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Welcome From The Chief Editor

Phew! January was a whirlwind of activity.

Without much hesitation – if any at all – users, ISPs, webmasters, Internet search engines, and just about anybody else with an interest in maintaining a free and open Internet, rallied around the opposition to the SOPA and PIPA bills that were up for consideration in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, respectively.

The fervor expressed against these two bills has, at least for now, made any support of such legislation a toxic topic among U.S. lawmakers – especially since 2012 is an election year. No U.S. lawmaker will even step near the topic. That's how toxic it has become. Still, the MPAA, the RIAA and their puppet groups continue to look for a legislative solution to their perceived ills and trespasses, completely disregarding even the search for a technological solution or – heaven forbid – a fundamental change in their outdated business model.

SOPA and PIPA were defeated, this time around. Those who fought to keep the Internet open and free can breathe a collective sigh of relief – but then need to get right back on guard duty, since the threats to a free Internet seem to be coming as fast a bullets fired from a U.S. Civil War era Gatling gun.

Just one day after the successful "Internet Blackout Day" on January 18, 2012, where many sites went "dark" in protest of SOPA and PIPA and Internet users flooded the U.S. Congressional e-mail boxes with millions upon millions of letters and petitions opposing the two bills, the U.S. Department of Justice, coordinating with the governments and law enforcement agencies of other countries, took down the MegaUploads file sharing site. They cited that the operators of MegaUploads were guilty of copyright infringement on a massive scale. Naturally, this raises a very good and necessary question: "if they can do this, why do they need SOPA?"

Already, Spain has succumbed to to pressure from the U.S. to pass SOPA-like legislation, to help protect copyrighted works there. More recently, Irish lawmakers have sought to pass another SOPA-like act. All around the world, a free and open Internet is coming under attack. Without hesitation or doubt, those threats can be traced back to the MPAA and RIAA.

Both groups have a history of "crying wolf" whenever new technology is introduced or becomes popular. They claim that [insert new technology here] will destroy their markets. Yet, time after time, both groups have only seen their profits soar – which is exactly the same thing that is happening today. It's not that they are afraid of their markets being destroyed.

Rather, it's just pure, unadulterated GREED that motivates these mongrels. They want to be able to extract every fraction of a cent out of those who do pay for the content they produce. Meanwhile, none of the laws that have been proposed will do much of anything to curb piracy, since it doesn't address bit torrent file sharing, perhaps the most widespread way of distributing pirated content.

Of course, there is no regard whatsoever given to the millions and billions of legitimate files that are shared between users, both via http and bit torrent avenues. It's a bit like saying, "well, this guy got killed by being hit in the head with a hammer, so let's ban all hammers," without regard to the fact that hammers also have a legitimate, non-lethal use.

A new threat to a free and open Internet is on the horizon, and it is called ACTA (don't you just love all these acronyms?). It stands for Anti Counterfeiting Trade Agreement, and you can get the full low-down by visiting the previous link to Wikipedia. Boy, is this one a winner – not! Basically, ACTA sets up a rogue international agency to "combat" counterfeiting and copyright infringement. As if none of the laws and measures already on the books don't already address such deeds.

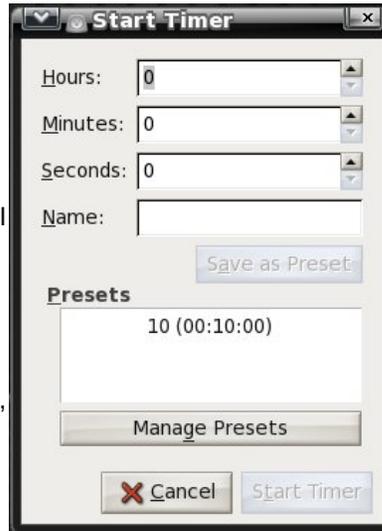Until next month, I wish each of you peace, solitude, serenity and good health.

Remain vigilant against encroachment upon our free and open Internet. It *IS* under attack, and like never before!

Gnome 2.32: Gnome Panel Applets
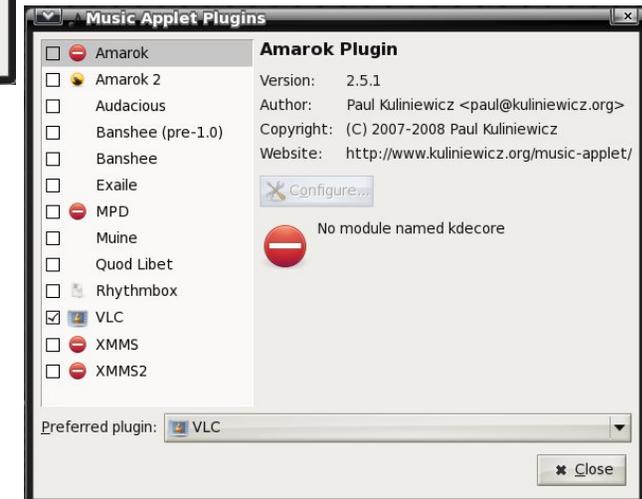
by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

There are a dozen or more Gnome panel applet packages available in the PCLinuxOS repositories. We will look at six of them. Zen Mini comes with a single Gnome panel at the bottom of the desktop. I created a second panel and placed it at the top of the desktop so that I could keep track of the extra applets installed, and so that the bottom panel would not become cluttered. Above is a screenshot of the top panel. From left to right, the applets are, by package name, gnome-timer-applet, gnome-applet-music, file-browser-applet, istream and gnome-applet-netspeed. "Wait a minute," you may say. "That's only five." I'll cover the sixth one at the end of the article.

gnome-timer-applet

Hover your mouse over the timer applet and you will see a help balloon stating "Click to start a new timer countdown."

Left click the applet and a dialog window will appear. The countdown timer has fields for hours, minutes and seconds. Fill in the time desired, then click the Start Timer button. Click the Manage Presets button to create and store pre-configured countdown timers. I created one with a time limit of ten minutes and named the preset "10" (above).

Right click the timer applet and select Preferences to set them (below).

gnome-applet-music

Hover your mouse over the music applet and you will see a help balloon stating "Launch Rhythmbox." Rhythmbox is the pre-configured default music player for this applet. The screenshot at right shows VLC because I changed the preferred plugin.

Right-click the music applet and select Preferences to see the window shown above right. Note that some of those preferences will depend on the music player's ability to show the information requested.

Right click the music applet and select Plugins to see the window below, and to select your preferred music player. The plugins with the white bar inside a red circle next to them have the "No module named …" message showing.

file-browser-applet

Hover your mouse over the file browser applet to see the help balloon "Browse and open files in your

home directory". I could find no option to change the contents of the help balloon.

Home 〓〓 Classic Rock 〓〓 0 B
Browse and open files in your home directory

Right click the file browser applet and select Preferences to see the window below. You can add file browser paths with corresponding labels. However, each new label will show the same "open files in your home directory" balloon. There are several folder view options. Although the Select applet icon button allows you to browse for an alternate icon image to be used, the icon does not show anywhere in the panel or in the file browser windows. The label name is what appears in the applet. You can also select an alternate terminal and text editor.

Shown at center top is the file browser menu that appears when you left click on the file browser applet. Simply navigate the menu to the folder or file you want opened.
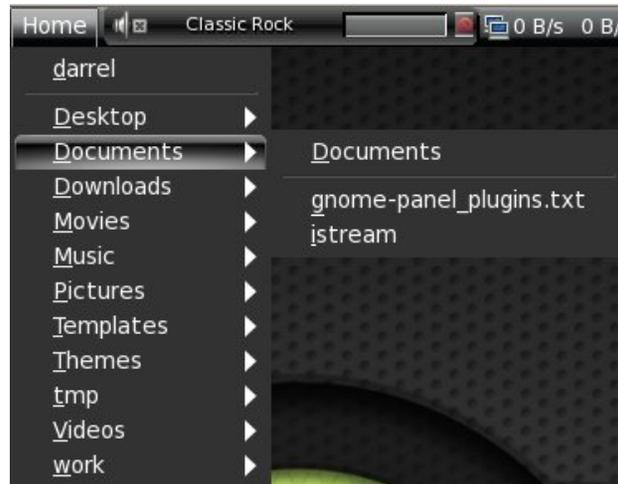
Hover your mouse over the istream applet to see a summary of the song title playing. The applet is an Internet radio station player similar to Radiotray. None of the stations selected would show any of the meta information associated with Album, Genre, Comment or Location.

istream

Left click the red icon in the istream applet to see the radio station labels. There is no GUI configuration for the applet. The station list configuration is stored in a simple hidden text file in your home directory named .istream. Shown below is the default configuration.

```
#format is:
#
#<Displayed Text> (<invisible Text>)=<url>
#
#url format:
#
#http://<....>
#file:///home/user/<file>
#
#
# my radio stations:
#
Classic Rock=http://205.188.215.226:8018
Country=http://216.218.159.151:8020
Motown=http://208.53.158.48:9170
Rock=http://64.71.145.130:8070
Modern=http://207.200.96.230:8002
Urban=http://64.71.145.130:8055
Blues=http://64.62.252.130:8030
New Age=http://64.202.98.133:9130
Jazz=http://207.200.96.226:8052
Club mix=http://38.118.158.78:8070
Metal=http://205.188.215.225:8022
```

I changed the Classic Rock station to another URI and commented the Club mix line. Neither of those two stations would load for me. It should be noted here that if a station will not load, the istream applet will hang and refuse to respond to any mouse clicks. It doesn't seem to affect any other desktop operations. The only method I found of regaining control of the applet was to log out and log in again.

The istream applet does not automatically start when you log in. In trying to track down radio station URIs, I came across an excellent radio tray station list compiled by "wolfgar". Although the radio tray format is a little different than istream's, the important thing is having a large list of internet radio station URIs, along with the corresponding port numbers, that can be easily copied from. Doing an Internet search for streaming radio stations can be a frustrating experience, as many of the compiled "lists" are actually just links to the stations themselves. Many of those stations require you to listen online using a flash player, or, worse yet, a Windows Media Player.

gnome-applet-netspeed

Hover your mouse over the netspeed applet to see a short summary of the monitored network device.
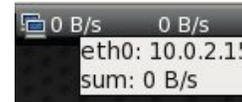
Right click the netspeed applet to see a more detailed summary of the monitored device.
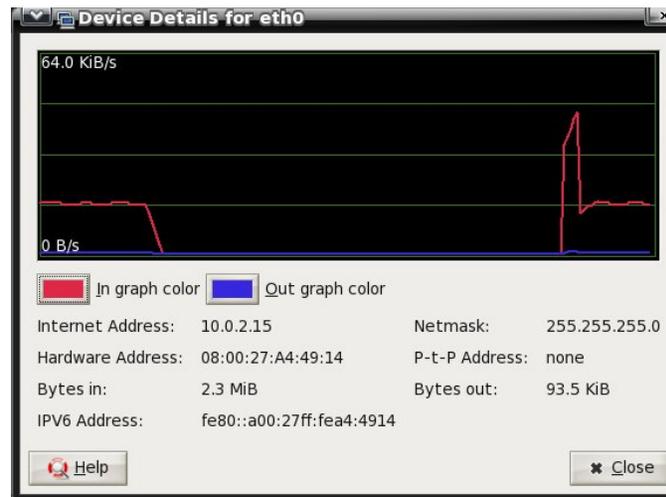
Right click the netspeed applet and select Preferences to see the window at above right. If you have more than one network device, you can select which one is to be monitored.

gnome-window-picker-applet

Last, but not least, is the window picker applet. This is the one applet that did not appear in the first screenshot of the Gnome panel. Until you open a

window, you may not even be aware the applet is actually installed. All open windows, even when minimized, are shown in the applet, represented by the application's icon. Below, you see the home folder, PCLinuxOS Control Center and firefox icons. Hover your mouse over one of the icons to see its window title.

The Gnome panel at the bottom of Zen Mini's desktop has a Window Selector applet at the far right side of the panel. However, using the window selector applet, you can only select a minimized
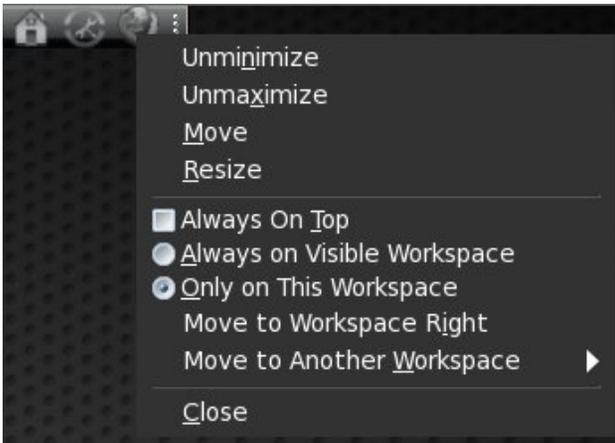
window to be restored to the desktop. Right clicking on any icon in the window picker applet gives you a few choices to manipulate the application's window, all from the window picker applet.

These are but a few of the Gnome panel applets available from the PCLinuxOS repositories. How many of them will you find a use for?

Want to keep up on the latest that's going on with PCLinuxOS?

Follow PCLinuxOS on Twitter!

http://twitter.com/iluvpclinuxos

Screenshot Showcase
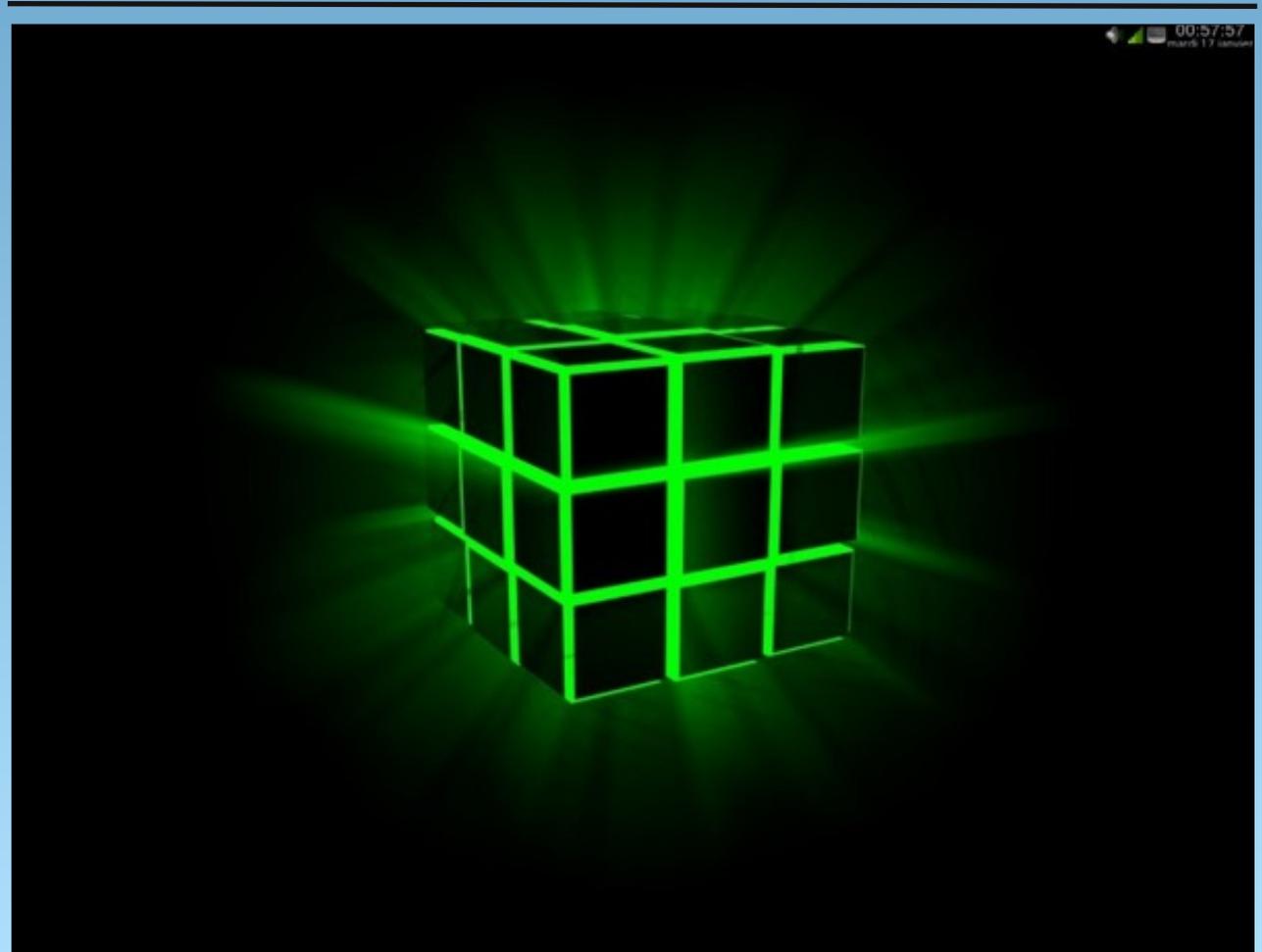
Posted by Melodie, January 16, 2012, running Openbox.

ms_meme's Nook: Too Marvelous

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
TEXSTAR
FROM
FORUM FRIENDS AND FANS
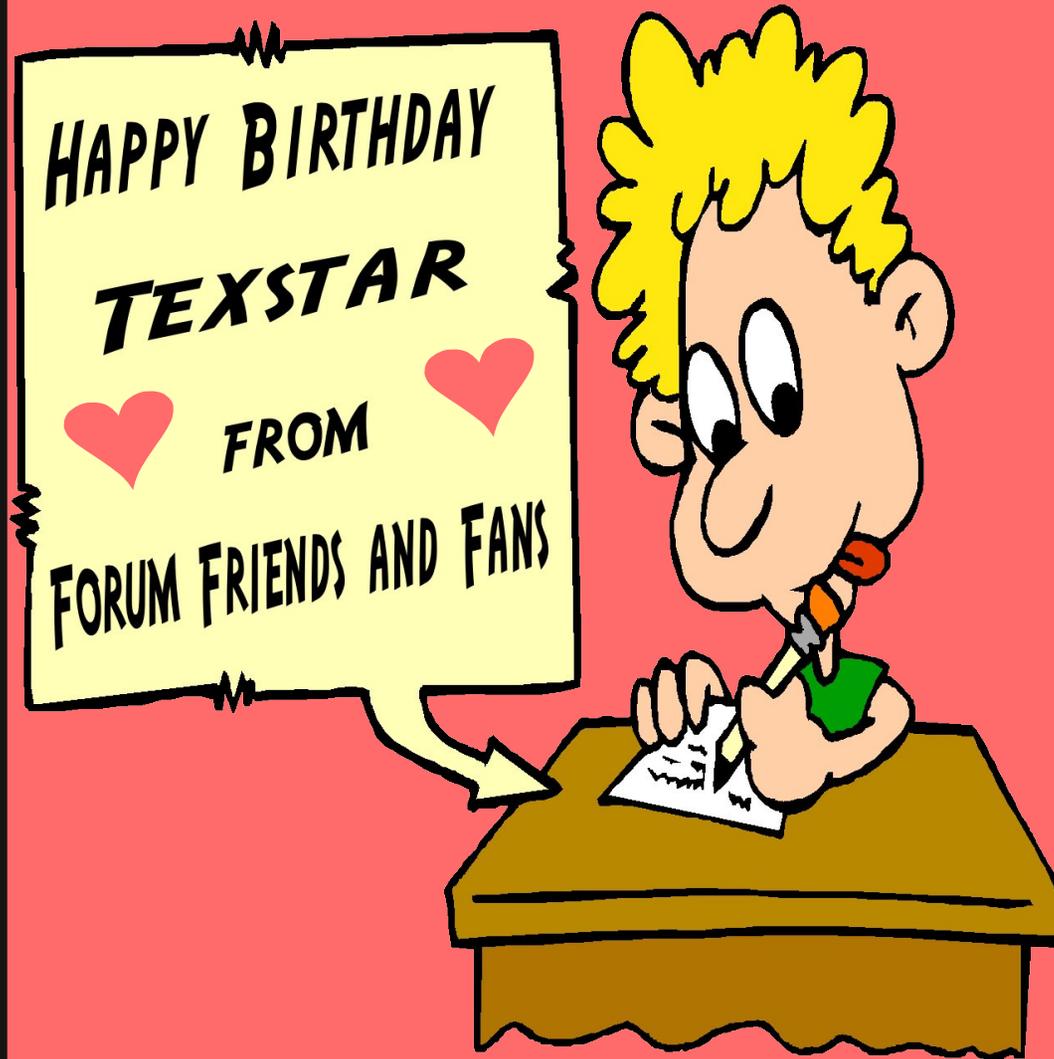
You're just too marvelous
Too marvelous for words
Like glorious glamourous
And that old standby amorous

It's all too wonderful
I'll never find the words
That say enough tell enough
I mean they just aren't swell enough

You're much too much and just too very very
To ever be in Webster's dictionary

And so I'm borrowing a love song from the birds
To tell you that you're marvelous
Too marvelous for words

MP3   OGG

SOPA For Dummies

by memcpy

Before I begin I'd like to discuss my qualifications. I am a student majoring in Computer Science, and I have completed (and am certified for) the following courses by Standford University:

Human Computer Interaction
Computer Science 101
Machine Learning
Cryptography
Computer Security
Design and Analysis of Algorithms I
Networking I
Networking II

Now that we've got that out of the way, lets begin:

SOPA is disguised as an anti-piracy bill. Any first year CS student knows better. The bill is, in actuality, designed to obliterate free speech on the internet and allow media publishing companies to commercialize everything.

SOPA explicitly states that companies will be liable for everything their users post. Sites like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Reddit, Wikipedia, or any sites that allow user generated content CANNOT exist under these laws. Immediately after this bill is passed, you will see the media mafia (MPIAA, RIAA, etc) replacing websites like Wikipedia with commercialized encyclopedia software. Mainstream media outlets will not cover this bill because they are the ones lobbying for it.

"I don't really know much about the internet, but we should pass this bill" – Congressman Walt

If you're not fond of the internet you may even think it will increase jobs or help the economy like they claim. It will do none of these things. The media industry has been the least impacted by the recession in terms of jobs, and it contributes hardly anything to our economy.
(Understanding Media in Economic Development http://www.peterleeson.com/Kyklos--Media.pdf)

You may say "well, it will stop piracy at least, won't it?" The issue is it can't, and they know it can't.

"Instead of closing down and arresting everyone in a crack house, it's like changing all the street signs and roads so that it's a lot more difficult to find the crack house. But it's still there, and if you try hard enough, you can find it. It also messes everyone else up, making places much hard to find for everyone else."
— U.S. Representative Jared Polis

Domain Name Servers are a lot like street signs. Each individual Domain Name record is assigned to the IP address of a website, and perhaps a markup address. It's very simple.

google.com forwards to––> 74.125.159.99

Browsers, by default, interact with any IP or domain name they are given on port 80, via the Hyper Text Transfer Protocol. It makes no difference whether you type the domain or the IP. This bill targets DNS only, ending nothing but your ability to type "google.com" instead of "74.125.159.99."

There's more than one protocol on the internet. There are thousands of well established protocols. This bill only targets HTTP, while more than 95% of all piracy occurs over the BitTorrent protocol, which utilizes neither HTTP or DNS. This bill does nothing to stop piracy and has a catastrophic impact on the structure of the internet which currently allows the free exchange of information.

You probably think this is ridiculous, and that there's no way it could pass. If only I was that naive. Lets take a look at a U.S. Supreme Court Case (City of Ontario v. Quon) in which Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. was lacking a bit of knowledge:

"What is the difference between an email and a pager?" - Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr.

Kennedy asked what would happen if a text message was sent to an officer at the same time he was sending one to someone else:

"Does it say: 'Your call is important to us, and we will get back to you?'" Kennedy asked.

These are the people making important decisions about the fate of the internet.

Politicians have been brainwashed to believe that copyright infringement is the same as physical theft. Congressman Walt likened it to walking into a store, stealing a video game, and ignorantly remarking that someone could be harmed in the process. You may think so too if you don't fully understand copyright infringement, which is nothing to be embarrassed about. It's a complicated subject, however, the U.S.

supreme court has recognized the distinction between copyright infringement and theft, noting that "nothing was stolen because the original was never removed or modified." (reference: Dowling v. United_States (1985))

The only way you are going to change their minds is if their constituents outweigh the hundreds of thousands of dollars they have received in lobbying. It currently racks in (12/25/2011) at over 100 million dollars. They were advised to take the advice of experts and one of them (the name plates weren't visible) snidely remarked "I don't need an expert's opinion to know this bill is good."

CBS VIACOM, Microsoft, and Disney all distribute uTorrent, Kazaa, Limewire, Frostwire, and other popular copyright infringement software on their websites, then turn around and sue people for it. CNET even has a search engine specifically designed to find MP3s (and offers embedded download links) - CNET is owned by CBS VIACOM. This bill isn't designed to eliminate piracy, it is designed to give them control of the internet, the pesky free speech tool that has crippled their obsolete business model.

I won't give you a sales pitch for my social networking mediums, but I'll provide them in case you want to ask me questions:

Twitter
Website

In a nutshell...

Eitor's Note: This "explanation" of SOPA and PIPA has been floating around the Internet throughout the month of January, with many blogs printing it in its entirety. We reprint it here in the hopes of PCLinuxOS users gaining a better insight into what these bills, as well as bills like them, mean for the average Internet user – especially for those in the U.S.

Visit Us On IRC

• Launch your favorite IRC Chat Client software (xchat, pidgin, kopete, etc.)

• Go to freenode.net

• Type "/join #pclinuxos-mag" (without the quotes)

International Community PCLinuxOS Sites

Netherlands

Turkey

Denmark

Czechoslovakia

Italy

Poland

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

January 18, 2012. The day the Internet went **dark**.

No more Wikipedia. No more Google logo on the Google home page. Wordpress … censored. Lights out on Mozilla. The Electronics Frontier Foundation, fighting for our digital freedom. Wired … unwired and censored. XBMC gone dark. Symbolically, at least for one day.

Even the web site of our own Patrick Horneker redirected to an "Internet Goes On Strike" page to show opposition to the proposed SOPA and PIPA bills now up for consideration before the U.S. Congress.

Most conspicuously absent from participation among those websites and content providers opposing SOPA and PIPA were Facebook and Twitter. The CEO of Twitter publicly announced his opposition to participating in the blackout, citing that it did not make good sense on a global business scale to black out the Twitter site. (I wonder who would cry foul loudest if Twitter became a victim of the type of Internet censorship that SOPA and PIPA would impose). My wife was able to effortlessly log into her Facebook account, without any mention of the blackout or either bill.

Just in case you've just awoken from a LONG hibernation, here's a brief – and informal – explanation of what's going on. (If you want a more concise and better explanation, watch this video.)

Some of the more notable participants in the fight opposing SOPA and PIPA during the Internet blackout campaign (from top to bottom, left to right): Electronic Frontier Foundation, WordPress, Google, Wikipedia, XBMC, Wired and Mozilla.

Since before Christmas 2011, the proposed SOPA and PIPA bills have caused a fever-pitched fervor and outrage among those who have embraced the Internet and the digital realm. The bills were put forth by special interest groups – the same people who distributed LimeWire, cNet downloads, iMesh, Napster and other file sharing applications – to prevent the piracy of their intellectual property. These same companies, largely backed by the MPAA and RIAA, are the record companies and movie studios, among other digital content creators.

So, a few members of the U.S. Congress and Senate took up their pleas, drafting **horrible** legislation (probably the worse legislation ever drafted in the history of the U.S. legislature) to

protect those intellectual property rights – by penalizing web content providers, and shutting down web sites who are even suspected of copyright infringement, all without the due process of law that is protected by the U.S. Constitution. Then they attempted to ram-rod the bills through their respective bodies of the legislature before the annual winter holiday break.

Not so fast!

Once tech companies, Internet service providers, web content providers, web search engines, and virtually anyone else who participates in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge over the web got wind of these bills, the fight was on like Donkey Kong. Largely ignored by the mainstream media (after all, virtually every one of their parent companies support SOPA and PIPA), there has been exceptionally little in the daily U.S. news about these bills. That is, until January 18, 2012.

With literally **thousands** of websites participating in the blackout, either by completely blacking out their website for the day as Wikipedia did, or by obliterating key parts of their website as Google, Wordpress and Wired did, the mainstream media had no option but to cover the story.

Repeatedly, in virtually every story that appeared on the mainstream medias' websites, you saw the disclaimer that their parent companies were ardent supporters of SOPA and PIPA. Even though you had to search the web page to find the coverage of the unified Internet blackout move (it was usually buried in the "other news of the day" category), there was indeed coverage. In fact, on the MSNBC news

site, the video about the Internet blackout was, by the website's own counter statistics, the most watched news story of the day. On the CBS News website, they offered up a public poll simply asking, "Should SOPA and PIPA be passed?" The results were no surprise: 97% said no, 1% said yes, and 2% were undecided.

Throughout the day, many key members of the U.S. Congress withdrew their support from the two bills, presumably due to the outcry from their constituents. I know that I signed every petition I came across during the day on January 18, 2012 that voiced opposition to SOPA and PIPA. Attempts to log into the home pages of my two U.S. Senators on the U.S. Senate website resulted in errors, as the Senate web servers were worked beyond capacity and overloaded. However, I was able to get into the email comment page of my U.S. Representative (Missouri 5th District), and I left him the following email:

PLEASE show your support for an open and free Internet by voting NO on SOPA and PIPA. The Internet has historically been about free and open exchange of ideas and knowledge. Both of these bills, if enacted, would gut

the Internet of these ideals and principles. In the past, the U.S. has been harshly critical over other countries who restrict access by their citizens to a free and open Internet (most notably The People's Republic of China, and Egypt during the recent demonstrations for government change there). Under SOPA and PIPA, the United States will join them in curtailing free and open access to the Internet to its citizens.

While I can see some importance in protecting intellectual property rights, SOPA and PIPA go way too far, with far too heavy of a hand. The Internet, if it is to survive, must do so without encumbrances of legislation by ANY country, and free and unfettered access to the Internet, by those who wish to access it, should be allowed. Legislation is NOT the way to protect intellectual property rights; rather, let the makers of those goods find other methods (e.g., the marketplace and technology) to protect IP rights.

Please, do not allow SOPA and PIPA, which cater only to special interest groups, to pass.

Thank you for your time.

The fight is just beginning. Those who are ever vigilant about fighting for Internet freedom and keeping government regulations and legislation from oppressing a free and open Internet must not let their guard down. There will be other attempts in the future by governments world wide to regulate the Internet. Spain was the latest casualty in this fight, bowing to pressure from the U.S. to pass anti-piracy legislation with very similar wording to SOPA and PIPA. The governments of the world seem to not be

able to just stand by idly without their paws and fingers dipping into an unregulated, free flowing river of ideas and knowledge that the Internet represents.

Perhaps the temptation to extend their influence of power is just too great. Perhaps they are fearful of a well informed constituency. After all, knowledge is power, and they've spent untold fortunes in their attempts to "dumb down" society. Plus, it is much easier to rule over an uneducated, ignorant and dumb populace.

Update: It appears that the protest was successful – at least for now. U.S. Congressman Lamar Smith has withdrawn the SOPA bill, and for all intents and purposes, PIPA is also dead in the U.S. Senate, dying a deserved death in committee.

Former U.S. Senator and current head of the MPAA Christopher Dodd expressed surprise at how the

widespread world-wide outcry against these bills "changed the game." He, along with his entertainment industry cronies, thought that they were going to be able to shove these bills through Congress and garner an easy victory, without hardly anyone noticing.

Also playing a hand in the defeat of SOPA and PIPA was an announcement from the White House on Saturday, January 14, 2012. "While we believe that online piracy by foreign websites is a serious problem that requires a serious legislative response," said the note, "we will not support legislation that reduces freedom of expression, increases cybersecurity risk, or undermines the dynamic, innovative global Internet."

Although a clear message has been sent by Internet users, ISPs, etc. in regards to **this** attempt to regulate and censor the Internet, don't underestimate the ability and desire of politicians to try again in the future. We must remain ever vigilant to preserve an open Internet, since it is often the **only** avenue available to a vast majority of the people of this world for an open exchange of knowledge, information and ideas.

They (the content providers, represented largely by the MPAA and RIAA) have "cried wolf" before, claiming that technological advances that came down the pipe were "going to ruin Hollywood" or "going to ruin the music industry." They did this with cassette tapes, home video tape recorders, home DVD players/recorders, MP3 players … the list goes on and on. It seems that every time a new technology gains popularity, they go running off in fear to legislators, seeking a preemptive legislative

With this being an election year, let's hope that the voters can break from their typically myopic memories and vote the supporters and authors of these bills out of office.

We, the users of the Internet and the citizens of this world, must remain on guard. It is up to us to protect and fight for a free and open Internet.

cure. Yet, in every one of the previously cited instances where they feared that their respective industries were going to be "ruined," their total sales and profits only increased. You would think that we've become accustomed to their mentality by now.

Somewhere down the line, in the not-too-distant future, another politician, bathed in the same motives as Representative Lamar Smith, **will** bow to the content providers' special interest group and yet another run in fear from yet another technological advance, and attempt to re-introduce a legislative "cure" for their perceived ills. An even scarier proposition is that some underhanded, less-than-scrupulous politician will attempt to sneak an amendment into another, unrelated bill (like an emergency funding bill or another bill to raise the country's debt limit), that will largely go unnoticed – until it's too late.
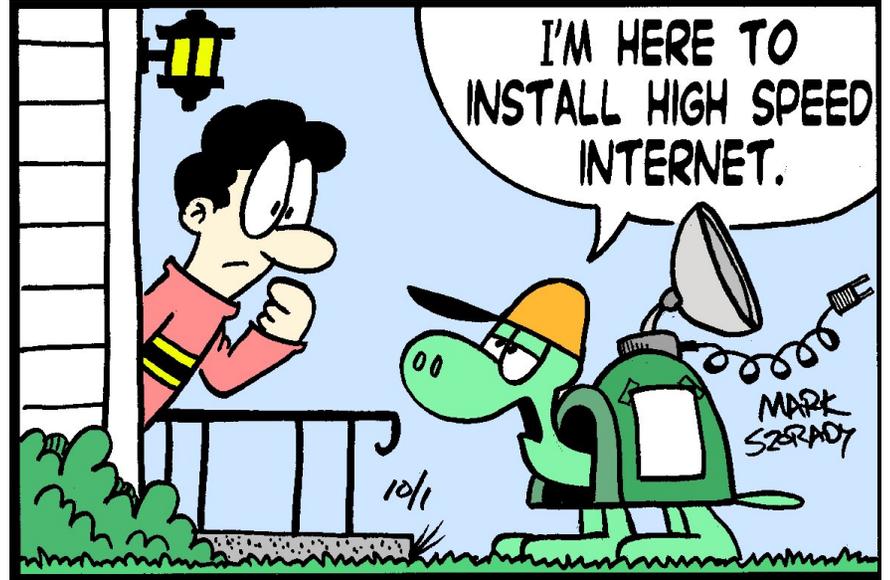
Screenshot Showcase

Posted by MtnMan, January 12, 2012, running e17.

Double Take & Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

Double Take
by Mark Szorady
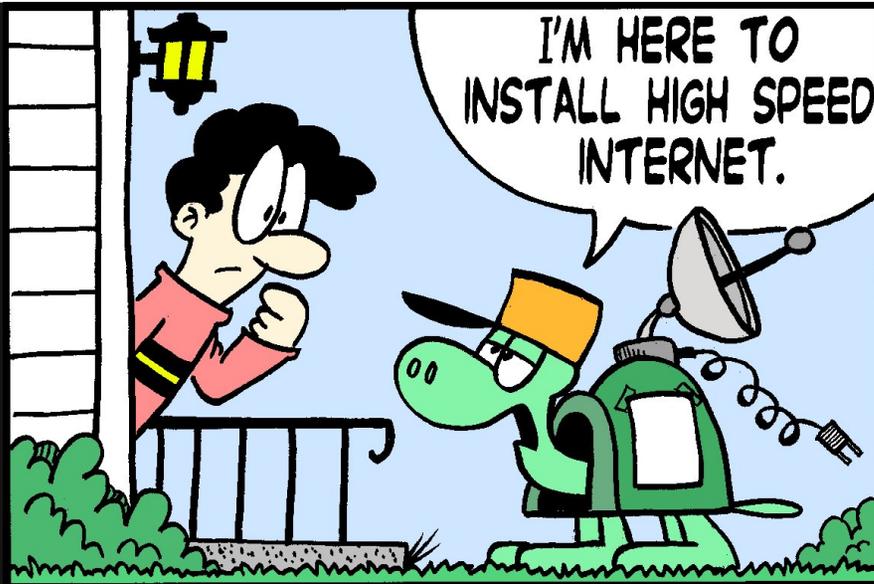
©2011 Mark Szorady. Distributed by georgetoon.com

Find at least seven differences between cartoons.

Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

Recently, while working on my comic strip, I needed to convert several cartoon images from Tiffs to Jpegs. Now, I could easily open each in The Gimp and re-save them in the new format. But that would take a little longer than I wanted. Luckily, I found an image conversion plug-in in the PCLinuxOS repository. It's called "David's Batch Processor for The GIMP." It allows the user to perform operations (re-size, new format, etc.) on a batch of selected images. Once installed from the repository, you can find the plug-in under **Filters > Batch Process.** When the filter is opened and running, simply add images to the interface and, by selecting any of the appropriate tabs, adjust the output of your new files. The batch processing filter does the rest! It's a quick and easy way to re-size or reformat a large number of images. (**Please note:** The application's description points out that "DBP is intended for RGB, not indexed images. Trying to process an indexed image will probably just cause an error, and DBP will halt.")
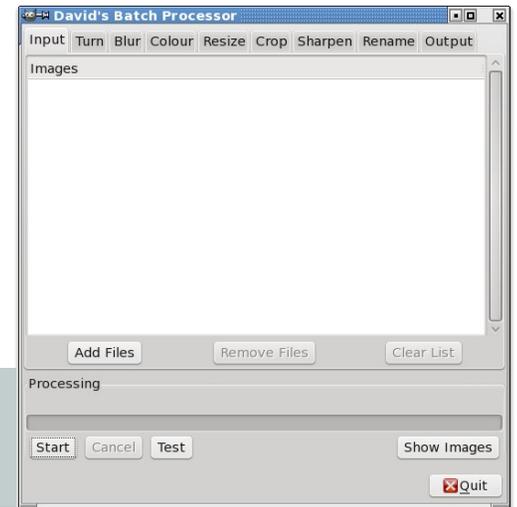
David's Batch Processor interface.

-Mark Szorady is a nationally syndicated cartoonist with georgetoon.com. He blogs at georgetoon.com/blog. Email Mark at georgetoon@gmail.com.

PCLinuxOS
Radically Simple

Forum Foibles: The Heart Of PCLinuxOS

This looks very sweet and one can smell the sweat and heart blood that went into it. Thanks Dragynn. looks like a winner to me! longtom

A hearty thanks to Tex for adding the metadata information in Nautilus. tddyred

Taking notes for joechimp I lost my heart. ms_meme

A heartfelt thanks goes to Sling-Shot for all his time and effort in making the Knowledge Base just that much better with his ideas and help. YouCanToo

As always, my heartfelt appreciation to Texstar and his truly dedicated support mob for one the finest Linux distributions out there! AussieBear

Don't worry, heart always belongs to PCLinuxOS. Nish

Coming from "the enemy M$", I can say with hand on heart, that PCLinuxOS is the best all round Linux system I have found, and like many people I have tried a few. Reb

Whiskey over ice - can cause you heart problems. Ice is Really, Really BAD FOR YOU ! ! ! ! Ramchu

You are too generous, Agust. Thanks. It's amazing how a simple geometric shape can be changed and result into a representation of our community feels ... the heartbeat of PCLinuxOS. Archie

I've come home to PCLinuxOS and I'm gonna stay for quite a spell . So thanks to the developers and especially "Tex" for the Number one Distro in my heart and in many others. Great work guys. Rob

16

The art of words ms_meme does know.
Out of her **heart** the words just flow.
joechimp

Thanks to TEX for all the enjoyment I get from using this Distro that is your **heart** and soul. **joechimp**

All I can say is a **heartfelt** kudos to Texstar for what you've built. Keep up the great work. **cage47**

It's my 500th post, and I thought I'd use it for a very **heartfelt** "thank you" to Tex, and to everybody who works so hard to make this awesome distro possible! So, thank you Tex! **stricktoo**

Whatever the name of the distro is, we are all linked to the one and only **heart** -- the Linux kernel. The teeming **heart** of PCLinuxOS, it is called the most celebrated meeting place in the world, and in all history. **uncleV**
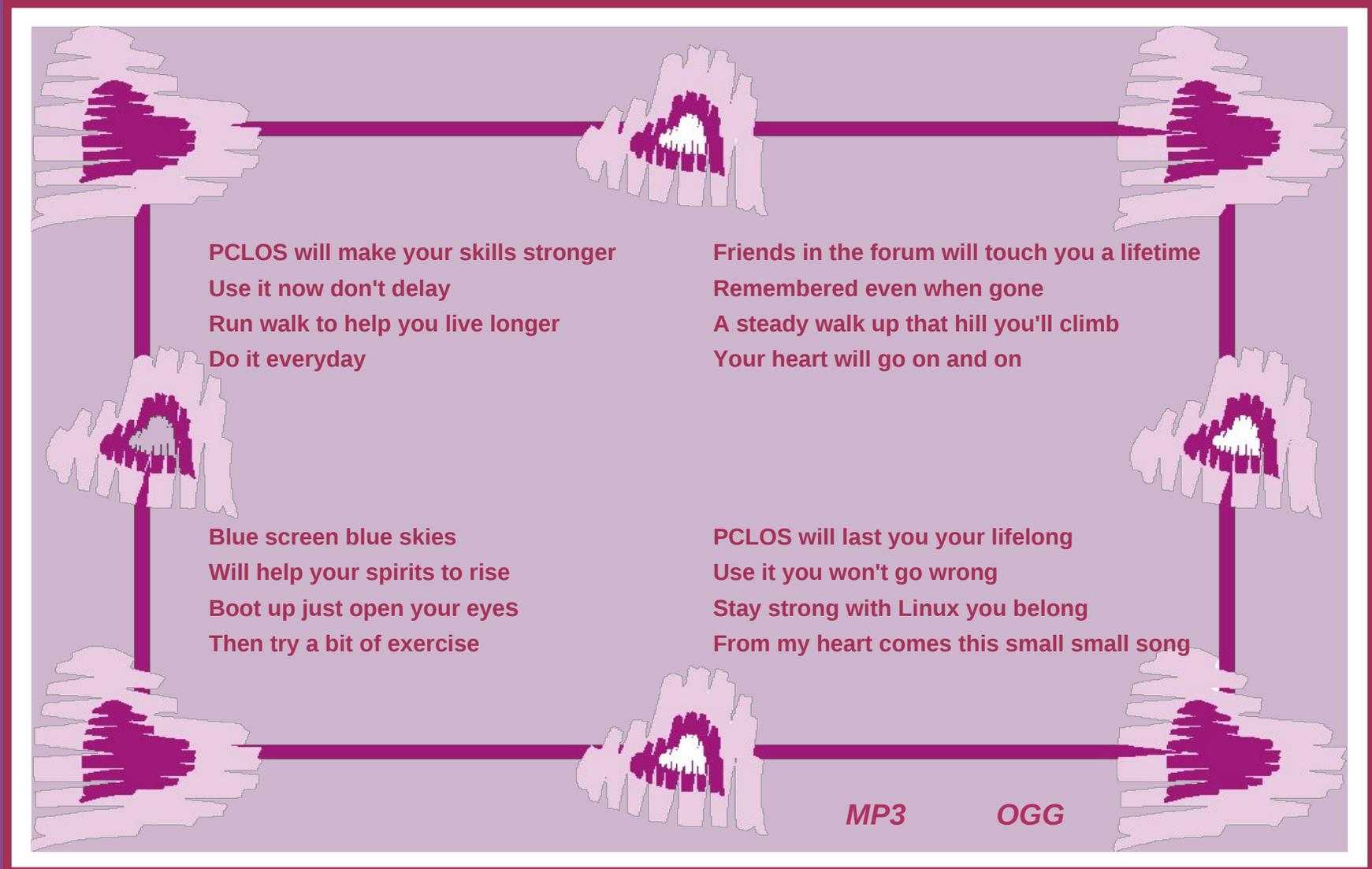
I am continually thrilled and honored to be a part of this wonderful magazine! The dedication of its staff and contributors really comes through. The articles are always helpful, instructive, and done with a **heartfelt** love for this Linux distro. **Georgetoon**

A **heartfelt** thanks to one and all for what you do. **dangbert**

I am sitting in bed looking at this absolute masterpiece of work called PCLinuxOS and would like to add my **heartfelt** gratitude to Texstar and all our packagers for their unselfish commits and the countless time they've poured to making PCLinuxOS AWESOME on my machine. **Archie**

Also Neal, you are such a **sweetheart**. **sandyv**

Well, I did say **lighthearted**! **Mike**

PCLOS will make your skills stronger
Use it now don't delay
Run walk to help you live longer
Do it everyday

Friends in the forum will touch you a lifetime
Remembered even when gone
A steady walk up that hill you'll climb
Your heart will go on and on

Blue screen blue skies
Will help your spirits to rise
Boot up just open your eyes
Then try a bit of exercise

PCLOS will last you your lifelong
Use it you won't go wrong
Stay strong with Linux you belong
From my heart comes this small small song

MP3   *OGG*

Forum Family & Friends: joechimp

by Archie Arevalo (Archie)

It was the year 1853, or 1302, or even 1260, but definitely 4186 when he had to leave his constellation, Scorpius. You may wonder why he had to leave one of the brightest stars in the our galaxy. While it may be true that Antares is a slow variable star, still …

joe, a.k.a. Rich, as his friends call him. was born on a sunny-side day in a futuristic hut to intelligent alien beings we might mistakenly recognize as chimps. This was 159 years ago.

Like what happened to Kal-El, who is sometimes disguised as Sproggy, many of Antares' inhabitants believe their star was going supernova, thus prompting his parents to strap him into a tele-transporter and zap! Before he knew it, he was in North America, the United States. But 'til this day, Antares has not yet exploded! Bummer!

Rich kept his identity hidden until a couple of years ago, when he made up his mind that he was among those he would want to be with – our family at the PCLinuxOS Forum.

Now, one-and-a-half centuries later, Rich tell us a bit more about himself. Artist. Bon Vivant. Man about town who lists chasing women as one of the things he likes to do most on his free time ... that is, if the women aren't chasing after him.

"I love to know something today that I did not know yesterday."

The one ... the only ... Rich, a.k.a. joechimp

"I also love to listen to music. I have varied tastes in music so it could be anything one day to the next. Most of my time, though, is on the computer or doing some type of art. I really don't have free time it seems. Well, I do but I use it to do what I do."

Rich said that he studied classical music in his early years on Earth, AND played clarinet in an orchestra.

And I was thinking who didn't play the clarinet?

"At some point, other things got in the way and I left that behind. I received a guitar at an early age and loved that, but an injury to one of my fingers took the steam out of that for a long time.

"Between then and now, I decided to play the guitar with chords and notes in a strange manner. Sometime after that I decided to take up the bass guitar and thought that might be easier. I discovered Jaco Pastorius and the world of the bass was infused into my DNA.

"I loved everything the bass did for a song. I played in a few bands, and in recent years, mostly sing at open microphones, or sit in for a song or two with a friend's band. I love to sing most of all now. There is something about the instrument of the voice that is so unique to each individual.

"Think about it. You own your voice. You can tune it any way that it pleases you. It is easy to carry around. Any type of music can be produced by it. A great instrument."

"As any musician will tell you the first time you are in front of an audience and they actually applaud what you have done. What a feeling. Never gets old."

I thought he'd never stop talking about music so when I sensed that he was about to take a breath, I asked him, "You joined the forum in 2009, what specifically made you stay?"

He said that he was like the many others who searched. And when he found PCLinuxOS, he decided that it was his distro of choice.

"What I immediately saw was that the PCLOS forum was what a forum was supposed to be. People wanting to help in any way they could. No question was a stupid question.

"Just19 (then johnboy) and our late friend, Joble, may he rest in peace, were instrumental in helping me in my Newbie stage. After running PCLinuxOS on a LiveCD for awhile, I also wanted to try and run it on a flash disk. They talked me through every little issue that I encountered. The generosity of their time was the key in finding my way to PCLinuxOS and my "permanent residence" in the forum.

"There were others who helped as well but it's the two of them who kept me going.

"As I learned more about PCLinuxOS, I knew I made the right choice. I finally was able to just do things. Everything worked all the time. No more daily maintenance as I had with Windows. Always worrying if I do this, will this break. If I do this will I get a BSOD. If I do this ..."

Rich, I've concluded, IS unstoppable!

"... you get my point. I was able to enjoy the OS and do actual things instead of fixing things. Most of all the people here. Real friends. Not just faceless people but real friends.

I dared.

"I would name them all but it would take the whole magazine and I already know what Paul is going to say. I would also be afraid to leave someone out as well. All of my friends here know who they are.

"I would be remiss in not mentioning Texstar (Mr. Bill Reynolds) though. What he has done in creating what I consider a masterpiece of an OS is simply amazing. The work he does to provide us with what is the best of the best will someday be recognized as remarkable. We already do recognize that. Someday everyone will.

"Yet he is just one of the guys when he is in the forum. It's great. Thank you, sir, for changing my life."

"I would also single out Neal. He was always there for me anytime something was bothering me, or if I needed help with PCLinuxOS. He is quite a guy. He is a great representative of what is good about this forum. I hope that someday I have the opportunity to meet him in person. We will drink coffee and eat bacon.

At this point, I was already unsure if I'd want to ask Rich another question. But I pushed it. How do you generally find the forum?

"The forum is a great place!

"If a day goes by and I can't be here , I feel I have lost something. Any questions I might have on PCLOS or Linux in general are answered for me in short order. People genuinely want to help. It is amazing how much this place has become such an important part of my life. The Sandbox has become a second home."

I knew it!

"But, I also want to say a few things about another important thing to me. I also sit on several State Boards as a volunteer to help people with disabilities receive vocational rehabilitation, and to find their way in the workplace. Or for more independent

living. My time spent there is very meaningful to me. Mostly what we do is find ways for case workers, who are overloaded, to find better ways to serve the public. Whether through legislation or improving forms or just to educate employers and people in general to the needs of people with different needs than their own. This is all very rewarding."

Huh? This is definitely something I am interested in knowing.

"Cities and towns have offices dedicated to helping these people in need. Case workers usually have a long list of people that needed to be helped and served. We try to find ways to streamline the process and to reach more people. It is a difficult process to help so many people. The success rate is high because the workers are so dedicated.

"Some of the services provided are to help with educating both the employee and the employer on how best to utilize a person with disabilities in the workplace. Sometimes it is just finding a way for people to utilize public transportation and finding other ways for them to get around. We recently completed a revision of a Vocational Rehabilitation Needs Assessment Survey that is required by the federal government every couple of years. We could just go through the motions and send out a basic survey, but we met multiple times to rewrite questions and really delve into how we could best get a response from the thousands of people that would view this document. We had great success and I can't tell you how good that makes me feel.

"The case workers are the unsung heroes. We that sit on boards and committees are just a small cog in what gets accomplished. They also help people who have always lived with someone to take care of them, move out on their own for the first time and live independently. Can you imagine the satisfaction of someone being able to live on their own for the first time in their lives?

"I can tell you that the things a lot of us just do unconsciously every day are a major hurdle for many people, on a daily basis. I am very thankful for so many things. I hope that someday all people will find the help they need."

I think being part of the process is what makes each one of us, especially you, Rich … important. What else can you tell us about yourself?

"I am also a painter. I paint with acrylic paint on canvas. I also use other mediums, but my favorite is acrylic. I paint what I see in my mind. So you can imagine how strange my paintings are. I guess you might call them abstract expressionism. Doesn't that sound cool?

"I also take black and white photos with a film camera."

Indoors or outdoors?

"I like fishing for large-mouth and small-mouth bass. I used to fish a lot but have had fewer opportunities in recent years. I have had the good fortune of having been able to fish in almost 40 of the United States.
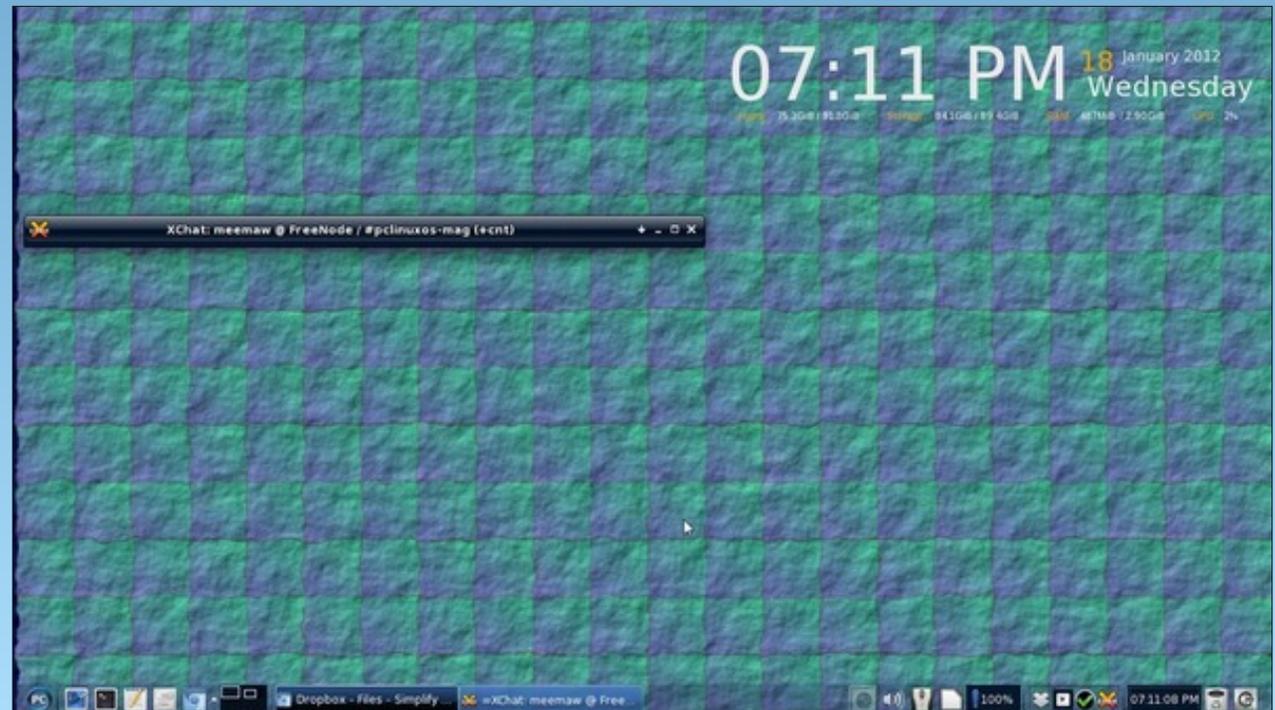
I answered, "What a cool way to go."

Indeed, very interesting and unusual experiences.

"Each and every day I am thankful and feel blessed by God for all the opportunities that have come my way."

Amen to that, joechimp … errr, I meant Rich!

"In Florida, I fell off the front of a boat once and landed on top of an alligator. That wasn't as interesting.

"Probably the most memorable encounter was when I was fishing for codfish in about 100 feet of water, about 27 miles out in the ocean. All of a sudden, a pod of whales were around the boat. They were pilot whales, and it was quite a sight. They were so close that we could reach out and actually touch them. Well, evidently I went a little crazy. Touching the whales apparently wasn't enough for me as I jumped into the ocean with the whales and was able to touch them and have the experience of my lifetime.

"They were playful creatures. My friend said, "you could have been killed."

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Meemaw, January 18, 2012, running Xfce.

Gnome 2.32: Gnome Games

by Meemaw

While I'm not a big gamer, I do occasionally like a game or two. In Gnome,
I installed the package Gnome Games. It is a collection of many popular computer games. The Gnome Games Wiki says:

GNOME Games is a collection of fifteen small "five-minute" games in a variety of styles and genres for the GNOME desktop.

The GNOME Games Wiki

The game icons shown above from left to right are Lights Out, Five or More, Four in a Row, Chess, Gnometris, Iagno, Klotski, Mahjong, Mines, Nibbles, Robots, Swell Foop (or Same Gnome), Tali, Tetravex, and Sudoku. However, besides the games the wiki shows at the top of the main page, I got Aisle Riot Solitaire, Blackjack and Freecell Solitaire but not Lights Out when I installed the PCLinuxOS package.
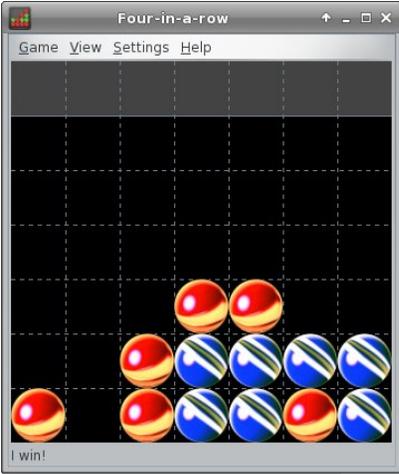
I think it is a nice assortment of games! You get a few arcade and board games, some are puzzle, and some are card games. In this article I will show a screenshot of each game in the PCLinuxOS package, and give a brief description of each.

In the **Arcade** section are Gnometris, Nibbles and Robots.

Gnometris is a version of the classic game Tetris, where different shapes fall and one must arrange them so each whole
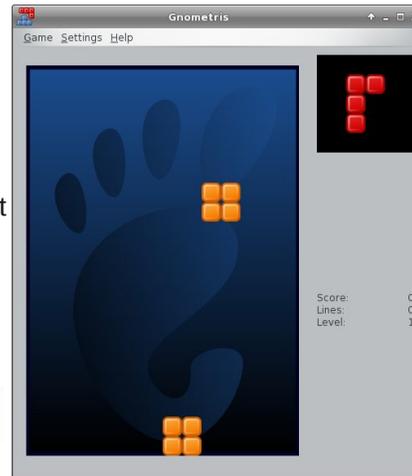
horizontal line is complete. As soon as it is, the line disappears

and all tiles drop to the bottom. As you proceed through the game the shapes drop faster. If you fill up the board and a shape can't drop, the game is over.

In **Nibbles** (center, bottom), you control a worm or a snake. You are moving around the board eating diamonds (the round yellow circle at the lower right of the board). You are competing with up to 6 computer-generated worms competing for the same diamonds. Every time you eat one you get longer,and walls appear in other levels, so navigation around the board gets more difficult. If you run into a wall or another worm, you start over at the length you were at the beginning of the game.
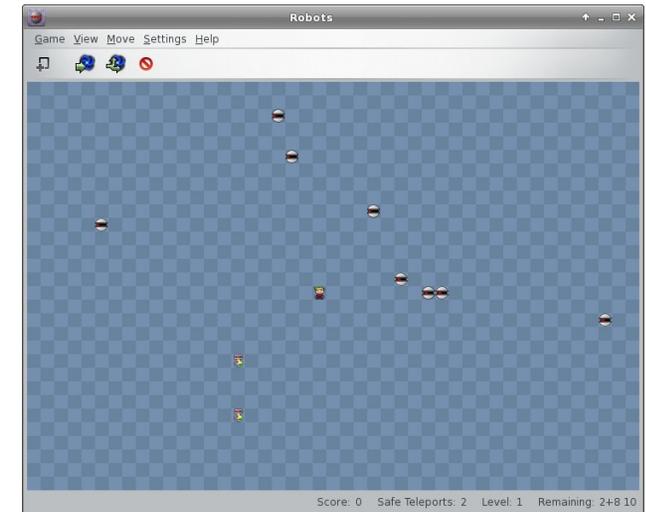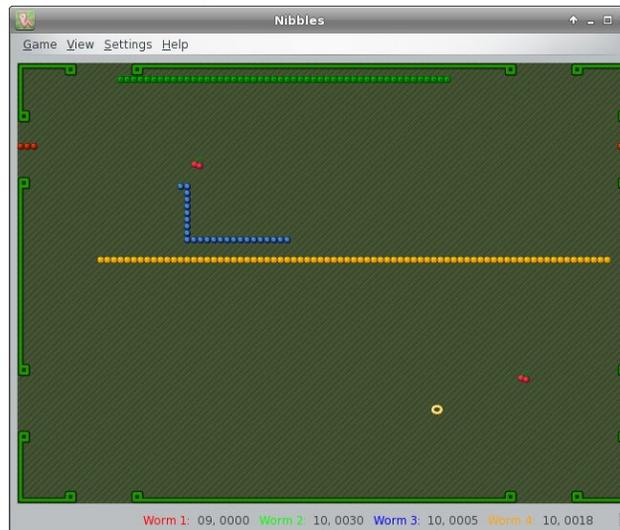
In **Robots**, you are in a space with several Robots trying to kill you. You can use your mouse or keyboard to move away from them or use a limited number of 'teleports' to get away. Your aim is to get

them to collide with each other and explode. If you can escape and blow them all up, you win.

In the **Boards** section, you have Chess, Five or More, Four-in-a-Row, Iagno and Mahjong.

This is classic **Chess** (which I have never played). You can configure it to show a 2D or 3D view.

In **Five or More**, your aim is to clear the board by lining up five or more of the same color marble, while the board is filling with marbles. You can click on one and move it to where you want it, if there is open space on the board. For example, I can move the orange marble in the lower left corner to the vertical line of orange marbles to

cause them to disappear, but the pink one next to the top on the left can't be moved because there are marbles surrounding it. The game is over when the board is full or empty.

Four-in-a-Row is the same as the commercial game, Connect Four. You play against the computer, dropping your pieces from the grey area at the top, while the computer does the same. You have to make a line of four pieces in any direction, while blocking the computer from doing the same thing. As you can see, I have lost to the computer as its blue pieces have already formed a line of 4 across.

Iagno (right) is the Gnome version of Reversi. You play against the computer. When you place a piece on the board, all of the computer's pieces in between two of yours are captured and change to match yours.

However, computer can then place another piece and capture any of yours that are between its two. The game is over when the board is full. The winner is the one with the most pieces.
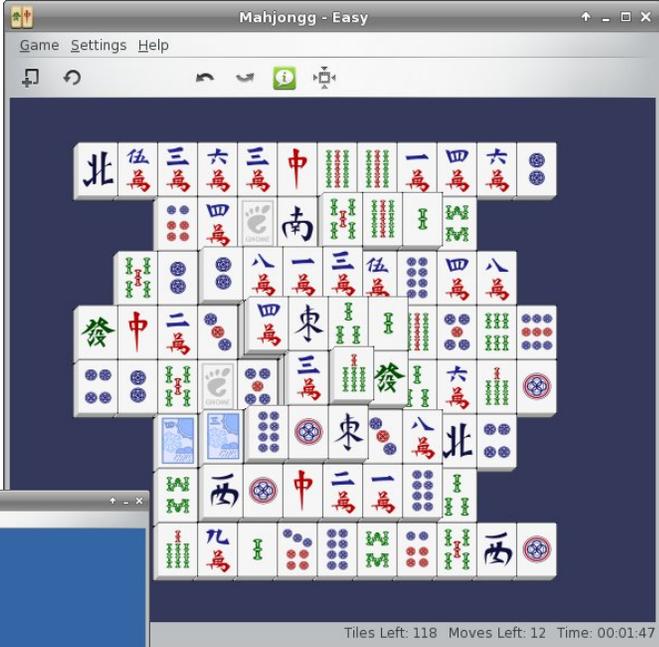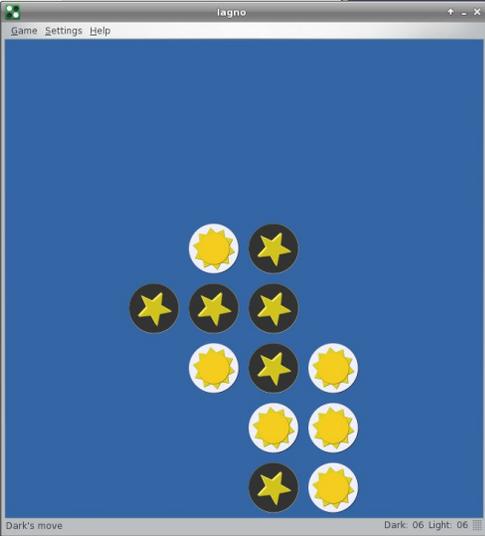
Mahjong is, of course, the classic matching game. You click on two matching tiles and they are removed from the board. The aim is to clear the board in the least time possible. The catch is that you can't remove a tile that is 'blocked' - that is, if there is a tile on each side of it. A tile has to be 'open' on at least one side to be removed. In the partially finished game above, the tile at top left has a match in the right side of the third row

from the bottom, but it can't be used yet because it's blocked. The tile with the 4 dots to its right has to be removed first.

In the **Cards** section are Aisle Riot Solitaire, Blackjack, Freecell Solitaire and, for some reason, Tali.
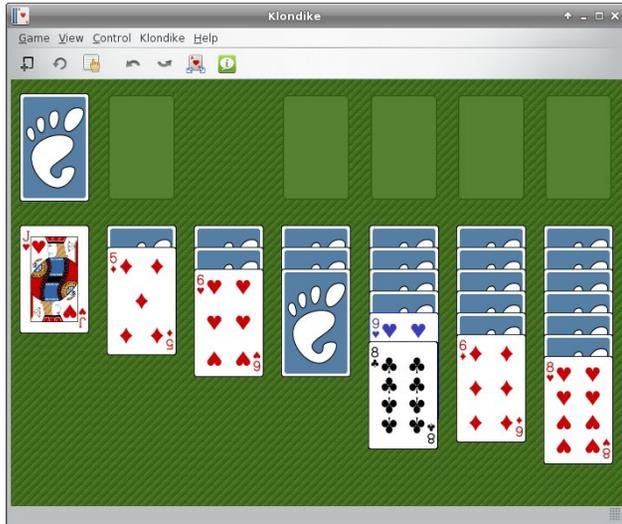
Aisle Riot Solitaire contains 86 different versions of Solitaire. When you open it for the first time, the default starting game is Klondike. You can choose the game you want to play by clicking on Game > Select Game. I play Klondike, Freecell, Spider and Gaps, but there are plenty more from which to choose!

You are playing **Blackjack** (center, top) against the computer. You can choose how much to wager, and play the hand however you wish, clicking to deal another card, or using the 'H' to Hit and the 'S' to

Stand. Your balance is down in the status bar.

If all you ever play is **Freecell** (center, bottom), then having that as a stand-alone game is pretty handy.
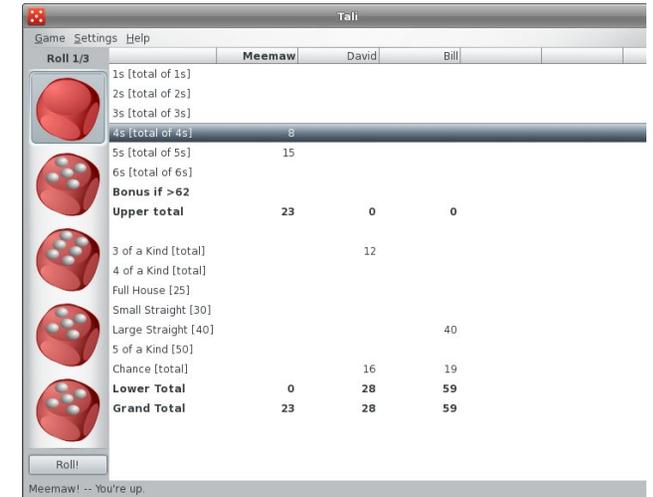

While it is in the cards section, **Tali** is actually a dice game. It's the Gnome version of the popular game Yahtzee. You can play against up to 5 computer opponents. Each turn is 3 rolls, during which you are trying to get the highest score for each category. You keep the dice you want and roll the rest.

The **Puzzles** section has some of the previously mentioned games, plus Klotski, Mines, Same Gnome, Sudoku and Tetravex.

In **Klotski** (next page, top left), you have to move the large blue square out of the board through the opening where the green squares are. To do that, you must move the small blue squares out of the way so your path is clear. The green squares don't move, and the large blue square is the only square that's allowed out of the outer frame. You have
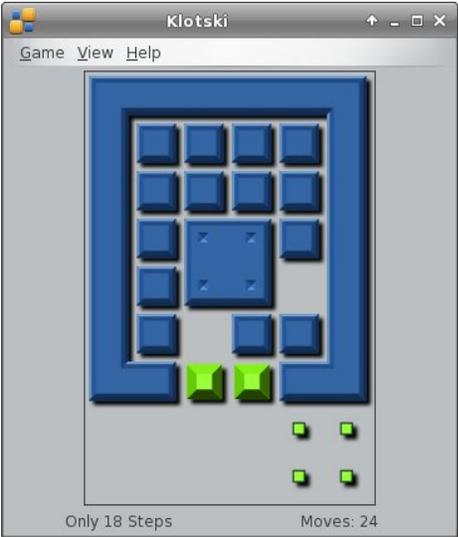
can mark what you believe is the location of each mine (by right-clicking the board in that spot).
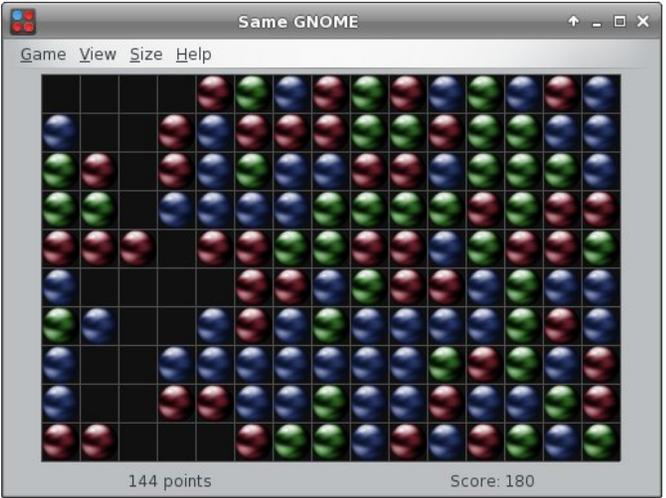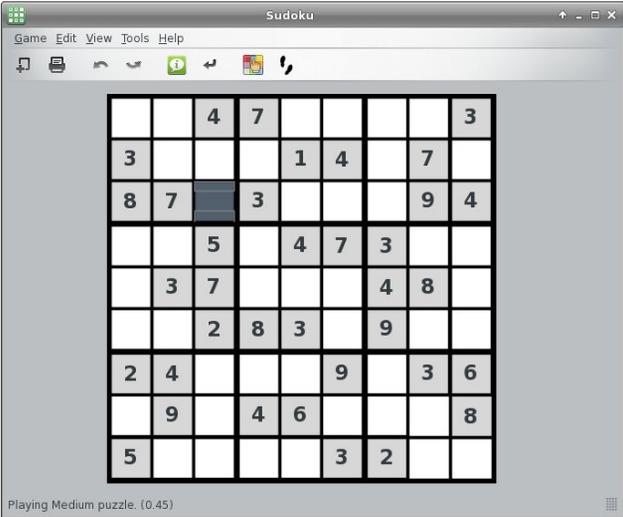
solved the board when the large square is placed over the four small green squares in the lower right of the window. The window shown is level 1, and they get much harder!

In **Mines**, you are trying to find and mark mines that are hidden on the board. When you carefully left-click on a square, the numbers that appear show you how many mines are in the vicinity so, hopefully, you
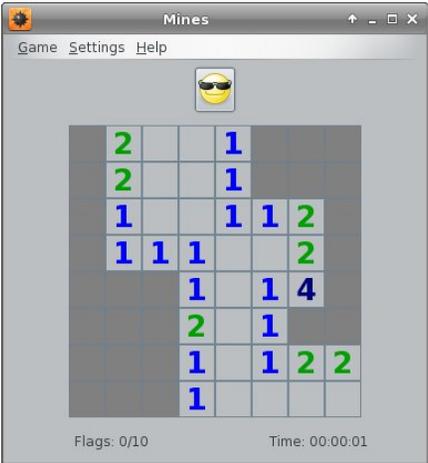
Sudoku is the number puzzle where you fill in the numbers 1 through 9. The catch is that each section of the grid can ONLY have one of each number, PLUS each line and column can have only one of each number. So... if you are filling in the darker square, that 3 x 3 section already has 3, 4, 7 and 8, so your possibilities are 1, 2, 5, 6 and 9. However, the line that square is in has a 9 in it, and the column it's in has a 2 and a 5, so your choices are narrowed down to 1 and 6. Once you decide which one will work, do the rest of them the same way.

Same Gnome (top right) is a game we see everywhere. On the Gnome Games site, it is also called Swell Foop, but I've also seen it on Yahoo as Bricks Breaking or in KDE as Same Game. You click on a group of 2 or more like-colored balls, and they

disappear. Any balls above them fall down into the empty spaces. Your aim is to clear the board.

Tetravex is a number matching game. Your aim is to place the tiles into the board on the left in such a way that when you are finished, the tile edges that you place side by side have the same numbers. I've placed one in the center. The one I place to its right will need to have a number 5 on the left side to match the right side of the tile I've already placed. When all tiles are placed, all numbers must match.

Synaptic also adds another menu item to Games. The **Other** section has Tali and Same Gnome in it. Have fun with Gnome Games!

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by djohnston, January 24, 2012, running e17.

My New Desktop Build

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

After many years of using hand-me-down and castoff computers that I've literally rescued from the trash/recycle bin, I'm finally building my own custom desktop computer. There's something exciting about building your own, new, cutting edge computer – all without having to pay the "Microsoft tax."

This is my first brand new desktop computer in almost 10 years. My last one was a Sony Vaio with an Intel P4 HT 3.2 GHz, 512 MB RAM, a DVD-ROM, a DVD+/-RW, a 500 GB HD, TV Tuner card with built-in MPEG2 encoder, eight USB 2.0 ports and a firewire port (huge deal, back then, it was). It came installed with WinXP Home – and the usual abundance of crapware and trialware. To top it off, the Sony Vaio was a factory refurb, purchased from the UBid auction site. Still, it was a leading edge computer for its time. By the way, I still have that computer and it's still humming along and still in great shape.

Prior to the Sony Vaio, my previous brand new desktop computer was a no-name box I purchased on sale at Office Depot. It ran an AMD Athlon XP 1500+ processor, with 256 MB RAM, onboard video and sound, and came with Win98 installed. I also still have this computer.

Without a doubt, this new computer I've built should serve me well for several years to come. So walk with me, if you will, through the build of this new custom computer.

"The Parts"

Parts List

CPU: AMD 3.3 GHz FX-6100 six core processor.

Motherboard: Gigabyte 970A-UD3 AM3+ AMD motherboard with SATA 3.0, USB 3.0, and up to 32 GB DDR3 RAM.

Hard Drives: 32 GB OCZ Onyx Series SATA II 2.5" SSD as the primary drive (OS installation) and a 2 TB Seagate SATA 2 hard drive, partitioned into 4 logical partitions for data storage. Icy Dock Dual 2.5" to 3.5" hard drive mounting adapter used for the 32 GB SSD.

Optical Drives: (2) Lite-On SATA 2 DVD+/-RW. (I decided to skip a BluRay drive at this time, due to the limited support under Linux).

RAM: 8 GB (4 GB x 2) Patriot PC3-12800 DDR3 RAM, 1600 MHz.

Video Card: PCIe 16x nVidia 8400 GS with 1 GB DDR3 RAM.

Multi-Card Reader: Rosewill USB 2.0 All-In-One Card Reader.

TV Tuner Card: Hauppage 1250 HDTV TV Tuner Card.

Thermal Paste: Ceramique 2 Tri-Linear Ceramic Thermal Compound.

Mouse: Pixxo Wireless USB Mouse, model MA-C1G5.

Keyboard: Lite-On 104 Key USB Keyboard.

Computer Case: Rosewill TU155-II mid-size AT/ATX case with (4) 5 ¼" drive bays, (5) 3 ½" drive bays, and 500 Watt power supply.

Assembly

I know that for a lot of computer users, sitting there looking at a pile of computer parts – in their boxes or not – can elicit tons of apprehension and push them towards, er, panic. But I've always been one of

those people who love taking things apart and putting them back together again. In fact, one of my other interests, (albeit one that I can't seem to find much time to indulge in), is woodworking. I love looking at a pile of raw lumber and envisioning what I can make from it. Well, I approached this computer build with that same type of vision.

For those brave-at-heart souls who wish to undertake a similar build on their own, I strongly suggest keeping the individual components boxed until you are ready to install them, to help keep them from being damaged before you get around to installing them. Oh, and please don't look at this as a formal how-to on building your own computer. I'm just going to walk you through the general process, and hopefully give you some "food for thought" along the way.

The first piece of wisdom I want to impart to you, if you choose to tackle this (or any time you tinker around inside your computer's guts), is to be ever vigilant to keep static electricity drained from your body. In the northern hemisphere, it's winter, which means that static charges build up easily in the cool, dry air. Scoot your feet across a carpeted floor and touch a metal door knob, and you'll experience that static electricity first hand. So your vigilance in keeping that static electricity discharged is even that much more important than ever.

The best way to do this is to wear an electrostatic discharge strap, attached to your wrist at one end and to a good ground at the other. If you don't have an electrostatic discharge strap, then position yourself near a ground and be sure to touch it with your hand often, and *without* any components in

either hand. Perform this act faithfully before you pick up the next component, and you will go a long way to insuring that your build is successful and that you don't ruin any brand new parts before you even get the chance to enjoy them.

Securing the motherboard in the new case.

First, we need to install the new motherboard into the case. Be sure you install the posts in the case to support the motherboard and to keep the back side of the motherboard from coming into contact with the metal case, causing a short circuit – and probable early death of your new motherboard. Line up the screw holes on the motherboard with the installation posts and carefully tighten each of the screws. The screws should be snug. Take care not to over tighten the screws, or you could damage your new motherboard.
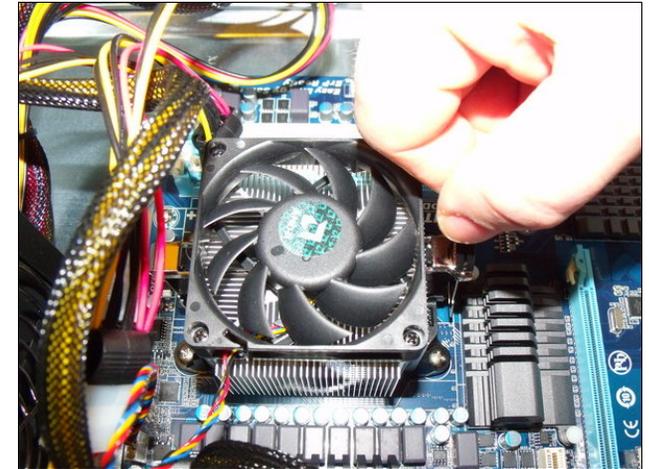
Installing the CPU cooler atop the CPU.

Next, install the CPU and the CPU cooler. After installing the CPU in the zero-force CPU socket, put a thin coat of thermal paste on top of the CPU. This helps improve the contact between the CPU and the CPU cooler, facilitating heat dissipation. Place and lock the CPU cooler on top of the CPU, and connect the fan wires to the appropriate connector on your motherboard.

Now, you need to install your RAM in the RAM sockets. My motherboard has four RAM sockets, supporting up to 32 GB RAM. I chose to go with two 4 GB RAM modules, for a total of 8 GB RAM. This leaves two empty RAM slots for future memory expansion, should I need or desire more memory. Notice that along the bottom edge of the RAM module that there is a notch. This notch is designed to prevent you from installing it backwards. Press down on the top edge of the RAM module with firm, even pressure, until the latches click along the sides
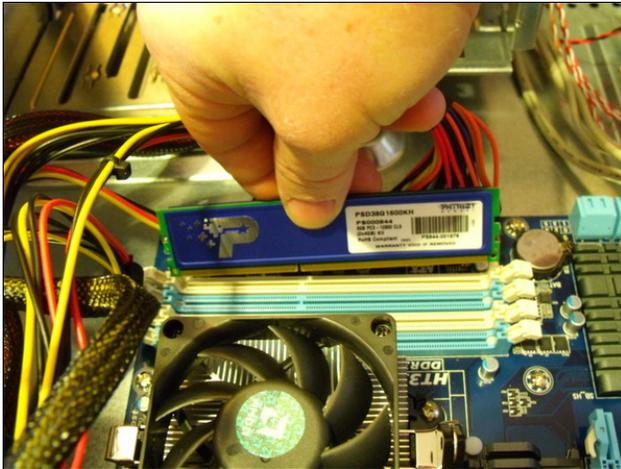
Installing the RAM modules.

of the RAM module. Repeat this process for each RAM module you are installing.

Assembling the 2.5" SSD into the IcyDock.

Next, it's time to insert and hook up the drives of your system. For my particular build, I chose to use a 32 GB SSD (Solid State Drive) to host my operating system on. Most – if not all – the SSDs on the market are 2.5" drives, which is the size most commonly used in notebook computers. Built for notebook computers, they traditionally don't fit into a desktop build. Fortunately, there are an assortment of 2.5" to 3.5" adapters that allow you to install a 2.5" drive into a desktop form factor. I chose the Icy Dock (above), which allows you to place two 2.5" drives into the space occupied by one 3.5" drive.
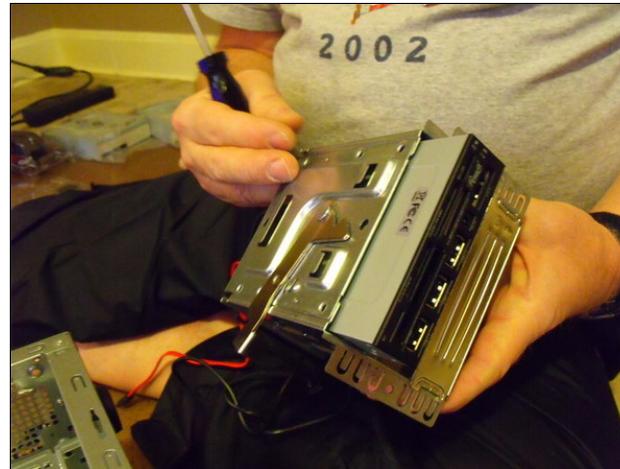
Securing the multi-card reader in the 3.5" drive bay.

I also installed a multi-card reader, along with two DVD+/-RW drives. To store my data, I installed a Seagate 2 TB SATA 2.0 hard drive that my wife bought me for LAST Christmas, which also happened to be the first piece I collected for my new build. She followed that up this Christmas with my motherboard and video card.
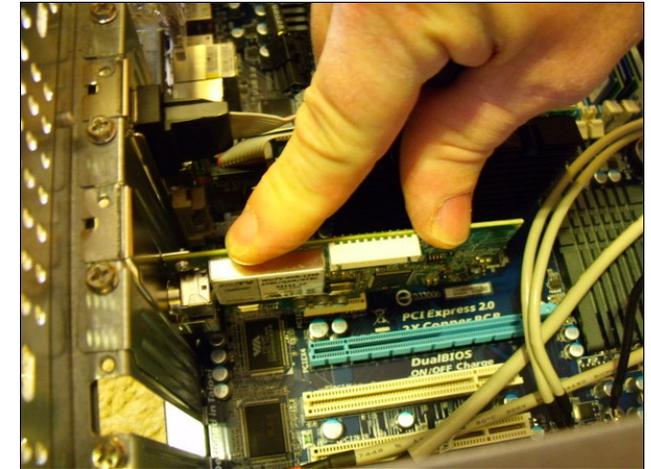
Installing the video card and TV tuner card.

The next items to be installed were the new video card and HDTV tuner card. Carefully line up the card connector edge with the card slot, and apply firm and even downward pressure to seat the card into the card slot. Be sure to secure the cards in place by screwing them to the computer case chassis.

Since that was all of the items I needed to install, it was time to close up the case and start installing the operating system.

Firing It Up & OS Installation

Now it was time for the moment of truth. Unceremoniously unhooking and disconnecting the "old" desktop system, it was time to hook up the new computer and slide it into the space vacated by the old system. One press of the power button and –

quietly – the new computer hummed to life. A blue glow shone through the clear Plexiglas insert in the side of the computer case and a the power button was bathed in a blue glow. The screen displayed the Gigabyte motherboard graphic. The phrase "Searching for OS..." was subsequently emblazoned boldly on the screen. Success!
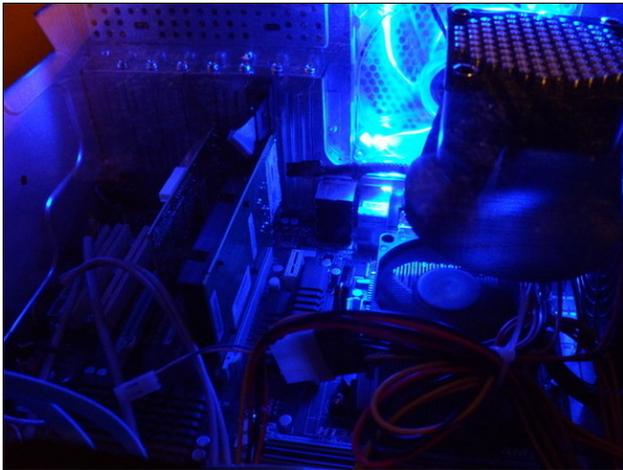
A view through the Plexiglas insert in the side of the computer case.

I chose to install Phinx on my new computer. Even though it's a lighter version, I'm a real fan of the Xfce desktop. Plus, installing a lighter desktop on my more modern computer just means a faster responding computer in the long run. While my new computer is way more than capable of running a flashy KDE desktop with all the flash, glitz and eye candy, I feel much more comfortable with the Xfce desktop. I find its simplicity very attractive.

I opened up the top DVD+/-RW drive and placed the Phinx 2011.08 installation CD in the tray. I closed the tray and gave the system a "three fingered salute" on the keyboard (Ctrl - Alt - Del) to cause a reboot. Just a brief moment later, the Phinx grub boot screen appeared. Confident that everything would be recognized, I moved straight to the "Install Phinx 2011" grub menu entry. I was very careful in picking out my individual components, doing my homework to make sure the components I chose were compatible with Linux.

Another moment later, and I was at the hard drive partition stage of the installation. Since both drives were new, raw and previously unformatted, I selected "Custom Partitions" so that I could set up the partitions on the new drives. I set up a 4 GB Swap directory (even though it'll mostly be a waste of space with 8 GB of RAM on the system) and the remainder of the SSD as my root partition. I also set up the 2 TB SATA II drive into four partitions, three with 450 GB each, and the fourth with the remainder (approximately 512 GB). The first 450 GB partition was set aside as my /home directory, with the three remaining partitions called data1, data2 and data3.

Less than 15 minutes after I started, the installation of Phinx on my hard drive was complete. I removed the installation CD and rebooted the computer. After entering the root password and setting myself up a user account, I was greeted by a clean Phinx Xfce desktop.

The last time I installed Phinx on one of my computers, it took me a solid week or more to get the desktop set up even close to how I want it. I have a list of personal tweaks (stored in my head)

My Phinx Xfce desktop, after some tweaks. Wallpaper shows downtown Kansas City skyline at dusk.

that I customarily apply to my Xfce desktops immediately after installation. These include setting up various window manager themes, wallpaper, launchers on the top panel, applications to start automatically when my desktop loads, installation of a core set of applications that I use, setting up the graphical server, setting up the sound system, etc.

While I pretty much have my desktop set up mostly like I want, my personal "tweaking" of the desktop on my new computer is still evolving and ongoing. It usually takes me three to four weeks to get everything "just so."

As is the case in many custom computer builds, I do have some "issues" left to iron out. For one, TV tuner cards are a hit-and-miss proposition under Linux. Nearly all of the manufacturers build their TV tuner

cards for Windows, often leaving users of "other" operating systems out in the cold – or at best, with a TV tuner card that only half works. Such is the case with my new Hauppage 1250 HDTV TV tuner card.

First, the new TV tuner card does not work under Linux with analog signals, such as the type sent to the card from my cable converter box (tuning it to channel 3, then using the TV tuner card to surf the channels). In fact, I've discovered that it ONLY works with purely digital signals, and even then, only with MythTV installed from the repos. It seems that MythTV is the only "TV" application that can properly recognize the card.

I don't know if the fact that it uses a PCIe 1x slot is a part of the problem, but it's appearing that TV tuner cards using the older, plain PCI slot are better recognized under Linux. Mind you, this is just an observation, since I don't have a lot to go on but the reports in user reviews on Newegg.com and Amazon.com. I wish I had realized this when I purchased the Hauppage TV tuner card. It would have altered my buying decision.

I will most likely be purchasing a HDTV tuner card that uses one of the PCI card slots in the very near future. Until then, I plan to install my old analog TV tuner card (an old ATI TV Wonder Pro), so that I can access the output from my cable converter box. I'll also be purchasing a separate aerial antenna to pick up terrestrial OTA HDTV broadcasts on the Hauppage 1250. In the end, I may end up giving the Hauppage 1250 away to one of my friends who are still stuck in the Windows world, where that particular TV tuner card will work as it was designed to do.

Another issue I have to "iron out" is getting power to my multi-card reader. Since I hooked up four SATA drives in my new computer, I ran out of SATA power cables. My computer case had only four such cables, so something had to give. I chose to leave the multi-card reader power cable unattached, preferring instead to get the two optical drives and the two installed hard drives running as they should. So, I will also be purchasing a power splitter cable very soon to enable me to deliver the necessary power connection to the multi-card reader.

Summary

While I've rebuilt many computers over the years, this computer was my first build from scratch. I spent the better part of a full year buying the parts, bit by bit, as I could afford them. Over that time, I estimate that I spent less than $700 on my new computer system. Spread out over a year's time, it makes it much easier to build a system with the parts you want, since you're not spending large amounts of money at one time – just a little here and there. I've seen computers with fewer features selling for well over $2000.

Overall, I'm very pleased with my new computer build. What I find especially pleasing is NOT having to pay the "Microsoft Tax" when you purchase a new, pre-assembled system. Like many Linux users, I'm through putting money into the Microsoft corporate coffers. Before I discovered Linux, I probably paid enough for Microsoft products over the years to put one of Bill Gate's kids through a semester of college. No more. Regardless of anything else, the fact that I contributed nothing else

to funding "the enemy" leaves me extremely satisfied.

My new computer in its bay in my desk.

ClamAV Installation and Configuration

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

Periodically, questions come up on the forum about configuring ClamAV after the installation. It seems that almost everyone, myself included, has encountered problems with getting ClamAV to work properly after it's installed. The default installation issues should be addressed upstream at the developers' end. However, the configuration issues have existed for years, and I'll let sleeping dogs lie. I'll show you how I addressed the problems encountered.

It was two or three years ago when I installed it for use on a remastered CD I made for the purpose of scanning Windows PCs for viruses. As a result, I had forgotten some of what I had done to get ClamAV working. So, I used the information from some helpful PCLinuxOS forum posts to help me along.

The first step is to open Synaptic package manager, install any updates needed for your system, then enter "clamav" as a search term (without the quotation marks). Several packages will be displayed. After marking the package clamav for installation, the packages clamav-db and libclamav6 will be shown as dependencies. You should mark them for installation, as well. The clamtk package is a front-end GUI for clamav and offers convenience

for the user. The clamav-milter package is designed for Sendmail. The package should be selected for installation on mail servers, but is not necessary on desktop PCs. The clamd package is a daemon (system service that runs in the background) that listens for incoming connections on UNIX and TCP communication sockets and scans files or directories on demand. Although the clamd package is not a dependency of clamav, you should mark clamd for installation, as well.

After installation of the clamav, clamtk and clamd packages and all dependencies comes the fun part of configuring ClamAV to work properly. The first two tasks I did were to change the contents of /etc/clamd.conf and /etc/freshclam.conf. These files must be edited as user root. It is always a wise idea to make backups of the original files before editing, just in case. I took my cues from wolverine_tech in editing the freshclam.conf file. He says:

For some reason, the config file for freshclam has some 'necessary' lines commented out. I got it to work by removing the # before some lines. Look for those that do not have #.

1. I modified DatabaseMirror db.us.clamav.net. It had a # at the beginning and was DatabaseMirror db.XY.clamav.net instead of DatabaseMirror db.us.clamav.net. (Use the appropriate country code.)

2. I removed the # before DatabaseDirectory /var/lib/clamav.

The contents of his modified file are listed in his post in the Code: section.

Next, I took a shortcut and downloaded Leiche's clamd.conf file from here. I then copied it to the /etc directory after making a backup of the original. For reference, here is the change to be made. Towards the top of the file are these two lines:

 # Comment or remove the line below.
Example

Why the line "Example" is uncommented is beyond me. **Every other line** in the file is commented but that one! That line causes the rest of the file to not be parsed at all. Comment the line by adding the # symbol at the beginning of the line, or remove the line altogether. There are no other changes necessary.

At this point, freshclam, the CLI executable used to update ClamAV's virus database will not run. As per forum user as, freshclam runs as user 'clamav'. You need to allow write permissions for user 'clamav' on the file /var/log/clam-update.log. His solution is to run the following two command lines in a terminal as user root:

```
echo > /var/log/clam-update.log
chown clamav:clamav /var/log/clam-update.log
```

Instead of opening a terminal and entering the command freshclam to update ClamAV's database, I opted to create a desktop file for that purpose. I wanted to be able to run the desktop file from the main menu. I opened a text editor and entered the following:

```
[Desktop Entry]
Name=ClamAV Update
GenericName=Virus Definitions Update
```

Comment=Update virus database
TryExec=freshclam
Exec=freshclam
Icon=clamtk
Type=Application
Terminal=true
Categories=GTK;GNOME;Utility;X-MandrivaLinux-System-FileTools;
StartupNotify=true
X-Desktop-File-Install-Version=0.18

I then saved the file as clam-def-update.desktop. Then I copied the file to my ~/.local/share/applications directory. (The ~ symbol represents, and is equivalent to, /home/{yourusername} directory.) I then had two new menu entries in the File Tools section, ClamAV Update, (from the desktop file I created), and ClamTk, from the clamtk package installation.
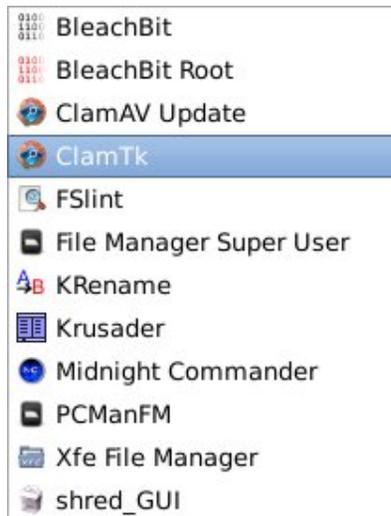
Next, I wanted to be sure that freshclam was working, so I opened a terminal and entered the command. I received the following error:

freshclam
ERROR: Can't create temporary directory /var/lib/clamav/clamav-be560031acf6a1b994ab1fa84ba4dc16
Hint: The database directory must be writable for UID 500 or GID 500

Hmmm. I'm user ID 500, and I'm the sole member of group ID 500. At this point, I could have tinkered with the settings in the /etc/freshclam.conf. I chose a simpler route. I chose to make (only) the /var/lib/clamav directory, its files and any subdirectories readable, writeable and executable by all. As user root, I issued the CLI command:

chmod -R 777 /var/lib/clamav

Once done, the freshclam command merrily updated the virus database definitions. (NOTE: If you elect to create a desktop file for freshclam, launching the desktop file from the menu will open a terminal. The terminal may pause for a bit while reaching ClamAV's database servers. The terminal window will close on its own once all steps have completed.)

As user margarita has pointed out, freshclam's database can be stored in your home folder, with all updates written to the stored database file.

I use that as user:
/usr/bin/freshclam --datadir=$HOME/.clamtk/db < (all --log=$HOME/.clamtk/db/freshclam.log # clamtk-defs   < one line)

/usr/bin/clamscan --database=$HOME/.clamtk/db --detect-pua -i -r $HOME < (all --exclude-dir=$HOME/.clamtk/viruses --log=$HOME/.clamtk/history/$(date < (one +\%b-\%d-\%Y).log 2>/dev/null # clamtk-scan < line)

There are a few possible solutions to the problem of configuring ClamAV to run after installation as forum user as has pointed out in this forum thread,

So now you have 3 solutions, but no one is an *upstream* solution.

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

Simple Samba Setup Under PCLinuxOS KDE

by Texstar

This tutorial will walk you through setting up a simple shared folder in your home directory.

Open Dolphin
Create a new Folder called Shared in your home directory
Right click on the Shared Folder
Click on Properties
Click on Permissions
Click on Advanced
Check all 6 boxes
Click OK
Click OK
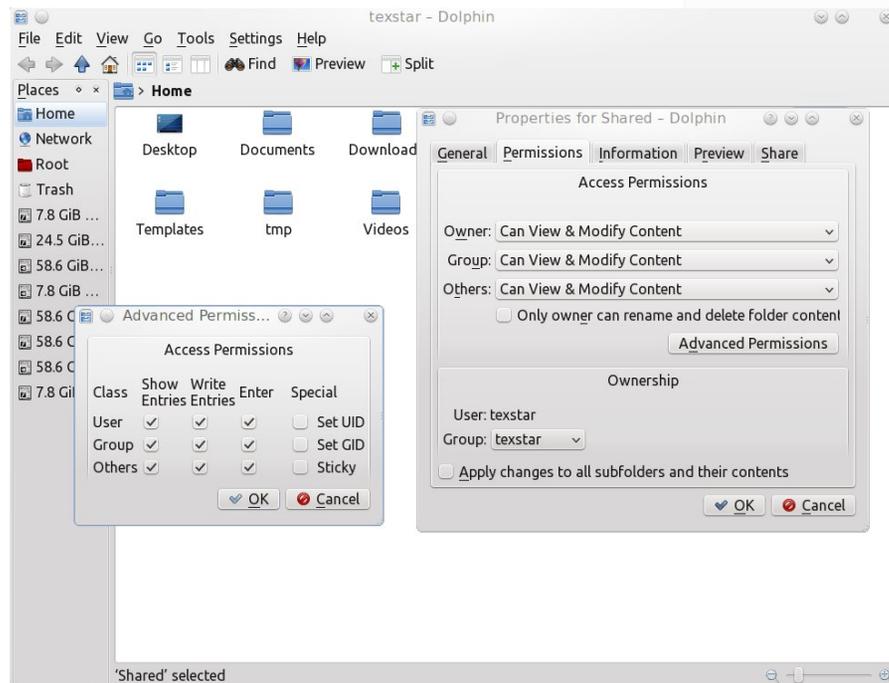
Open Synaptic
Click Reload to get a current file list
Click on Search
Type in task-samba
Right click on the task-samba
Mark for installation
Click Apply
Close out Synaptic after transaction is complete
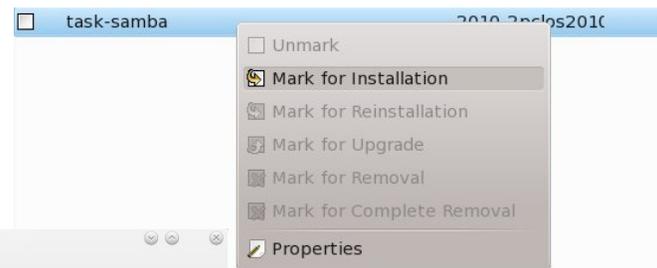
Open Configure Your Computer (PCLinuxOS Control Center)
Click on Network Sharing
Click on Share drives and directories with Windows (SMB) System

The Wizard will start.

Select Standalone - standalone server (top right)

Click OK
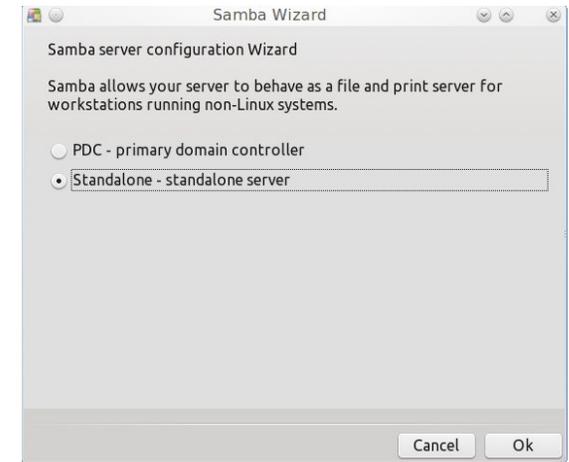
Workgroup type mshome
Netbios name type samba-server
Click OK
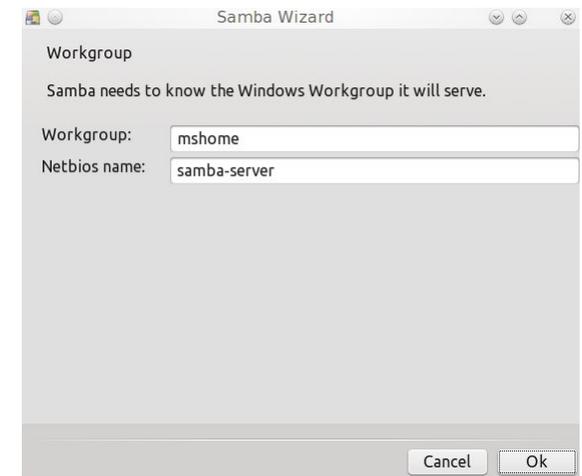
Security Mode - Select Share
Host Allow - type 192.168.1. (Please note all of my network computers use 192.168.x.x)
Click OK.

Server Banner
Click OK

Samba Log
Click OK
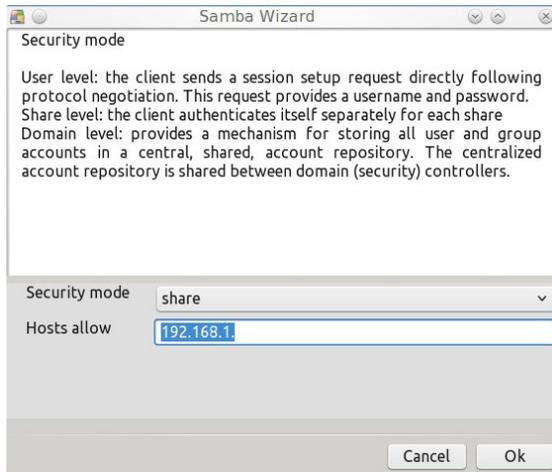
Final Status Wizard page
Click OK
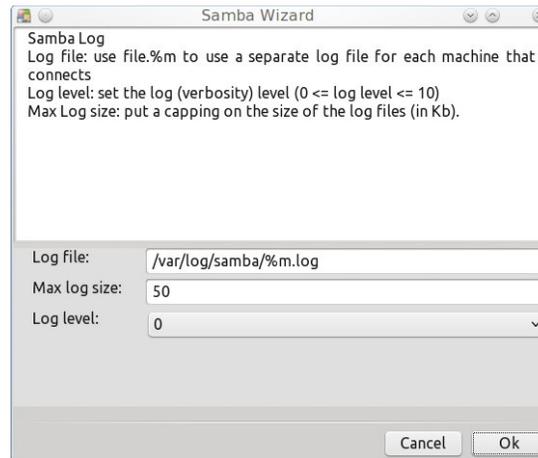
Congrats to you. The Wizard has configured your Samba Server
Click OK
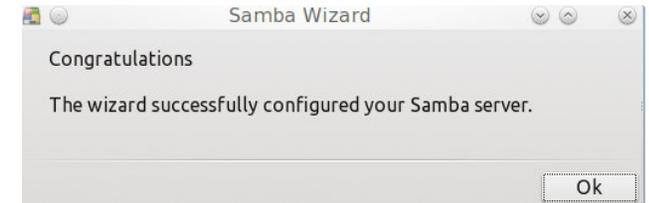
File Share Tab
Click on Modify
Click on Open
Select the Shared folder you setup earlier
Click OK

Add Yes to Public, Writable , Browseable
Click OK
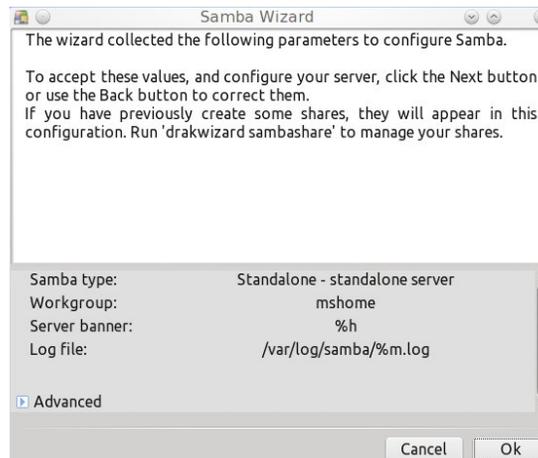
Click on Samba Users Tab
Click on Add
Select Nobody (next page)
Leave the password field blank
Click OK
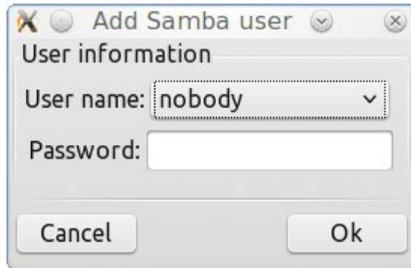
Click on the Samba Server Menu Item next to File
Select Reload
Select Restart
Click OK

While still in the Control Center go to System ->
Manage System Services

saslauthd	running	Info	✓ On boot		Start	Stop
shorewall	stopped	Info	☐ On boot		Start	Stop
smb	running	Info	✓ On boot		Start	Stop
snmpd	running	Info	✓ On boot		Start	Stop
sound	running	Info	✓ On boot		Start	Stop

Scroll down to SMB (right)
It should show as running
Check the box to On Boot
Click OK

You can now close out the PCLinuxOS Control
Center.

To test copy some files into the Shared folder.
Go to another computer on the network (sorry no
Windows here)

Open the Konqueror File Manager from the menu ->
File Tools

In the URL bar type smb://samba-server/homes
There is your shared folder with files! \O/

For Dolphin Click on Network
Click on Samba Shares
Click on mshome
Click again on Samba-Server
Click one more time - on Homes
There is your shared folder with files! \O/

Holy crap you did it!

VCRON: A Visual Interface For cron & at

by Ralf Vöpel (DAGAZ)

What is cron?

cron is a daemon that executes scheduled commands. Cron wakes up every minute, examining all stored crontabs, checking each command to see if it should be run in the current minute.

An example of crontab format (with commented fields) is as shown at the bottom of the page.

Do not worry, since vcron does all of this for you. And then there is the command 'at'.

cron vs at

The command 'at' runs a command ONCE at a specified time on a specified date, whereas 'cron' allows you to run the command or script repeatedly at different minutes, hours, days, monthly or on different weekdays.

Vcron?

V stands for visual and as all GUI's do, it makes life easier and takes a lot of 'syntax' off your hands. In short, vcron is a front end for cron. Install vcron via Synaptic. Once Synaptic is done, you will find it here: Application Launcher → More Applications → Accessibility → Visual Cron.

Welcome to Visual Cron, scheduling made easy.

This is how vcron initially appears and we are about to change it. But first, let us familiarize ourselves with the GUI.

The Operations Menu:

As you can see (top, next column), clicking on Operations shows the same selections as those at the bottom part of the Visual Cron window.

The Configuration Menu:
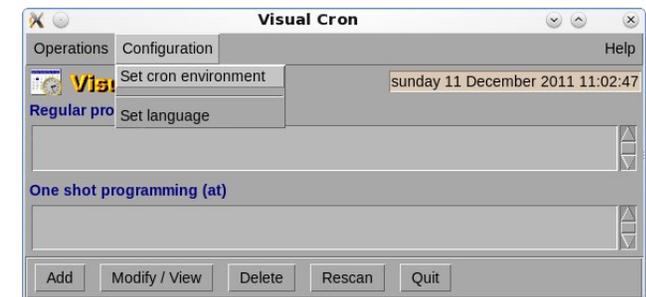
Set cron environment allows you turn on/off email notifications and more. We do not need to change or

Sample commented crontab input

add anything here. However, if you want more details visit: http://adminschoice.com/crontab -quick-reference.

Set language:

You guessed it. You can change the language on the fly, meaning you do not have to restart vcron. Now is this not cool?

Now, it's time to add a task. First click on Add. You will be asked what kind of cron job/task you want to create. Remember the difference between cron and at?

We are going to create a cron job which synchronizes our /home folder with a NAS (Network attached storage) device. You can, of course, sync any folder to any device or any folder.

Click regular and the next window shows up.
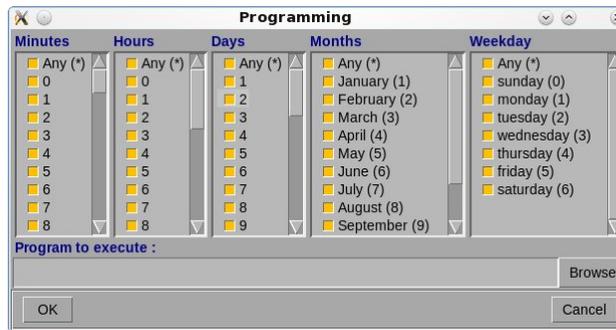
In the Minutes column click 0, Hours 3, Days Any, Months Any, Weekday Sunday. Click into the Field 'Program to execute:' and type in:

```
rsync -a  --delete /home your_server_ip_or_
folder/where_to_sync_folder.
```

The example above means:

run rsync at 3:00am every Sunday, archive the /home folder as root on a NAS with the network address 192.168.0.130 in the folder/ DataVolume/ laptop AND delete every file on the destination server that does NOT exist anymore in the /home folder. If you do not have a NAS device, you can
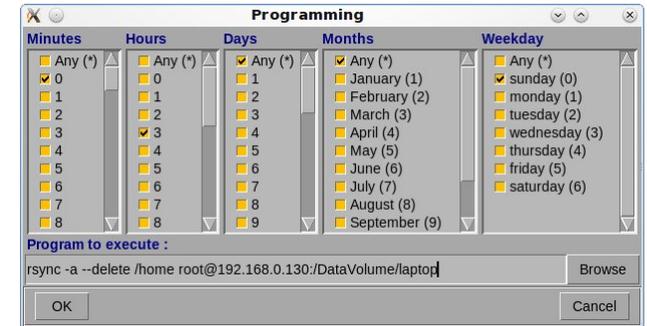
modify the command to: rsync -a --delete /home any_drive/any_folder. Click OK.

Congrats, your first cron job has just been created. It shows up under regular programming and from now on, the task will be done every Sunday at 3:00am.

If you have your own script(s) and you want it/them to be executed automatically, use vcron to set time and date and your trusty PCLinuxOS box will take care of it.
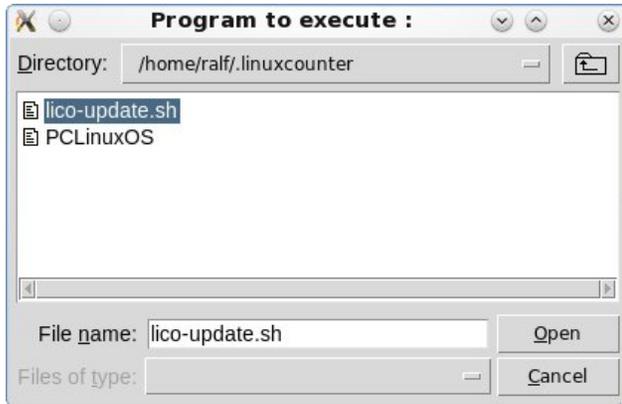
Here is how to get your program or script automated:

Instead of typing the command into the Program to execute field, click on Add, then Browse, locate your program or script and click Open.


Voila! There it is. lico-update.sh updates my status on linuxcounter.net.

Now what about the One Shot Programming 'at'? The command 'at', as we now know, runs a job only once. So what is it good for?

Let us say you want to shutdown your machine on April 2, 2020 at 3:30 AM. Click Add, select one shot (at), click the required minutes, hour, day etc., browse for shutdown, the program to be executed (/sbin/shutdown) and add /sbin/shutdown -h now. Click OK.
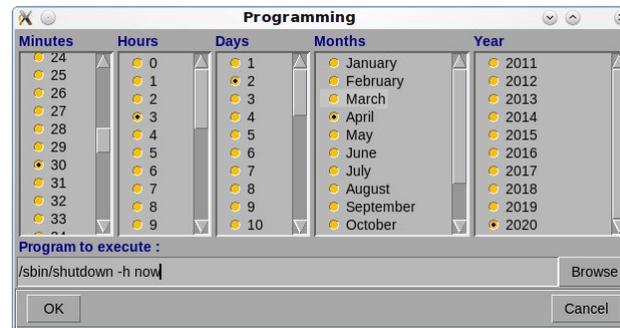
Now your one time job is in the list under One shot programming.
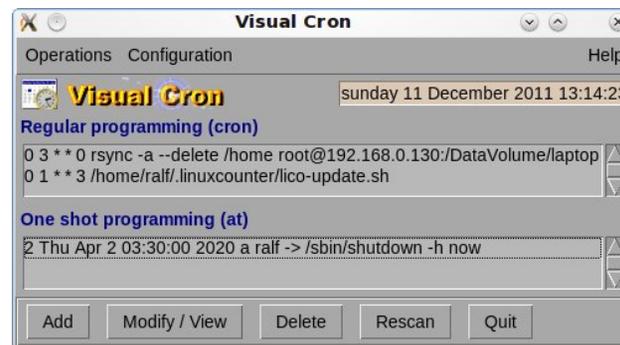
We now have 2 jobs that will run from now on at the set date and time until we modify or delete them and we have 1 job that will run in 2020 ONE time. To delete, modify or view a certain job, click on the job in the list and then click the wanted "action" button.

!! Important !!

Vcron creates the cron job for the current user. If you want vcron to create jobs for ROOT or another user, you need to open a Terminal, su to root/other user and call vcron from the Terminal. You also need to have the rights to execute the scripts or commands you want to run.

Have fun with Vcron. Consider it crontab -e without the headache.

The PCLinuxOS Magazine

Created with Scribus 1.3.9

Reaching Out In Friendship

by Archie Arevalo (Archie)

It seemed like just any ordinary day when I would visit bookmarked sites like free (Code), SourceForge, KDE-Apps, Qt-Apps, etc., and was making my usual selections of reading about new and updated apps. It just happened that I read and downloaded an image viewer app called Photo. The reviews were encouraging but it was such a new app that rpm.pbone doesn't even list an RPM-based distro that had packaged it.

It was easy enough to write a spec file for it, and it built flawlessly - no errors and exit 0s at all!

So, I began testing it. The first thing I noticed was it's small file size. At 136.6 KB, I thought it would be another app that I'd redirect to trash://.

It was a minimalistic app, 1 point. On launch, it opened the File Open window, which was the next sensible action for using the app, 2 points. It displayed my selected image and it didn't take long to generate thumbnails of the couple of hundred images I had in that particular folder. It was fast! 3-pointer!

The next thing I did was I posted a comment to the app's page on Qt-Apps, stating I have packaged the app and would send it upstream to our head developer for consideration and inclusion on the official PCLinuxOS repository. I also asked about the icons.

What icons? A reply was almost immediate.

And this is how I met **Lukas Spies**, the lone developer of Photo.

Lukas was originally from the southern city of Karlruhe in Germany who is now studying Mathematical Science at the National University of Ireland in Galway.

I asked him if he would like to be interviewed for the PCLinuxOS Magazine. This is his first ever and he thought it would be pretty cool.

What got you started with Photo?

"I saw some friends using Google's Picasa and I really liked the way the images are presented. I looked around and tried all different types of image viewers to find one, that does not only do its job properly but that also looks nice and neat. There are a lot of good image viewers out there, that can do a lot of things but most of them aren't necessarily first choice for presenting images.

"Last December, 2011, I played a bit around with C++ and Qt, more as a proof of concept to myself; to show that it's possible to do something like Photo. I originally didn't even intend to publish the app in any way, but eventually decided to upload it at Qt-Apps.org and see what happens. Within a few days, I got some really good feedback from people who really liked it.

"Looking back at my surprise, the first version really was very, very basic. The interest motivated me to continue developing it. Every new release since then I got more feedback and encouragement. It really is somewhat satisfying to see people liking and using something you created."

What are your goals for it?

"I just hope to continuously work on it and improve it, until - well, I don't know until when or what. I didn't start developing it with some final idea in mind. Of course, there are some things I want to achieve and features I want to implement. And it would be really cool, to see it some day becoming maybe the standard image viewer. Well, I think, that pretty much everybody that does some programming hopes one day to have programmed a "standard application". But, I actually do see potential for that, but that's not what I'm primarily working for. The main thing for myself is to enjoy the programming I do ... not feeling stressed out or stretched by it."

What do you do when you're not working on your app? Tell me a bit more about yourself ... social life, relationships, favorite music and film, etc.

"I'm sharing a small house with four other friends in the west of Galway. It's maybe not the nicest area, but I do like it here (mainly because of the people I live with). Besides working on my app and university, I'm leading a small Christian youth group called "Ambassador Youth", a bit more than half an hour outside of Galway, in the town of Tuam. The youth group is part of a church called Corner Church. I started volunteer work in September last year, and I really love it!

"Together with some others, I'm also trying to get some youth work started here in Galway, where I live. In the university, I'm also part of a leadership committee for the Christian Union Society, taking care of technical stuff and finances. That's where I spent almost every Wednesday evening. And we do a lot of stuff also during the rest of the week (movie evenings, bible studies, just hanging out, etc.), which are always great fun.

"A big (although fairly new) hobby of mine is trekking. I just love to go out there for a week or two with a tent and just walk and see amazing things. Every summer, I plan and hope to get at least once out there for a good while.

"And last, but not least, I enjoy making music. My primary instrument is the accordion although I sadly don't have one over here in Ireland. Besides the accordion I play a little bit of panpipe and also a bit didgeridoo. I obviously like slightly more exotic instruments. My favourite band is called "Kutless",

an American rock band. I really like their style and the type of songs they sing. I'm not that big into watching films or movies, but I do like the actor Terence Hill and his films a lot."

What OS are you using? Have you tried PCLinuxOS? What are your computer specs?

"I started out my Linux experience more than six years ago with openSuse, that a friend gave to me in school. About three years later, I switched over to Arch Linux (64-bit), which I'm still using today. My WM is KDE, but for a good while I also used LXDE. But KDE definitely is my first choice today.

"I have to say, that I haven't tried PCLinuxOS myself yet, but I did hear some good stuff about it from others using it. I certainly would recommend it to other (new) users.

"I have an Acer TimelineX 4820TG laptop. Some specs for it are:

-Intel i5 480M
-AMD Radeon HD 6550M
-14" screen
-4 GB DD3
-750 GB harddrive
-long battery life"

How far would you take Photo? What are you future plans for it? Are you involved in any other projects?

"Well, I certainly hope to take Photo as far as I can and keep on improving it. I really want it to be something nice, simple and good looking - easy to

use. But at the same time I want to keep it highly configurable and adjustable to personal needs. I want Photo to be perfectly usable "out of the box" without having to adjust a lot of annoying settings. But it certainly is worth having a look at the settings and especially the many shortcuts that are available.

"There is indeed another project I'm involved in. It's not a desktop app: a javascript unit converter, that aims on being fast, being usable without having to click or reload the page, and to look nice at the same time. You can find it here: http://luspi91.cuccfree.com/. It's working pretty good, but it wasn't tested in that many browsers yet. But I'm also continuously working on improving it."
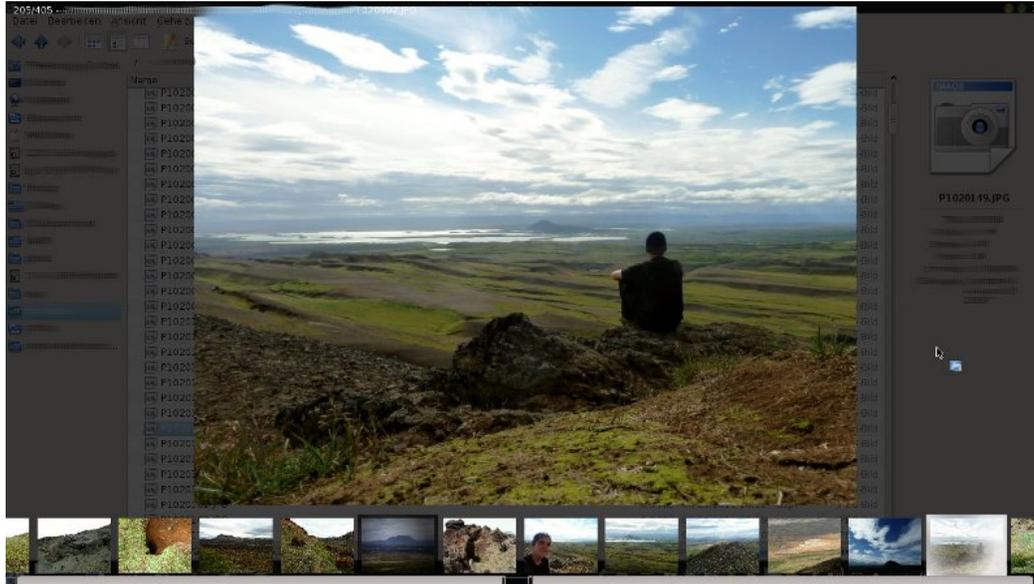
You are now programming in Qt, are there any specific reasons why you chose Qt?

"After I started learning C++, I wanted to do "cool stuff", graphical programming. Qt was the first graphical framework I found through Google. I read some stuff about it and it looked pretty promising, so I started to learn it from a book from our local library. It took me a long while, but I slowly learned more and more. I really like it today, cause it's a pretty neat and working framework for graphical programming. That's also why I used it for Photo. And last but not least, that's the only graphical framework I know how to use for programming. I never did anything with Gtk or something else, cause I never needed to. Until now, Qt always worked perfectly for me, that's why I used it also for Photo."

Do you use any other computer programming language?

"I started my programming adventure more than six years ago with Php and HTML, and soon after Javascript. Some of my friends in school were

learning it, and I thought that was pretty cool and wanted to do it as well. So I went to our local library and got a big book about Php and started learning. It wasn't always easy and I had some longer breaks in it where I had lost my motivation, but I kept coming back and trying again. And eventually I got a hang of it, I set up a little website where I was trying out all different things. After about two and a half years I started learning C++, shortly after followed by Qt. Since then I've learned more and more about it, tried different stuff, programmed smaller things for myself, and I really got to like it a lot.

"Most of the programming I did was just playing around, trying different stuff, seeing how this or that works, trying to write little apps that didn't really work or that were "meant to be senseless." I tried myself on a Qt interface for Streamripper, extended by Phonon and Mplayer functions, but I stopped doing stuff for it about half a year ago (although I think, the sourceforge page of it still exists). Maybe I will "resurrect" the project at some stage in the future again.

"One and a half years ago I learned a bit of Python at the university. It's a fairly simple programming language (at least compared with C++), but I somehow don't really like it. I probably would have never started with it, if I didn't have to for my course. And I do know some basics of bash programming, just the amount you need for daily use."

Often projects involve a group of developers collaborating on the different components. You seem to be working on Photo all by yourself (with the exception of the translators listed on the app's info window). Do you have any plans on collaborating with other developers either on the Photo app or another?

"Well, Photo started as "playing around with code," without the real intention to do some proper app. That's why I'm currently developing it on my own. Although I'm open to help, I'm not (at least currently not) actively looking for help, cause it's not yet that complicated, and I do have more than enough time for it. I really like it for getting my maths out of my mind for a while and focu[a]sing on something else.

"If I'll ever be starting or helping with another project, I don't know. I'm not too sure if I'll be able to do more than the two projects I'm working on right now, simply because I probably wouldn't have the time, I have enough other things going on. The main purpose of programming for me, is to have fun in doing it."

What do you think is the most important thing when starting a project?

"I think the most important thing when starting a project is definitely not to get discouraged! The start usually is very slow, and it takes time until people find out about your project. It's easy to give up after a couple weeks, because nobody seems to use it, and because you didn't get feedback back. I think it's really important to stand through these times, because when people notice that you are continuously working on something, they are more likely to have a look at it.

"Another important thing is to have a rather short release cycles with each rather few changes than only once in a while a big release. Showing that a project is alive is vital for it to become something long-term."

Adventures with My New Computer

by Gary Ratliff Sr. (eronstuc)

My adventures in buying computers have been many. I bought my first PET in 1978 and had to go out of state to do so, since they had not yet reached Mississippi. Then, when Dr. Dobbs' accepted my first computer article, *Just Poking Around with my Pet*, I knew I was to be a computer journalist. Soon, articles followed in *kilobaud, PC Computing*, and *COMPUTE!*. Then the folks at IBM introduced the PC and thought they had invented the personal computer. I wrote my very best article and received a rejection slip, since people wanted to read about the PC and not the PET! I vowed I wouldn't touch one of these with a ten foot pole!

Soon, I saw the folks at work struggling with a project, and told them I could save them money by writing a computer program to solve the problem. I was given a list and told to write down what I needed. Soon, a machine that I could only dream about was sitting on my desk. Later, I learned FOCUS and wrote some data entry files. The corporate programmer was now out of a job, since I soon took her place providing the programs needed. Later, I was assigned data entry over the network. I soon became familiar with the workings of Novell Networks. The department wanted a more up to date system, and I saw an ad for a 486 system named Cardinal. It seemed to offer the best buy for the buck. All used it except for the QC Manager, Tom Kent. He told me I should always buy from HP, since their equipment was the most reliable.

As the years passed, I made an effort to always buy my systems from them. As you know, my main system was until recently an HP Pavilion a1253w

system. Now the systems are reliable and have caused no problems. The only fault I have with them is that once the warranty is out, they don't provide answers any more. The USB ports on the front of the system had all "given up the ghost." The holder for the Flash Card had come loose and it was clearly time for a new machine, despite the addition of the SATA drive.

My ability to purchase a new computer is due to WalMart possessing a little Christmas spirit and allowing layaway for certain merchandise for the three months prior to Santa's arrival.
I looked at the options and again let the dollars make my choice. My selection was the eMachine from WalMart, which had a 1T byte hard drive and offered 3 gigs of memory, no monitor, and all for less than $300. Soon, I had set up the layaway account. I only had to make an additional three payments before I could take it home. One by one, the payments were made, and the big day arrived to go get my computer.

I hauled it home and went to put it up and surprise, it was the wrong computer. This one was $100 more and had included a LCD monitor. After waiting three months, I set it up and it only had 2 gigs of memory and a 320 gig hard drive. So, I decided I would take this computer back and swap it for the correct model. However, since I can only get to the store once a week, I had at least a week before I could return it.

Finally, just two days before Christmas, I had the computer I had actually determined offered the best buy for the buck - a brand new eMachine EL 1358G-

51W. I soon set up my system and moved the 2T FlexDrive to the system. By enabling sharing, I could use this with my HP system, which was in the computer room.

Note the contrast in size between the newer computers with only SATA drives and the older towers. You can see the Seagate 2T GoFlex drive and the HP Deskjet 1000 mentioned in my December article. The new computer is called Gabriel, and replaces the older Gabriel, which is to the right. Beside the old Gabriel is Michael, which was my brother Dave's computer. It runs Windows 95 and has 16 megs of memory. It still functions flawlessly. Perhaps what has kept it safe is that I can't figure how to open the case!

In the last issue of the magazine, there was a picture showing the inside of the HP computer with both

PATA and the new SATA drive showing. Compare that with the more compact inside view of the new machine:

Gone are the wide ribbon cables. The cables for the SATA hard drive and DVD drive are smaller around than a typical power cord. The system also has a dual core processor, which greatly speeds up operations. Windows 7 has borrowed many items from Linux. It actually insists that you set up a password. Actually, the trial of the first system, before I returned it, was quite embarrassing! I actually forgot the password and was unable to get into my earlier eMachine.

The only thing that saved me was that I had followed instructions and created a complete set of recovery

DVDs. As I was trying to remember the password and being rebuffed, the machine told me that I should have created another drive, which would provide a clue as to the password. It's funny that they forgot to mention this item. The recovery process brought the machine back to the enter password selection, and this time I wrote it down.

I have been very happy with the new computer. Before closing the article, I want to mention another item which should appeal to video buffs. While watching TV, I happened to switch for a few minutes to QVC. They were demonstrating an item called the Roku HD. They were offering the system for four payments of only $19.99. What the Roku HD does is bring in channels from the Internet to either your high definition or standard TV. The standard TV will need the stereo and video RCA jacks, which attach to the Roku through a special jack.

You set up your account information through your computer, and the device uses the wifi of your router to reach the Internet. You just select the channels you wish to view and the items appear on your TV. There are TV shows, movies, Pandora and other radio providers, and games which may be sent to your TV.

If you need more channels than your cable system allows, you will love this item. The sale from QVC is over, but you may purchase one directly from Roku.

If you can't follow the previous link, just do a Google search on Roku to learn how.

As you can see below, the Roku is very small (sitting on the top left of the small table). The shown cable is the one provided by the default system, which goes to a standard TV. By connecting it to a VCR, DVD Recorder, or digital PVR, it is possible to save the movies, which you download from the Internet. Here again, this is possible using what is becoming an obsolete technology. Its redeeming feature is that it works.

I'm planning a future article, featuring a tutorial on how to use Dolphin to store your files on the GoFlex drive.

Gnome 2.32: Nine Re-Sounding Apps

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

There is no shortage of sound applications that have been specifically written for (or centered around) the Gnome desktop environment. Of course, many of these applications can be used in other Linux desktop environments, as well.

The criteria for inclusion as part of a Gnome 2.32 article was a) the description in Synaptic, b) being listed on the Gnome project site's Module Maintenance list, c) significant Gnome dependencies listed for a package in Synaptic, or d) my prior knowledge of a project belonging to (or catering to) the Gnome desktop. For example, the Python/Gtk+ app Exaile is a favorite of many users. But, it is not included because it's not dependent on Gnome. If your favorite app isn't listed below, it's simply because it didn't pass muster when the aforementioned criteria was applied.

So, without dilly-dallying around any more, let's look at the Gnome sound apps.

Banshee

Closely associated with Gnome, Banshee is a free/open source C#/Mono application, using the Gnome technologies and SQLite. It attempts to position itself as the "go-to" application for all of your multimedia needs, playing CDs, DVDs, digital music files, podcasts, Internet radio stations, audio books … and just about any other multimedia format you can think of.
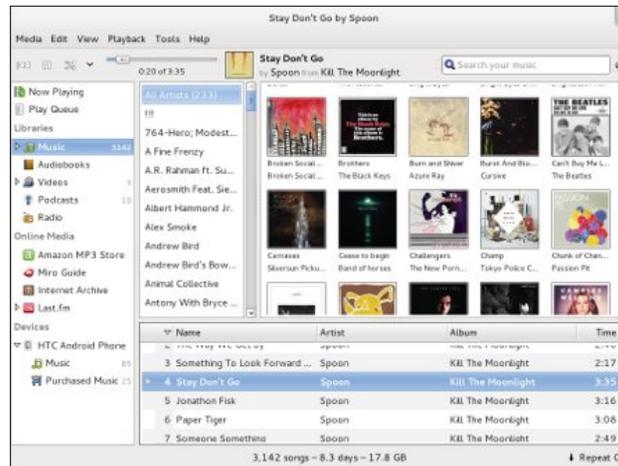
Image courtesy of the Banshee web site.

Unfortunately, Banshee in the PCLinuxOS repository is broken (at the time of this article being written), and will not launch on my copy of Zen Mini 07.11. You can check out more information about Banshee by checking out the Banshee home page.

gnac: Gnome Audio Converter

Don't let the simple interface fool you. This application does one job – sound file format conversion – and does it well. To get started, click on the "+" icon and select the file(s) you want to convert. If you make a mistake and want to exclude one of the added files from the conversion process, highlight the file and click on the "–" icon. To completely clear the list of queued files, click on the broom icon.

Next, click on the drop down list in the lower left corner, and select the format you want to convert to. If the format you want to convert to isn't listed, or if you want to see what parameters are applied, select a similar codec to use and click on the "Edit" button.

You will see a list of the predefined "profiles" listed in a dialog box similar to the one shown above. Select the one you want to alter (or select the "New" button on the right), and select the "Edit" button on the right.
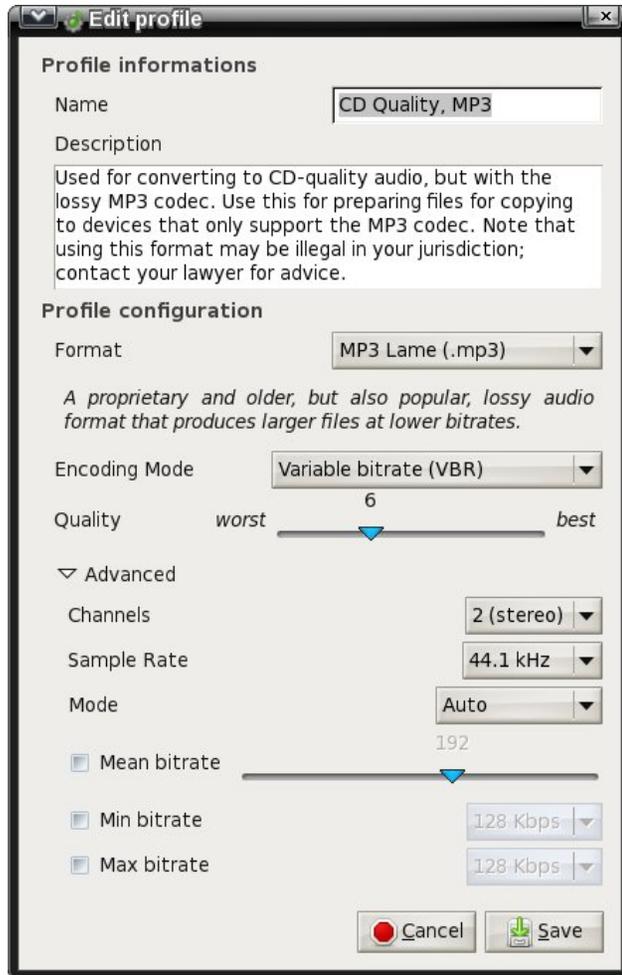
Using the "Edit Profile" dialog box (shown above), you can enter all of the variables that control the conversion of your sound file to the selected format. Of course, different options may be presented with different formats, dependent upon what options your selected format supports.

you need to choose the music you want to play. If you want to play all of the songs in a directory, simply choose the File > Play Directory menu item. GSSMP will start playback of the first audio file it finds in the selected directory, then proceed through the other audio files there, alphabetically. If you want to play a specific file, select the File > Play File menu item. Then, select the file you want to play.

You can also sync your music listening preferences with last.fm, if you choose, via the "Tools" menu. GSSMP also remembers the last file you were playing, and will allow you to directly access it via the "Recent" menu, in case you had to shut down GSSMP before you completed the playback of the file. The rest of the controls in the application window should be fairly self explanatory. The GSSMP home page will provide more information for you.

Selecting the Edit > Preferences menu item will display the dialog box above. Set the general operation preferences for Gnome Audio Converter here. The "Audio" tab allows you to set a couple of options for how your converted sound files are saved. The GAC home page will fill you in on more information.

gssmp: Gnome Simple Stateful Music Player

With "simple" as part of its name, the Gnome Simple Stateful Music Player is exactly that. To start with,

gwc: Gnome Wave Cleaner

If you are one of the many MLU's (Mature Linux Users) in the PCLinuxOS forum, you most likely have a fairly extensive collection of music on vinyl records. I know I do. My wife got me a USB turntable as a present Christmas before last. In my leisure, I've been converting my old vinyl records to MP3 files that I can play on my assorted MP3 players and
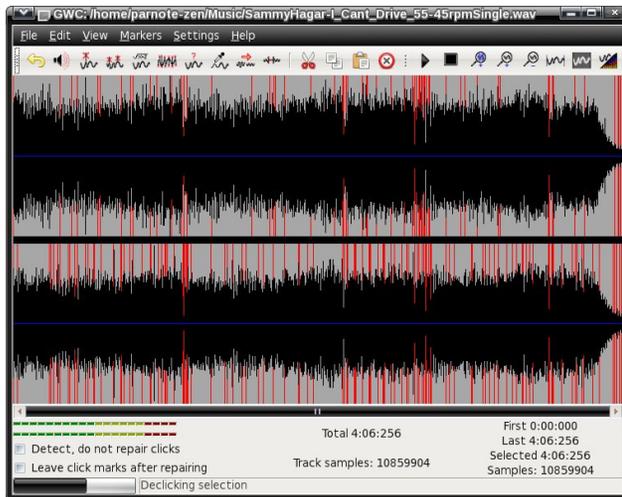
on my computer. No matter how hard you try, you cannot get rid of all the microscopic dust particles, not to mention the years of wear from listening to your vinyl records over and over again. Vinyl records DO wear out with repeated playings. Invariably, you will be left with a recording of your vinyl record tracks that contain "pops" and "clicks." These are the direct result of all of that wear and microscopic dust.

Enter GWC, also known as Gnome Wave Cleaner. It's primary purpose is to automatically detect those "pops" and "clicks," and remove them from the source file. You can run it once to get rid of the strong clicks, then again to scan and eliminate the weaker clicks. I recommend listening to the file after the first pass – you may be satisfied with the results after eliminating only the strong clicks.

As anyone who has worked with making digital copies of their vinyl music collection can attest to,

old vinyl can also develop a "crackle" in the background that can also detract from having a clean digital copy. Fortunately, GWC also has the ability to remove that background "crackle" sound.

Keep in mind that GWC only works on sound files in the *.wav format, which is a good thing, since it is pretty much a universal lossless sound format. So, if you have recorded your vinyl tracks as MP3 files, you will need to first convert them to the *.wav format. Don't worry – GWC will allow you to later resave your edited sound file as a *.mp3 file.

Prior to performing any action on your sound file, I recommend clicking your mouse on the black bar that separates the two sound channels (in a stereo file), then clicking on the "Select All" icon on the toolbar (next to last icon on the toolbar, at the upper right corner of the GWC window). This way, you will insure that both channels of your stereo file are analyzed for the editing you wish to perform. Otherwise, my initial use of GWC resulted in only the left channel being de-clicked, leaving the right channel untouched. Needless to say, I was still hearing "clicks" and "pops" in my sound file after attempting to remove the clicks, because the right channel had not been cleaned.

GWC can also "de-noise" your sound recording, as well as amplify your file. Most other sound editing functions can be done with a more complete sound editor, such as Audacity.

Just as many other Linux applications, GWC does one job, and does it exceptionally well. Let your ears be the judge. I know that I could certainly hear the difference. I picked a song that I thought might give

GWC difficulty (Sammy Hagar's "I Can't Drive 55"). However, GWC processed the file admirably and without any difficulty. GWC definitely deserves to be in your sound file editing and processing toolbox. Check out more about GWC by visiting the GWC home page.

Listen

Written in Python for Gnome, Listen is a quite capable music manager and player. With Listen, you can playback your favorite songs, manage your music library, manage your iPod, make playlists, download album covers (and sync them with your iPod), burn an audio CD, retrieve data from Wikipedia when you play a song, view the lyrics of a song, retrieve statistics about your favorite songs, albums or artists, listen to web radio stations, and access to your last.fm account.

The latest version (0.6.5) is in the PCLinuxOS repository. While it can be used under other desktop

environments, be forewarned that it will pull in a significant number of Gnome dependencies. You can visit the Listen home page for more information.

SoundConverter
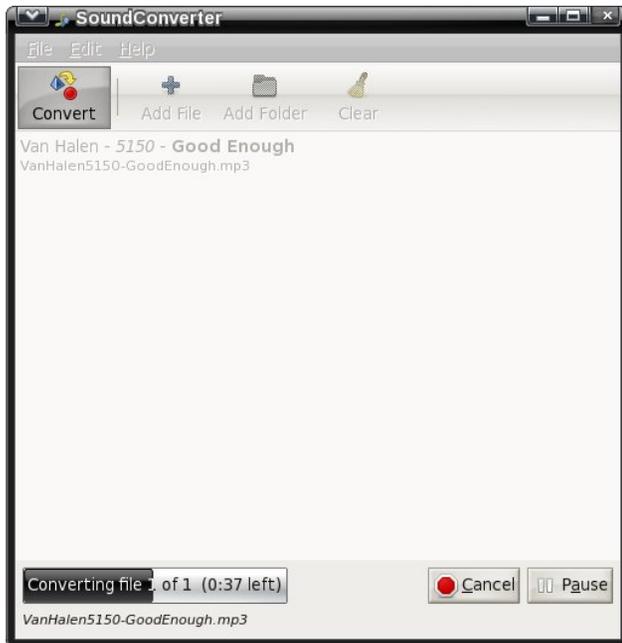
Despite its simplistic appearance, Gnome's SoundConverter is a powerful tool that automates conversion of various sound file formats. SoundConverter can read any input sound file that can be read by gstreamer, and output it to WAV, MP3, OGG, FLAC or AAC formats. You can specify the output format by selecting the Edit > Preferences menu, and changing the output format in the

preferences dialog box. Additionally, SoundConverter can extract the audio from video files.

Written in Python, SoundConverter is a multithreaded application, that will use as many cores available to perform the file conversion as quickly as possible. Because of its multithreaded design, SoundConverter will convert multiple files simultaneously, placing each conversion process into its own thread. Visit the SoundConverter home page for more information.

SoundGonverter
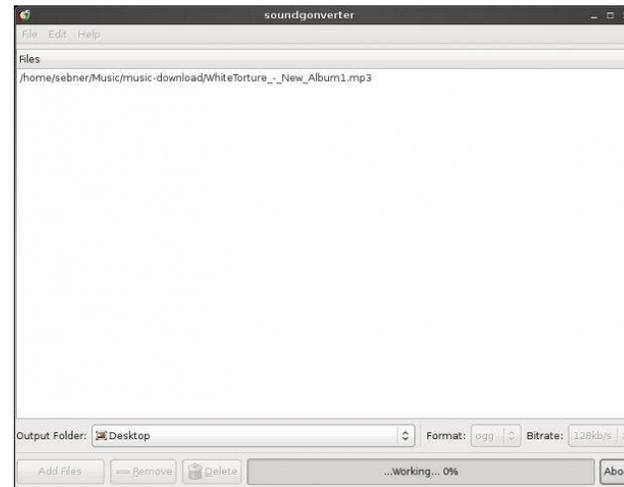
Soundgonverter is a sound conversion application written in Mono, the Linux equivalent of the Microsoft .NET application framework that utilizes the C# programming language. Unfortunately, I can't report very much about this application, since the version

that is in the PCLinuxOS repository produces a segfault whenever I attempt to run it. You can visit the soundgonverter home page for more information.

RhythmBox
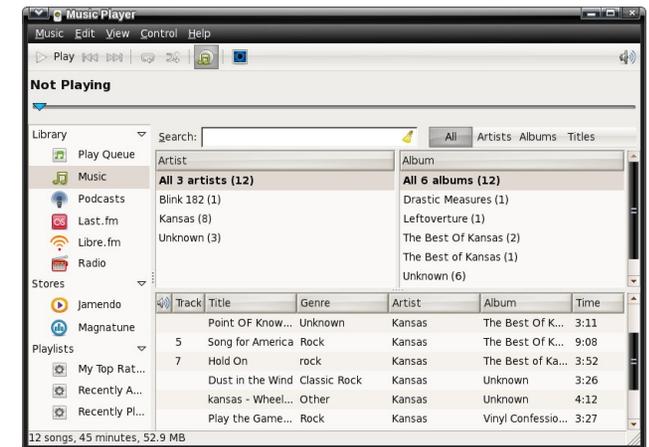
Taking its inspiration from Apple's iTunes, Rhythmbox is a Gstreamer application built for the Gnome desktop. Rhythmbox bills itself as more than a music player. Rather, it bills itself as an integrated music management application – and probably rightly so.

So what can Rhythmbox do for you? For one, it can play your music collection on your computer, as well as organizing it and allowing you to search and sort through the songs in your collection. It can also sync your music collection with your iPod or other MP3 music player. You can also burn audio CDs, listen to

Internet radio stations, listen to last.fm music streams, create playlists, download and view song lyrics and album covers, and display audio visualizations.

Additionally, there are several 3rd party plugins for Rhythmbox, that further extend the capabilities of Rhythmbox. These plugins range from graphical equalizers to adjusting the pitch and speed of your songs. To get the full lowdown on Rhythmbox, as well as a link to the 3rd party plugins, visit the Rhythmbox home page.

Nautilus Sound Converter

A product of a Google Summer of Code project, Nautilus Sound Converter is almost identical to the Gnome Audio Converter (GAC) – except, it's a Nautilus extension. In fact, Nautilus Sound Converter uses the same configuration file as GAC. As such, Nautilus Sound Converter works exactly like GAC, which we talked about earlier in this article. The Nautilus Sound Converter home page has more information.

Summary

As you might expect, Gnome 2.32 has a plethora of sound applications to fit your sound file needs. While it's true that we left out some sound applications that are popular with Gnome users, such as Exaile, we did so because Exaile is not developed specifically for the Gnome desktop environment. Even without Exaile, the Gnome desktop has plenty of other sound applications to fulfill your sound application needs.

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by bones113, January 14, 2012, running KDE4.

Networkless PCLinuxOS Installation

by Patrick G Horneker (phorneker)

PCLinuxOS is an easy to install and maintain distribution for everyday use. Installation consists of a LiveCD image that is written to a CD/DVD disc, a USB flash drive (2GB or larger), or a memory card with at least 2GB of capacity, preferably larger.

If you are using the Full Monty distribution, you will need to use a blank DVD or flash drive with at least 4GB, preferably more because of the size of the disk image (about 3.2GB).

When you install PCLinuxOS from a disk image, what you get is enough to get a basic system running. Generally, you would need to use a high speed Internet connection to do an initial update (using Synaptic) first, then install any and all software you need from the repository (or any if its mirrors).

But what if you are installing PCLinuxOS on a machine that has a dial-up connection, or worse, a machine that is not connected to the Internet?

As of this writing, there are 171 packages for the initial update. On a 56K dial-up connection, the initial update would have to be done overnight as it would take **several hours** to download and install the initial updates.

Yes, there are still a number of dialup Internet connection providers around, usually costing about $10.00/month on average. For some people, this is the only way to connect to the Internet.

After the initial update, you might want to install additional packages, right? If you have a 56K dialup, you would have to either tie up the phone line for several hours, or go to a local cybercafe and use their Wi-Fi connection.

There are two ways to get around this problem.

Full Monty Distribution

The first solution is to get a copy of the Full Monty edition of PCLinuxOS. This is a 3.9GB image of a standard KDE installation, a very organized layout with six desktops, and loaded with most every application you would want installed on the disk image.

Without an Internet connection, you will not be able to do an initial update, but you have a nearly complete system containing most anything you want. I say nearly complete because some multimedia codecs are not installed by default (due to licensing restrictions on the codecs).

Get The Repository on DVDs

It is possible to get the PCLinuxOS software repository as a DVD set. Vendors such as osdisc.com sell a six DVD set containing the entire PCLinuxOS repository (at this writing contains updates through January 19, 2012).

It is with this set that you can install a complete PCLinuxOS system without having to rely on a high speed Internet connection. You will also need to order a Live CD, since the repository DVD set does not include a Live CD for installation.

Another Case Where This Would Be Useful

Imagine one day not being able to access your favorite repository with Synpatic (due to Internet censorship). Having the DVD set is handy if you ever have to reinstall PCLinuxOS without access to the repository. You may not have the latest updated packages, but at least you will have a working PCLinuxOS system.

ms_meme's Nook: Some More

PCLOS my pretty little OS
You make my desktop sweet and heavenly
You are my chosen my 'puter's never frozen
Now it runs magnificently

PCLOS my pretty little OS
Texstar made you with such charm
PCLOS PCLOS
You keep my files and folders from harm

Some More Some More Some More
Texstar is neat I must repeat we all adore him
Give us More Some More Some More
His OS sweet none can compete we don't ignore him

Some More Some More Some More
For each update we cannot wait we all implore him
We want More Some More Some More
Praises I bring and that I sing are just for him

MP3   *OGG*

Alternate OS: OpenIndiana, Part 1

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

Sun Microsystems was started in 1982 to further develop the project born at Stanford University. The acronym (SUN) itself stands for Stanford University Network. Co-founder Bill Joy was one of the leading UNIX developers of the time, having contributed the vi editor, the C shell, and significant work on the TCP/IP stack to the BSD UNIX OS. Sun's first workstation shipped with UniSoft V7 UNIX. Later, Sun began providing SunOS, a customized 4.1 BSD UNIX, as the operating system for its workstations. In the late 1980s, AT&T tapped Sun to help them develop the next release of their branded UNIX, and in 1988 announced they would purchase up to a 20% stake in Sun. UNIX System V Release 4 (SVR4) was jointly developed by AT&T and Sun. This partnership triggered concern among Sun's competitors, many of whom banded together to form the Open Software Foundation (OSF). By the mid-1990s, the ensuing UNIX wars had largely subsided, AT&T had sold off their UNIX interests, and the relationship between the two companies was significantly reduced.

Sun used SVR4 as the foundation for Solaris 2, which became the successor to SunOS. Solaris is known for its scalability, especially on SPARC systems, and for originating many innovative features such as DTrace, ZFS and Time Slider. Solaris supports SPARC-based and x86-based workstations and servers, and is registered as compliant with the Single UNIX Specification. Solaris was historically developed as proprietary software. In June 2005, Sun Microsystems released most of the codebase under the CDDL license, and founded the OpenSolaris open source project. With OpenSolaris, Sun wanted to build a developer and user community around the software.

In the first half of the 2000s, Sun was too slow in turning Solaris from a closed to an open source product. This lost the company the server segment in enterprise-level deployments. Some studies indicate that if Sun hadn't been so conservative, it is possible that a large part of the server segment would now be OpenSolaris hosts, rather than Linux. OpenSolaris took another blow when Sun, in a bad financial condition, was bought by Oracle in January 2010. After the acquisition of Sun Microsystems, Oracle decided to discontinue the OpenSolaris distribution and the development model. Oracle can hardly be called an open source friendly company, so it wasn't surprising when the OpenSolaris community decided to develop their own fork, independent of Oracle's corporate games. As a result, the OpenSolaris community forked as the OpenIndiana project in 2010, a part of the Illumos Foundation. In August 2010, Oracle discontinued providing public updates to the source code of the Solaris Kernel, effectively turning Solaris 11 into a closed source proprietary operating system. However, through the Oracle Technology Network (OTN), industry partners can still gain access to the in-development Solaris source code. The open source portion of Solaris 11 is available for download from Oracle.

OpenIndiana comprises the Illumos core, taken from OpenSolaris, with a set of GNU user-land tools. OpenIndiana can even be called an analogue to GNU/Linux. But, instead of a monolithic Linux kernel, it uses the OS/Net-based derivative kernel known as Illumos, which is 100 per cent ABI compatible with the Solaris kernel. In short, we can assume that OpenIndiana is actually the OpenSolaris operating system. It is worth mentioning that in 2007, Sun specially hired Ian Murdock (the Debian founder) for the development of "Project Indiana", to transform Solaris into OpenSolaris, and combine the latter with a number of open source products, such as GNOME.

Although Solaris is traditionally a server based operating system, Open Indiana's last public release includes a desktop version. That is the version we'll be looking at, and the DVD iso can be downloaded here. Normally, I allocate 512MB of RAM for the VirtualBox VM. Open Indiana recommends at least 768MB of RAM, and I allocated 1024MB.

Booting from the DVD, we first see the screen shown below. I chose the default boot option.
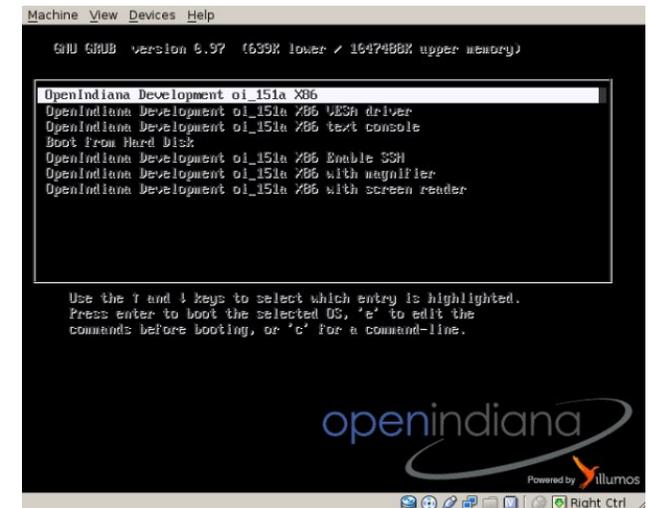
Next, we are asked to choose a language and keyboard layout.
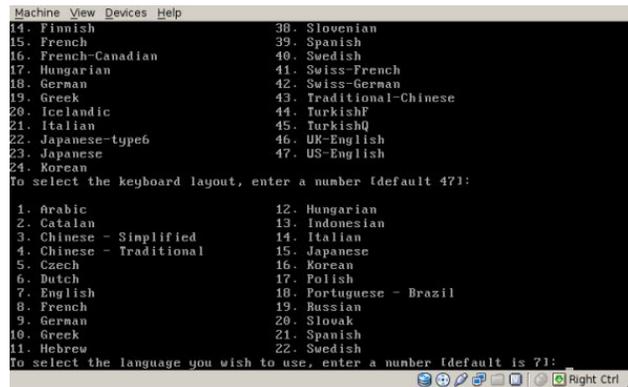
The live session boots to a Gnome 2.30.2 desktop. There are Install OpenIndiana and GParted Partition Editor icons on the desktop. The screenshot is a bit hard to see, as the VirtualBox VM opened to the full size of my host desktop, 1280x1024, and the size of the screenshot has been reduced. Double click the
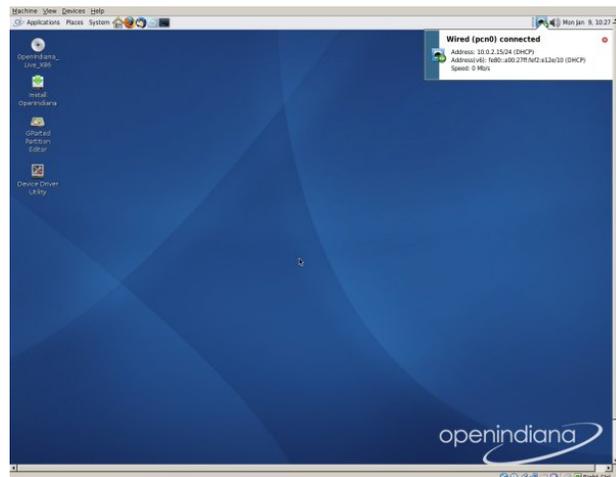

Install OpenIndiana icon, and partitioning the drive will be part of the setup (below left).

The Welcome screen is the first one in the installation process. Click Next to continue.
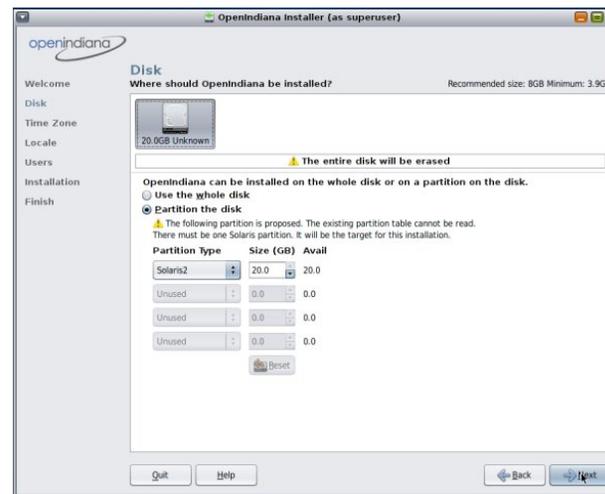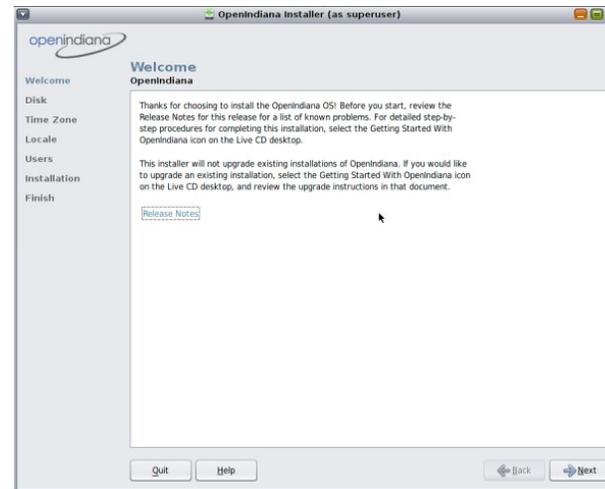
I began with a blank 20GB drive, and the two options shown in the Disk screen are Use the whole disk or Partition the disk. Partition the disk was highlighted by default, and I chose that option (center bottom).

The next step is to choose our timezone. The setup screen shows Region, Location and Time Zone options. I chose Americas, United States and Central.
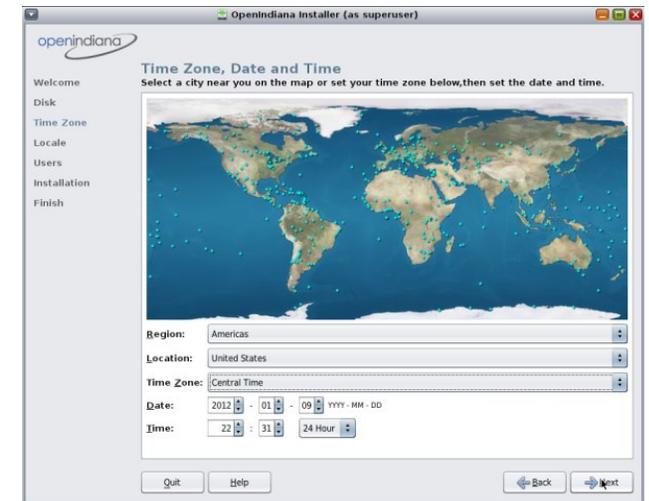
In the Local screen, we are asked to choose a default Language and Territory (next page, top).

In the Users setup screen, we are asked for a root password, a user's name and login name, the user's password and a computer name (next page, bottom).

Displayed in the Installation screen are all the
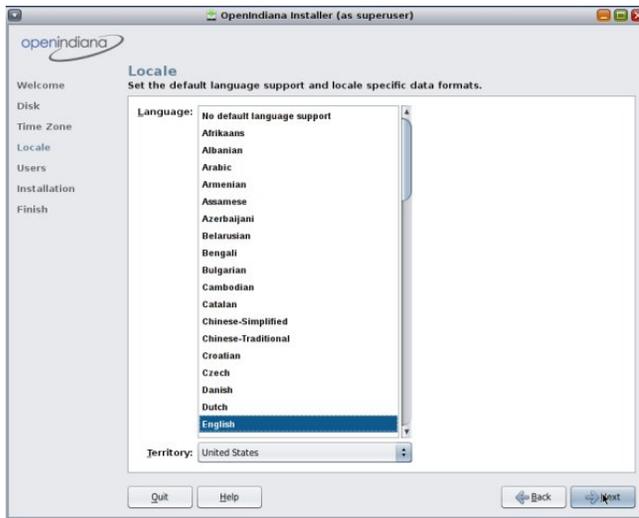
previous choices made. At this point, we can click Back to correct or change any chosen options, or click Install to begin the installation.

Installing copies quite a few files from the DVD to the hard drive (bottom, center).

After the file copies have completed, we are given the option to Quit the installation procedure or Reboot into our newly installed operating system. I clicked Reboot.
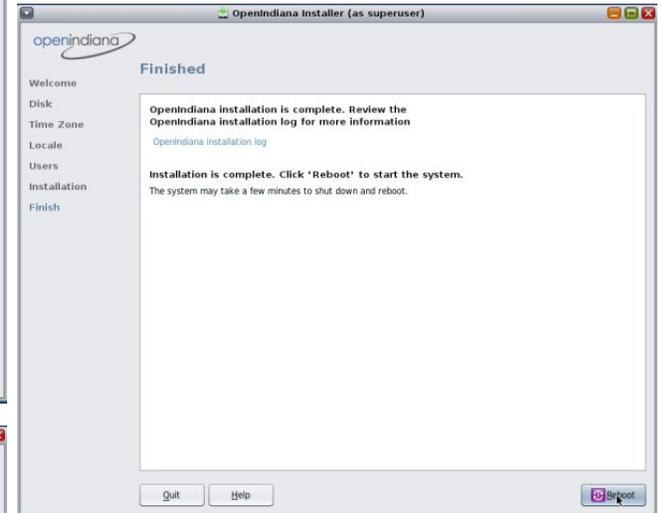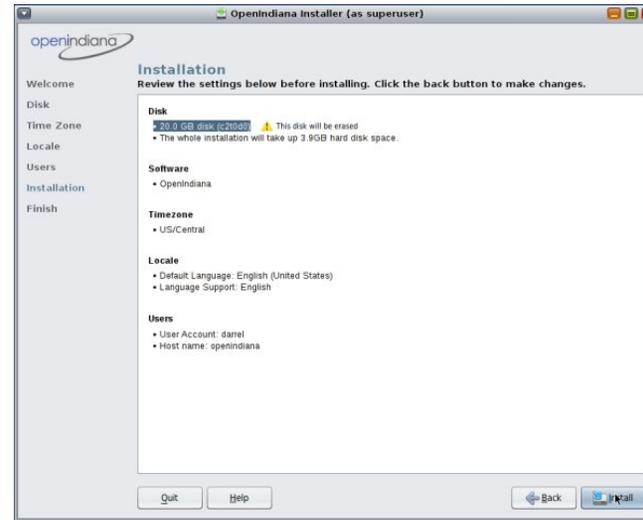
I wasn't sure if the DVD would automatically eject and detach from the VM or not. It didn't. I ended up booting from the DVD again. Therefore, I chose to boot from hard disk and the newly installed Open Indiana OS (next page, top).

As soon as I did, I got a new GRUB boot screen launched from the hard drive, with only one boot option listed (next page, bottom).

The Open Indiana boot splash is shown during bootup, with a progress bar shown, and the
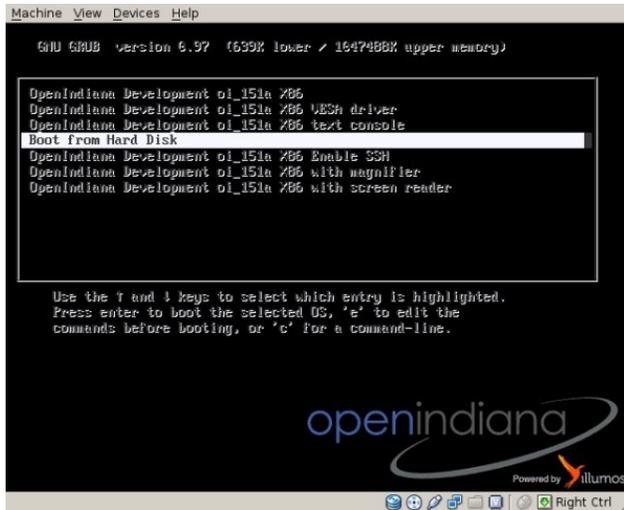
"Powered by illumos" brand and logo prominently displayed.
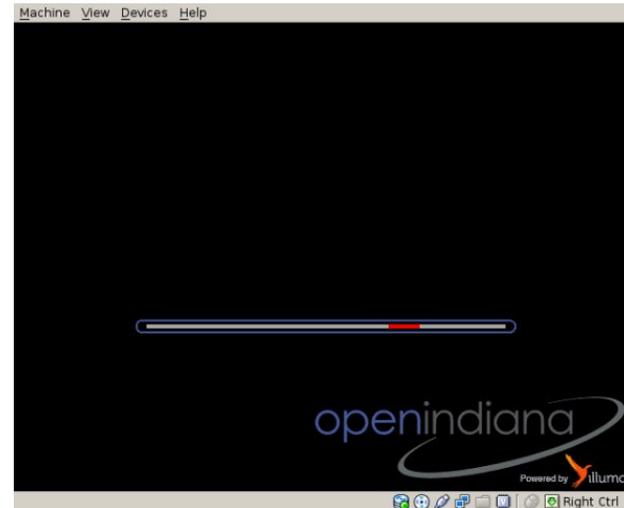
The GDM login screen is displayed, asking for a username, then the user's password.

The Gnome desktop in the hard drive installed edition no longer shows the installation and GParted icons on the desktop.

I first set about changing the monitor's display size from its 1280x1024 size to a more manageable one, without having to change xorg.conf. Actually, there was no /etc/X11/xorg.conf file (at right and next page, top).

I ended up changing the display size to 1152x864 (not shown).

Next, I updated the OS from System > Administration > Update Manager (next page, bottom).

I then rebooted. The login screen size was 1280x1024. After the desktop started, the screen
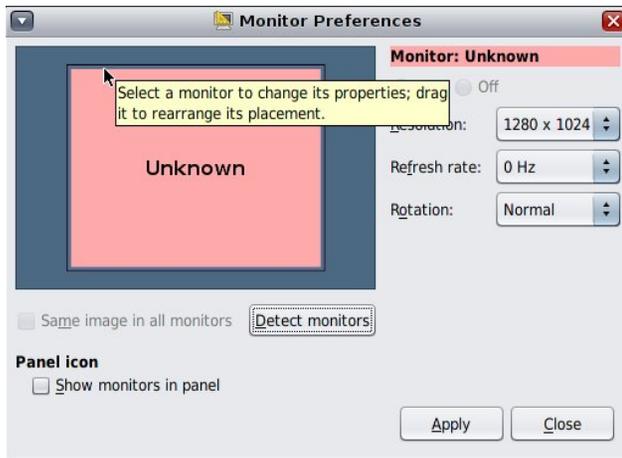
size became 1152x864. Not quite satisfied with this, I opted to install the VirtualBox guest additions. After installing them and rebooting again, I discovered a minimal xorg.conf file had been written. But, now I was confined to 640x480, 800x600 and 1024x768 screen sizes. I made some changes to the xorg.conf file that have always worked with NetBSD, FreeBSD and OpenBSD installations. After making the changes and rebooting, I was unable to log in. The progress bar on the splash screen just kept running.

OpenIndiana, being a UNIX variant, has no run levels. It isn't possible to log in as user root or boot into runlevel 1 or 3. I ended up reinstalling the OS and VirtualBox guest additions. The default screen size is now 1024x768. After making a few tweaks, I ended up with the desktop shown below.

The package manager interface is almost identical to Synaptic. There aren't many applications yet, and only Gnome as a desktop environment. The Firefox version available from the repository is 3.6.12. However, the solid Open Solaris-like core is there in the operating system. In the next part, we'll look at the features of the Z filesystem, DTrace and Time Slider.

Disclaimer
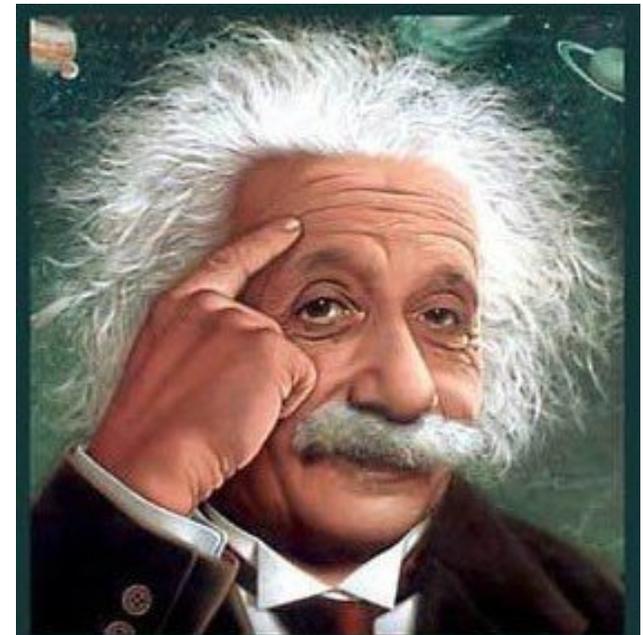
Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Leiche, January 08, 2012, running LXDE.
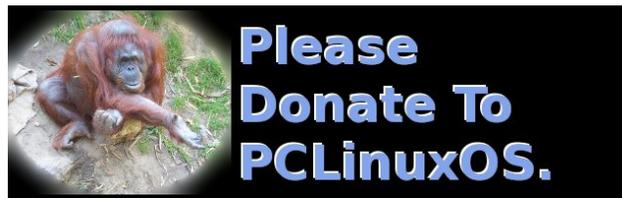
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If you have article ideas, or if you
would like to contribute articles to the
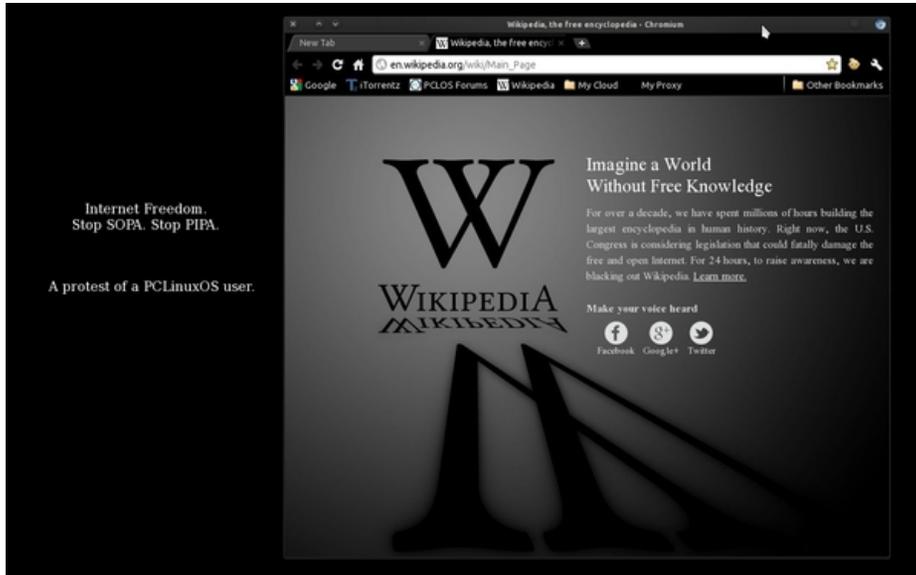PCLinuxOS Magazine,
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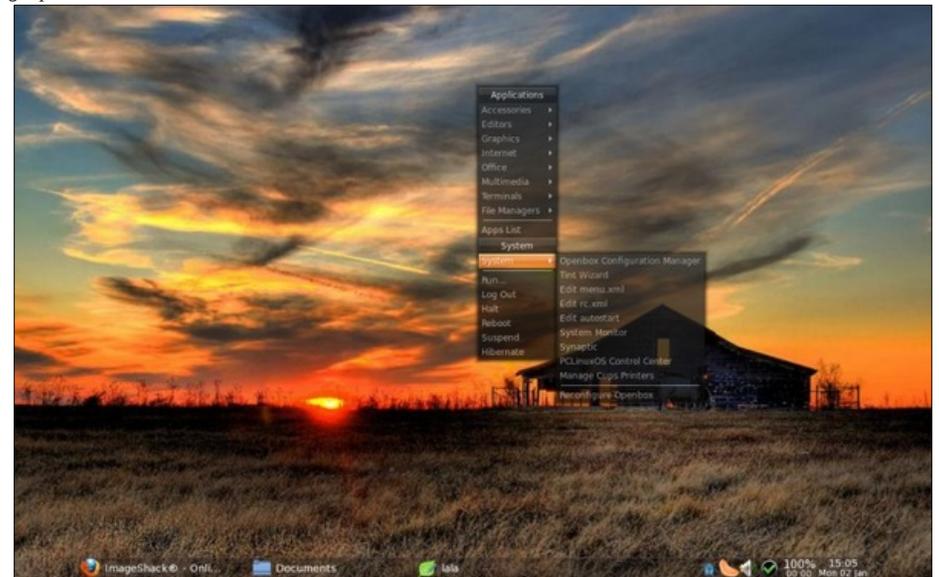It's elemental
It's light years ahead
It's a wise choice
It's Radically Simple
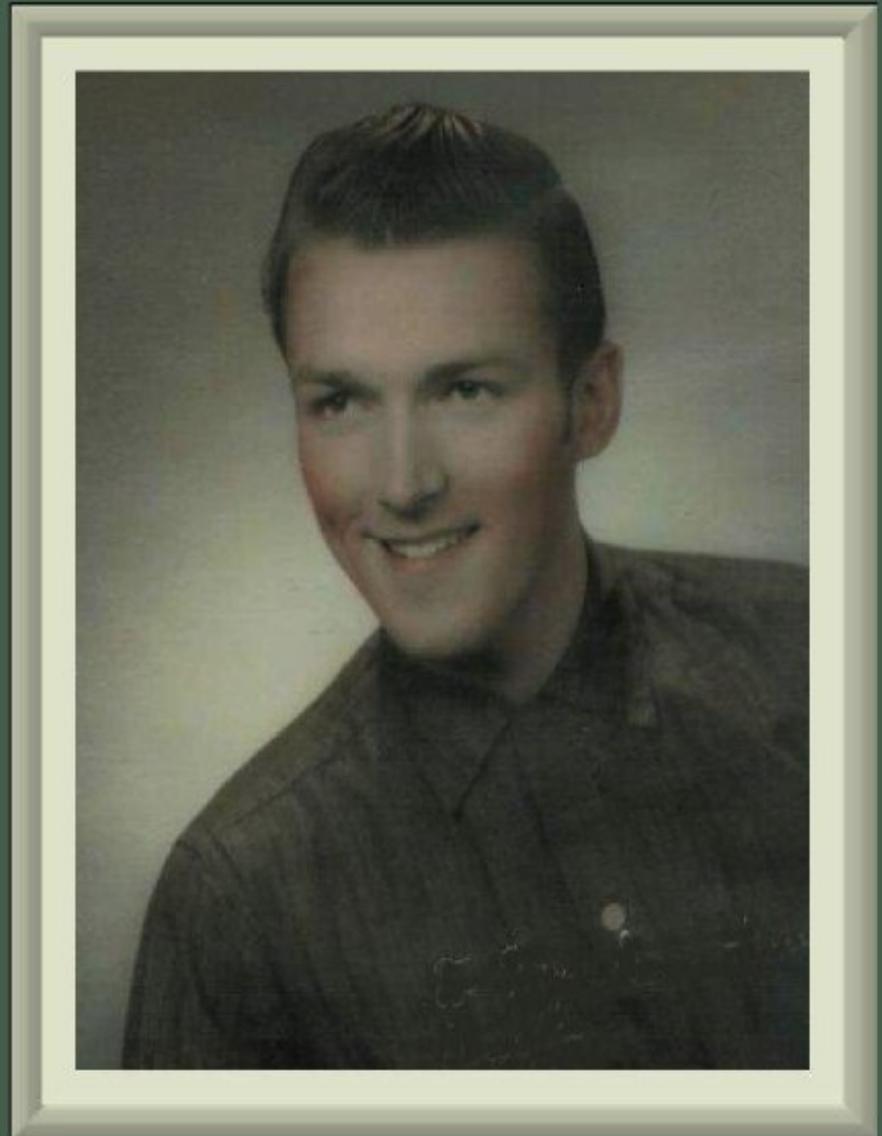It's ...

More Screenshot Showcase

Top Left: Posted by Archie, January 18, 2012, running KDE4. Top Right: Posted by LKJ, January 6, 2012, running Xfce.
Bottom Left: Posted by RobNJ, January 11, 2012, running e17. Bottom Right: Posted by ferry_th, January 2, 2012, running Openbox.

2012
February

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