

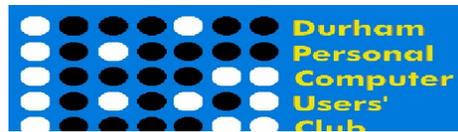
**Dec 2025**

# **PC MONITOR**

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Durham Personal Computer Users' Club Newsletter

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## **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.**

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**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 Topic**

**TBA**

**I will advise by email when I find out**

**Thursday, Dec 11 2025, 7:00 PM**

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# FYI

- By Dan Delong

## OmniOne 5.7



For just a few more dollars than would be spent buying a mini-PC, this device also offers a keyboard, glide pad, battery, and a touch screen (5.7 inch). Although it does not accept a smartphone SIM card, for data, operation of the **OmniOne** is equivalent to that of a laptop, when plugged into an Ethernet cable, or when using fast WiFi (version 6). Since the OmniOne has two USB-c ports, a display port and an HDMI port, it can run up to four screens simultaneously.

*[For travellers who wish to carry along this under one pound device, lots of hotel rooms are equipped with large 4K TV screens, which can double as a large monitor, able to show multiple task windows in high resolution.]*

Users may wish to add a separate USB keyboard/mouse combo for convenience, since the included keyboard is rather small. Yes, this is another KickStarter project, but it is well financed – with deliveries starting in Feb. 2026. Canadian pricing is about \$500 VIP or \$560 non-VIP, both equipped with 8GB RAM & a 256GB SSD. A higher version comes in at about \$650, for the 16GB & 512SSD version. An even more tripped out model costs about \$970 for the 32GB & 1TB SSD version. Shipping (about \$25, and taxes) is extra. All machines can swap-out both RAM and SSD modules. A one megapixel front camera is probably barely good enough for conferencing. *[Personally, I'd prefer no camera, after learning that it is possible for bad actors to bypass camera hardware remotely.]* Ordering without Win 10 or Win 11, pre-installed, does not seem possible, although the hardware can handle any other OS. Microphones, speakers, and power supply are included.

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1002116890/omnione-pocket-power-mini-pc-with-screen-and-battery>

## **P-Phone is a Backup**

So many smartphones are misplaced, stolen, lost, or broken, that a market exists for an equivalent backup device. The only way to sell it to the public would be to make it less costly than the price for a total replacement of the original phone. At the current discounted price, of \$100 US for a **P-Phone**; that seems about right, so customers will come. There remains only one minor drawback. A WiFi connection for the P-Phone is required, unless an extra cost data SIM (for cellular internet) is purchased. As long as the original owner's smart phone has been linked with the P-Phone by way of its phone number, along with installation of the **Phoneado** app, the P-Phone will carry out all essential functions of the main phone (in its absence). It does so by backing up your contacts (securely) to the app's Cloud, and letting the P-Phone act as a backup companion (for making calls, texts, chats, searches, photo synchronization, and map locations). Yes, it can locate a lost phone on a map. Even if the main phone is off, as long as a friend has also downloaded the app, you can use it's permissions just like on your own main phone. For full details, look it up on KickStarter, because shipping will not begin until January 2026.



<https://pphones.com/>

## **Vista Focus Security Camera**



Real-Time Alerts



Automatic Night Vision



150° Wide-Angle Lens



iOS & Android Apps



Rechargeable & Long-Lasting Battery



MicroSD Card Storage



Easy Setup with Mounts



Sleek & Minimalistic Design

So small, yet so capable! This camera's ad lists many advantages (*see above*), yet there may also be a few disadvantages. For example, it is unclear where the images go during recording despite the presence of an SD card. *[Hence, I'll assume recordings go to a server somewhere. This usually means a fee will be charged at some point.]* Also, the battery, although rechargeable, may last only a few days (in ideal conditions) and less time when asked to record a lot of video, or if mounted outside in cold weather. When I recently checked, each camera was priced at about \$40US (and less with multiple orders).

<https://get-vistafocus.com/pp/en/>

## **The Small Web – longing for the old days.**

Remember when the web was easy?... when creating a web page on Geocities, Angelfire, and Rootsweb was free – as long as the size of web pages was small. This was before the rise of big business, layered websites, and hackers. *[Personally hosted web sites are still possible, but securing them is almost impossible. That's why web designers exclusively use paid hosting services. As witnessed recently, these services also get hacked, infrequently. This is often due to over-concentration of main trunk services, holding up the other parts of this unevenly distributed system of today.]*

**Jenny List**, in her Part 1 article (*link below*) tries to tackle this issue, with a recommendation to return to “**Gopher**”-like days (a predecessor to HTML) and the distributed **Internet of Things**, along with the speed and file size advantages gained from **Gemini** usage

<https://hackaday.com/2024/09/10/a-look-at-the-small-web-part-1/>

## **New, a Non-AI Browser – Servo**



Version 0.0.1, of this still experimental **Servo** browser, has been released on [Github](#).

This, from the Servo website: -

*“Servo is a web browser rendering engine written in Rust, with WebGL and WebGPU support, and adaptable to desktop, mobile, and embedded applications.*

*Servo aims to empower developers with a lightweight, high-performance alternative for embedding web technologies in applications.”*

Servo can be embedded in other apps, compatible with most operating systems:- i.e. Windows, macOS, Android, Linux, and Open Harmony.

<https://servo.org/>

## **ZORK I, II, and III, Now Open Source**

Bill Gates enjoyed Zork text adventure games so much that he eventually bought the company. These days, even though the selling of ZORK still requires paying licenses related to package art and media, the source code can be released, freely – and is being released on Github – along with some other old **Infocom** games. *[ZORK was written in a language called, “ZIL”.]*

<https://arstechnica.com/gaming/2025/11/microsoft-makes-zork-i-ii-and-iii-open-source-under-mit-license/>

## **A Common Codec Becomes Rarer**

The common **H.265** video codec simply functions by default, on most devices. This is only true because [**H.265 HEVC (High Efficiency Video Coding )**] has been paid for by the CPU manufacturer, or the computer manufacturer.

However, the price for H.265 is about to increase, by a few cents per license. This may be the reason that some Dell, HP, and Synology devices have lost the ability to play H.265, natively.

*[End users, lacking the ability to play such videos, can still buy a third party license., or they can play all media through VLC or Kodi.]*

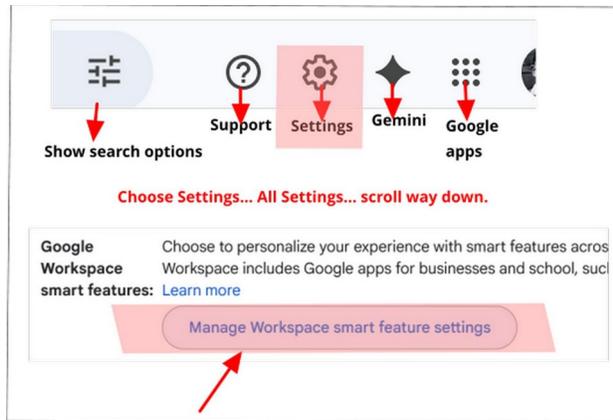
<https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2025/11/hp-and-dell-disable-hevc-support-built-into-their-laptops-cpus/>

## **Expanding Needs of AI**

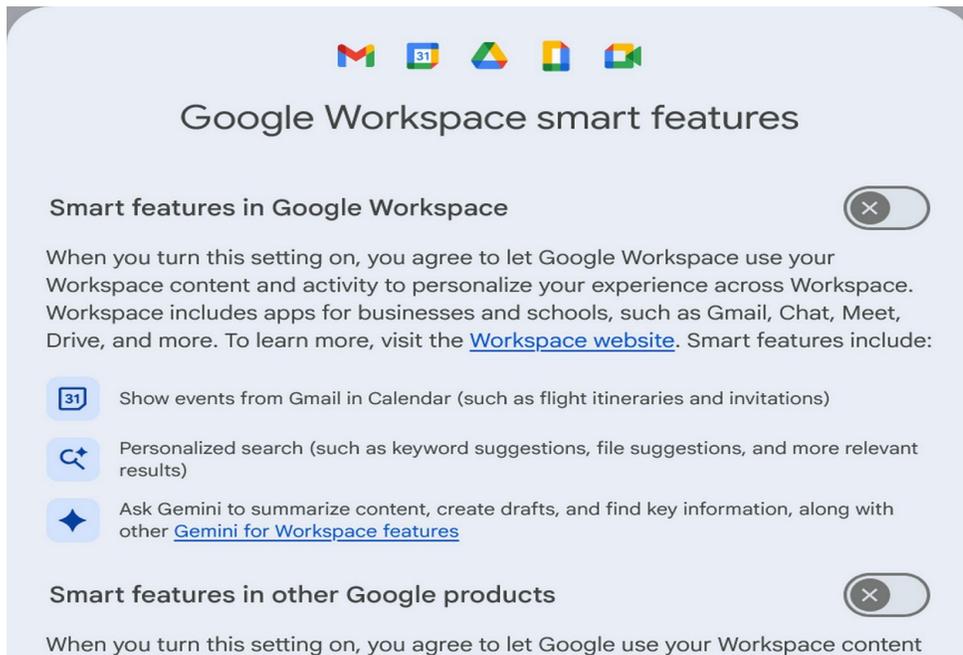
With respect to only Gemini (by Google) infrastructure hasn't been able to keep up with the demands of the millions of current users, or even those who have paid for higher levels of service. Google now feels the only way to compete with other AI projects is through expansion – (in a way that is not ridiculously expensive). Soon, this may involve building more interlinked data centres near sources of ready electric power (without using a lot more of that power). Right now, Nvidia supplies Gemini with power hungry chips for its GPUs. Google may achieve the needed power savings with an in-house design for a new chip, the “**Tensor Processing Unit**”, accompanied by a **one thousand** fold upscale in infrastructure.

<https://arstechnica.com/ai/2025/11/google-tells-employees-it-must-double-capacity-every-6-months-to-meet-ai-demand/>

# Google Smart Features – What Are They?



Malwarebytes claims, and Google refutes, the Google practice of scraping user data for AI training. Since few of us are able to interpret the legalese in ever changing “*terms of agreement*” policies, this item may have slipped by your radar. When Google adds any “**smart**” feature, it means **Gemini AI** is involved, somehow. The Google AI feature, currently turned on by default, is probably “**Workspace smart features**”, (although Google is rolling out evermore “smart” features, not yet turned on). You’ll see **smart** features when you click on the “gear” or Settings icon and choose “**All Settings**”. Some “**smart**” features may be beneficial to most users, and will still be active, even if the “Workspace smart feature” is turned off. The button to look for is “**Manage Workspace smart feature settings**”. Here, you can turn off one, or both, features:- 1. **Workspace** alone, or 2. include turning off smart features, in other Google products. Don’t forget to click on “**Save**”.



*I found that my selections persisted (held) when I logged into the same account on a different computer. [If Microsoft Outlook users encounter the same situation per Microsoft’s recent change in “terms of service”, using Copilot to train it’s AI on your conversations and attachments, there may be ways to meliorate.]*

<https://www.malwarebytes.com/blog/news/2025/11/gmail-is-reading-your-emails-and-attachments-to-train-its-ai-unless-you-turn-it-off>

## Home Power Via Your EV



For those who own a Tesla car and experience frequent, annoying, home power failures, this KickStarter project appears almost ready to ship – the **elejoy V2H** [which allows the car to return up to **8000 watts of clean 120volt and 220 volt power** to the home for an extended period (depending on how power hungry the home is)].

*[It's a complete kit, needing installation near the main electrical panel.]*

This device is expected to be competitive with home backup generators, at price of about \$2000 to \$3000 USD, again, depending on accessories (plus \$80 USD shipping to Canada) and installation.

Extra cost accessories would be the cable power box, and the interlock kit (preventing the main power and battery power breakers from being ON at the same time). A phone app displays consumption rate, and can set a lower limit for withdrawal of battery power from the car itself. If extra time is needed, for home power, the car can be driven to a still powered Tesla charger. The developers hope to support other EVs in the near future.

*[Typical home backup generators cost more and require maintenance and fuel (either natural/propane gas or fresh gasoline).]*

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/elejoy-v2h-inverter/elejoy-v2h-turn-your-tesla-into-your-home-backup-powerhouse?>

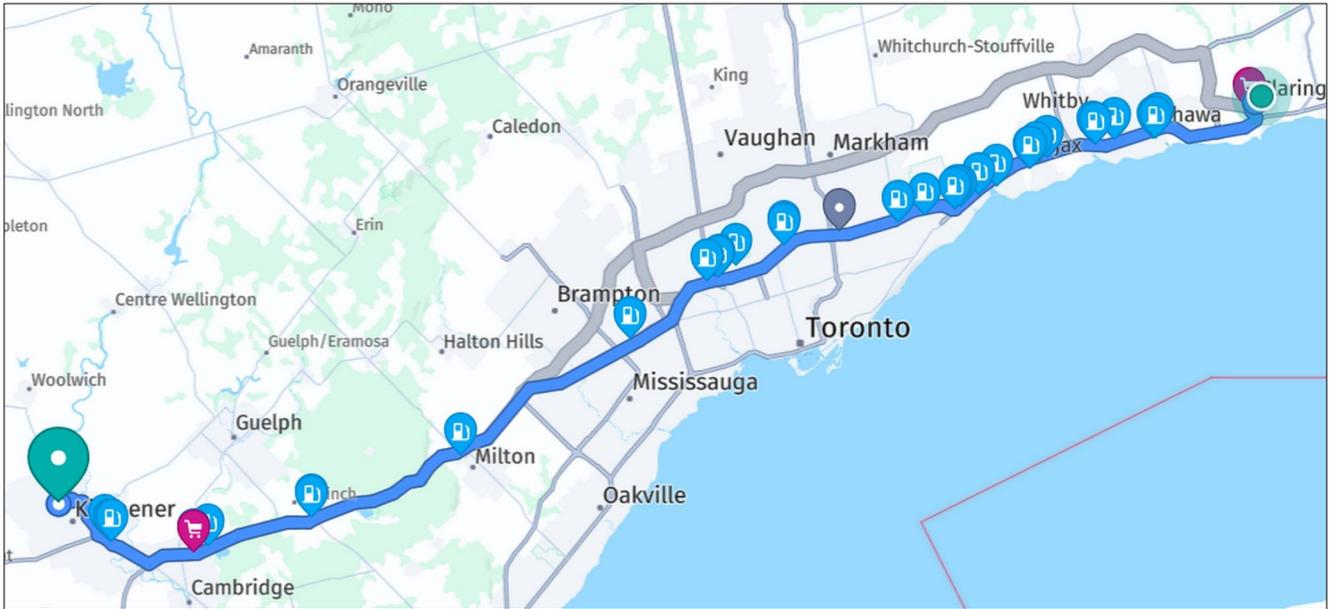
## Longterm SSD Failures

It could be “charge leakage” or “bit rot”, after long long periods of un-powered SSD storage. Or it could be due to high temperatures. Or, maybe the SSD was overfilled with data. Or, maybe it experienced too many read/writes. Or, firmware, on the drive itself, failed. Or, hardware drivers on the device may have failed. Also, recall that a recent Windows update was reported to be a SSD killer. So many unforeseen dangers exist, for SSD storage.

*[Note:- My Samsung SSDs are regularly monitored by Samsung Magician, adding a margin of confidence.]*

<https://www.techtarget.com/searchstorage/tip/4-causes-of-SSD-failure-and-how-to-deal-with-them>

**HERE WeGo -maps and directions, stored on your computer or phone**



**HereMaps**, on my old Windows smartphone, was such a great app that I held onto that phone for as long as I could. [It is now integrated into Daimler cars, pushed from phones onto car screens (at least those using CarPlay or Android Auto).

*[I suspect it is also the software basis for many GPS units.]* For those who wish to have maps and turn by turn directions stored on their phone, Google has similar options for this (but requires using up data) **Here WeGo**, does it offline (unlike **Waze**).

[Some users claim **Here WeGo** has saved them from trip grief when beyond cell reception, or when out of data.) Yes, it has a fully functioning offline mode, still giving turn-by-turn directions, toll avoidance, fastest and alternate routes, ETAs (based on pre-set car speed, walking, cycling, or transit, along with kilometres to common locations and delays). The app knows touristy sites and has further information about the floor plans and contents of each business. Just remember to download maps for the countries or regions you plan to travel in. Pre-planned trips can be saved for use later. [Here WeGo Pro](https://wego.here.com) became even more popular during Covid, especially by delivery drivers.

The web site (linked below) works best when given access to location by a registered user (free). The version from the Android **Play Store** works best if location is turned on. If you choose to activate the feedback feature, for updating traffic, the data is anonymized. You still get satellite, traffic, transit, terrain, landmarks, and 3D *[It also shows eateries, gas stations, shopping, parking, and sleepover spots.]*

<https://wego.here.com>

## **DPCUC President's Notes**

**by Peter Camilleri**

A year ago, the end of support for Windows 10 loomed large on the horizon. today it's in our rear view mirror. Well at least for now. Microsoft bowed to pressure and extended minimum support for another year.

I'm pretty sure that was not an altruistic move. Windows 11 adoption continues to lag behind that of previous new releases. For most users there is no strong reason to move. Microsoft, Intel, and AMD all are motivated by the lure of huge sales as everyone buys a new computer, but it has long been true that the processing power of computers exceeds what most people need. Unless of course, a bloated, slow, inefficient operating system *makes* it unbearable!

And now Microsoft is saying that future releases of Windows will be Agentic. Just what is that?

"Agentic" describes the ability of a system to act independently to achieve a goal, like a person making their own choices. The big question is whose goals? Your goals? or the goals Microsoft thinks you should have?

All of this has focused attention on our big alternative: Linux. I am still working on exploring options for my old, slow, test laptop machine. I know my progress is slow, but rest assured I am still working on it. I hope to at least be able to report my results, when I have some to report.

And again; As always; Please, Pray for Peace.

Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.



# Sudoku Puzzles

December 2025 by Alex Morrison

## EASY

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

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

## HARD

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

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

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

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

# Linux – BigLinux

Alex Morrison



I have a Micro PC [a Beelink mini] that I use to test different Linux systems to see what they offer.

This month I installed as a test the BigLinux operating system. BigLinux is based on Manjaro [an Arch derivative].

BigLinux originated in Brazil and as a result defaults to Portuguese but you can choose English as an alternative while installing.

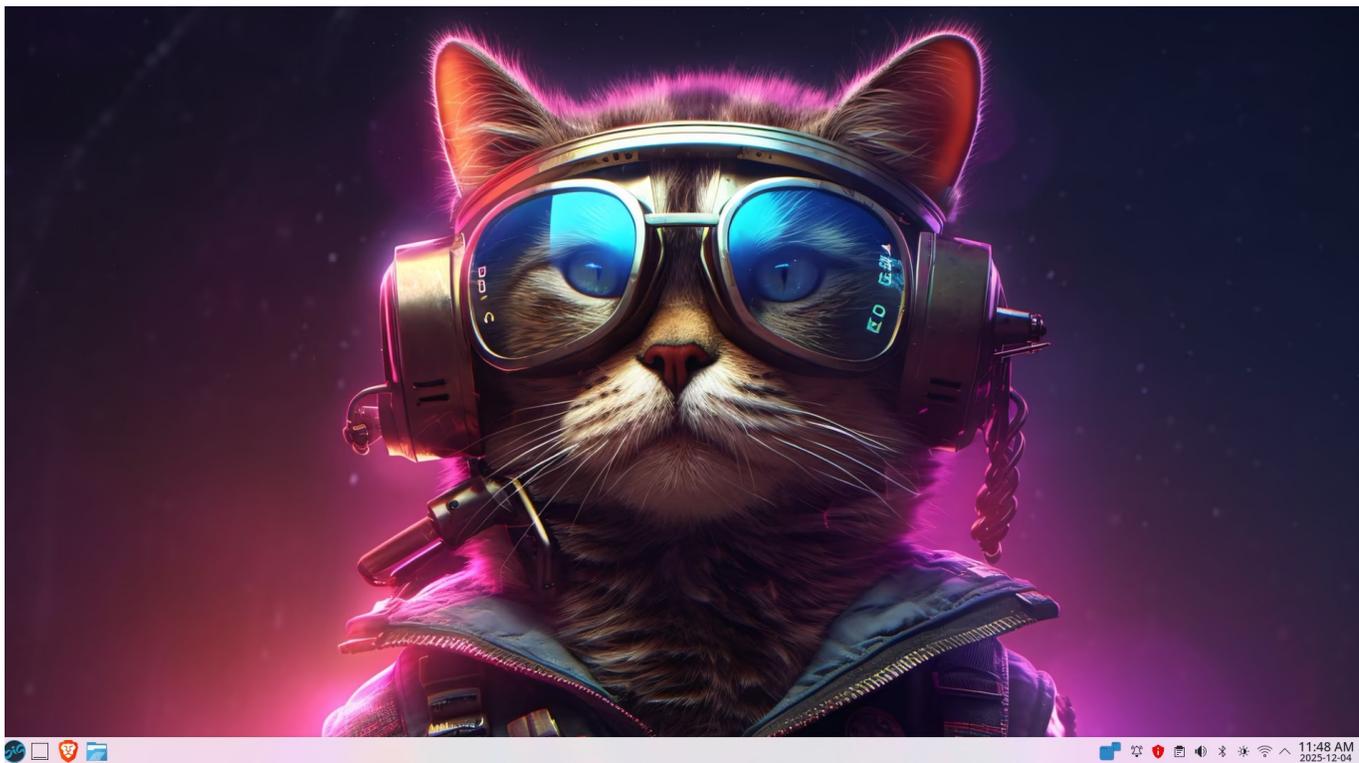
All the usual application available with KDE are installed or available. BigLinux includes by default Lutris and Steam for gamers.

Also a few interesting apps are available by default. The system offers an Emoji Selector, an OCR for scanned PDF file and an interesting Big Store software selector.

Having access to the AUR for software and Snap makes finding almost everything you might need easy to install.

The most interesting thing about BigLinux is the variety of images available when you want to change wallpaper!

Below is the desktop view after I had chosen an alternative image from the many available.



I will show a bit more about BigLinux at the next Linux meeting.

# Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison



## Arch Linux's December 2025 ISO Is Out Now with the Archinstall 3.0.14 Installer

### [0 Comments](#)

Arch Linux 2025.12.01 is now available for download as Arch Linux's ISO release for December 2025, powered by Linux kernel 6.17.9 and featuring the Archinstall 3.0.14 menu-based installer.

## Raspberry Pi 5 Single-Board Computer Now Available with 1GB RAM for \$45 USD

### [0 Comments](#)

Raspberry Pi 5 single-board computer is now available with 1GB RAM for \$45 USD with quad-core 2.4GHz Arm Cortex-A76 processor, dual-band Wi-Fi and PCI Express port.

## Debian 13.2 Released with Security Fixes and Stability Updates

Discover the latest Debian 13.2 release, featuring essential security fixes and stability updates to enhance your system's performance and reliability.

## KaOS 2025.11 Ships Plasma 6.5.3, Linux Kernel 6.17

- Linuxiac.com; By Bobby Borisov (Posted by [bobolin](#) on Dec 1, 2025 1:34 AM EDT)
- Story Type: [News Story](#); Groups: [Distributions](#), [Linux](#)

KaOS 2025.11 adds an optional Limine bootloader and ships Plasma 6.5.3, KDE Gear 25.08.3, and Frameworks 6.20 on Qt 6.10.1.

- [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**

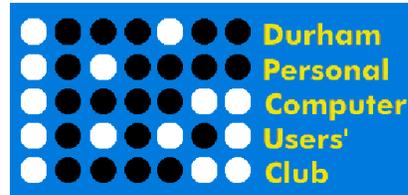
**Durham Linux User Groups**

**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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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.