

Meeting the Swedish Chef

Linux Bork Hike

Around 80 people from all over the world met in the tiny village of Schin op Geul in the Netherlands from 16th to 22nd of August to hack, experience local culture, and go on hikes. **BY HEIKE JURZIK**

The sixth annual “LinuxBierWanderung” (LBW)[1] took place in the south east corner of the Netherlands, close to Belgium and Germany. The hike attracted geeks from many different countries: UK, Germany, the Netherlands, USA, Belgium, Ireland, Slovakia, Russia, Canada, Sweden (including the Swedish chef!) and Austria.

LBWs are always a nice opportunity to meet Linux and Free Software enthusiasts from far away. The combination of talks and hacking sessions, pub meetings, and hikes makes this event so special. This year’s LBW took place in a classic 17th century timber barn that has been converted into a community hall with two bars, sleeping facilities, and a large industrial kitchen, which came in very handy when a load of geeks were set loose preparing food for the international potluck later in the week.

Real Life

We enjoyed several hikes during the week, including a ride on an old steam train and a trip to the “Three Countries Point” at Vaals [2], where the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium meet. One



Figure 1: About 30 geeks traveled to visit the radio telescope in Effelsberg.

of the highlights was the excursion to the Max Planck Institute’s 100-meter radio telescope in Effelsberg [3], Germany. The institute provided an interesting lecture on the astounding telescope, which is one of the world’s largest fully steerable instruments.

The international potluck, which was held for the second time, was a huge success. The idea of the potluck is that people bring food or drinks that are typical of their home countries. Following the instructions on the mailing list (“For the British – tea bags are a no-no!”), we had pierogies, black pudding, calf’s brain, Christmas mead, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, Belgian chocolate, German Reibekuchen, American stuffed pizza, spam sandwiches, and of course, fried food from the local snack bar.

Musical Life

As people tasted the various dishes, background music was provided by a folk session. In keeping with the international food, we had an interesting mix of Irish, Slovakian, and Russian folk. Musical experiments continued all week with the production of our own adaption of Baz Luhrmann’s song “Sunscreen,” extolling the virtues of firewalls. We used Audacity to record and mix various tracks consisting of percussion on empty bottles and tea cups, choral and violin backing tracks, and spoken lyrics.

Geek Life

There were talks throughout the week



Figure 2: The international potluck was a huge success.

on a variety of subjects, such as “Jobs for Techies,” “Practical Cryptography,” “How to design a satellite for 100 EUR,” and “Domain Name Server Comparison.” Geeks being geeks – the fact that there were lots of other things to do didn’t stop us being on IRC all the time, to the extent that when the “Wardriving with Kismet & GPSdrive” talk was announced, it seemed perfectly natural for someone to ask, “Do we really have to listen or can you do your talk on IRC?” Somebody actually transcribed the talk to IRC for those LBWers who were not present this year.

Virtual Life

Constant IRCing seems to be bad for your sanity. During one of the nightly sessions somebody started imitating the Swedish Chef and everybody joined in the borking. Under the influence of quite a few borks that night, the website slashbork.org [4] was set up. Luckily this effect is short-lived and nobody suffered any lasting side effects or went borking mad. I really enjoyed this year’s LinuxBorkHike and will be happy to bork geeks again next year! ■

INFO

- [1] LBW Info:
<http://www.lbwand.org/>
- [2] 3-country-point and Moresnet:
http://home.hccnet.nl/c.damen/engels/index_en.htm
- [3] Radio Telescope in Effelsberg:
http://www.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de/div/effelsberg/index_e.html
- [4] slashbork.org:
<http://www.slashbork.org/>