# MUUGLines

## The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

## Next Meeting: May 12th, 2009

### VirtualBox - Run Several Virtual Systems On A Single Host Computer

Sun's xVM **VirtualBox** offers full virtualization on many host platforms for many guest systems like Linux, Windows, BSD, OpenSolaris and many others. VirtualBox requires no changes in the guest systems and provides for guests as far back as MS-DOS and forward to Windows Vista and OpenSolaris.
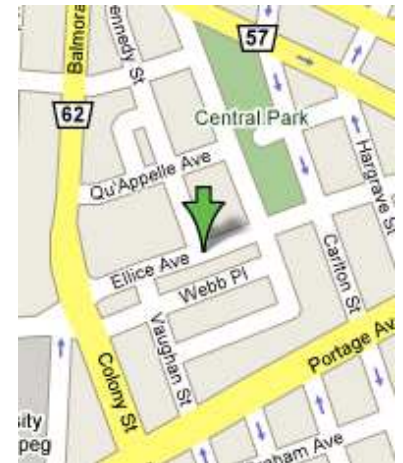
In this presentation, Daryl Fonseca-Holt, from the University of Manitoba, will explain what kind of virtualization VirtualBox offers, the major features it has, and some of the uses it can be put to. During the demo, Daryl will show how to set up for a new guest in VirtualBox, install the guest, and show the effect Guest Add-ins have on the user experience of the guest system.

## 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 a jackalope 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 $5.00 for the evening. Bicycle parking is available in a bike rack under video surveillance located behind the building on Webb Place.

## Sending Us E-Mail?

Due to the amount of e-mail MUUG receives, we've set up an auto-reply to give you jaunty feedback, and redirect some of the e-mail to the appropriate places. Why not look at **http://www.muug.mb.ca/about.html#contacts** first?

## Share Your Thoughts

E-mail us with your comments on the newsletter, whether it's criticisms or commendations, 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…?

# A Very Ubuntu MUUGLines

### Montana Quiring

This issue of MUUGlines will contain three reviews of the latest offering from Canonical Ltd, Ubuntu 9.04, Jaunty Jackalope. The first review is by a seasoned Linux user, the second by someone who's first exciting experience with Linux was with Ubuntu, and the third will be a review of the remix version. Jaunty is more evolutionary then it is revolutionary. Some of the new features include:

- Shorter boot speeds
- Enhanced suspend and resume features
- Better 3G card support
- Integrated notification system
- Enhances the texture of your beard

Why not give it a spin?

**ftp://ftp.muug.mb.ca/mirror/ubuntu/**

### Interested in the purchase of Sun by Oracle?

Here's some info and back-story to hopefully put the purchase in context:

**http://cli.gs/OracleSun**

# Gentoos Play With Jackalopes

### Jeff Howie (GROG!)

I originally cut my 'NIX teeth on Debian at home & Caldera at work, on which we ran some print servers for our remote offices, with the head office databases running on VMS/VAX. I also ran Caldera on my work desktop until I was forced to switch it back over to Windoze (sigh) because they started using Lotus Notes (double sigh). We later switched over to Solaris/SPARC for the database server. Over time I became a Gentoo user. For a few years now I've been running Gentoo on both a P4 desktop, which has now been upgraded to an Athlon dual-core, and a P1 as a headless file server. I had jumped over to Gentoo

from OpenBSD on the file server, not because I was un-happy, but just because I wanted to stick with one platform at home for easier maintainability.

That maintainability became more & more of a chore, however. While I still find Gentoo an extremely powerful & flexible distro, it does come at a cost. While it's great to be able to grab source & compile anything on your system, it becomes tiresome to HAVE to compile EVERYTHING on your system, EVERY TIME. I had been contemplating trying out Ubuntu for a while, but I the kicker came when I wanted to switch over from Gnome & try out the latest KDE (4.x). Now while Gentoo had 4.1 available in their testing trees, the number of hoops I started to jump through to be able to compile it became more & more arduous, to the point that I just through up my hands in defeat rather then spend more time on it.

Then I saw the announcement about the upcoming Ubuntu Jaunty (9.04) on Slashdot. I guess I was just in the right mood at the right time. I downloaded the Kubuntu RC & gave it a whirl. I was really surprised on just how easily & quickly I had it set up. The install wizard was simple point-n-click, which shielded me from the details that i didn't want to see (I just went for the defaults to get it over with as fast a possible). And the result was a beautifully set up system that just seems to _work_. The only issue that I've experienced is setting up the sound, which admittedly I haven't had the time to tackle yet. I'd probably be more motivated if I'd get more time to play at home, but lately the kids have been my priority. Not that I'm complaining or anything, mind you ;).

Reading through the Ubuntu forums & FAQ's gives me a confidence that I haven't felt since first starting with Gentoo. The docs are very well laid out, the forums seem very helpful. And the presence of strong corporate support certainly doesn't hurt either. Having some memory of the uses of dpkg & APT from my old Debian days, never mind it's continued uses on my Nokia Internet Tablet (N810), has also certainly helped the transition. Oh, and the fact that there's a (semi-) working port of Ubuntu for the Nokia Tablet (not that I've tried it yet) makes the whole thing much more attractive. Imagine, running the same distro on

your desktop, file server AND handheld. We'll see, we'll see ... :)

All in all I have to say that my Ubuntu experience has bee a very positive one so far. I would recommend it to anyone, newbie, hard-core, or middle of the road hacker. Hope to read about YOUR experiences on the Ububtu forums soon! Take care.

## The Peppy Jackalope With Extra Jaunty

**Adam Nixon**

I've been using GNU/Linux since the release of Breezy Badger back in 2005, which I discovered one lazy afternoon using the stumble extension for Firefox (a highly addictive extension, quite useful for wasting lazy afternoons). I had been interested in GNU/Linux from afar for quite some time, drawn in by the idea of free software (free as in freedom and free as in beer), but at the same time intimidated by the rumors that GNU/Linux was only for the true elite of the computing world and not a toy to played with by the average user like myself. When the Ubuntu home page appeared on my screen it appeared as though all of my fears had been erased in an instant. Linux for human beings? I'm a human being! This must be the Linux distribution for me. Well, it turns out it was. I tinkered about with it on an older computer for a couple of years. Then I started using my Windows machine less and less. One day I got a present from Microsoft...service pack 3. Well, things were never really the same between me and XP after that, and I made the decision to move into a world free of proprietary software. That was May 2008, one month after the release of Hardy Heron LTS and I have never looked back. I use my computer for music, photographs, email, web surfing, watching movies and TV shows, and learning how to maximize my GNU/Linux experience.

So here we are a week into the release of Ubuntu 9.04, The Jaunty Jackalope. I upgraded from 8.10 on April 23 and for the first few days I wasn't really very sure what was different, apart from the sexy new log in screen, Everything seemed to be pretty much the same. There was a certain peppiness that was there

but nothing to write home about. That all changed a couple of days ago when a few updates came in. Let me tell you, The Jackalope is most definitely Jaunty....very jaunty indeed. Programs open faster than ever, the video is smoother, all elements of the experience just feel more responsive. The boot time rumors are absolutely true. It is noticeably quicker than in version 8.10 on the same hardware.

They've changed the notification balloon to a more discrete grey box in the top corner. I wasn't sure if this would change my life in any significant way, but I must admit it is more pleasant somehow.

Although this release wasn't necessarily the most feature rich, I would have to say, that it has been one of the most experience enriching. I love it when an upgrade offers a performance boost, it really does make the whole operating system feel more solid and confident.

## Throwing the Remix Into The Mix

**Michael Doob**

The latest Ubuntu release, Jaunty Jackalope, went public on April 24. It included a new version called the Ubuntu netbook remix, of UNR for short. It is specifically aimed at the new generation of computers known as netbooks. These are usually equipped with a rather underpowered Intel Atom chipset, three USB ports, a jack for a wired Internet connection, a slot for an SD card, and often with a camera/microphone built-in for Skype calls. The screen is usually 1024 by 600, not a lot of real estate for the windowing system. Since I've just acquired an EEE PC 1000HE, I thought that I'd give it a run.

The particular netbook I have only comes with Windows XP, so the first decision is whether or not to throw it away. I decided to keep it, so that meant doing some work with the disk partitions. The original

partition is a little unusual in that there are two NTFS partitions installed --- a C: drive and a D: drive. The D: drive has nothing on it; I threw it away. It would be possible to proceed with the install using the new space, but I decided to reduce the size of the remaining NTFS partition. I have found that the system rescue CD from **http://www.sysresccd.org** really works well for such tasks.

You can then use dd to push the img file onto a USB stick, and it is ready for the install. You don't even have to put syslinux on the boot track. It's just ready to roll. There are not many choices during the install. This means that you will be using apt-get to add your favorite programs.

Most of the special buttons in the top row work properly: volume up and down, brightness up and down, external screen on and off, backlight off, and hibernation mode. The camera and microphone work fine. The wired connection to the Internet has no problems, but the wireless seems to fail after coming out of hibernation.

The boot time from pushing the on button to having the screen is about one minute 30 seconds. There are some faster boot-ups, but this is not too bad.

The default window manager is gnome. The graphical interface has been adjusted to fit the 1024 by 600 screen (See screenshot below).

There are not many adjustments that can be made to the visual effects; indeed, it is pretty inflexible. That having been said, the default display is gorgeous. The icons are really clear, even in the task bar and the text is exceptionally legible. Opening an application automatically goes to full screen to maximize the use of the small real estate available. There is also an option to switch

back and forth from this special theme to the standard Ubuntu startup if that is really desired.

The short summary is: this is really useful for netbooks and worth a tryout.

## Community Outreach Opportunity

The Computer Lending Library is a non-profit organization in based in Selkirk Manitoba with an extension in Winnipeg. The CLL program provides computers loans for people who complete a 40-hour computer training program but may not be able to acquire a computer. The Program also provides basic technical services to the computers loaned out. They are currently in need of assistance in repairing PC's that have come back with a variety of software and hardware issues. If you are able to set aside some time to assist the CLL program contact Mike VIA email: **high.res.mike@gmail.com**

## What Do You Think?

If you have a How-To or other idea, and aren't ready to give a presentation at MUUG, an article is a great alternative! If you can write better than the editor, that's terrific; if you can't, submit it anyway and we'll get it into shape for publication. We know that many of you have some great ideas and lots of knowledge. Why not share? Send Mail to: **editor@muug.mb.ca**.