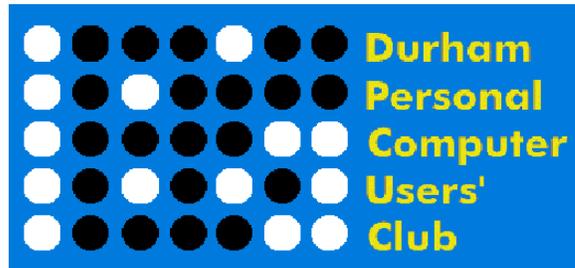


October 2017

PC MONITOR

Durham Personal Computer Users' Club Newsletter



September Prize List

Alan Francis	\$15.75	Mark Hunter	Tablet Stand
Ron Meyers	\$9.00	Ed Goudge	Screen Clean Kit
		Alex Morrison	Key Fobs
		Jim Smith	WiFi Detector

Please visit the Club Web Page for all the latest links and information

<http://www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/>

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Next Meeting

Technology and Security

by Lloyd Lindsay

Faith United Church at 1778 Nash Road, Courtice

Thursday, October 12 2017 7:00PM

FYI

- By Dan Delong

Amazon New and Upgraded Gadgets

Amazon, an online marketer of merchandise, also designs and sells a variety of hardware devices. I believe the Kindle Reader was first, promoting digital book sales. Although the Kindle, Fire TV Stick, and Alexa, may not be the best devices, among peers from Apple and Google, they are less costly. Amazon will soon release improvements to two hardware items. The **Fire TV set top box** will gain a microphone for voice control. **Alexa** will produce better sound, and a new product – **Echo** (a smaller version of the Alexa) can deliver music to all other Echo devices throughout a home. Voice commands initiate searches – words that may be mined for keywords leading to purchase suggestions. Echo will also receive and make phone calls, just like the Alexa personal assistant (now with better speakers and microphone). For times when shouting at Alexa or Echo, from across the room, might be annoying, a new product will place the wireless microphone inside the frame of eyeglasses. <https://www.theverge.com/2017/9/27/16374254/amazon-event-2017-news-recap-echo-spot-fire-tv-hardware>



Baidu now with live translation



A smallish hand-held device (soon to retail in China and Japan) will provide a Wi-Fi hotspot in about 80 different countries. But, its main talent is the ability to almost immediately translate speech between Chinese, Japanese, and English. Baidu is the national Chinese based search engine. The article also reported that Baidu and Ford have been working on autonomous vehicle technology, based on LIDAR (and many other technologies), for at least the last three years. <https://www.chinamoneynetwork.com/2017/09/25/baidus-newest-gadget-translates-speech-near-real-time>

Star Trek Diagnostic Scanner

New Zealanders are developing a space age scanner, specifically designed to diagnose skin cancer. Caught early enough, patients who were treated almost always lived for five or more years. It's another story for those too late in obtaining an accurate diagnosis. Although the fictional Star Trek *Tricorder* could scan for multiple health issues, this device uses advances in photonics and invisible lasers to aid diagnosis for skin cancer only. *(I wonder if it works much like the new iPhone X's facial identification, using many foci marked and interpreted by patterned laser beams.)* The cancer scan results would then be compared to a database, yielding highly reliable estimates of the kinds of skin lesions found. Perhaps the next use for this self-examination device will be self-treatment of such tumours with lasers. http://www.nzherald.co.nz/technology/news/article.cfm?c_id=5&objectid=11926350



Kim Komando – on unlocking a smart phone



I don't currently bother unlocking my phone, with either a finger pattern or a pin code, because it stores only contacts and phone numbers (never financial matters). Perhaps I should take Kim's security advice. After all, my phone can still access my email and social media accounts, by default. She warns against using drawn finger patterns, as they are too easily observed and replicated by others. She feels a six-digit pin is best. *Note: Taking your phone, or any electronic device, through US customs may require you to open the device for full inspection (even duplication).*

[And, here I thought the North Korean leadership was 'nutters'. I was wrong. This kind of intrusion on International travellers is way overboard, in my opinion, and in the opinion of some Canadian privacy officials.]

<https://www.komando.com/happening-now/421110/stop-unlocking-your-smartphone-this-way-its-not-safe>

In a subsequent story, Kim describes how to turn off tracking features on your phone.

<https://www.komando.com/happening-now/421108/your-smartphone-is-quietly-recording-a-lot-about-you>

Samsung AI inside a phone

Currently, a lot of artificial intelligence processing happens offsite - in the cloud - and certainly not inside your smart phone. Samsung is working on a single chip, to handle the AI needs of future phones (or any web connected gadget) that will use their various personal assistant apps.

Microsoft is also working in this vane, and will include AI processing inside the next **HoloLens** headsets - those with augmented and virtual reality capabilities.

<http://www.trustedreviews.com/news/samsung-working-on-ai-chips-3297181>



Telus - speed tested at 1Gbps

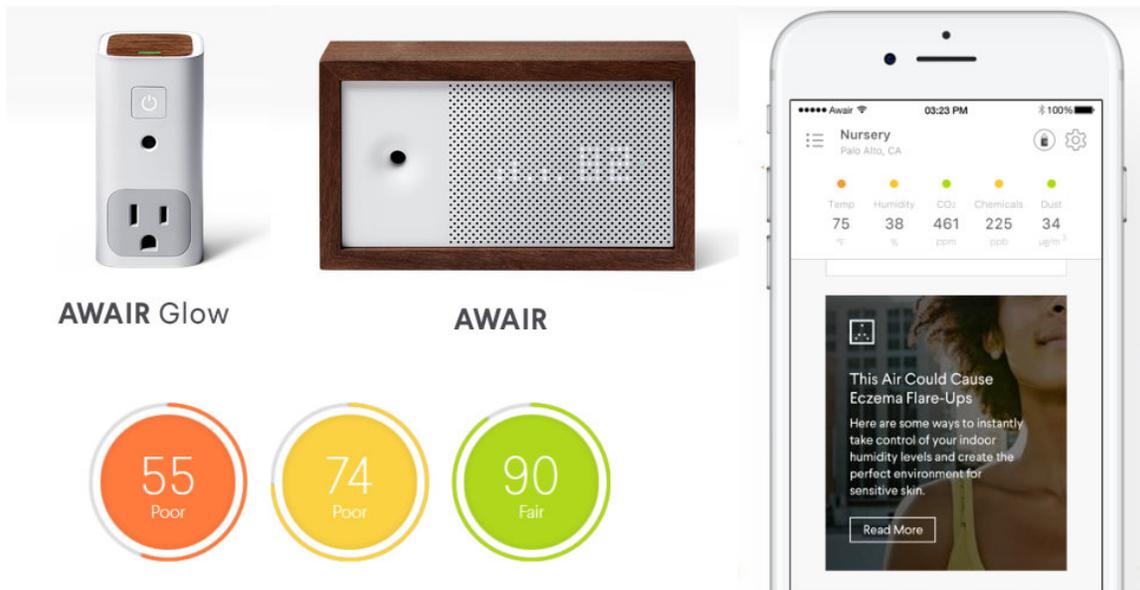
Big Telco has, until recently, relied entirely on radio towers and **licensed** spectra to connect between callers, and for the transfer of Internet data. Home users make use of 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz **unlicensed** spectra for access to both the web, and VoIP

services. Customers generally pay two bills: - one for cell service and another for home ISP service. Yet, both services can now make phone calls, send text messages, handle e-mail, and access the Web. This situation appears both redundant and costly. A few start-ups have tried to sell phone and ISP as a single service, on a single cell phone plan. Until defeated by a CRTC decision, Sugar Mobile, for example, provided both cell and data service (when away from wireless), by piggy-backing onto a major carrier. While on wireless (home or public), the same services were achieved through wireless IP. For only \$20 per month, Sugar users got a phone number (sim card), roaming, and 400Gb of data (cumulative). Now, Telus, to achieve the 1Gbps speed, is piggy-backing onto unlicensed wireless signals over short distances, using publicly available or free hardware, to boost the speed of its licensed spectrum. The process is called LTE-U, or License Assisted Access (LAA). It's working, but places extra load on the unlicensed spectra.

<https://mobilesyrupt.com/2017/09/27/telus-almost-reaches-1gbps-lte-a-speedtest>

mobilesyrupt

AWAIR and GLOW

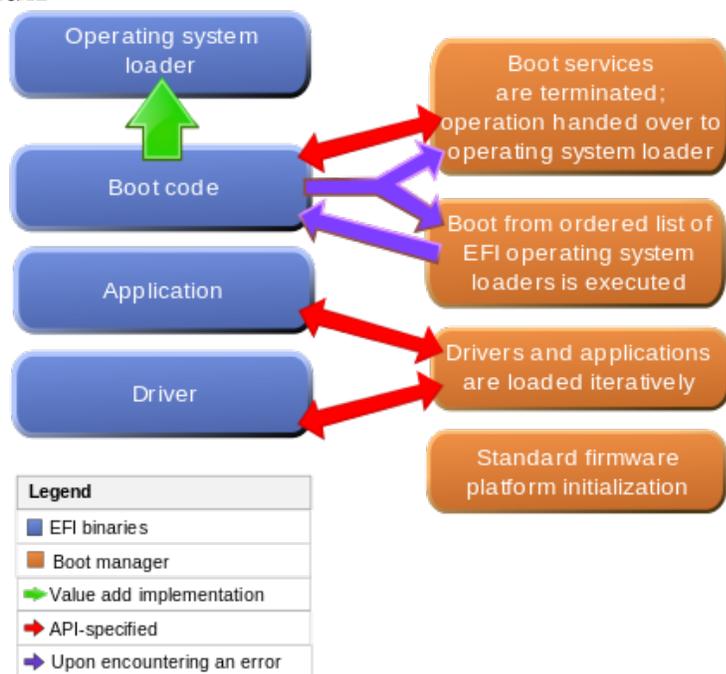


These two indoor air quality monitors differ only in the number of pollutants measured (and price). **GLOW** measures temperature, humidity, CO2 and VOCs (volatile organics compounds), while **AWAIR** adds measurements of dust. GLOW also acts as plug-in night light, and communicates via a smart phone app with **Alexa**, **Google Home**, and **If This Then That**, reporting results on the phone, and allowing control of smart devices like thermostats and humidistats. AWAIR works with **Nest** rather than Google Home and it also displays clock time. <https://getawair.com/>

EFI (BIOS) Vulnerability – Mac, PC, Linux

Figure 1 from Wikimedia Commons

Going by names like **Thunderstrike** and **Sonic Screwdriver**, computers owned by those in sensitive positions (journalists, lawyers, politcos) may be compromised by an almost impossible-to-detect incursion into their computer... an incursion that is even more impossible to remove. This malware lives not in the Operating System, but in the pre-boot section of the GPT hard drive, or in the BIOS chips on the motherboard of UEFI computers. The article explains how to detect such malware. Mac monoculture and the prevalence of Thunderbolt devices (as delivery vehicles for malware), make Apple devices more likely to be infected than PCs. *EFI* means “*Extensible Firmware Interface*”; a *U* prefix stands for “*Unified*”.



<https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2017/09/an-alarming-number-of-macs-remain-vulnerable-to-stealthy-firmware-hacks/>

CCleaner 5.33 –infected

Maybe not all downloads of **CCleaner** 5.33 carried the infective payload, according to new owners, **Piriform**, but check it out if you use this trusted crap cleaner.

<https://www.theverge.com/2017/9/18/16325202/ccleaner-hack-malware-security>

GoPro HERO6 Black

At a retail cost of \$500 USD, a purchaser would expect a pretty good video camera. And, that's exactly what you will get; for this camera shoots 4K at 60 fps, and 1080p at 240 fps, while withstanding water depth to 33 feet, and its ability to stabilize video (digitally) is better than ever before. Editing can occur inside a smart phone using the GoPro **QuickStories** app, after wired or wireless transfer of the video files. <https://venturebeat.com/2017/09/29/gopro-hero6-black-hands-on-amazing-stabilization-on-the-rocket-boat/>



Tweeters – now doubled to 280 characters

Enough said.

<https://9to5mac.com/2017/09/27/how-to-get-280-character-tweets/>

Sudoku

for October 2017

by Alex Morrison



A Difficult Puzzle this month!

7								
5		4					2	
				5	9			4
2		3		8				
	1				3		7	
8		6		4				
			8	1		2		
					4	9		
				3	6			

Sudoku

The game board on the left was produced using **Sudokuki** on PCLinuxOS 64 Bit running KDE 5 Plasma.

The objective is to fill in the missing numbers ensuring that every 3 X 3 grid has the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats and every full column or row has the numbers 1 through 9 again with no repeats.

If you have troubles solving the puzzle send an email to me and I will send you the solution.

Have fun! Alex

Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison



From: <http://lxxer.com/> & <http://www.linuxtoday.com/> & <http://www.linuxinsider.com/>
<http://www.topix.com/tech/linux>

How to Set Up and Use Guitarix on Linux

- Howtoforge Linux Howtos und Tutorials (Posted by [bob](#) on Oct 4, 2017 10:07 PM EDT)
- Story Type: [Tutorial](#); Groups: [Linux](#)

Guitarix is the best virtual amplifier and effect emulator for Linux, so if you are a guitar or a bass player the following quick guide on how to set it up and use it is for you.

- [Full story](#)
- [Read more](#)
- [0 threads and 0 posts](#)

7 must-have GIMP brushes

- Opensource.com; By Seth Kenlon (Posted by [bob](#) on Oct 4, 2017 2:58 PM EDT)
- Story Type: [Editorial](#), [Tutorial](#); Groups: [Community](#), [GNU](#), [Linux](#), [Multimedia](#)

GIMP, the GNU Image Manipulation Program, is first and foremost, as its name suggests, a photo manipulation program; however, sometimes the lines blur between photo manipulation and airbrushing, material emulation, graphic design, and even layout. In other words, GIMP isn't just for photos.

- [Full story](#)
- [Read more](#)
- [0 threads and 0 posts](#)

[Linux Mint 18.2 Sonya MATE Complete Review](#)

(Oct 04, 2017, 12:00) ([0 talkbacks](#))

Linux Mint in 2017 is what Ubuntu used to be in 2008.

LINUX PICKS AND PANS

[Bodhi Linux With Moksha Is Truly Enlightening](#)

September 6, 2017

Bodhi Linux 4.3.1's implementation of the Enlightenment desktop, released late last month, continues this distro's tradition of providing an awesome desktop computing platform for office or home. When I last reviewed Bodhi Linux, I was attracted to the relatively new desktop environment. I recently installed the latest version on new hardware, and Bodhi Linux did not disappoint. [\[More...\]](#)

Linux Software **QMPlay**

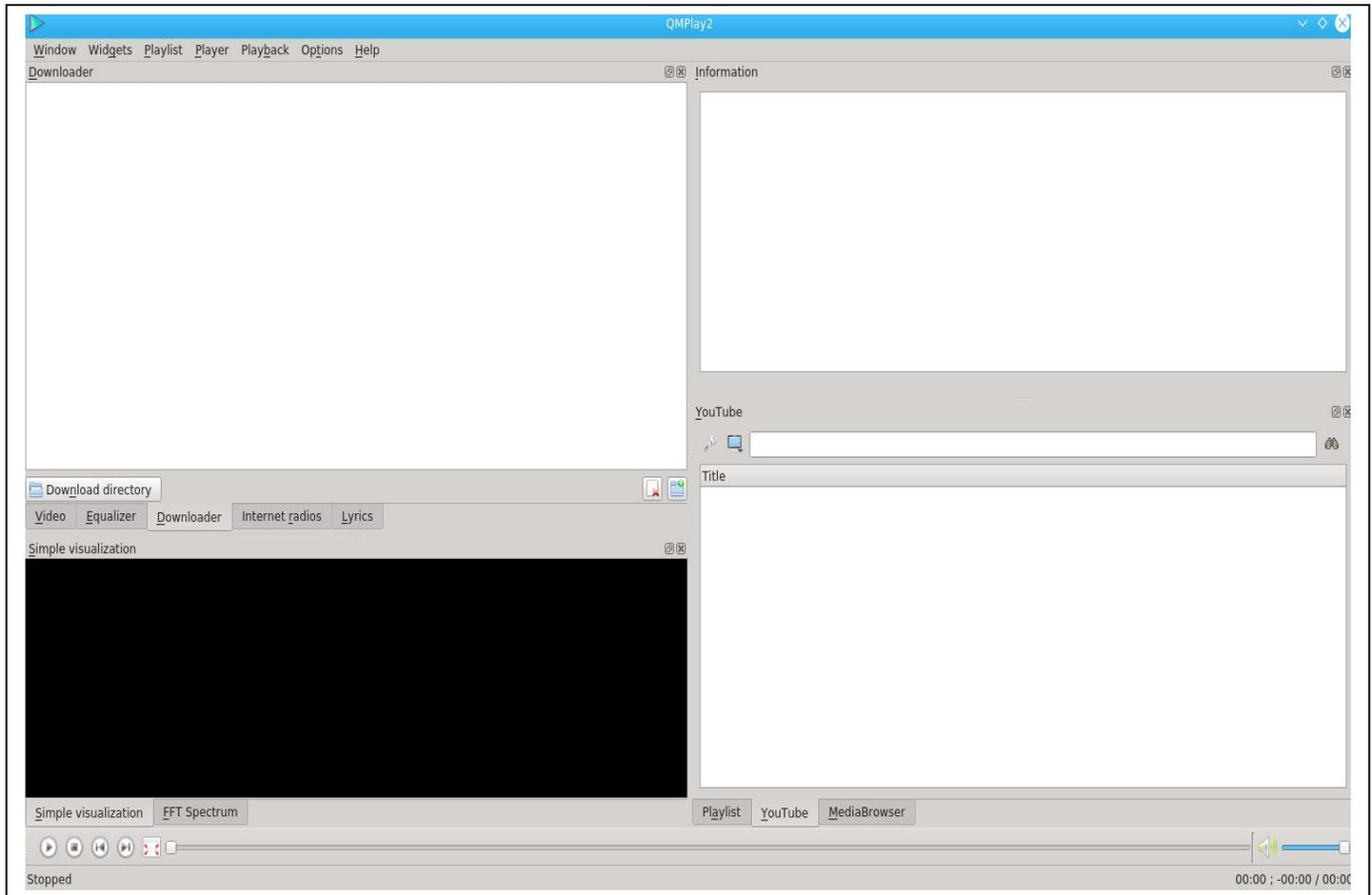
by Alex Morrison

Linux users in the past used Minitube to play YouTube videos when there browser was unable to play the flash files.

Whether we now have a problem with flash or some other codec on YouTube we have another choice. We can use QMplay. QMplay will play the videos as did the older Minitube but QMplay does more than just play YouTube video.

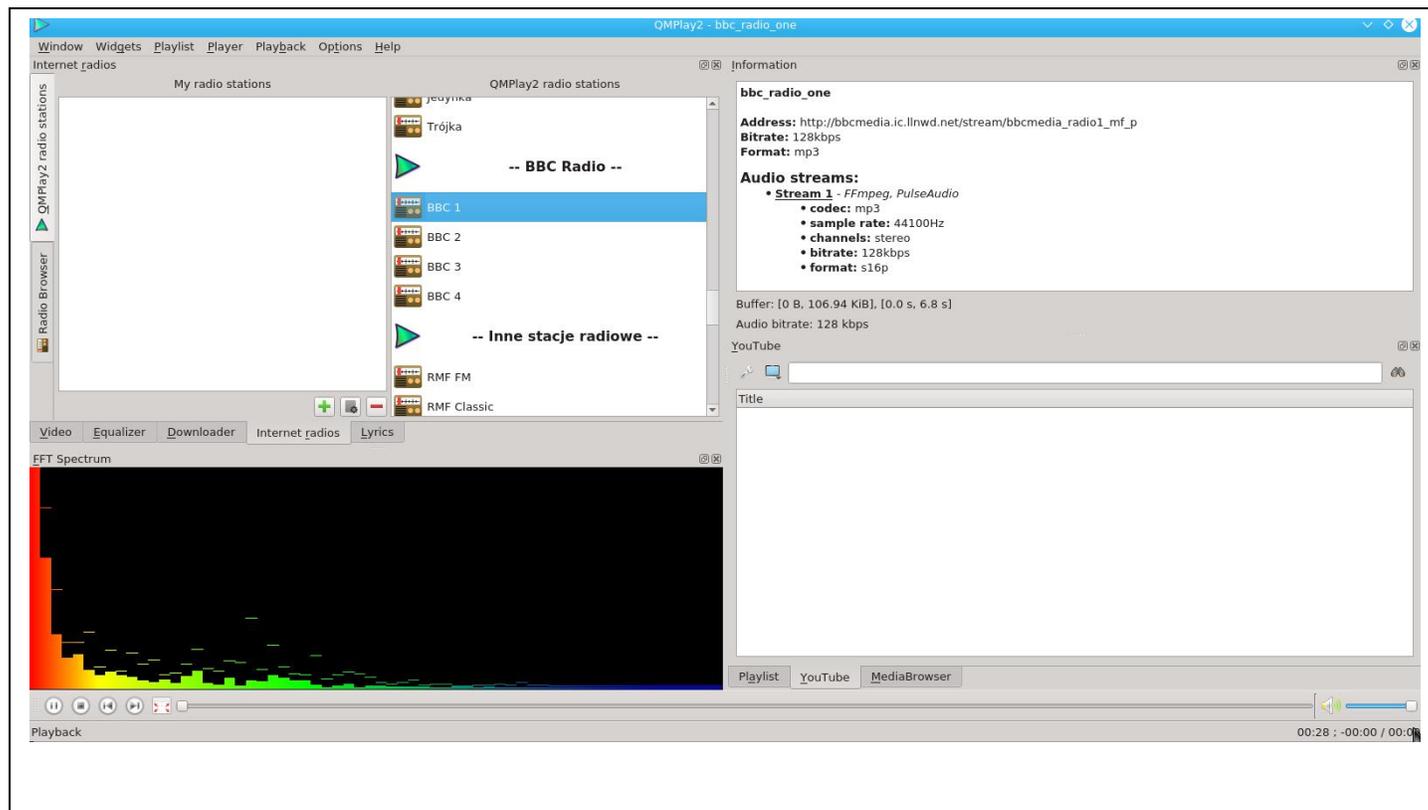
I will illustrate what QMPlay can do with a few images. First – The basic layout

As you see in the tabs we can play Video, adjust the Audio [Equalizer], Download, Play Internet Radio and display Lyrics.

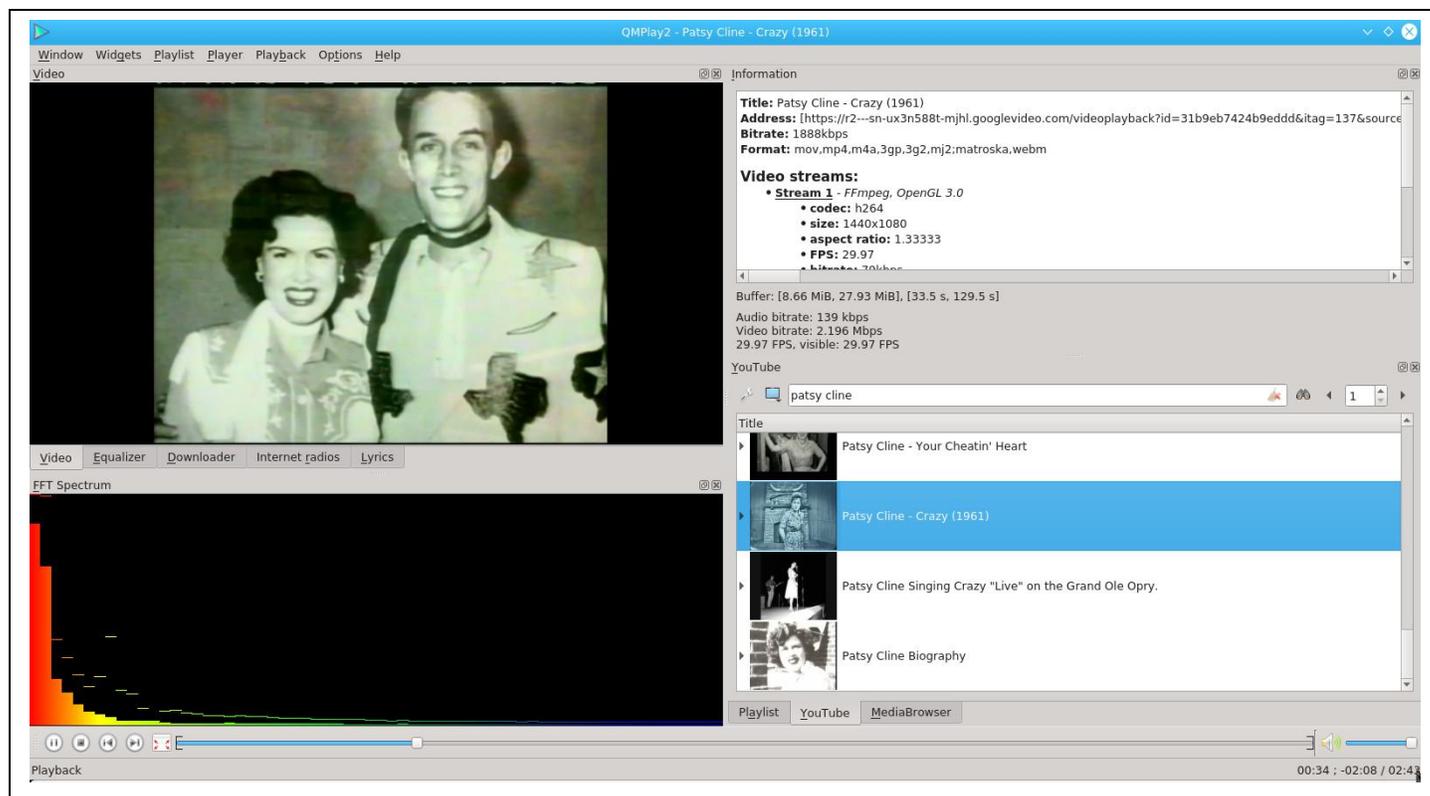


The following two images illustrate the Radio and YouTube capability. I will leave other features to the Linux meeting.

In the next picture we see a BBC radio station playing music. Information is displayed in the right panel. A graph of the sound waves is shown lower left.



In the next image we see a YouTube playback of a Patsy Cline song and a display of the YouTube video



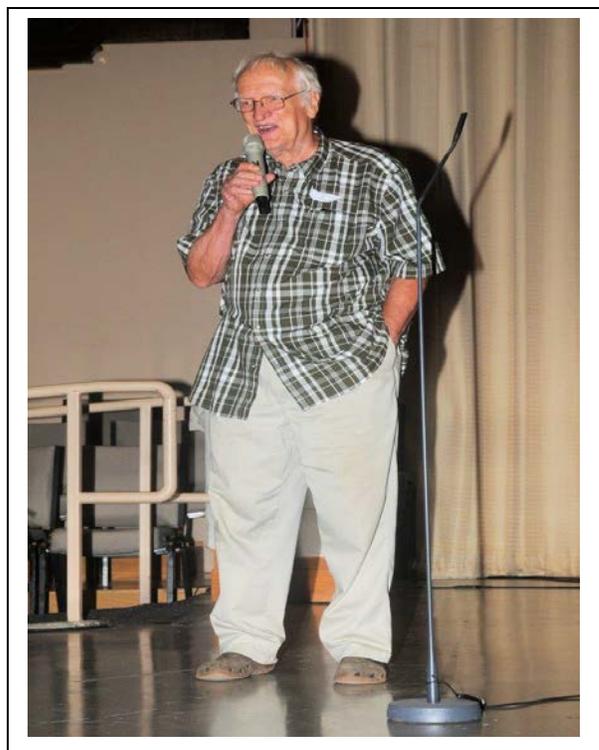
We will look at this program in more detail at the next Linux Meeting.

Presentation Images [from September] by Farny LeGresley



An Introduction to ZTree

By David McComb



Wikimania 2017 Conference

by Anne Delong

Between August 11-13 Dan and I attended [Wikimania 2017](#) in Montreal. Wikimania is the annual conference organized by the Wikimedia Foundation, and brings together people who contribute to the foundation's many projects. The best known of these are the [Wikipedia](#) free encyclopedia and the [Wikimedia Commons](#) collection of freely-licensed media files. The conference is held in a different part of the world each year, so we took advantage of its nearby location this year.

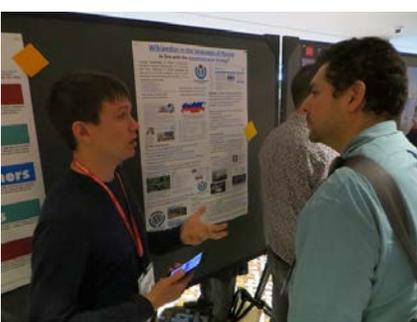


The conference included how-to workshops, edit-a-thons, hack-a-thons (collaborative software development), poster sessions, project reports and meet-ups. There were also lectures and panel discussions by internationally-known speakers on the subjects of freedom of information, privacy, copyright issues, censorship, open data, access to information in areas with limited or no internet, and future directions of the foundation.

We attended a session about [Wikidata](#), a new project to create a world-wide collection of structured data which can be searched using custom searches written in a query language called [SPARQL](#). Anne attended a session about computer data mining of scientific journal articles, while Dan went to one about audio, image and video file formats and recording techniques. We heard about efforts to use 3D scanning and printing to preserve cultural and architectural items which are being destroyed through conflict and natural disasters; a six foot high 3D printed example was on display.



Six foot 3D printed columns



Poster session

We participated in a poster session, at which the poster creators explained their personal projects and points of view. Later, we attended a series of “lightning talks”, at which people from around the world demonstrated their contributions to free knowledge projects, including software tools, school and community projects, data collection and scanning, computer translation algorithms, and a standalone encyclopedia server and hotspot powered by a Raspberry Pi.. We went to a meetup for contributors to [WikiSource](#), an online collection of scanned documents from around the world.

The conference also included presentations about projects that weren't part of the Wikimedia Foundation, but had similar goals and interests. One example was [Wikivoyage](#), which is a user-contributed guidebook for travellers, with transportation routes, restaurant and hotel reviews, points of interest, etc. We attended a demonstration and map-a-thon for [OpenStreetMap](#), an open-source, user-contributed map of the world.



Portable hotspot/server for Wikipedia

The conference included lunches and other social events at which we met open source and open data enthusiasts from around the world. We even participated in Breton dancing lessons! All in all it was an informative and enjoyable experience. (all photos from [Wikimedia Commons](#))

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS {SIG's}

Special Interest Groups are for members only.

SIG's are really free monthly seminars with question and answer sessions following the presentation(s)

Members of SIG's enjoy a feeling of community and share common goals and interests.

Most SIG's are informal and members who attend them set the agenda for the meeting based on their own needs.

New ideas for SIG groups are welcome.

Special Interest Groups

Details

BEGINNER

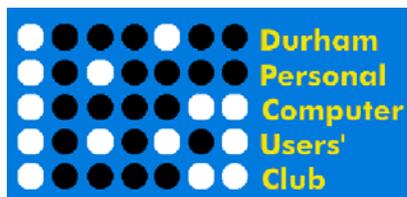
Co-ordinator: Ed Goudge
Location: Call for Location
Telephone: 905-926-9003
Date: 3rd Thursday of month 7:00 PM

**LINUX
 Durham Linux User Group**

Co-ordinator: Ed Goudge
Location: Call for Location
Telephone: 905-926-9003
Date: 1st Thursday of month 7:30 PM

Digital Camera Group

Location: Call for Location
Telephone: 905-926-9003
Date: 4th Thursday of each month at 7:30PM



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 EXECUTIVE**

2015-2016

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HOME PAGE --- <http://www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/>

**Newsletter
 Information**

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 The PC Monitor cannot be responsible for errors or inaccuracies in the content, although efforts will be made to publish information accurately.

The deadline for articles and information is 10 days following the monthly meeting. Late submissions may not be published due to tight schedules. Submit articles by email to the editor at alexmor@teksavvy.com. Articles should be submitted in Word Format using Times New Roman as the preferred Font.