LINUXVOICE YOUR LETTERS

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LINUX VOICE STAR LETTER

WE'RE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT!

Looking awesome! I haven't kept on top of the magazine, but decided to read Issue 8 today and just the front cover is enticing, lots of articles about Linux-y things that interest me.

Reading the gaming section, I was a little disappointed that every single link was to Steam. I think Valve has done a lot to boost Linux gaming support in general this last year, but that doesn't entirely do away with their general bad attitude towards software ownership. While most games require Steamworks (eg *Civilisation 5*), I think it's worthwhile to highlight when a developer has put the effort into avoiding this (eg *Kerbal Space Program*), or older titles

have been repackaged DRM-free (eg *AI War*) rather than just re-releasing them on Steam.

GOG.com haven't been friendly to Linux in the past, but they currently offer both Debs and tarballs for an increasing catalogue, with official support for Ubuntu/Mint and a 30 day money-back guarantee if it doesn't work on your system, and store credit for losing out on regionally-priced games.

I also saw the *Dungeons 2* announcement, but I think *War For The Overworld* is more likely to become the unofficial Dungeon Keeper 3. *WFTO* has Linux builds, now with multi-player and the DRM-free release has been announced

Steam is a big deal for games, and potentially a bigger deal for Linux.

for February. Other than the *Dungeons 2* mention, the actual content of this section was a good sample of games, hopefully the "history of" article will also be good.
**Phil Morrell**

Graham says: Thank you for such a comprehensive letter. And I think you're absolutely right. It's

not our strategy to focus purely on Steam, but with so many high-profile developers following Valve's lead, it's difficult not to - this month is no different with the release of Borderlands 2, for example.

But we will make an extra effort to cover other independent games publishers, especially those whose titles are DRM-free.

PHOTOSHOP

Good Lord – Adobe is bringing *Photoshop* to Chrome OS! Which, basically, means that it'll be working on Linux before too long. This is a massive leap forward – I've been messing about with *Gimp* and *Photoshop* for years now, and *Gimp* is great, but *Photoshop* has the edge when you're exporting for print (I like to have physical copies of my photos, not just computer files). Another fantastic application is coming our way – Linux is winning!
David, Ponteland

Andrew says: *Photoshop* is indeed fantastic, and I'm glad that Adobe realises how much money it could make out of Chromebook users (and, eventually, it will make a few quid out of us Linux users too). But another factor is that this will have a huge effect on *Gimp*. For years now it has been the preeminent image editing software on Linux, and that has meant that there's been little point in adding the one missing feature that it needs – CMYK support. With a serious competitor, *Gimp* will have to up its game or face extinction.
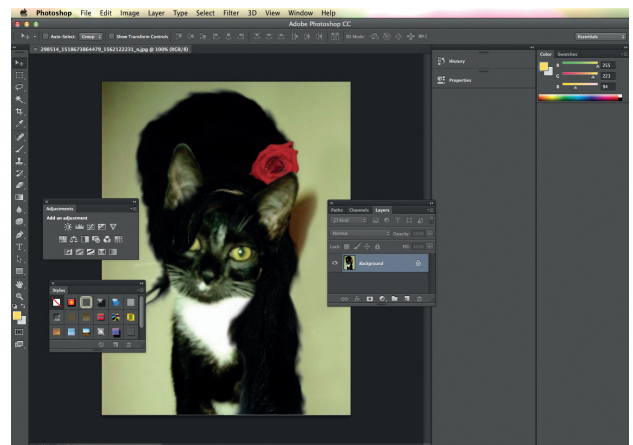
Photoshop takes a million years to learn properly – which is one factor contributing to lock-in.
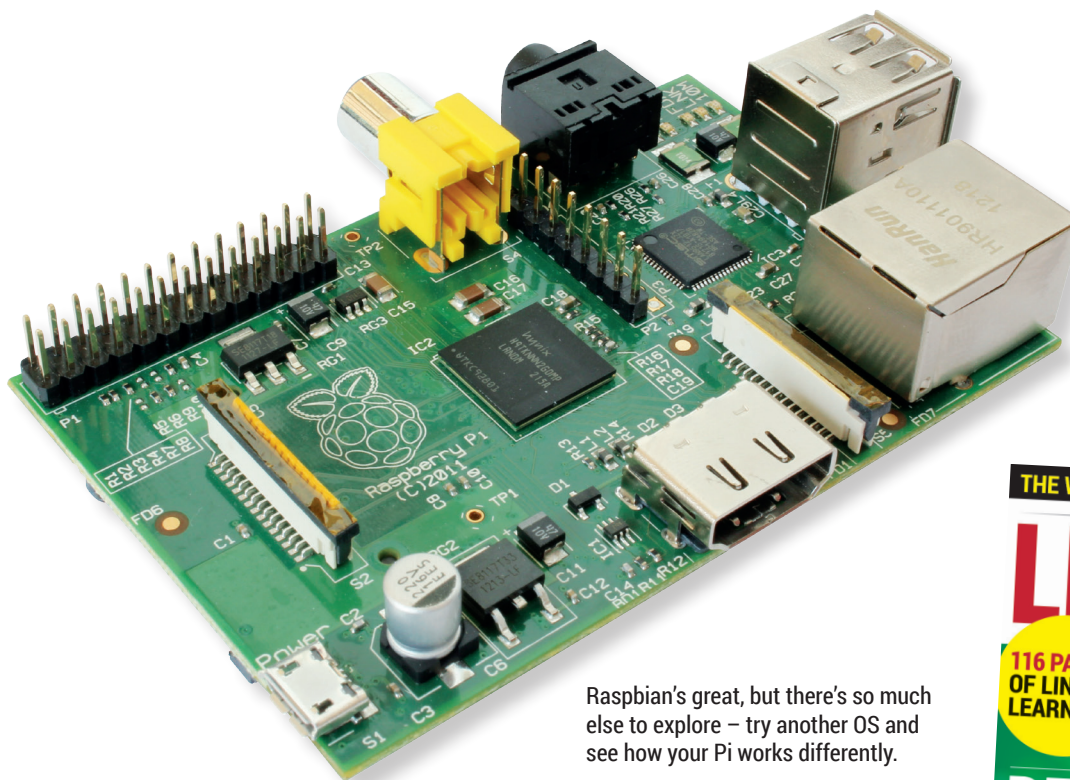
Raspbian's great, but there's so much else to explore – try another OS and see how your Pi works differently.

AWWW, THANKS

Congratulations on another fantastic issue people, it's the best yet. I love the tutorials, I'm learning so much.
James, Bedford

Andrew says: Hmm. You don't actually say which issue is the best yet… which suits us, as we hope the best yet is always the current one and the next issue will be even better.

RASPBERRY PI

Thanks for the group test of Raspberry Pi distros in LV008. I'd never tried Arch before, but having it there in the installer made me go for it. I feel duty bound to point out however that you missed out RetroPi, which turns your Raspberry Pi into a SNES, a Megadrive or a bunch of other consoles and makes college essay deadlines even harder than they would othewise be. I love it and hate it in equal measure.

Graham says: There are loads of alternative operating systems out there for the Pi – Arch included – but we focussed on the ones that are included by default in *Noobs*, the easy Raspberry Pi installer. I reckon we did the right thing, because RetroPi look like a modified form of Raspbian, but Mike says anything that makes it easier to play SNES games is wonderful and we should have included it. Thanks for bringing it to our attention.
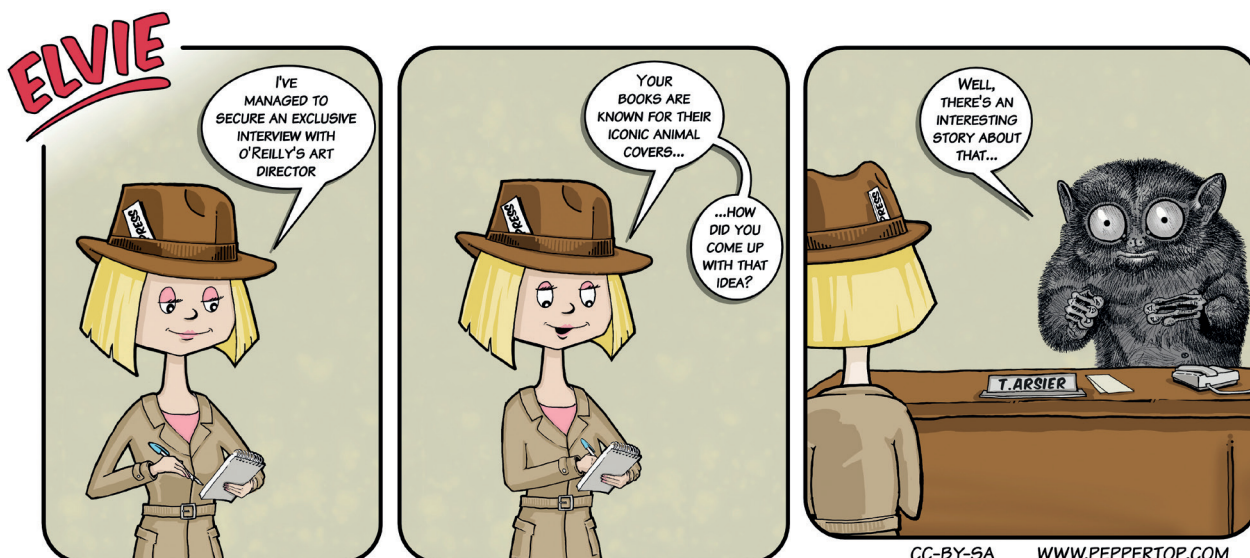
The issue you're reading is the best one ever… at least until the next one comes out.

FREEDOM ISN'T FREE

I have a problem. For years I've been evangelising free software in what I think is the best possible way: by using it, helping people out with their problems and showing it off to whoever's interested. I don't believe in shouting about it, and I do believe that a horse will only drink when it's thirsty. But I have a problem.

A friend of mine still doesn't get the distinction between 'freeware' and 'free software'. She 'discovered' the meaning of the word 'Ubuntu' recently and asked me what African philosophy has do with 'freeware'! I'm clearly not getting through. Do I go full Stallman on her? Or just find better friends?
Richard Bosworth

Andrew says: There's always room for argument about the merits of free software vs proprietary. The trouble is that the lexicon used is so often skewed in favour of preaching to the choir. The distinction between 'free as in beer' and 'free as in speech' is neat, but so much of our terminology misses the masses – a case in point being the four freedoms (the freedom to run the program the way you want; the freedom to study how the program works; the freedom to share the program; and the freedom to modify the program). It's typical that even with something as fundamental as this we manage to overcomplicate it by numbering them 0–3 rather than 1–4 like normal people would. We must do better. People are clever – if they don't understand, we should assume it's our fault for not explaining clearly enough.
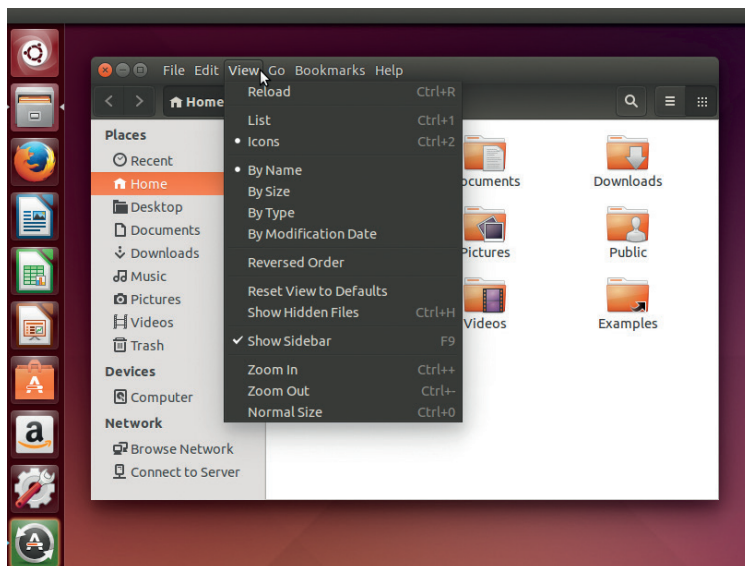
"It's free, so it must be a trial version, right? I wonder what's wrong with it? Apparently you can't get antivirus on Linux…" Arrrrrrrrrghghgh!!!!!

LINUX VOICE ALE (19L, EXTRACT)

Linux Voice reader and avid homebrewer Glenn T Arnold sent us this recipe for our very own magazine beer. Of course, it's freely licensed (GNU FDL), so share and tweak it!

Estimated original Gravity: **1.057 SG**

Estimated final Gravity: **1.013 SG**

Estimated bitterness: **30.9 IBUs**

Estimated colour: **16.8 EBC**

Estimated alcohol by Vol **5.8**

INGREDIENTS

- Muslin bag for steeping.
- 4.2kg Northern Gold Malt Syrup or a Pale Liquid Extract equivalent (15.8 EBC).
- 0.55kg Munich Malt - 10L (19.7 EBC) .
- 0.45kg Caramel/ Crystal Malt – 10L (19.7 EBC)
- 28.00g Cascade hops 5.50% (45.0 min.).
- Whirlfloc Tablet (15.0 min.).
- 42.00g Cascade hops 5.50 % 15.0 min.
- 28.00g Cascade hops 5.50 % 5.0 min.
- White Labs WLP004 (Irish Yeast) or Wyeast 1084 (Irish Yeast) or Safale 04 Dry Yeast or Danstar Windsor Dry Yeast.
- Priming sugar (if bottling).

Process: I use Northern Brewer Gold Malt. If you cannot get this liquid extract, buy a pale ale extract at your local homebrew store. I use Briess malts for the Munich and Caramel/Crystal malts. If you cannot find the these malts locally, you can use equivalent grains. The hops I used are in pellet form and come from **HopUnion.com**. As with the grains, you can substitute similar hops from your local homebrew store.

First, pour 25L of water in your brewpot and bring the water temperature up to 74C. Steep the milled speciality grains for 30 minutes and keep the temperature around 74C. Lift the muslin bag and let the wort drip out. Don't squeeze the bag – just let the wort drip out of the bag. Add the malt extract and stir until the malt extract is dissolved. While adding the extract, bring the wort to a boil. The total wort boil time will be 60 minutes. Add 28g of Cascade hops with 45 minutes remaining of the boil.

Then add an additional 42g of Cascade hops with 15 minutes remaining in the boil. Also with 15 minutes remaining add 1 Whirlfloc tablet or Irish Moss to the boil for clarity. With 5 minutes left add the last Cascade hop addition of 28g.

At the end of 60 minutes turn off the heat and start chilling the wort down to 65–68 degrees. Sterilise your fermenting vessel and the vial. When the wort has cooled down, pour it into your corby or ferment bucket. Then pour the yeast in the wort. Let the beer ferment for a minimum of a week. If you still see fermentation after week, let the yeast ferment until the fermentation is done. Since it is an ale it should not go longer than two weeks. When fermentation is done rack the beer into a keg if you have a kegging system – or rack to a bottling bucket, add priming sugar and bottle. Let the beer condition for at least a week if you bottled your beer to allow the yeast to carbonate it.
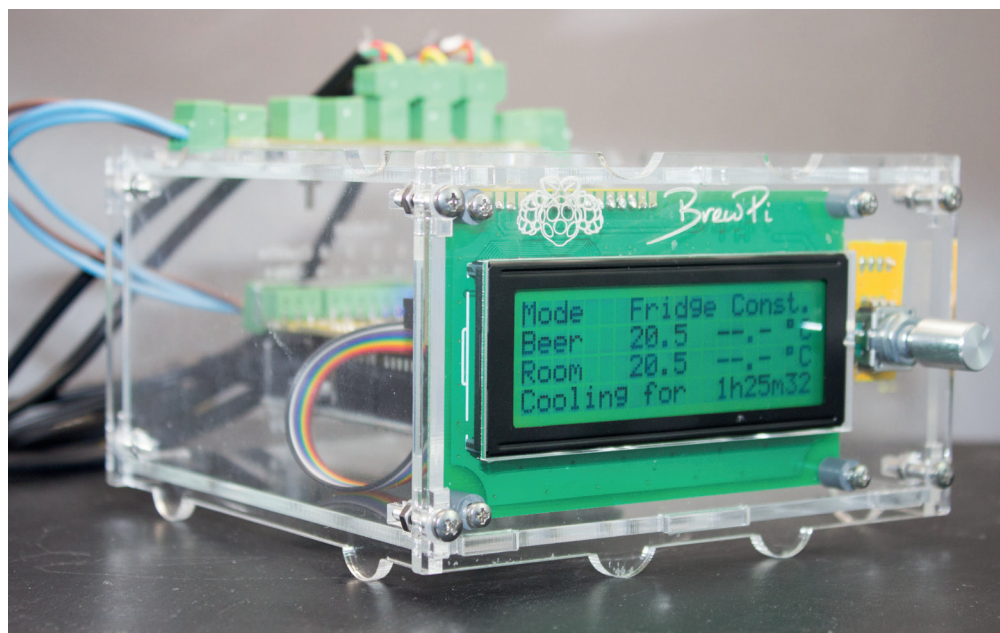
We like the taste of beer. Its live white lather, its brass-bright depths, the sudden world through the wet brown walls of the glass – that's why we use the Brew Pi for our home brewing projects