

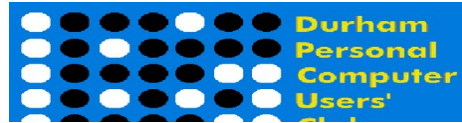
**Mar 2026**

# **PC MONITOR**

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Durham Personal Computer Users' Club Newsletter

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## **DPCUC General Meeting**

**Our Club meets monthly on the second Thursday of each month.  
All meetings are currently held using Zoom.**

**We hope some day in the future to be able to meet in person again.**

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**Please visit the Club Web Page for all the latest links and information**

<http://www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/>

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### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

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### **Next Meeting Topic**

**Pearls of Windows Wisdom  
By Peter Camilleri**

**Thursday, Mar 12 2026, 7:00 PM**

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# FYI

- By Dan Delong

## iFixit -a free, editable, website, advocating for the “right to repair”



Whether we buy software or devices, planned obsolescence and “repair secrets” are rampant. In dealing with patented software, the [Free Software Foundation](#) – established in 1985 – has long advocated for openness, as does **iFixit**, with respect to devices. Although iFixit is focused on free repair manuals for electronics, the site covers many consumer products that would otherwise be junked as ‘unfix-able’.

For example, I checked out a step-by-step guide for replacing an internal part (the T-Con) on my Sharp TV. The guide contained photos for each step, showed each screw needing removal (and suggesting the use of a magic marker to mark replacement locations). Anyone can click on the “edit” button to add their own fix-it tips, for others to read. Since glue and springs are often used to “confuse” the home DIYer, this guide provided fastener locations and instructions for releasing the printed circuit board. This example is just one, from 130,314 free manuals, not to mention tens of thousands other devices and solutions. A free video lecture, by Elizabeth Chamberlain, on [MakerTube](#), covers the whole topic quite well.

<https://www.ifixit.com/>

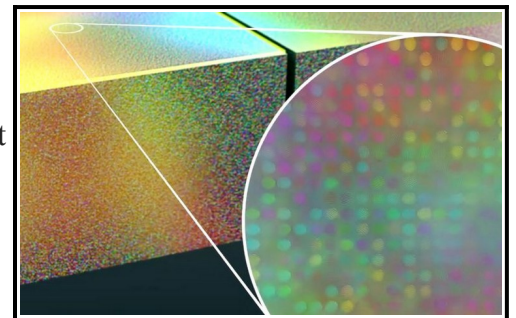
## Project Silica – Microsoft Research

This promising Microsoft research has been under development since 2019, showing how **borosilicate glass** (ovenware glass) only a couple of millimetres thick, and smaller than a CD/DVD, can hold terabytes of data, lasting for at least ten thousand years. In human history, only cuneiform clay tablets and rock carvings have shown similar endurance.

*[Also, a densely engraved metal disk, sent into space (decades ago) by NASA, with details about our planet, its chemical make-up and morphology of its human inhabitants, may not last that long.]*

The problem remains; those who find our current storage devices, in some future world, must be able to interpret them. So far, this digital information, stored inside glass, does not appear different to the naked eye, so who’s to know that they hold information? However, this data is permanent – not influenced by magnetism, water, or high temperatures.

*[Other research, into disk drives using a new form of magnetism, called “p-waves”, may compete with glass, in the near term.]*

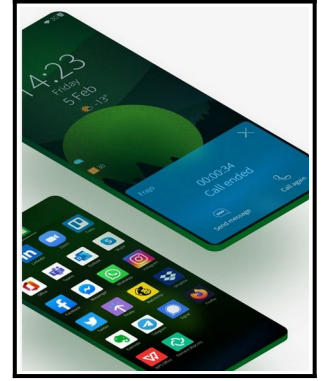


<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/project/project-silica/>

## **Jolla – privacy online with “Sailfish OS”**

A Finish company wants to improve privacy and security for anyone who uses a computer, a smart phone, or who drives a modern car, all with a custom version of Linux, along with **Mind2** – a privacy minded AI. Since prices are in Euros, translating to CAD places the computer at just over one thousand Canadian dollars, and the phone at about \$500 CAD (which is a full featured modern phone). The company indicates that owners of Sony devices can install this Linux OS (I assume, by “rooting” it). Similarly, the auto version of the OS – “**SeaFarix**” – still uses GPS and maps for guidance, without the tracking so prevalent with Android and Apple vehicle interfaces, while still able to run Android apps. High demand has delayed deliveries.

<https://jolla.com/>



## **Landline Comeback**

A ten year old child might argue with a parent for their own smart phone, saying, “Well, Suzie is my age, and she has one!” Despite this compelling argument, today’s parents are mightily afraid that their child may become hooked on social media, where a lot of bad stuff happens – like, bullying and exposure to adult content. Moreover, some kids just can’t put the phone down. Returning to a single, family phone/landline, where conversations are not private and are limited to a reasonable time commitment, then provides time for family members to pursue non-phone based fun, learning, and hobbies.

*[How about reading a book once in a while?]*

Old fashioned literacy is just as important as digital literacy, when it comes to evaluating the suitability of information for the age and stage of a child. A CBC article states that children as young as seven can be taught how to trust information sources.

*[NOTE: Today’s landlines (with a typical short span of in-house copper wire) still send conversations over the Internets, using VOIP. They function just like copper lines (with some battery backup), but send voices digitally. The phone company’s power blocks, keeping the lines alive in a blackout, also consume electricity, on the homeowner’s dime.]*

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/smartphone-landline-parenting-children-teen-tween-kids-9.6946437>

## **Coleman Digital Propane Fuel Gauge**

Shaking the propane bottle, listening for the sound of sloshing liquid, may provide a clue as to the amount of remaining fuel, but is highly inaccurate. Canadian Tire carries a **digital fuel gauge** that provides both a visual indication of fuel remaining (with bars, like a battery level indicator) and a numerical view (in ounces of remaining fuel) based on the original weight of the fuel cylinder (14 oz. & 16 oz. Cylinders). [cost is \$13 CAD]



<https://www.canadiantire.ca/en/pdp/coleman-digital-led-fuel-gauge-compatible-w-14-oz-16-oz-propane-map-pro-cylinders-0766288p.html>

## **Windows 10 Extended Service Not Always Working**

A recent attempt to run **Update and Security** on Win10 laptop, that had previously been accepted into the Extended Service program, started to download two updates, then abruptly stopped the download. In an effort to restart these updates, Microsoft now wanted more than an administrator log-in and a Microsoft account, it wanted a **reconfirmation** of my account on that computer, **and my phone number** – and proof that I was **not a robot**.

## Automatic Garbage Can

Walk up to this disposal device; it opens the lid. This model appears to ‘know’ when it is full. Users simply lift the lid right off, which causes the bag to be sealed (perhaps with heat, since this model has a lithium battery). The battery should last 30-50 days. Proprietary bags must be purchased in groups of 25 (4 gallons or 15.5 litres per bag).

<https://www.bestbuy.ca/en-ca/product/towne-t1s-auto-sealing-smart-trash-bin-with-motion-sensing-lid-15-5l/15324524>

## KV Bear Electrical

Club members considering purchasing an EV know that a wall charger is a needed accessory, along with possible upgrades to the main electrical panel. This company appears to service our general area. **KV Bear** has created an impressive website and blog, for estimates.

*[I have no knowledge of reputation, or if they are using sub-contractors for the actual work. Most qualified electricians can do this work.]*

<https://kvbearelectrical.ca/services/>

## LOGiX Piston Power 5000 Mag Power Banks recalled

Certain models, starting with LXG-13xxx, may cause a fire, either when being charged, or when delivering charge. Here's the Canadian government web page for this recall...

<https://recalls-rappels.canada.ca/en/alert-recall/logiix-piston-power-5000-mag-power-banks-recalled-due-fire-hazard>



## LogiVote

Not quite as bad as what's going on in the United States, with Trump's attempts to limit who can vote in November; a “**vote tilting**” software company in Israel is offering other countries “**LogiVote**” – for a price. The software finds individual political supporters, who are willing to share their “friends/contacts” on social media. It then rates those secondary contacts on the likelihood that they might also join the cause. It then sends AI tailored, individualized messages on chats, email, or SMS to each of those people, suggesting negative things about the opposition, and requesting that they **copy and paste** the message to others. People still have the option to send these message verbatim, or to make edits first.

**“With municipal elections coming up in six Canadian provinces in 2026, experts warn that “cyborg propaganda” tools could reduce campaigns to battles between humans ventriloquised by chatbots.”**

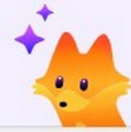
*[Since this information came to me in a subscriber e-mail, from an independent news source, “The National Observer”, it may not load for everyone.]*

<https://www.nationalobserver.com/2026/02/24/investigations/logivote-ai-political-messaging>

## Firefox 148 is Coming, with AI enhancements

### 🔮 AI Controls

You always have a choice in Firefox, including whether to use features enhanced with AI. More controls coming soon. [Learn more](#)



#### Block AI enhancements

Blocking means you won't see new or current AI enhancements in Firefox, or pop-ups about them. [Get more details](#) about what's included and how to control traditional machine learning features, like search suggestions and recommendations.



I will never know what these AI enhancements do, because the first thing I did, when updated to version 148, was turn AI off. Fortunately, version 148 presents a screen (above) to allow a user to do this. If, by chance, you missed seeing this screen, invoke it with this command, in the search field... *about:preferences#ai*

[OpenMedia.org](https://openmedia.org), a Canadian organizations watching the progress of AI, has initiated a number of campaigns (link below).

*[When cancelling AI, Firefox warns it will block: translations, image alt text, grouped tab suggestions, some text in link previews, some AI extensions, and chat providers in a sidebar (Claude, ChatGTP, Copilot, Gemini Mistral), then offers to unblock each individually. Edge users get Copilot by default, and anyone on their Google account will also see a Gemini icon in the side-bar.]*

<https://openmedia.org/campaigns>

## Libre Office is going online

Like Google docs, Office 365, and many Cloud storage server businesses, **Libre Office** will soon offer a web based version. Unlike the others, **The Document Foundation** (makers of Libre Office) will not host user files produced by their software.

*[I assume data storage will still be local... the responsibility of the user.]*

<https://blog.documentfoundation.org/blog/2026/02/24/libreoffice-online-a-fresh-start/>

## Thomson Reuters Investigate

This Toronto, Canada company owns subsidiaries selling personal data to ICE, Border Patrol, and Homeland Security. The United States is supposed to be a “**land of the free**”, with citizen privacy and movements protected by law. However, police and other federal agencies subscribe to CLEAR, a data service that tracks licence plates, cell phones, bank accounts, medical records, legal charges, incarceration records, employment records, and more, including social media content. Although one such contract expired in 2024, it is doubtful that such a lucrative income source would be abandoned entirely. Such all encompassing data is useful for ferreting out immigrants and political opponents.

<https://investigate.afsc.org/company/tomson-reuters>

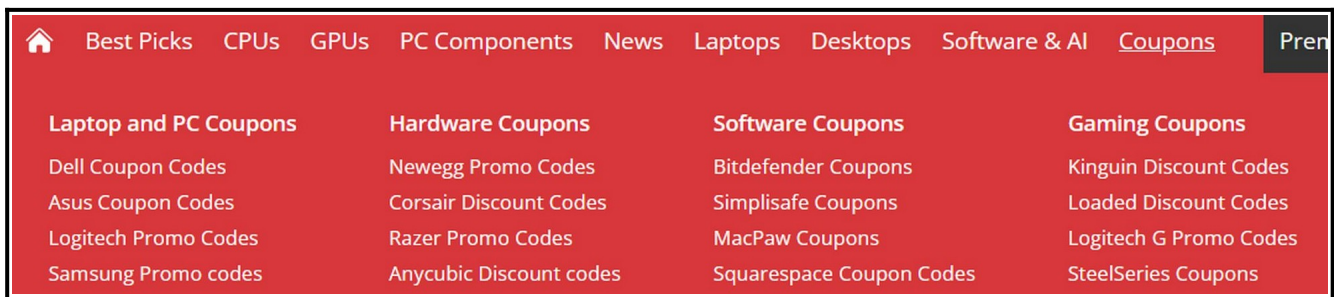
## AirSnitch – breaks wireless encryption

As long as the attackers is on the same wireless network (like those in public and educational spaces) it is possible to de-crypt both incoming and outgoing traffic with **AirSnitch**, discovered by University of California researchers. Two other factors make this possible. First, even though most Wi-Fi traffic is encrypted, the MAC address is not. Secondly, the packets containing the Group Temporal Key (GTK) are identifiable. By sending that key, in the flow of data, to the spoofed MAC address of a known device (already on the network) insertion can be achieved. This method of attack is rather complicated and not expected to become widespread. However, manufacturers of routers now have the opportunity to do something about it. The article lists several specific router models that have succumbed.

<https://www.tomshardware.com/tech-industry/cyber-security/researchers-discover-massive-wi-fi-vulnerability-affecting-multiple-access-points-airsnitch-lets-attackers-on-the-same-network-intercept-data-and-launch-machine-in-the-middle-attacks>

**Ars technica** covered this as well... <https://arstechnica.com/security/2026/02/new-airsnitch-attack-breaks-wi-fi-encryption-in-homes-offices-and-enterprises/>

## Promo Codes and Coupons



Did you know that the Tom's Hardware website lists coupons and promo codes monthly? Some are dollar discounts; others a generally in the range of 5% to 20% discounts. One code offered \$150 off on a Samsung Galaxy S26 Ultra.

<https://www.tomshardware.com/coupons>

## Hard Drives, becoming pricey

Just as solid state drives, flash drives, and RAM have increased greatly in price, so have spinning hard drives. Spinning drives, with the highest capacity, still carry an outlandish price; so, go for lower capacity and slower drives, if backup is all you need. *One report claims that RAM alone makes up 35% of the cost for a new PC, and causes further monthly price hikes.* My recent purchase of a 4TB drive came to about \$35 per terabyte, from Newegg Canada; this, for a slow 5400rpm unit with moderate caching. Considering shipping charges, it would have been about the same price for a pick-up at Canada Computers.

*[Personally, I'm staying away from Amazon, even if the price is cheaper.]*

<https://www.tomshardware.com/pc-components/hdds/best-hard-drive-hdd-deals-amazon>

## Android 17

If you own a more recent pixel smart phone, it can be updated to a beta version of Android 17. One change has made some software adaptations to cope with larger screens and folding screens. These changes will work better as long as Play Store developers keep up. Improvements to camera software and video encoding have also been made.

<https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2026/02/the-first-android-17-beta-is-now-available-on-pixel-devices/>

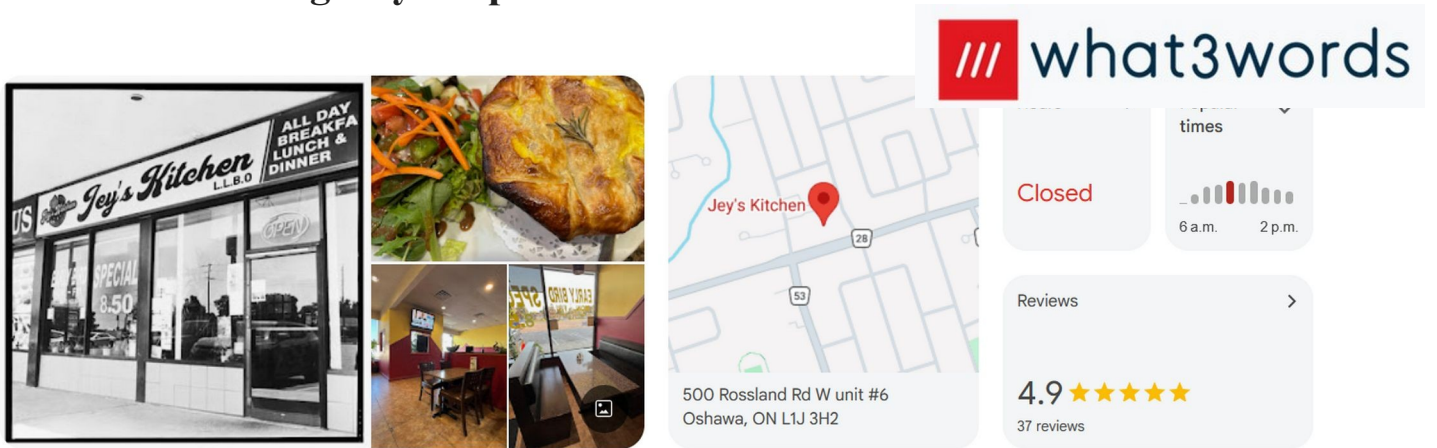
## Wikipedia housecleaning Archive.today

Not only has Archive.today caused DDoS attacks, it is changing the content of Wikipedia pages, making those pages unreliable. It's going to take a while for Wikipedia to eliminate all 695,000 Archive.today links, and clean up the pages that may have been altered. Archive.today has been investigated for breaking paywall terms of service, despite its value for verifying sources.

*[Archive.org is not involved with this issue, in any way.]*

<https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/02/wikipedia-bans-archive-today-after-site-executed-ddos-and-altered-web-captures/>

## Three Words for Emergency Help



*Illustration 1: Location of our in person gathering at 2:30 p.m. on March 26.*

Emergency or not, locating a place on a map, especially in an emergency, has become much easier with **What3Words**, since many police departments, the CAA, and ambulance services now know about What3Words, and use this system. This is particularly important if you are stuck in a remote location, with no recognizable landmarks, and need the fastest way to send for help. About 12 years ago, some clever people in England created this efficient **geolocation** system, no longer needing sets of number coordinates, or location by cell signal triangulation. The entire World, when overlaid with an imaginary grid of 3 metre squares, can be described with **three random (and unchanging) words**, unique to that plot on the globe. Hence, **10 Downing Street** becomes **slurs.this.shark**. **Jey's Kitchen**, in Oshawa, becomes **battle.flip.remake** – which, if not using What3Words, is also this address - **Jey's Kitchen, 500 Rossland Rd W unit #6, Oshawa, ON L1J 3H2**.

*[This service is available as a phone app, or a website (link below).]*

<https://what3words.com>

## **DPCUC President's Notes**

by Peter Camilleri

This month, I thought it might be nice to continue the theme of presenting potentially useful links to computer and related materials.

One thing about Windows 11 that bothered me was how slow the Start Menu was. Answer: Stop Windows from searching the web, Result: my Start menu is instant now

<https://www.makeuseof.com/stopped-windows-from-searching-web-start-menu-instant/>

Another Windows 11 issue was the way that AI was being forced on us. This headline says it all: Microsoft ADMITS Windows 11 FAILURE — Copilot Being STRIPPED After Massive Backlash!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98rAyI\\_LpbI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98rAyI_LpbI)

Finally, I am always upset when perfectly good but obsolete equipment ends up a land-fill. So I was pleased to see: Your old Android phone can become a free security camera in 5 minutes. I will have to try this out on my old phone and see how it goes!

<https://www.makeuseof.com/your-old-android-phone-become-free-security-camera-in-minutes/>

If you think of any new ideas, be sure to drop me a line. If there's any area you like to learn more about, tell me and I will do the digging for you!

Spring cannot be to far now! Yay!

Peter Camilleri, President DPCUC.

# Sudoku Puzzles

March 2026 by Alex Morrison



## EASY

8	4		1					
5		7		3				
			2	9	8	5	7	
4	8				2		3	
			3			9	8	
	3						5	
	1				7			
					6		9	
		5	4					

## Sudoku

The game boards on this page were produced using **Sudokuki** on PC Linux 64 Bit running KDE Plasma.

The objective is to fill in the missing numbers ensuring that every 3 X 3 grid has the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats and every full column or row has the numbers 1 through 9 again with no repeats.

If you have troubles solving the puzzles send an email to me and I will send you the solution.

Have fun! Alex

## MED

					2			
							7	
	7	5				6		
		6	7				9	
				3		5		
	5	9	6			7	2	
	1		8					
7		4		6				
3			9			1		5

## HARD

								3
3					7		1	
	9		1			8		2
					1		4	
		5						
2	7						5	
	1		7		8			
	8		2					4
			9			1	6	

IF you don't Like Sudoku puzzles – try these pages

<https://www.boatloadpuzzles.com/playcrossword>

<https://www.cryptograms.org/play.php>

# Linux – Alacritty

Alex Morrison



There are many different Terminal programs available in Linux.

This one I found in a Youtube video.

**Alacritty** [ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76GbxnD8wnM> ]

**Alacritty** is a fast, GPU-accelerated terminal emulator written in Rust. It's minimal by design and configured via a simple config file.

- 
- ◆ How to install Alacritty

## Ubuntu / Debian

```
sudo apt update
```

```
sudo apt install alacritty
```

## Fedora

```
sudo dnf install alacritty
```

## Arch Linux

```
sudo pacman -S alacritty
```

Or download builds from the official GitHub page if your distro doesn't provide a recent version.

- 
- ◆ Basic Configuration

Alacritty uses a config file (TOML format):

```
~/.config/alacritty/alacritty.toml
```

Example minimal config:

```
[window]
```

```
opacity = 0.95
```

```
padding = { x = 10, y = 10 }
```

```
[font]
```

```
size = 12.0
```

```
[font.normal]
```

```
family = "FiraCode Nerd Font"
```

```
style = "Regular"
```

```
[colors.primary]
```

```
background = "#1e1e2e"
```

```
foreground = "#cdd6f4"
```

After saving, restart Alacritty to apply changes.

---

◆ Common Features

- GPU acceleration
- Very fast rendering
- Vi mode (scrolling & navigation)
- Custom keybindings
- Font ligature support
- Transparency support (compositor required)

---

◆ Useful Key Shortcuts (Default)

Some of these are not working for me!!!

<i>Action</i>	<i>Shortcut</i>
Copy	Ctrl + Shift + C
Paste	Ctrl + Shift + V
New Window	Ctrl + Shift + N
Search	Ctrl + Shift + F
Vi Mode	Ctrl + Shift + Space

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**Join us for any Linux meeting. They are free to attend.**

**Send an email to the newsletter editor and ask for the Zoom password or link**

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# Linux in the News

by Alex Morrison



## **[IPFire 2.29 Core Update 200 Is Out with Linux 6.18 LTS, IPFire Domain Blocklist](#)**

[0 Comments](#)

IPFire 2.29 Core Update 200 firewall distribution is now available for download with Linux kernel 6.18 LTS, IPFire Domain Blocklist, and other changes. Here's what's new!

## **[Armbian 26.2 Released with Linux 6.18 LTS, Expanded ARM and RISC-V Support](#)**

[0 Comments](#)

Armbian 26.2 Linux distribution based on Debian and designed for ARM devices is now available for download with support for new boards and various other changes. Here's what's new!

## **[Tails 7.5 Anonymous Linux OS Released with Updated Tor Client and Tor Browser](#)**

[2 Comments](#)

Tails 7.5 anonymous Linux OS is now available for download with Tor client 0.4.9.5, Tor Browser 15.0.7, and other changes. Here's what's new!

## **[BunsenLabs Carbon Is Here with Support for Wayland Sessions, Based on Debian 13](#)**

[3 Comments](#)

BunsenLabs Carbon Linux distribution is now available for download with support for Wayland session, based on Debian GNU/Linux 13 "Trixie". Here's what's new!

## **[Shotcut 26.2 Open-Source Video Editor Released with Various Improvements](#)**

[0 Comments](#)

Shotcut 26.2 open-source video editor is now available for download with various improvements and bug fixes. Here's what's new!

**SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS SIG's**

Special Interest Groups are for members only.

SIG's are really free monthly seminars with question and answer sessions following the presentation(s)

Members of SIG's enjoy a feeling of community and share common goals and interests.

Most SIG's are informal and members who attend them set the agenda for the meeting based on their own needs.

**Special Interest Groups**

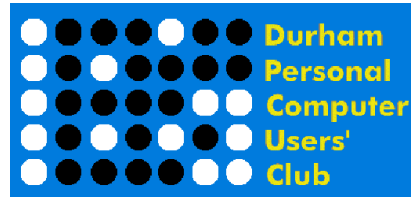
**Durham Linux User Groups**

**Coordinator: Ed Goudge**

**Our Linux group meet on the first Thursday of every month.**

**All meetings are currently held using Zoom.**

**We hope some day to meet again in person.**



**DPCUC  
EXECUTIVE**

**2022-2023**

<b>President</b>	<b>Peter Camilleri</b>	<a href="mailto:peter.c.camilleri@gmail.com">peter.c.camilleri@gmail.com</a>	289-928-1579
<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>Anne Delong</b>	<a href="mailto:annedelong@timetraces.com">annedelong@timetraces.com</a>	905-623-6975
<b>Secretary/Treasurer</b>	<b>Mark Hunter</b>	<a href="mailto:mark.s.hunter6605@gmail.com">mark.s.hunter6605@gmail.com</a>	905-924-2196
<b>Membership/Publicity</b>	<b>David Odynski</b>	<a href="mailto:odynskid@sympatico.ca">odynskid@sympatico.ca</a>	905-576-6325
<b>Librarian</b>	<b>Dan Delong</b>	<a href="mailto:dandelong@timetraces.com">dandelong@timetraces.com</a>	905-623-6975
<b>Program Director</b>	<b>TBA</b>		
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	<b>Alex Morrison</b>	<a href="mailto:dpcuc@rogers.com">dpcuc@rogers.com</a>	905-579=1560
<b>Director at Large</b>	<b>David Swain</b>	<a href="mailto:david@swainracing.com">david@swainracing.com</a>	



HOME PAGE --- <http://www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/>

**Newsletter  
Information**

PC Monitor is the official publication of the Durham Personal Computer Users' Club and is published monthly at Oshawa, Ontario.

The DPCUC mailing address is [dpcuc@live.com](mailto:dpcuc@live.com)

The PC Monitor cannot be responsible for errors or inaccuracies in the content, although efforts will be made to publish information accurately.