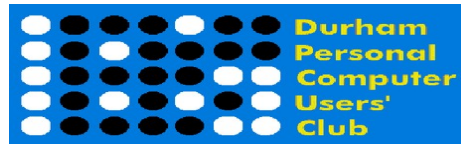


Nov 2024

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/>

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Next Meeting

Join the Fediverse

by Anne Delong

On ZOOM – Thursday, Nov 14 2024, 7:00PM

FYI

- By Dan Delong

Hook'em and Sink'em says Microsoft

Microsoft has invented a clever ploy to reduce **phishing** by those who use its platform to cheat people. It's analogous to staying on the phone during a crank call. Microsoft's "**Head of Deception**" came up with the idea, to create thousands of email addresses, populated with traits making them attractive to bad actors, who then waste a lot of time trying to engage with the fake owners of such accounts. While doing so, Microsoft tracks their efforts to connect, learning the methods employed by bad actors, and enabling better first line defences against phishing.

<https://it.slashdot.org/story/24/10/20/1840217/microsofts-honeypots-lure-phishers-at-scale---to-spy-on-them-and-waste-their-time>

European EVs are Getting Cheaper

In another **SlashDot** article, covering the slump in sales of electric cars, claims sales may pick up due to lower pricing for smaller models, especially in Europe. Canadians, despite a federal \$5000 assist, still pay about a \$20,000 premium for electric, versus gasoline, cars. Used EVs are still quite costly, despite recent drops in price. General Motors expects to release a far cheaper model soon. But, where will it be manufactured?

[Many Buicks are assemble in China.]

<https://tech.slashdot.org/story/24/10/21/024242/europe-automakers-launch-cheaper-electric-cars-to-compete-with-china>

The Internet Archive and Way Back Machine

For a while, the Internet Archive was totally offline, due to Cyber attacks. This, after the organization had also been sued for copyright violations with respect to books, published online.

*[I, hitherto, did not know that a paid service – **Archive It** – was offering the same service to organizations wishing to create their own archive.]*

Some other Archive services, like the **Way Back Machine** may be back online, but in read only mode. Even though the stored data in the Internet Archive is secure, their user database and help database, was not secure. As a non-profit, without connection to the United States governments, it is baffling. Why would an individual or group go after such an important service? [...unless our collective memories are so transient that politicians wish to remove all traces.]

If you haven't visited the [Internet Archive](https://www.archive.org/) in a while, a return visit may be in order. The "**Top Collections**" on the main page make for some fascinating scrolling.

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/more-of-internet-archive-is-back-online-despite-hackers-infiltrating-its-helpdesk/>

Bitdefender and Trend Micro

If you use these malware scanners for protection, update soon! Both have suffered **Man in the Middle** exploitation recently. The mention of **Trend Micro** was of special interest to me, since my expensive ASUS router uses it to catch problems before they can enter my home network. In fact, the log for Trend Micro shows hundreds of such attempts have been blocked.

<https://www.tomshardware.com/tech-industry/cyber-security/bitdefender-and-trend-micro-security-software-patched-after-multiple-critical-vulnerabilities-exposed>

India wants fewer imports.

More specifically, imported laptops are upsetting the country's trade balance and causing security concerns. Since adding tariffs would break international agreements, a softer approach will be taken. That approach places a **limit on imports**, to encourage domestic assembly of such computers. India is not the only country encouraging and subsidizing industries, to "come back home".

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/india-plans-laptop-import-curbs-boost-local-manufacturing-sources-say-2024-10-18/>

BYD Dissembled

All major car manufacturers have, for decades, purchased samples of competitors cars for dismantling. This, to discover ways to understand and to copy the same levels of efficiency and engineering acumen. It is no surprise that China's electric cars are being 'autopsied' in a similar manner. This article, at **Electrek**, tries to answer the question, "How does BYD (China) make good EVs so cheaply?"

<https://electrek.co/2024/10/22/byd-ev-teardown-shocks-japan-how-is-it-made-so-cheaply/>

Microlino

"It's not a car!" claims the seller. Neither is it a motorcycle, or bike. It is an all electric conveyance, protecting the driver and passenger from inclement weather, with a range of about 200Km. However, Europe gets it first. The **Microlino** was designed in Switzerland and built in Italy. The less expensive, 'lite' version runs at a slower speed, and not as far; 'best for in-town errands only.



<https://microlino-car.com/en-ch/microlino>

Adobe Fresco is now free

Although this **Make Use Of** article seems to focus on Apple devices regarding the now free **Fresco** (a feature rich Adobe drawing program) installers for Android and Windows devices are offered, as well.

[Hardware and driver requirements are here: <https://helpx.adobe.com/ca/fresco/system-requirements.html>]

The above link may not yet reflect the **FREE** aspect of this prime drawing program, since the announcement is quite recent. Fresco works well on touch screens... even better when using a stylus.

<https://www.makeuseof.com/adobe-fresco-five-year-update-free-to-all/>

Three TV Settings

In another **Make Use Of** article, the author of the article always makes three changes to the default settings on a new television.

First, in the Picture settings, he avoids presets like: - **Vivid, Sports, Cinema, or Gaming** because original TV signals are already colour corrected for best viewing. He disables them with controls like **Standard, Neutral or Off**.

The same is true for Audio. Trust the original sound engineers to deliver the best sound possible over small internal speakers, or sound bars. He also sets audio to **Standard, Flat or Off**, in favour of **Spacial Audio or 3D Sound**.

Further tweaks can be made to accommodate those hard of hearing. Colours can actually be manually set to please one's taste.

The final change refers to motion blur on large screens, due to the differing frame rates for film (24p) and live broadcasts (30p). Read on for more...

<https://www.makeuseof.com/settings-change-new-tv-best-viewing-experience/>

Liquid AI – the next “big thing”

MIT has birthed an improved AI methodology—one that requires less electricity, works faster, and needs smaller masses of learning data. Lead researcher, [Ramin Hasani](#), noticed that the ‘brains’ of a tiny worm could make complex decisions despite having only a few hundred neurons. Studying these neural patterns led to a better machine learning mathematical formulae, termed **Liquid Neural Network**. Such AI is also more accountable, in that the processes involved in decision making can be ‘reverse engineered’ more easily.

<https://www.liquid.ai/>

Blood in the Machine *[A newsletter about AI, Silicon Valley, labour and power. Over 7,000 subscribers]*

As a new member of the **Fediverse**, on **Mastadon**, some interesting postings have arrived, based on my preferred areas of interest. For example, **Brian Merchant** lays out analysis and opinion, on the possible future effects of AI, with blog article titles like:- “*Understanding the Real Threat Generative AI Poses to Our Jobs*”, “*AI is revitalizing the fossil fuels industry...*”, and “*AI will never solve this*”.

<https://www.bloodinthemachine.com/>

Wired Magazine – AI Help

Wired has run a few articles recently with respect to constructing better phrasing when creating queries/prompts used for **AI searches**. The advice is:- **Use natural language (a dozen or more words) and, “Be specific”**. Instead of asking for general recipes when you are really wanting a specific lunch idea, use this text, “*Find lunch ideas that involve both soup and bread.*”

<https://www.wired.com/newsletter/ai-unlocked>

[The above link will not show all content unless you are a subscriber, so try this one instead...

<https://link.condenast.com/view/6142243c6fdf8d47750a3614670d164ca6fe0822a60c71fe/eb6f127d>

In a subsequent newsletter, the author discussed some dangers of using **AI for medical diagnosis**, when doctors are either unavailable or too expensive. AI has been known to get it wrong, especially when it comes to drug side effects. **Meta’s Facebook Search**, on a smart phone, now offers to perform a **Meta AI Search** instead, using Llama3.2. *[NOTE: The terms and conditions of use pop-up disappeared too quickly to read. Ignoring that, the suggested prompts led to some interesting and useful content.]*

Since Facebook was also open on a nearby computer, the results arrived both on the phone and on the ‘alternate’ computer screen.

*[From personal experience, I’m beginning to believe that more Facebook postings are now created by AI. I think thus because more postings are multi-paragraphs – after clicking on **More** – and the text just doesn’t feel quite right (to my ear) having unusual grammatical structures and expressions... occasionally with factual errors.]*

Vivaldi is ‘Way’ Better

A recent major update to the **Vivaldi** desktop/laptop browser makes a good thing better. This browser is modern in appearance and utility. It has a built-in mail client, calendar and feed reader. **Tabs** remember content, and update it in the background while synchronizing with Vivaldi instances on other computers, **in real time**. Synchronization also includes bookmarks, feeds, and settings changes. Vivaldi also supports the **Social Web Foundation** – part of the **Fediverse** – which breaks away from the growing control of web content by those with the most bucks.

[**Vivaldi Social** is just one of thousands of **Mastodon** instances, but is a good one to join, since it has 56,000 registered participants.]

<https://vivaldi.com/blog/social-web-foundation-launches-supported-by-vivaldi/>



Copilot becomes more useful

Not only will Copilot be available as an app, it will run in your Edge browser, (now using more than just text prompts). I tried a couple of new features, like a **voice/spoken query** (after allowing microphone access), and dropping in an old **photo** (to identify a computer model). On both tasks, the results were quite good. When voicing into the microphone, responses come back as **both text and well-spoken English**.



[I pasted that personal photo of an old laptop, made in Canada. The identification as a Canadian MCM/70 micro computer from 1973, one of the earliest PCs, took only a few seconds.]

Using the “**Think Deeper**” algorithm, Microsoft claims this improved version may need a little more “thinking” time to provide ‘deeper’ details not yielded by other AI platforms.

[Some of these features are available to Pro users (\$20/month), or they are still under development, in the lab.]

*[Now, I see more clearly why the next Win11 update will include “**Recall**”, again. Recall saves all screens, web visits, and local app operations (locally, is claimed). Such records will make it possible for Copilot to react quickly to image questions, or to explain the object your mouse is hovering on, or even to bring up prices for ordering an item.]*

[Just one caution about using voice query while in public... Others, within hearing range, may find it odd, just as when smart phone users began talking to an invisible presence.]

<https://youtu.be/4IUnol4hLyQ?si=Z3TDPc-KJeGUC1O8>

GSMarena and One Plus with Oxygen 15 OS

This new, less bulky, operating system—Oxygen 15 (based on Android) - offers many improved features They include greater speed and AI built right into the device. It hasn’t yet arrived in North America. India and Asia get first crack at updated phones.

The camera editor impressed me the most, offering amazing **de-blur** and **object removal**, which may be further aided by AI, depending on settings. Excellent cameras (and lower price, compared to Samsung and Apple) have helped One Plus sales.

[Flagship models, from most brands, can cost almost \$3000CAD.]

The hands-on review (below) covers all the details, with examples.

https://www.gsmarena.com/oneplus_oxygenos_15_handson_review-news-65059.php

Phone Tracking

Targeting individuals, according to their phone location and movements, is possible through their Android and Apple device IDs. This article gives examples of incipient tracking, and how to turn off location tracking for specific apps, as well as all Geo-tracking. That still won’t stop Google from tracking your location as you travel near public or private Wi-Fi locations... those that Google has mapped during Streetview updates.

<https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2024/10/phone-tracking-tool-lets-government-agencies-follow-your-every-move/>

Loops is the Tik Tok Alternative

The Fediverse welcomes [Loops](#) to its distributed social web platforms. This newest phone app – still adding features – accepts **60 second videos**. Trusted accounts (with uncontroversial content) will appear instantly, while suspect content will be delayed or removed by moderators (depending of severity).



<https://www.theverge.com/2024/10/26/24280075/fediverse-tiktok-alternative-loops-pixelfed-mastodon-activitypub-signups-open>

Osmo Pocket 3 Creator Combo

What can an online shopper do when finding the same product with two wildly differing prices? One site claims \$54.31CAD for this device, while the other wants \$1130.00 CAD. The first is a China based seller; the second is Amazon Canada. Ordering from the low priced site may result in receipt of an alternate, partial, or defective product. Ordering from Amazon may result in an over-priced, yet quality, item. **I did neither**. The cheap site is supported by a set of 2024, five star, comments, and one claim that seemed rather fantastic; that being, 5K video. [*What is 5K video, anyway?*]

[The **Osmos Pocket 3** is supposed to do all of the following, as listed on Amazon - “*Vlogging Camera with 1" CMOS & 4K/120fps Video, 3-Axis Stabilization, Face/Object Tracking, Fast Focusing, Mic Included for Clear Sound, Small Camera for Photography*”.]

AI now reads emotions.

“ArtEmis” is the **Stanford** name given to a dataset containing **81,000 WiKiArt paintings** used in the analysis of emotional reactions to each, by human volunteers. In other words, AI can now read artworks for emotional responses (*8 emotions... both positive and negative*), thereby giving advertisers and artists some feedback on the expected emotional states invoked by such images.

<https://www.artemisdataset.org/>

New Space Debris in GEO

An equatorial high altitude (geostationary) communications satellite broke up into smaller pieces, endangering other satellites in the same Clark Belt. A couple of theories have come forth to explain it.

<https://gizmodo.com/space-force-is-tracking-uncontrolled-debris-after-communications-satellite-breaks-apart-2000514385>

Giant Monitor for Sale

Ever think you’d like to own a back-stage-sized television? An audio/video rental company – **Briere Production Group** (Burnaby, BC & Seattle, WA)– is selling off used equipment. A complete set of 120 LED video tiles, with travel cases, and the rack to install them, assembles into a 14 feet high and 30 feet wide screen, for about \$70,000CAD (a saving of \$30,000CAD).

Add a 30x optical zoom HD block video camera for \$1,600CAD, completing your neighbourhood watch surveillance system, or constructing a decent outdoor drive-in screen.

[NOTE: These 23-inch square LED tiles are not the same as the tough, low resolution, video lights used for the infomercials on hockey arena boards.]

[*Many other lower priced items are available, including a professional Yamaha keyboard, and drum kit pieces.*]

<https://shop.briereproductiongroup.com/absen-c7-led-video-tile-pkg-of-120/>

Fibre for Independent Providers

The **CRTC (Canadian Government)** has set out some rules that may give Independents, like Teksavvy, a chance to use the infrastructure of Bell, Telus, and Sasktel.

[Although Rogers has replaced some cable with fibre (but not directly to the home) it is excluded from the ruling. having already agreed to pricing for cable access.]

It appears that Bell will be able to charge providers about **\$68 per connection, per month**.

If memory serves, Bell's original deal for DSL with Teksavvy, about 25 years ago, was a \$20 per month charge, which gave room for Teksavvy to add their own charge (lower than Bell's DSL) and still make a profit. Bell, currently (without this new rule having taken effect) allows Teksavvy to sell Bell Fibe for \$120 per month plus taxes and installation fee, using Bell's router only.

[If Bell would install just a fibre terminal to the house – an ONU (Optical Network Unit) – customers could use their own router systems.]

This CRTC ruling comes into effect in February 2025, but only in areas already served by fibre. Bell's response had been to cut back on installation of new fibre in these next two years, by 1.1 billion CAD each year and let go thousands of employees. Any new fibre will not need to adhere to price setting by the CRTC, until 5 years later.

[Bell claims fibre is costly to install. I imagine underground installations are more costly than pole stringing, as is the case in my neighbourhood.]

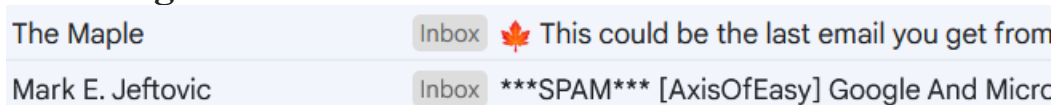
<https://www.thestar.com/business/crtc-sets-interim-rates-for-wholesale-fibre-internet-access>

Car Batteries will Improve

Actually they are improving already – that is, the current liquid Li-ON cells are improving. One such company makes better high silicon anode material for existing battery cells, while a couple of others companies are not yet ready to go into industrial scale production of their solid state (dry) battery technology. Toyota plans to use solid state batteries, in some vehicles, by 2026. The aim for all is to make smaller/lighter/safer batteries, while decreasing charge time, and increasing power.

<https://insideevs.com/features/738508/high-silicon-anode-solid-state/>

Gmail now automanaged



Organizing my inbox manually, with 'labels' and folders is still possible, but more automation seems to be taking over, causing some important emails to remain hidden. When it comes to Spam, Gmail has always done a good job; seldom have I found an important email in Spam. Google has also created some new folders, into which some emails appear, while still retaining their visibility in "Inbox". These new folder categories are "Social", "Updates", "Forums" and, "Promotions", along with icons for "Starred", "Important", "Chats", "Scheduled" and, "All Mail". However, I recently found one sender (one I've subscribed to for years) in Spam. Another regular, "The Maple", sent out a special email to subscribers, stating that we should send a reply to them, at least once, or add "hello@readthemaple.com" to my contact list, else Google's 'intelligence' might demote emails to Spam.

DPCUC President's Notes

by Peter Camilleri

Well, it's starting to become real folks. In less than a year, roughly 400 million personal computers will become obsolete. I can only imagine the impact of that many machines being thrown out.

It is fair to ask why things are so much worse this time versus say, the switch from Windows 8 to Windows 10?

Well previously, Microsoft has allowed seven years for people to migrate. This time, we've only been allowed four.

Secondly, the systems requirements for upgrading are so much more onerous than in previous times. Many capable machines are being excluded. This tactic is largely driven by the desire to force people to spend lots of money buying new machines. Microsoft partners AMD and Intel had a lot to do with this.

While it is possible to bypass these requirements, it is clear that Microsoft is also working to block the "tricks" that make this possible. So this is uncertain.

However, the worst problem of all would seem to Windows 11 itself. All kinds of undesirable nonsense like advertisements in the Start menu and the insecure, poorly implemented spy called "Recall". Turning off all of this stuff can be done, but it's looking to be a lot of work, just to stand still.

Now, there is an offer on the table for those who don't want to be hijacked. Schools can pay \$1 per machine for one year of extra support, \$2 for the second year, and \$4 for the third. For consumers (that's us) the offer is \$30 for one year only! Not sure, but I think those are also US dollar prices.

Finally, there's the ultimate solution of switching to a distribution of Linux. For most of us though, this is a daunting proposition starting with picking a distro out of the bazillion that are out there.

So it comes down to the choices: Buy new? Sneak in? Pay up? Convert? Or worst of all, hide your head in the sand and pretend there's no problem. I'm still trying to make up my mind.

And as always, for Ukraine, Gasa, and the rest of the world, Pray for Peace.

Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.

Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison



[COSMIC Desktop Alpha 3 Released, Here's What's New](#)

Alpha 3 of System76's COSMIC desktop is now available with improved customizable theming, applets, and adaptable windows designed to improve your Linux workflow.

[The November 2024 Issue of the PCLinuxOS Magazine](#)

The PCLinuxOS Magazine staff is pleased to announce the release of the November 2024 issue. With the exception of a brief period in 2009, The PCLinuxOS Magazine has been published on a monthly basis since September, 2006. The PCLinuxOS Magazine is a product of the PCLinuxOS community, published by...

[Download YouTube Videos on Linux from CLI Using yt-dlp](#)

Discover a step-by-step tutorial for downloading YouTube audio and video on Linux from the command line using yt-dlp.

[Linux Mint Is Getting a Night Light Feature in Cinnamon, Framework Laptop Support](#)

Linux Mint distribution is getting a Night Light feature for the Cinnamon desktop environment and support for Framework laptops.

[Immutable Distro Nitrx 3.7.1 Released with Linux Kernel 6.11, NVIDIA 565, and More](#)

Nitrx 3.7.1 distribution is now available for download powered by Linux kernel 6.11 and featuring the NVIDIA 565 graphics driver. Here's what's new!

[Linux Lite 7.2 Released with Lite Theme Manager, Based on Ubuntu 24.04 LTS](#)

Linux Lite 7.2 distribution is now available for download based on Ubuntu 24.04 LTS, powered by Linux kernel 6.8, and featuring the Xfce 4.18 desktop environment. Here's what's new!

[I Installed Fedora on Raspberry Pi, Here's How it Compares to the Official Pi OS](#)

- It's Foss News; By Abhishek Kumar (Posted by [Scott Ruecker](#) on Nov 4, 2024 2:30 AM EDT)
- Groups: [Fedora](#), [Linux](#), [Raspberry Pi](#), [Distributions](#); Story Type: [News Story](#)

Fedora is one of those Linux distributions that tends to fly under the radar for Raspberry Pi users because there's Raspberry Pi OS and many other distros fit for Raspberry Pi.

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



Linux – Man-Pages

Man-Pages are konsole based help files.

Most, but not every program, offer help files to assist with understanding how the specific program functions.

When you open a konsole [or terminal] and type man followed by some program name and then press enter you might see a very detailed guide to using the program.

Most Linux distributions have a few man pages built in when installed. Modern Linux distributions however tend to have fewer man pages today as in the past. The newer iso images might be too large to include many man pages.

If you want to add more man-pages to your system here are the steps to get them.

First look to see if man-pages is in your distribution repository.

If not in your systems repository try the following steps.

Install git if you do not already have it installed.

Open a konsole and type the following command as a normal user and press enter.

```
git clone http://git.kernel.org/pub/scm/docs/man-pages/man-pages
```

The above command downloads a number of man-pages

Now change to the man-pages folder by typing the following.

```
cd man-pages
```

Now log-in as root user by typing the following.

```
su
```

 and press Enter

Now type your root password and press enter.

Now you are in the correct location and are the root user. Type `---> make install`

after this a number of new man-pages are installed.

NOTE: Not all programs have man-pages but these steps help to add what are available.

Our Linux Meeting is the first Thursday of the month using ZOOM. All are welcome!
Please send an email to Alex or Hugh to get the Linux group Zoom credentials.

Sudoku

Nov 2024

by Alex Morrison



EASY

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

Sudoku

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

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

HARD

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

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.

Special Interest Groups

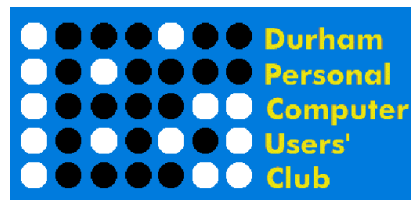
Durham Linux User Groups

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.



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2022-2023

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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.