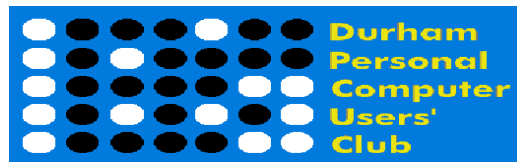**Feb 2024**

PC MONITOR

Durham Personal Computer Users' Club Newsletter

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.

Please visit the Club Web Page for all the latest links and information
http://www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Next Meeting

Hard Disk Sentinel

by Mark Hunter

On ZOOM – Thursday, Feb 8 2024, 7:00PM

FYI   - By Dan Delong

Gmail Tips and more

Google mail, now in its 20th year, has been adding non-publicized features to Gmail over these many years. Hundreds of millions of Gmail accounts are in regular use by individuals and businesses every day. In the beginning, accounts were not freely available, as invitations were required for admission to the 'Gmail Club'. Now, a free, and freely available, Google account admits users to a raft of applications and services;- like, YouTube, Docs, Spreadsheets, Photos, Maps, Earth, Finance, and so on... for thirty more titles (not including these **six new AI features, along with free 15GB of storage). Almost everyone, who uses an Android phone, will have (had to) registered it with a Google mail account.**

Some Gmail tips: -

Search Shortcuts – If I type text into the search field, "*Alex*", for example, (and press *Enter*) all mails with that word, somewhere in it, will be listed; that's a lot of 'hits'. To reduce the number of hits, add some qualifiers, like '*From*', a *date*, or those with *attachments* only, and only those *you (I) sent* to Alex. Other, more direct, shortcuts also work. Try "*imgur -cats before:2020*", or "*has:attachment "computer"*", or "*from: hugh "zoom"* and "*from: hugh "zoom" newer_than:2m*". *[You can see the syntax here.]* Just typing a couple of letters can bring up wild card results. Searches that yield large attachments are particularly useful; you can mark them for deletion in order to free up storage space when butting up against the 15GB free storage limit.

Search stacking/hints -

As you enter words into the search field, narrowing the number of hits, you may have noticed some new clickable 'hint' tabs appearing, just below the search field. In this example, the extra hints were "*Has attachments*", "*Last 7 days*", and "*From me*". Google does try to give a helping hand.
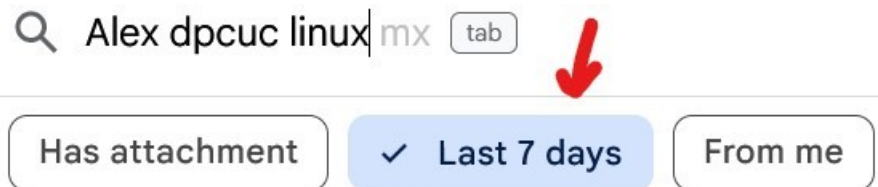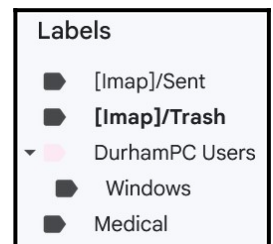

Figure 1: narrowing down to emails containing "Alex" and "dpcuc" and "linux" and "the last 7 days"
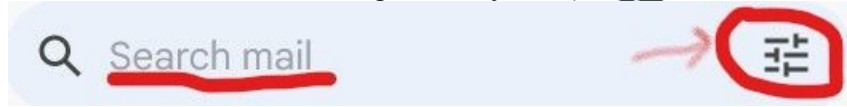
Labels

Labels are not Filters. Long time users of Gmail have appreciated the organizational potential of "**Labels**", applied appropriately, in order to categorize emails. At first, users were encouraged to create their own labels, or classifications. We then noticed that Google started applying commonly used labels automatically. However, labels do help when searching and sorting your emails.
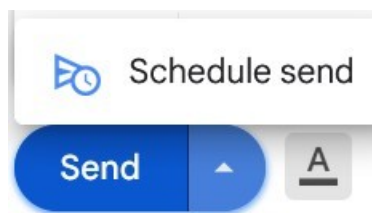
Create Filters

  Instead of using the above shortcuts, use the advanced search symbol
(three horizontal lines with small bars – looks like an equalizer symbol).

Once some search field text has been entered (for example "*unsubscribe*") only then will the "*Create filter*" lettering,
next to the blue Search button, appear. Clicking on "*Create filter*" will bring up a new window, offering a bunch of
actions to attach to any emails with the word "*unsubscribe*". – [*Here's a useful link.*]

Scheduled Send – Near the blue **Send** button is a small, down-facing caret; it will change to an upward-facing caret
once clicked. Click it to delay sending an email until a chosen date, or time, has arrived. Doing so also allows editing of
the message before the "Send" happens.

All Settings – If you haven't visited the 'gear' Settings symbol in a while, you may be surprised at the many useful
options offered, along with some default settings made by Google. One item I tried to select under **General... Offline**
was refused, since I was not browsing with Chrome. However, had I been using the Chrome browser, all recent emails
could have been downloaded to my laptop, for later reading and replying, even while not connected.

Under "*General*" you'll also find the option to turn on icons for **Chat** and **Meet**.
In next generation of smart phones, don't be surprised if they are AI enhanced, to the point you won't need to learn any
of the above tips and tricks. Searching, chatting and creating content may be as simple as voicing your wishes to the
phone.

HP Omen Transend 14 laptop

Gizmodo describes it as a light weight laptop for gaming, containing a Core Ultra 9, with
Nvidia GeForce 4070 graphics. It is so new that this 2024 model is not yet listed on HP
Canada's website. However, in the States, it is going for a starting price of around
$1500USD, and a fully optioned price of $2500USD. With dimensions of 12" x 9", and
weighing in at about 3lbs, at a thickness less than one inch, and with a 14" diagonal 2.8K
OLED screen, plus a rainbow LED keys, it is really a powerful gamer's machine. Best
battery endurance might be 8 hours, but it recharges to 50% in half an hour. Wireless
includes WiFi7 and Bluetooth 5.4
https://www.omen.com/us/en/laptops/2024-omen-transcend14-intel.html
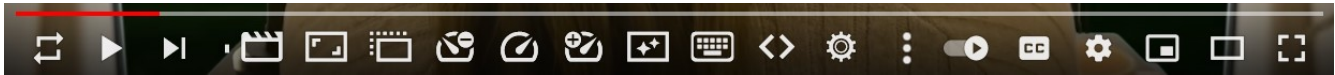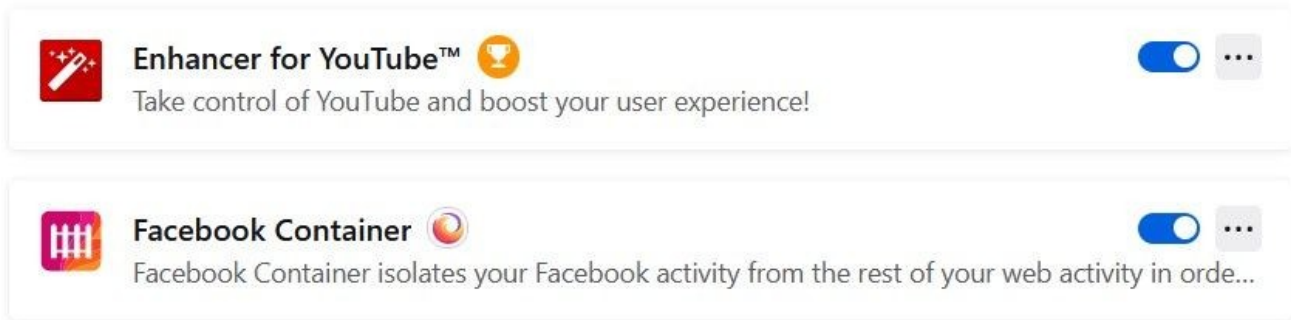
Two Firefox Extensions

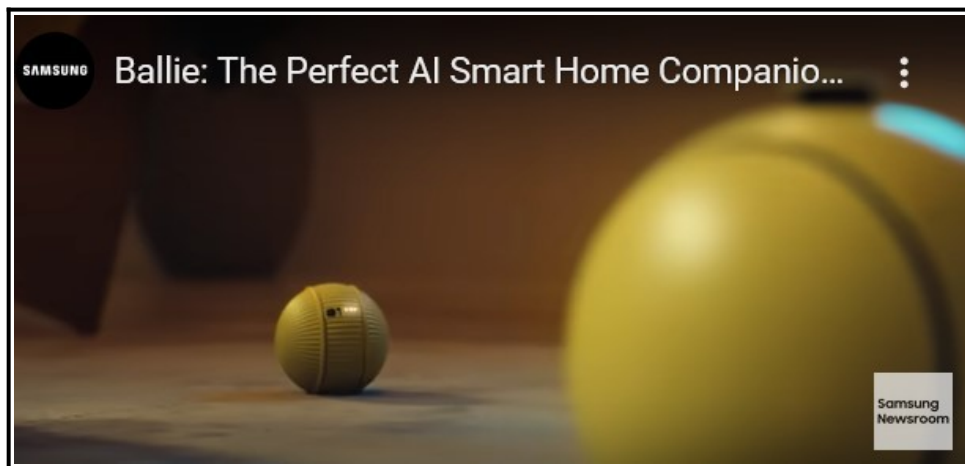**Figure 2: Get this set of controls with Enhancer for YouTube.**

Although YouTube's Adblock Policy has forced the maker of "***Enhancer for YouTube***" to remove the ad blocker code from this extension; installing the ***uBlock Origin*** add-on is a way around this restriction. The latest version of "Enhancer" contains a bunch of bug fixes and new features. "***Facebook Container***", other extension I use, is self-explanatory.

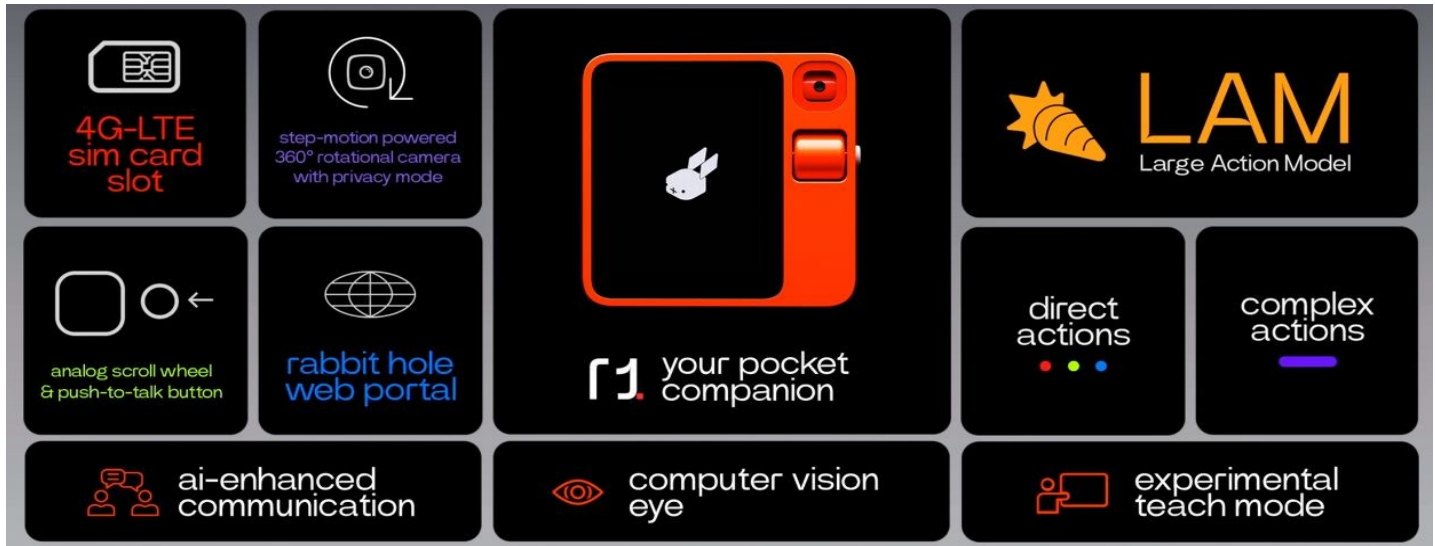## SAMSUNG Ballie, personal assistant

Ballie [ball-ee] listens, moves, acts, and projects video (down, up, and sideways). You'll get a better idea of its capabilities from watching the video. https://youtu.be/YBfSX3QiqDM

Rabbit R1 – companion

This hand-held, $199 USD device can do so much, just by speaking to it, or by pointing its 360 degree, rotating camera at a scene. Rather than requiring the use of many different apps (one after the other) to get a job done, Rabbit automatically finds the right combination of apps needed to perform an action *[like trip planning, simultaneous translation, ordering food, map directions, playing music, or creating AI images]*. The user simply confirms each action by tapping the touch screen message.
rabbit — keynote

Some Chat GPT experts are experimenting with a new version, called "**vimGPT**", that can perform actions almost as well as Rabbit R1 (above). VimGPT can search out web pages and complete any actions needed to fulfill a request by a user. One of the reporters for Wired Magazine tried it with **Siri**, asking vimGPT to subscribe to Wired. This experimental AI, "**vimGPT**", was able to find the online subscription form for Wired, fill it in with the applicant's personal details, and would have completed the financial transaction, had it a credit card on file. [**https://link.wired.com/public/34198343**]

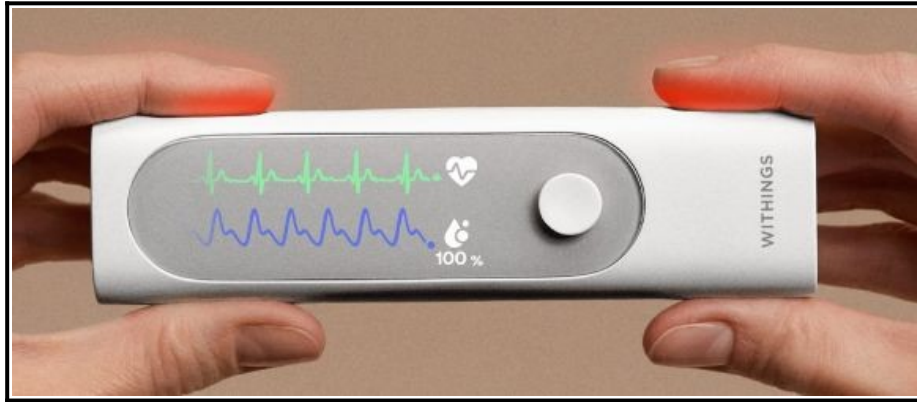## Elon Musk says Neuralink has implanted a wireless brain chip

According to the BBC (and other sources) a 'chip' has now been inserted in the brain of the first human patient, who is healing, and will eventually use thoughts to control devices that assist in the movement of limbs left idle by disease. The interface itself looks more like a thin piece of tape resting on the brain's surface. Other companies have been involved in similar research far longer than Musk, with success in stimulating large muscles needed for walking. When fully developed, such brain interfaces may control computerized messaging and speech.

https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-68137046

Withings BeamO – health monitors

This device listens to your heart and lungs (stethoscope function), reads out your temperature (thermometer function), measures oxygen saturation (oximeter function) and even checks for cardiovascular operation (ECG function). Hence, this is a device with 4-in-one capability. Users may view the results directly or send them to a phone or computer, then to a doctor. After FDA clearance, it should be available this summer for $250 USD.
Revolutionary at-home checkup - BeamO | Withings

Withings also sells health monitor wrist watches, with similar capabilities, along with a blood pressure cuff, smart weight scales, and a sleep monitor. Their most advanced watch is also awaiting FDA approval, but a $300 CAD model is still being sold here. Monitoring is further enhanced by accompanying Android and Apple apps.
https://www.withings.com/ca/en/

Samsung's latest – Galaxy S24 Ultra

Samsung phones are noted for excellent photography. The **Galaxy S24 Ultra** boosts AMOLED screen resolution, has more RAM, more camera megapixels (with an extra, wide-angle 200MP lens), and boasts a larger battery. Those who already own older **S-series** models can trade in for substantial savings, which may make the $1800 CAD price tag a little more attractive.
[Trades can offer as much as $1000.]
The S24 Ultra comes with a stylus. The S24+(plus) has most of the same specs as the Ultra, but sells at a lower price.
https://www.bestbuy.ca/en-ca/event/new-samsung-phones/blt7a51947a350a15b2
Although Samsung also sells a health monitoring wrist watch, at CES2024 it introduced the **Galaxie Ring**; which is another device, in development, that may never be sold, especially if it is priced too high, or is unable to meet the expectations of potential buyers.

V3 AMD 3-in-1 Windows Tablet

The Chinese company, **MinisForum**, created a new tablet, with detachable keyboard, touch screen, 4096 levels of stylus pressure, 2.5K 14" 2560x1600px 500nit bright screen, with VLink (to act as a larger screen for a smart phone), along with twin fan cooling.

MinisForum is better known for a line of mini computers, ranging from $150USD to $650USD. This tablet venture is so new that the item has not been priced.

https://www.minisforum.com/page/v3/

Sightful Spacetop – laptop wlithout a screen

Replacing the screen with VR glasses (and augmented reality) gives a Spacetop computer user a private, 100-inch, virtual screen, with plenty room for lots of active windows. While wearing the glasses, all surrounding visual distractions are removed, which may be quite useful for the procrastinators among us. When used in public settings, like planes and trains, it would be quite unsettling, for others within hearing range, to overhear a one-sided conversation; just as it is unsettling to witness a lone person talking aloud, while walking through the grocery store. *[Who are they talking to... an imaginary friend?]* It may require a few moments to realize there is a real person on the other end of the conversation.

This laptop still has a small 200x200px paper display (for boot-up, perhaps), a 5MP web camera, a prescription lens frame, a custom OS, and a Nano-SIM card slot (for 5G), along with WiFi6 and BlueTooth 5.1. [Current price is $2150.00USD]

In other words, it has the guts of a smartphone, with a large keyboard and glide pad, along with a really big, private, screen.

https://www.sightful.com/

LG CineBeam Qube

Televisions still provide the best picture quality, but quality comes at a price. Digital projectors are getting cheaper, and can throw out a large image, at HD 1080p60 quality. At 7 feet away, this projector throws an 80-inch picture at 58 nits brilliance. It also has auto-focus (with horizontal and vertical key stoning) and a 3 watt speaker.

If fed a 4k input signal, the output is reduces to 1080p. Because CineBeams include the LG WebOS, streaming is built-in. Pricing was not provided at the CES2024 reveal. Should it be found to be too costly, try the many other offerings at Projector Central (below).
https://www.projectorcentral.com/LG-CineBeam_Qube.htm

TESLA now at the OC

Tesla has opened a retail store in the Oshawa Centre. **Robert T. Bell**, one of our club members, visited on January 31st. **to take a few photos**.

[This Tesla shop is so new it does not yet appear in the shopping centre's directory.]

One of the questions I'll be asking concerns the location of repair centres and the availability of parts; both are often criticized by current owners. **https://www.oshawacentre.com/**

Free Linux Wallpaper

This image is from MXLinux KDE

DPCUC Wind Tunnel Visit   by David Swain

When: **Thursday February 22, 2024**
Where: **Ontario Tech University, Oshawa ON.**
Time: **3:00 pm**

ACE (Automotive Centre of Excellence) is a world-class R&D facility. Our environment can re-create any weather conditions a test object will experience anywhere in the world, from the blistering heat in Death Valley to the frigid conditions in the Arctic. We can test vehicles operating under full load with crosswinds and wind speeds up to 280 km/h.

This will blow your socks off !

Join the Durham PC Users' Club for a tour of the ACE— Climatic Wind Tunnel at Ontario Tech University.

As requested by the university, please submit the names of those attending to dpcuc@hotmail.com by Sunday Feb. 19th.

Friends & Family are welcome.

Directions to the Ace Climatic Wind Tunnel at Ontario Tech University

2000 Simcoe St N, Oshawa, ON L1G 0C5

Enter off Colin Rd. The Automotive Centre of Excellence is on your right as you round the curve.Please park in Founders Lot 2 which is the parking lot on your left at the first stop sign.Enter the gated lot by obtaining a ticket and the university will provide you a free pass after check-in at ACE.Enter the ACE building via the north entrance doors, pass the elevators, turn right and follow the signs to the ACE security desk.Let security know you are meeting with Andrew Karski.

DPCUC President's Notes   by Peter Camilleri

I remember, learning in school, that in southern Ontario, February is the coldest month of the year. It had something to do with Lake Ontario having a warming influence in January. It made me less fond of February.

Not this year!

This year, the month of February is going to be a little special, and hopefully, not because of an historic, massive blizzard!

This February we will be having *two* main club activities:

- Our Zoom meeting discussing Hard Disk Sentinel and other storage utilities. Really useful information and not to be missed!
- And an extra bonus, a field trip! We are scheduled to visit the Climatic Wind Tunnel at Ontario Tech University on February 22 at 3:00 pm. A chance to see some really cool, hi-tech stuff in person!

To attend this field trip, submit the names of those attending to dpcuc@hotmail.com by Sunday February 19th.

And now, as mad as the world is, it seems to be getting worse. We now have two humanitarian catastrophes under way. The wars in Ukraine and now in Gasa. It is so awful to sit here, safe and sound in our peaceful nation while these atrocities are under way. What can be done? What can we do? Not much, but here are two thoughts: Be grateful for the country we are fortunate enough to live in and secondly, Pray for Peace.

Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.

Linux in the News   **by Alex Morrison**

Tails 6.0 Anonymous OS Launches February 27th Based on Debian 12 Bookworm

0 Comments

Tails 6.0 anonymous OS is now available for public testing ahead of the official release on February 27th based on the Debian 12 "Bookworm" operating system series.

KaOS Linux 2024.01 Released with a Pure KDE Plasma 6-Based Environment

0 Comments

KaOS Linux 2024.01 independent distribution inspired by Arch Linux is now available for download with a pure KDE Plasma 6-based environment.

Clonezilla Live 3.1.2 Released with Linux Kernel 6.6 LTS and Memtest86+ 7.00

0 Comments

Clonezilla Live 3.1.2 live system for disk cloning and imaging is now available for download powered by Linux kernel 6.6 LTS and featuring updated components and various enhancements.

Damn Small Linux 2024 released
[Distributions] Posted Feb 1, 2024 14:53 UTC (Thu) by corbet

A new version of the Damn Small Linux distribution has come out with an updated definition of "damn small":

> The new goal of DSL is to pack as much usable desktop distribution into an image small enough to fit on a single CD, or a hard limit of 700MB. This project is meant to service older computers and have them continue to be useful far into the future. Such a notion sits well with my values. I think of this project as my way of keeping otherwise usable hardware out of landfills.

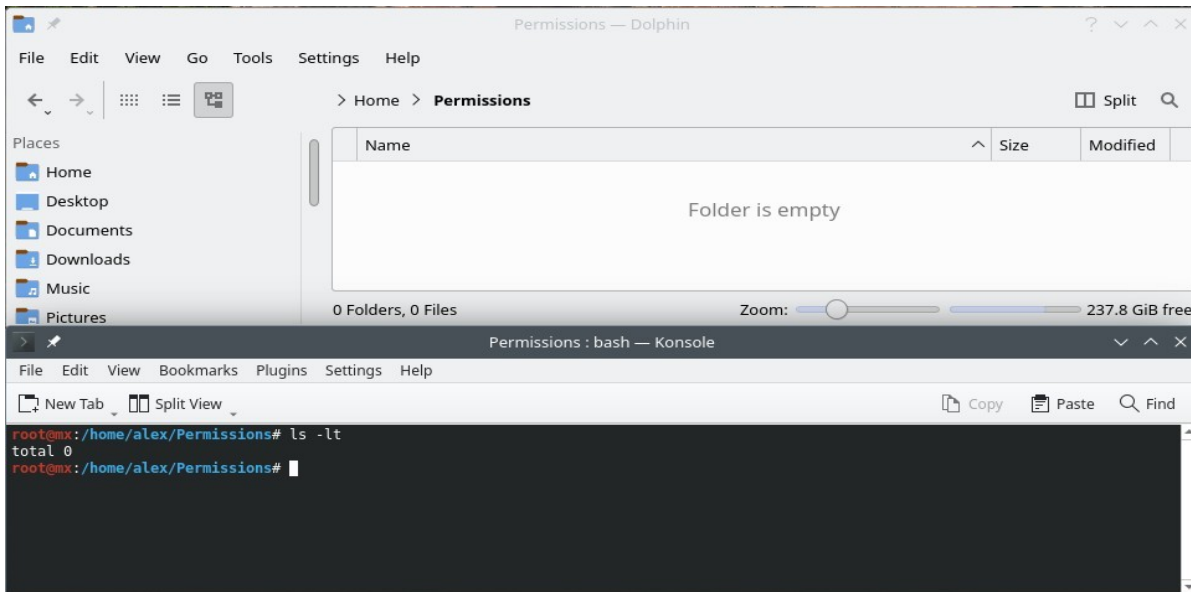**Comments (4 posted)**

Linux – Permissions   By Alex Morrison
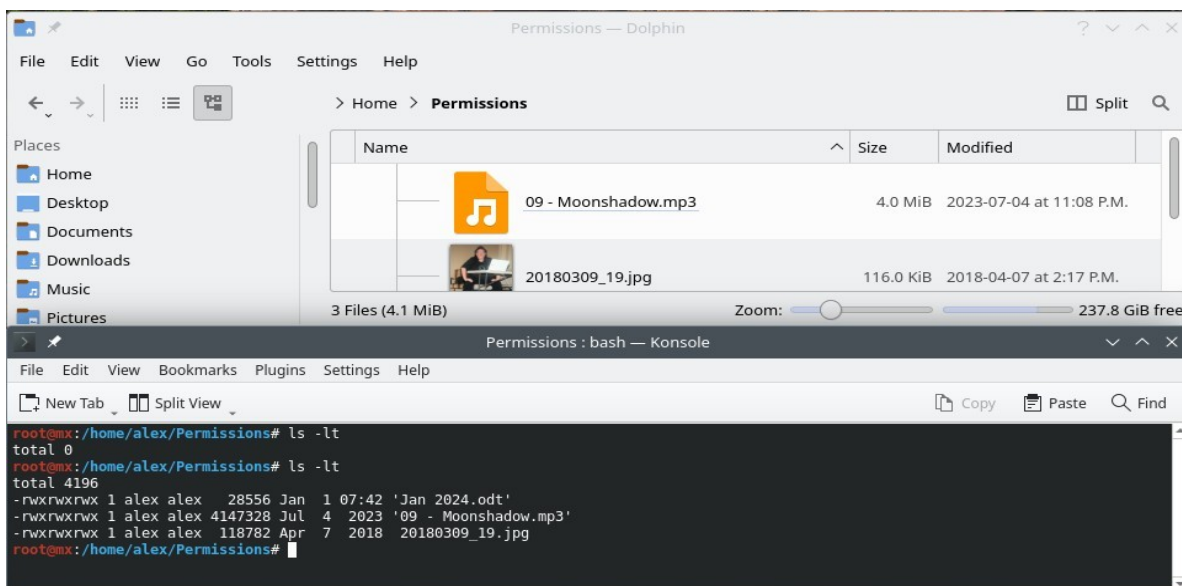
This is a small intro to Linux commands.

All files in a Linux system have levels of permissions.

The konsole command ------------> ls -lt will show all files in the current folder and the associated permissions.

I created a folder called Permissions and it started as empty. When I run the command --→ ls -lt it shows total 0 because the folder is empty.

Now I will place a few files in this folder. And look at what appears when I next run the same command.

Look closely at the entries in the black konsole window now.

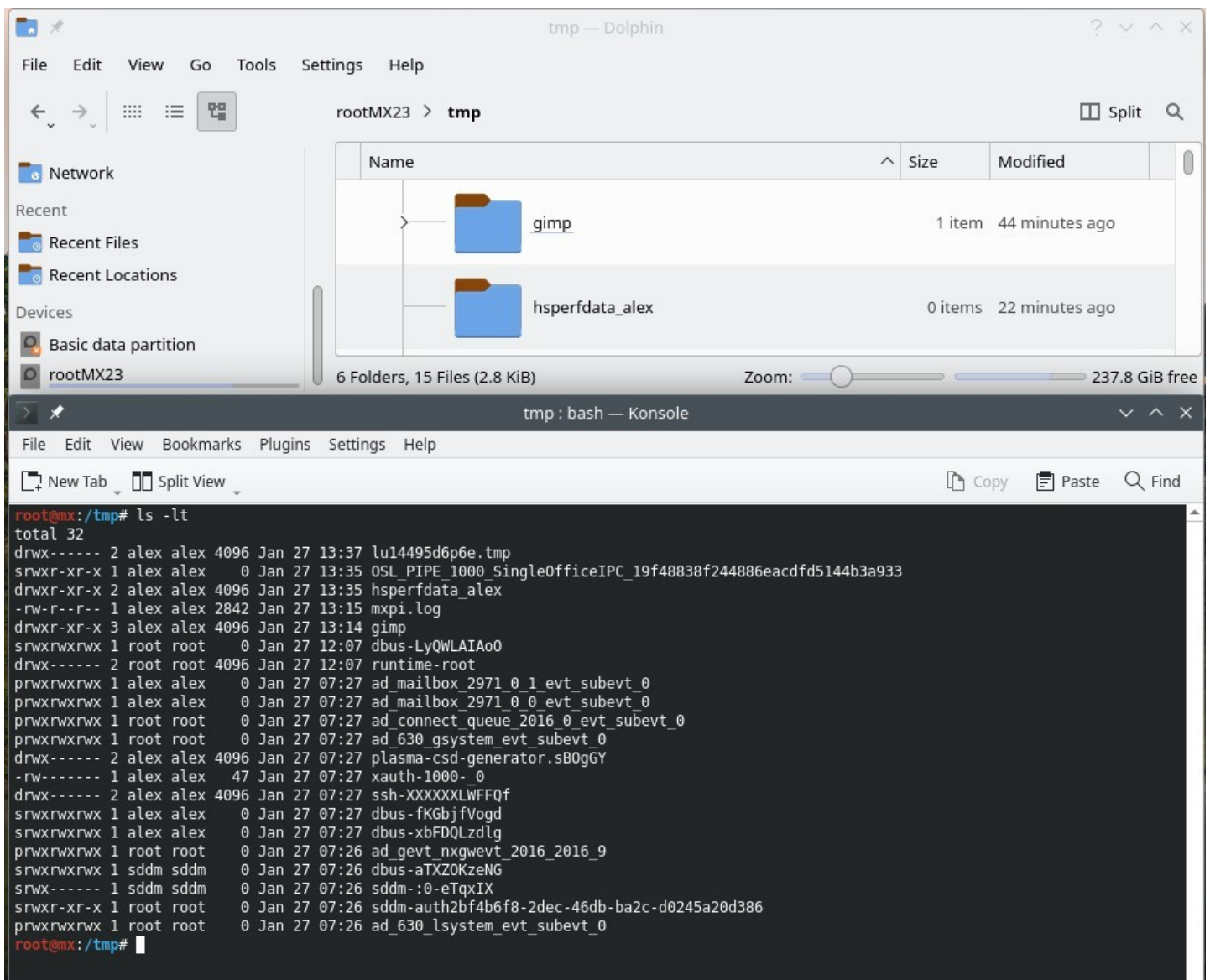You will see the names alex alex   This stands for the user first and the group the user is part of second

The file size is next. The last time the file was modified follows.

The lletters at the front describe permissions granted to the user and group following.

To show the difference I will next go to a root folder. I chose the temp folder which contains files owned by root and by the user alex.

Here we see users alex and root and also sddm [this is the display manager].

I will ad a few more commands in future articles.

Sudoku   February 2024   by Alex Morrison

EASY

Sudoku

The game boards on this page were produced using **Sudokuki** on Mageia 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

HARD

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.

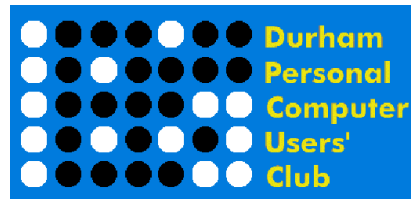New ideas for SIG groups are welcome.

Special Interest Groups

Durham Linux User Groups

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

President	Peter Camilleri	peter.c.camilleri@gmail.com	289-928-1579
Vice-President	Anne Delong	annedelong@timetraces.com	905-623-6975
Secretary/Treasurer	Mark Hunter	mark.s.hunter6605@gmail.com	905-924-2196
Membership/Publicity	David Odynski	odynskid@sympatico.ca	905-576-6325
Librarian	Dan Delong	dandelong@timetraces.com	905-623-6975
Program Director	TBA		
Newsletter Editor	Alex Morrison	dpcuc@rogers.com	905-579=1560
Director at Large	David Swain	david@swainracing.com	

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.