

Google comes to town



BRANDON PHILIPS

Hardware operations manager Ken Patchett (right) talks to the LUG about power and cooling issues when you scale to thousands of machines or more. Trevor Seherer (middle) and he work at the new Google facility at The Dalles, and they discussed their experiences there with LUG members.

Spontaneous conference in PDX May 11-12

Betsy Strobel
Staff Writer

On March 22, students Brandon Philips and Alex Polvi ventured to a BarCamp Portland Meetup at Jive Software. Ideas were flowing about sponsors and proposed sessions, and a logo was chosen.

Why is this exciting? Imagine a conference where there is no agenda until the participants arrive, and sessions are created around the topics the attendees desire. According to its Web site, "BarCamp is an ad-hoc gathering born from the desire for people to share and learn in an open environment. It is an intense event with discussions, demos, and interaction from participants."

This is what the BarCamp Portland group, made up of members from the Oregon open-source and technology community. BarCamp attendees are called "campers" and are treated to free food, drinks, and clothing, as well as a spontaneous agenda based on their interests. Proposed sessions include speed geeking, which involves speed networking, discussions on open embedded hacking and open-source business models, and a game of Mafia-style Werewolf.

BarCamp runs 6-11 p.m. on Friday, May 11 and continues from 9 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday. The Web site is at barcamp.org/BarCampPortland, where potential campers can sign up, propose sessions, view the tentative agenda and survey the sponsors.

"BarCamp is a great opportunity for students to get involved with a broader community, as well as give presentations," Polvi said.

He hopes to gather a group of interested students to bring an OSU presence. To participate, e-mail Alex Polvi at polvi@onid.orst.edu. It should be a weekend of fun, hacking, and communal geekness.

Security expert talks to CS class

Alex Polvi
Contributing Writer

Kees Cook recently visited campus to discuss "Securing Open Source Software: How to think like a bad guy" with the CS419 class, Special Topics in Open Source.

Cook's day job is the security architect with Canonical, the company that produces Ubuntu Linux. He is responsible for ongoing security issues related to Ubuntu.

He is also involved with the open-source vector graphics project Inkscape along with performing system administration for kernel.org.

The presentation talked about various security topics related to open-source software. What is the best way to secure a computer? "Turn it off!" Cook deviously suggested.

After highlighting specific security topics such as social engineering, worms, and trust within communities, Cook went on to show the class some best security coding practices.

He demonstrated ways to perform, and prevent, vulnerabilities such as cross-site scripting



WIKIINDEX.ORG

Kees Cook

and SQL injections.

The class was startled when Cook revealed his "Wireless Wall of Worry."

Before class, he had set up a tool that would steal unsecured passwords sent in plain text off the wireless network and post victim information to his

Web site.

Cook may be an expert in his field, but this time the security-aware students from CS419 foiled him—he was unable to capture any passwords.

Learn more:
outflux.net/blog

Learn more:
barcamp.org/BarCampPortland

OSS@OSU José Cedeño hacks Drupal

José Cedeño
Contributing Writer

José Cedeño is an industrial engineering student from Ecuador located in South America. While working on campus, he got to work with Drupal. Drupal is an open-source program that allows the users to publish, manage, and organize a wide variety of content on a website. Tens of thousands of people have used Drupal to power their Web sites.

I first got started with Drupal at Central Web Services. They started working on customizing Drupal to



José Cedeño

rough edges.

I played around a lot with the interface and features offered by modules. As usual, Drupal didn't meet all my needs. One of the modules that I wrote was to allow administrators to set template values for different types

make it suit the needs that OSU had for a content management system. I also got to play and learn about Drupal through the class that I took from Dr. Budd. At first, Drupal had a lot of

of nodes. This was a simple node, but it provided non-technical users with default values for the different text fields when they created a new node. This can be helpful since an admin can set the default body with relevant text and pictures, which could be daunting for the regular user.

Another module I worked on was upgrading a module so it supports Drupal 5.0. This module was "checkout," which prevented two users from editing the same node at the same time to prevent conflicts. Working on these modules helped me build my confidence and comfort level around open-source projects.

I will soon work on my blog, and it will use Drupal. One module I will write will allow each node to have different versions for each language. This will allow my Hispanic family and friends to read my blog in Spanish and my English-speaking friends to read it in English. I want Drupal to automatically render the correct version of the node based on where they come from or the language setting of their browser.

Learn more:
drupal.org

The OSU Linux Users Group turns 3 years old



ALEX POLVI

Original LUG members Michael Marineau and Alex Polvi baked a cake in the form of the Linux mascot, Tux. They helped revive the LUG after many years of silence and inactivity.

Betsy Strobel
Staff Writer

On February 27, the OSU Linux Users Group celebrated its third birthday.

Original members Alex Polvi and Michael Marineau created a penguin-shaped cake, honoring Linux's mascot, the penguin Tux. At least 20 members stopped by for a piece of cake and conversation.

Marineau remembers when the OSLUG started up. "Polvi and Brandon [Philips] did all the initial work back in the spring of

freshman year," he said. "We had our first meeting in the CS library in Dearborn, and we had maybe 15 to 20 people There was a LUG in town that did mostly contract work, so when the student group started, they thought we were forking the LUG. But we were really starting a new group that wouldn't have gone to the other LUG anyway."

The group's first big event was an InstallFest in Dearborn 206, where they would help students and community members install Linux on their computers. The response was overwhelming, with around 50

people attending, so they threw another InstallFest a few months later, this time in the library. Around 70 people attended.

The OSLUG received its current space, The Penguin's Nest, in fall of 2005. Besides InstallFests, the OSLUG has been involved in a few projects, such as the Firefox Weather Balloon and the Firefox Crop Circle. They also have weekly hacking socials at 6 p.m. Tuesday nights.

When asked about his favorite part of being in the OSLUG, member Jeremy Orem replies, "All the awesome people!"

<h3 style="text-align: center;">Questions or comments?</h3> <p>You can get in touch with us via our e-mail address, which is osel@lists.oregonstate.edu. Brought to you by:</p> <p>Editor: Donnie Berkholtz</p> <p>Staff Writer: Betsy Strobel</p> <p>Contributing Writers: Alex Polvi José Cedeño</p> <p>This newsletter is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license and created with free software.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">What is the OSEL?</h3> <p>The Open Source Education Lab has a simple mission: help to get students at OSU involved in free and open-source software.</p> <p>It's about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · community · student-student interaction · skill building <p>The Open Source Education Lab was created in partnership with the OSU Linux Users Group, the OSU Open Source Lab and the OSU College of Engineering.</p> <p>To help the OSEL, contact osel@lists.oregonstate.edu.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">What is the OSL?</h3> <p>The Open Source Lab facilitates open-source communities as well as the development and distribution of open-source software. It accomplishes this through hosting projects and developing software.</p> <p>The Open Source Lab is a global, world-class facility and data center for open-source software knowledge, hosting, infrastructure, development and collaboration.</p> <p>To help the Open Source Lab, contact donations@osuosl.org or getinvolved@osuosl.org to contribute to a project.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">What is the LUG?</h3> <p>The Linux Users Group is a highly active, self-organizing group dedicated to advocating Free and Open-Source Software on campus.</p> <p>The LUG supports Linux, increases awareness about FOSS and jointly creates events with other groups.</p> <p>Google provides the pizza and the LUG provides the fun each Tuesday night. The LUG hosts a hacking social at 6 p.m. Tuesdays in Dearborn 401, the Penguin's Nest.</p> <p>Visit lug.oregonstate.edu for more information.</p>
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