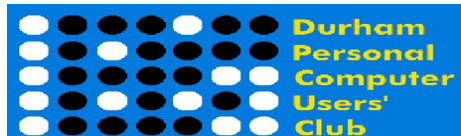


**August 2025**

# **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**

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## **Next Meeting**

**Visit to the Tank Museum**

**Hosted by DPCUC**

**Thursday, Aug 14 2025, 2:00 – 4:00 PM**

# FYI

- By Dan Delong

## Switch from the Brave Browser to Zen

This reviewer claims Chrome based browsers, like Brave, are too limiting and do not respect privacy well enough. He suggests moving to Zen, for wider compatibility with legacy web site coding and greater privacy. Zen uses the Gecko engine, as does Firefox. Further ... Zen focuses on lots of customization, sticky priority tabs and pinned tabs, lots of add-ons, split view, picture-in-picture video, translations, and workspaces. **Zen Glance** lets you preview a web page before actually clicking and loading it. In Compact Mode, it hides the menus – i.e.:- goes full-screen.

“It can block social media trackers, finger printers, and more, and you can install extensions like uBlock Origin on top of that.”

[[Zen Browser App](#)] Zen is also “open source”.

<https://www.xda-developers.com/zen-browser-better-brave-arc-chrome/>

## All This AI Talk – Optimism vs Fear

Meta, Google, X, and Microsoft are all competing for leadership in the upcoming dominance of AI for new discoveries and new application. Heeding the words of Microsoft’s Global Senior Director at the **World Economic Forum**, we are heading for the next great revolution in physics, akin to the Industrial Revolution. He portends great advances in medicine, materials, automation, and robotics, with not a mention of the dangers, like, breakage of the “[The Three Laws of Robotics](#)” designed by Isaac Asimov. Or, of the huge financial investment in hardware, and the insatiable demand for electrical energy. Efficiency gains with respect to lower human labour costs, inventory controls, and movement of goods, will bring greater profits to the billionaire class. Ade Famoti also introduced the term “friction points”, to describe opportunities to control AI (when in the form of robots). Friction points designate occasions when a robot halts long enough to receive further direction from a human operator. A further article in this link discussed competition among nations, for AI superiority. [Microsoft published a two lists](#) – one of 40 jobs likely to be lost to AI, and another list of 40 jobs unlikely to be taken over by AI.

<https://www.weforum.org/videos/ai-golden-age/>

## Retired Canadian Finds Happiness in Making Robots

Mike assembles robots from “junk”, without the aid of computers, calling it “Art”. His video is for anyone who aspired to learn welding for “happiness”.

<https://blog.adafruit.com/2025/06/29/how-building-robots-saved-my-life/>

## Micron PCIe SSDs Leapfrog Competitors

Capacity (up to 245 TB) is just as important as speed (3.6 GB/s) in an enterprise AI installation. Micron is a large, World Company, with main offices in the United States. Solid State Drives ,like these latest from Micron, are too expensive for hobbyists, but it’s interesting just the same – to see where technology is going. They are designed to keep up with the data requirements of **nVidia GPUs**.

<https://investors.micron.com/news-releases/news-release-details/micron-unveils-portfolio-industry-first-ssds-power-ai-revolution>

## Self-Hosted vs Publicly Hosted

Rapid human advancement is not simply due to brain size, opposable thumbs, and walking erect; it is due to language and the ability to pass knowledge to next generations through stories, trade guilds, texts, libraries, newspapers, television, and now the Internet. Trouble is, we are falling into past practices, in which knowledge transfer is only for the 'monied' class. Today, access to knowledge requires hardware and paid subscriptions, made worse by AI (which will not remain free) and the disappearance of some archival content (in the USA, China, and Russia, where governments fear a freely informed populous).

As this Slashdot article ([link below](#)) points out, content accessed using a subscription is no grantee of ownership, in perpetuity. When one subscriber (to Kindle books) lost his access, he built his own server, self-supplying content he thought he owned, with his own alternatives to Drive, Photos, Audible, Kindle, and Netflix. But this self-hosting arrangement served only himself. Wouldn't it be better to "lend" knowledge to everyone, in a public way, using our tax paid Library systems (which is largely digital now). Let every citizen with a library card have a file sharing/storage area on the Library servers, including photos.

<https://hardware.slashdot.org/story/25/07/30/203220/the-future-is-not-self-hosted>

Further to the above, knowledge repositories (other than Wikipedia and the Internet Archive) namely, Substack, Beehiiv, Medium, and ConvetKit, generally charge both the information consumer and the authors, after reaching a certain volume of readers. <https://leavesubstack.com/>

## Financial Trading with AI, Not So Smart

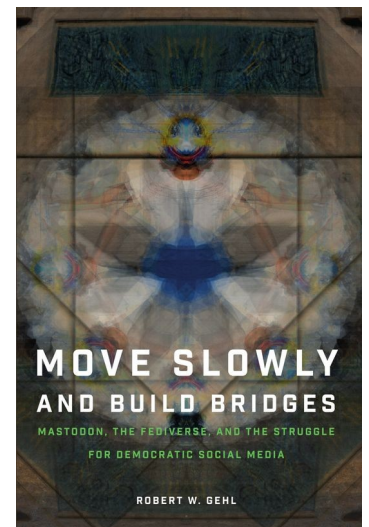
Artificial Intelligence tools for financial trades have been colluding, without being told to do so!

<https://www.tomshardware.com/tech-industry/researchers-find-automated-financial-traders-will-collude-with-each-other-through-a-combination-of-artificial-intelligence-and-artificial-stupidity>

## Book About the Fediverse, by Robert W. Gehl

The author, an academic, has also written about the dark web. "Move Slowly and Build Bridges" is a book about the making of new social media platforms, separate from X, Facebook, and TikTok, largely represented by instances of Mastodon open software on many separate servers, run by volunteers. I belong to one Mastodon instance, *thecanadian.social*.

<https://moveslowlybuildbridges.com/>



## Street View, by Google... new data



For visual learners, Street View is great – e.g.- for destination confirmation, for exploring a childhood neighbourhood, and for seeing your immigrant roots. It even has a time machine, going back over almost two decades, in many locations. One developer has used images of urban NYC to make an alttext database (Alttext describes content and is usually shown as a cursor hover pop-up). This database is assembled from all the readable text on buildings, billboards, graffiti, and street signs. (*Google blurs faces and license plates, so they are not readable*). Eight million images yielded 138 million alttexts. When given the [Pudding Treatment](#), the data base becomes searchable.

[The accompanying [search engine](#) does not require a Google account.]

I tried searching for the word “**saving**” and got over 60 thousand hits. Clicking one any “hit” (*circular images above*) provides the ZIP code, coordinates, image date, and borough pinpoints. In some cases the details include shopping hours of businesses and a description of the services offered. The **Pudding** site suggests other search terms to reveal cultural aspects of the city, and areas to be wary of. Graffiti translations are also quite interesting.

<https://blog.adafruit.com/2025/07/29/nycs-urban-textscape-arttuesday/>

## Google and Microsoft Forcing AI On Users

My latest update to Chrome includes “Ask AI Assistant” which appears to integrate with Adobe’s AI efforts, in particular. Microsoft does the same with Copilot.

Here’s a [quote from a developer](#):- “You’ll be much better off by learning how to deal with AI, because it’s surely going to deal with you.”

The newest laptops, those with NPUs – Dell and Lenovo for example – will turn on Copilot by default.

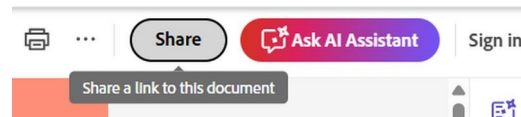


Figure 1: Copilot (CTRL-Shift-.)

## **A Google Tool Made Content “Disappear”**

A journalist, who had written about a CEO's arrest, found that text could not be searched for on Google. What happened? Google's "Refresh Outdated Content" tool had been misappropriated to make his story disappear... 'gone'. Google says it has now fixed the issue, but it makes one wonder if similar weaknesses exist for future access to stories about powerful people. Google dislikes showing searchers a URL leading to a 404 error, so much so, that an automated tool was able to eliminate close approximations to that real, live, URL, hyperlinking to the story.

[Journalist Discovers Google Vulnerability That Allowed People to Disappear Specific Pages From Search](#)

## **OpenMedia**

**OpenMedia** is a Canadian movement to lower telecom prices. As the web site points out, cheaper prices (after the Rogers purchase of Shaw) could not last. Rogers customers are now paying more for service (3 dollars per month) in order to enhance the ARPU (*Average Revenue Per Customer*). Our current government has indicated a willingness to break up the 3-party monopoly, of telecom services, but will still not enact MVNO (Mobile Virtual Network Operator) legislation, which would greatly lower phone fees.

[I am aware of only one MVNO service in Canada, that “hitchhiked” on Rogers Iqaluit signals, for a few years, called, “Sugar Mobile”.]

Remember Skype? It once offered a personal phone number (in the USA) with an account, and billed about 2 cents per minute for outgoing phone calls. Canadians could not get the personal phone number, but we could make outgoing calls, to any long distance number, for the same price – using the microphone and speaker in your computer. This, I believe, was a form of MVNO, using TCIP for voice calls.

[Soon after the advent of the Internet, AT&T switched to TCIP for long distance calls, according to my source, saving millions of dollars on contract agreements.]

OpenMedia is worth a visit, as it also discusses privacy, police surveillance, digital sovereignty, and the underserved.

<https://openmedia.org/campaigns>

## **Quantum Computers To Secure Elections**

The fear that Quantum computers could easily de-encrypt the most secure data, making current encryption methods obsolete, works both ways. Quantum computers can also thoroughly resist decryption of voting results, such that security and anonymity of the vote is guaranteed. The Norwegian Institute of Technology has come up with a method to count only valid voters, without back tracking to personal details about the voter.

*[More voters tend to show up for digital polls, than for paper voting, but this system is compatible with paper voting – one vote per registered voter. It cannot solve the gerrymandering problem – the redistribution of voting districts in order to favour one party... so popular in the USA.]*

<https://interestingengineering.com/innovation/evoting-system-quantum-computer-hacking-proof>

## **CD2WAV32 4.01jp for Win11**

This is an old Windows7 audio CD ripper, updated and improved for windows 11. The author is Japanese, but running it should be in English.

<https://www.mlum-factory.com/delphi.html>

**Tomshardware** reviewed it here:- <https://www.tomshardware.com/software/windows/ancient-cd-ripping-tool-updated-for-the-first-time-in-16-years-now-supports-windows-11>



## SparkO

What a handy little flashlight! It can clip onto clothing, or a laptop screen; or it can stand on a table at any angle – handheld too. Lighting modes are white, yellow, more yellow and red, with 4 levels of intensity for each. Bike riders can set the SparkO to bright red and clip it to the back of a shirt, while riding during the day (or at lower intensity for night riding). Book readers can clip it to clothing while in bed with a book. Make videos brighter (fill lighting) while on Zoom, by clipping it to the screen frame. Okay, so it's a Kick-starter project, but SparkO has far surpassed its fundraising goal in just 15 days. The USB-C rechargeable battery should last about 14 hours on low power. The price will be about \$25 CAD when available in October.



<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/scoutlite/sparko-our-next-generation-multi-scenario-wearable-light>

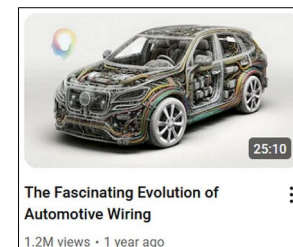
## New Mind – YouTube Channel

Thanks should go to a tipster, for recommending this educational YouTube channel. **New Mind** is focused on explaining (from olden times to now) the workings of everyday technological inventions/devices – all essential to modern living (which should be understood from first principles to current developments). The video that first caught my eye concerned automobile wiring, dating from the Model-T to today's computerized data busses.

Topics include, evolution of motor oils, microscopic machines, zip ties, stealth materials, quantum computing, strange computers, AI, batteries, energy from the air, and many more...

*[Be aware that non-payers, to YouTube, will experience pop-up ads throughout the most popular shows.]*

<https://www.youtube.com/@NewMind/videos>



## Heated Desk pad and Mouse pad

Winter will come again. You may find yourself typing and mousing in the wee hours, when the furnace is on “low”. Comfortable computing can be regained with these ‘warmers’. The desk pad’s temperature can be set to variable temperatures. Product images (*link below*) show a customer sitting on this pad, warming up another cold spot. [\$51 CAD] Warmers specific to ‘mousing’ are available in several styles. Just search for “mouse pad warmer”.

<https://www.newegg.ca/p/1KR-003M-00001>

## Power a light with Escaping Earth Heat

Remember the girl who won a Google science fair contest, with her invention of a flashlight that made enough electrical power to illuminate some LEDs, simple with hand heat? It appears that this lesson has not been forgotten by a couple of Western Universities, where ‘radiative cooling’ (heat escaping earth at night) can convert energy (via thermocouples) enough to create useful lighting. The equipment cost was about \$30, which could be scaled up to produce more electricity than made by this test equipment.

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/quirks/generating-light-from-darkness-1.5282365>

## Axis of Easy

Finally, for those who have enjoyed reading the **EasyDNS** (Canadian) blog summary of security breaches, here's the latest:- <https://mc.easydns.com/email/view/688d3f73a51b9540742308>

## **DPCUC President's Notes**

**by Peter Camilleri**

I hope you are all enjoying this amazing summer. Remember: Don't complain too much about the heat because it will be freezing cold before you know it!

As a part of the club executive, I am always eager to hear what you, club members think. Recently, a theme emerged that it would be nice to do another club outing to an interesting place.

That is why I am so glad to say that the club is going on another field trip! On August 14 we will congregate at the Canadian Tank Museum (1000 Stevenson Rd N, Oshawa, ON L1J 5P5) at 2PM. We don't have solid numbers on attendance, but that does not matter. The point is to get out, see new things, and have some fun.

Prices are \$15, \$12 for seniors plus tax. After enjoying a look at a unique, heavy metal sort of technology, there will be a gathering at a nearby restaurant for supper.

I have been meaning to see this attraction for some time and am very much looking forward to the event and seeing as many of you as possible.

Finally, it is such a source of pain to me that the insane war in Ukraine and the horrific suffering in Gaza continue, unabated.

Pray for Peace.

Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.

## **Linux in the News**

by Alex Morrison



### Microsoft's Debt Exploded by 15.4 Billion Dollars in the Past 9 Months Alone (Despite All the Layoffs)

- Techrights; By Roy Schestowitz (Posted by [schestowitz](#) on Aug 1, 2025 8:29 PM CST)
- Groups: [Microsoft](#)

After nearly 10 waves of layoffs in 2025 (not 2 as the mainstream media likes to claim) the workforce is a lot smaller and money is still absent, except for speculation in Wall Street

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

### Audacious 4.5 Open-Source Audio Player Adds Playback History Plugin, Winamp 2.9 Skin

[0 Comments](#)

Audacious 4.5 open-source media player arrives with a new Playback History plugin, Winamp 2.9 skin, improved PipeWire output plugin, and more. Here's what's new!

### Shotcut 25.07 Video Editor Introduces Speech to Text Model Downloader

[0 Comments](#)

Shotcut 25.07 open-source video editor is now available for download with new Speech to Text model downloader and other changes. Here's what's new!

### Rescuezilla 2.6.1 Swiss Army Knife of System Recovery Adds Ubuntu 25.04 Support

[0 Comments](#)

Rescuezilla 2.6.1 distribution is now available for download with a new build based on Ubuntu 25.04 "Plucky Puffin" and other changes. Here's what's new!



# Sudoku Puzzles

August 2025 by Alex Morrison

## EASY

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

## Sudoku

The game boards on this page were produced using **Sudokuki** on PC Linux 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

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

## HARD

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

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

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

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

# **Linux – Garuda Linux** by Alex Morrison With AI help



## **Garuda Linux: A Cutting-Edge Arch-Based Distro for Power Users**

In the vast and diverse world of Linux distributions, **Garuda Linux** has rapidly carved a niche for itself as a bold, performance-oriented operating system. Based on Arch Linux, Garuda goes beyond the minimalist ethos of its parent distro by offering an out-of-the-box experience that's visually striking, gaming-ready, and optimized for performance. Whether you're a gamer, developer, or enthusiast looking for bleeding-edge features without spending hours configuring your system, Garuda Linux presents an attractive alternative.

### **What is Garuda Linux?**

Launched in 2020, Garuda Linux is a relatively young project that aims to provide a modern, easy-to-use desktop operating system based on Arch Linux. Unlike vanilla Arch, which is notoriously complex to install and configure, Garuda offers a graphical installer (Calamares), making it accessible even to users with limited Linux experience.

Garuda combines the **rolling release model** of Arch with curated tools, performance tweaks, and a strong aesthetic sense. It's not trying to be minimal or "lightweight" in the traditional sense. Instead, Garuda proudly embraces bloat if it adds value to the user experience. This makes it stand out in a sea of minimalist distros.

### **Aesthetics and Desktop Environments**

One of Garuda's most distinctive features is its **stunning visual presentation**. From the splash screen to the KDE Plasma desktop with dynamic blur effects and vibrant themes, Garuda feels sleek and futuristic right from the first boot.

While KDE Dragonized (Dr460nized) is the flagship edition, Garuda also supports other desktop environments and window managers including GNOME, Xfce, LXQt, Cinnamon, MATE, Wayfire, and Hyprland. Each version is pre-configured with unique themes and layouts, offering a polished and consistent UI experience across the board.

### **Performance First Philosophy**

Garuda Linux isn't just a pretty face—it's engineered for **high performance**. Some of the notable performance enhancements include:

- **Btrfs file system with zstd compression** by default, along with automatic snapshot management using **Timeshift**.
- **Zen Kernel**, optimized for desktop responsiveness and low latency.
- **Systemd-oomd** enabled to prevent system freezes due to memory exhaustion.
- Performance tweaks via **Garuda Assistant** and pre-installed tools like **Garuda Gamer** for managing gaming software.

These features make Garuda especially appealing for gaming, multimedia production, and systems with powerful hardware. However, it also runs surprisingly well on mid-range machines, as long as users are okay with its relatively high resource usage compared to minimal distros.

### Gaming on Garuda

Garuda Linux has become popular among Linux gamers, thanks to its inclusion of **Garuda Gamer**, a GUI tool that helps install and manage tools like Steam, Wine, Proton, Lutris, GameMode, MangoHud, and more. Combined with Arch's access to the latest software versions via the Arch User Repository (AUR), Garuda ensures gamers are always at the cutting edge.

Additionally, thanks to Btrfs snapshots, users can roll back the system easily if an update causes issues—crucial in a rolling release environment.

## Who Should Use Garuda?

Garuda Linux is ideal for:

- **Intermediate to advanced Linux users** who want the power of Arch without manual setup.
- **Gamers and multimedia professionals** seeking performance and visual appeal.
- **Tinkerers and hobbyists** who enjoy customizing their systems with the latest tech.

It's **not** the best choice for:

- Users on very low-end hardware.
- Those seeking an ultra-stable system for mission-critical workloads.
- Absolute beginners who need a very simple, hand-holding experience (though the installer and GUI tools do help bridge that gap somewhat).

## **Community and Development**

Garuda Linux has a growing community and responsive forums, with contributions from users and developers across the globe. Since it is based on Arch, users benefit from the extensive Arch Wiki, while also enjoying Garuda's specific documentation and tools.

The development pace is fast, and updates come frequently. Users should be comfortable maintaining a rolling release system—this includes being able to fix the occasional breakage or configuration issue.

---

## **Conclusion**

Garuda Linux is a striking example of how Arch can be transformed into a user-friendly, performance-focused, and visually beautiful operating system. It's unapologetically bold, both in appearance and functionality. For users who want to be on the bleeding edge without sacrificing usability, Garuda might just be the perfect blend of power, polish, and personality.

Whether you're a gamer, developer, or just someone who loves to customize your desktop, Garuda offers a compelling Arch-based experience that is worth exploring.

---

## **FREE Wallpaper from Deepin Linux**



## 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

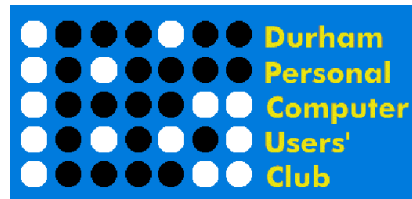
#### Durham Linux User Groups

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.



### DPCUC EXECUTIVE

2022-2023

President	<b>Peter Camilleri</b>	<a href="mailto:peter.c.camilleri@gmail.com">peter.c.camilleri@gmail.com</a>	289-928-1579
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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.