

Gnome News and Programs

GNOMOGRAM

BJÖRN GANSLANDT

Each month we sift through Gnome news and tools and present you with a digest of all things Gnome.

A Gnome in the Sun

Sun is now offering, Gnome 1.4 packages for its own operating system Solaris. At present Sun is still presenting the packages as a preview, but eventually Gnome will supersede the antiquated CDE. As a member of the Gnome Advisory Board, however, the activities of Sun are not limited to porting onto Solaris. Sun is also heavily involved in making Gnome accessible to disabled people, and is collaborating on compilation, documentation, session management and Gconf. Not least, the office package Open Office (formerly StarOffice)

from Sun is being adapted to Gnome. Another project involving Sun is the verification of the Gnome 2.0 architecture according to Sun's own criteria. To this end, the 20 Questions questionnaire will be applied to the individual components of the system in order to improve stability and quality.

Gnome 2.0 Schedule

The first schedule for Gnome 2.0 can be found at gnome.org, which should be completed in December. But there is some doubt as to whether the target date can be met. It doesn't exactly inspire confidence when the developers argue among themselves over Gnome 2 – although it certainly wouldn't be the first time a Gnome release was delayed.

Ximian and Swarmcast

Miguel de Icaza, co-founder of Ximian, has announced that he would be interested in integrating Swarmcast into the Red Carpet package manager. Swarmcast is a system from Opencola,

Lightspeed

Even if it's not possible to accelerate objects of more than elementary particle size to the speed of light, we can still simulate the optical effects that would arise if it were. Lightspeed (Figure 1) is capable of importing 3D objects from Lightwave or 3D-Studio and bringing these to various virtual speeds. This sometimes gives rise to effects similar to those with sound – the Doppler effect for example. The object also shortens along its axis of motion and becomes very blurred. This blurring is due to the fact that more distant points are perceived as if they were nearer. These and other effects can be activated individually, and the virtual camera can be turned and moved at will in space. Since the real-time display is incorrect, especially when it comes to the Doppler effect, Lightspeed also allows the export of scenes for the raytracer Backlight, which works with greater precision. To display objects Lightwave needs OpenGL or Mesa and GTKGlarea, which allows it to embed OpenGL as a GTK Widget.

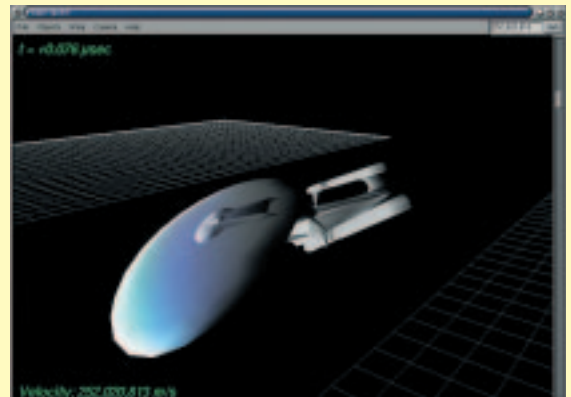
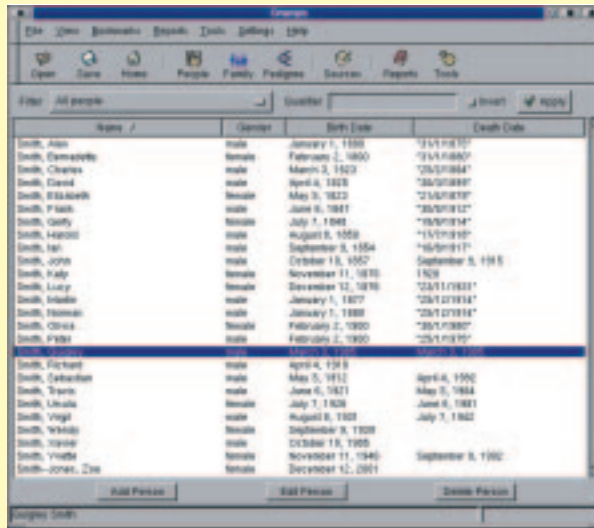


Figure 1: The Enterprise – not yet up to warp one

Gramps

As soon as it encompasses more than a couple of generations, genealogy becomes very complicated, both in terms of research and in processing the data. But processing can be simplified considerably by programs such as Gramps. Gramps creates a gzipped XML database, in which individuals and their family relationships are recorded. Information such family photos and genealogical sources can also be managed. Inside this database it is possible to search and to classify according to specified criteria – such as the Soundex codes formerly applied by the US government. But what makes the program really interesting are the numerous reports which can be generated from the database.



Name	Gender	Birth Date	Death Date
Smith, Alan	male	January 1, 1888	"21/11/1917"
Smith, Elizabeth	female	February 2, 1890	"21/11/1967"
Smith, Charles	male	March 3, 1822	"28/12/1881"
Smith, Edward	male	April 4, 1825	"28/12/1881"
Smith, Elizabeth	female	May 5, 1822	"21/12/1871"
Smith, Frank	male	June 6, 1881	"28/12/1912"
Smith, Gail	female	July 7, 1888	"28/12/1914"
Smith, Harold	male	August 8, 1888	"15/12/1915"
Smith, Ian	male	September 9, 1854	"18/09/1911"
Smith, John	male	October 10, 1852	September 9, 1915
Smith, Judy	female	November 11, 1878	1928
Smith, Lucy	female	December 12, 1878	"22/11/1933"
Smith, Madeline	female	January 1, 1877	"28/12/1914"
Smith, Malcolm	male	January 7, 1888	"22/12/1914"
Smith, Olivia	female	February 2, 1890	"28/12/1967"
Smith, Peter	male	February 2, 1890	"28/12/1917"
Smith, Robert	male	March 3, 1890	March 3, 1960
Smith, Richard	male	April 4, 1918	April 4, 1992
Smith, Sebastian	male	May 5, 1812	May 5, 1884
Smith, Tracy	female	June 6, 1821	June 6, 1881
Smith, Ursula	female	July 7, 1828	July 7, 1881
Smith, Virginia	female	August 8, 1828	July 7, 1882
Smith, William	male	September 9, 1828	September 9, 1908
Smith, Xavier	male	October 10, 1905	
Smith, Yvonne	female	November 11, 1840	September 9, 1902
Smith-Jones, Zoe	female	December 12, 2001	

Figure 2: A little genealogy

In addition to a simple family tree and a complex family graph, Gramps can also process the genealogy as a Web page. The appearance of the Web pages here is partly influenced by templates. Under *Tools* there are numerous tools for working out the type of relationship between two people. It is also possible to verify the integrity of the database, though Gramps gives no information of any kind as to where specific errors have occurred. Gramps offers those who would be older than the selected parents when selecting possible children. This slows the work considerably, especially in the case of large databases. Since Gramps also interprets the common GEDCOM format, it's a good program for medium-sized databases (Figure 2).

which is famous for its free cola recipe. Swarmcast is not going to be used to supply drinks, but large files. In a way similar to the peer-to-peer system Mojonation, this large file will be split up into lots of small pieces, which will then be downloaded. Everyone who owns a piece becomes part of a mesh and can obtain the missing parts from the other participants. This takes a considerable load off the main distributor, since he does not have to send the whole file to every individual. As soon as the file has been completely put together, the participant can leave the mesh.

Smoothed Text in Gtk+ 1.2

The fact that anti-aliasing is possible under Gtk+ 1.2 was demonstrated recently with the patch at *chez.com*. But however beautiful the associated screenshots may be, the patch is not compatible with the internationalisation in Gtk+ 1.2. For this reason all Gnome users will have to keep straining their eyes until the release of Gnome 2.0 with hard edges. Gnome 2.0 will then be based on Gtk+ 2.0, which contains anti-aliasing and a greatly improved internationalisation by means of Pango.

Gnome support

To make it easier for new programmers to get into Gnome, the Gnome-Love Mailing List has been set

up, in which many relatively simple tasks, as well as support, are offered. The Gnome To-Do-System has also been revived, which should fill up rapidly – especially with respect to Gnome 2.0. Another way of becoming familiar with the architecture of Gnome is the correction of a few bugs: Apart from Bugzilla, a Bugsquad mailing list has been set up to this end. ■

URLs

Sun's Gnome site	www.sun.com/gnome/
Twenty Questions	developer.gnome.org/dotplan/archreview/20questions.html
Gnome 2.0	mail.gnome.org/archives/gnome-hackers/2001-May/msg00221.html
Swarmcast proposal	slashdot.org/articles/01/05/23/2136226.shtml
Swarmcast site	www.swarmcast.com
MoJo Nation	www.mojonation.net
Antialiasing patch	www.chez.com/alex9858/gtkaa/
Gnome Love mailing list	mail.gnome.org/mailman/listinfo/gnome-love
Gnome To Do list	gnome.org/todo/
Gnome Bug list	bugzilla.gnome.org
Gnome Bugsquad list	mail.gnome.org/mailman/listinfo/gnome-bugsquad
Genealogy	gramps.sourceforge.net
LightSpeed	fox.mit.edu/skunk/soft/lightspeed/
BackLight	www.anu.edu.au/Physics/Searle/Downloads.html
Mesa	www.mesa3d.org/
Gtk GL Area	www.student.oulu.fi/~jlof/gtkglarea/