MUUGLines

The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

Next Meeting: May 8th, 2012

RTFM: parallel(1)

May's RTFM will feature the parallel command, presented by Gilbert Detillieux.

Topic: ZFS

Edwin Amsler will talk about (and demonstrate, if all goes well) ZFS. ZFS is a filesystem originally developed at Sun Microsystems. It has numerous features and has a native port to Solaris, OpenSolaris, and FreeBSD; Non-official ports have been made to Linux and Mac OSX. Edwin will be focusing on the basic usage of the filesystem and the snapshotting features that come built in.

Upcoming Meetings

June 12th, 2012: Ubuntu Mirroring

Where to Find the Meeting
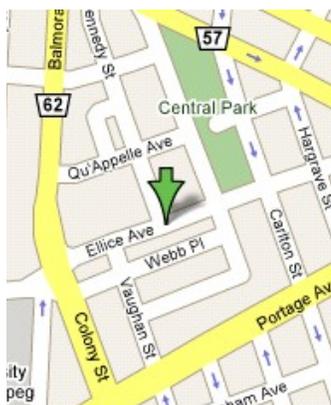
Meetings are held at the IBM offices at 400 Ellice Ave. (between Edmonton and Kennedy Streets). When you arrive, you will have to sign in at the reception desk. Please try to arrive by about 7:15pm, so the meeting can start promptly at 7:30pm.

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.

Ubuntu 12.04 LTS Release

Ubuntu 12.04 Long Term Support was released on April 26th. It carries support and package upgrades through until April 2017. Major changes include an upgrade to Kernel version 3.2.0 and X11 version 1.11.4.

Unlike previous releases of Ubuntu this version will be supported both on Desktop and Server for the 5 years. Previously the Desktop release was supported for 3 years.

Other major changes include OpenJDK being included in the "*universe*" repository in preparation to become the standard Java implementation in the 12.10 release. 12.10 is set to come out in October of this year. As well this release makes a move to Python version 2.7 or 3.3. Version 2.6 of Python is not supported.

Valve & Steam Coming to Linux

While speculated late in 2011, pictures, videos, and interviews showing the Steam engine running natively on Linux have now surfaced.

"Valve's Steam and Source Engine-based games are coming to Linux. Michael from well known site Phoronix.com has been invited to Valve's office and was able to spend a day with the developers and Gabe Newell himself. He is confirming the rumors about Linux ports from Valve, and has been able to play the games and work the developers himself. Attached in the article are pictures from Valve's offices with games running on Linux."
 - slashdot.org April 25th 2012

Nouveau Driver "Stable"

While the Nouveau Driver is now considered stable and has been moved from the staging area, those running newer cards will still see big performance gains running the proprietary NVIDIA kernel module over nouveau. Also Optimus is not fully supported.

"The open source Nouveau driver, a reverse-engineered incarnation of NVIDIA's official proprietary driver for Linux, has reached its biggest milestone. The Nouveau driver is now being considered stable within the Linux kernel and leaving the staging area, with the pledge of a stable ABI. Phoronix has summarized the state of the Nouveau driver, which works fine if you don't care about performance or are fine with running hardware that's a few generations old."

 - slashdot.org April 13th 2012

Amazon Now 1% of Traffic

How many sites can you name that use Amazon's Network? Likelihood is that in Winnipeg you use Amazon's services whether you know it or not.

"A Wired story claims Amazon's cloud now hosts enough companies and traffic to generate 1% of all Internet traffic (and visits from 1/3 of daily Internet users). An amazing number if true. And a little scary for one company to host this much cloud infrastructure."

–slashdot.org April 18th 2012

Cacti on MUUG's Lisa

For those who are not familiar with Cacti, it is a "network graphing solution" that polls SNMP hosts and makes pretty RRDTool based graphs.
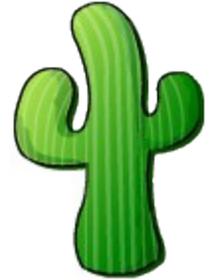
Cacti has been running on Lisa for over a month measuring Network, Disk, and Load among other statistics.

Check it out with read only permissions at the link below. Login: *"guest:guest"*

http://muug.mb.ca/cacti

Playing Air Traffic Controller

In the tech news recently there has been a number of articles and tutorials floating around on a **cheap** RF to USB reciever that is actually marketed as a TV adapter.

One chip that facilitates this is the Realtek RTL2832U. It has the ability to do raw sampling at a rate of 3.2M samples/second with a depth of 8 bits. This particular chip can be tuned anywhere from 64-1700Mhz, allowing it to among other things listen in

on radar signals, cell phone frequencies, bluetooth communications, and aviation transponders.

Keep in mind this is all available with a **$30** usb dongle and some open source software.

As you can imagine the low cost allowed many people, including *Balint* from **spench.net** to put software defined radio to more use. *Balint* has combined the information recieved from aviation transponders and google earth (with some open source glue), to produce a **realtime map of current aircraft** over Sydney Australia. Links below. Very cool.

It's worthwhile to note that *Balint* also made use of a USRP, although it was not strictly necessary.

http://maps.spench.net/aviation/
http://blog.spench.net/

Buildings Up For Lease
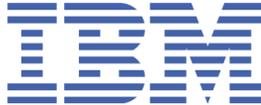
For those attending the upcoming meeting it will be hard to miss. The IBM building that MUUG currently meets in is up for lease. IBM made public the decision in mid-late April, and are planning on relocating by February of 2013.

IBM took care to mention that some datacenter space will remain at 400 Ellice, and that no clients will be affected.

Also in the news this month, the NRC (National Research Council) lays off more employees based in Winnipeg and announces plans to sell the buildings near IBM.

20th IOCCC Competition Results

The 20th IOCCC (International Obfuscated C Code Competition) Results are in. Winners include a Bar Graph Plotter, a Neural Network classifier, a Scientific Calculator, and even a Text Raytracer. The code below is a winning entry by Konno.

```
main(_,l)char**l;{6*putchar(--
_%20?_+_/21&56>_?strchr(1[l],_^"pt`u}rxf~c{wk~zyHH
OJ]QULGQ[Z"[_/2])?111:46:32:10)^_&&main(2+_,l);}
```

```
# ./konno "hi"
. . . . . . . o . .
 . . . . . o . . .
 . . . . . . .
```
http://ioccc.org/
http://www.ioccc.org/2011/konno/hint.html

Google Mail Goes Down

Google Mail experienced some downtime earlier this month. Specifically on Tuesday April 17th (Epic Tech Day for those who attended) around 10:45am. Only around 2% of GMail users were affected, but that did include parts (if not all) of Winnipeg.

http://bit.ly/ImJYdK
http://bit.ly/IHq5cm

OpenSSH 6.0 Released

OpenSSH 6.0 was released on April 22 2012. It is primarily a bugfix release.

Also included are new features that have relevance to previous talks given at MUUG. Specifically the support for cancelling local and dynamic forwardings from the ~C commandline, as well as the addition of wildcard support in the PermitOpen argument.

http://openssh.org/txt/release-6.0

Upcomming BSDCan

BSDCan is a BSD4.4 based conference that is held annually in Ottawa. This year it is being held on May 11 and 12 at the University of Ottawa. Prices are reasonable at $195 for the entire event, and $60 for students.

There are also two days of Tutorials prior to the main events.

http://www.bsdcan.org/2012/

XFCE 4.10 Released

It took over a year of work but Xfce 4.10 is now released, which superseeds the stable 4.8 branch.

"In the 4.10 cycle we mainly focused on polishing the desktop and improving the user experience in various ways. Highlights of this release are:

•A new application finder that has been completely rewritten and combines the functionality of the old xfce4-appfinder and xfrun4.

•The panel now has an alternative vertical display mode (a deskbar). What is more, panel plugins can be arranged in multiple rows, which is particularly useful in the deskbar mode.

•A new MIME type editor that allows you to easily change applications used for opening different file types. The mouse and touchpad settings dialog and the settings editor were extended in terms of functionality. The former now supports tablets in a much better way.

•It is now possible to launch applications and open files on the desktop with a single click of the mouse. In addition, the 4.10 desktop can display thumbnails and automatically advance through the wallpaper list.

•The window manager can be configured to tile windows when dragging them to the screen edges. The tab window (Alt+Tab) supports more flexible theming and cursor key navigation."
 - xfce.org

Intel Officially Reveals Ivy Bridge

Not that we all didn't know it was coming, and pretty much what was inside, but now its official.

*"Tom's Hardware takes the newly-released, top-of-the-line **Ivy Bridge Core i7-3770K for a spin**. All Core i7 Ivy Bridge CPUs come with Intel HD Graphics 4000, which despite the DirectX 11 support,*

only provides a modest boost to the Sandy Bridge Intel HD Graphics 3000. However, the new architecture tops the charts for low power consumption, which should make the Ivy Bridge mobile offerings more desirable. In CPU performance, the new Ivy Bridge Core i7 is only marginally better than last generation's Core i7-2700K. Essentially, Ivy Bridge is not the fantastic follow-up to Sandy Bridge that many enthusiasts had hoped for, but an incremental improvement. In the end, those desktop users who decided to skip Sandy Bridge to hold out for Ivy Bridge, probably shouldn't have. On the other hand, since Intel priced the new Core i7-3770K and Core i5-3570K the same as their Sandy Bridge counterparts, there is no reason to purchase the previous generation chips."
 - slashdot.org

Why You Should Use BlueProximity

Having read two different articles on BlueProximity and finially testing it I am now an avid user.

BlueProximity locks your computer when a bluetooth device is out of range, and unlocks it when it comes back.

"*But I don't carry a bluetooth device*". You most likely do. Your cell phone. Yes it will use more power. Plug it in. It's worth it.

It took me ~5 minutes to download/install/configure BlueProximity with my phone. The defaults are sane, and there are packages for Ubuntu and other Linux distributions.

Why wonder if you locked your machine? Why not opt for more security? You can override the lock simply by logging in.

http://blueproximity.sourceforge.net/