



MUUGlines

The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

Next Meeting: February 10th - Squid

Kevin McGregor will provide an introduction to setting up web caching using the Squid (www.squid-cache.org) web proxy software. This will include installation, configuration, monitoring and if there's time, a demonstration.

Where to find the Meeting

Meetings are held at the IBM offices at 400 Ellice Ave. (between Edmonton and Kennedy). When you arrive, you will have to sign in at the reception desk, and then wait for someone to take you up (in groups) to the meeting room. Please try to arrive by about 7:15pm, so the meeting can start promptly at 7:30pm. Don't be late or you may not get in.

Limited parking is available for free on the street, or in a lot across Ellice from IBM, for \$1.00 for the evening. Indoor parking is also available nearby, at Portage Place, for \$2.00 for the evening.

Update Your Fedora Linux Core Installation

By Gilbert Detillieux

By now, most of you have probably heard of The Fedora Project, and the public release in early November 2003 of Fedora Linux Core 1. Some of you may have already downloaded it, either from the Fedora site, or a convenient mirror site, such as MUUG's FTP server, or may have gotten a copy on CD-ROM.

Some of you have perhaps even been organised enough to have read the release notes, available on

the CD-ROM or online, before attempting the install. (If you haven't, you might want to read them now, since they might help explain some of the strange issues you've encountered during the installation or afterwards.)

But, are you keeping your Fedora installation up to date? Since its release, there have been dozens of updates issued. Many of these are fixes for security vulnerabilities, so if your Fedora system is accessible via the Internet, it's important to install these update packages promptly.

Updates are announced on the `fedora-announce-list` mailing list, so you should start by subscribing to that list, and reading the message archive, so you'll know when updates are available, and what they fix. You should then be sure to install those updates as soon as possible. Fortunately, that's now a much simpler task than it used to be.

Up2date and RHN-Applet

In the early days of Red Hat Linux, updates had to be installed manually. Then Red Hat introduced `up2date` and the RHN Panel Applet, which would notify you of available updates, and make it easy to install them, including finding and installing any other packages needed to satisfy dependencies. Unfortunately, you had to register to use RHN, the Red Hat Network, and there was a fee associated with that after an initial free trial period.

With Fedora, you still can take advantage of these tools, but without having to register to use RHN. The tools have been enhanced to also support a new update service, called YUM (Yellowdog Updater, Modified), which can get all the update information

and packages via HTTP or FTP, from any Fedora mirror site.

This last point is important, since the RHN servers can often get bogged down, resulting in slow connections or no response at all. By making a simple change to the `/etc/sysconfig/rhn/sources` file, you can instead point to your favourite mirror site, such as MUUG's Fedora mirror.

Patch to `/etc/sysconfig/rhn/sources` file:

```
--- /etc/sysconfig/rhn/sources.FC1    2003-10-30
10:07:10.000000000 -0600
+++ /etc/sysconfig/rhn/sources 2004-01-14
11:44:01.000000000 -0600
@@ -27,8 +27,8 @@
### format:
### type channel-label url

-yum fedora-core-1
http://fedora.redhat.com/releases/fedora-core-1
-yum updates-released
http://fedora.redhat.com/updates/released/fedora-
core-1
+yum fedora-core-1
http://www.muug.mb.ca/mirror/redhat/fedora/linux/co
re/1/i386/os/
+yum updates-released
http://www.muug.mb.ca/mirror/redhat/fedora/linux/co
re/updates/1/i386/
#yum updates-testing
http://fedora.redhat.com/updates/testing/fedora-core-1
```

an local directory full of packages

Note that the patch uses HTTP to connect to MUUG's Fedora mirror, rather than FTP. FTP might work for you, but the yum support code only uses active mode, which may not work if you're behind a firewall or NAT router. Passive-mode FTP transfers would be a better option, but there's currently no way to configure that.

Automatic Updates via YUM

Using `up2date` and the RHN Panel Applet certainly makes the update process much easier than in the past, but you still have to take action manually to get the updates installed. That's OK for a desktop system you use regularly, but not for a server system you want to run with as little manual intervention as possible.

Fortunately, there's also a `yum` command, which you can not only run manually, but automatically via a cron script (by enabling the yum service). This command uses its own configuration file, `/etc/yum.conf`, which can also be simply changed to point to another mirror site.

Patch to `/etc/yum.conf` file:

```
--- /etc/yum.conf.FC1    2003-10-29
08:54:19.000000000 -0600
+++ /etc/yum.conf    2004-01-14
11:47:40.000000000 -0600
@@ -9,11 +9,11 @@

[base]
name=Fedora Core $releasever - $basearch - Base
-baseurl=http://fedora.redhat.com/releases/fedora-
core-$releasever
+baseurl=http://www.muug.mb.ca/mirror/redhat/fedo
ra/linux/core/$releasever/$basearch/os/

[updates-released]
name=Fedora Core $releasever - $basearch -
Released Updates
-
baseurl=http://fedora.redhat.com/updates/released/fed
ora-core-$releasever
+baseurl=http://www.muug.mb.ca/mirror/redhat/fedo
ra/linux/core/updates/$releasever/$basearch/

#[updates-testing]
#name=Fedora Core $releasever - $basearch -
Unreleased Updates
```

To enable automatic updates via yum, you'll need to run the following commands:

```
chkconfig yum on
service yum start
```

After that, yum will run nightly via a cron script. Update packages should be automatically downloaded and installed. With certain updates, such as kernels, you'll want to reboot afterwards, for the updated code to take effect. Also, new kernels are installed with the equivalent of "rpm -i", rather than "rpm -F" or "rpm -U", so the old kernel packages will remain. You can safely remove those after you've rebooted the new kernel, and are sure everything works fine.

To save disk space, you might also want to periodically run the "yum clean" command, to purge old header information and downloaded RPM packages from the cache.

Out of Sight, Not Out of Mind

Once you've set this up, you may think that you no longer have to think about updates, since they're automatically installed. However, it's important to still keep on top of things yourself, in case there is a problem. By all means, continue to review update announcements, and make sure you understand the implications of installing the updated package. Also, it might be a good idea to test things out after packages are updated, to make sure the affected programs still work as they should.

If packages are being updated that you didn't even realise were installed, or that you decide you don't need, it might be a good idea to remove them, or at least make sure than any network service they provide is disabled. For services you do want, you might want to configure them, or your firewall rules, to make sure they're only available locally, unless you're sure it's a service you want to offer to the world.

Remember the old adage that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." By taking a bit of time now

to keep your system up to date, you can save yourself a lot of headaches down the road.

(This article can be found online here:
<http://www.muug.mb.ca/fedora-updates.html>)

MyDoom vs. SCO

The recent MyDoom email virus targeted www.sco.com with a DDOS attack on Feb. 2. Many people in the security field wondered what SCO would do since they had advance warning about the attack. SCO's actions surprised some people.

On Jan. 31 SCO moved their servers from Linux to OpenBSD and updated their DNS records to expire after 60 seconds to let them act quickly once things started happening.

The attacks started about 12 hrs earlier than expected (I guess some people aren't running NTP) and quickly took www.sco.com down. By early evening on the 2nd, SCO did the right thing and removed www.sco.com from their DNS records effectively ending the attack. Shortly after www2.sco.com was up and running fine.

Netcraft has some interesting articles on the incident at www.netcraft.com and I am sure many more will be written.

Winnipeg Wifi

www.wpgwifi.com as gone live with some maps of wireless access points in Winnipeg. While they are not listing actual access point information, you can probably guess if they have found yours by looking at the map. Time to start locking down your WiFi. For some good pointers on wireless security, check out the Michigan Wireless FAQ (<http://makeashorterlink.com/?V2F364547>).

Psst. Wanna buy a G5?

After lots of rumors, Virginia Tech has confirmed that they are moving System X, the third fastest super computer in the world, running 1100 Dual 2.0Ghz PowerMac G5's from Apple, to Dual Processor Xserve G5's, Apples 1U rack mounted servers. This will save on space and power consumption. It will be interesting if they decide to add more machines while they are at it.

Expect a flood of refurbished Dual G5's from Apple in the near future.

SGI to help Linux Graphics

SGI announced that they are going to help "deliver unprecedented scalable visualization technology to the Linux operating environment". They initially plan on helping both the Chromium and DMX projects. They have also released the Silicon Graphics Visualization System for Linux which includes Silicon Graphics technologies such as OpenGL Multipipe™, OpenGL Multipipe™ SDK, OpenGL Volumizer™ and OpenGL Performer™. They also have a website set up with lots of information for developers (<http://www.sgi.com/developers/technology/linux/graphics/>)

MUUG Shirts

We have spare MUUG Golf Shirts if people are interested, we have various sizes available for \$40 at the regular MUUG meetings.

VMWare Offer

We are still accepting names for the following VMWare offer.

"If you send us a list of your members' names and email addresses (with their permission!), when they support our Linux development efforts by purchasing

a copy of VMware Workstation, we will send them a \$100 rebate. The program for Linux group members will begin on December 22, 2003.

In the next 6 weeks, we'll also be providing all registrants with a referral code. This code will both provide your colleagues with a 5% discount off of VMware Workstation and provide you with 15 VMware Points when they purchase it on our web site. Approximately every 6 weeks, we'll send you a statement of your points earned, at which point you can redeem them for various product and merchandise."

If you are interested in this promotion and want us to submit your name and email to VMWare, please send us an email to vmware@muug.mb.ca

Sending Us E-Mail?

Due to the amount of e-mail MUUG receives, we've set up an auto-reply to give you immediate feedback, and redirect some of the e-mail to the appropriate places. Why not look at <http://www.muug.mb.ca/about.html#contacts> first?

Share Your Thoughts

E-mail us with your comments on the newsletter, whether it's criticisms or commendations, and continue to send in articles or ideas for the same. Specifically, what sort of material you would rather see: Announcements, technical articles, new products, or...?

If you have a How-To or other idea, and aren't ready to give a presentation at MUUG, an article is a great alternative! If you can write better than the editor, that's terrific; if you can't, submit it anyway and we'll get it into shape for publication. We know that many of you have some great ideas and lots of knowledge. Why not share?

Send Mail to: editor@muug.mb.ca