

# LUGS ON TOUR

## SAPO Codebits

**Josette Garcia** has been in Portugal. It's a tough life sometimes...

**F**or the seventh time I went to sunny Portugal to attend SAPO Codebits. I am always surprised by the creativity of the organizers. So what was in store for attendees this year?

There were 64 talks overall, and while there were talks on very diverse subjects, one could find unofficial tracks of 4–6 talks on one subject (gaming, security, hardware, etc); there were also two panels: one on game development and another one on Portuguese Makers, at the end of which the organisers announced the first Portuguese Maker Faire, to be held in September.

### Babbage rides again!

Among the speakers were Christian Heilmann (Mozilla Foundation) and John Graham-Cumming (who is currently involved in a project to build Charles Babbage's Analytical Engine – see [plan28.org](http://plan28.org)), along with talks on building robots, cryptocurrencies, web design, 5G, creating an OS, etc. There were also two sessions of Lightning Talks, from freelancing to building arcade machines, via subjects as diverse as Tor, pair programming, and even

a 3D scanner (yes, a 3D scanner, the one thing that 3D printers are missing).

The core of Codebits is a 48-hour competition; people assemble in groups and hack together an original idea in just 48 hours; throughout the event, these groups are interviewed by the jury, which selects the best projects for the final stage presentation on the last day.

This year the winning project was an open source Knee Lock for polio patients so that they can walk safely without the typical metallic gears that were once used; the project was even featured on Wired ([www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2014-04/25/codebits-nelo](http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2014-04/25/codebits-nelo)); the project used a lot of things that were present at the event: 3D printers, Arduinos, gyroscopes, etc. Other projects delved into the realms of biosignals, VOIP solutions, stock markets, automatic localisation for product managers, a multiplayer version of the 2048 game and, of course, a version of Flappy Bird hacked together with a Kinect that had the players jumping up and down in real life!

There were also about a dozen satellite activities at this year's



For three days, 24 hours a day, 900 geeks were immersed in dozens of activities in the MEO Arena in Lisbon.

Codebits; these included a three-hour CTF security competition, a very funny geek quiz show, a zip-line crossing the venue, and even a competition of Nuclear Chili made with Bhut Jolokia, which is one of hottest chili peppers in the world (rated at more than 1 million Scoville heat units, roughly 400 times hotter than Tabasco sauce).

All of this put together, along with ~1,000 free meals every lunch and dinner and snacks and beverages available around the clock make Codebits an extraordinary event.

- The website: <https://codebits.eu>
- The event calendar: <https://codebits.eu/s/calendar>
- Some videos of the event <https://codebits.eu/s/page/videos>.



Codebits 2014 featured panels on games development and Maker culture in, leading to the announcement of Portugal's first Maker Faire.

### TELL US ABOUT YOUR LUG!

Chances are that you are already a member of a Linux User Group (LUG). LUGs are all over the world and each one has its own unique selling point, which draws its members to meet and discuss their favourite topic. We want to know more about your LUG or hackspace, so please write to us at [lugs@linuxvoice.com](mailto:lugs@linuxvoice.com) and we might send one of our roving reporters to your next LUG meeting

# Lincolnshire LUG

**Dave Rice** has news of a new user group.

**L**incolnshire LUG is a new, virtual, online, user group and is probably the first of its type!

Lincolnshire is the second largest county in the UK covering nearly 7,000 square km, with over 1 million inhabitants. It has a wide variety of people living there; from farmers to large agricultural industry, metropolitan areas to tiny hamlets and, of course, it's the home of the Royal Air Force. With such a diverse economy the county can benefit in so many ways with a larger understanding of Free and Open Source Software.

The LincsLUG was initially set up many years ago to cater for the needs of the county's Linux users. It struggled, however, to become a widely used asset mainly because its members were all located large distances from each other and real meetings were difficult to organise. Unfortunately, the LUG fell into disuse and membership faded. Linux users in the City of Lincoln itself set up the superb Lincoln LUG, which is going strong; but the rest of the county, where Lincoln is too far

away to reach, were left without a LUG to call their own.

After a year or two, Dave Rice and Iain Baker, members of the original LincsLUG had a thought that because of the distances involved it might be worth a try re-launching the LincsLUG but as an online entity, enabling Linux users in all parts of the county to get together using the internet to discuss their favourite OS and the issues surrounding it.

## Here there and everywhere

The new LincsLUG website is the focal point of the group and is in the process of being put together using tools that encourage online cooperation and enabling users to communicate and have meetings. We currently have a forum and an integrated Facebook page. There is an aspiration to have an embedded IRC channel and collaborative tools to enable common file storage and remote desktop help and support.

We still aim to have real meetings, but they will be less frequent and hopefully in conjunction with existing LUGs in the area. With the central point



Lincolnshire's geographical spread makes an online LUG a sensible option.

being the website, it will, hopefully, become a source of information for home users and businesses to find information about Linux and how it can help them as well as find a support network they can access at no cost.

Lincolnshire is a beneficiary of the rural broadband initiative – the whole county should have super fast broadband by 2016, and many local businesses are becoming more reliant on the internet as a means of doing business. So getting more Linux users will help keep business costs down and productivity up. With a successful LUG as an advocate to business and providing a support network Lincolnshire may well become a huge user of FOSS systems.

If you live in Lincolnshire, or just want to help us in our endeavours please visit <http://lincslug.org.uk> and join us.

# OpenSUSEConf 2014

Free Software makes it to King's Landing.

**A**pril marked the latest OpenSUSE conference, held on the glittering shores of the Adriatic at the campus of the University of Dubrovnik in Croatia. Free Software can be a lonely furrow to plough, so it's essential for projects to meet up regularly.

OpenSUSEConf 2014 comprised four tracks: Business, which concerned itself mostly with implementation of OpenStack and OpenSUSE on ARM (we saw a sneak preview of this at FOSDEM earlier in the year); End User, with sessions covering the Jolla smartphone OS, among other

things; Technology development, and the much under-appreciated Community and Project thread. This included a look at how OpenSUSE can market itself more effectively; so we'll venture our opinion here and say: more SUSE beer please!

## Video stars

The conference included 50 sessions, so even if you were there you probably missed something – but you've not missed out, thanks to the OpenSUSE YouTube channel, where you can see videos of the event talks.



Once home to a medieval trading republic to rival Venice, Dubrovnik is now best known as a filming location in a TV show.