Oct 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

Next Meeting

Wireless Communication
by Anne Delong

Thursday, Oct 9 2025, 7:00 PM

FYI

- By Dan Delong

Byte Back – a simpler experience.

Do you long for "**The Web That Was**"? **Byte Back** wants to formulate a browsing experience just like "the good old days" - one in which neither CSS – nor JS – nor HTTPS, existed; one in which Netscape could still read HTML 3.2. A bulletin board is planned. Future users are cautioned not to post critical information, as security protocols will be non-existent. This will be an open forum. The project can be viewed at:-
http://www.byte-back.net

TimeMachiner discusses some advantages of WEB1.0, advocating a return to **Small Web.**

AI resistance – 'proof'?

One enterprising individual – **Andy Carolan**- fills this need – i.e.; AI resistance- with sets of badges... designed with icons (88x31px) and statements, claiming this content is "**human made**".

[The various texts are:- "I am not a robot, there's no AI here, never by AI, human content, drawn/written/made by a human, and organic content".]
Place a button on your website, to indicate freedom from AI creation. Pay nothing, or give a donation. Or, make your own badges.

https://ko-fi.com/s/4662b19f61

Power Outages

Yes, along with storm season, outages are inevitable. How long they last, matters... a lot! This is especially true for refrigerated food and communications devices, like smart phones. Fortunately, low power devices, like phones, can be recharged from battery backups, like a UPS or a power station. Refrigerators and freezers are a different story. How is one to know if the food stayed cold enough to be safe to eat, after power restoration? A simple analogue solution is advised *(link below)*. Place a couple of old style, non battery, thermostats in the cold compartment (one at a lower level than the other) well ahead of a possible outage. The moment power returns, check to see if the temperature is still not above 40 Fahrenheit (5 Celsius), at both levels.

[Among my many acquaintances there are only two who installed whole house power generators, at great expense.]
https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/articles/small-appliance-gadget-youll-want-094000211.ht ml

World's Smallest Computer

It looks like a speck of dust, yet works like a computer, and can do only one thing; it measures temperature accurately. Critics claim it is not really a computer *(similar to arguments about a virus not being a form of life)* because it lacks storage and processing, but this little device can be programmed with light flashes, and it can be embedded in the body to measure cell temperature. Knowing when/if cancer cells change in temperature lets doctors know if a treatment is working.
https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/worlds-smallest-computer-is-here-it-is-smaller-than-a-rice-grain-1872072

X-Rays evolves to ɣ-Rays (Gamma-rays)

Success, from generations of scientific studies, has led to a more accurate, faster, and cheaper, medical imaging machine, known as a **perovskite gamma-ray camera.** This collaborative research at **Northwestern U.** and **Soochow U.,** is not quite ready for hospital deployment, yet.

> *"Nuclear medicine, like SPECT (single-photon emission computing tomography) imaging, works like an invisible camera. Physicians implant a tiny, safe, short-lived radiotracer in a specific part of a patient's body. The tracer emits gamma rays, which pass outward through tissues and eventually hit a detector outside of the body. Each gamma ray is like a pixel of light. After collecting millions of these pixels, computers can construct a 3D image of working organs."*

The link *(below)* to **Nature**, where the full article can be found, is beyond the understanding of anyone but a nuclear medicine scientist, but it lists citations (at the end) which demonstrated the many decades of collaboration that have led to this conclusion.

https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-025-63400-7

OpenAI developing new devices.

OpenAI subcontractors are hard at work in their 'North Pole' workshops, developing devices that use AI in some way that is most useful/saleable to consumers. Most do not look anything like conventional computers; most of these ideas do not have screens at all. Since AI is so smart, users will need only to talk or gesture, to offer input.

https://convergence-now.com/artificial-intelligence/openai-first-hardware-device-late-2026/

Getting more out of chips – mircofluidics.

For decades, CPU and GPU cooling has relied upon thermal pastes, finned heat sinks, and fans. Microsoft is leading the way with 'wet' cooling, liquid running through micro channels over the chip's surface. This method not only reduces power consumption considerably (even when overclocked) it will allow stacking of chips in layers, like a BLT sandwich. The cooling liquid chosen will not be water, even though overclocking does not usually exceed the boiling point of water, and can reach the freezing point. These fluid channels, less in diameter than a human hair, are being designed by AI. The pattern of micro-channels is akin the those seen in a leaf, or in the wings of a butterfly.
[This better facilitates local cooling in certain portions of the chip.]

First applications will be in servers, drastically reducing AI power demands; then may move to memory chips for HBM (high-band width memory transfers).

https://news.microsoft.com/source/features/innovation/microfluidics-liquid-cooling-ai-chips/

Meta Gen2 Ray-Ban glasses



Improvements have been made in intelligent glasses, despite Zuckerberg's recent wayward demonstration (when one of his "Hey Meta" commands was heard by all the Ray-Bans in the room – an unforeseen bug). He pointed out that these Gen2s are higher res, with a bigger virtual screen (for one eye), and it shifts text (out o the way, to the right), and it has greater screen brightness, along with simultaneous language translation, with scrolling captioning of all speech, and with a longer battery life. This is not to mention the new wristband gesture controls. Wearers just need to look at something and ask the AI glasses to describe whatever is in the field of view, or to take a photo/video. For example, if you look at a business, while strolling the streets, it can describe the services and goods for sale there. Just like a telephone, this device can still make and receive phone calls, with a slight wrist movement. [$519 CAD]
https://www.meta.com/ca/ai-glasses/ray-ban-meta/

IKEA Vallhorn Hall Lighting ($13USD)

These dome shaped lights turn on when sensing motion, and stay on for one to five minutes. Simply peel and stick, and recharge the batteries once in a while ($9USD) or recharge with your own AAAs). Day/Night modes allow different light temperature/intensity settings. As a wireless product, operation can also be controlled by an IKEA smart app.
https://www.ikea.com/us/en/p/vallhorn-wireless-motion-sensor-smart-white-40504348/

Smart Phones Becoming Predictive

Some of them, the more recent smart phones, are already predictive – if they are AI enabled. As an example, such phones learn your daily movement patterns. They then self-set an alarm to wake you up at the usual time, while presenting local weather for the day. We are told not to worry about such pattern learning by our phones, because the AI is performed locally, stored only on the phone itself.
[If the phone has access to birthdays and anniversaries, it may prompt you for action.]
https://tech.yahoo.com/phones/articles/creepiest-coolest-thing-2025-smartphone-153142563.html

New Solar Cells

Older electronic calculators, once powered by battery only, got a significant boost by including a small solar panel to its face. Indoor lighting was enough to make these devices work again, while recharging the battery, if in direct sunlight.
There are many other devices in our homes and businesses that could benefit from the exclusion of batteries entirely, replaced by indoor solar panel power. Until recently solar panel efficiency was inadequate – that is, until researchers at **University College Institute for Materials Discovery** found new materials, **six times more efficient** than currently available. This discovery will allow the replacement of batteries in home heating controls, smoke detectors, wall clocks, and remote controls of all kinds, as long as power requirements could be matched with the proper small-sized indoor solar panels. These **perovskite** panels can be made cheaply, although durability is in question; they may last only five years.
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2025/aug/new-solar-cells-could-power-devices-indoor-light

Logitech Light Powered Wireless Keyboard

Perhaps such **perovskite power panels** have been included in this newest Logitech keyboards. The included rechargeable battery could last up to ten years, with frequent boost-charging from room light or sunlight over the expected decade long life. Charging occurs with as little as 200 lux.
[Perplexity.ai could not calculate the power equivalency, in watts, without more data.]
The battery is replaceable without naming the model, or cost, of a replacement battery.
Keys look almost the same as other Logitech keyboards, with the exception of an **AI key** (for direct activation of the OS's default AI app, and a **programmable key** to open frequently desired sets of apps... like office productivity or browsers/searchers.
Matched with a Logitech mouse, two or three computers may be controlled – even those with differing operating systems.
(I assume each computer will need a matching dongle - **Logi Bolt USB receiver** at $20 each - *that controls both keyboard and mouse.)* [$140 plus $50 for the Logitech Flow mouse]

https://www.logitech.com/en-ca/shop/p/signature-slim-solar-plus

Did Gmail Expose 2.5 Billion Users?

According to Google (and Panda Security)... No! Google admits to attacks on its sales staff. Still, it's a good idea to have created a complex Gmail account password, along with dual factor authentication, or some other password alternative..

https://www.pandasecurity.com/en/mediacenter/did-hackers-steal-the-details-of-2-5-billion-gmail-users-last-month/

Benjiclock Fingerprint Padlock

Benjilock makes a couple of fingerprint locks, This model accepts up to 10 individual people/fingerprints, or it can be opened with a key, for instance, in case the rechargeable battery dies. For frequently opened situations, like bikes and lockers, it is great! [$50 USD]

https://benjilock.com/padlocks/

Doomsday Approaches – October 14th!

What' you 'gonna do'? (...about the end of support for Win10.) Some have move to Linux, while hoping MS alternatives/equivalents are freely available on Linux platform. Some will try to run MS applications on a Linux machine, as per the most recent APCUG podcast, using Wine (or Winbind, Winboat, Crossover, Bottles, or One Drive Client for Linux). In all cases, it is advised that Win10 stay offline after support ends.
Explaining Computers (a YouTube channel) covered Microsoft's solutions – three of them- all requiring a Microsoft Account.

1. Pay $30 USD for another year of Extended Security Updates.
2. Cash in 1,000 Microsoft Rewards Points for the same.
3. Backup and share your PC settings for transfer to a new Win11 machine

Explaining Computers goes on to show **how to get extended support at no cost,** while giving MS the least amount of personal information, as long as the Win10 computer is using a MS administrator account, and OneDrive (to synchronize – temporarily). Just remember to turn off back up for Documents. Pictures, and Desktop (everything, really). Then go to **Updates and Security,** where you will see a message regarding end of Win10 support (as long as you've been getting updates). Click on the **Enroll now** to get extended **Security Updates (the Wizard)**, which brings up the three options from above. Select "**Back up your PC settings** – no extra cost". This will involve exporting some settings and your MS credentials to the cloud (One Drive). If you enrolled, this synchronizing action completes.

Microsfot already knows this information, if you made and account. Go back to Settings, **Windows backup** now lets you **turn off synchronizations** (might have to check OnDrive again to make sure it's off). You should still be enrolled in **ESU (Extended Security Updates**) to November 2026, even if you restart the computer. **Christopher Barnatt**, of Explaining Computers, goes on to demonstrate the creation of an extra local account, that still runs with ESU active. He also unlinked OneDrive for every user of the Win10 machine.

[Faint hope still arises in the possibility that a current legal suits may convince Microsoft to enroll everyone in ESU, as the default.]

Or, let Christopher describe **two ways to install Win11** on unsupported hardware.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERDjeKN1_Es

Intelligent Planter

The **LeafyPod** provides ideal growing conditions for each type of plant – no more dead indoor plants- for up to 30 days of inattention. This includes moisture, heat, light, and humidity. Charge it up, fill the reservoir with water, and leave it be (except for occasionally moving the plant to more favourable light and temperature locations, as requested by the plant). Your smart phone's app will run the show from here on, specific to the plant you have chosen. Automatic watering will follow the prescribed schedule for that plant; it even imitates rain.

[With added accessories, you can spend around $200 for a LeafyPod system.]

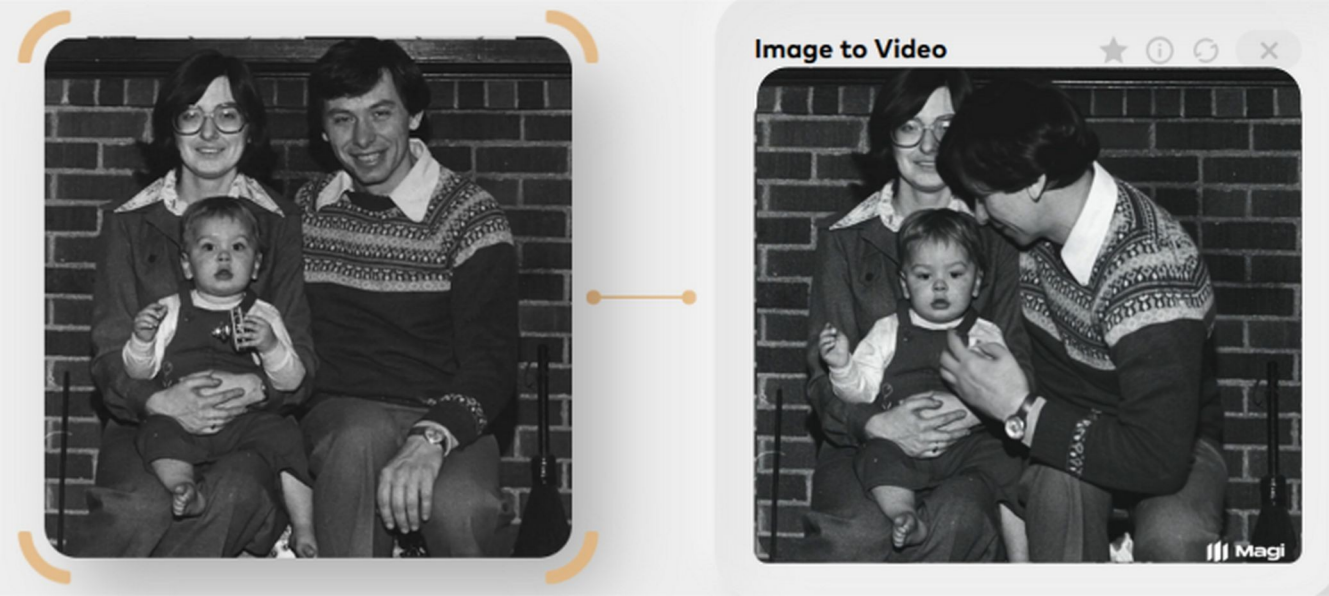
https://www.theleafypod.com/

The Superior Teen Mind

Not every teenager uses their mind like Robert Sansone. Still, we often read about significant engineering advances made by other young inventors. Why is this so? What is "better" about the teen mind? Perhaps younger minds, having newly learned their science and physics, right from "first principles", notice when and where over complexity exists. In the case of this Florida teen, a multiple inventor, he found a way to improve electric motors, giving them much greater efficiency, without the use of rare earth materials or permanent magnets. When finally put into production, such motors will make EVs more efficient, as long as the more complex manufacturing hurdles can be met.
[His modification of the reluctance motor, gives it more "oomph".]

https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/this-17-year-old-designed-a-motor-that-could-potentially-transform-the-electric-car-industry-180980550/

MagiAI



This AI project lets you add movements to people in still photos. Each second of video will cost 10 credits, but you'll start with 500 free credits. In the example I used, eliminating background from the photo probably would have worked better; this old black and white has a busy background, yet the animation of all three people was successful.
The Web interface for MagiAI is not intuitive, but keep at it. Remember to fill in the prompt, to tell the AI exactly the task of task wanted - e.g.: "Make the people/person move". The link *(below)* appears to direct this trial activity to a sandboxed area.
[The result is impressive, yet cannot compare to sophisticated creations – full movies, with generated settings, buildings, imaginary vehicles and characters. Another worry is rampant personal data collection by AI agents like this.]
https://magi.sand.ai/

Home Fitness

With Winter approaching, 'couch potatoes' may worry about their declining fitness. This calls for a solution.
Either drive, almost daily, to a gym, or buy an exercise device, and USE IT!.
This trio of devices (*link below)* comes recommended, mainly for price - $280 CAD for the walking pad. The cheapest model, meant only for the walking type of exercise (up to 6km/h) does have a hand hold, but it can be also be used at a standing desk without a hand hold. Other models need a folding handhold because speed can increase, up to 10 km/h, for jogging. The hand hold bar also contains an LCD speed/distance/monitor/adjuster and calorie counting display, or you can use the remote control.
https://ie.homefitnesscode.com/products/under-desk-folding-treadmill-1-6km-h-walking-jogging-machine-for-home-office

FREE Wallpaper from PCLinuxOS

DPCUC President's Notes

by Peter Camilleri

As I write this, I am pondering the end of Windows 10 support in just a few weeks now. I have a number of machines, currently stuck with 10 and I am not sure what to do.

Some of the machines could easily run 11, but one, my laptop, struggled to even manage Windows 10. I am certain, given Microsoft's talent for selling chips by making old computers slow, that Windows 11 would be unbearable even if I got it to run.

So what am I to do? I mostly use the laptop for web based applications. While Linux would certainly be an excellent choice, it seems like overkill in terms of effort and complexity.

It turns out that there is an operating system that may fit the bill perfectly. It's ChromeOS. The heart of so called Chrome Books. It also turns out that there's a version for older PCs and Macs. It is called ChromeOS Flex.

It is free from Google and can be found at:

https://chromeos.google/intl/en_ca/products/chromeos-flex/

Over the next month, I plan to put this operating system on my old laptop and see how usable it is. I plan to document as much of the process and user experience as possible and with any luck, it could be a presentation to the club in the near future.

Wish me luck!

As always; Pray for peace.

Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.

Sudoku Puzzles

October 2025 by Alex Morrison

EASY

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

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

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

HARD

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

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

https://www.boatloadpuzzles.com/playcrossword

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

Linux – Windows 10 EOL

Alex Morrison

Preparing for Windows 10 End of Life: Why It's Time to Consider Switching

The End of Windows 10 and What It Means

Microsoft has officially announced that **Windows 10 will reach its End of Life (EOL) on October 14, 2025**. After this date, Windows 10 will **no longer receive security updates, bug fixes, or technical support**, leaving millions of users potentially vulnerable to security threats. While extended support options may be available for enterprises (at a cost), home and small business users will need to make a decision: **upgrade to Windows 11**, or **switch to an alternative operating system**.

However, upgrading to Windows 11 isn't always straightforward. Many older PCs do not meet its strict hardware requirements—such as TPM 2.0, Secure Boot, and newer CPUs—leaving users stuck with obsolete software or facing the cost of new hardware.

This growing frustration has led many users to **reconsider Linux**—an open-source, secure, and increasingly user-friendly alternative that offers a compelling escape from the Microsoft upgrade treadmill.

Why Linux Makes Sense—and How to Switch

Why Choose Linux?

Linux has come a long way from its early days as a system for programmers and hobbyists. Today, popular Linux distributions (or "distros") like **Ubuntu, Linux Mint, Fedora, and Zorin OS** [or **PCLinuxOS**] offer intuitive interfaces, wide hardware compatibility, and thousands of free applications. Here's why Linux is worth considering:

- **Free and Open Source**: Linux distros are free to download, use, and modify. You won't have to pay for licenses or subscriptions.
- **Lightweight and Fast**: Many distros run efficiently on older hardware, often outperforming Windows on the same machines.
- **Secure by Design**: Linux is less prone to viruses and ransomware thanks to its strong user permission model and open-source transparency.
- **Software Availability**: Most essential software—browsers, office suites, media players—is available on Linux. Apps like LibreOffice, Firefox, and VLC come pre-installed with many distros.
- **Customization and Control**: With Linux, you're in control. You choose how your system looks, functions, and updates—without forced reboots or bloatware.

What About Compatibility?

One of the main concerns new users have is whether Linux will run their essential software. While most open-source alternatives cover day-to-day needs, certain Windows-only apps—especially specialized tools or games—may require

extra work. Thankfully, tools like **Wine, Lutris, and Proton (via Steam)** allow many Windows programs and games to run on Linux with surprising success.

Still, it's worth identifying the software you rely on and checking for Linux-compatible versions or alternatives. In some cases, dual-booting or keeping a minimal Windows installation may be a practical solution.

How to Switch to Linux in 5 Steps

1. **Choose a Distro**
   Beginners often find **Linux Mint**, **Ubuntu**, or **Zorin OS** to be the most familiar and easy to use. They offer friendly user interfaces similar to Windows and include pre-installed apps.
2. **Try Before You Install**
   You can download a distro's ISO file and create a bootable USB stick using tools like **Rufus** or **balenaEtcher**. Boot your computer from the USB to try Linux in "live mode" without installing anything.
3. **Backup Your Data**
   Before making any permanent changes, back up your important files to an external drive or cloud storage.
4. **Install Linux**
   When you're ready, you can install Linux to your hard drive. Most installers allow you to erase Windows or **dual-boot** so you can choose your OS at startup.
5. **Explore and Customize**
   After installation, take time to explore the system. Use the software manager to install apps, tweak settings, and get comfortable. The Linux community is large and helpful—forums like **AskUbuntu** and **LinuxQuestions.org** are great resources.

Final Thoughts

There are a number of people in the Linux SIG group who would be willing to help you install Linux by replacing Windows or dual booting.

Our Linux group meets the first Thursday of each month so pay a visit and learn about Linux.

Linux Rocks !!!!!!

Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison

Slackware-Based PorteuX 2.3 Is Out with GNOME 49, Improved Webcam Support

Discover the latest PorteuX 2.3 release, featuring GNOME 49 and enhanced webcam support. Upgrade your Slackware experience today with these exciting improvements!

Just got Linux Mint 22.2? Two more versions are coming soon – and they're big

Discover the exciting upcoming versions of Linux Mint 22.2! Learn about the new features and enhancements that are set to elevate your experience.

Raspberry Pi OS Is Now Based on Debian 13 "Trixie" with Fresh New Look

2 Comments

Raspberry Pi OS 2025-10-01 is now available for download with based on Debian 13 "Trixie" and featuring new GTK and icon themes, as well as numerous other improvements.

Latest Steam Client Update Improves Support for DualSense Controllers on Linux

- 9to5linux.com; By Marius Nestor (Posted by hanuca on Oct 3, 2025 4:11 PM EDT)
- Story Type: News Story; Groups: Linux, Steam

Valve released a new stable Steam Client update today for all supported platforms that improves support for DualSense controllers on Linux systems and brings various other changes.

- Full story
- Read more
- 0 threads and 0 posts

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

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