

MUUGLines

The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

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Next Meeting: December 11th, 2012

RTFM and presentation: none this month

Instead of a formal presentation this month, we will be starting the holiday season with an informal round table meeting at a restaurant. We are leaving our normal meeting place at the IBM offices, and will be meeting at the Seine River Café. The Seine River Café is located at 390 Provencher Blvd, just east of Des Meurons.

We will be meeting for dinner at 6:00 pm. Please email us to let us know how many people will be attending, so we have an idea of how much space to reserve with the restaurant. Brad Vokey will be collecting the RSVPs, so email him at brad@fsi.ca. You can also call or text him at 204-955-5691.

If you can't make it for dinner, drop by at 7:30 for an informal roundtable and social meeting – a great chance to chat with other MUUG attendees and to celebrate the holiday season. MUUG will be providing a few light refreshments; you can order more food and drink from the restaurant if you like.

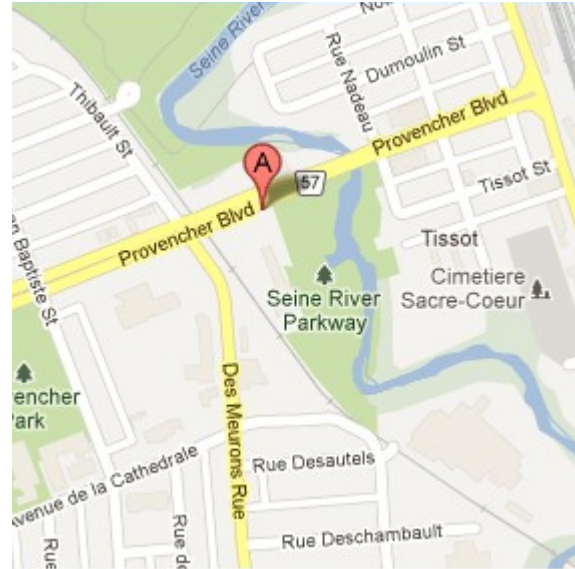
Winnipeg Harvest Food Drive

As we have done in previous years, we are collecting non-perishable food items for Winnipeg Harvest. Please bring a non-perishable food to the December restaurant meeting to drop in our box.

Winnipeg Harvest lists their most wanted food items at this site:

<http://winnipegharvest.org/10-most-wanted-food-items/>

Where to Find the Meeting



The December MUUG meeting is at the Seine River Café, at 390 Provencher Blvd.

Upcoming Meetings

January 8th, 2013

Topic: TBD

Location: TBD

We are still arranging the new permanent location for the monthly MUUG meetings, since IBM will no longer have the boardroom on Ellice Street. The most likely locations are the University of Manitoba's Fort Garry campus or the University of Winnipeg's downtown campus.

MUUG Annual Financial Statements

Once a year, we publish the financial statements for our user group.

Manitoba UNIX User Group
2011-2012 Season
Income Statement

Income

GIC Interest	\$353.09
Interest	\$0.05
Membership sales	\$880.00
Total income	\$1,233.14

Expenses

Bank charge	\$20.42
Mailbox	\$304.50
Newsletter	\$503.46
Total Expenses	\$828.38

Net Income \$404.76

Manitoba UNIX User Group
2011-2012 Season
Balance statement

Assets

Cash	\$1,618.85
Investments (GICs)	\$20,048.89
Total Assets	\$21,667.74

Equity

Retained Earnings	\$21,667.74
Total Equity	\$21,667.74

Electronic Edition of the Newsletter

Just a reminder that if you had signed up for the electronic (e-mailed) edition of this newsletter, you'd be able to click directly on the links below.

Raspberry Pi Fix of the Month

The Raspberry Pi Foundation has announced that their users will be getting one of their most wanted items on their wish list – the game Minecraft. Minecraft is a game where players gather resources and build structures and equipment. It provides a programming interface so that sophisticated users can additionally control the game world.

Mojang, the publishers of Minecraft will be releasing a free edition called Minecraft: Pi Edition.

<http://news.softpedia.com/news/Minecraft-is-Coming-to-Raspberry-Pi-For-Free-309646.shtml>

In other Raspberry Pi news, a distribution of the Plan 9 operating system is available for Pi:

http://bendyworks.com/geekville/lab_projects/2012/11/getting-plan-9-running-on-the-raspberry-pi

A number of Linux based distributions are available for the Raspberry Pi. One of the notable exceptions is Ubuntu; Ubuntu requires ARMv7, and the Pi uses ARMv6.

More Gaming News

ID Software will be releasing the source code of Doom III BFG:

http://www.phoronix.com/scan.php?page=news_item&px=MTIzNjUI

Last year, ID Software released the source code for the original version of Doom III. They don't release the game's data, so you still need to buy the game to play the game.

In truly retro gaming news, the Metropolitan Museum of Art has a 20-sided die made out of serpentine. The museum estimates that it was made some time between 304 and 30 B.C.E.

http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-57547697-1/ancient-d20-die-emerges-from-the-ashes-of-time/

Scanning Books on a Budget

Google has released plans for an inexpensive device for scanning books and automatically turning the pages of the book. This prototype was developed under Google's program for encouraging individual innovation for its employees.

The operator places the book face down on an inverted V-shaped track. The device scans the book at one end of the track, and then slides the book down the track. The device has a slot running through the middle of the track. As the book moves down the track, the device turns the page by using vacuum pressure to draw a single page through the slot from one side of the track to the other.

The prototype costs about \$1,500, which is very cheap for a book scanner that can automatically turn pages. Off-the-shelf items that the prototype uses include a flat-bed scanner and a vacuum cleaner.

<http://code.google.com/p/linear-book-scanner/>

The web site has a video where the presenter gives a survey of existing book scanners that turn the page automatically, and discusses how this prototype was engineered to minimize the stress on the pages and the bindings as it turns a page.

Fedora 18 Beta Release Available

Red Hat has released the beta version of Fedora 18.

Updates include a new version of the GNOME and the KDE desktops, as well as the XFCE, Sugar and MATE desktop environments. For developers, there are new versions of Perl, Python, Rails and Haskell. It also includes Samba 4, and should be able to connect with an Active Directory domain with minimal setup work.

One major change is that the Fedora project has reworked the Anaconda installer, and the installer now has a different user interface. The new installer sparked a controversy over default install settings for the Logical Volume Manager (LVM). The LVM provides additional flexibility for managing your storage. However, some people point out that this flexibility is rarely needed, and the extra level of indirection for the file system is too costly.

Previous versions of the installer set up LVM by default; the new version of Anaconda defaulted to not installing LVM. A number of people complained about this sudden change; they argued that several Fedora features (such as the System Storage Manager, and the ability to migrate file systems across disk) depended on LVM. As well, the Fedora documentation assumed that LVM would be available by default.

Red Hat plans to release Fedora 18 in the beginning of January, 2013.

Apple Reluctant to Apologize on U.K Web Sites

Apple launched a series of lawsuits against Samsung, accusing Samsung of copying Apple's look-and-feel for Samsung's smart phones. Apple won the lawsuit

in several jurisdictions, but it lost the case in the United Kingdom. The U.K judge ordered Apple to place a message on Apple's U.K. web site, apologizing for the attack advertisements it had launched against Samsung during the dispute.

Apple put up an apology which some people described as "passive aggressive," where Apple insisted that they were still right and implied that the U.K. court was mistaken because other courts found in favour of Apple. The apology ended with "Samsung wilfully copied Apple's far more popular iPad."

The U.K. court was not impressed, and ordered Apple to prepare another apology. The court ordered that this new version be posted within 48 hours, although Apple originally asked that they be given two weeks to comply due to "technical difficulties" in providing an updated apology.

Apple posted a more terse second draft (stiffly referring to the iPad as "Community registered design No. 0000181607-0001"). However, Apple added custom code to its front page for the U.K. web site so that the link to the apology doesn't show up on the initial viewing area. No matter how big your display is, you have to explicitly scroll down to see the page footer where the link is located.

Creeping Advertisements

Software users are accustomed to buying software, or getting a free or low cost version that is financially supported by advertisements.

However, advertising seems to be pushing in to even full cost software.

The Microsoft XBOX 360 dashboard and Xbox Music service present advertisements to the users, even if the users have paid for a subscription to the Xbox Live Gold membership service. As well, people have complained about ads embedded in the Microsoft Windows 8 operating system and applications.

Microsoft isn't the only company extending the scope of advertisements. Amazon's line of Kindle Fire HD tablets had advertising embedded in the home screen of the user interface. Only later did Amazon offer an add-free version of the tablets -- for an extra \$15.

Secure Bootloader for Linux Distributions

Matthew Garrett has build a shim bootloader that will chain boot GRUB.

It will allow you to install and boot on a secure boot enabled computer without requiring the distribution to get a key from Microsoft.

Instructions for downloading and using this bootloader are at this web site:

<http://mjpg59.dreamwidth.org/20303.html>

Wayland 1.0 Officially Released

The Wayland project has officially released the 1.0 version of Wayland.

This system is intended to be a replacement for X11 Server. The Version 1.0 milestone marks a reference release where all future releases will aim to be backwards-compatible with the 1.0 release.

Wayland is a display server protocol and an implementation of that protocol. It allows window managers to communicate with applications, and is designed to be simpler and more efficient than the X Window System. Several major distributions have indicated that they plan to switch to using Wayland.

Critics of Wayland have noted that it doesn't provide network transparency (for example, you wouldn't be able to start a remote client and have its GUI display on your local workstation). The Wayland developers intend to implement this ability, but it is lower down on their list of priorities.

BeOS Continues to Slog Forward

The Haiku project (previously known as OpenBeOS) has announced the fourth alpha release of Haiku R1. The first alpha release was offered three years ago. This release fixes a lot of bugs, plus updates a number of components to current versions.

http://www.osnews.com/story/26547/Haiku_R1_alpha_4_released

A good summary of the history of the Be Operating System can be found at this link:

http://www.osnews.com/story/22156/In_the_Round_Haiku_Alpha_Released

Genode Operating System Now Self-Hosting

Genode Version 12.11 is now self hosting – the complete Genode development environment runs under Genode, so the developers no longer have to develop Genode under a different operating system.

Genode is a research micro-kernel operating system. It maintains a strict hierarchical organizational structure for the processes running in Genode. Instead of having a central resource manager, each process is responsible for managing the resources for itself and its child processes. When a process creates a child process, it defines the environment in which the child process runs. The parent process assigns resources to the child process from the parent process's resource pool. If the child creates additional sub-processes, the child would assign the sub-processes' resources from the child's resource pool.

Following this philosophy, when an application process requests a GUI window from a GUI server, the GUI server can demand that the application process lend it a block of memory for the GUI window to use.

With this hierarchical structure, Genode tries to maintain a deterministic use of resources, while allowing dynamic responses to workload.

<http://genode.org/about/index>

Don't Look At Me

A new version of Tails (version 0.15) is now available. Tails (The Amnesic Incognito Live System) is a Debian-based system that focuses on providing the user with Internet anonymity. It provides a web browser, email client and IRC client that are packaged to be secure and to provide anonymous Internet traffic.

Mozilla Joins Internet Society

Mozilla has joined the Internet Society (ISOC) as a Silver member. It has been increasing its involvement in various groups in the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). The ISOC provides administrative support for the IETF, and Mozilla said that it wanted

to increase this support for the Internet standards groups.