

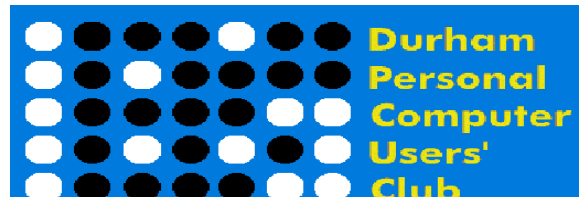
June 2023

# **PC MONITOR**

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Durham Personal Computer Users' Club Newsletter

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## **DPCUC General Meeting**

**Our Club meets monthly on the second Thursday of each month.  
All meetings are currently held using Zoom.**

**We hope some day in the future to be able to meet in person again.**

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**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**

**Getting the Most from Your  
Internet**

**by Anne Delong**

**On ZOOM – Thursday, June 8 2023, 7:00PM**

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# FYI

- By Dan Delong

## Windows 11 – news

Bing will soon offer an integrated **AI chatbot** based on ChatGPT called “**Copilot**”, able to carry on a conversation, present facts, gather data from within and organization, collate it for aiding in report writing, and even make power point slides for the presentation.

<https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2023/03/16/introducing-microsoft-365-copilot-your-copilot-for-work/>



A convenience feature on Android phones is their ability to **reload apps** to a new phone, as long as they had been installed from the Play Store, originally (on the old phone using the same log-in ID). Microsoft is working on a similar feature for Windows 11, for when you are configuring a new computer, using the same Microsoft account. Since cloud backups are now offered for Microsoft user accounts, this may also apply to installed apps, be they from the Windows Store, other MS products (or those of third parties).

<https://www.windowcentral.com/software-apps/windows-11/windows-11-is-finally-getting-a-cloud-powered-backup-and-restore-feature>

**Widgets**, in the past, had become a security problem for all developers, on all operating systems. Windows 11 is bringing some third party widgets back, as they were popular with users.

<https://www.ghacks.net/2023/05/22/windows-11-widgets/>

When programs “jam-up” – re-fuse to respond – slowing your computer (or preventing your computer from functioning at all)... Well, I generally open the **Task Manager**, find the offending app, and (*with difficulty, if the app list changes when trying to click on it*) click on “End Task”. Win11 will soon have a new way to end a task from the taskbar, with a right click... no need for Ctrl-Alt-delete. <https://www.howtogeek.com/894660/windows-11-will-let-you-force-quit-apps-from-the-taskbar/>

**Moment 3**, the latest Win11 update is out. For those who wish to read about improvements and changes... [Windows 11 KB5026446 Moment 3 is out, download offline installers \(windowlatest.com\)](https://www.windowcentral.com/windows-11/kb5026446-moment-3-is-out-download-offline-installers-windowlatest-com)

**Windows 11's** next update will bring back “**View Wi-Fi security key**” under *Wi-Fi > Manage known networks > The Framework*. <https://www.howtogeek.com/895092/you-can-now-check-your-wi-fi-password-in-windows-11/>

**Windows 10** users have likely installed the **May 2023 update**, which many users found ‘buggy’. [Windows 10 KB5026361 May 2023 Update is causing issues for some users \(windowlatest.com\)](https://www.windowcentral.com/windows-10/kb5026361-may-2023-update-is-causing-issues-for-some-users-windowlatest-com)

**Windows XP** support and activation has been shut down for years. What's a person to do should they wish to install XP on a stand-alone computer. Microsoft owns XP, and will not protect a computer running this OS if it is connected to the Internet. ArsTechnica recounts how the verification algorithm for generating a valid, unique, key has been solved. <https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2023/05/a-decade-after-it-mattered-windows-xps-activation-algorithm-is-cracked/>

## NVIDIA Grace CPU

**Grace is a CPU**, not an Nvidia GPU (*Graphics Processor Unit*) typically found in gaming machines. GPUs help process images for computer visioning. This new **Grace CPU** is not for everyone, as it will be used inside more energy efficient super computers, requiring, not 270 watts, but 270 thousand watts of power, collectively (which appears oxymoronic). Thus, **Grace** will be used for high level academic research into medicine and our climate projections.

<https://nvidianews.nvidia.com/news/nvidia-grace-drives-wave-of-new-energy-efficient-arm-supercomputers>

## **Canon Power Shot V10**

Canon has developed a camera specifically for Vloggers, hence the “V” in the model name. Convenient features include a fold-out/down stand for stable shots, a wide angle lens able to focus on objects as close as a few centimetres, two levels of image stabilization, decent stereo microphones (with an audio jack for an external mic.) many video resolutions, up to 4K, and a quick record button. One drawback is the non-replaceable, rechargeable internal battery (with at least one hour of recording time). [Henry's Canada](https://youtu.be/a2RAfaTzDz0) sells this unit for \$600 + tax. See <https://youtu.be/a2RAfaTzDz0> – for video with a full review.



## **News by Artificial Intelligence (Unbiased Robo-Journalism)**

I can't vouch for the 'unbiased' claim in this headline; but, it was sure to happen—a convincing, eclectic, website of general interest, covering [World](#), [Politics](#), [Business](#), [Economy](#), [Technology](#), [Sports](#), [Arts](#), [Lifestyle](#), and [Entertainment](#), created entirely by AI, sans human designed algorithmic intervention. Most interestingly, the **Business** menu item, on this website, provides investment advice, while claiming to be a better option than your average human financial advisor (who probably already uses a similar platform, but with algorithms created by humans).

<https://news-by-ai.com/>



## **Smart Canadian Arm (not the Canadarm!)**

Two developers designed/engineered, 3-D printed, and programmed the [SmartARM](#). All five fingers articulate under AI control, as 'seen' by a camera in the palm of the 'hand'. This arm is both comfortable and less costly than alternatives. SmartARM's fingers work individually, with enough force and accuracy, to handle most objects, just as a muscle and bone would. This Toronto STAR article covers it well...

<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2023/05/20/mind-blowing-toronto-start-up-creates-ai-powered-bionic-arm-that-can-think-and-see-for-itself.html>

## **MaRS Toronto – some genetic, medical research**

AI is also heavily employed in cellular, molecular research at the level of genetic manipulations of the building blocks of life; i.e. – protein interactions and messenger RNA modification.

I noticed two companies at [MaRS](#), both deeply involved in this research: [ProteinQure](#) and [Deep Genomics](#). I believe the term for these efforts is “designer therapies and drugs” because they are cures for individuals with rare conditions.

**ProteinQure** designs protein drugs (and delivery of same) for specific health problems.

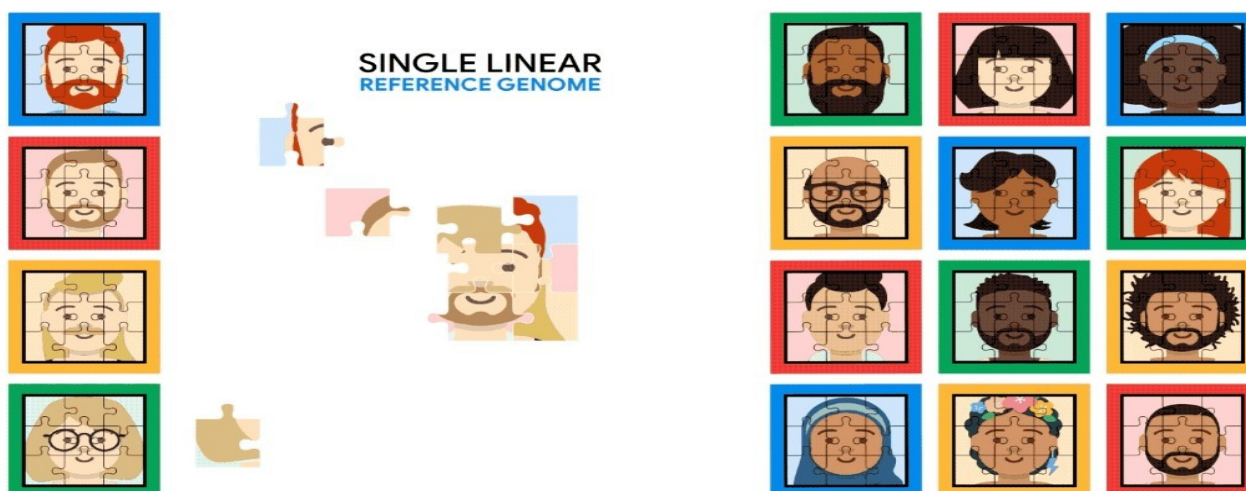
**Deep Genomics** uses AI to find promising candidates for drug development, experiencing success in RNA splicing such that DNA produces a curative protein inside cells; this to treat [Wilson Disease](#), (too much copper in blood).

## **Prison Phone Calls, a rip-off**

Jails hold prisoners who desperately need to communicate with others on the outside. However, they are not permitted to make phone calls unless through Bell installations inside prisons, using money or a charge card. The cost for such calls is \$1 per minute, with a \$1 hook-up fee for local calls and a \$2.50 fee if long distance. Twenty-five percent of such fees are rebated to the province. Without financial resources to pay exorbitant phone bills, the mental health of prisoners can suffer. Many of them haven't even been convicted of a crime, not having gone through trial yet, in our backed-up legal system.

<https://www.tvos.org/article/bell-and-ontario-lets-talk-about-how-much-you-profited-from-prison-calls>

## Google Research – Human Pangenomic DNA sequence



AI is also being used to ‘improve’ the reference model for the complete human DNA gene sequence. Around 2000, this massive undertaking to determine the base pairs of the entire human set of chromosomal DNA threads was achieved. But, this model was not based on sequencing all individuals or all ethnicities. So many variations in certain portions of DNA still exist, that this, ‘pangenomic’ research is now using AI to modify the standard model to account for differences in populations around the world, without changing the DNA model such that essential human coping characteristics are removed from the gene pool. One such example would be areas of DNA involved in disease resistance, because this beneficial feature is not universal. Why not try to make it universal? *[Or, at least, better understand the causes of, and prevention of, diseases.]*



<https://ai.googleblog.com/2023/05/building-better-pangenomes-to-improve.html>

## Microsoft Research

This idea is ‘far out!’ And, yet, it is being done – Data stored in bio-matter... specifically, DNA.

*“If we are to preserve the world’s data, we need to seek significant advances in storage density and durability. Using DNA to archive data is an attractive possibility because it is extremely dense (up to about 1 exabyte per cubic millimeter) and durable (half-life of over 500 years).”*

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/project/dna-storage/>

## The Question Is – “Is AI sentient?”

The Answer has been with us for at least a year now. Realizing the answer has cost Google whistle-blower, Blake Lemoine, his job. (This, when he released his findings to the press after being ignored by higher ups.) Blake Lemoine feels the answer to the question is “YES” The link (below) to an October 1922 article in the Toronto STAR provides the full story. <https://www.thestar.com/business/mars/2022/10/11/is-ai-inching-closer-to-sentience.html>

## SwitchBot

Able bodied individuals may chuckle, at this idea – a button pusher. A device for pushing a button is not very high on the wish list for a majority of users. However, for those with mobility issues, it is a near necessity. Among SwitchBot’s six products are others for drawing curtains, or closing and opening blinds. Control all of them with an app on your smartphone, or automatically, on a schedule, with their hub device. The SwitchBots for turning on/off light switches are stuck on with 3M tape. The website also sells remote door locks, cameras, and few other handy gadgets.

<https://ca.switch-bot.com/pages/switchbot-bot>

## 911 is having a problem

Since 911 took over the task of emergency response from local telephone operators, many lives have been saved, fires alerted, and crimes notified, along with a new line item fee on phone bills. A few times 911 operators have been, either overwhelmed or callous in attitude, causing dangerous delays. More often, the problem is “ghost calls” or “hang-ups” caused by dialing in error, realizing their mistake, then hanging up. But, 911 does not know that the call was accidental; hence their need to call for a full-response to the caller’s location (if known) – police, fire, and ambulance (if available). Toronto 911 and Hamilton 911 get hundreds of these calls each day. Some even come from kids playing portable phones and cell phones. *[Did you know that an old cell phone can still be used to call 911, despite it not having a SIM? These ‘dead’ phones cannot be called back by the 911 operator... very frustrating for them!]*



## Scanmarker Air – text to text, and text to speech

This hand-held text scanning pen transfers selected text to both your computer’s word processor and to your ears (has a small speaker, or sends to Bluetooth headphones). With a text transfer rate of 3000 characters per minute, a rechargeable lithium battery, and text to speech in many languages, this scanner works for any researcher. Listening to the text, as it is ‘understood’ by the scanner, enhances retention (possibly, making it attractive to those with slight memory loss).

\$190 CAD +tax

<https://www.amazon.ca/Scanmarker-Air-Pen-Scanner-Highlighter/dp/B01N07J2AE>

## Concept vs Execution – Samsung Freestyle Portable LED Projector

This smallish projector appears to be a case of ambitious design released before having been fully debugged, especially with respect to Bluetooth (according to reviewers). Freestyle’s specifications are great; point anywhere, has self-levelling, colour adapts to any pale wall/ceiling, vertical and horizontal key-stoning, 5 watt speaker, battery portability with a 60 watt USB-C power supply. Voice commands are via Alexa. Some buyers praise it, while others found a few weaknesses. This may explain the sudden drop in price, now \$700 CAD, down from \$1150 CAD. *[Open Box is now \$500 at [Visions](#).]*



<https://www.samsung.com/ca/projectors/the-freestyle/the-freestyle-sp-lsp3blaxzc/>

## Rocketbook Smart Reusable Notebook

The Rocketbook notebook has 32 laminated, lined, pages, which can be written upon with dry erasable pens, of any colour, then captured as images with the Rocketbook app for storage and transfer to any cloud service. Moreover, the ‘smart’ AI feature involves some kind of text OCRing so that the app can use it to organize image files, for easier searching.

<https://www.amazon.ca/Rocketbook-Smart-Reusable-Notebook-Eco-Friendly/dp/B07WMVDX64>



## Powerlight 6-Outlet wall plug

Such a wide variety of extenders, all competing for buyers, makes deciding which is best difficult. This one, with 6 outlets, angled on the sides, is oriented so plugs and power blocks will not conflict with, or block each other, and it offers surge protection. Adding two USB power ports and a 3-level auto night-light may make it a winner. [\$25 CAD +tax]

<https://www.amazon.ca/Protector-POWLIGHT-6-Outlet-Extender-3-Sided/dp/B09ZNG5P8Z/>





## NetGear Nighthawk M6 Pro Hotspot Router



This is a battery, or USB, powered Wi-Fi hot spot and router that can handle 32 simultaneously connected devices, over a line-of-sight distance of 600 metres (while on its ‘high performance’ setting). To save power while operating on battery, it works on the more efficient 5GHz band.

While on direct power it works on 2.4 and the new 6GHz bands. Since the Nighthawk M6 is sold as an ‘open’ (unlocked) device, it should accept any SIM card and data plan. *[For example, Public Mobile just came out with some large 5G (up to 2.5 Gb/sec.) plans - \$80 for 50GB and \$65 for 25GB, along with some less costly 4G plans.]* Set-up is done through the touch LCD screen, which, once configured with a passkey, offers a QR code to quickly connect to cell phones. In rural settings, covered by strong cellular, the M6 works well (Or, when trying to avoid using public Wi-Fi.) Once the M6 has achieved a good cell connection, a laptop computer can be plugged into its Ethernet port. I guess you could also plug a powered un-managed switch into the same port, to connect many computers by wire. *[The Canadian price is a sky-high \$1400.]* Alternatively look for 4G cellular hot spot devices costing a few hundred dollars. <https://www.netgear.com/ca-en/home/mobile-wifi/hotspots/>

## Full Functioning Robots

**Grace** is a robot designed as a medical aid during Covid. ‘She’ can take vitals and chat with patients in several languages, while appearing almost real with, soft flexible skin made of “*frubber*”, and is able to copy many human expressions. **Nadine**, another realistic robot, has an emotional repertoire of 27 facial expressions. She ‘remembers’ people by their looks and also remembers the conversations she’s had with them. An agency in Singapore uses Nadine as a customer service representative. **Ai-Da** is a robot artist. **Jia Jia** is the most human-like of any designed to date. **Amica** uses AI to tailor reactions with humans with a wider range of body and facial movements. **Sophia** has been given Saudi Arabian citizenship and the chance to enter into high level discussions with leaders. Next on the build list are soldiers.

<https://youtu.be/PLBAbmETEmo>

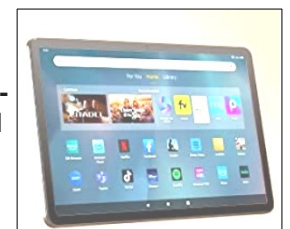
## HP Inkjets not so eco-friendly

Makers of re-fill cartridges and off-brand replacements discovered that HP’s firmware upgrade now ‘bricks’ their products. Well, not right away. The cartridges may work for a little while, then stop working, even though they may be 90% full.

<https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2023/05/hp-printers-should-have-epeat-ecolabels-revoked-trade-group-demands/>

## Amazon Fire Max 11 tablet

This is Amazon’s most powerful tablet yet; vivid 11" display, octa-core processor, 4 GB RAM, 14-hour battery life, 64 GB, Wi-Fi 6, works with Alexa, split screen, MicroSoft 365. The keyboard and pen are optional accessories. Amazon is known for lower prices on hardware, as long as you understand, “There will be ads!”



<https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/devices/amazon-fire-max-11-tablet-best-features>

## Sandisk Extreme V2 and Extreme Pro V2 portable SSDs

Firmware updates for these drives should be arriving, to solve problems experienced by users of the larger 2 and 4 TB units. I have an older 500GB USB-c drive, that looks the same; it has not had any problems.



<https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2023/05/sandisk-extreme-ssds-keep-abruptly-failing-firmware-fix-for-only-some-promised/>

## **DPCUC President's Notes**

**by Peter Camilleri**

I used to be an avid reader of the computer magazine called **BYTE**. One of the regular features was written by the late Jerry Pournelle. In these, he discussed the swirling and confusing activities of his house, writing, technology, computers, his interests in space, and the far-out ideas he dreamed up.

The articles had the bye-line “Chaos Manner”. So much has been going around my house lately that I sometimes feel I should use the same bye-line. As it is, I struggle to keep my head above water with all that needs to be done. So, I know that club election time has come and gone and that I just have not had the time to be more active in promoting the club. Your club executives work tirelessly to run things but they can only do so much. The membership needs to be involved. It would help so very much to hear from you with your thoughts and suggestions.

One thing that I am working on is my long delayed look at the Arduino computing platform and how it brings computer development to a much wider audience. People without engineering degrees or large budgets. I have finally been able to locate and recover my equipment supplies and hope to be able to allocate the time needed to create a first rate presentation on this interesting topic. I will try to make it interesting with live demos and examples.

Finally, I keep repeating this because we should never accept that war is “normal”. The atrocious and illegal attack on Ukraine continues. I know there is little we can do to improve matters so all I can say is:

Pray for Peace.

**Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.**

# Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison



## [How to Stress Test CPU in Linux](#)

Want to stress test your CPU in Linux? Learn how to do it effortlessly with this step-by-step guide.

## [10 Awesome Things You Can Do with ChatGPT](#)

In this article, we'll look at the most remarkable things you can do with ChatGPT to improve your efficiency.

## [Fedora Plans to Drop X11 Support in Plasma 6 Completely](#)

The Fedora KDE Plasma spin will boldly move to go all-in on Wayland, dropping X11 when Plasma 6 comes out. Here's why.

## [Nitrx 2.8.1 Released with Linux Kernel 6.3, Plasma Wayland by Default](#)

[0 Comments](#)

Debian-based Nitrx 2.8.1 distribution is now available for download with Linux kernel 6.3, Plasma Wayland by default, Mesa 23.2-git, and much more.

## [FYI: Windows XP keygen made to work on Linux](#)

- The Register; By Liam Proven (Posted by [bob](#) on May 28, 2023 9:14 PM EDT)
- Story Type: [News Story](#); Groups: [Linux](#), [Microsoft](#)

The unkillable OS rises from the grave... Again. Over 21 years after it first came out, the Microsoft operating system that will not die is receiving another lease of life. It's possible to activate new installations, safely and securely, without a crack, offline and while using Linux....

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

## [KDE Plasma 6 Will Support Night Color on Wayland for NVIDIA Users](#)

- 9to5linux.com; By Marius Nestor (Posted by [hanuca](#) on May 28, 2023 4:00 AM EDT)
- Story Type: [News Story](#); Groups: [KDE](#), [Linux](#)

The upcoming KDE Plasma 6 desktop environment series looks to offer support for the Night Color feature that automatically adjusts the color temperature of your screen to protect your eyes during long night computing sessions for users with NVIDIA graphics cards when using the Plasma Wayland session.

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



# **Linux –Beelink Mini**

**By Alex Morrison**



For those who do not want to install Windows 11 or who do not like Windows 11 or do not want to stay with an older Windows system – it might be time to try a Linux system.

I bought a new mini PC from Amazon called a Beelink Mini S Mini PC W11, Intel 11th Gen N5095. The system is a quad core Celeron N5095, with 8 Gig ram, a 256 Gig M.2 hard drive, intel UHD graphics. Currently \$259 Canadian. The installed OS was Windows 11 Pro.

I booted the new machine using the HDMI cord and it connected to the built in Wifi and worked perfectly on my 32" TV used as a monitor.

The small PC has 4 USB 3, a Gig lan port and built in AC wireless.

After looking at Windows 11 I thought I might keep it for a short time and dual boot the PC with PCLinux.

All I had to do was shrink Windows 11 using the built in Disk Management tool and enter the bios to turn off secure boot. PCLinux supports UEFI very well.

I booted the PC from a live USB of PCLinux and started the install. PCLinux auto detected the UEFI so I selected the free space I had created with Windows 11 and told the installer to auto partition the free space.

PCLinx worked as well as Windows 11 detecting the 32"TV as a monitor and the install was flawless.

I ran the PCLinux for a couple of days and decided I didn't need the Windows 11 at all. So I just reinstalled PCLinux and replaced the entire drive with Linux.

At the price I paid for this Mini PC I am very pleased with it. I use the PC to stream video, do video capture and video editing and just normal email and browsing.

If you need more power Amazon carries several other Beelink Mini PCs with more memory and a better video card. These other models will support high end gaming if you need that.

Meanwhile Linux is working very well for me! If you need a new PC these Beelink are very good!

---

## **Free Linux Wallpaper**



# Sudoku

June 2023

by Alex Morrison



## EASY

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

## Sudoku

The game boards on this page were produced using **Sudokuki** on PCLinuxOS 64 Bit running KDE 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

## MED

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

## HARD

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

IF you don't Like Sudoku puzzles – try these pages

<https://www.boatloadpuzzles.com/playcrossword>

<http://www.freegames.net/puzzle-games.html>

<https://www.cryptograms.org/play.php>

**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**

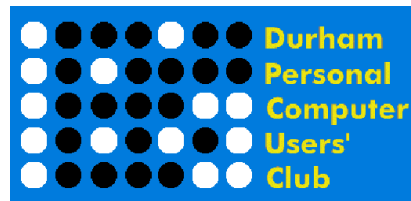
**Durham Linux User Group**

**Coordinator: Ed Goudge**

**Our Linux group meet on the first Thursday of every month.**

**All meetings are currently held using Zoom.**

**We hope some day to meet again in person.**



**DPCUC  
EXECUTIVE**

**2022-2023**

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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.