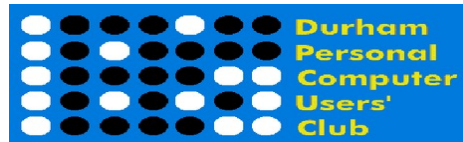


**Jan 2025**

# **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**

**Accessibility –  
Help! Can't see, can't hear, can't touch**

**by Judy Taylour  
President, SCV Computer Club;  
Member, APCUG Speakers Bureau**

**On ZOOM – Thursday, Jan 9 2025, 7:00PM**

# FYI

- By Dan Delong

## AI and Ethics

Projecting into the future, AI will mature, until finally reaching sentience, so that each 'artificial mind' will be just as individualistic as is each human mind (although much depends on training methods). The question remains, "Unlike human training, will an AI 'mind' be fully developed at the moment it is 'created'? And, will it have a sense of moral duty?" Moreover, will humans treat intelligent robots decently, according to moral and legal codes. For example, "How long should a robot live? And, what activities will satisfy an intelligent robot's needs or wants?" Consideration of these matters is a priority, just starting to take root in the minds of ethicists. The article (*below*) confronts many other issues. <https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/moral-status-digital-minds>

## Digital Twin

If you could create a duplicate of yourself, what tasks would you ask this clone to perform?

One busy person has recently created a digital twin that can carry out mundane tasks for her. She may be the first to do so. When her busy (and wealthy) friends see the full benefits of a digital twin assistant—especially the owner's increase in free time to think, solve, and create—then everyone will want a digital assistant.

To some degree, current AI assistants already do this. Facebook has one to make and respond to your comments, as well as some fake users that make comments in order to keep users engaged. <https://www.makeuseof.com/facebook-ai-generated-people/>

<https://www.thestar.com/business/opinion/meet-laila-my-digital-twin-who-has-transformed-my-work-life-and-made-me-more>

## Copilot needs money

That's why users of **Microsoft 365** in Indonesia and Australia will have the 'privilege' of paying more for their office suite (which includes advice from **Copilot**, the Microsoft-AI Assistant).

<https://slashdot.org/story/24/12/26/140236/microsoft-is-forcing-its-ai-assistant-on-people---and-making-them-pay>

## ChatGPT Ghosting People

According to a paragraph in a recent [Axis of Easy blog article](#), OpenAI's ChatGPT is 'rubbing out' references to newsworthy individuals, based on their views. [Johathan Turley](#), for example, no longer appears in ChatGPT queries. or on Twitter (according to Google). Other "disappeared" mentions are [Jonathan Zittrain](#) and [David Faber](#).

Readers will note that links (*above*) to these same people are links to Wikipedia (with which **Elon Musk** is annoyed, because Wikipedia's administrators/editors will not sanction his Wikipedia entries if they do not have sufficiently cited entries. One report states that upon taking over Twitter, he removed the account of a past girlfriend, who had blocked him on Twitter.

Musk does not understand that Wikipedia content is supposed to meet a standard of truth and relevance, not a standard of personal opinion.

<https://mc.easydns.com/email/view/676ec34b2d817375599607>

## Muama Ryoko Mobile Hotspot

In case your home router stops working – e.g.; power failure/ISP down – your phone will probably serve well enough to retrieve e-mails and peruse social media... and, perhaps, view some video streaming. The phone can also become a mobile **hotspot**, able to handle a few WiFi connected computers... until the battery dies.

For those who wish a better, longer lasting, mobile hotspot – one that is faster and can handle more connections— **Ryoko** may be the answer. It is basically a 4G, LTE wireless router with a 12 hour battery, but it still requires purchase of a SIM card, with data and roaming. That SIM might involve paying-once (for an amount of data) or a paying monthly, for unlimited data.

*[Note: Rogers is being taken to court for advertising unlimited data, but cutting speed by 99% when a certain threshold has been reached. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/competition-bureau-rogers-misleading-customers-unlimited-data-1.7418233>]*

Months ago, when I first read about Ryoko, I doubted the existence of this Lithuanian sourced product. ‘Seems I was wrong. The official Ryoko site has lowered its price for a single unit to \$128.00CAD.

*[However, a web search will yield lower prices elsewhere, along with some other. Competitive, mobile routers. Note:- Some advance home routers offer a rear port for wired tethering to a phone's hotspot]*

[Ryoko Portable WiFi Hotspot](#) | [Ryoko](#)

## Instant Translator Earbud

While attending a Montreal conference, decades ago, in which one of the speakers spoke French entirely during the presentations, those not fully conversant in this second language could wear a headset (to listen to simultaneous translation). Translation was carried out by a skilled human translator. AI has now improved to the point that it can handle translating 40 languages, and many accents, with 98% accuracy, with a device as small as an external earbud. Conversations are aided by a paired app on a smart phone, and can be recorded as text on a linked-in device. A pair of AI Interpreter earbuds cost almost \$700USD.

<https://www.timekettle.co/>



## Cyber Security – on a Fediverse instance

For those who have followed the club presentation regarding “**Mastodon and the Fediverse**”, the link below leads to a **cybersecurity** related site, hosted on a Mastodon server, and requiring no log-in to explore content. I was led to this site by a posting on it by [Erik van Straten](#), who claims that Google is hosting a lot of Canadian phishing sites – sites that are clearly criminal, in that they rotate their IP address almost daily. He also points out that **Virus Total**, owned by Google, does not restrict these sites. Such scams include the “package scam”, the “banking scam”, the “billing scam”, and the “investment scam”. Here is an example of a Canadian banking scam, via text message: -

<https://isc.sans.edu/diary/Phishing%20for%20Banking%20Information/31548> and a link to the **Info Security Exchange**, where I found this information.

<https://infosec.exchange>

This CBC article warns of threats of death against Canadians, mainly in the GTA, from phone scammers in the State of Georgia. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/toronto-police-fraud-and-extortion-scam-warning-1.7420416>

## **Attention:-Audiophils**

**Headphonesty** is a website for those who enjoy quality sound and probably spend a lot of money to get it. Some respected reviewers now claim high spending is not needed, as expensive re-badged and re-branded devices are often no better than cheaper brands.

The site also demonstrates examples of laughable and poorly made knock-offs.

<https://www.headphonesty.com/?s=mafia>

## **Use Signal for Text Messages**

Banned in Russia and Venezuela, **Signal** is the best app for messaging without risking billionaire or government intrusion. Many of us don't care about secure encryption because our messages usually concern mundane topics. However, we are still giving away valuable free data to our e-mail providers. Criminals, corporations, and high government officials are worried about accountability and giving away secrets; hence, their communications are likely to be the first target for hackers. However, if all of us start using **Signal** encryption, hackers will give up on trying to DE-crypt any of them... just too many messages to contend with.

**"All communication sessions between Signal users are automatically end-to-end encrypted (the encryption keys are generated and stored on the devices, and not on servers)."**

<https://signal.org/>

## **Dark Shadows on New LED Headlights**

Since the introduction of more powerful, brighter, car headlights – great for dark nights on rural roads – drivers have been oblivious to the danger they cause to oncoming traffic. Some headlights are so bright that approaches from behind can also cause blinding light, reflected from the rear view mirror. A recent change in rules has led manufacturers to created a dimmed area, primarily on the drivers side headlight beam, to lessen the amount of light reaching oncoming drivers.

Headlight glare affects older eyes more, a danger that has reached the national network news.

Some new car drivers, not understanding the reason for darker spots, have decided to seek replacement bulbs that defeat this safety measure.

Drivers are discouraged from employing "high beam" retaliation against over bright drivers, as this just increases the danger.

*[Find out more by searching for, "**Dark spots in projector headlights**".]*

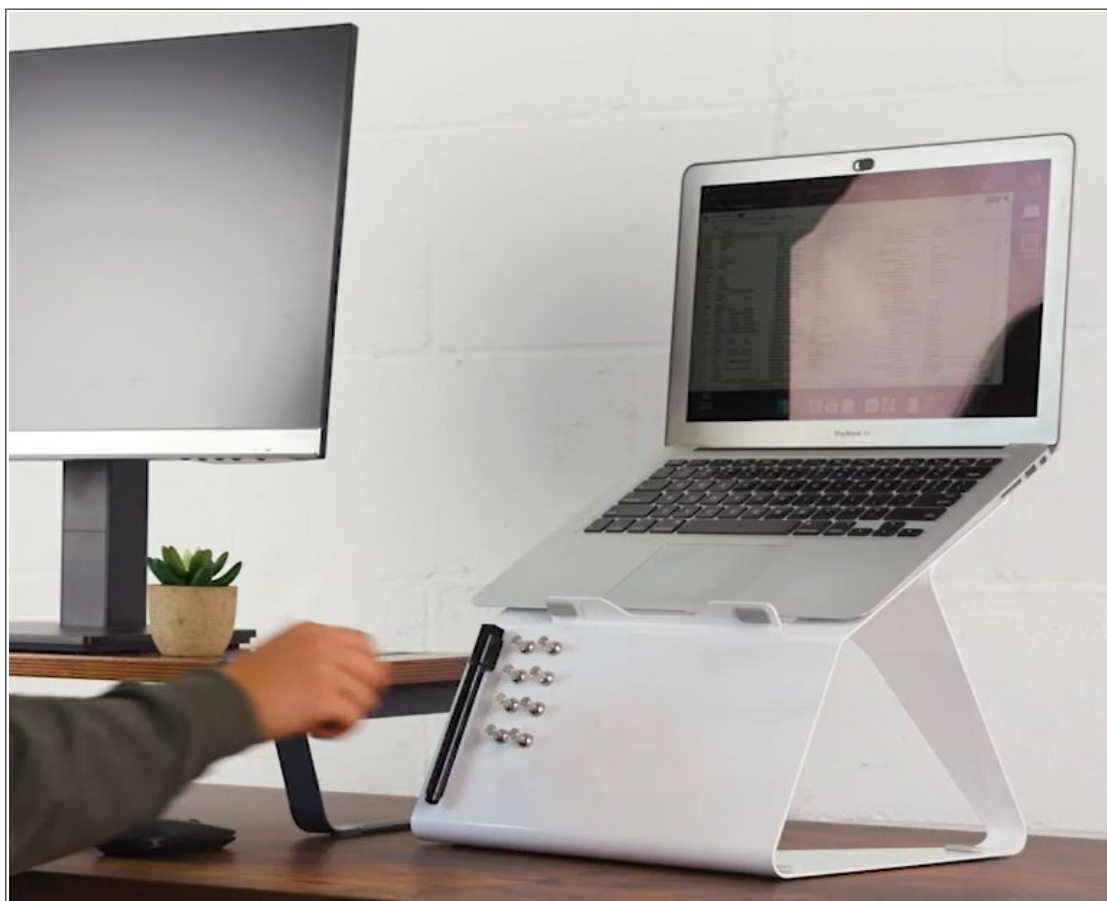
*Those cheap, yellow-tinted, night driving glasses, may help for the moments spent in direct glare, but they also darken other objects when not in glare.*

## **Bimotal Elevate Ebike Motor System**

Change almost any bike with a rear disk brake into a powerful Ebike. Both the motor and battery are easily removed, for times when full manual foot pedalling is preferred; say, for training and competition. The mounting kit remains in place at all times; therefore, the motor and battery can be used on any bike with the kit already installed. Top speed is about 33 kph, but the torque is exceptional... for climbing. The price is rather steep, compared to other electric kits for bikes.

<https://bimotal.com/>

## FluidStance Lift Whiteboard Riser



The intended place for a laptop is the lap. But, some users prefer a desk, along with a computer screen that is elevated. This laptop stand does just that, but users may still wish to accessorize it with a second wireless keyboard. A further convenience is the 'white board' surface for making hand printed notes, or for attaching notes with magnets. Wire guides, on the backside, suggest that attaching a second large monitor is possible. A large tablet would also fit on this stand, almost as well as a laptop. The current price is \$87.75CAD.

<https://fluidstance.com/products/lift>

## Marseille mClassic Pixel Enhancer & upscaler (480 to 1440)

... for older gaming systems, like:- **Xbox 360, Xbox, Nintendo Wii, PlayStation2, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch, Gamecube, N64, Wii, SNES, Genesis, Dreamcast, etc.** It's a dongle that plugs into the HDMI port and up-scales HDMI output to a TV/monitor. At \$141.11CAD, it is a lot cheaper than buying a newer gaming system.

<https://www.amazon.ca/stores/Marseille/page/2427635B-3B1B-482B-9AA0-C8E39DBB3A6B>



## 2025 Expectations

°Pundits may predict, and we may agree to some extent, as to what will, or will not, change in the next year. Some feel that AI will take a dive. As a research assistant, AI accuracy is just too unreliable, and it's expensive to operate. In certain fields, like medicine and law, AI may get a proper work out. But, adequate controls for future AI super intelligence has already been abandoned by OpenAI.

[<https://gizmodo.com/openai-reportedly-dissolves-its-existential-ai-risk-tea-1851484827>]



Figure

1: Lenovo extendable second screen

°Folding screens may be slow to take hold as well, because they are so expensive and can't seem to eliminate all traces of the fold line when opened.

°Similarly, augmented reality glasses may not become as universally adopted as previously predicted. Apple stopped making theirs.

°Those enrolled in various paid streaming services will likely continue, despite increased fees, whether ad free, or not. *What I'd like to see are smart phones with replaceable components, like battery, physical keyboard, and camera, along with widely available, less costly roaming; none of which are likely to arrive any time soon. One product, almost ready to roll, is the Lenovo laptop with a 'roll-able' extended screen. Look for it at CES'25.*

## Indoor/Outdoor 3D Lidar Scanning

Such scanners, from **3D Maker Pro**, range in price from a few hundred dollars to thousands. [Eagle Lidar 360°](#) is the next and most versatile 3D scanner coming up for sale, soon (sooner in the States than in Canada). Expect whopping capabilities and a corresponding price. Demo videos are quite impressive.

<https://store.3dmakerpro.com/>

## Y2K 'Emergency'- 25 Years Ago

The turnover to a new century was not so smooth in 1999, since so many of the World's operations depended upon computers. Moreover, date updating depended on computers that could tell the difference between 1900 and 2000. Computers, up to that time, had been allocated only 2 digits for recording the year; this was to save memory and limited storage space. What is the double digit after 99? It's 00, because there is not hundreds column! The 1999 fear was that computers might count the new year as either 1900 or 2000, possibly shutting things down in the confusion. This led to great angst over the rapidly approaching centennial goodbye to '99'.

Some, fearing a total breakdown of the power grid and phone system... and society itself, stockpiled food and water. A few bought guns, and prepared to tough it out in the bush.

National Public Radio (NPR) wrote a retrospective on the issue.

<https://www.npr.org/2024/12/28/nx-s1-5116271/y2k-year-2000-preparations>

## The Case for RSS Revival

For those who prefer to read text, uninterrupted by ads and untracked by cookies or leaky browsers, try [Pluralist](#). One article on this site explains how to obtain text only versions of most web sites, by accessing their RSS feed. Most web sites have one, apparently. Here's the article link (*below*).

<https://pluralistic.net/2024/10/16/keep-it-really-simple-stupid/>

## Canada and USA Suing Big Tech

In Canada, **Google** is being sued for its dominance, **TikTok** for its security risk (and maybe its social damage). [Not to mention the suit against **Rogers** for throttling unlimited data plans.]

<https://www.engadget.com/tag/canada/>

The US Federal Trade Commission is going after **Microsoft** for taking advantage of recent cybersecurity breaches i.e.; forcing bundled office products (with security protection measures) on customers. Measures are also underway to break up **Google's** monopoly on search in browsers.

<https://www.engadget.com/big-tech/the-ftcs-microsoft-antitrust-probe-reportedly-focuses-on-software-bundling-193545163.html>

## LG Signature Series for CES'25

As one of the main manufacturers of TVs and appliances, it has taken **LG** this long to come up with a combo TV&Microwave. As more time is spent in modern open kitchens, why not include a television screen right on the, otherwise blank, front surface of a microwave? This 27-inch TV has Wi-Fi and speakers.

*[Will it carry ad free streamed programs? That is still unknown.]*

*[Since TVs and microwaves are 'planned obsolescence' devices, how long will they last? If one fails, so does the other.]*

*[Also Note:- The prevalence of black appliances, these days, gels well with black TVs... almost like this has been planned for some time.]*

<https://www.lgnewsroom.com/2024/12/lg-presents-live-beyond-with-expanded-second-generation-lg-signature-lineup-at-ces-2025/>

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**Free Wallpaper from PCLinuxOS - After all it is Winter!!!**



# Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison



## [Amarok 3.2 "Punkadiddle" Music Player Officially Released, Now Ported to Qt 6](#)

Amarok 3.2 open-source music player app is now available for download with initial Qt 6 and KDE Frameworks 6 port, as well as other changes. Here's what's new!

## [Mixxx 2.5 Open-Source DJ App Released with Qt 6 Port, Improved Controller Support](#)

Mixxx 2.5 open-source and free DJ software for performing live mixes is now available for download with Qt 6 port, improved controller mappings, and many new features. Here's what's new!

## [Serpent OS Enters Alpha with GNOME and COSMIC Spins, Powered by Linux 6.12 LTS](#)

Serpent OS Alpha is now available for download powered by Linux kernel 6.12 LTS and featuring GNOME and COSMIC desktop editions. Here's what's new!

### **This is an Open Source 3D Printer That You Can Build Yourself**

- It's Foss News; By Sourav Rudra (Posted by [Scott Ruecker](#) on Dec 30, 2024 8:08 AM EDT)
- Story Type: [News Story](#)

## [Lemontron is an open source 3D printer that you can build yourself. Sounds exciting!](#)

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

### **MNT Reform Next Laptop Features Modular Design and Open Hardware**

- LinuxGizmos.com; By Giorio Mendoza (Posted by [bob](#) on Dec 30, 2024 5:05 AM EDT)
- Story Type: [News Story](#); Groups: [Debian](#), [Linux](#)

The MNT Reform Next, recently featured on CrowdSupply, builds on the Classic MNT Reform with a 12.5" open hardware laptop designed for modularity, customizability, and repairability, offering full access to hardware sources for user modification and maintenance.

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

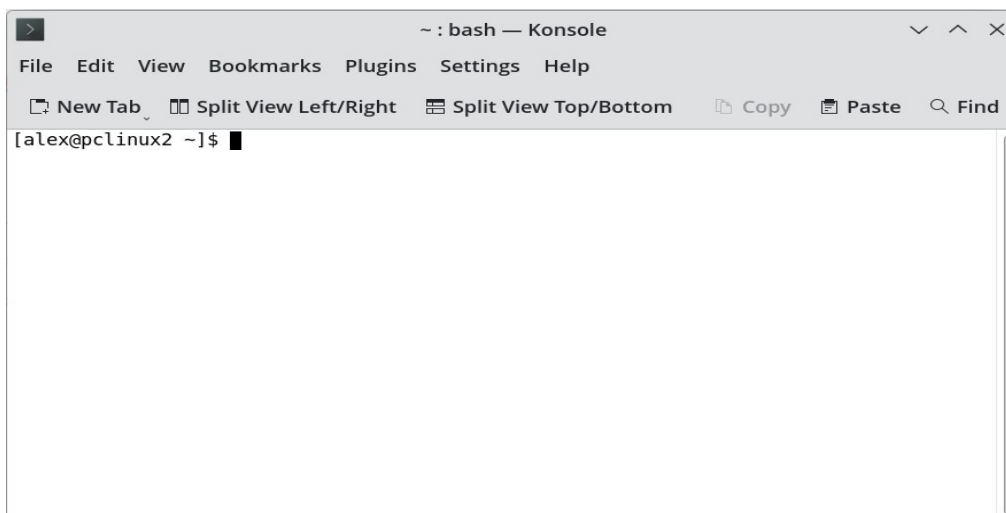
# Linux –Terminology



Now – Do not think I am talking about defining terms to describe Linux or some program.

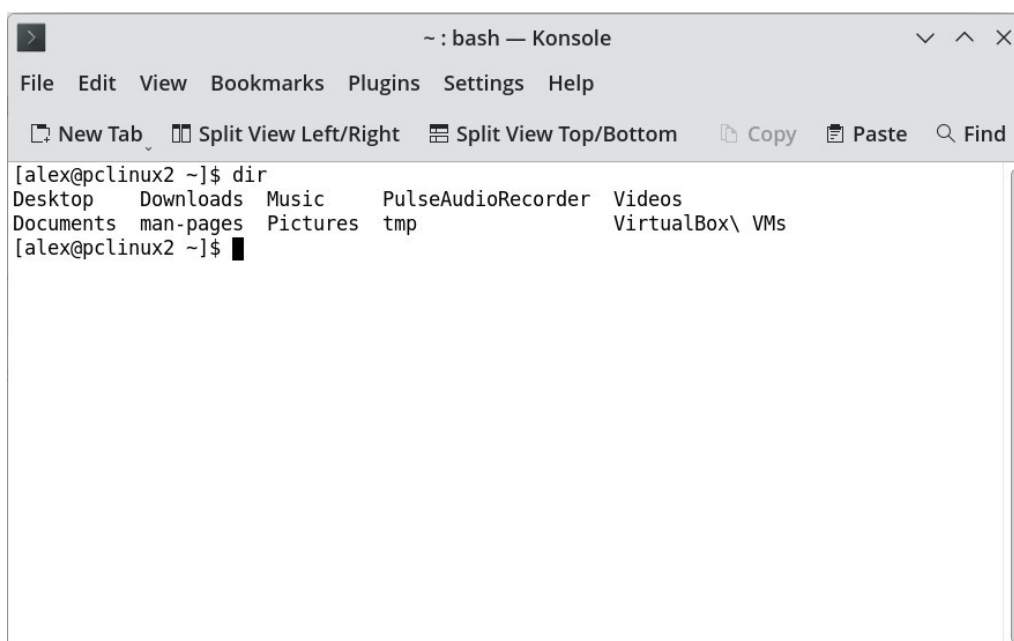
Terminology is an alternate konsole that might be fun to use for most Linux enthusiasts.

Here is a very plain look at a standard Linux konsole .....



A screenshot of a Linux Konsole window. The title bar reads '~ : bash — Konsole'. The menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Bookmarks, Plugins, Settings, and Help. The toolbar shows icons for New Tab, Split View Left/Right, Split View Top/Bottom, Copy, Paste, and Find. The terminal text shows the prompt [alex@pclinux2 ~]\$ with a cursor.

Here it is when I type dir to show the list of folders. Not very exciting.

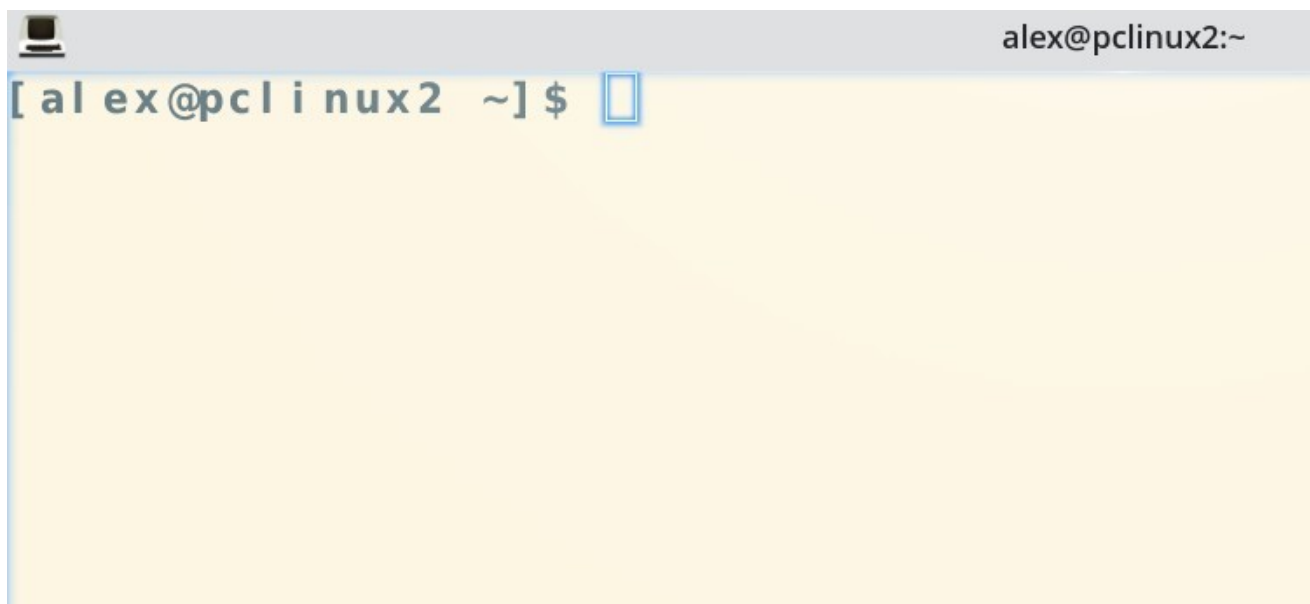


A screenshot of a Linux Konsole window showing the output of the 'dir' command. The title bar reads '~ : bash — Konsole'. The menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Bookmarks, Plugins, Settings, and Help. The toolbar shows icons for New Tab, Split View Left/Right, Split View Top/Bottom, Copy, Paste, and Find. The terminal text shows the prompt [alex@pclinux2 ~]\$ followed by the command 'dir' and its output: Desktop Downloads Music PulseAudioRecorder Videos Documents man-pages Pictures tmp VirtualBox\ VMs. The prompt [alex@pclinux2 ~]\$ is shown again at the bottom.

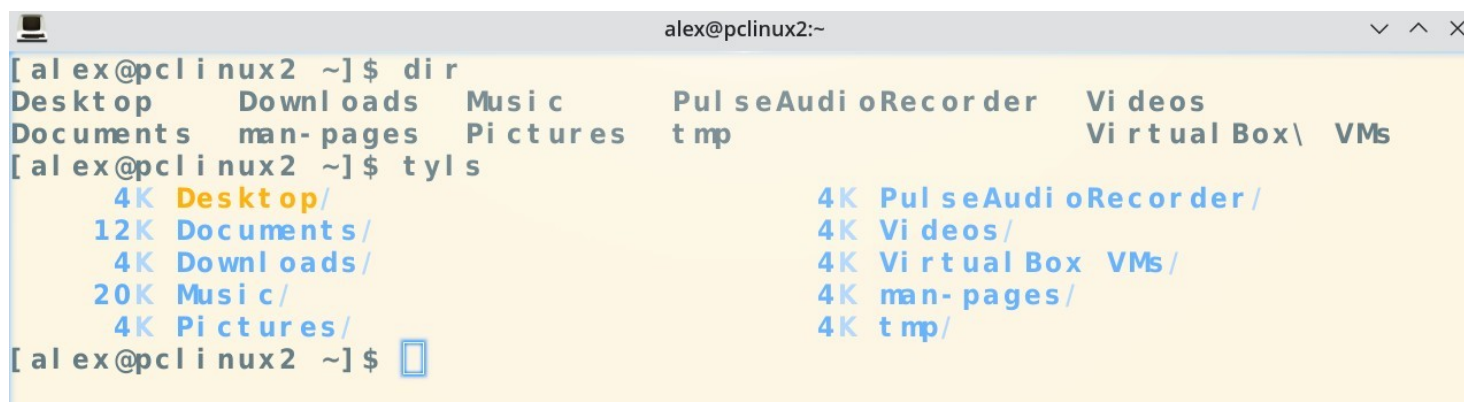
In order to spice up the konsole we need to install terminology. Terminology should be in most all Linux package managers.

Terminology can be found [after installation] by looking in the same location where you find konsole.

When I launch terminology this is the screen presented.....



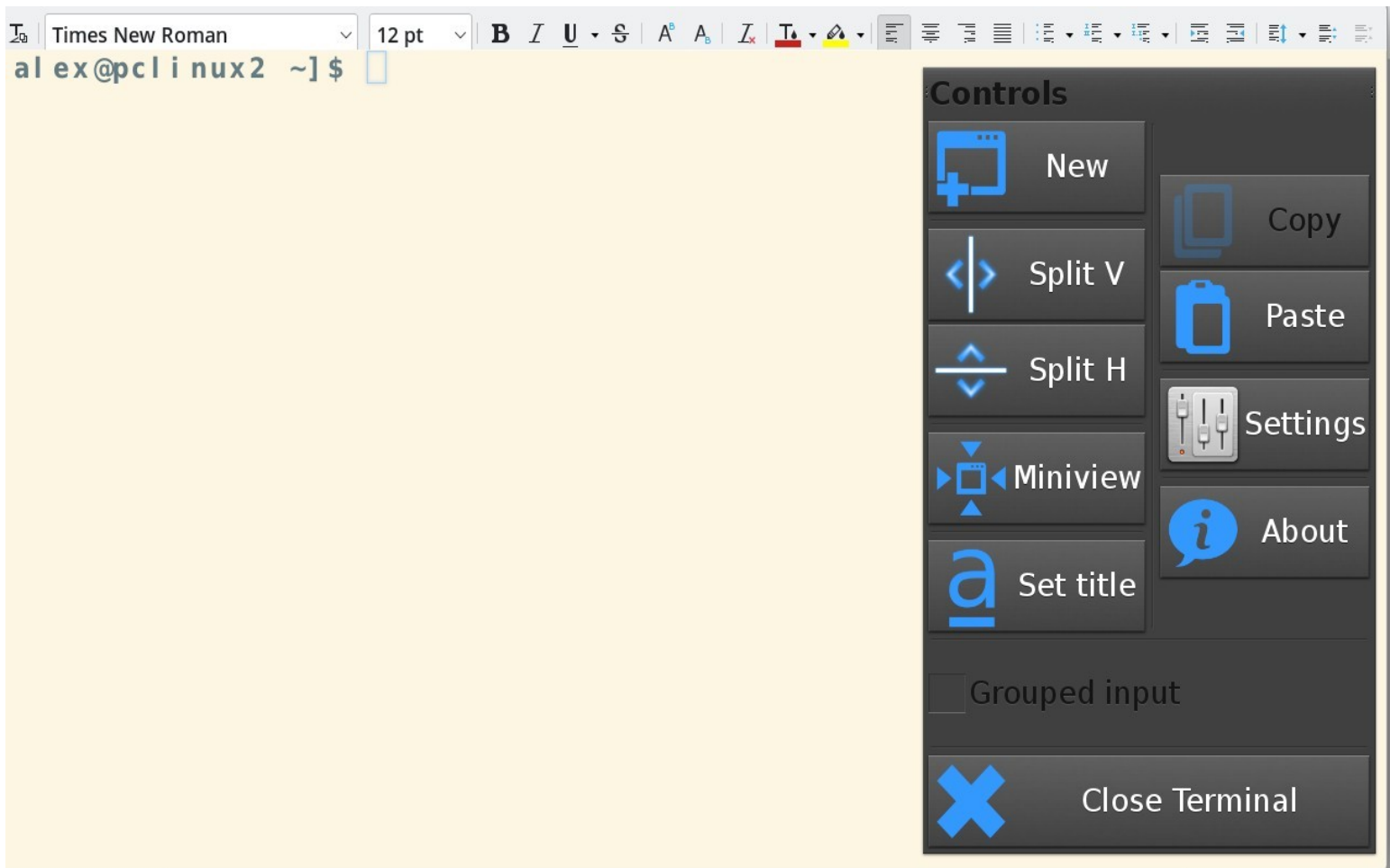
When I type dir and later a terminology command tyls I see the image below. Dir is a plain view just like a normal konsole but below it we see what appears by the tyls command used by terminology. Colourful and easier to read.



One further screen will show the effect of using a terminology mouse effect.

Right mouse click on the terminolgy screen and a very slick menu appears.

I have the ability to Split the screen Vertically and Horizontally I can add a mini view [haven't found use for that yet] Setting a Title put whatever I want at the top of the screen. Settings allows a lot of additional options. Included in Settings are keyboard shortcuts, Font changes including colour and size, Mouse settings, Background, Themes I can also use Enlightenment setting in this menu.



The easiest way to illustrate everything is a Web page and Youtube link.

This web page describes some options.

<https://www.enlightenment.org/about-terminology.md>

This Youtube link displays a few settings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68SqPg-QXIk&t=2s>

I am just starting to use terminology and think it helps to display a Konsole in a very colourful manner.

# Sudoku

JAN 2025

by Alex Morrison

## EASY

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

## MED

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

## HARD

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

## 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

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

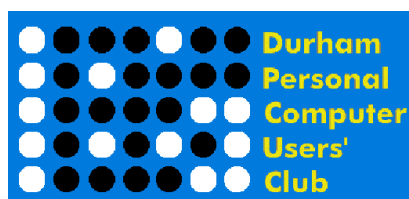
#### Durham Linux User Groups

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.



### 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 DPCUC mailing address is [dpcuc@live.com](mailto:dpcuc@live.com)

The PC Monitor cannot be responsible for errors or inaccuracies in the content, although efforts will be made to publish information accurately.