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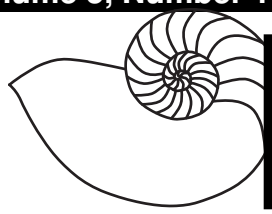

MUUG Lines

Manitoba UNIX® User Group

Newsletter of the Manitoba UNIX® User Group

All Those Years Ago...

By Gilbert Detillieux

It was a dark and stormy night... OK, it wasn't stormy, and it wasn't really that dark, since it was late spring. It was a warm, pleasant night — the kind that has been quite rare this year, and the kind you'd rather spend at the lake than sitting around in some meeting room, planning how you would run a user group if you had the chance.

It was in the spring of 1986 that Susan Zuk, Gilbert Detillieux, and Gilles Detillieux all sat down and talked about the need for a new user group in Winnipeg. We wanted a group which would provide a forum for UNIX users, both novice and expert, to exchange technical information about using this misunderstood and relatively unknown operating system that we felt would soon become extremely popular.

So, armed only with a dream and a few good ideas, we sent out a survey to several companies in the city, to find out if there was sufficient interest, and in what areas. By the fall, the *Technical UNIX User Group* was born.

It was a very informal group for the first couple years. There was no newsletter, no online access system, and no budget — therefore, there were no membership dues, and no formal membership. Our monthly meetings, held in the tiny library of the Physiology department, were a very casual affair, attended by about 8 to 10 people at the start. We tried to set up a consistent meeting date, time, and place, and relied on word of mouth to let people know about the group. That became unworkable after a while.

By the fall of 1988, we decided to "go public" with the group. We filed a name notation to make the name official, set up a bank account, charged membership dues, set up a mailing list, and started producing a monthly newsletter. The main purpose of the newsletter was to announce upcoming meetings, to make sure members wouldn't forget, or in case there was a change in meeting location.

By 1992, the group had grown considerably, and with the broadened membership base, the group's objectives had also broadened. The group was no longer limited to "technical" issues, so it was decided the name should be changed to reflect this. Since membership was no longer confined to the city, but included a few members from rural Manitoba, the name *Manitoba UNIX User Group* seemed appropriate. That became official in May, 1992.

At the same time, arrangements were being made with the U of M Computer Services department for the use of one of their old Sun 386i systems, which they had retired. After a lot of hard work by Andrew Chan, the *MUUG Online Network Access* system (MONA) became available.

Since then, the group has grown at an incredible rate. Awareness of the Internet in Manitoba has increased so much that MBnet, administered by the University, has set up its own access system for commercial users. This too has proven to be increasingly popular.

When we sat down in 1986 to start a user group, our dreams and our goals were not that different from what was accomplished in the end. However, we never dreamed of the scale of today's user group, and what is yet to come. ➽

This Month's Meeting

Meeting Location:
Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 12, at 7:30 PM. Once again, the meeting will be held in the auditorium of the St-Boniface Hospital Research Centre, just south of the hospital itself, at 351 Taché. You don't have to sign in at the security desk – just say you're attending the meeting of the Manitoba UNIX User Group. The auditorium is on the main floor, and is easily found from the entrance.

Meeting Agenda: See inside for details.

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Milestones, Looking Back, and Moving On

By Gilbert Detillieux

This issue of the newsletter marks another important milestone for the group. We've been producing the group's newsletter for five years now. Time for a celebration? Maybe, but first, there are a few things to take care of, before I go.

As you look through the issue, you'll detect more than a hint of nostalgia. Since both Susan Zuk and I are stepping down, we wanted to get some last words in. I hope these articles will bring back some fond memories for our older members, and give a bit of historical background to our newer ones.

Five years of newsletters means quite a significant number of articles. I thought it would be a good time to include a comprehensive table of contents and topic index for all these articles. I'd like to thank Andrew Trauzzi for typing in all the information that was used to produce these.

Of course, I'd also like to thank all of the contributing writers, particularly those who submitted articles quite often. My job would have been a lot more difficult if it weren't for your valuable input.

I'd also like to thank the previous newsletter editors, Darren Besler and Susan Zuk, in a special way. After walking in your shoes for two years, I appreciate the effort you each put into this job before me.

To the next newsletter editor (this will most likely be Andrew Trauzzi, who has agreed to take on this role), I welcome you and wish you the best of luck. I also would like to extend my offer to help with production of the next couple issues, and to contribute articles for future issues.

I'd also like to thank Unisys, who allowed us to use their photocopier in the past, and Xerox, who do so now.

And, last but not least, I'd like to thank those who helped out with stuffing envelopes and mailing the ever-increasing number of copies of the newsletter. This has included every member of the board at some time or other, as well as Peter Graham, Pat Bessler, and two of the new board nominees, Brad West and Andrew Trauzzi.

And with that, I end my last column as MUUG Lines editor. See you all at the meetings, at MUUG special events, and online on MONA. ➽

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Ad copy must be submitted by the final copy deadline for an issue (usually 3 weeks prior to the monthly meeting) in a format acceptable to the editor. (Please make arrangements with editor beforehand.)

Internet E-mail: editor@muug.mb.ca

Group Information

The Manitoba UNIX User Group meets at 7:30 PM the second Tuesday of every month, except July and August. Meeting locations vary. The newsletter is mailed to all paid-up members one week prior to the meeting. Membership dues are $25 annually and are due as indicated by the renewal date on your newsletter's mailing label. Membership dues are accepted at any meeting, or by mail.

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Any Last Words? ... You Bet!

By Susan Zuk, President

It is with much emotion that I write my final President's Corner. The 2 years that I have spent in the role of President have been a very rewarding experience. I have had the opportunity to represent the group nationally, through UniForum Canada, as well as on the local level. Besides the pride I have in the accomplishments of the group, my most warm memories are of the many wonderful people I have met and of the fantastic executive members that I have worked with these past years. These are not just co-volunteers, they are friends who have been very devoted and dedicated to the group and making it the success it is today. When Gilles, Gilbert and I began the group back in 1986, little did we know or dream of how much the group would grow. The early years found 6-10 of us sitting around a table at the Basic Medical Sciences Building, at the Health Sciences Centre, sharing experiences and knowledge. The growth and interest in UNIX in Winnipeg has been magnified through the interest in MUUG. I can only say that this group will continue to grow and evolve as the market demands.

For those of you who recently joined the group, and others who are just curious, here is an overview of the various accomplishments from the 1992-93 session:

- Open Systems — Getting Past the Hype — A combined effort between CIPS (Canadian Information Processing Society) and MUUG. A very successful one-day event which provided local, national and international case studies on implementations of Open Systems environments.
- Computer Expo — A booth was used to promote MUUG to the public.
- An increase from 100 to over 160 members — Membership has significantly increased over the past year. This showed us that the interest level in UNIX and the Internet is continuing to increase in the community.
- Representation at UniForum Canada — Ideas and information was shared at two National Council meetings hosted by UniForum Canada and attended by the local UNIX groups across Canada.
- Internet Access Increased — The first full year of UNIX and Internet access has completed with over 100 accounts being activated.
- Corporate Sponsorship — A corporate sponsorship program was initiated to obtain support from the business community and allow for the furthering of our programs.
- Publicity Portfolio Created — A publicity portfolio was created to help in the promotion of MUUG. Brochures, MUUG mugs and other marketing items have been created.
- MUUG was a sponsor of Health Sciences Campus Computer Fair — MUUG supported this event to promote the group and help the community.
- LINUX/System Admin SIG Formed — Our first special interest group was formed and now meets on the third Tuesday of every month.
- Preparation for the Fall Seminar — Preparations are nearly complete for the third joint event between CIPS and MUUG. The seminar is called "SURVIVAL — Riding the Technology Wave."

This has been another very busy year for MUUG. This also shows the effort that is put forth by some very hard working people. The amount of time it takes to perform some of these tasks is quite staggering. This is why I can truly say that attaining these accomplishments is something that the volunteers of the group can be very proud of. I thank the many people who have given their free time to this organization.

The events for the year have already begun with the well attended meeting on September 14th. The meeting was attended by over 270 people. This exemplifies the interest in the Internet. Dr. Roger Taylor provided us with some background information on the Internet. He spoke on how to use the communications facility, the size of the network, as well as some of the projects being performed through the Internet. Afterward, Mr. Bill Reid, from the University of Manitoba, spoke about MBnet, for commercial Internet access. He explained how people can obtain access to the Internet through the University network. Finally, Gilbert Detillieux, from MUUG's Computer Use Committee, spoke on how to obtain access to the Internet through MUUG's computer system. He defined the relationship between the University and MUUG and how to decide if access should be obtained from one or the other's service. Thank you to all those who spoke at the meeting and to all the members who came out to listen to our speakers.

Beside this event, the outgoing board has begun the process of planning the new year with many great meeting topics. This will allow the new board a chance to learn the ropes before having to put forth new projects. The new board will have many new faces as many of the current executive are stepping to the sidelines to allow for fresh ideas.

The board will most likely be elected by acclamation. What we will be doing is having the members provide a show of hands to accept the slate of nominated candidates. They will be introducing themselves to you so you will know who they are. Come to the monthly meeting and participate in welcoming the new board.

Finally, I would like to thank the current board for all their hard work and dedication. We had one great year. I would like to wish the new board a warm welcome. I know that it will be as rewarding an experience for you as it was for me and the rest of the board. All the best to all the group members. Thank you for all your support and I'll see you at the October 12th meeting.

P.S. Robert Li, thank you for the gavel — it's just what our meetings have been missing! It was a nice thought. ➽

Meet the MUUG Board Nominees for '93/94

Since the preliminary list of nominees was published last month, we've had one additional nomination — Andrew Trauzzi — but also two withdrawn nominations — Kirk Marat and Roland Schneider. This leaves us with a slate of eight nominees, which is exactly the number to be elected to the board. According to the MUUG by-laws, the nominees are therefore deemed to be elected by acclamation. This will be made official with a vote on a motion to accept the new board, most likely by show of hands, at the October MUUG meeting. Here are the eight nominees.

Ramon Ayre

Ramon has 11 years experience in the information systems marketplace. Ramon spent 2 1/2 years with Computer Innovations in Winnipeg before joining Computerland of Winnipeg. At Computerland Ramon became the top Sales Person in his first year and moved to the Large Account Marketing Team, where he was instrumental in acquiring accounts such as Manitoba Hydro, ICG Liquid Gas, and many Manitoba Government departments. As Vice-President of CSB Systems Ltd., Ramon has been involved in the marketing and implementation planning of over 100 UNIX sites over the last seven years.

Ramon has a certificate in Business Management and is well respected in the Winnipeg business community for providing superior client support, both during and after the sale.

Bary Finch

Bary Finch has been with IBM for four years as a Systems Engineering Representative. He has specialized in AIX and the RISC System/6000 since its announcement. Previously he has worked as a Systems Analyst in the Engineering Department of Versatile Farm Equipment, and as a Programmer Analyst at both Westfair Foods and Canadian Indemnity. Bary holds a B.Sc. in Computer Science from the University of Manitoba.

Last year Bary was the Vice President of MUUG, serving his first term on the board. In this term he worked with Susan Zuk, President, to develop the Corporate Sponsorship program, and helped start the first Special Interest Group (SIG) for MUUG. Bary looks forward to another year of serving on the board, and helping MUUG grow even more to meet the needs of the membership.

Paul Hope

Paul Hope has been a member of MUUG (on & off) for four years and presently holds the executive position of Meeting Coordinator. He is employed by St. Boniface General Hospital Research Centre as Coordinator of Audio Visual & Information Services, a position which includes responsibility for administering two Unix boxes (SVR3 & SVR4.2) with approximately 30 users, network planning & administration, general computer support and many other non computer-related duties. Although Paul's educational & past work experience has been primarily Audio-Visual rather than computer oriented, he has approximately 4-5 years experience with Unix and is just starting to feel somewhat competent in a *few* areas.

Rick Horocholyn

Rick Horocholyn is presently employed at Manitoba Hydro in the Financial Planning Dept. as Sr. Financial Consultant. His responsibilities are the development and support of financial forecasting and modeling tools. The systems he has built in the past four years have been almost exclusively on UNIX machines, and, consequently, he has had to learn UNIX from both a user's and a system administrator's perspective. His education includes a Mechanical Engineering degree and an MBA.

He has been a group member for over three years, and has found comfort in the accessibility to other expert members when he needed specific UNIX "how-to" details. For the past two years he has served as treasurer, and set up the group's financial statements using a shell-script-based accounting system.

Rory Macleod

Rory Macleod is an Integrated Systems Consultant for the Midwest District of Xerox Canada Ltd. Having only recently joined MUUG, he is the newest member to be a board nominee. Recently, Rory has gratiously helped with the production of the newsletter — Xerox has agreed to photocopy the newsletter as their form of corporate sponsorship of MUUG.

Greg Moeller

Greg Moeller works for MTS (Manitoba Telephone System) in the central office. His official title is a Frameworker. He has been employed there for 8 years. He joined MUUG in the summer of 1992. Last year, at one of the MUUG meetings, he gave a presentation on Linux. He also maintains the Linux area on Mona. His hobby is computers. He currently has approximately 6 computers in the house. The wife's computer runs under MS-DOS and Windows. Four of the computers run Linux. Eric the BBS is running under DR-DOS (soon to be running Linux). These six computers (five of which are networked together (Ethernet TCP/IP)) comprise 47 megabytes of RAM and 1.1 gigabytes of mass storage.

Andrew Trauzzi

Andrew Trauzzi has been with the City of Winnipeg for 5 years as a programmer/analyst. He has been working with UNIX since 1986, and currently works with UNIX machines both at home and at work. His current project could be described with a large number of buzzwords, but can be summed up as a tax certificate request system using C++ and Sybase on PC and UNIX platforms. Previously, Andrew obtained his B.C.Sc. at the U of M, and has been an active member of the MUUG for two years.

Brad West

Brad West is presently employed at Freshwater Fish Marketing Corp. as an Automation Control Specialist. His responsibilities included administering the Unix system for the plant data collection system, along with hardware/software support for PCs and design of the plant's computer controls. He's been involved with Unix for four years, and is a beginner to intermediate level user. ➽

A TEX tour on MONA

By Michael Doob, Department of Mathematics, University of Manitoba

We can now use TEX on MONA. Is this interesting or should we collectively shrug our shoulders and say, "So what?". If you are interested in making high quality typeset documents, especially those containing mathematics, then TEX is the best software going. It is used world-wide and has actually become a language for interchanging papers via email among mathematicians. The TEX setup is a little complicated to follow at first, but with a little background it makes sense. What we'll do here is explain how to use TEX to produce some output, and then take a little tour of the file system.

Let's try a simple test. There are files called
`/usr/local/tex/setup.csh`
(for the C shell) and
`/usr/local/tex/setup.sh`
(for the Bourne shell) on MONA. Use `source` on the appropriate file to set up some working parameters (if you use TEX often you might want to do this automatically as part of your login script). Now create a file called `first.tex` with your favourite editor and put in it the line

```
Here is some \TeX. \bye
```

The file `first.tex` is called the source file. Next let's run TEX on the source file, i.e., enter the command

```
tex first
```

and see what happens. If all goes well, you'll get something like

```
This is TeX, Version 3.141 (C version d)
(first.tex [1] )
Output written on first.dvi (1 page,
240 bytes).
Transcript written on first.log.
```

This means that your have completed one page and the new files `first.dvi` and `first.log` have been created. We call the file `first.log` the log file and it contains a copy of the output that went to the screen plus some other stuff. The file `first.dvi` is machine readable only, but it is what is necessary to produce the hard copy. The TEX program itself only produces the `.dvi` file. Another piece of software, a device driver, is needed for each piece of hardware (screen, laser printer, typesetter, etc.), and with the driver it is possible for a human to see what TEX has produced. There are actually good reasons for this. For one, it is relatively easy to write a device driver; it is vastly less complicated than the TEX program itself. For another, it gives the user some assurrance that the output viewed on a screen will be exactly the same as that which appears later as printed output.

We have one device driver on MONA. If you invoke the command

```
dvips first -o
```

a new file `first.ps` will be created; this is a PostScript file and can be viewed or printed on any PostScript device.

Device drivers for many different types of hardware exist. There are (free) copies of drivers for X-windows, Hewlett Packard Laser Jet printers, ink jet printers, and Epson dot matrix printers. Ghostscript can view the PostScript output, of course, and it can also make files for printing on non-PostScript devices such as dot matrix printers.

When TEX runs, it uses several auxiallry files. The most important type is the `.tfm` file. The text used in our `first.tex` file above, for example, uses a font called `cmr10`. To do this a file called `cmr10.tfm` is used by TEX to get the "TEX font metrics" of the characters in that font. These include the height and width of all the letters, for example. Normally when certain pairs of letters are adjacent, they are moved closer together for further apart to give a more balanced appearance. This is called kerning. The word Toyota without kerning looks like Toyota. The kerning information is also part of the `.tfm` file. All of our `.tfm` files are kept in
`/usr/local/tex/fonts/tfm`.
It's interesting to note that the `.tfm` files have no information about the actual shapes of the characters; so TEX never knows anything about the specific shape of the character. This means that this information is independent of the size of the font, i.e., we don't need a different `.tfm` file for each different point size of type.

So where do the shapes appear? The device driver and not TEX needs to know this information. These files are called `.pk` files since they are in a special "packed" format. They contain the raster images of the individual characters and hence a different file is needed for each point size (`cmr10` printed at 12 point size is not the same as `cmr12` printed at 10 point size). In addition, different files are necessary for hardware with different resolutions. In our case we have 300 dot per inch files. They are all contained in the directory
`/usr/local/tex/fonts/pk/pk300`.

How do you get other resolutions? TEX comes with a companion program called Metafont. The program produces "general font" `.gf` files. A utility called `gftopk` is used to convert the `.gf` file to the `.pk` file. There are several utilities of a similar nature in
`/usr/local/tex/bin`.
There are appropriate `man` pages in
`/usr/local/tex/man/man1`. Poke around and have fun!

There is a file called `gentle-intro.tex` in the directory
`/usr/local/tex/docs`
which is a TEX source file that gives lots more of the TEX syntax. It's a good place to start to learn more about TEX and to start making documents of the highest quality.

The text for the above article was created as a source file for TeX — a plain text file, with embedded TeX commands. The file was then processed with the "tex" command, to produce a DVI file, which was then converted to PostScript using the "dvips" utility. The "ps2epsi" utility, which is part of the Ghostscript package, was then used to compute a bounding box, to make it easier to place and size the PostScript file as a graphic in this PageMaker publication.

Michael Doob *is a professor in the Department of Mathematics at the University of Manitoba. He is also editor of the Canadian Mathematical Society Journal, which he composes using TeX and several PostScript utilities, on a Sun workstation. He is actively involved in the TeX User Group, and has written publications on using TeX. He is also active in MUUG, having given a presentation on TeX last February, and having recently set up TeX on MONA.*

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SIG Sideline

By Bary Finch, SIG Coordinator

It was a dark and stormy night... but we had a good turnout at the last SIG (Special Interest Group) meeting on Tuesday the 21st, in spite of the weather. We did not have a specific presentation for this meeting, so we continued with our round-table format. The discussions for the night centered mainly on UUCP and Linux.

The big reason for Linux to dominate the discussion was the presence of a portable system running Linux! Greg Moeller graciously provided his portable PC to demonstrate aspects of Linux. He hopes to be able to provide this machine at future meetings. With several of the people at the meeting also running Linux there were a lot of questions on specific details of implementing Linux. The portable PC allowed Greg to try out things on the fly at the meeting. It's a great addition.

Another act of generosity from Greg is that he has made up both 3.5" and 5.25" diskette sets of Linux. The diskette sets that Greg has are the SLS release 1.03 using Kernel version 0.99pl12. The release numbers may not mean much to some of you, but it is a current, and "stable" version that would be good for anyone wanting to try out Linux for the first time. This is the same distribution as on MONA. If anyone is interested in borrowing either set of diskettes, contact Greg Moeller <gkm@calvin.muug.mb.ca>, or come to the next SIG meeting. Whichever of the sets of diskettes are available will be brought to the meeting for distribution to other interested people.

The other big discussion topic was UUCP. Several of the people at the meeting are getting UUCP going on Linux and other systems, and need more info to really understand what's happening in UUCP. To this end I am arranging for a UUCP presentation to be given at the next SIG meeting. It will cover most of the basics of UUCP (hopefully) and some of the specifics of UUCP connections to MONA. I think this will be of great interest to those who are following the System Administration side of the SIG.

To tie this back to Linux, we will also have Greg's PC with Linux, and of course Greg to demonstrate. We hope to have Greg's PC attached to a projection unit so we can all see the screen. This will allow Greg to review the UUCP specific files in Linux for all of us to see.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 19, at 7:30 p.m. This meeting will again be held at ISM, 400 Ellice Avenue, behind Portage Place. Our host is Wolfgang von Thuelen. He will be waiting in the lobby as of 7:15 p.m. to let everyone in.

Hope to see you at the October meeting! ➽

Agenda

for

Tuesday, October 12, 1993, 7:30 PM
Samuel N. Cohen Auditorium
St-Boniface Hospital Research Centre
Main Floor, 351 Taché

1. President's Welcome 7:30

2. Round Table 7:35

3. Business Meeting 8:00
   a) Old Business
   b) New Business
   c) MUUG Board Elections

4. Coffee Break 8:30

5. Presented Topic 8:45
   To Be Announced
   Stay tuned for details — watch muug.general for updates, as they become available.

6. Adjourn 9:30

Note: Please try to arrive at the meeting between 7:15 and 7:30, to avoid disrupting the meeting in progress.

Coming Up

Meeting:
Next month's meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 9, at 7:30 PM. Meeting location will be the St-Boniface Research Centre, as usual. The November meeting topic is still to be announced. Stay tuned for details.

Got any ideas for meeting topics? Any particular speaker or company you'd like to see at one of our meetings? Just let our meeting coordinator, Paul Hope, know. You can e-mail him at <phope@muug.mb.ca>.

Newsletter:
Next month, a new editor takes control of the MUUG newsletter. Give the new kid a break and send in some new material, especially shorter articles – half a page to one page (400 to 1000 words) would be fine.

Monsieur Ex has also let me know that his mail-box has room for more of your wonderful queries again – please submit your questions to the old guy via e-mail to <m-ex@muug.mb.ca>. He may be old, but he's not ready for retirement yet!

Riding the Technology Wave

CIPS/MUUG ANNUAL FALL SEMINAR

INTERNATIONAL INN

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1993 7:30AM TO 5:00PM

A SEMINAR ABOUT TOOLS, TECHNOLOGIES, AND TECHNIQUES FOR SURVIVAL IN THE INFORMATION PROCESSING INDUSTRY IN THE '90s.

Featuring:

• Roger T. Burlton	(Process Renewal Consulting Group)	*Re-engineering*
• Guy Wood	(United Grain Growers)	*The UGG Experience*
• Pamela Paul	(Datapro)	*Client-Server Computing*
• Ken Nakashima	(Computer Associates)	*The UNIX Security System*

- Relational Database Panel: Informix, Oracle, Sybase, and Ingress
- Operating Systems Panel: Microsoft (Windows NT) vs. IBM (OS/2) vs. COSE (UNIX)
- A vendor area featuring over 20 booths, and **much more...**

Participating Companies:

PRCG	UGG	Cognos	Datapro	Information Builders
PMS&K	Informix	Oracle	Sybase	The Ask Group
CSB Systems	Sunsoft	Uniface	MTS	Hewlett-Packard
Computer Assoc.	Microsoft	IBM	COSE	Group West
Sun Microsystems	DCS Systems	Progress	On-Line Business Systems	

Prices (includes lunch & GST)

CIPS Members: $200 MUUG: $250
Students: $30 Others: $295
(late registration – add $50 after Oct. 8)
Exhibit area only: $25 (at the door)

For further information

Don Gillespie (204) 983-6725
Susan Zuk (204) 631-2530
FAX (204) 694-3901

KNOWING WHAT IS GOING ON HAS NEVER BEEN SO IMPORTANT