

Abort, Retry, Ignore...



Computers Are Easy User Group



August 2008

Suggested Retail Price \$1.95

Volume XXV

Issue 8

Calendar
of
Events

!!!IMPORTANT!!!

*** NOTE ***

Confirmed
2008 meeting
dates will be on

August 23

* * * * *

MEETING PLACE
will be the
Glenside Public
Library

**SEE YOU
THERE!!**

COD Linuxfest

[http://
www.codlug.info/](http://www.codlug.info/)

CAEUG Meeting

:: Saturday Aug 23 ::

August has 5 Saturday's CAEUG meets on the 4th Saturday

Michael Goldberg
will demo Microsoft Train Simulator

For Anybody Who Has Thought About Trying Linux

By Drew Kwashnak

Linux SIG Leader, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT

<http://www.dacs.org> dacseditor(at)dacs.org

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For anybody who has thought about trying Linux, it has become easier than ever before with Ubuntu 8.04 LTS Hardy Heron. As with most Linux distributions, Ubuntu is available as a free download and is freely distributable. It is even available already installed on Dell computers. The most common method is downloading the ISO image from Ubuntu's website (<http://www.ubuntu.com>) and burning it onto a CD.

From the site, you can download the Desktop version or Server for 32-bit and 64-bit systems. There is even an option to download what is called an alternative version which is just the installer

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and does not include the LiveCD portion, which also includes an installer. If you are like me, until a couple months ago, and living on dial-up or you do not have a CD burner handy or just don't want to put in that much effort then you can order a free CD through the corporate sponsor of Ubuntu, Canonical, ShipIt department. I have been very pleased with the speed with which their CDs arrive. Alternatively, the website contains links to vendors where you can buy the CDs from under \$5 to more, and they can handle large orders as well.

Once you have your CD in your hot little hands, trying Ubuntu is as simple as placing it in your CD-ROM tray and rebooting your system. If system will boot from the CD and after a short moment you'll be greeted with the Ubuntu welcome screen. If you want to "try before you buy," then you can choose the default "Try Ubuntu without any changes to your computer" and your hard drive will not be touched during your session unless you choose to. You don't even need a hard drive to select this option; you just will not be able to install it from the session.

If you are more certain or just daring then you can go straight into the installer and in about 60 minutes (45 minutes if you know what Different Strokes For Anybody Who Has Thought About Trying Linux by Drew Kwashnak you are doing) you're booting to your new Ubuntu installation.

Ubuntu will scan your hardware and load the modules and drivers necessary for your system. If you have hardware that has proprietary drivers available, Linux cannot include them in the CD for legal reasons. Ubuntu works around this by providing a Restricted Drivers tool that lists all such hardware found on your system and provides the ability to download and install the necessary drivers in a click or two, legally.

Now that you have Ubuntu up and running on your system, what can you do? Plenty! Ubuntu brings you a full featured operating system complete with:

- Firefox 3.05 beta web browser
- OpenOffice.org 2.4 full featured office suite compatible with pre-Office 2007 Word, Excel, PowerPoint and some Access files.
- Evolution personal information manager for email and calendar goodness, a Microsoft Outlook user can feel comfortable with. There is even plug-ins to allow Evolution to access existing Microsoft Exchange servers.
- Pidgin multi-protocol instant messenger including Yahoo, MSN, AIM, Jabber, IRC and more.
- Gimp (GNU Image Manipulation Program), a powerful Photoshop-like image editing program that includes filters, layers and a host of goodies.
- F-Spot image manager for categorizing and minor editing of all of your pictures as well as easily importing pictures from your digital camera.
- And much, MUCH more...

If Ubuntu doesn't come with a particular application, thousands of free applications are available from the Ubuntu online repository which are easily installed and updated from the Synaptic package manager.

When you decide to install Ubuntu onto your hard drive or virtual machine you only need to click the "Install" icon on the desktop to start the process. After seven or so easy questions the installer will copy the files over to the hard disk. Depending on your system's speed this could take about 60 minutes, more or less. It will even detect if you have Windows installed and offer to transfer over your files and compatible settings from your Windows accounts!

Of course, if the limitations of the LiveCD, such as settings are not saved from session to session, and you are hesitant to partition and install the full operating system on your hard drive Ubuntu offers yet another

alternative called Wubi. Wubi is, from the Ubuntu website: "Wubi is an officially supported Ubuntu installer for Windows users that can bring you to the Linux world with a single click. Wubi allows you to install and uninstall Ubuntu as any other Windows application, in a simple and safe way.

Are you curious about Linux and Ubuntu? Trying them out has never been easier!" Wubi can be downloaded as an .exe file directly. With Linux the installation is not the end, only the beginning! Whether you try the LiveCD, Wubi or a full installation you will find a wealth of quality applications, refreshing freedom and a community unlike any other! If you have problems, questions or want to find out more then you need look no further than the third Wednesday of every month for the DACS Linux SIG at 7:30 p.m. in the DACS Resource Center!

Drew Kwashnak: Has been losing more nights of sleep with Linux since 2002 and just can't keep from downloading and trying the latest versions! When not working with Linux he works with ASP.NET and Microsoft SQL Server for a small financial company. He is also the DACS Linux SIG leader and a father of 3.

Links:

Ubuntu: <http://www.ubuntu.com>

Get Ubuntu: <http://www.ubuntu.com/getubuntu>

ShipIt: <https://shipit.ubuntu.com/>

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Firefox 3 – Hot New Browser

By Ira Wilsker

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WEBSITES:

<http://www.getfirefox.com> – Free Download

<http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/features/> - Features

<https://addons.mozilla.org/firefox/> - Add ons

After a lengthy wait, Mozilla has released the latest and greatest release of the very popular web browser, Firefox 3. This new release, available for free download from <http://www.getfirefox.com>, has many new features, making it a very strong competitor to Microsoft's ubiquitous browser, Internet Explorer.

Firefox evolved from an earlier browser, Mozilla, which in turn grew out of the Netscape browser as AOL announced the cessation of Netscape development. Since its first release several years ago, Firefox in its current and previous versions has developed a wide following, with hundreds of millions of copies downloaded. The newly released version 3 has tentatively set a Guinness world record with over 8 million copies downloaded in its first 24 hours of public release, despite overloaded servers that discouraged countless people from downloading it the first day of issue. According to published reports, the number of copies of Firefox 3 downloaded surpassed 14 million downloads in the first 72 hours. Obviously, many people are using it.

Rhetorically, so why are so many using Firefox 3 rather than Internet Explorer (IE), which is installed by default on all contemporary Windows computers? There are several other fine browsers in circulation, such as the newly released update to Opera, and Apple's Safari (for both Windows and Mac), but for Windows computers, Firefox is firmly in second place, right behind Internet Explorer. If Internet Explorer was not preinstalled on Windows computers and integrated into the operating system, there is a good chance that Firefox 3 could surpass IE in a fair competitive market. Firefox 3 is faster rendering web pages than IE, has superior tabbed browsing, is written in tighter code taking fewer system resources, and has many advantages over IE. There is no reason why PC users should not download Firefox 3 for Windows (7.8mb download), and install it, as it runs happily on computers that already have IE installed. On a fresh installation of Firefox on a Windows computer, Firefox will nondestructively import the favorites (bookmarks), cookies, and other information from IE, without making any changes or impeding IE in any way. If Firefox 3 is installed on a computer that has an older version of Firefox installed, it will automatically install it as an upgrade, including all bookmarks, passwords, cookies, and other information. Once installed, many users, such as me, prefer to use Firefox instead of IE. In my case I would say that I use Firefox for 98% of my browsing tasks; it would be 100%, but I have IE setup to access another internet account that I have, but rarely use.

According to the Firefox 3 website at <http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox>, over 15,000 improvements were made to version 3 over version 2. The newly released version 3 is claimed to be faster, safer, and smarter than the previous version, and also IE! One of the new features, which I have personally verified, is the fact that web pages do indeed load faster than on IE and previous versions of Firefox. Firefox 3 also consumes less system memory and system resources, leading to improved computer performance when Firefox is loaded and running, compared to the previous version, or even IE. Firefox 3 is also more secure than previous browsers, and incorporates the latest technologies to help prevent phishing (identity theft), and other website forgeries. A neat new feature in Firefox 3 is "Instant Website ID", where clicking on the tiny website icon ("site favicon") at the left of the URL in the menu bar will display site information and identification, which will likely indicate if the site is as intended, or a web forgery. Firefox 3 has also been engineered to work smoothly and compliment Vista's parental controls, as well as most antivirus and other security programs.

Another interesting feature unique to Firefox 3 is the "Smart Location Bar" that shows detailed information on websites recently visited, and is accessed by clicking on the right side of the menu bar. This Smart Location Bar is intelligent, in that it adapts to persona preferences to locate better website matches. Typing a "tag" or keyword in the menu bar opens a detailed list of previously visited websites containing that keyword, making it very fast and easy to locate websites that have previously been visited. Another very useful feature is the integrated spell checker, which underlines any misspelled words typed in a browser window; right clicking on the word opens a list of suggested spellings, which a mouse click will instantly replace the incorrect word with the correctly spelled word.

Malware of various types, including worms, Trojans, viruses, and spyware is a growing menace to internet users. Firefox 3 integrates a sophisticated anti-malware feature that provides some protection if the user either intentionally or erroneously accesses a website that contains attack code. If such a dangerous website is accessed, a full screen (browser window) display will appear as a warning. Firefox, working with other organizations (including Google) maintains a continuously updated list of so called "attack sites", so there is nothing for the user to update or maintain. In the event the user does happen to fall into a suspect site, such as a very freshly created phishing (identity theft) website, the forgery can be quickly reported by simply clicking on HELP – REPORT WEB FORGERY; this will connect to a Google service that collects such information on a real-time basis, verifies the forgery, and automatically adds it to the malware list, as well as forwards the

(con't on page 5)



information to groups like Phish Tank (<http://www.phishtank.com>) for further action.

Many of us use multiple passwords and user names on countless websites. Firefox 3 has an excellent integrated and secure password manager. When a password is first entered, Firefox 3 asks if you want it to remember that password and logon information, without any annoying pop-ups. Speaking of pop-ups, Firefox 3 incorporates a sophisticated and easily configurable pop-up blocker which can stop pop-ups and pop-unders, speeding and making more enjoyable the surfing experience. In some cases, pop-ups are not irritating advertisements, but instead contain important information; these can be easily allowed when desired.

Many of us choose to tweak the appearance and features of our browsers, and Firefox 3 happily obliges. Firefox has many themes and “personas” that can be selectively implemented to change the appearance of the browser to meet our individual tastes. For those of us who want additional features, Firefox offers over 5,000 free “add-ons” (<http://addons.mozilla.org/firefox>), which are easy to install devices to customize the browser to work as desired. I have installed about a dozen add-ons, including some security add-ons (PhishTank, McAfee SiteAdvisor, and others), as well as an enhanced download manager (the one integrated in Firefox 3 is very adequate for most users). I also have selected to use differently colored tabs on the top of the browser window, an add-on that can make a tab an IE window (for the rare cases when a website is intended for IE only), a PDF manager, and several other add-ons.

Firefox 3 is an outstanding and free product. It is a very worthwhile competitor to Internet Explorer, and users should try it to see if they like it. I like it, and use it almost exclusively on my desktop and notebook computers. That is the best recommendation I can give it.

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LampPost 98
by John Spizzirri
August 17, 2008



You may be receiving e-mail that appears to be from the Cable News Network (CNN <http://www.cnn.com/>). Look at the return address. If it does not end with '@cnn.com', it is a phishing (<http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/p/phishing.html>) scam. You should be asking yourself, why would CNN send an e-mail to me? Did I sign up for CNN 'Alerts'? WebSense, a network security company, has a good explanation of the threat with pictures of the e-mail (<http://securitylabs.websense.com/content/Alerts/3154.aspx>). Hoax-Slayer (<http://www.hoax-slayer.com/>) is a useful site that helps identify and classify criminally originated e-mail. Those of you using a Mac or Linux have nothing to worry about as this is a Windows only malware (<http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/m/malware.html>). This paragraph was posted on the CAEUG web site as soon as I was aware of the problem. As of today, the scam is now using 'MSNBC Breaking News' in the return address.

The Ponemon Institute (<http://www.ponemon.org/>) sponsored by Dell (<http://www.dell.com/>) did a study. They found that about 12,000 laptop computers are 'lost' in U.S. airports each WEEK (about 800 per week at Ohare). 53 percent of the laptops have 'confidential' information on them. 65 percent of the respondents say they do not backup or protect the data on their laptops. About 60 percent of the laptops are NEVER recovered (returned to the rightful owner). 50 percent say they have left their luggage and laptop under the watchful eye of a fellow passenger - a clear violation of federal regulations. The place in the airports where most laptops were lost - security checkpoints. Thanks TSA (<http://www.tsa.gov/>). The TSA web site now includes a 'Week at a Glance' section to show the public (us) that they are doing their jobs. For the week of July 14-20 the items listed were;

- * 10 passengers were arrested due to suspicious behavior or fraudulent travel documents
- * 22 firearms found at checkpoints
- * 3 artfully concealed prohibited items found at checkpoints
- * 12 incidents that involved a checkpoint closure, terminal evacuation or sterile area breach.

The list is interesting in that only 10 people were arrested while 22 firearms were found. I thought that 22 firearms would result in at least 22 arrests. I guess it is not illegal to try to bring a firearm on board an aircraft about half of the time. I found this story here http://www.darkreading.com/document.asp?doc_id=158099&f_src=drdaily and did follow up here <http://www.usatoday.com/money/biztravel/2002-02-20-lost-laptops.htm> . The pdf file of the report is on the CD of the Month.

Microsoft (MS <http://www.microsoft.com/>) reported a 25.7% increase in profit. Sales of Windows Vista, Office 2007, server software, and Xbox 360 were reportedly the primary drivers of the huge increase in profits. The story is at http://www.cbronline.com/article_news.asp?guid=D89D3369-5AF2-4FA9-941D-B42299D416AD .

Windows XP SP3 <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/bb794714.aspx> is on the CD of the Month. Before you install the service pack, be certain to back up your data. Set a restore point. Have or create an installation disk. If things go wrong, you should be prepared to reinstall the OS

(<http://forums.microsoft.com/TechNet/ShowPost.aspx?PostID=3412334&SiteID=17>). Read the postings at

<http://forums.microsoft.com/TechNet/ShowPost.aspx?PostID=3412334&SiteID=17> to determine for yourself if you truly want to install this service pack. Windows XP SP3 is larger than the original installation program. Could this mean that the service pack is a total rewrite of the operating system? Why would MS do that?

Windows Vista SP1 <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/bb738089.aspx> will be available on a separate CD of the Month for \$2 (covers media and handling). MS phone support is available at (866) 234-6020 (for tty/tdd (800) 892-5234) for troubles you may have with the installation. Before you install the service pack, be certain to back up your data. Set a restore point. Have or create an installation disk. If things go wrong, you should be prepared to reinstall the OS.

I discovered an interesting feature of Vista that I had not known about at a Micro Center (<http://www.microcenter.com/>) Vista clinic (http://www.microcenter.com/instore_clinic/sign_up.html). Micro Center offers these clinics free at their stores in Westmont and Chicago. They will not do a presentation at our meeting, I have already asked.

The feature is called Ready Boost
(<http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/Help/12428141-2e4c-43ab-8dd2-a6ed6e3b87761033.msp#EBC>). There is conflicting information about just what it does (<http://discuss.extremetech.com/forums/2/1004414166/ShowThread.aspx>). It is supposed to increase the performance of any Vista machine. Here is how it works. If you have a Ready Boost certified USB 2 (Universal Serial Bus) flash drive, you can designate a portion of that drive to act as additional memory. The conflicting information is what that memory is used for. To use the Ready Boost feature, plug in the flash drive
(<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-vista/features/performance.aspx>). Click the Windows Orb (the replacement for the Start Button), click Computer (the new name for My Computer), right click the flash drive and select properties. The resultant dialog box has a tab marked Ready Boost. Select that tab and click the 'Use this device' radio button. Change the amount of memory to be used to whatever amount you wish. Click the apply button. You may have to reboot the machine to make this feature active. The amount of memory that you have selected to use will no longer be available to use as disk drive storage. MS has made it clear that it will not offer Ready Boost on Windows XP (in a service pack or patch). If MS will not make Ready Boost available to XP users, I thought that some one may be doing it as a third party add on. I found eBoostr, a pay program (\$19 to \$39) that offers more features than Ready Boost. The free trial of the program is on the CD of the Month.

During last month's members forum a question came up about cache memory. Just so there is no misunderstanding I will put it in writing. Volatile memory is temporary storage that requires constant power to maintain the stored data. Volatile memory is used in a number of places in the computer. Random Access Memory (RAM), also known as main memory, is just one of those. L1, L2 and L3 are type of cache memory that are located on the Central Processing Unit CPU. Not all CPU contain L3 cache. L1, L2, and/or L3 is used by the CPU to store and retrieve instructions and data without going to the much slower main memory RAM. If what the CPU needs is in an L1, L2 or L3 cache, it is used saving a few nano-seconds. The nano-seconds can add up to some real time. See

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CPU_cache for a technical discussion of L1, L2, and L3 cache. If the CPU cannot find what it needs, it goes to RAM memory. It uses the Front Side Bus (FSB) to access the RAM. The speed of the FSB is expressed in megahertz (MHz) - the faster the better. If the CPU cannot find what it needs in RAM, it then goes to the hard drive or optical drive (CD or DVD). The CPU always uses the fastest memory source first then switches to the next fastest source until it gets to the slowest. Other places that memory is used is in the hard drive. There are 2, 8, or 16 MB cache storage on the hard drive circuit board. The drive controller anticipates what information will be asked for and preloads it into the cache. This activity, which cannot be altered by the user, speeds the throughput of the drive. The larger the cache, the greater the throughput. See

<http://www.tomshardware.com/reviews/understanding-hard-drive-performance,1557.html> for a technical discussion of hard drive selection. Another place is on the graphical interface card. Some cards are set up so that memory may be added, but most cards have a fixed amount of memory.

The higher the memory on a graphics card the higher the resolution and refresh can be delivered to the monitor. The monitor may restrict the highest resolution because of physical limitations. In Vista under Control Panel -> System shows a performance number. That number is almost always related to memory. It is set to the lowest performing device. Most times the lowest number is the graphic card. If your screen does not refresh instantly, the card may need to be replaced. Always buy the card with the most memory that you can afford. See

<http://techreport.com/articles.x/14230> for a technical discussion of graphics card selection.

In Vista you may have encountered the annoying dialog box that asks you if you are sure you want to run a program. The way to turn off that 'feature' is to click the Windows Orb (the replacement for the Start Button), click Control Panel, click User Accounts. In User Accounts, turn off User Account Control. Gizmodo, a tech toy web site, interviewed Bill Gates, Chairman of MS, at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES **<http://www.cesweb.org/>**) last January. The interviewer asked what product that has been released in the last 5 years should have had more 'polish'. Gates responded, "Ask me after we ship the next version of Windows...then I'll be more open to give you a blunt answer." The video of the question and answer are here;

<http://gizmodo.com/342920/holy-crap-did-bill-gates-just-say-windows-sucks>. The headline on the web page reads in part "did Bill Gates just say that Windows sucks?" I guess Bill has had trouble with Vista.

Between you, me and The Lamp Post that's all for this month.

CD of the Month August 2008

ARI - August Newsletter

AviraAntiVir - Free anti virus software

Ccleaner210 - Update to Ccleaner

Clickster - Program searches the Web for free MP3 music

DeskDrive - Creates a desktop short cut to USB devices

EasyVideoDL - Program to download videos from Youtube

eBoostr - Ready Booster run alike for Win XP

Everest220 - Last free version of the inventory software

Flypaper - Create presentations and publish anywhere

KeyScrambler - Keeps passwords safe by sending junk with the PW

Memtest86 - Memory tester

OldTimeRadio - Old time radio programs

PonemonDellRprt - The Dell sponsored study on lost laptops

RootkitElim - Detects and kills rootkit (malware)

Save2PC - Downloads videos from Youtube/Google - saves it as Avi/Mpeg

ShowStopper - Program to help shutdown your computer

SpybotSD160 - Update to Spybot

TubeMe - Downloads videos from Youtube

WinAmp554 - Media player update

XPSP3 - Windows XP SP3

YouRipper - Downloads videos from Youtube

YouTubeDL - Downloads videos from Youtube

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Reminder:
You'll get better, faster service
if you use CAEUG in the
subject of your e-mail.

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER:

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The CAEUG newsletter is published eleven times annually. Contributions by members are encouraged and will be gratefully acknowledged in the newsletter. We have a policy of exchanging newsletters with other users groups across the nation. Several CAEUG member articles have already been picked up and reprinted.

MEMBERS HELPLINE

Any member with a specific expertise can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline.

Beginner Helpline Billy Douglas

Beginner hardware problems . . . Dick Fergus

Hardware problems, Win 9x, 2K, XP & Linux John Spizzirri

CD OF THE MONTH FORMAT: Is now available in **two (2)** flavors. The **Basic CD** will be packed with the standard items, while the **CD of the Month** will have NEW and updated items.

NEW Money Saving Offer for CD of the Month
Pre Order + Prepay = SAVE \$\$

The club will offer the CD of the Month on a pre order, prepaid basis. The charge will be \$70.00 a year for 9 months. This is \$20 annual savings over buying them for \$9 each month. Lynn Johnson, the treasurer, will keep track of anyone placing a 9-month order.

MAIL Request - There will be a \$2.00 mailing charge per CD

Beginner's SIG

Ask questions and discuss computer experiences
Such as:

1. New to Computers? (basic topics)
2. How to use the Web or download information
3. How to install hardware/software
4. Discuss how to troubleshoot hardware conflicts, learn boot up emergency tricks
5. What do you want to know??

SIG meets before regular meeting from **9:05 to 9:45**



Membership Costs.....

	First Yr.	Renewal
Individual	\$25.00	\$20.00
Family	\$30.00	\$25.00
Corporate	\$30.00	\$25.00
Associate	\$20.00	\$15.00

CAEUG
P. O. Box 2727
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

FIRST CLASS MAIL

*** ! ** ! ** Notice Date information ** ! ** ! ***

The next **REGULAR** meeting will be held at the **Glenside Public Library**
25 East Fullerton in Glendale Heights, Illinois
starting 9:45am on

4th Saturday August 23, 2008

CONFIRMED Future Meeting dates for 2008 at Glenside Public Library:
August 23 full room A+B

Hope to see you there!