

Apple S.P.I.C.E.

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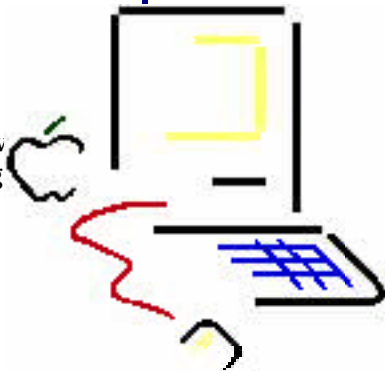
January 1999

State of the Mac?

Well, once again we come to newsletter time and there is no new news to report. NOT! (Oops, sorry for the vernacular there.) MacWorld Exposition was just hosted in San Francisco and the show was a fabulous success. Rick is going to be presenting some of the information to us that he gathered at the show, so "bring your listening ears" next week.

A little closer to home was my trip to the North American International Auto Show last weekend. While there were plenty of cars to see, and some mighty interesting concept cars as well, I always like to have a look to see what computer technology is in evidence. A couple of displays caught my eye for their use of Macintosh computers. The first was the 'Tool Time' van. I've long thought this 'workshop in a van' would be an interesting proposition. A scaled back work bench with power tools built in. Racks for your hanging tools and, of course, a new, G3 PowerBook. Great for checking on pricing of that new lathe or visiting an on-line wood show.

The second display was much easier to see. In the Lincoln - Ford area was the familiar look of an iMac, but something looked just a little out of place. A closer view showed it was running "Virtual PC". Guess they thought more people would be able to use that operating system. Here were all these unsuspecting Windows users working from the comfort of a Macintosh.



What's On This Month?

January 19th - 7:30 p.m. 1075 Ypres (Optimist Club)

Our topics for this month will be:

- **MacWorld San Francisco Report**
(that's right... no rumors required!)
by Rick Quinn
- **Virtual PC from Connectix**
run MS Windows programs on your Macintosh
by Paul Rousseau
- Draw for a cool 'iMac flavours' poster

On the Horizon

February 16th

- **iMac Night**
Imation SuperDrive demo (pending availability)
USB -> parallel connections with PowerPrint
Virtual Game Station by Connectix
(www.virtualgamestation.com lists over 100 titles tested)

Sites of the Month...

The latest buzz word in the industry is **linux**. Ok, so maybe it isn't so much a buzz word as a really interesting operating system that stirs a lot of buzz in the industry. Why so? Well it is even billed as a possible "Windows Killer". Not likely to happen, no, but it is gaining new respect and use in the computer industry.

It is available for multiple computer platforms including Macintosh, in multiple flavours and, best of all, it is freely distributable.

There is even some talk of starting a linux sub-interest group at Apple SPICE.

Check it out at: <http://www.linuxppc.com/>
or: <http://www.mklinux.apple.com/>

Running Linux on Your Mac: An Update

by Tom Gewecke <tom@bluesky.org>

A little over a year ago in TidBITS-407_, I wrote about how to run Linux on your Mac. In case you haven't heard of it, Linux is a freely distributable clone of the Unix operating system that's gaining significant momentum, particularly in corporate and Internet arenas - and it's always been popular with programmers and Unix advocates. Although you can't run Macintosh applications under Linux, it does offer fundamental features that aren't available in the Mac OS (like true multitasking and protected memory) and can run an ever-growing set of Linux utilities, servers, and applications, many of which are available for free.

<<http://db.tidbits.com/getbits.acgi?tbart=04533>>

****MkLinux DR3**** -- My original article covered versions of Linux available for the Macintosh, along with some graphical window managers that put a friendlier face on the command-line world of Unix. Since then, Apple has released a new version of MkLinux, Developer Release 3 (DR3). Prime Time

Freeware sells a CD-ROM and a book about DR3, which probably makes MkLinux the most user-accessible Linux for PowerPC-based Macs.

<<http://www.mklinux.apple.com/>>

<<http://www.ptf.com/ptf/products/MKLP/dr3.shtml>>

MkLinux DR3 includes a number of important improvements over DR2.1:

* DR3 supports a wider range of PowerPC systems, including many NuBus and PCI-based Macs, G3 systems (but not the iMac), some Performas and PowerBooks, plus many clone systems. MkLinux still has problems with some IDE drives and SCSI drives attached via PCI adapters, but these can be worked around by using an external hard disk connected to the built-in SCSI port.

* Serial port functions that were problematic with DR2.1 (and critical to printing and PPP, for example) have been fixed and now seem to work smoothly. DR3 also supports audio and multiprocessor operation on some Macintosh models.



From the streets of San Francisco...

* DR3 is based on current versions of PC Linux, which means it uses standard Linux file systems and tools, incorporates shared libraries, and uses the popular Red Hat Linux installation procedure.

MkLinux DR3 is available as a free download from Apple; however, the minimal installation is 160 MB, and the full package (including sources) is about 800 MB. Thus, most people will want to spring for the CD-ROM, which is only \$20, or the full release plus book, which is \$50.

<<ftp://ftp.mklinux.apple.com/pub/DR3/>>

****Running DR3**** -- I installed and set up DR3 on an external SCSI drive attached to my Performa 6116CD without a hitch by following the lucid instructions that came with (and on) the CD-ROM. Now that DR3 is installed, when my Mac starts up, a splash screen appears that lets me boot into MkLinux instead of the Mac OS.

MkLinux has the normal Linux/Unix command line interface and all the programs that go with a typical Linux distribution, including half a dozen different shells, plus the X Windows GUI and a good selection of window managers that enable extensive customization of the desktop. The MkLinux DR3 CD-ROM also includes independent X Window programs for text editing (nedit), mail (xmail), telnet (ktelnet), and connecting via PPP (netcfg).

The default window manager is KDE, an elaborate system with its own games, utilities, text editor, and Internet tools (including PPP, mail, news, and an integrated Web browser). KDE runs rather slowly on old machines like mine, so I prefer one of the other managers. By editing the appropriate configuration file, you can choose between Afterstep, FVWM2, FVWM, and TWM. And, of course, you can install others, such as Motif, if you want to provide and set up the software. One fascinating aspect of these systems is the capability to select among multiple desktops and command-line terminals within each desktop, all on single screen.

The MkLinux CD-ROM does not include Netscape Navigator or Communicator, but you can download current versions for MkLinux directly from Netscape.

<<ftp://ftp.netscape.com/pub/communicator/>>

I'm not qualified to comment on using MkLinux for programming, server operation, or other serious work. But for an ordinary Mac owner interested in learning about and playing with a Unix-style multi-user, multi-tasking operating system, I found

MkLinux DR3 to be a winner, both easy and fun to use.

****More Linux**** -- MkLinux isn't the only Linux available for Macintosh. LinuxPPC is an independently developed version of Linux for Macs which is also available on CD-ROM; LinuxPPC Release 5 should be available shortly. I have not used LinuxPPC because it doesn't support NuBus machines, but otherwise the two are now considered mutually compatible. LinuxPPC is supposed to outperform microkernel-based Linux implementations like MkLinux, and Release 5 is expected to support iMacs.

<<http://www.linuxppc.org/>>

If you set Linux up on your Mac and are interested in learning more about it, you might also take a look at the two online courses, Introduction to Unix and Unix System Administration, offered by ZD University:

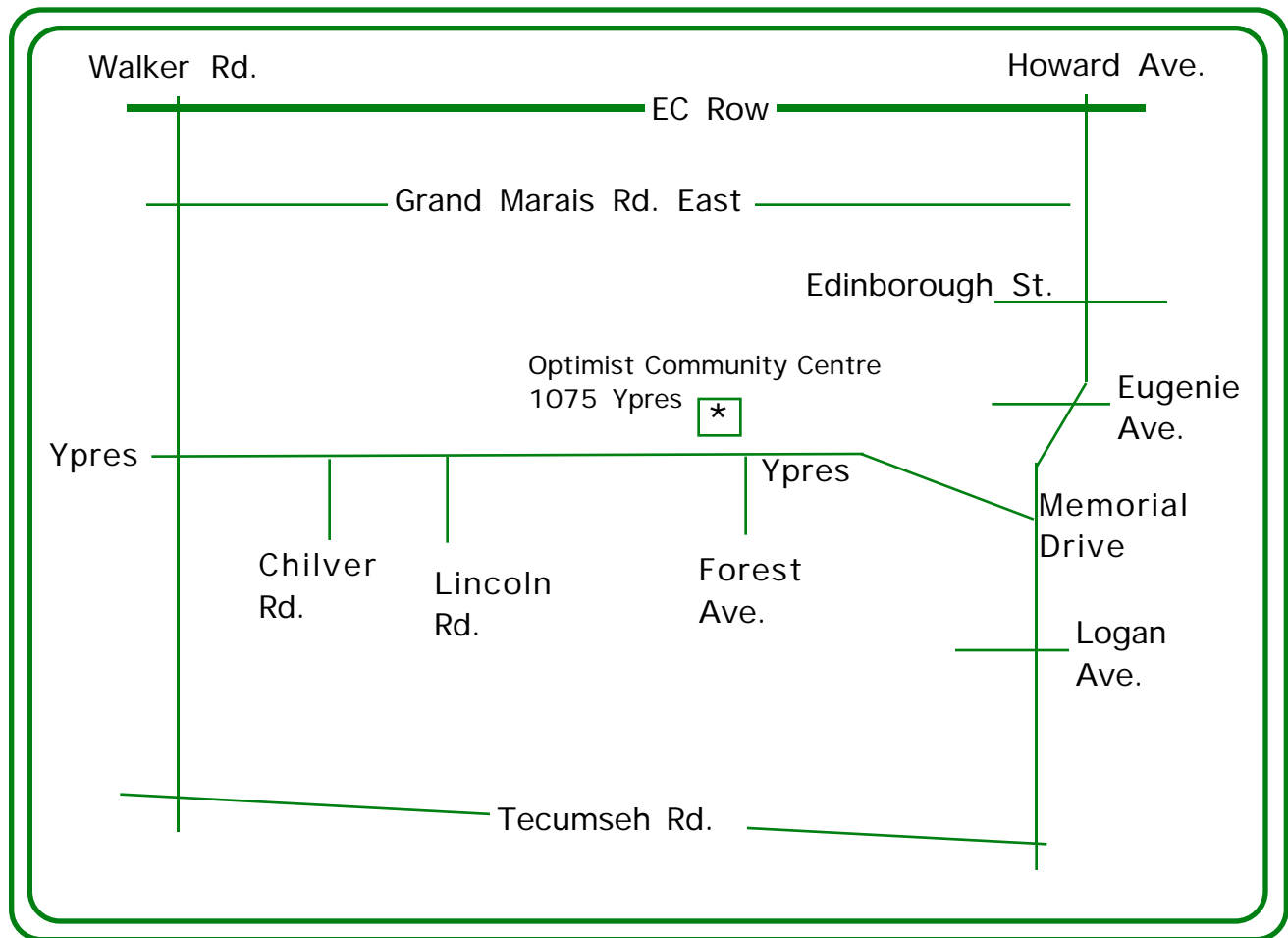
<<http://www.zdu.com/>>

Running Linux on Your Mac from TidBITS#461/04-Jan-99



MkLinux

If you are interested in forming / joining a Linux sub-interest group within Apple SPICE, please contact one of the executive members listed on the back page of the newsletter.



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Meetings:

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month from September to June, usually at the Optimist Club Community Centre, 1075 Ypres. Membership is \$25. per year. Special student rate of \$15 per year.

There are two club CD's per year, which are available free of charge to members. These disks include the latest shareware and freeware that we think will be of use or enjoyment to our members. These disks are also available to non-members at a cost of \$10.00 per disk to help cover the cost of the disk and duplication.

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