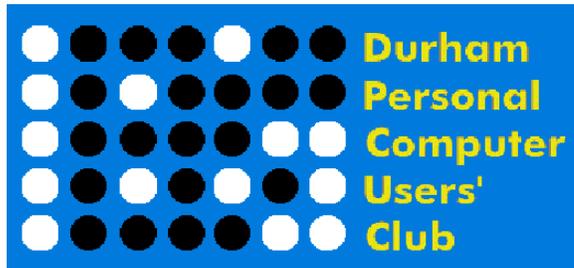


Jan 2019

PC MONITOR

Durham Personal Computer Users' Club Newsletter



December Prize List

Alan Oliver	\$14.00	Adrian De Groot	Phone Repair Kit
John Alford	\$???.00	Ron Galbraith	Flashlight
		Mike Roche	Calculator
		Farny LeGresley	Phone Holder
		Allan Francis	USB Car Charger

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

Get it Free [At the Library]

By Kiley Percy [Clarington Branch]

Faith United Church at 1778 Nash Road, Courtice

Thursday, Jan 10, 2019 7:00PM

FYI

- By Dan Delong

Are Device Microphones Listening to You?

This **Vox** article is about cell phone **microphones**, and the techniques used by social media to deliver ads to you. Although our phones are probably not constantly listening, unless we say the magic words to awaken them, listening to the flow of human speech is not the main way, employed by monetizers, to figure out our personalized ad preferences. The article goes on to explain how location data, interactions with friends, and even analysis of photos, based on lens dust, can provide better identifying data. Also, installation of some game apps may lead to a few “cloaked” screen grabs uploading to a monetizer of such data.

Alternately, the microphone may be listening to environmental sounds (some outside of the human hearing range) to determine whether we are in a certain type of location, like a mall, or a city street, or in a car. It may even take a sample of audio to compare it to a database of TV ads or shows, in order to determine your media consumption habits.

<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2018/12/28/18158968/facebook-microphone-tapping-recording-instagram-ads>



Top Shot on Pixel 3

For those who do not yet own a Pixel 3 smart phone, **Top Shot** may still be of interest, as I expect this feature will eventually migrate to other Android phones. **Artificial Intelligence** (or at least, one iteration of **AI**) analyses a succession of up to 90 images, taken pre and post shutter press, (that's 3 seconds worth of images) to pick out a couple of high resolution shots that are the best, based on facial expression, detail, and lighting. The image from the shutter push moment is saved first, followed shortly thereafter by the Top Shot choices. <http://ai.googleblog.com/2018/12/top-shot-on-pixel-3.html>



CRTC Boss not doing his job

In 2017, the Feds installed Ian Scott as head of the CRTC, with an expectation his insider knowledge of the big telecoms would bring forth cheaper data and cell phone plans for Canadians. Those plans might have started as low as \$5 per month, for just minimal data. *NOTE: - The average cost to maintain a cell phone in Canada is currently \$70 per month.* Total cellular revenue for 2017 was over 24 Billion \$. That huge amount of money may be overfunding network upgrades and investor profits. My Sugar phone, for example, (killed by a Rogers challenge to the CRTC last year) cost only \$20 per month. For that fee, I got a phone number that worked on any WiFi signal I could hook up to, and provided backup roaming on the same remote tower system used in Iqaluit (where one would expect the tower and signal costs to be extreme). Furthermore, the 500MB of monthly LTE data on Sugar was cumulative; that is, any unused data was added to the next month. Ian Scott's past work as VP of TELUS, and other insider executive jobs, seems not to have encouraged him to fall on the side of consumers. Pundits are calling for him to be replaced.

<https://mobilesyrup.com/2018/12/17/crtc-decision-slap-in-face/>



Smart Phone Powered Laptop



Razer's Linda Project mates the Razer smart phone to a full-sized laptop, with a lighted keyboard. The phone itself docks into the place you'd expect to see a glide pad. In fact, it replaces both the glide pad and the brains of the laptop. This concept was shown at last year's CES 2018, but I missed seeing it. (I'm still not sure if it exists.) But, I like it – the ideal of enlarging the phone screen and using a keypad and mouse. My Windows 10 phone (maybe the Android as well) can become a controller for a smart television, or integrate with a Windows 10 laptop to some degree. This [Linda Project phone](https://thegadgetflow.com/blog/2018-in-review-gadget-flows-most-innovative-products-of-the-year/) also charges while it is docked. <https://thegadgetflow.com/blog/2018-in-review-gadget-flows-most-innovative-products-of-the-year/>

Canada Pension Plan Investing in BYJU

India's middle class takes education seriously, such that families are willing to pay a subscription fee for a package of online lessons, learning apps, and for human tutors. All is wrapped up into one service, called, "BYJU". Decades ago, MIT's Nicholas Negroponte created an inexpensive web enabled device, powered by a hand crank and loaded with essential free software. He intended to combat the digital divide experience by students in poorer countries. However, prices for such devices have since dropped considerably, and WiFi is almost universal. The focus has now turned, from hardware, to maximizing learning efficiency in other ways. An infusion of investment money (about half a billion dollars), some of which is from the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, should improve educational opportunities in India, with plans to expand worldwide. BYJU is now part of Naspers Ventures, which also owns *Udemy*, *Codecademy*, *SoloLearn*, and *Brainly*. <https://gadget.co.za/naspers-invests-540m-in-education-app/>



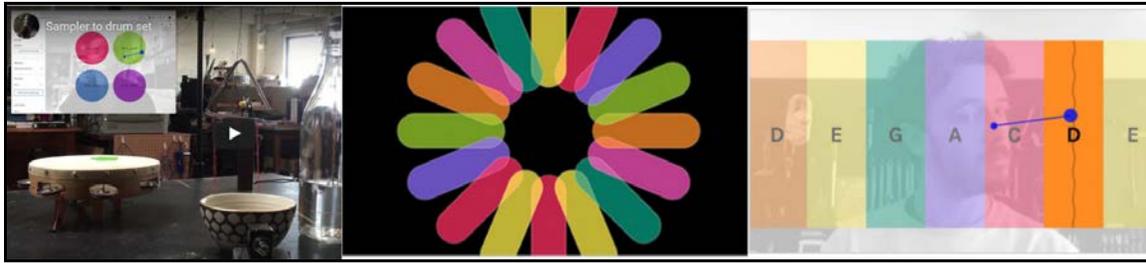
Jamstik7, Jamstik Plus, and Jamstik12



Jamstiks are not true guitars. They are meant to be compact learning tools, playable anywhere, which could include the passenger seat of a car. The strings and frets work as expected, with the added benefit of Bluetooth connection to audio speakers or computers and phones. When running the downloadable software, finger positions on the strings and frets are recognized and- appear on screen, where any successfully made musical cords are named for you. Alternately, you can just play some music and have it transcribed through midi as sheet music, automatically. Guided lessons and practice sessions are also included. The soon to be released **Jamstik12** (with twelve frets) costs about \$500 USD, which is twice as much as the seven fret **Jamstick7** version.

<https://jamstik.com/>

Experiment with Google



Titles like: “*Word Synth*”, “*Seeing Music*”, “*Clarion Lite*”, “*Keyboard*”, “*Sound Canvas*”, and “*Body Synth*”, all appear as members of the **Google Creatability** series of experiments, designed to enrich artistic creativity for people lacking the ability to hear or see, or who have some other disability. Visitors to the web page can try these programs. Furthermore, Google invites developers to improve upon the open such source projects, or design new ones, using **TensorFlow Java Script**. [What can you do with them? The experiments explore a diverse set of inputs, from mouse, keyboard, body, wrist, nose, or voice. You can make music by moving your face, draw using sight or sound, experience music visually, and more.] <https://experiments.withgoogle.com/collection/creatability>

Serious App developers may wish to check out Google’s **Firebase**: <https://firebase.google.com/> or make use of **Dynamic Links** (better than QR codes).

BBC Micro:bit Computer on a Card



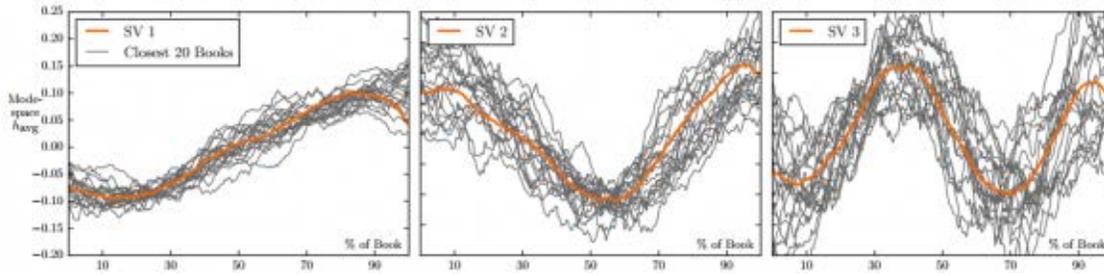
If a Raspberry Pi computer is too advanced for children, then the **Micro:bit** computer, along with accessories and a simple block building coding language, like *Scratch*, *Kodu*, *Swift* or *MakeCode*, should encourage lots of exploration and ‘fun’ learning. The website lists six Canadian suppliers for this \$20 device, along with multiple ‘build’ accessories. However, the basic card still comes with 2 programmable buttons, a reset button, some connecting pins, sensors for light, temperature, acceleration and direction, along with radio and Bluetooth. On one side of this “computer on-a-card” are 25 LEDs that can be programmed to show letters, numbers and shapes. More advanced coding uses Python and JavaScript. The **Micro:bit** can be “flashed” from a number of other device operating systems, including Raspberry Pi. <https://microbit.org/>

Radiologists Lose to AI

Stanford researchers have trained deep learning and computer vision to read X-rays of **wrists and hands** with accuracy better than a radiologist asked to do the same task. (Efforts to include the X-rays of other bones - of the elbow, arm, and shoulder - may soon prove just as successful.) Radiology is one of the most expensive, yet the most valuable, diagnostic tool in medicine. Perhaps radiologists can soon return to general practice, saving the system from their generous fees. <https://www.technologyreview.com/the-download/610017/ai-is-continuing-its-assault-on-radiologists>



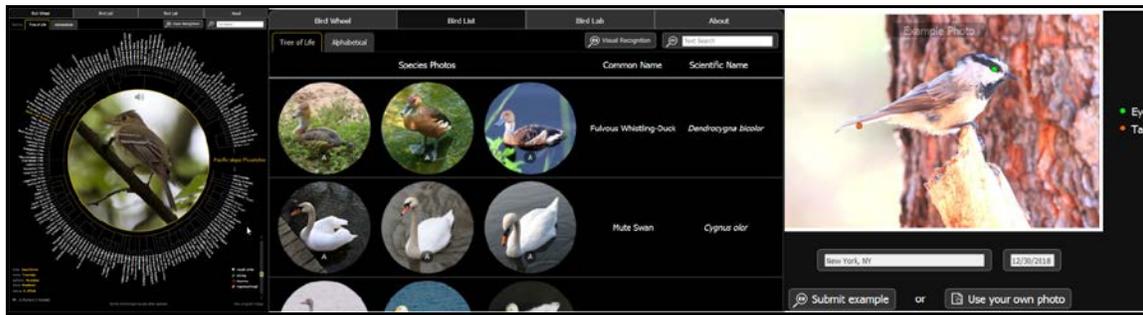
Stories (Novels) Have Six Emotional Arcs



Good story writing was once thought to require anywhere between three and thirty emotional roller coasters. An analysis of text from 1,700 stories in the public domain has concluded otherwise. The algorithm analysed English words for sentimental polarity, while also locating them within plot lines and page numbers. The article also describes earlier theories for making good stories (Aristotle for one), and the proposal by Kurt Vonnegut in 1995 to input story shapes into computers.

<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/601848/data-mining-reveals-the-six-basic-emotional-arcs-of-storytelling>

Birdsnap



If facial recognition can pick out people from hordes of others, it should be able to do the same for bird identification. And, now, it does! Although the **Birdsnap App** is made for iPhones, the website offers equivalent functionality through its web pages. If you can't take a good clear live photo of the bird in question, this app, and the website, permits browsing through images. This technology has already created other smart apps – namely, “**Dogsnap**”, and “**Leafsnap**”. **Birdsnap** has added bird calls to its database and may use your recording of a call to identify birds in the future.

<https://www.audubon.org/news/innovative-technology-gives-birdwatching-boost>

\$500 Million for Better GPS

This newest **GPSIII satellite** will augment all of the other US military GPS satellites, thereby providing three times more accurate positioning. Whether or not any of this improved accuracy will translate to civilian GPS is questionable. However, this particular vehicle is much better at resisting interference through jamming by an enemy. Elon Musk had to sue the government in order to open up a closed bid by another company. His SpaceX Falcon9 rocket now has a contract to put up more satellites.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/gps-spacex-launch-success-1.4953736>



Deep Learning Creates Immersive Sound



In our natural environments, humans have become really good at locating the source of a sound, even when not able to see the thing creating it. As long as our hearing (our binaural hearing) has not decayed with age, or been damaged by loud sounds, we are really good at sensing direction. The shape of the human ear, along with the loudness of sounds and micro-second differences in sound arrival times to the left and right ears, have all aided in such direction finding. Researchers in Texas are working on ways to simulate realistic sound effects, based on video recording of the source of the original **mono** sounds. They can also create false sounding sources, in the same manner. This is quite an achievement, considering the researchers started with mono sound, and they were able to create what is now called, **“2.5”sound**.

<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/612664/deep-learning-turns-mono-recordings-into-immersive-sound>

Our DPCUC Executive would like to wish you all a
Happy and Safe holiday season!!!



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> <https://fossbytes.com/>

5 open source resolutions for 2019

- Opensource.com (Posted by [bob](#) on Jan 1, 2019 1:50 PM EDT)
- Groups: [Sun](#), [Community](#); Story Type: [News Story](#)

No matter how much of a cliché it may be, making New Year's Resolutions is hard to resist. There's something about the calendar flipping to a new year that causes even the most curmudgeonly, set-in-their-ways people to take stock of the year ending and make plans for improvements during the next trip around the sun. To that end, here are my five resolutions for 2019. Some relate to my job and wider life, others to my place in the community, and I think each one will make the world a better place. Feel free to put any or all of these on your list of plans for 2019. [read more](#)

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

[How to check if your processor supports Virtualization Technology on Ubuntu](#)

(Dec 31, 2018, 13:00) ([0 talkbacks](#))

Virtualization Technology enables your processor to act as a number of independent computer systems.

Note – The topic should apply to any Ubuntu spinoffs as well.

[How to Change UUID of Partition in Linux Filesystem](#)

(Dec 31, 2018, 06:00) ([0 talkbacks](#))

Tecmint: In this short tutorial, you are going to learn how to change the UUID of a Linux partition.

The State of Desktop Linux 2019

- Linux Journal; By Bryan Lunduke (Posted by [bob](#) on Jan 1, 2019 6:59 AM EDT)
- Story Type: [Editorial](#), [Reviews](#); Groups: [Community](#), [Debian](#), [Distributions](#), [Fedora](#), [Linux](#), [Red Hat](#), [Ubuntu](#)

A snapshot of the current state of Desktop Linux at the start of 2019—with comparison charts and a roundtable Q&A with the leaders of three top Linux distributions.

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

Sudoku

Jan 2019

by Alex Morrison



A Trio of Puzzles again this month – Happy New Year

EASY

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

Sudoku

The game boards on this page were 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 puzzles send an email to me and I will send you the solution.

Have fun! Alex

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

Do you want an extra month added to your Membership – FREE!

All you need to do is to write an article for the newsletter. It can be as small as a single page!

If you write an article every month for 12 months you will end up getting a full year free membership.

Topics can be anything you think might be of interest to the general membership.

Presentation Photos

by Farny Le Gresley



December saw our Club President Fred Fernbach provide a guide as to how to create applications, using Android Studio that would run on our Android Cell Phones and Tablets



Linux

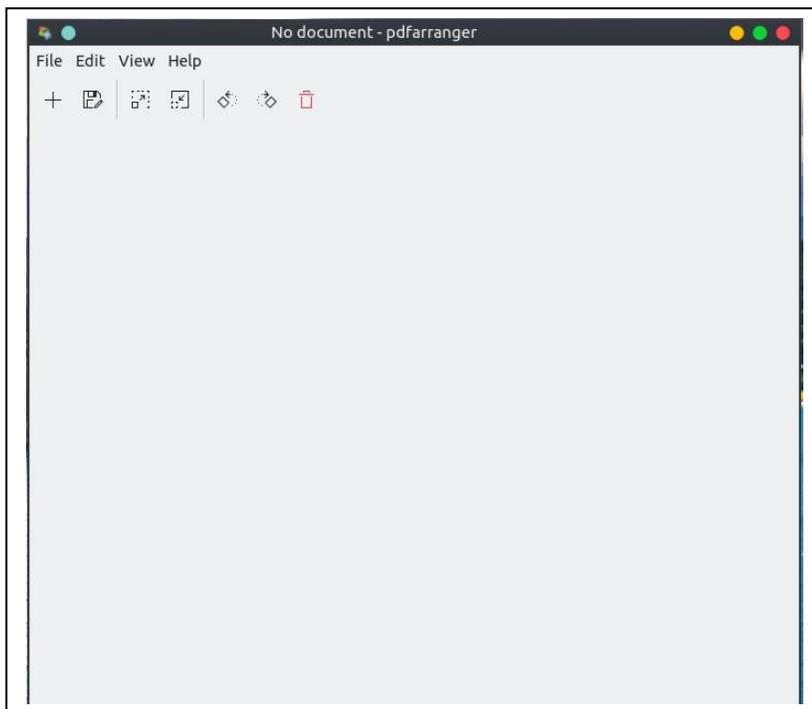
PDF Arranger

by Alex Morrison

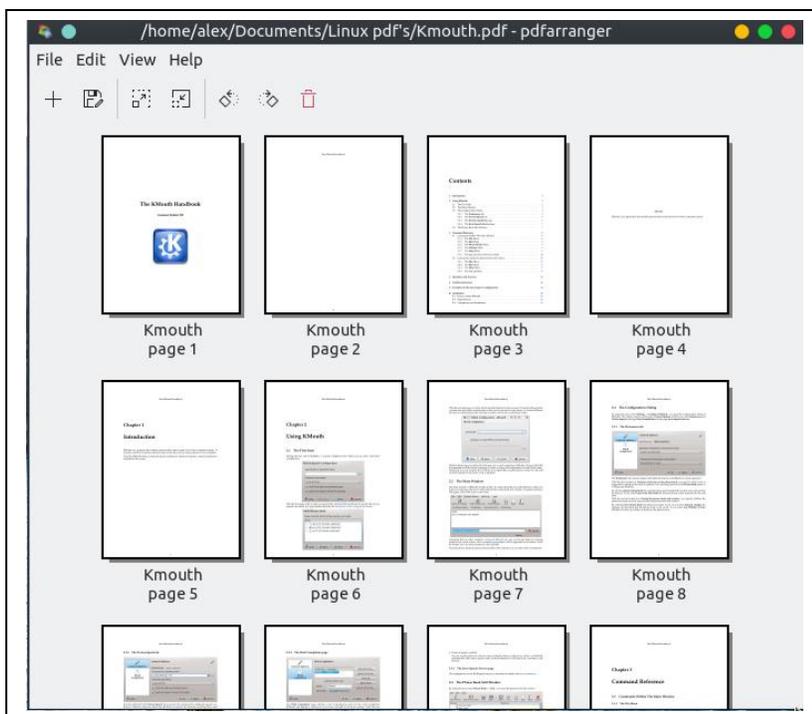


This month I want to show you a tool that might be useful called PDF Arranger.

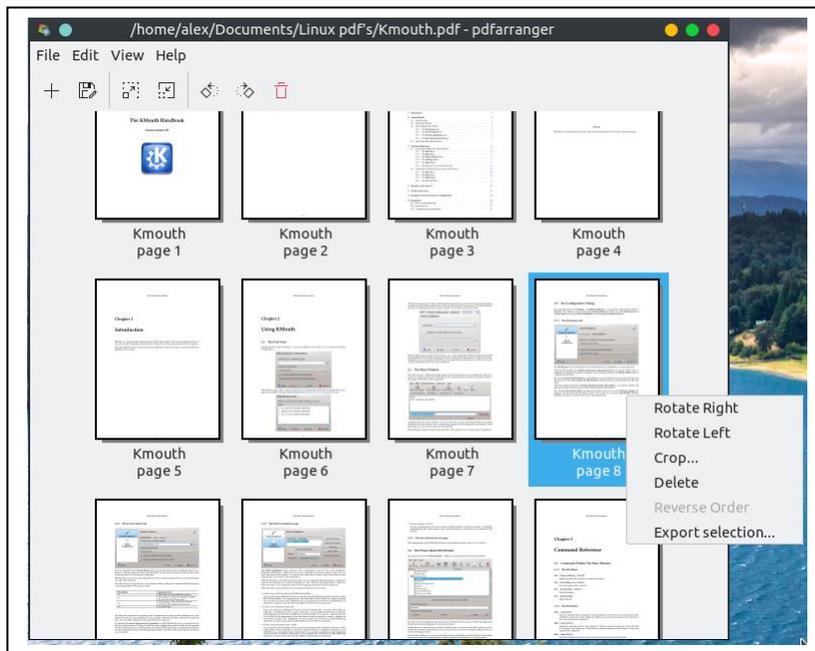
The following image is the start screen of the software.



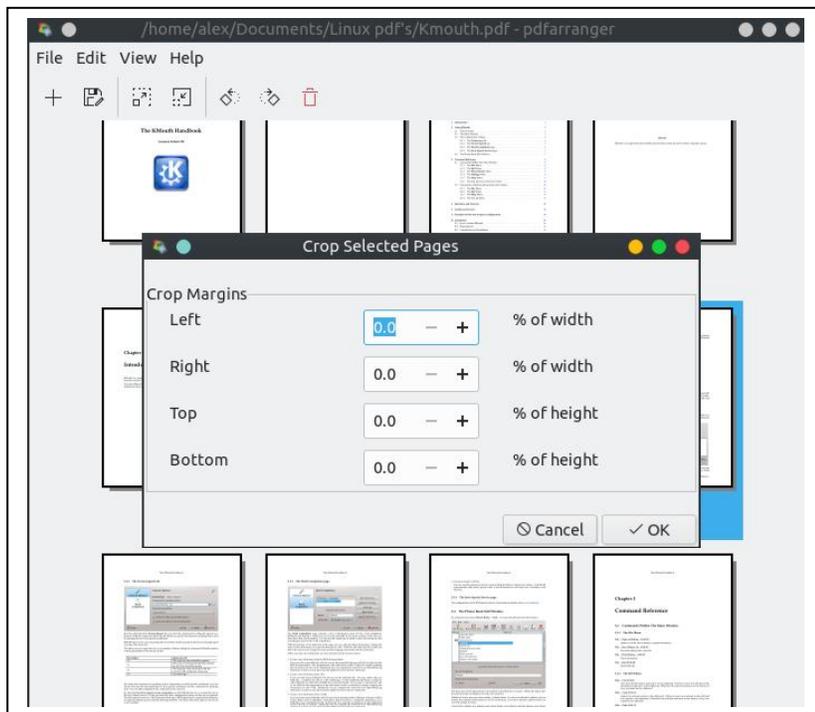
You can select File + Open or click the + button to add a PDF file as below. We see the pages listed in order. The PDF used is a guide to Linux speech software called Kmouth.



Next I show the right click on a page menu. If you highlight the page first you can also go to the file menu for the option list shown below. The various options shown work and are I think easy to understand.



The image below illustrated the second option list after clicking Crop. Here you can select how much of an area you wish to remove from the selected page.



PDF Arranger is a Linux tool derived from PDF Shuffler [an older Linux tool]. This tool makes it easy to export individual pages for printing or saving elsewhere.

We might look at this software [and PDF Shuffler] at a future Linux meeting.

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

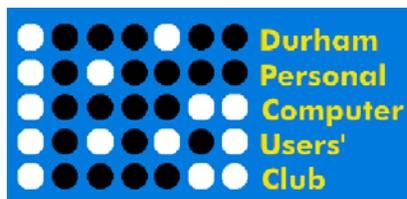
Co-ordinator: Ed Goudge
Location: Call for Location
Telephone: 905-926-9003
Date: 3rd Thursday of month 7:00 PM

LINUX Durham Linux User Group

Co-ordinator: Ed Goudge
Location: Call for Location
Telephone: 905-926-9003
Date: 1st Thursday of month 7:00 PM

Digital Camera Group

Co-ordinator: Ed Goudge
Location: Call for Location
Telephone: 905-926-9003
Date: 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00PM



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2018-2019

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

Newsletter Information

PC Monitor is the official publication of the Durham Personal Computer Users' Club and is published monthly at Oshawa, Ontario. The DPCUC mailing address is
PMB # 110, 27-1300 King St East,
Oshawa, ON L1H8J4.
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.