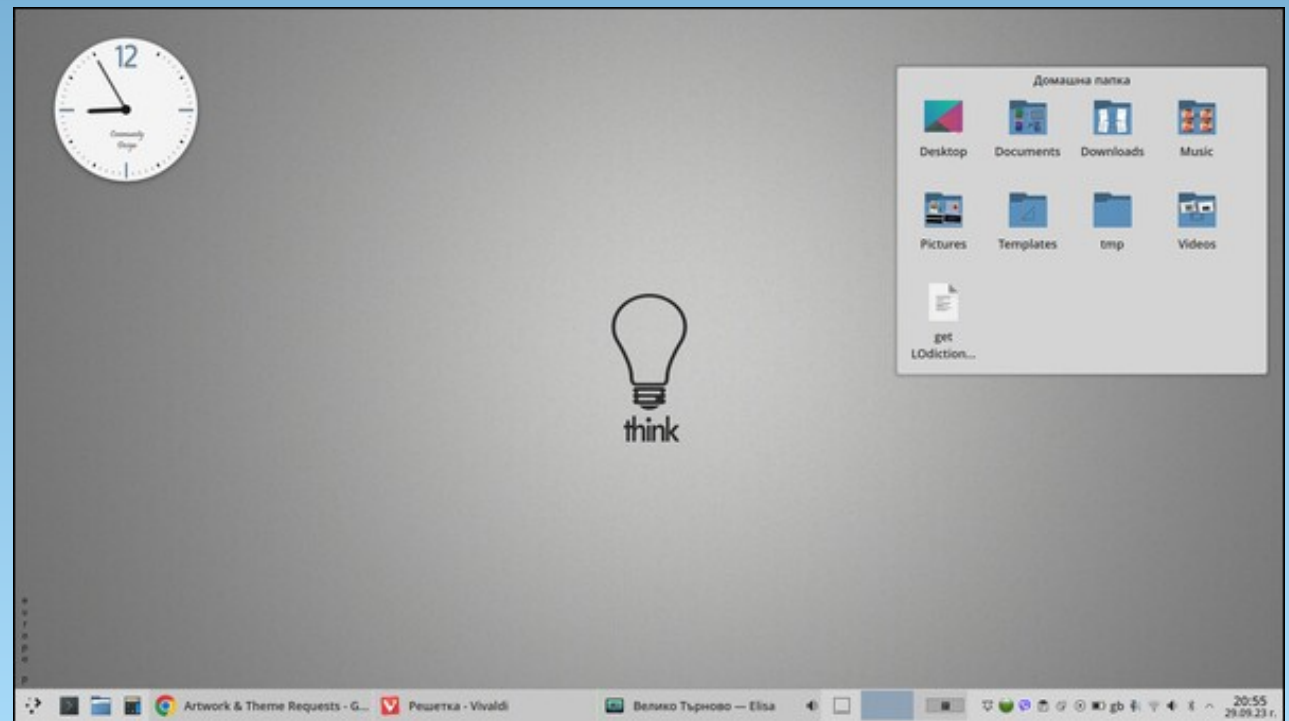
In conclusion, if you need a free translation service, I can offer the following suggestions. First, use both GT and DeepL (if possible), and compare their results. Second, use both services with caution. Third, it is preferable that you have some knowledge of the target language (if possible). Fourth, tweak your own words; avoid using slang and/or highly idiomatic phrases. Fifth, if possible, have the results vetted by someone who knows both languages. Sixth, include a disclaimer. Let your recipient know that you have used machine translation, and include your original English text (for reference purposes).

For additional recommendations, see Martin Benjamin's "When & How to Use Google Translate," *Teach You Backwards* (March 30, 2019),

<https://www.teachyoubackwards.com/how-to-use-google-translate/>.



## Screenshot Showcase



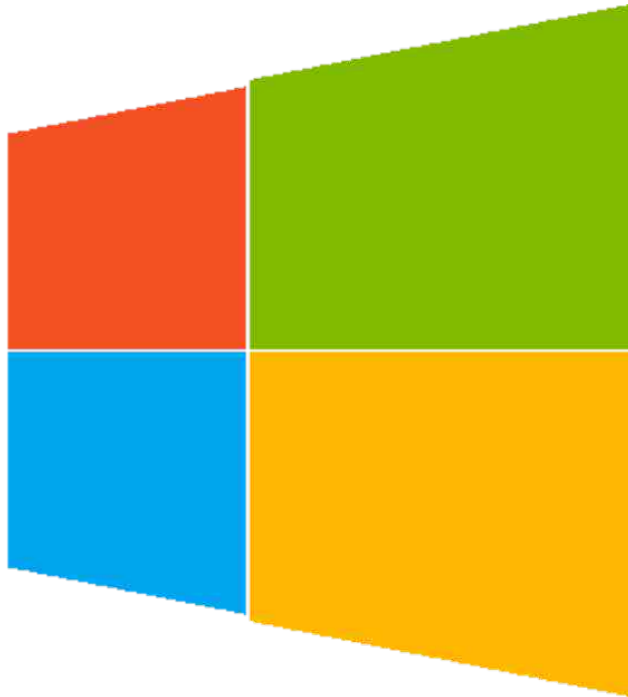
Posted by daniel76, September 29, 2023, running KDE.





# ICYMI: Enable Automatic Translations In Firefox 117

by Paul Arnote (parnote)



**A new study found that 4.31% of phishing attacks mimicked Microsoft**, far ahead of the second most-spoofed brand PayPal, according to an [article](#) from TechRepublic. PayPal (1.05%), Facebook (0.68%), DocuSign (0.48%), Intuit (0.39%), DHL (0.34%), McAfee (0.32%), Google (0.30%), Amazon (0.27%), and Oracle (0.21%) round out the top ten most-spoofed brands. Best Buy, American Express, Netflix, Adobe and Walmart are some of the other impersonated brands among the list of 350

companies used in credential phishing and other social engineering attacks Abnormal flagged over the past year.

**A team of computer scientists at the University of Massachusetts Amherst**, led by [Emery Berger](#), recently **unveiled a prize-winning Python profiler called Scalene**. Programs written with Python are notoriously slow—up to 60,000 times slower than code written in other programming languages—and Scalene works to efficiently identify exactly where Python is lagging, allowing programmers to troubleshoot and streamline their code for higher performance. Berger's team, which included UMass computer science graduate students Sam Stern and Juan Altmayer Pizzorno, built Scalene to be the first profiler that not only precisely identifies inefficiencies in Python code, but also uses AI to suggest how the code can be improved.

**A comet discovered just weeks ago by an amateur astronomer could soon be visible to the naked eye**, according to an [article](#) from Cosmos. Comet C/2023 P1 Nishimura was [found by](#) Japanese astrophotographer Hideo Nishimura, on 11 August. Nishimura was taking long-exposure photographs of the sky, with a digital camera. The comet may get bright enough to see unaided by early September – although at the peak of its brightness, it will be very close to the Sun, meaning it may be obscured by glare. The best viewing is believed

to be around sunrise and sunset from a high vantage point, like the top of a mountain. If it survives its trip around the sun intact, skywatchers on Earth may get a second glimpse in late September as it continues its estimated 435 year orbit around the sun.



**The latest version of Mozilla's flagship FOSS browser is out, and it's picked up one of the main features for which we keep Chrome around**, according to an [article](#) on The Register. The Firefox version 117 feature list might not look all that impressive, but it does have a big-ticket feature that may tempt people back: automatic translation. The snag is it's disabled

by default in the release version, and you'll have to manually enable it. Although it was enabled in the betas, Mozilla has decided to go for a staged rollout and not enable it for everyone until Firefox 118 in six weeks or so. To enable it now, in Firefox 117, go to the configuration page (enter **about:config** in the address bar), and search for a setting called **browser.translations.enable**. Change that to True and restart the browser, and the new feature should start working. If you go to a page that's not in your configured system language, a new button should appear next to the address box, offering machine translation.

**Is Python *\*\*really\*\** the world's most popular programming language?** And, what happened to JavaScript in this realm? Well, according to an [article](#) at DevClass.com, that depends on which “survey” you choose to believe. It also depends on what you “classify” as a programming language. One survey has JavaScript positioned in fifth place, while another survey has it positioned in first place. Meanwhile, the survey that positions JavaScript in fifth place has Python positioned in first place. Confused? I'm sure.

Even ransomware operators make mistakes, and in the case of ransomware gang the Key Group, **a cryptographic error allowed a team of security researchers to develop and release a decryption tool to restore scrambled files**, according to an [article](#) on The Register. The decryptor only works on a specific version of the ransomware built around August 3, according to threat intel provider EclecticIQ,

which spotted the criminals' mistakes and exploited them to develop the Python-based restoration tool. It's available for free: EclecticIQ published the Python script on Thursday in a report about the Russian-speaking gang. Check out the [details](#), and scroll way down to Appendix A for the smart script.



Do you think you're doing the environment any good by using paper cups for your coffee? You might want to think again, according to an [article](#) from Wired. **Supposedly eco-friendly cups are still coated with a thin layer of plastic, which scientists have discovered can leach chemicals that harm living creatures.**

**Apple has urgently rolled out software updates to counter a newly discovered “zero-click” vulnerability that allows spyware to infiltrate its devices**, according to an [article](#) on

Breitbart. Owners of iPhones, iPads, and Macs, and even Apple Watches should immediately update their device by following the instructions at the bottom of the linked article.

**Something may be rotten over at Rotten Tomatoes**, the popular movie rating website that many people use to gauge which of Hollywood's releases to spend their money on to view, according to an [article](#) at Vulture. The article gives instances where PR firms “hired” critics to review films in order to “raise” the Rotten Tomato score on the website.

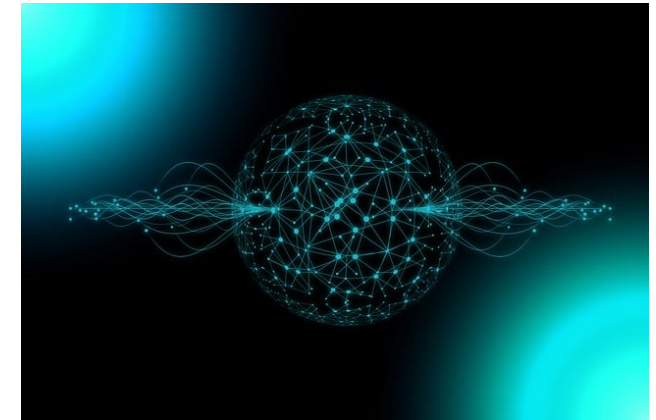


Image by [Gerd Altmann](#) from [Pixabay](#)

**A product engineer and a software engineer are bringing OpenAI and its primary supporter Microsoft to San Francisco federal court with claims of stolen personal data**, according to an [article](#) on TechRepublic, which was based on an [article](#) from Reuters. The plaintiffs, who are known only as A.T. and J.H. in the complaint, claim [OpenAI used](#) their personal information scraped from the internet to train generative artificial intelligence tools,

such as ChatGPT. Specifically, it claims OpenAI used personal data from social media, stealing their “skills and expertise” in order to make products that could “someday result in [their] professional obsolescence.” It was only a matter of time before someone took the companies behind AI to court, given how the companies are eager to reap enormous profits from the burgeoning AI market. Maybe this will FINALLY be the thing that slows down the adoption and explosion of AI.

**Paul Landis** was one of two Secret Service agents tasked with guarding first lady Jacqueline Kennedy on November 22, 1963—the day President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. **In a new book, [The Final Witness](#), to be published in October, Landis claims to have seen something that afternoon that he had never publicly admitted before.** His secret, coming to light only now, will certainly reorient how historians and laymen perceive that grave and harrowing event. His account also raises questions about whether there might have been a second gunman in Dallas that day, according to an [article](#) from Vanity Fair. The mystery deepens. By the way, Landis was never interviewed by the (in)famous Warren Commission.

OpenAI published tips for educators in a promotional blog post that shows how some teachers are using ChatGPT as an educational aid, along with suggested prompts to get started, according to an [article](#) on ArsTechnica. In a related [FAQ](#), **they also officially admit what we already know: AI writing detectors don't**

**work**, despite frequently being used to [punish students](#) with false positives.



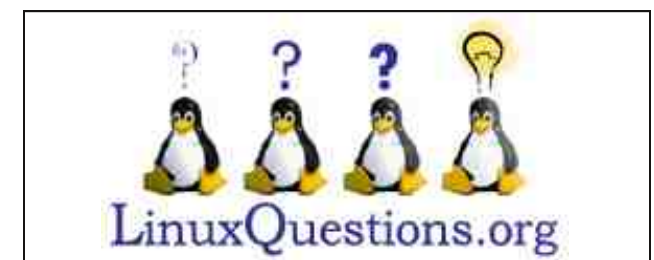
Image by [BedexpStock](#) from [Pixabay](#)

**“The Immortals” is a new podcast from BBC Radio 4 about Silicon Valley billionaires who go to great lengths to try to fight off aging and extend their lives as long as possible,** according to an [article](#) on BoingBoing. This article shows that the super-rich will go to any lengths to pervert their wealth, even to their attempts for immortality or longevity. Subscribers can access it now, but it will soon be available for free from your favorite podcast distributor.

**It's time to update Google Chrome, Mozilla's Firefox or Thunderbird, Microsoft Edge, the Brave browser or Tor Browser,** according to an [article](#) on TechRepublic. Web development

news site [StackDiary](#) has reported a [zero-day vulnerability](#) in all six browsers that could allow threat actors to execute malicious code. The problem isn't with the browsers — the vulnerability originates in the WebP Codec, [StackDiary](#) discovered. Other affected applications include Affinity, Gimp, Inkscape, LibreOffice, Telegram, many Android applications, and cross-platform apps built with Flutter. Apps built on Electron may also be affected, but Electron has already [released a patch](#).

**Your Gmail and Instagram are training AI. And, there's little you can do about it,** according to an [article](#) from the Washington Post (article may or may not be paywalled). It's your data. Do you know what Big Tech is doing with it? Google, Meta and Microsoft are taking your conversations, photos or documents to teach them their AI. Unless you [turn it off](#), Google uses your Gmail to train an AI to [finish](#) other people's sentences. Meta, the owner of Facebook, took a [billion](#) Instagram posts from public accounts to train an AI, and didn't ask permission. Microsoft uses your chats with Bing to coach the AI bot to better answer questions, and you [can't stop it](#).







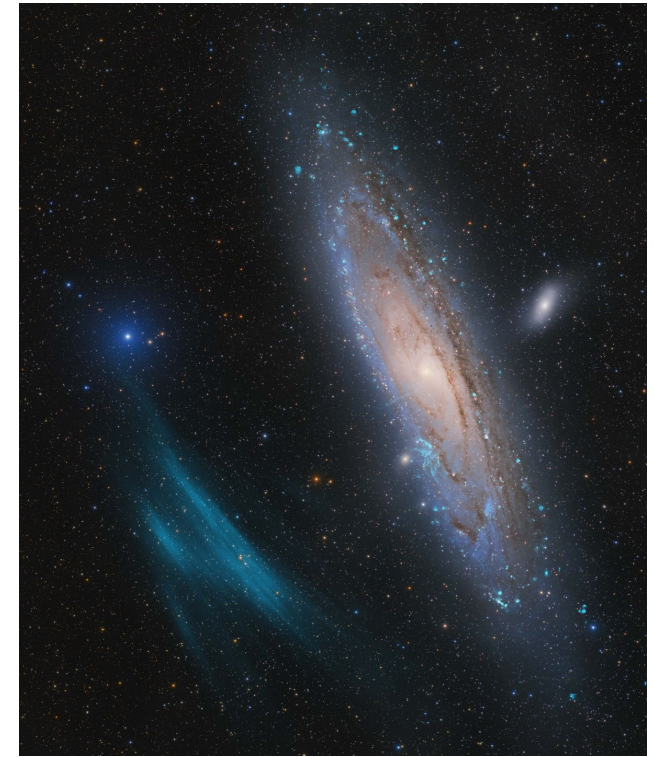
Credit: NASA

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) has captured an image of Herbig-Haro 211 that is an “infantile analog” of the Sun when it was just a baby star with a mass of about one-twelfth the present-day Sun, according to an [article](#) on PetaPixel. Herbig-Haro (HH) objects are “luminous regions surrounding newborn stars, formed when stellar winds or jets of gas spewing from these newborn stars form shock waves colliding with nearby gas and dust at high speeds,” [explains NASA](#). HH 211 showcases an outflow from a Class 0 protostar. Herbig-Haro 211 is located about 1,000 light-years away in the constellation Perseus. The Class 0 protostar in the center will one day grow into a star like the Sun. Scientists believe the image here could represent what the Sun looked like when it was “no more than a few tens of thousands of years old.” The Sun is about 4.6 billion years old today. This beautiful image was captured by Webb’s Near Infrared Camera

(NIRCam). Infrared imaging technology is especially powerful when looking at newborn stars and their outflows because they are formed within the gas of a molecular cloud, which is difficult to see through in visible light. HH 211 emits infrared light, which can penetrate through the gas and dust that blocks the object from view.

The Google Pixel Watch may have emerged as one of the top Android smartwatches, but the device is not without its issues, according to an [article](#) on Android Central. **The most notable issue with the Pixel Watch is the recent confirmation that Google won’t repair any damages or cracks to the watch’s screen.**

If there’s something that Google wants you to know, **it’s that the defendant in the United States’ most significant antitrust trial in 25 years is *not* a search monopoly established through unfair, anti-competitive means—and if people get that impression**, it’s only because all the other search engines suck. Google is, literally, just built differently, according to an [article](#) on Slate. Whew! This trial ought to be a wild ride, and one that’s LONG overdue!



Credit: Marcel Drechsler, Xavier Strottner and Yann Sainty

**The Royal Observatory Greenwich has announced the winners of the Astronomy Photographer of the Year 15**, during an award ceremony held Sept. 14, according to an [article](#) on Space.com. As the world’s largest astrophotography competition, Royal Observatory Greenwich divides winners into 11 categories, and from those chooses an overall winner.

**Google will pay \$93m to settle accusations of misleading consumers on how and when their location information was being tracked and stored**, a considerable payout for the tech giant

that followed a years-long investigation into its data practices, according to an [article](#) on The Guardian.

**A “ring of fire” solar eclipse will be visible in parts of the United States and Mexico on October 14**, according to NASA. The annular solar eclipse will be visible in Oregon, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and Texas, as well as some parts of California, Idaho, Colorado and Arizona, NASA predicted. During the eclipse, the sun appears as a “ring of fire” in the sky.



Credit: NASA

**NASA’s OSIRIS-REx will release an asteroid sample capsule this September, aiming for a landing in the Great Salt Lake Desert, with teams ready to address challenges during its descent and recovery**, according to an [article](#) on SciTechDaily. After traveling billions of miles through our solar system, NASA’s OSIRIS-REx spacecraft will cruise past Earth with an extraordinary delivery. As it passes, it will release a mini-fridge size capsule containing a sample of primordial space rock

collected from an asteroid located between the orbits of Earth and Mars.

Various bacterial species have demonstrated an extraordinary ability to degrade [plastics](#), which are synthetic polymers known for their long-lasting and non-biodegradable characteristics. **Now, researchers from North Carolina State University have put to use the remarkable biological traits of two bacterial species to enable efficient plastic breakdown in saltwater**, according to an [article](#) from Interesting Engineering. This genetically engineered microorganism can break down a type of plastic known as polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which contributes significantly to microplastic pollution in the global oceans. PET is widely used to manufacture many items, including water bottles and clothing.

The [three-body problem](#) is a notoriously tricky puzzle in physics and mathematics, and an example of just how complex the natural world is. Two objects orbiting each other, like a lone planet around a star, can be described with just a line or two of mathematical equations. Add a third body, though, and the math becomes much harder. Because each object influences the others with its gravity, calculating a stable orbit where all three objects get along is a complex feat. **Now, an international team of mathematicians claims to have found 12,000 new solutions to the infamous problem** — a substantial addition to the hundreds of previously known scenarios, according to an [article](#) from Live Science. Their work was

[published](#) as a preprint to the database arXiv, meaning it has not yet undergone peer review.



Credit: NASA

NASA’s Perseverance rover has done the unthinkable. Or, at least, a small device on the rover has. According to a tweet and article shared by NASA’s Perseverance team on Twitter, **a device known only as MOXIE has proven that we can generate oxygen on Mars using the planet’s CO2-concentrated atmosphere**, according to an [article](#) on BGR.

**Do you remember the ubiquitous floppy disk?** Of course you do. Tom Persky is the self-proclaimed “last man standing in the floppy disk business.” He is the time-honored founder of [floppydisk.com](#), a US-based company dedicated to the selling and recycling of floppy disks, according to an [article](#) on Aiga Eye On Design. Other services include disk transfers, a recycling program, and selling used and/or broken floppy disks to artists around the world. All of this makes floppydisk.com a key player in the small yet profitable contemporary floppy scene.



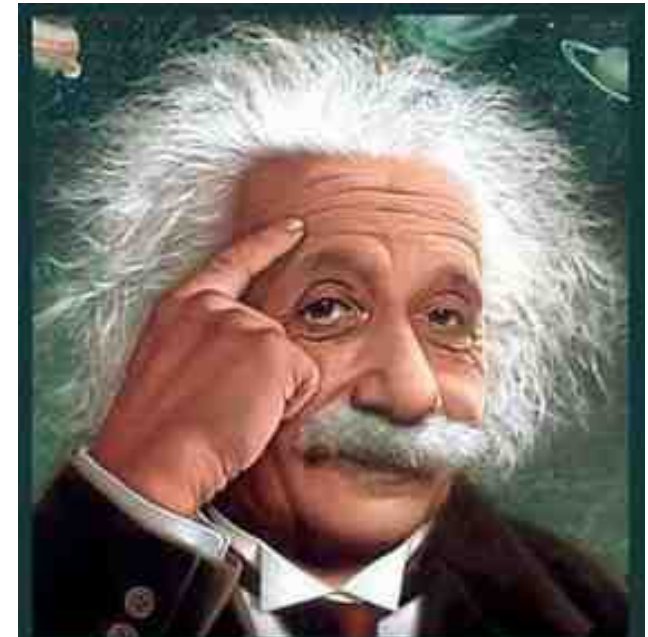
Are you “into” audio books? If so, Project Gutenberg has teamed up with Microsoft to create nearly 5,000 new FREE audiobooks of classic literature. They employed AI technology and Microsoft’s Text-To-Speech engine to create “natural sounding” audio recordings of the works. The project is called “The Project Gutenberg Open Audiobook Collection,” and its homepage is [here](#). In a quick review of the available titles, I found audio books of works by Jules Verne, Mark Twain, William Shakespeare, and many others among the offerings. Go [here](#) to access the new audiobooks. You can also [access](#) them from the Internet Archive. While you can tell that it is a computer-generated “voice,” the recordings do have natural speech inflection patterns, and won’t be too hard to listen to.

cases [rise](#) in the United States — and as many people are realizing the tests they’ve long had on hand have expired. People can check whether the expiration date on their tests have been extended on the Food and Drug Administration’s [website](#). The mailed tests will also include instructions on how to look up extended expiration dates.

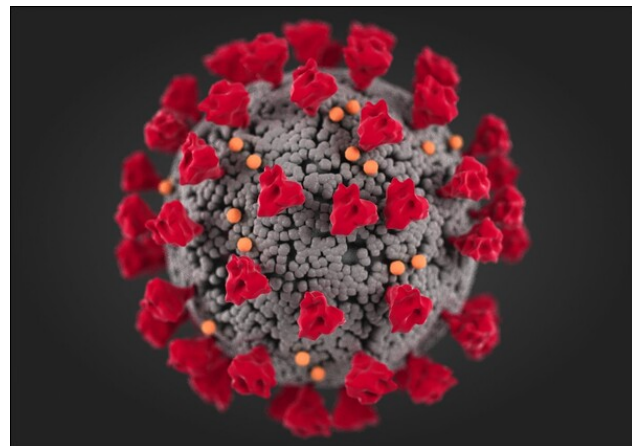
**A new report reveals that in 2022, 47.4% of all internet traffic came from bots, a 5.1% increase over the previous year**, according to an [article](#) from Security Magazine. The same report showed that human traffic, at 52.6%, decreased to its lowest level in eight years. Imperva released its 10th annual [Bad Bot Report](#), a global analysis of automated bot traffic across the internet. The annual report provides security and business leaders with information about the evolution of bot technology and automated traffic. This year’s report also documents milestones in the evolution of bad bot technology. For the fourth consecutive year, the volume of bad bot traffic — malicious automated software applications capable of high-speed abuse, misuse and attacks — grew to 30.2%, a 2.5% increase over 2021.

**Researchers in Japan said they’d developed an AI system that could understand the emotional state of chickens**, according to an [article](#) from Business Insider. [The study](#), which was led by University of Tokyo professor Adrian David Cheok, has yet to be peer-reviewed. The AI system is based on a technique the researchers called “Deep Emotional Analysis Learning,” which can adapt

to changing vocal patterns. The study found that the system was capable of translating “various emotional states in chickens, including hunger, fear, anger, contentment, excitement, and distress.”



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The Department of Health and Human Services said that it is reopening its website [COVIDTests.gov](#) on Sept. 25, according to an [article](#) on NBC News. Households can order the tests to be delivered to their homes, free of charge. The announcement comes as COVID



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Take Pictures  
Email  
Chat

***While Driving.***

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Phone & Arrive Alive.***

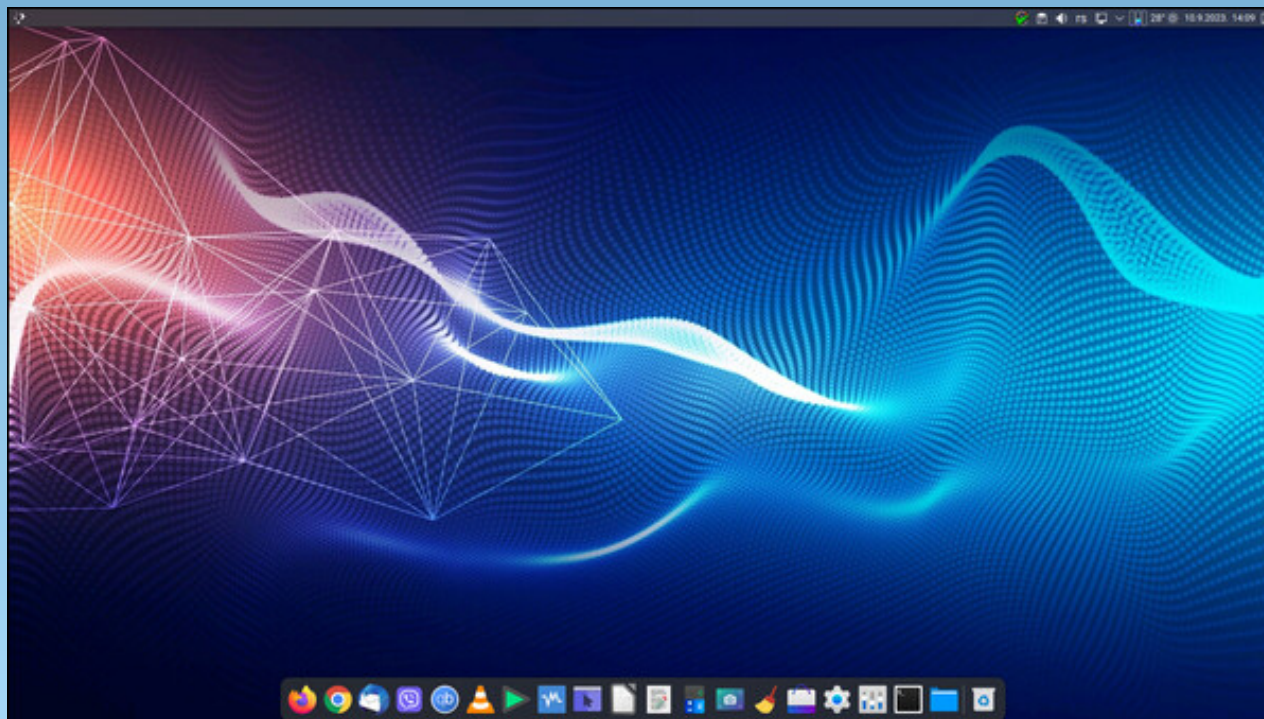


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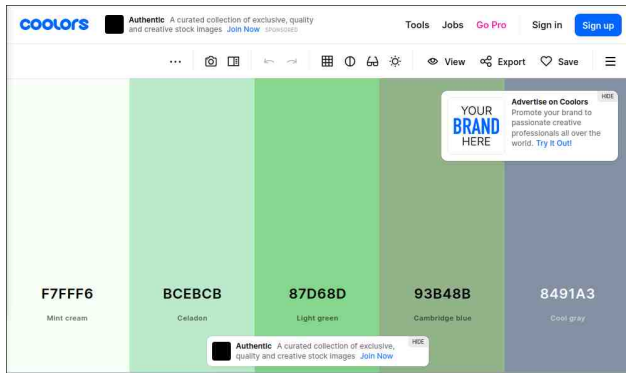


*Posted by jogurtmen, September 10, 2023, running KDE.*

# Inkscape Tutorial: Create A Landscape

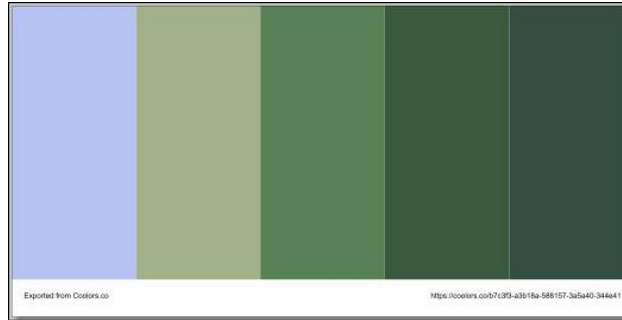
by Meemaw

I saw another Inkscape tutorial I thought was really neat, so I'm going to share it. This one is from Davies Media Design, and it gives instructions for a [landscape](#) which fades into the distance. He also outlines a way to get a palette of complimentary colors, if you are having trouble choosing them in Inkscape. You can go to the website <https://coolers.co> which is totally a color palette selector.



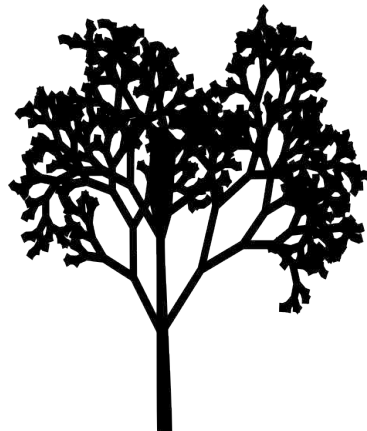
To choose a color you want to use, press the spacebar until you see one you want to use, then hover over it with your mouse and lock it. Hit the spacebar again and all the colors you see now will blend with the first. Keep choosing and locking colors until you have what you want, then export it as an Inkscape .svg file. You can then open it in Inkscape and use the colors.

Here is my palette:



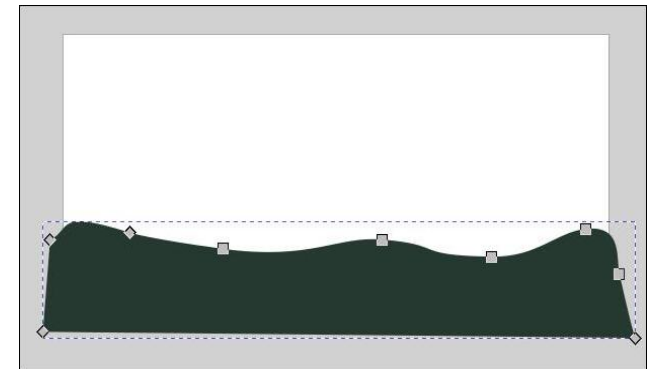
I saved two, but I liked this one the best.

Davies Media Design used some oranges and browns to do a desert theme with cacti, but I'm going to use greens and trees. I used the tree method from my [article](#) in the August, 2018 issue. However, I didn't expand the stroke to make the tree full, because I wanted it to show nearly fall, rather than mid-summer. I DID, though, combine several trees together to make the branches fuller.



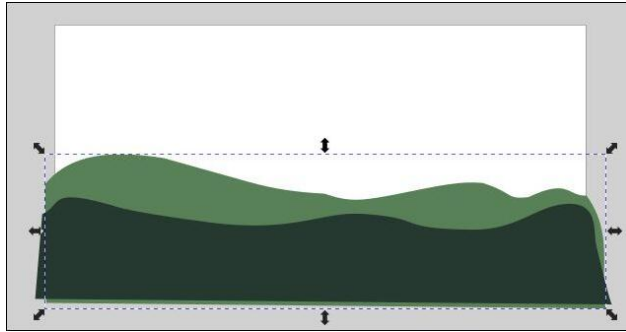
Open Inkscape, and create a new drawing. Davies suggests 1920 x 1080 canvas size, with the border always on top, so it's visible over your additions. I put a white rectangle at the back, because we'll be messing with opacity.

Starting at the bottom of the page, you want to use your Bezier tool and draw a rectangle with rolling hills at the top. This will be the foreground. Edit your nodes at the top so your hills look the way you want them to, then using your color palette, change the fill color of your foreground. Notice that the hills extend off the page, so there are no spaces at the edge. When you export your finished product, you'll export the page, rather than the drawing, so all the excess at the edge will be cut off.

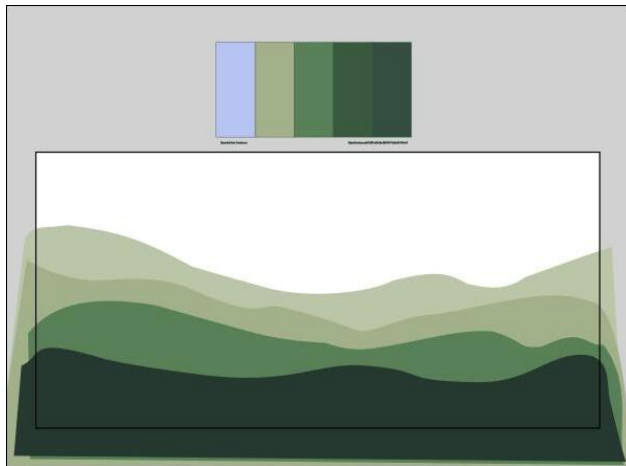


Davies suggests using a different layer for each hill farther away, and after you create this one you can add a layer below the present layer. Using your Bezier tool, create another hill on the new layer, edit the nodes, and fill it with the

next lighter color in your palette (I skipped a color).



And a third... You can see the palette I used here as well.



I chose to make a fourth hill, but it's your creation, so do what you want. For mine I used the same color as the third, but went into Fill & Stroke and lightened it more.

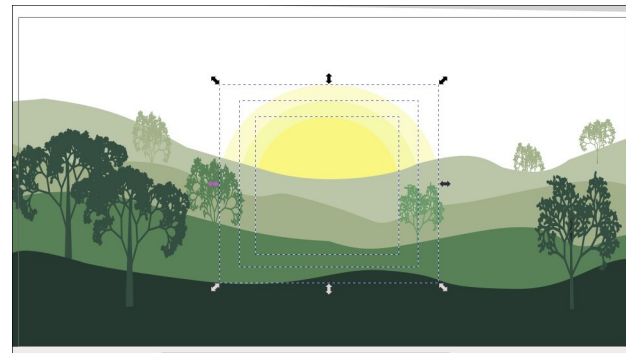
When you have your hills as you want them, it's time for the trees. Create your trees however you want. I created 3 that looked similar, then

resized and flipped them so they aren't exactly alike.

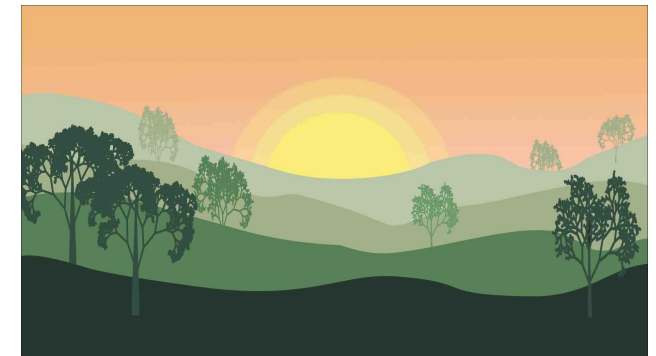
You'll place the trees on each layer, in the same color as the hills in that layer. The effect here is items fading as they get farther away. I placed at least two trees on each layer, resizing them smaller as I went through the layers.



I want to add a setting sun to this. The easiest way is to add a yellow circle on another layer, and behind it, two more circles, progressively larger, but lighter shades of yellow. You can duplicate the first circle, and using the <SHIFT> key, resize it out farther and then edit the color and opacity. Then place them lower in the drawing so it looks like the sun is setting.



I'm going to add an orange sky (because the sun is setting). You can leave it one color or use gradients. My final was a gradient, and then I selected the larger two suns and blurred them a bit. It's not fine art, but it was fun! I suggest you also go to Davies tutorial (link above) and watch it, because it has some more tips when working with nodes. Have fun!



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# PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner: Easy Meatless Lasagna



## Easy Meatless Lasagna

Serves 8

### INGREDIENTS:

2 cups ricotta cheese  
or small curd creamed cottage cheese  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano leaves  
or 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano leaves  
2 jars (28 ounces each) tomato pasta sauce  
(any variety)  
12 uncooked lasagna noodles  
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese (8 ounces)  
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
Additional shredded mozzarella cheese,  
if desired

### DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 350F. Mix ricotta cheese, 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, the parsley and oregano.

Spread 2 cups of the pasta sauce in an ungreased rectangular pan, 13x9x2 inches; top with 4 uncooked noodles. Spread ricotta cheese mixture over noodles. Spread with 2 cups pasta sauce and top with 4 noodles; repeat with 2 cups pasta sauce and 4 noodles. Sprinkle with 2 cups mozzarella cheese. Spread with remaining pasta sauce. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese.

Cover with tinfoil and bake for 30-45 minutes. Uncover and bake about 15-20 minutes longer or until hot and bubbly. Sprinkle with additional mozzarella cheese. Let stand 15 minutes before cutting.

### TIPS:

You can substitute cottage cheese in place of the ricotta cheese.

Complete this meal with your favorite tossed salad and crusty Italian bread.

To prepare ahead of time, cover unbaked lasagna tightly with foil and refrigerate no longer than 24 hours. About 1 1/2 hours before serving, heat oven to 350F. Bake covered 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 to 20 minutes longer, or until hot and bubbly. Sprinkle with additional mozzarella cheese. Let stand 15 minutes before cutting.

### NUTRITION:

Calories: 515      Carbs: 28.2g      Fiber: 4.3g  
Sodium: 1340mg      Protein: 24g

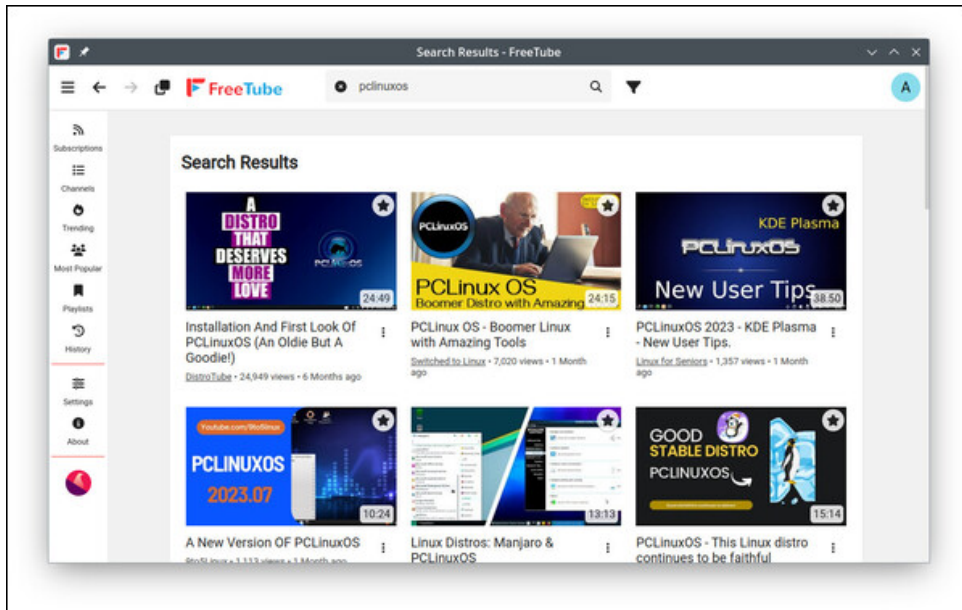


# Repo Review: FreeTube

by Cg\_boy

**FreeTube** is an advanced open source YouTube client with a strong focus on privacy. It comes with a built-in ad-blocker, a video downloader utility, and even supports subscribing to YouTube channels without the need of a Google account. It provides an easy way to watch YouTube videos from your desktop while retaining user privacy.

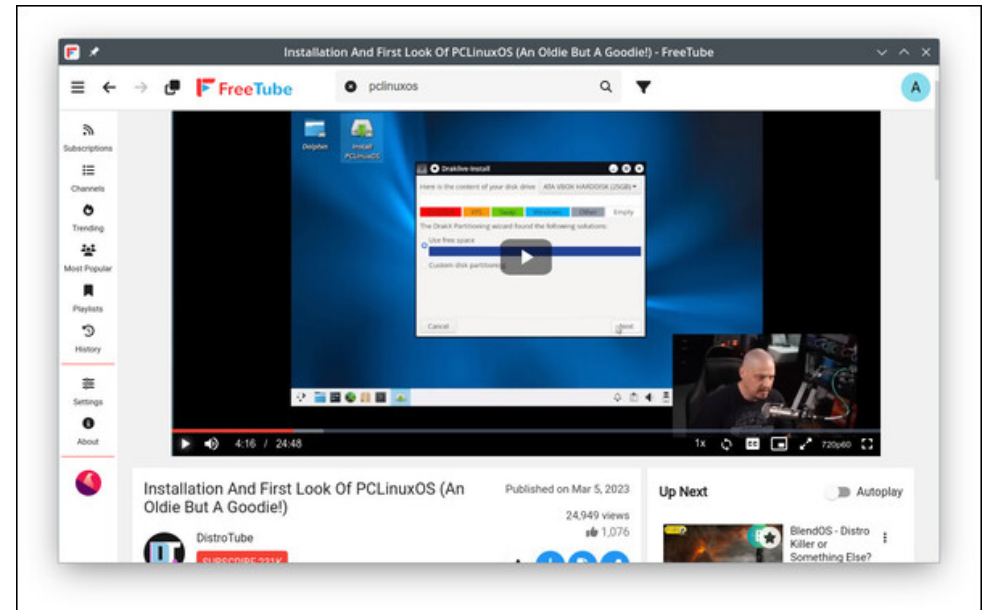
FreeTube's interface is well designed and quite easy to navigate. From the panel on the left, you can access your subscriptions, saved channels, trending videos, most popular videos, saved videos, and history. The toolbar at the top of the screen provides access mainly to the search bar, as well as navigation controls, and the profile selector.



When you launch FreeTube, it automatically starts at the Subscriptions page, showing you all the latest content from channels you have

subscribed to, separated into videos, shorts, and live categories. One of FreeTube's great features is the ability to anonymously subscribe to channels without needing to be signed into a Google account. You can apparently also import subscriptions from YouTube, but I did not get a chance to try this feature out.

Searching for videos is very quick and easy, and FreeTube displays search suggestions in the search bar as you type. The search results are displayed in an organized and uncluttered way, which is, in many ways, actually nicer than how the regular web version of YouTube shows search results. You can click on and visit a channel the same way you would when using YouTube in a web browser, allowing you to then view all the channel's videos, shorts, live streams, playlists, community, and about pages as you would normally.

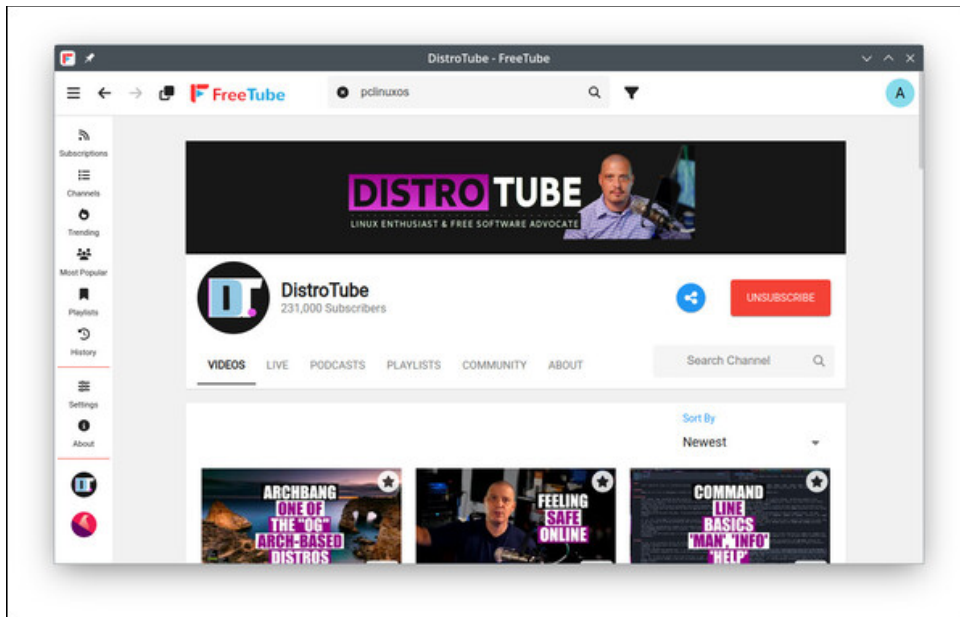


Watching videos with FreeTube is pretty much the same as when using YouTube in a browser, as FreeTube strives to provide you with a familiar



interface. All the regular options for playback, chapters, video quality, captions, and so forth are all there. You are also given the option to change the media format of the video if you need to do so. The comments and description, along with the recommended videos list to the right are also present. Video playback works very well in FreeTube, and this is where I really appreciate the less distracting layout of the application.

FreeTube does also give you the option to download videos to your computer, presenting you with a list of resolutions and formats to choose from. It does not, unfortunately, seem to show any sort of progress information when downloading a video, though, so it is a bit hard to know when one has finished downloading.



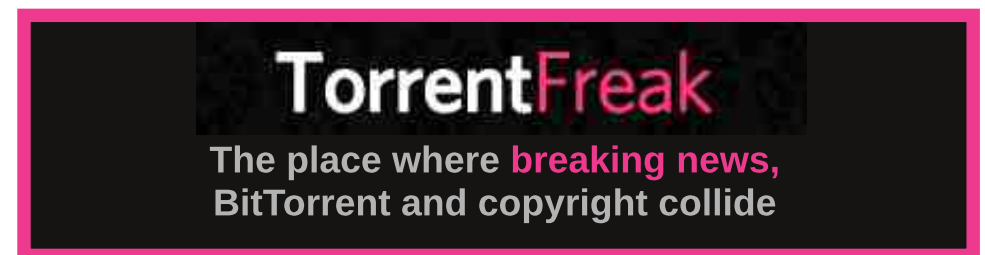
From the Channels page you can see and visit all the channels you are currently subscribed to, as well as remove them from your subscriptions. The Playlists page allows you to view and manage any videos you've saved in FreeTube (You can add a video to the list by clicking on the save button next to the video). The Trending page, as its name implies, just shows you currently trending videos on YouTube, the same as when accessing YouTube from a web browser. When I tried accessing the Most

Popular videos page, however, FreeTube would just display an error and be unable to load the page.

FreeTube gives you a huge wealth of options at the Settings page, allowing you to configure and customize much of the interface and playback functions. Some of the more interesting options it has are the Distraction Free Settings, which allow you to hide things such as the comments, live chat, recommended videos, likes, views, and many other items that may cause distractions while watching videos. Parental control settings are also available, as well as proxy and connection options.

### Summary

All in all, FreeTube provided a very good YouTube watching experience. I had previously tried it a couple times over the last few years, but I generally encountered some issue or another with it. However, I'm happy to say that this time around FreeTube worked nearly flawlessly, and I would highly recommend it to anyone looking for an excellent desktop YouTube client.

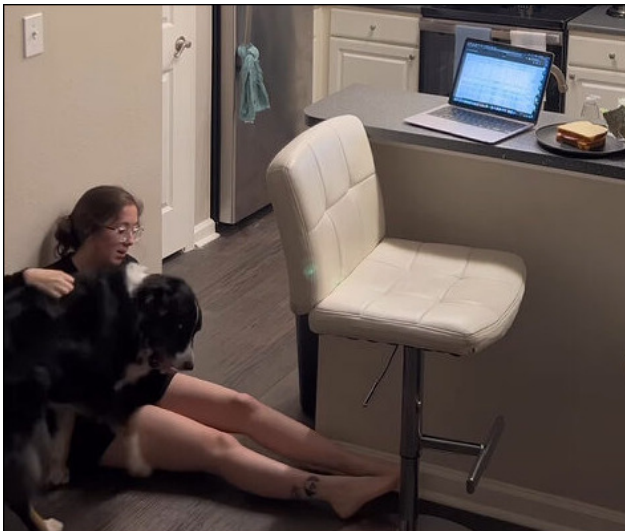




# Good Words, Good Deeds, Good News

compiled by Meemaw

## Therapy Dog saves Owner



Katie has postural tachycardia syndrome or PoTS — a condition that causes an extreme change in heart rate and dizziness when one sits or stands up. It can be a nuisance, as it happens at random times. She got her Australian shepherd, Bailey, to help her through these episodes.

*“Bailey is trained to pick up a scent my body gives off prior to going into a medical episode,”* Graham said. *“This gives me enough time to get to a safe spot and prepare to lose consciousness.”*

As caught on her security camera, Bailey pushed her against the wall, so she could sit on the floor, then brought her a bottle of water and her medicine. Posted on [Tik Tok](#), it received 24 million views. You can see it at the link above.

Katie is very thankful to have Bailey, saying, *“He is so determined and quick-witted, I know that despite any challenge, he will ensure to do his job and keep me safe. He allows me to have freedom and to feel safe even when I am alone. He is my lifeline and I could not live without him.”*

## 14 Year Old Funds Childrens’ Lunches



14 year old DeJuan remembers when he was in elementary school in Florissant, MO, near St. Louis. Sometimes the only meal he got was his school lunch. As a fourth grader at McCurdy Elementary, DeJuan felt the pangs of hunger many times during lunch. Since then he has started the Tech Boy Initiative to help students get their school lunches paid even if their families are having trouble paying. He started a [GoFundMe](#) page called *“Lets Help Eliminate Negative Lunch Balances”* which uses those funds to pay off the balances the students’ parents can’t pay. He started at McCurdy Elementary, but will probably spread to other schools. The bills have been paid and a check sent to the school principal. At last look, the fund had collected over \$7,000!

DeJuan is in middle school now, and writing comic books (called Tech Boy), and is very grateful to all who donated. He posted on the GoFundMe page, *“I want to take this time to thank each and every one of you who took the time to donate to help eliminate students’ negative lunch balances. This will help many families who are struggling financially. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.”*



### Maui Church Remains After Wildfires



The world was shocked in August to hear about the horrendous wildfires that swept through Lahaina on the island of Maui. However, one amazing thing happened. In spite of the flames surrounding it, one church amazingly escaped the flames.

Maria Lanakila Catholic Church, located in downtown Lahaina, is still standing as of Friday, August 11th, confirmed by the office of St. Anthony's parish, which is nearby.

Many of the news outlets had photos of this church from the air, showing burned ruins all around it.

*Video footage shows the church against a backdrop of blue sky. As the camera pans away, the clip shows charred debris strewn across a parking lot and what appears to be smoke rising from the ground "Wow. Standing up after the Fire. Glory to God," a social media user*

*commented on the video, while another said, "A miracle, and a testament to God's Glory. Ave Christus Rex."*

### Lost Calf Returned to Mother



The Jackson County, Michigan Sheriff's Deputies were surprised when they noticed a newborn black and white calf wandering alone last month in Spring Arbor Township, Michigan.

They had been called about a truck tearing up a field driving through it when they found the calf wandering alone. They determined that it belonged to a nearby farm, and made sure it got back with its mother.

*"There's a huge amount of satisfaction in stopping something bad from happening," one of the deputies added. They have since named the bull calf Jerry.*

### Veteran Receives New House



*John & friends*

A wounded veteran from Lebanon, Ohio, is getting ready to move into a home that fits him and his family perfectly, and they will not have to worry about mortgage payments.

*The house builders are constructing for Navy Petty Officer First Class John Kremer will be completely accessible for the veteran, who was severely wounded during a deployment to Afghanistan, WLWT TV reported earlier last month. The house will be completely paid for by the Gary Sinise Foundation (their About page says "we serve our nation by honoring our defenders, veterans, first responders, their families, and those in need").*



Kremer has done three tours in Iraq as an EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) officer. On his third tour he was injured, eventually losing both legs from the knee down. He and his wife have two children.



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## Screenshot Showcase



Posted by tbs, September 1, 2023, running KDE.



# Thunar Custom Action Joins Multiple PDFs

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Around our house, one of the kids' premiere questions every morning before school is, "What's for breakfast and lunch at school today, daddy?"



A lunch my kids would probably eat at school. Otherwise, it's "brown bag" time.

So, I find it easiest to keep a PDF file on my desktop that has all of the meal menus for their school, just so I can answer that daily question. I used to be able to just download the PDFs from their school's website, but last year they changed to some funky clunker that only allows you to "print off" the menus, one at a time. So, I've had to adapt.

Now I'm a HUGE fan/user of CUPS-PDF, but it really doesn't work well in this particular situation, since each menu (there's a separate menu for each meal at school) has the exact same name. Fortunately, Firefox's print dialog has an option to save the current document to a PDF file. So, by

using that, I can give each menu a separate filename, where CUPS-PDF doesn't allow me to specify a name for each PDF file. Rather, with CUPS-PDF, the title of the page serves as the filename, and since they are all named the same, each downloaded menu would just overwrite the previous one. I know this because I've tried it.

Previously, when the school's website had pre-made PDF files of the school menus, they still had separate menus for each meal. But who wants to have to open multiple PDFs when you can get all of the information you're seeking by looking at just one PDF? So even back then, I would combine all of the downloaded PDF files into one contiguous PDF file that contained all of the menus.

And, until the past month, I would combine them all "manually" using command line tools from the command line. But that became an arduous task (ok ... just more arduous than it should be), and the whole thing was just begging for simplification. I finally came up with a solution that works exceptionally well. That's not to say that there aren't other ways of doing the same thing, but it is what works very well for my use.

I had thought about trying to write a bash script, but that proved problematic for reasons I won't go into here. I needed two things. First, it had to allow me the opportunity to specify the output filename. Second, I had to have a way to select which PDFs I wanted to join together into one. What I came up with accomplishes both requirements, and is executed from a Thunar Custom Action "one liner."

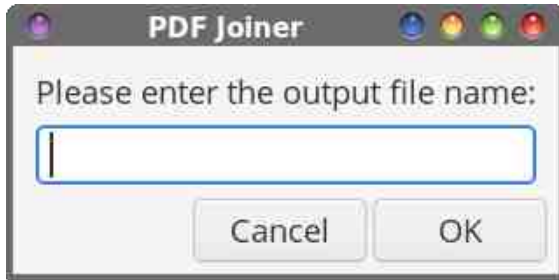
Here's the one liner that I came up with:

```
P="$(zenity --title="PDF Joiner" --entry --text="Please enter the output file name:"); pdfunite %N $P
```

So, "P" defines a Zenity dialog box that allows me to specify the filename for the output file. Once I click "OK" in the Zenity dialog box, **pdfunite**

## Thunar Custom Action Joins Multiple PDFs

joins the selected PDF files (specified by the %N parameter, which is just the filenames of the selected files without any path information) into the single PDF file specified in the Zenity dialog box.



I chose **pdfunite** over **pdfjoin** because it has fewer command line options. With **pdfjoin**, you have to specify the output file by prefacing it with “-o” in the command line. With **pdfunite**, the last PDF file listed is the output file. You *can* use **pdfjoin** if you want, but you will have to be sure to have the **pdftk** tools installed. The **pdfunite** utility *should* already be on your system, since it comes from the Poppler developers, requiring nothing further to install.

If you choose to use **pdfjoin**, you will have to slightly alter the one-line command.

```
P="$zenity --title="PDF Joiner" --entry --text="Please enter the output file name:"); pdfjoin %N -o $P
```

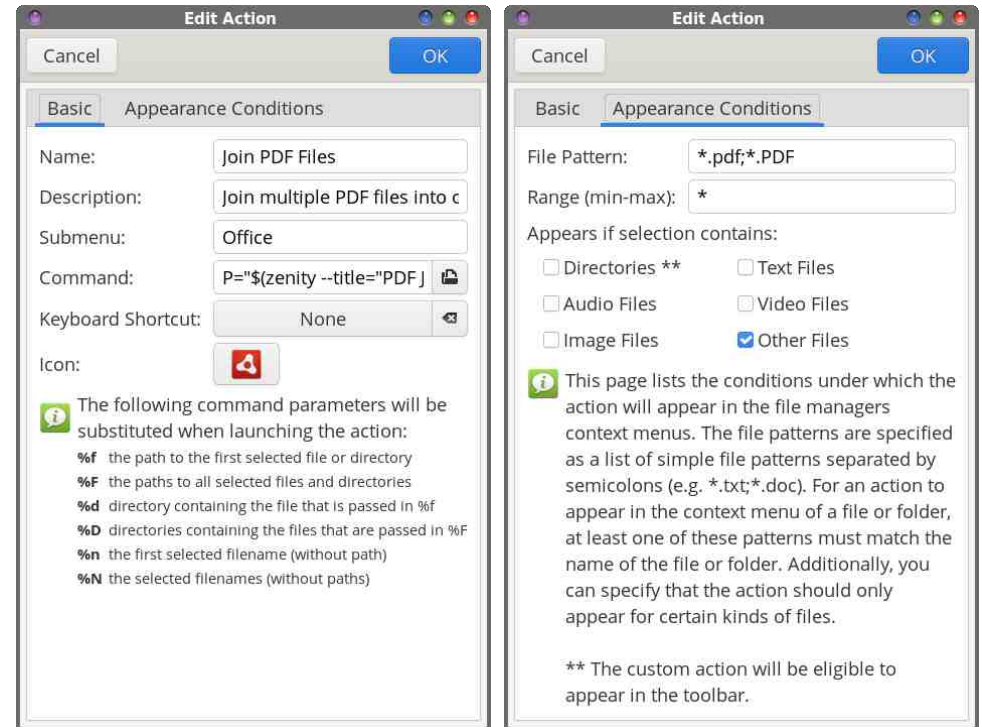
I also chose to use Zenity for the dialog box because I liked its appearance better. I’m sure that **yad** can be configured to have a similar appearance, but I didn’t want to spend a lot of time on making that happen. So, with that in mind, here’s the **yad** dialog version of the same command, and it works just as well as the Zenity version.

```
P="$yad --title="PDF Joiner" --entry --entry-label="Please enter the output file name:"); pdfunite %N $P
```

Again, if you choose to use **pdfjoin**, you will have to slightly alter the one-line command.

```
P="$yad --title="PDF Joiner" --entry --entry-label="Please enter the output file name:"); pdfjoin %N -o $P
```

To set up the Thunar Custom Action, you might want to make your custom action dialog(s) look like mine.



The first dialog box, showing the “Basic” tab, should be fairly self explanatory. Under the “Appearance Conditions” tab, set the “File Pattern” field to “\*.pdf;\*.PDF” and put a checkmark in the “Other Files” selection.

To use your new Thunar Custom Action, press the CTRL key on the keyboard, and select the PDF files you want to join together. Then, right click your mouse over the last PDF file, and select “Join PDF Files” from the Thunar context menu. Your naming regimen will determine the order of appearance in the output PDF file, as the files appear to be “joined together” alphabetically or numerically by their file names. If you want to ensure that the individual PDF files appear in a specific order, rename the

individual PDF files so that they are named in a sequential manner, using either numbers or letters of the alphabet to determine their proper order.

This custom action is *F-A-S-T!* In literally no time at all, you will have multiple PDF files joined into one PDF file. Plus, your original PDF files are left unscathed and unaltered (other than renaming them to ensure they appear in the correct order in the joined PDF).



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# Screenshot Showcase



Posted by AnalogueMan, September 25, 2023, running KDE.



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# The Sinister Six Strikes Again



by Alessandro Ebersol (Agent Smith)

Who doesn't remember the Sinister Six? The Sinister Six was a group of supervillains who joined forces to defeat Spider-Man. Their initial line-up was: Dr. Octopus, Electro, Kraven, Mysterio, Sandman and Vulture. Yes, organized

by Dr. Octopus, the villains have always tried to destroy Spider-Man. But, thanks to the ingenuity of the arachnid hero, they never succeeded.

Now, we have a sinister six working tirelessly against GNU Linux, but mainly against us users.

**Big Tech's Sinister Six**

I don't know if you've ever heard the term MAFIA-G, but this was an acronym created by Amy Webb in her book "The Big Nine" to describe the largest technology companies in the USA. The point here is how these companies

## The Sinister Six Strikes Again

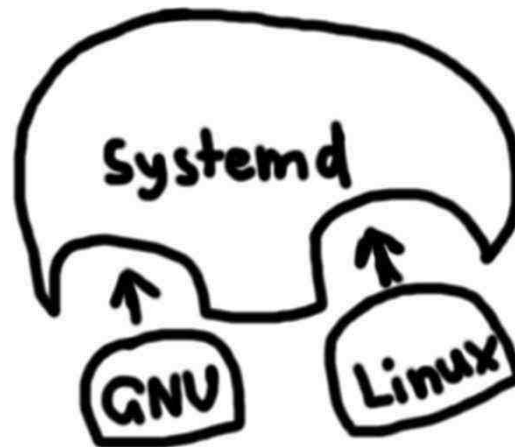
are actively working to end GNU Linux and user freedom. In fact, the attack on GNU Linux can even be considered secondary, with the attack on users being the main one.

- \* IBM
- \* Amazon
- \* Google

All these companies own, to a greater or lesser extent, important parts of the development of the GNU Linux operating system.

I'll list the best-known parts:

**Microsoft:** It currently controls systemD, the most crucial part of the GNU Linux operating system. So much so that the meme below has already become infamous.



GNU and Linux are just a small part of the overall systemd operating system.

**Apple:** Controls CUPS, the GNU Linux printing system.

**Facebook:** Controls the ZSTD compression system, which is present in many aspects of GNU Linux.

**IBM:** Controls the development of Gnome and several fundamental libraries for the operating system, the GTK libraries.

**Amazon:** Amazon Linux and cloud infrastructure

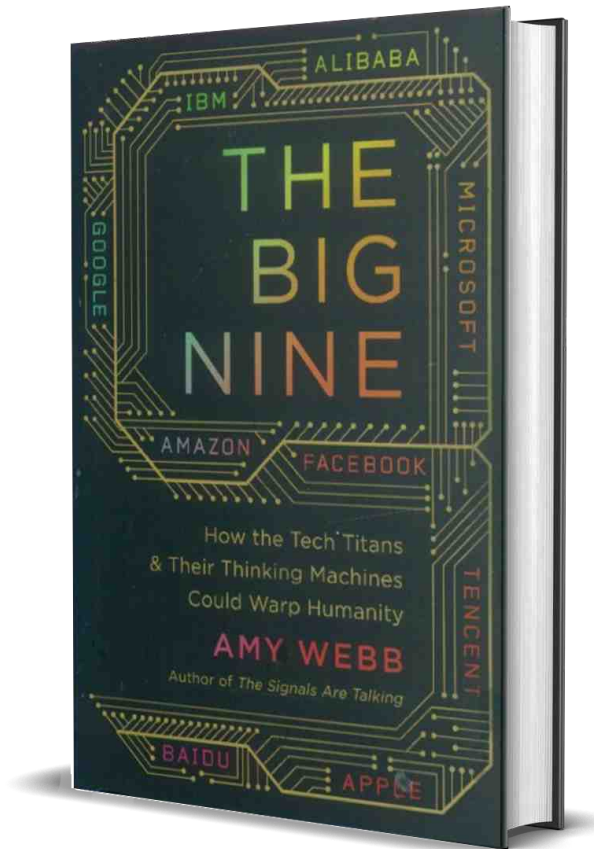
**Google:** Among other critical parts of the operating system, Google develops the EXT-4 file system.

This is some of the best known information about how these companies control parts of the system. Of course, there may be more points of influence and dependency on these companies, which we would have to research in more depth (Microsoft itself owns Github, where 90% of the world's free software projects are probably housed).

But, as I started the article, the enemies of users are plotting again to make our lives worse. Now, I'm going to quickly focus on one member of the sinister six that is working hard to end our freedoms... Yes, unfortunately, the GNU movement, little by little, with its four freedoms, is being destroyed, in broad daylight, and right in front of our eyes.

**With friends like Microsoft, who needs enemies?**

Well, I'll start by writing about what our "Friend of Open Source" (note that Microsoft has never called itself a friend of free software, because it hates freedom) is up to.



### MAFIA-G and its members

The members of the G-Mafia are, in order:

- \* Microsoft
- \* Apple
- \* Facebook



Yes, things have been so quiet, haven't they? Nope, work is in full swing to... Deprecate our beloved Grub2.

Yes, you didn't read that wrong, Microsoft wants Grub2 in the same place as the Dodo bird, i.e. extinct. Now it's down to systemd-boot.

But let's see what's happening, how it's happening and what might happen.

**SystemD wants to be everything... Unfortunately, it can only be everything ill done**

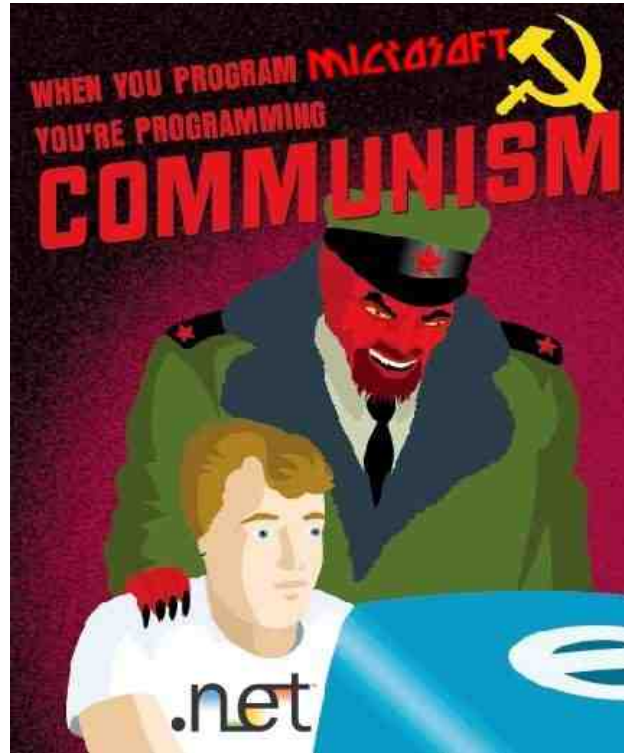
The whole purpose of systemd is to replace the resources of the Linux kernel with something that systemd itself does, incompetently. It's full of bugs.

One of its latest gimmicks is systemd-oomd, which is doing well (sarcasm) and you can read all about what Fedora users have to say about it on [Reddit](#). And Mr Reynolds' best decision was not to touch that hornet's nest, can of worms, etc... I'd say the juice isn't worth the squeeze...

But back to our topic, systemd now wants to control the boot. The secondary goal of systemd is to eliminate the GNU boot loader, GRUB, and replace it with one that can lock down the entire computer according to Microsoft's orders.

Yes, people, as I wrote [here](#), Microsoft is no friend of free software, what it wants is

totalitarianism: it alone controls all users' data and machines, as I wrote here [too](#).



What's worse, the community has become so corrupted that, astonishingly, Debian's official position is to no longer allow a boot loader that is licensed under GPLv3:

"the code must not be subject to the GPLv3, - or any license that purports to give someone the right to demand authorization keys in order to install modified forms of the code on a device.

Code that is subject to this license and that has already been signed can have this signature revoked.

For example, GRUB 2 is licensed under the GPLv3 and will not be signed."

One of Microsoft's requirements for signing a bootloader is that it not be GPLv3.

Systemd-boot wasn't designed to be better than GRUB 2, but to make it possible for it to be "signed" directly by Microsoft and refuse to give the user the right to run an alternative version of systemd-boot that doesn't lock the computer and remove a significant amount of access to it.

What's worse, all these secure boot schemes are based on UEFI, a broken standard where each manufacturer does what they want and the user is left screwed, trying to make his/her computer work.

Honestly, disable UEFI on your machine, it's too big a risk to keep using it. It's not even plausible that UEFI, as it stands, can enforce Security Theater Boot, because it has thousands of [CVEs](#) (security flaws) and, unless people update their firmware every month, most of these flaws will work and can be exploited.

UEFI is so bad that serious hardware companies are abandoning the standard. System76 stopped selling machines with the UEFI BIOS, and switched to the [Coreboot firmware](#), for general happiness.

UEFI was designed based on Windows and is full of bugs and promotes Microsoft's lock-in, Security Theater Boot.



Coreboot is the firmware that people deserve to have.

In fact, it's designed to "Just boot the computer and be done with it", which is what Linus Torvalds said he missed about the "PC BIOS".

However, one of the most disturbing things about this whole situation is that there is no confrontation with this wave of Microsoftian totalitarianism. No... Everyone acts accordingly. And I'll write about this "cooperation" below.

### The Goodfellas



Anyone looking from the outside at all the Mafia-G companies working together, especially IBM and Microsoft, might be fooled into thinking: "What a fine example of cooperation in the spirit of open source". But it's not quite like that. There is also "cooperation" between drug cartels and crime syndicates. And what is happening is a gigantic collusion against users.

In the past, companies that even competed with each other are now competing against users and their rights. Or, if this wasn't all a big set-up, in what world would IBM leave the development of the most crucial piece of software for the operating system that IBM sells (RHEL), through Red Hat, in the hands of its biggest rival, Microsoft? Today, systemd is unfortunately the backbone of many Linux distros (which have chosen to rely on it).

But the abuses of the good fellows are already starting to irritate many sectors of the free software community around GNU Linux. The last straw was locking down the RHEL repositories so that CentOS (and other derived distros) could no longer be [based on it](#).

**No one competes anymore, but rather colludes**



I tried to find a point in time where this cartelization of the Big Techs began... And the watershed point in my research was when Microsoft bought Apple's shares for US\$150 million.

That was the moment when these companies stopped competing and started buying each other's shares. Bing versus Google, a stage play just for the audience, since both Microsoft has Google shares and Google must have Microsoft shares.

Let's face the sad truth: almost all technology companies are in cahoots, and they're colluding with one another. It's more or less like MMA, where everyone is managed by Dana White. In other words, it doesn't matter who wins or loses, Dana White always wins.

**And these companies have a free pass to abuse the consumer**

Yes, sadly, these companies can do whatever they want without any consequences.

The whole scheme of locking the bootloader and forcing boot only with keys validated by one of these manufacturers is based on a false premise of "security," aimed at preventing attackers from infecting the operating system as soon as it boots up. However, for an attacker to do this, they must necessarily have physical access to the machine. And if someone is in the presence of the machine, they can pull out the hard disk and do whatever they want with it. A locked boot won't prevent that from happening.

But under false pretexts of protection, these companies continue to do this. Things are not lost yet.

**How to fight back?**

Despite Microsoft's political power, they haven't yet turned information technology into North Korea, where they (Microsoft) are the supreme dictators. And we, as users, can still strike back.

How? Like this:

- \* Don't buy computers with Windows 11. Windows 11 forcibly employs TPM2, locked boot UEFI and is terrible for user privacy.
- \* Prefer to buy refurbished computers, which are cheaper and don't have the Microsoft tax.
- \* Prefer to buy new computers from companies that respect the user, like System76.
- \* Lobby your congressmen to pass right-to-repair laws. Repair implies being able to install other operating systems on computers, so that they are the multi-purpose machines they were meant to be (and not a one-trick pony).
- \* Don't use Linux distros that depend on systemd. Unfortunately, the pantagruelic daemon that eats up more parts of GNU Linux every day is bad for user freedom (when will RMS wake up?).

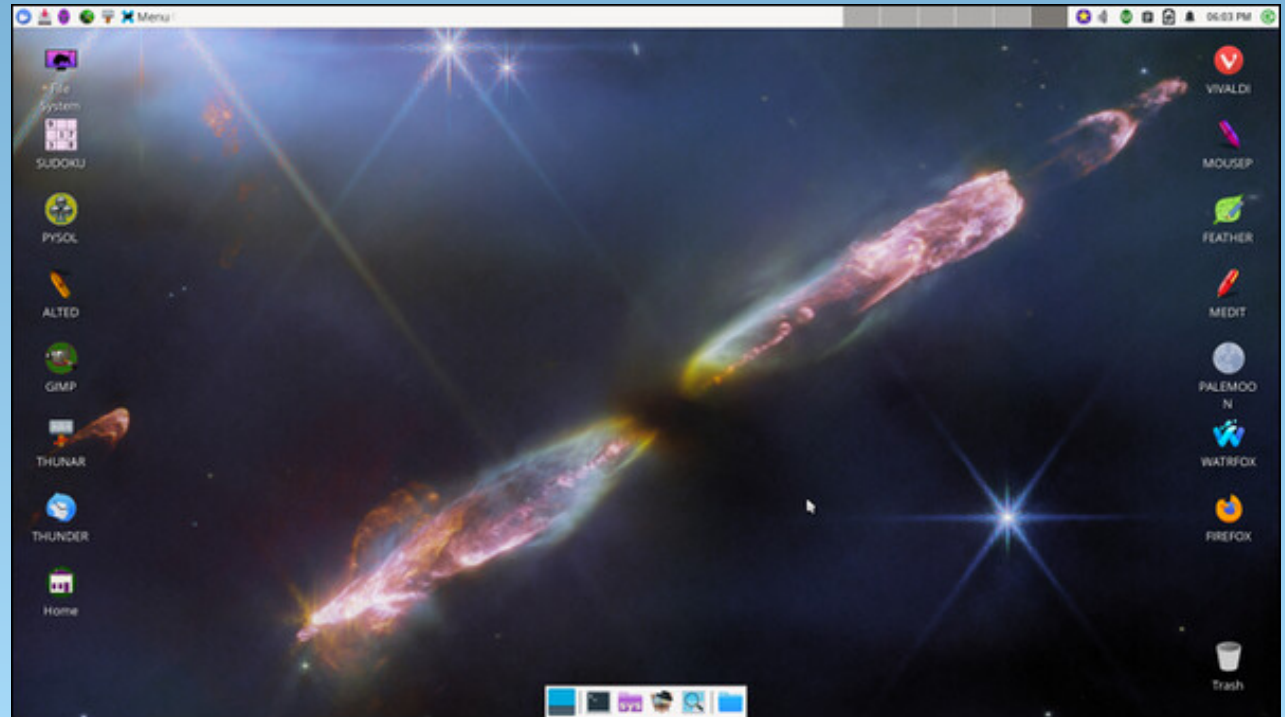
And be ready to apply pressure: send tweets, emails, petitions, and try to enlighten the unwary about what the tech companies want for our future.

And, at a later date, I'll continue to write about what the other five sinisters are up to. Wait for me...

Until then, hugs and Godspeed.



# Screenshot Showcase



*Posted by DrMop, September 15, 2023, running Xfce.*



# Apple, Long A Critic Of Right To Repair, Comes Out In Support Of California Bill

by [Thorin Klosowski](#)

[Electronic Frontier Foundation](#)

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Apple has announced a surprising stance in support of California's [Right to Repair Act](#) (S.B. 244). This is a sign that the public's strong support of the right to repair has forced Apple to change its position, and now is the time for you to help keep the pressure on lawmakers to get the Right to Repair Act passed in California.

Apple's about-face came in a [letter](#) to the bill's sponsor, Senator Susan Eggman. Apple's letter marks a significant change from where Apple was on the issue in the past, when reporting in 2017 [showed](#) that lobbyists associated with Apple (and other tech companies) fought against the "Fair Repair Act" in New York, and [again against](#) the "Digital Fair Repair" Act in 2022. In a [letter](#) to New York Governor Hochul, Apple flat out denied the benefits of the bill for consumer choice, safety, and protection of the environment, while raising the specter of dire consequences if others were allowed to compete with them in the repair market.

But in a major shift in policy, Apple says in its letter that it supports the California bill as it stands, as long as it still includes a requirement for repair shops to disclose the use of third party or used parts, and doesn't allow those shops to turn off certain remote locks. Apple has made



small concessions to the repair movement with moves like its 2021 launch of its Self Service Repair [program](#), which allows you to order repair parts directly from Apple, but direct support for a bill is a major change for the company.

S.B. 244 [raises the bar](#) from right to repair laws recently passed in Minnesota and New York. If passed, S.B. 244 goes further than previous laws by setting a time span requiring manufacturers to make repair parts, manuals, and diagnostic tools available to everyone for three years after the last date of manufacture for products between \$50 and \$99.99, and seven years for

products over \$100. It also allows a city, county, or state to bring a case in superior court, as opposed to other laws that can only be enforced by the state attorney general.

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## Apple, Long A Critic Of Right To Repair, Comes Out In Support Of California Bill



This week, supporters assembled a [pile](#) of nearly 250 pounds of e-waste—244 pounds, specifically, in honor of the bill—to show how much e-waste is generated every five seconds.

S.B. 244 is not perfect. It doesn't cover cars, farm equipment, medical devices, industrial equipment, or video game consoles, and there are good reasons why independent repair shops need to be able to work with devices' security

systems. If it does pass, there will still be work to do in the future.

The right to repair is an important part of the rights that a device owner should be able to exercise. In addition to repair, we have long fought for the rights of security researchers, consumer protection groups, and other device owners to be able to understand, control, and

improve upon the technology they rely upon every day.

Apple's support is a big deal, but the fight is not over. If you're a Californian, you can help! The bill is before the Assembly Appropriations committee, which is its last hurdle before heading to the floor and, hopefully, to the governor's desk for a signature. Please take action to tell your Assemblymember that you support the "Right to Repair" Act today.



*The  
PCLinuxOS  
Magazine*

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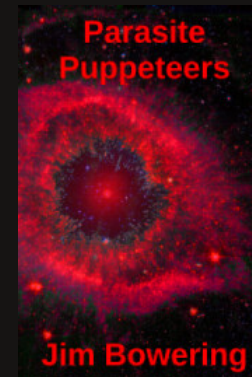
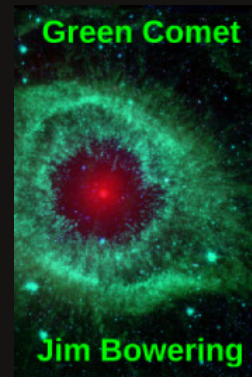
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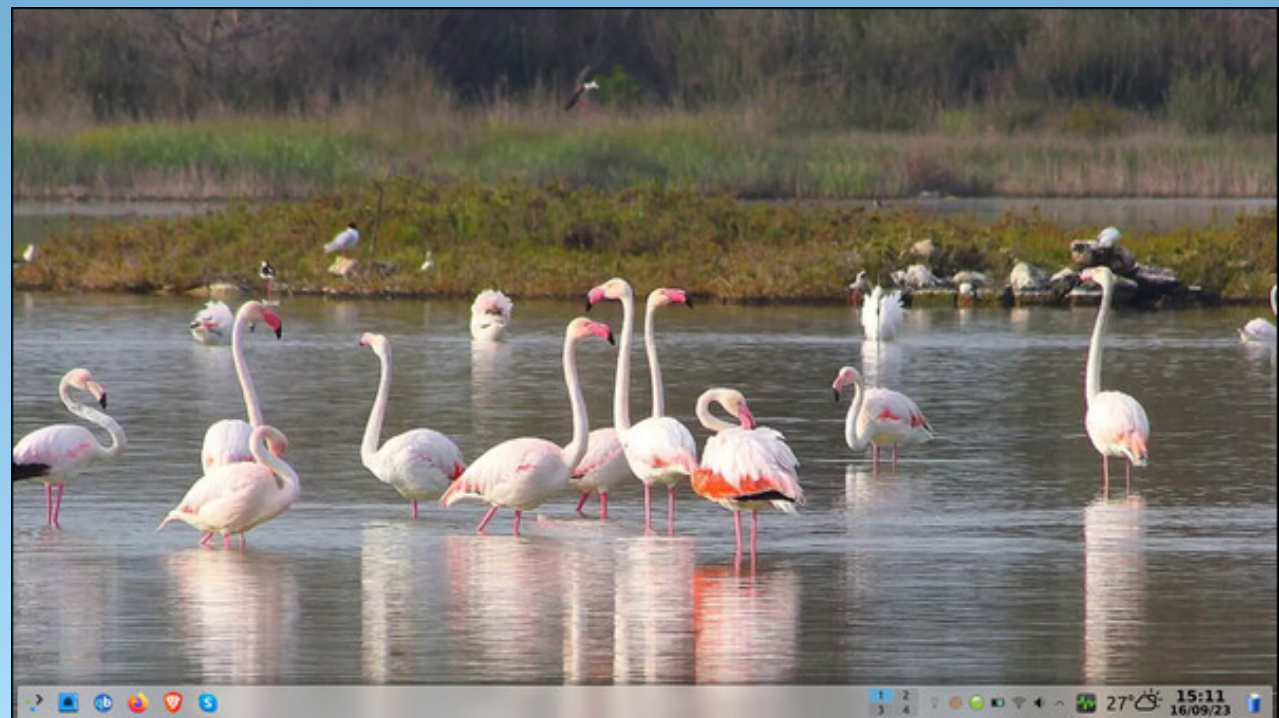
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# Screenshot Showcase



Posted by piratejumbo, September 16, 2023, running KDE.

# PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner Bonus: Pizza Soup



## Pizza Soup

Serves: 12

### INGREDIENTS:

1 pound of beef  
1 pound of spicy Italian sausage  
1 large onion, chopped  
1 large green pepper, chopped  
1 can (16oz) crushed or diced tomatoes, drained\*  
4 garlic cloves, minced  
1 jar (16 oz) salsa  
1 jar (12 oz) pizza sauce  
1 package (8 oz) sliced pepperoni  
1 package (8 oz) sliced mushrooms  
2 cups water  
1 tablespoon pizza seasoning  
or Italian seasoning  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon pepper

### SOUP TOPPINGS:

2 cups shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese  
1 can (4 ounces) sliced ripe black olives  
4 green onions, scissor cut

Optional: red pepper flakes to taste

### DIRECTIONS:

In a Dutch oven, cook the beef, sausage, onion, green pepper and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain.

Stir in the salsa, mushrooms, pizza sauce, pepperoni, tomatoes, water, Pizza seasoning or Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer until heated through, about 20 minutes.

Use a ladle to scoop soup in a bowl. Garnish with sliced black olives and green onions. Sprinkle it with mozzarella cheese and red pepper flakes to taste. Serve and enjoy this savory pizza flavored soup.

### TIPS:

Can be cooked in a slow-cooker. Brown meat, onions, green pepper, and garlic and drain. Put

in slow-cooker and combine the rest of the ingredients, except for the toppings, stir well and cook on low heat for 6-7 hours. Served as above.

Can be served with Croutons, Crusty Bread, Cheese Bread, Garlic Bread, or Grilled Cheese.

\* Substitute tomatoes with fire roasted tomatoes to add complexity.

Can be frozen for up to 3 months. To reheat, allow thawing in the fridge overnight and then microwave, or heat in a pan on the stove top.

### NUTRITION:

Calories: 232    Carbs: 25.3g    Fiber: 5.6g  
Sodium: 1040mg    Protein: 8.9g





# PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

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



Triple Word



Double Word



Possible score 262, average score 183.

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# October 2023 Word Find

## Trick or Treat Candy

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

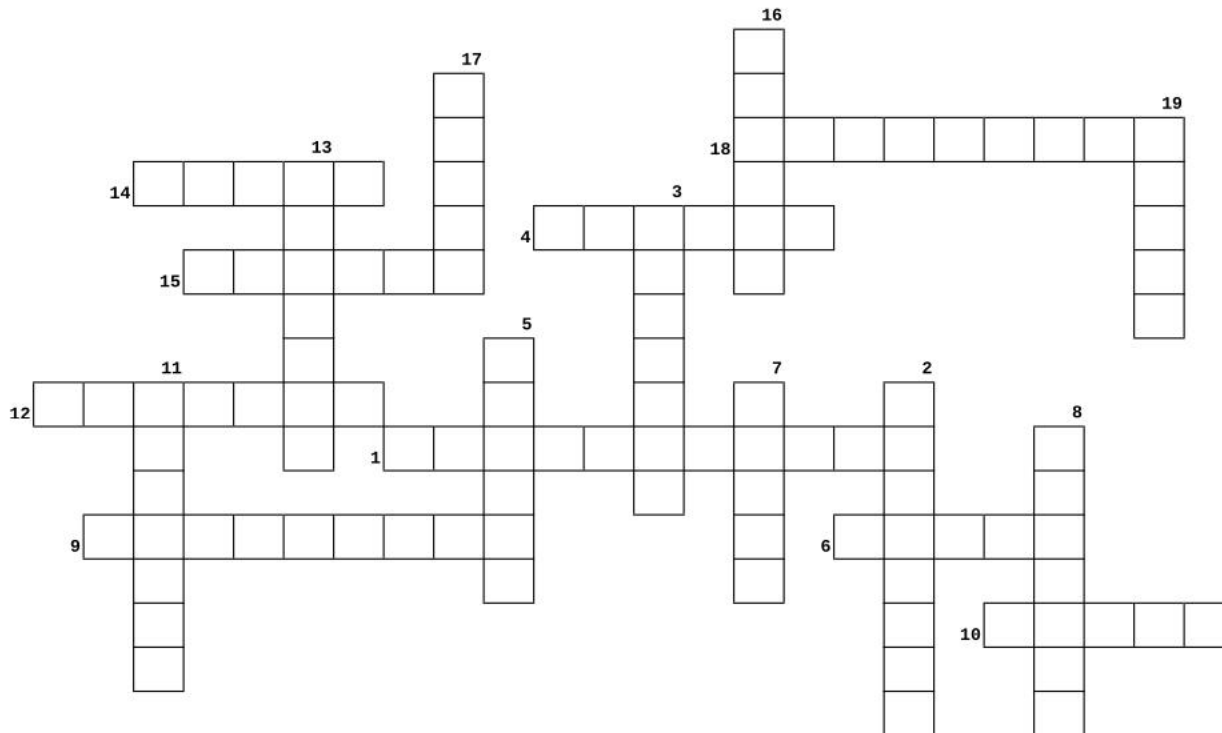
- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Almond Joy         | Baby Ruth             |
| Butterfinger       | Candy Corn            |
| Chocolate          | Crunch                |
| Gummie Bears       | Heath Bar             |
| Hershey's Kisses   | Hershey's Nuggets     |
| Kinder Joy         | KitKat                |
| Licorice           | Life Savers           |
| M and M's          | Mars Bar              |
| Milk Duds          | Milky Way             |
| Nerds              | Nestle's Crunch       |
| One Hundred Grand  | Payday                |
| Peanut Butter Cups | Peppermint Candy      |
| Wintergreen Mints  | York Peppermint Patty |
| Skittles           | Smarties              |
| Snickers           | Starburst             |
| Taffy              | Three Musketeers      |
| Tootsie Roll       | Twix                  |
| Wintergreen        |                       |

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# October 2023 Crossword

## Trick or Treat Costumes

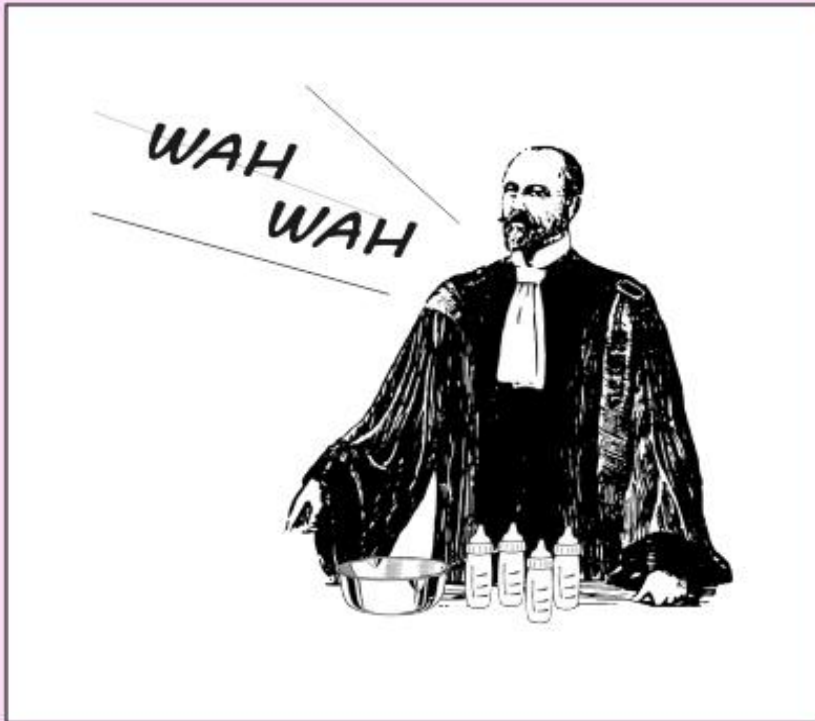


1. A first responder trained primarily to control and extinguish fires.
2. The daughter of a monarch.
3. A mythical half-human sea creature with the head and trunk of a woman and the tail of a fish.
4. Someone who moves around as if unconscious and being controlled by someone else.
5. A person who attacks and robs ships at sea.
6. A spiritual being represented in human form with wings.
7. An apparition of a dead person which is believed to appear as a smoky, cloudy image.
8. A person who serves in an army.
9. A person who is trained to travel in a spacecraft.
10. A person who excels in a particular skill or activity.
11. An imaginary creature that is typically large, ugly, and frightening.
12. A corpse believed to leave its grave at night to drink the blood of the living.
13. A woman who herds and tends cattle, typically on horseback.
14. A person thought to have magic powers, especially evil ones
15. A man, typically on horseback, who herds and tends cattle.
16. A small grotesque supernatural creature.
17. A body of a human being or animal that has been preserved and wrapped in bandages.
18. A female who dances professionally with a ballet.
19. A creature from outer space; extraterrestrial.

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# Mixed-Up-Meme Scrambler



What the judge experienced  
when he took time off...

YADIL

\_ \_ \_ \_

RYRUH

\_ \_

BOGTLE

\_ \_ \_ \_

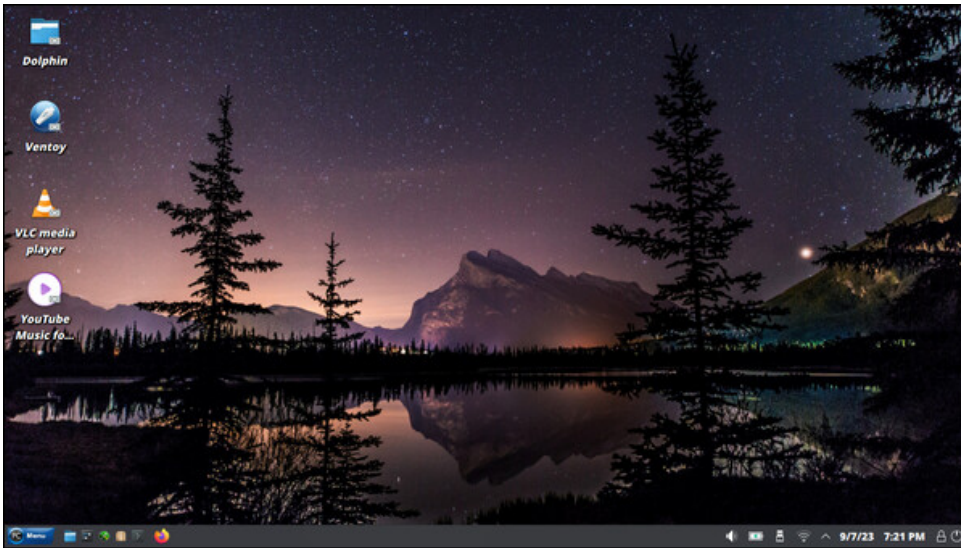
NATIVY

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A " \_ \_ \_ \_ " \_ \_ .

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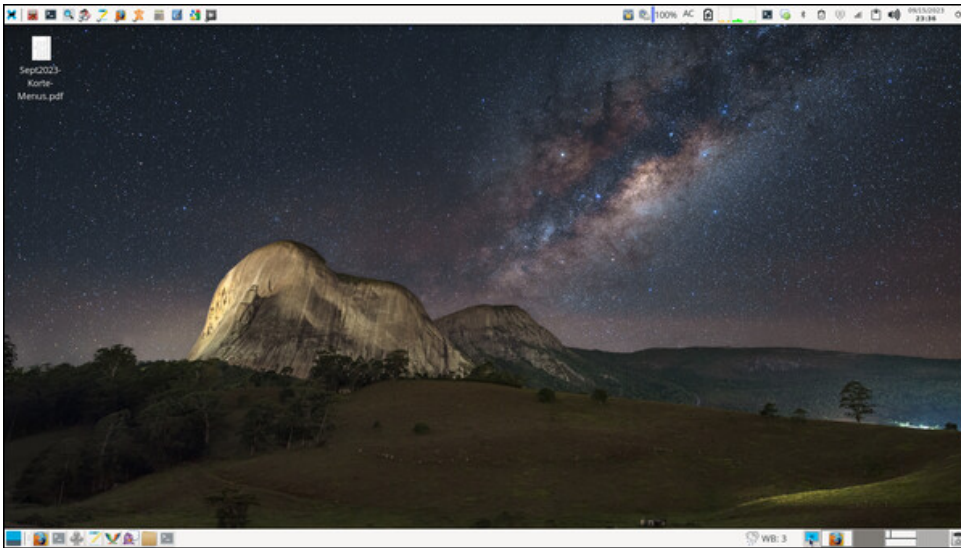
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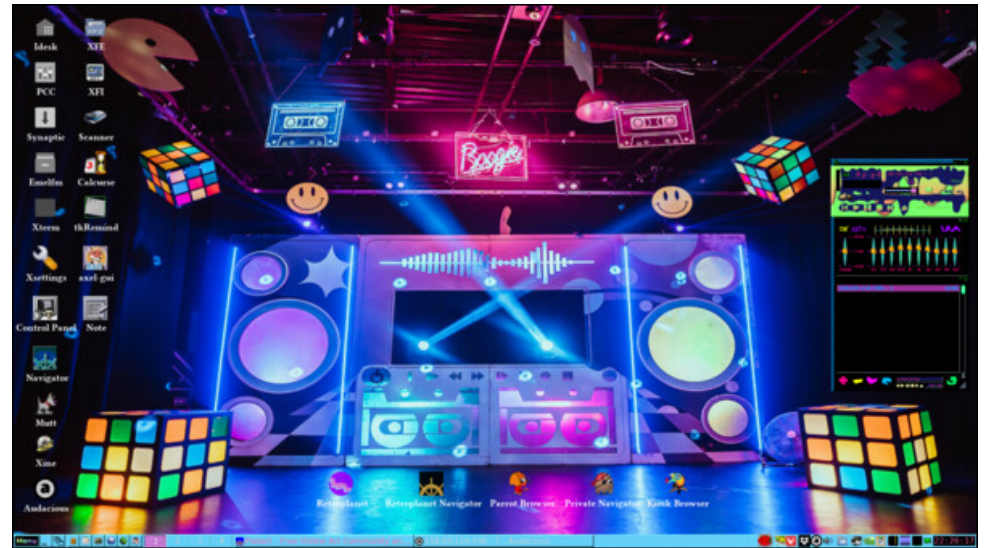
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