

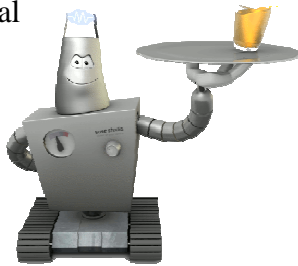
MUUGLines

The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

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Next Meeting: December 8th, 2009 SuseStudio

SuseStudio is an online virtual appliance builder based on OpenSUSE. *"Build an appliance or your own custom Linux distro with a few mouse clicks. Customize it to your heart's content, and share it with the world!"*



It is quite astonishing what this site/tool can do with a few mouse clicks.

John Lange will demo, from start to finish, the creation of a completely custom Linux distribution.

Before the break, as this month's RTFM topic, Gilbert Detillieux will cover the `find(1)` and `xargs(1)` commands.

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.

Upcoming Meeting: January 12th, 2010 Zimbra

Next month, Montana Quiring will cover Zimbra, the open-source collaboration suite, which includes email, calendars and more.



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. Please try to arrive by about 7:15pm, so the meeting can start promptly at 7:30pm.

We Think Your Friends are Awesome!

We Want To Meet Them!

Do you have a friend that is working on an interesting Linux/Unix project?

Why not ask them to present what they are doing at a future MUUG meeting?

Have them email board@muug.mb.ca

FreeBSD 8.0 Released

On the heels of last month's announcement of the second release candidate, the FreeBSD team has announced FreeBSD 8.0:



*“The FreeBSD Release Engineering Team is pleased to announce the availability of **FreeBSD 8 stable** release. Some of the highlights: Xen DomU support, network stack virtualization, stack-smashing protection, TTY layer rewrite, much improved ZFS v13, a new USB stack, multicast updates including IGMPv3, vimage — a new virtualization container, Fedora 10 Linux binary compatibility to run Linux software such as Flash 10 and others, trusted BSD MAC (Mandatory Access Control), and rewritten NFS client/server introducing NFSv4. Inclusion of improved device mmap() extensions will allow the technical implementation of a 64-bit Nvidia display driver for the x86-64 platform. The GNOME desktop environment has been upgraded to 2.26.3, KDE to 4.3.1, and Firefox to 3.5.5. There is also an in-depth look at the new features and major architectural changes in FreeBSD 8.0, including a screenshot tour, upgrade instructions are posted here. You can grab the latest version from FreeBSD from the mirrors (main ftp server) or via BitTorrent.”*

Don't Brick Your TV: SamyGO

By Jake Edge, lwn.net

While it is quite common for consumer electronics—TVs, DVRs, and the like—to be running Linux these days, it is less common to see projects geared towards replacing and upgrading the Linux firmware in that class of devices. But that is exactly what the SamyGO project is doing for Samsung televisions. By using the source provided by Samsung, along with quite a bit of ingenuity, SamyGO allows users to telnet into their television—an amusing concept—but also to enable functionality beyond that which ships with the device.

The SamyGO wiki lists several modifications that can be made to the TV firmware. One of the main modifications seems to be enabling NFS or SMB/CIFS support so that media files from servers on the network can be played. The TVs already support getting media from the local network using *Digital Living Network Alliance* (DLNA) protocols, but there are restrictions on the audio and video formats and some playback functionality (pause, forward, rewind) depending on the DLNA server. By using NFS or CIFS, all of the formats and features available for USB-based playback are also available across the network.

KOffice 2.1 released

By Inge Wallin, koffice.org

The KOffice team is very happy to announce version 2.1.0 of KOffice, 6 months after the platform release 2.0.0. This release brings a number of new features as well as general improvements in the maturity of the individual applications. Importing of documents have also been given an overhaul.



The advantages of the clean and well-structured codebase have started to show. Despite a relatively limited developer group, there are a large number of improvements over 2.0. During the development of 2.1, it was also announced that KOffice is going to be used in the Nokia n900 smartphones based on Maemo Linux.

The State of KOffice 2.1

This release is a marked improvement of almost all parts of KOffice compared to 2.0. Version 2.0 was labeled a “platform release”, which was meant as a first preview of the framework and new UI paradigm. In version 2.1, most applications and components have improved significantly **but should still only be**

used by early adopters and probably not as the primary worktool.

Thunderbird 3.0 RC 1

By Joe Brockmeier, ostatic.com

If you just can't get away from email over the holidays, you can at least help test the release candidate for Thunderbird 3.0. The Mozilla folks released Thunderbird 3.0 RC 1 on Tuesday, November 24th with more than 100



changes in the release. It's been a long time in coming, the first release in the 2.0 series was back in 2007. But Thunderbird 3.0 looks like it might be worth the wait when the final is released.

What's new and interesting? The user interface changes are probably the first thing you'll notice, especially the new tabbed interface. Instead of opening messages in a new window, they'll now open in a tab. Tabs are saved between sessions by default, so you can pick up right where you left off. The toolbar has been redesigned as well, and the most commonly used buttons are right on each mail message in 3.0.

3.0 will also include "smart folders," for better managing special mailboxes. 3.0 also includes better search tools and filtering, so you can easily manage your mail nearly any way you like.

Thunderbird 3.0 also makes it much easier to set up your email against popular email providers. For instance, if you have a Gmail account, all you need to do is to enter your name, email address, and password. It's a major improvement over needing to know ports and whether a provider uses encrypted or unencrypted communication. Another welcome change in 3.0 is improvements to IMAP performance.

The release candidate is available for Linux, Mac OS X, and Windows. Be sure to read the release notes before installing Thunderbird 3.0, especially if you're using one of the Thunderbird 2.0 releases now.

OLPC XO 1.75 Goes ARM, No XO-2

From OLPC News

This morning I woke up to find an e-mail in my inbox which contained a link to an xeconomy.com interview with Nicholas Negroponte. While reading it over breakfast I managed to spill my tea because I couldn't believe I was really seeing the words I was looking at. XO-2 development canceled? An XO-1.75 to replace it? Talk about an XO-3? Going from OLPC to olpc? But let's take it step by step, shall we...

From XO-2 to XO-1.75 to XO-3

NN: 2.0 has been replaced by two things: 1) model 1.75, same industrial design but an ARM inside, 2) model 3.0, totally different industrial design, more like a sheet of paper.

Now there's something I didn't see coming! While I never believed that the XO-2 had gotten much beyond the concept stage I always considered it to be a strong vision of where OLPC was going in terms of device design. Sure, both the hardware and the software for an XO-2 are massive undertakings which would probably overstretch OLPC's limited resources but then again that's what everyone thought of the XO-1 design as well and arguably they did a great job there.

An ARM based XO-1.75 on the other hand is much more of an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary step into the future. So many people, especially a certain Charbax, had long expected OLPC to move from an x86 to an ARM design. I've been following the ongoing x86 vs. ARM race quite closely and it's my understanding that they're now closely matched when it comes to the all-important price / performance / power-consumption metrics. What I however cannot estimate is how much engineering by OLPC, Sugar Labs and Fedora it takes to make the current software run, and run well, on an ARM platform. It also re-

mains to be seen when OLPC plans to release the XO-1.75 but I'd be very surprised if it happened within the next 12 months.

On the topic of the XO-3 xeconomy updated their original story with a quote from Negroponte:

Not much to say other than its aspirational aspects: 3.0 is a single sheet, completely plastic and unbreakable, waterproof, 1/4" thick, full color, reflective and transmissive, no bezel, no holes. 1W. \$75, ready in 2012.

To me that sounds like a slightly souped up XO-2 vision and given the timeframe for such a device I can't help but simply not care about it at this point in time.

Microsoft Patents sudo

From groklaw.org

It appears that Microsoft has just patented sudo, a personalized version of it.

Here it is, **patent number 7617530**. Thanks, USPTO, for giving Microsoft, which is already a monopoly, a monopoly on something that's been in use since 1980 and wasn't invented by Microsoft. Here's **Wikipedia's description of sudo**, which you can meaningfully compare to Microsoft's description of its "invention".

This is why what the US Supreme Court does about software patents means so much. Hopefully they will address the topic in their decision on Bilski. Sudo is an integral part of the functioning of GNU/Linux systems, and you use it in Mac OSX also. Maybe the Supreme Court doesn't know that, and maybe the USPTO didn't realize it. But do you believe Microsoft knows it?

Perhaps Microsoft would like everyone in the world to pay them a toll at least, even if they don't want to use Microsoft's software? Like SCO, but with more muscle behind the request? Or maybe it might be used as a barrier to competition? What do you personally believe Microsoft wants patents on things like sudo for? To make sure innovative new companies can

compete on an even playing field with Microsoft?

The earliest sudo reference in the patent database Microsoft told the USPTO about is 1997, for **patent 5655077**, and in other references 1991, so for all the patent-loving dolts in the world, here is **A Brief History of Sudo**:

Sudo was first conceived and implemented by Bob Cogheshall and Cliff Spencer around 1980 at the Department of Computer Science at SUNY/Buffalo. It ran on a VAX-11/750 running 4.1BSD. An updated version, credited to Phil Betchel, Cliff Spencer, Gretchen Phillips, John LoVerso and Don Gworek, was posted to the net.sources Usenet newsgroup in December of 1985.

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...?

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.

