

## The monthly BSD column

# Free World

## Absolute BSD



Michael W. Lucas has written the Absolute BSD book. Aimed at answering all the SysAdmins questions from installation to performance tuning it goes into depth on the management of any BSD-based servers. A tight focus on network management and troubleshooting gives needed depth to the available BSD documentation. Absolute BSD goes beyond explaining what to type to make things work. Instead it takes the reader into why and how things work, and takes BSD system administrators that next much needed step forward.

And as no technical book is ever perfect there is a website set up in case any errata are required. For more details see [www.AbsoluteBSD.com](http://www.AbsoluteBSD.com).

## Virtually there



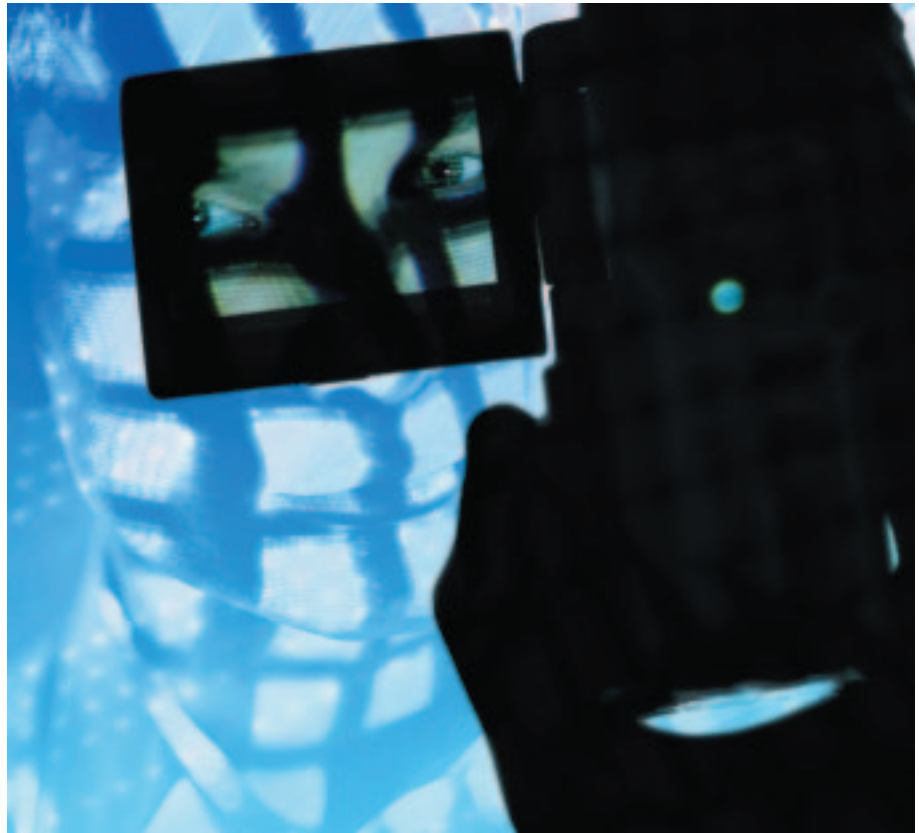
Running OpenBSD on a VirtualPC is taking some steps closer to becoming a reality. Peter Bartoli is continuing to work on maintaining the OpenBSD components for installation. Due to the restricted memory available, a slimline kernel which Peter has produced is occasionally needed along with some modified drivers that make use of all the virtual hardware. The system will now install on VirtualPC which opens up the possibilities for its use. This could range from sandbox testing of security modules to the joy of just having multiple copies running. For more information see [slagheap.net/openbsd](http://slagheap.net/openbsd).

## More graphical fun

The G.O.B.I.E project is aimed at adding a graphical installation to the OpenBSD OS. This project has been developed in the spirit of OpenBSD which means that the installation is as close as possible to the text one. The G.O.B.I.E team wishes to add some value to the product by the development of installation modules to known servers such as Bind, Sendmail, Inn, Apache, etc.

Welcome to our monthly Free World column where we explore what is happening in the world of Free software beyond the GNU/Linux horizons.

This month we will look into security and releases. **BY JANET ROEBUCK**



The team is composed of 6 students from the French computer school. The G.O.B.I.E. project is developed using C and GTK. It uses the XFree86 Server version 4.2.0. They are re-coding most of the tools, such as xinit, and fdisk. The

XServer is loaded into a RamDisk and it then uses a generic configuration file offering a screen resolution of 800x600 at 8bits. The first release will be available for downloading at [www.gobie.net](http://www.gobie.net).



Figure 1: Adding users to OpenBSD with GOBIE

## NetBSD support for new Opteron processor



Wasabi Systems, the leading provider of the NetBSD operating system, announced NetBSD support for AMD's upcoming eighth-generation AMD Opteron and AMD Athlon Processors, culminating in a development process that began with Wasabi's port to a simulator of AMD's new x86-64 architecture one year ago. NetBSD is a powerful open source operating system derived

from BSD Unix. NetBSD is used in place of many high performance Unix applications on the x86 platform. With the x86-64 architecture, customers will soon have an even higher performance 64-bit migration path at an attractive price. NetBSD for x86-64 runs both 32- and 64-bit binaries. Wasabi plans to release the software, including support for SMP, binary compatibility with both Linux and Solaris/x86, and enhanced datacenter functionality in time for the commercial release of x86-64 hardware from AMD.

With systems based on future 64-bit AMD Opteron processors, Unix customers will be able to benefit from enhanced 32-bit application performance of their existing NetBSD applications, with the option of deploying applications based on x86-64 architecture when available.

## Hiding the problem

On BugTraq it was announced that Symantec have acquired SecurityFocus. While this is good news for SecurityFocus it does raise some interesting questions about security issues.

Symantec aim to keep both the BugTraq and the SecurityFocus mailing lists open. In their own FAQ they say "We observe a 30-day grace period after the notification of a security advisory to give users an opportunity to apply the patch. During this grace period, we provide our customers significant information about the vulnerability and the fix, but not step-by-step instructions for exploiting the vulnerability. We do not provide detailed exploit code or provide samples of malicious code except to other trusted security researchers and in a secured manner."

This means that you cannot test your systems using exploit code pulled off from the SecurityFocus site, unless you are a member of their 'trusted security partners'. In effect they have closed down the vulnerabilities from the community. Both VulnWatch [www.vulnwatch.org](http://www.vulnwatch.org) and PacketStorm [packetstorm.decepticons.org](http://packetstorm.decepticons.org) still remain giving full disclosure.

## Twice the power



Chuck Silvers has reported success at implementing dual processor usage on the NetBSD Mac-PPC port. The work was carried out and completed on a dual G4 processor Apple.

## NetBSD release

The NetBSD Project has announced on *OSNews.com* that the Release 1.5.3 of the NetBSD operating system is available. The future 1.6 release is also currently in Beta development. The NetBSD 1.5.3 is a maintenance release for users of NetBSD 1.5.2, 1.5.1, 1.5 and earlier releases, which gives security and performance updates relative to 1.5.2. Some new device drivers have also been added.

## Package Information

At the beginning of August the number of packages in the NetBSD Package Collection stood at a high of 3076. FreeBSD ports for the same period reached 7365. The collection is found at [www.netbsd.org/Documentation/software/packages.html#searching\\_pkgsrsrc](http://www.netbsd.org/Documentation/software/packages.html#searching_pkgsrsrc).

The most recently added packages are: Asnap (screen capture), ssh2 (secure shell), geoslab (TrueType fonts from Bitstream), Xvattr (modify XV attributes), Pscan (security scanner), psi (Jabber client), neon (http and webDAV client library), matchbox (window manager for small displays) and acread (viewing pdf docs v5.06).

The most recent updated packages are: Vice (C64 emulator), gdb (debugger), gmplayer (MPEG 1/2/4 video decoder), uvscan (DOS virus scanner), squidGuard (filter for squid), pth (portable thread library), zebra (routing daemon), nmap (scanner), apache6 (web server) and isect (middleware).

The three packages Uvscan-dat, buildlink-x11 and pth-syscall have all been retired.

## New scheduler

Luigi Rizzo has released the first version on the new Proportional Share scheduler at [info.iet.unipi.it/~luigi/ps\\_sched.20020719a.diff](http://info.iet.unipi.it/~luigi/ps_sched.20020719a.diff). He has now tested on a diskless system running full X and applications with no harmful side effects. The only 3 files modified are kern2\_synch.c, kern2

\_switch.c and proc.h, plus a one-line change to kern\_exit.c. The sysctl variable kern.scheduler controls the scheduler in use. You can switch between the two schedulers by changing the value of the sysctl variable. The "old" scheduler (Feedback Priority) should be as robust and stable as always, there are still a few things to cleanup in the Proportional Share scheduler, such as the case for SMP support in the kernel.

## No Logo

The FreeBSD Foundation logo contest has ended. It received a total of 106 entries. Unfortunately, there was no entry that the foundation thought spoke to them as the logo to use. As a result the FreeBSD Foundation will remain logoless.

## Telling the truth

The OpenBSD site has updated their tagline. On [www.openbsd.org](http://www.openbsd.org), it now states "One remote hole in the default install in nearly 6 years!". This update was after the openSSH hole was found. This is still a very impressive record with the full list of patches and errata being found at [www.openbsd.org/errata.html](http://www.openbsd.org/errata.html).

## eZine news

DaemonNews have released their August eZine for BSD users. The free eZine can be found at [ezine.daemonnews.org/200208](http://ezine.daemonnews.org/200208). It includes the regular columns with the Answerman and a review of the VicFUG 2002 in Australia. The HOWTO article is about backing up FreeBSD with SMBFS commands to transport the data to network shares. ■



Figure 2: The latest eZine from Daemon News