

# MUUGLines

## The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

October 2010

Volume 23 No. 2

### Next Meeting: October 12th, 2010

#### The Wireless Neighbourhood

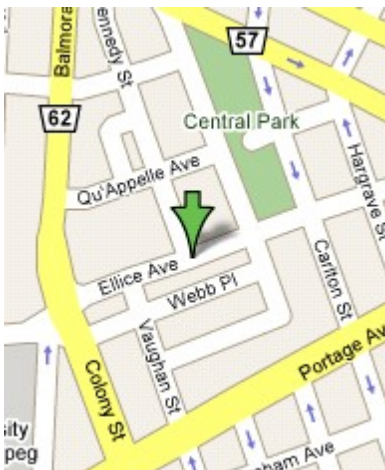
Over three years ago, neighbours and MUUG members Kevin McGregor and Kelly Leveille thought they had some cool ideas for data sharing that would work well via a direct link between their homes. They had briefly experimented with using their broadband Internet connection, but they were disappointed by the asymmetric connection speeds. This month, Kelly and Kevin will discuss the hardware, firmware, topology, trials and tribulations, configuration and eventual successful implementation of their private, wireless-connected network. With pictures, and demo-free!

#### Upcoming Meetings

##### November 9th, 2010

WordPress & podPress

#### Where to find the Meeting



Meetings are held at the IBM offices at 400 Ellice Ave. (between Edmonton and Kennedy Streets). 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.

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.

#### MUUG Board Elections 2010-2011

As part of the October 2010 meeting, we will be holding an election for the positions of directors to the MUUG board. The following nominees are candidates for election. Since the number of candidates (10) is more than the number of vacancies as last set by the board (8), in accordance with MUUG By-laws 5.(c) and 10.(e-h), we will have an election by ballot. You must be a MUUG member in good standing, and be present at the October meeting, in order to vote.

In accordance with section 10.(a), the board appointed an election committee at the start of the 2010-2011 season, chaired by Gilbert Detillieux and including Kevin McGregor and Adam Thompson.

In alphabetical order:

##### Nominee: Sean Cody

Sean Cody has been a UNIX user since he started university back in 1996. Since then he's worked for and with businesses using UNIX variants in all kinds of strange ways dabbling in almost every corner of the software and hardware stack. He has a B.Sc. in Computer Science (minored in Geology) and continues to eschew graphical UIs and toolkits for the pure elegance of the command line. On the side, he provides subsistent web hosting and consults with small businesses looking to improve their work flow, secure their data and expand their IT capabilities on small budgets. He spends most of his free time dabbling in gadgets, OpenBSD and is professionally focused on system performance and security. He is

also an occasional contributor to and editor of the OpenBSD Journal ([undeadly.org](http://undeadly.org)).

### **Nominee: Trevor Cordes**

Trevor Cordes has owned and operated TecnoPolis Enterprises – a computer VAR, programming and consultancy company – since 1999. Linux and open source have been the keystone of TecnoPolis since 2000 with the introduction of Linux-based appliances which today are critical to the operation of over 20 local small businesses. Trevor was President of the Atari ST User's Group in 1995 and 1997-1999, and also holds a B.Sc. (CompSci) from the University of Manitoba. His main workstation runs Fedora.

### **Nominee: Gilbert Detillieux**

Gilbert Detillieux has been working with UNIX as a programmer, system administrator, and trainer since 1980. He worked as a computer consultant specializing in UNIX, from 1983 to 1989, and is currently working as a Systems Analyst for the University of Manitoba's Department of Computer Science, where's he's worked since 1989, installing, supporting and upgrading the department's network and UNIX server infrastructure. He was co-founder and past president of the Technical UNIX User Group (now MUUG), and has been an active member of the MUUG board ever since.

### **Nominee: Michael Doob**

Michael Doob is a member of the Mathematics Department at the University of Manitoba. He has been using UNIX since 1990, primarily as a working environment for mathematical publishing. He has been a member of MUUG for the last decade and has given a number of presentations for that group.

### **Nominee: Robert Keizer**

Robert Keizer is currently a Systems Administrator at Les.net. Before that, he was a Junior Systems Administrator at Prime Focus, and a Member and Director of ParIT Worker Co-Operative. Robert is attending the University of Winnipeg, studying applied computer science, and is specifically interested in distributed computing, single-system-

image (SSI) computing and system monitoring. In his spare time, he plays guitar and piano.

### **Nominee: Kevin McGregor**

Kevin McGregor provides server, platform and infrastructure support in the City of Winnipeg's Information Systems Department. After having briefly used UTS on an Amdahl mainframe in university in the mid-80s, he dabbled in Coherent and then converted to Linux and OpenBSD. He has been a member of MUUG since the early 90s, edited the group's newsletter for a number of years, presented various topics at MUUG meetings and has served on the board for the majority of his membership.

### **Nominee: Katherine Scrupa**

Katherine has been using Linux exclusively at home for four years, during which she has also been a member of MUUG. Promoting her learning experiences and solutions to benefit others, her blog can be located at [uniquegeek.blogspot.com](http://uniquegeek.blogspot.com). Her educational pursuits in Computer Science at U of M led her to a Network Technology CCNA program (Hons.) at Red River College in 2010, with emphasis on working with Linux, cabling, and network equipment.

### **Nominee: Doug Shewfelt**

Doug Shewfelt first encountered UNIX in 1980 at the University of Manitoba. He has been worked in various IT positions for the City of Winnipeg since 1985, and currently provides system and database administration support for the City. He has been a member of the MUUG board for the past several years.

### **Nominee: Adam Thompson**

Adam has over 20 years' experience in the IT field, ranging from Programmer to Network Administrator to Chief Technology Officer & VP. He first used UNIX (although he didn't know it) in 1988 while playing NetHack on the QNX BBS in Ottawa. He first ran into UNIX professionally in 1990, and started using Linux in 1991. Adam is the author of several `termcap(5)` and `terminfo(5)` entries, deployed the first

cross-platform, public, networked instant-messaging system in Manitoba, and installed the first UnixWare system in Manitoba. He has developed several UNIX/Linux courses, and has also taught RDBMS administration. Adam has been a member of MUUG since 1995, and a board member for most of the last seven years.

## **Nominee: Brad Vokey**

Brad Vokey is the owner of Fortress Software Inc. and the creator of the Matchmaker Fundraiser (a fundraiser that “matches up” over 1 million high school students across Canada and the U.S. during Valentine’s). Brad started the company in 1985 using Apple II computers writing the original program entirely in 6502 machine language. The program migrated to 68000 machine language (on Atari ST computers) in 1986 and then eventually to C (and Atari TT computers) soon after. The original C program is still very much alive to this day and is constantly being tweaked and added to every year. Brad has served on the board of the Atari ST Users Group (STUG) until its dissolution in 2000 and has been a member of MUUG since 2006. He was first exposed to Linux in 1999 with Mandrake 6.0, uses Linux on a daily basis on his company’s firewalls, and is looking forward to converting his entire office to Linux “sometime” in the future.

## **Office phone system smaller than paperback book**

First Digium gave us Asterisk. Then David Rowe ([www.rowetel.com](http://www.rowetel.com)) gave us open hardware and firmware, then ATCOM gave us the economies of scale only Chinese manufacturing can provide.

The ATCOM IP01 is a scaled-down version of Rowe's IP04 embedded µLinux-based Asterisk system. All the members of the IP0x family have a BlackFin 400MHz CPU with 64Mb of RAM and 256Mb of flash ROM for filesystem storage. It can accommodate one FXO or FXS port on a daughterboard. (The IP02 has room for two boards, the IP04 can accommodate 4 daughterboards, and so on).

Presently, the IP0x family runs Asterisk 1.4 with Asterisk-GUI. Commercial support is provided by VoIPTel.no for an additional fee.

The amazing part about the IP01 isn't how great a product it is (it's adequate but no more), but rather how small an office phone system has become. An equivalent Nortel NORSTAR system would require at least 4 or 5 modules, and take up most of a wall. The IP01 is slightly larger than a pack of cigarettes, slightly smaller than a paperback novel.

That Nortel system would have cost many thousands of dollars – the IP01 sells for \$166, and basic VoIP phones from ATCOM sell for under \$60 each.

ATCOM products are available in Canada through [www.atcomshop.ca](http://www.atcomshop.ca).

## **Open-source stolen hardware tracking**

The PREY project introduces recovery & tracking software to help you find the thief that walked away with your laptop/macbook/tablet/smartphone.

A small agent is installed on your device, which sits and waits for a signal either through the Internet or via SMS. Upon activation, the agent uses geolocation techniques (via GPS, AGPS, WiFi Geolocation) to determine and report its current location. It can also use the device's camera to take photos of the thief and its surroundings. It does a whole bunch more, too, such as locking the system, remotely wiping the system, remote screen captures, etc., etc.

The software is free, and the service supports up to three tracked devices for free. Users wanting to track more than three devices from a single control panel can pay for a Pro account. The software also supports a stand-alone mode where it can be used without the online control panel or service.

Presently the software runs on Windows, MacOS X, Ubuntu, Android, and generic Linux.

You can find more information about the project online, at <http://preyproject.com/>.

## Oracle Linux faster than Red Hat?

September 19, 2010: Oracle announced the availability of Oracle's Unbreakable Enterprise Kernel, optimized for Oracle software and hardware.

Oracle claims to have provide a more than 75 percent performance gain in OLTP performance tests over a Red Hat Compatible Kernel; 200 percent speedup of Infiniband messaging; and 137 percent faster solid state disk access.

If you trust Oracle to deliver your open-source operating system, please let us know if these claims are legitimate or not.

## ALL YOUR PAD ARE OWN BY US

The Apple iPad runs iOS4, a BSD UNIX derivative.

All Android tablets run Google Android, a Linux-based OS. (In related news, Sony just announced they've officially abandoned Symbian in order to focus on Android product development.)

The HP Slate will run WebOS, another Linux-based OS.

Now the Blackberry PlayBook runs QNX, another UNIX OS. It's not Linux, it's not BSD, but it still qualifies as UNIX according to QNX.

That leaves traditional Tablet PCs as the only non-UNIX tablets out there... and my ThinkPad X201t runs Linux just fine, thank you.

By my calculation, that means 100% of the consumer tablet market runs UNIX, and the rest of the industrial market is capable of running UNIX, too. I think that's the best market-penetration UNIX has ever seen!

Fedora Beta 14 ships with the MeeGo desktop, which should improve the tablet experience. Unsurprisingly, you can't buy any tablets running Fedora yet.

FYI, you probably already use the QNX operating system – most cars today have one or more subsystems that run QNX.

RIM has also confirmed speculation that the BlackBerry smartphones will also get QNX as an OS “in the long run”. That won't be until v8, however, and we're still only at v6.0 on the brand-new Torch phone, so no worries about upgrading in the middle of your contract – unless you have a 10-year contract, that is...

## Mandriva Forked

Most of Mandriva's employees have been laid off, have re-assembled, and have forked Mandriva. The new Linux distro is called Mageia.

I'm not sure anyone in North America still cares about Mandrake, I mean Mandriva, but we wish them luck in breaking away from an apparently less-than-competent corporation anyway.

## 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?



O'REILLY SCHOOL of TECHNOLOGY

Get the experience.  
Build the skills.

Group discounts available.  
Use code ORALL1



User group members  
**SAVE 40%** off print  
and **50%** off ebooks

ENTER DISCOUNT  
CODE: DSUG

O'REILLY



Spreading the knowledge of Innovators

oreilly.com