



MUUGLines

The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

June 2008 Volume 20 No. 10

Next Meeting: June 10th, 2008

Django

Presented by Bill Reid



This month, Bill Reid will discuss Django (www.djangoproject.com), a Web development framework for the Python (www.python.org) language that saves you time and makes Web development a joy. Using Django, you can build and maintain high-quality Web applications with minimal fuss. Django provides many of the advantages of Ruby on Rails.

At its best, Web development is an exciting, creative act; at its worst, it can be a repetitive, frustrating nuisance. Django lets you focus on the fun stuff — the crux of your Web application — while easing the pain of the repetitive bits. In doing so, it provides high-level abstractions of common Web development patterns, shortcuts for frequent programming tasks, and clear conventions for how to solve problems. At the same time, Django tries to stay out of your way, letting you work outside the scope of the framework as needed.

Where to find the Meeting



Meetings are held at the IBM offices at 400 Ellice Ave. (between Edmonton and Kennedy). When you arrive, you will have to sign in at the reception desk, and then wait for someone to

take you (in groups) to the meeting room. Please try to arrive by about 7:15pm, so the meeting can start promptly at 7:30pm. Don't be late, or you may not get in. (But don't come too early either, since security may not be there to let you in before 7:15 or so.) Non-members are welcome, but may be required to show photo ID at the security desk.

Limited parking is available for free on the street, either on Ellice Ave. or on some of the intersecting streets. Indoor parking is also available nearby, at Portage Place, for \$3.00 for the evening. Bicycle parking is available in a bike rack under video surveillance located behind the building on Webb Place.

MUUG Online: To Mirror, or Not To Mirror?

Gilbert Detillieux

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, MUUG has a new server, with a fair bit more storage capacity than the previous one, which will allow us to mirror additional open source software distributions. We've already added a couple Linux distributions, at the request of certain group members, and will consider adding others as well. Also, to keep space from growing out of control, and to keep our content relevant, we'll also consider removing stale content or distributions that don't get accessed much.

Fedora ([/pub/fedora/linux](http://pub/fedora/linux))

MUUG will continue to act as an official mirror site for the Fedora distribution, and we were ready for the official release of Fedora 9 last month. Fedora contin-

ues to be a popular choice with our members, and with the Linux community at large. The Fedora Project's commitment to open source development makes it a cause we're willing to support.

CentOS (/pub/centos)

The first new distribution that was added to the new MUUG server was CentOS 5 (currently at the 5.1 release, but with 5.2 on its way). This was a natural, since the new server is running CentOS 5, but also because this seems to be an increasingly popular choice among Red Hat/Fedora devotees, as it is based on the (commercial, but open source) RHEL distribution.

Fedora EPEL (/pub/fedora/epel)

The Fedora Project used to divide its distributions into "Core" and "Extras" repositories, with the "Extras" consisting of a bunch of useful add-on packages that were not included in the core distribution. (Starting with Fedora release 7, these were merged into one "Everything" repository.) They then introduced the EPEL (Extra Packages for Enterprise Linux) repository, which can be used with RHEL and similar distros, such as CentOS. We mirror the EPEL packages for releases 4 and 5.

Unofficially Mirrored Distros

In addition to the above, which we officially mirror, we've also unofficially started mirroring OpenSUSE 10.3 (/pub/opensuse). We've also freshened up our mirroring of Knoppix (/mirror/knoppix), and of the GNU software tarballs (/mirror/mit/gnu).

What Else?

Distinctly lacking right now is any of the Debian-style distros. We did mirror Debian at one point (though not officially), but stopped doing so for lack of space and demand. If people are interested in that one, we could start mirroring it again. Another possibility would of course be Ubuntu, which is quickly becoming one of the most popular choices. Is there any interest in other systems than Linux? Perhaps

something from the BSD camp? Feel free to let us know what you'd like to see on our server!

OpenOffice.org 3 In Beta

The most immediately visible change to OpenOffice.org 3.0 is the new "Start Centre", new fresh-looking icons, and a new zoom control in the status bar. A closer look shows that 3.0 has a myriad of new features.

Notable Calc improvements include a new solver component; support for spreadsheet collaboration through workbook sharing; and an increase to 1024 columns per sheet. Writer has an improved notes feature and displays of multiple pages while editing. There are numerous Chart enhancements, and an improved crop feature in Draw and Impress.

Behind the scenes, OpenOffice.org 3.0 will support the upcoming OpenDocument Format (ODF) 1.2 standard, and is capable of opening files created with MS-Office 2007 or MS-Office 2008 for Mac OS X (.docx, .xlsx, .pptx, etc.). This is in addition to read and write support for the MS-Office binary file formats (.doc, .xls, .ppt, etc.).

OpenOffice.org 3.0 will be the first version to run on Mac OS X without X11, with the look and feel of any other Aqua application. It introduces partial VBA support to this platform. In addition, OpenOffice.org 3.0 integrates well with the Mac OS X accessibility APIs, and thus offers better accessibility support than many other Mac OS X applications.

A more detailed guide to the features can be found at <http://marketing.openoffice.org/3.0/featurelistbeta.html>.

OpenBSD 4.3 Released

OpenBSD 4.3 was released on May 1st, just slightly too late for a note to that effect to be included in that month's MUUG Lines.

This is the 23rd release on CD-ROM (and 24th via FTP). The OpenBSD team remains proud of

OpenBSD's record of more than ten years with only two remote holes in the default install. As in previous releases, 4.3 provides significant improvements, including new features, in nearly all areas of the system.

- New/extended platforms:
 - OpenBSD/sparc64 - SMP support (This should work on all supported systems, with the exception of the Sun Enterprise 10000)
 - OpenBSD/hppa - (K-class servers like the K200 and K410 are supported now)
 - OpenBSD/mvme88k - SMP support on MVME188 and MVME188A systems 88110 processor, and thus MVME197LE/SP/DP boards, are supported now
 - OpenBSD/sgi - Contains many new drivers
- New tools:
 - `snmpd(8)`, implementing the Simple Network Management Protocol
 - The `snmpctl(8)` program controls the SNMP daemon
 - The `pcidump(8)` utility displays the device address, vendor, and product name of PCI devices
- New functionality:
 - The `ffs` layer is now 64-bit disk block address clean. This means that disks, partitions and filesystems larger than 2TB are now supported, with the exception of `statfs(2)` and `quotas`
 - DMA is now enabled for 1-sector devices such as flash drives, providing significant speed improvement
 - Sparc and Sparc64 disklabels now provide automatic recognition of `ext2fs` partitions
 - Filesystems on USB devices are automatically dismounted if the device is disconnected
- OpenNTPD 4.3:
 - Handle IP changes of clients more gracefully

- Log peer and sensor status to `syslog` if the majority of either is bad, or if a `SIGINFO` signal is received
- Allow offsetting of time sensors that have a systematic error

And much, much more. See

<http://www.openbsd.org/plus43.html> for the changes between 4.2 and 4.3 (very long!).

OpenSolaris™ Distribution Released

Meanwhile, the first release of the OpenSolaris™ distribution, 2008.05, took place on May 5th. You can get it from <http://www.opensolaris.com/get/>.

OpenSolaris 2008.05 is a Live CD, allowing users to experience OpenSolaris immediately, without the need to install it to their systems. When ready, installation is a single click away with a new improved easy-to-use installer. This release also introduces IPS, a new network based package management system, allowing users to install additional software from the network. ZFS is also the default root file-system, allowing unique snapshot and rollback features, especially useful during system upgrade. OpenSolaris 2008.05 has a significantly improved user environment, in particular for those familiar with other Linux distributions.

Never Mind The Distributions

So you're not a big fan of "distributions", and you've been working your way through *Linux From Scratch* (<http://www.linuxfromscratch.org/lfs/index.html>), and you're wondering what comes next?

There's help available for you (aside from a tight jacket with very long sleeves and a padded room). Visit "Beyond Linux From Scratch" (<http://www.linuxfromscratch.org/blfs/index.html>), a project that continues where the LFS book finishes. It assists users in developing their systems according to their needs by providing a broad range of instructions for installing and configuring various packages on top of a base LFS system.

Beyond Linux from Scratch 6.3 (a complement to Linux From Scratch 6.3) RC2 has been announced. From the site: “It has been 15 months since the last release of BLFS and almost nine months since LFS-6.3 was released. Though we would like to release BLFS versions as quickly as possible after an LFS release, this version lagged a bit due to Editor inactivity. However, early on in 2008 several new Editors were brought on board which helped stimulate a flurry of activity. Many new packages have been introduced in the 6.3 version, as well as many updates, refinements and additions to the existing packages.

The BLFS book now provides build and configuration instructions for almost 500 packages (many more than that if you want to count each individual package in the autotooled X Window instructions). Some of the new packages introduced in this version are: Dash, ksh, D-Bus bindings, Wireshark (formerly named Ethereal), rxvt-unicode, Gutenprint (formerly name Gimp-Print), Pidgin (formerly name Gaim), GnuTLS (and many of its dependencies), Qt version 4.x, GnuPG version 2.x, and Amarok. Major updates include GNOME-2.18.3 (with several new GNOME packages), KDE-3.5.9, Firefox-2.x, Thunderbird-2.x, and most (if not all) of the mainline server packages. As always, the list of packages that have been upgraded or added as well as configuration and build command changes are annotated in the ChangeLog.

As always, the main thrust of BLFS development will be to support the changes in the current LFS development book, but we’re releasing this version of BLFS so that builders of the stable LFS book can continue on into BLFS with known good instructions that should be 100% compatible to provide a semi-current and very stable Linux platform.”

Of course, when you’re finished with Beyond Linux From Scratch, you’ll want to explore ALFS (Automated Linux From Scratch), CLFS (Cross Linux From Scratch), and naturally, HLFS (Hardened Linux From Scratch). No, really, these all exist!

The Book of IMAP (No Starch)

The Ultimate Resource for Mail Server Management

The Internet Message Access Protocol (IMAP) allows clients to access their email on a remote server, whether from the office, a mobile phone, or a hotel room in Outer Mongolia. IMAP is powerful and flexible, but it’s also complicated; it’s more difficult to implement than POP3 and more error-prone for both client and server.

The Book of IMAP (No Starch Press, May 2008, 368 pp, ISBN 9781593271770) offers a detailed introduction to IMAP and POP3. Readers learn how the protocols work as well as how to install, configure, and maintain the two most popular open source mail systems, Courier and Cyrus.

Authors Peer Heinlein and Peer Hartleben have set up hundreds of mail servers and offer practical hints about troubleshooting errors, migration, filesystem tuning, cluster setups, and password security that will help readers extricate themselves from all sorts of tricky situations. Readers also learn how to:

- Use built-in tools for server analysis, maintenance, and repairs
- Manage shared folders, virtual domains, and user quotas
- Authenticate user data
- Handle heavy traffic with load balancers and proxies
- Implement complementary webmail clients
- Set up and use the Sieve email filter

Thoroughly commented references to the POP and IMAP protocols round out the book, making ***The Book of IMAP*** indispensable for all mail administrators.

Share Your Thoughts

E-mail us with your comments on the newsletter, and continue to send in articles or ideas for the same. Specifically, what sort of material you would rather see: Announcements, technical articles, new products, or...? Send it to editor@muug.mb.ca.