

# this month

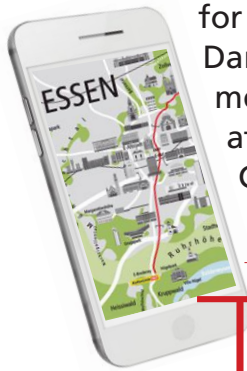
## In FreeBSD

BY DRU LAVIGNE



### The Essen Hackathon

This month, we speak with **Benedict Reuschling**, who recently participated in the second Hackathon in Essen and who also spoke at the Open Source Datacenter Conference in Berlin. In addition to teaching a UNIX for software developers class at the University of Applied Sciences, Darmstadt, Germany, Benedict stays busy as a FreeBSD documentation mentor, a member of the FreeBSD German translation team, a Director at the FreeBSD Foundation, and a proctor for the BSD Certification Group. He provides some interesting insights about the importance of face-to-face hackathons and for participation in non-BSD conferences.



The second FreeBSD hackathon was held April 22–24 at the Linuxhotel in Essen, Germany. We had people from Canada, Sweden, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, with some recurring participants.

I picked up Allan Jude from Frankfurt Airport and together we took the train to Essen. At the train station, we were picked up by someone who took part in the BSDA certification exam later that afternoon and we drove to the Linuxhotel. We dropped off our luggage and while I proctored the BSDA exam, Allan started hacking on his implementation of the Skein checksum algorithm (<https://reviews.csiden.org/r/223/>) for FreeBSD's ZFS that he wanted to make available. Lars Engels, the main organizer, arrived soon after and managed a couple of things with the Linuxhotel staff. After the BSDA exam was over, Lars and I went to buy some stuff for the barbecue later that evening. We were joined by Christian Brueffer and on the way there, we had a good exchange about what's new since the

last time we saw each other.

After we got back and the afternoon progressed, more people arrived who had not attended before. We showed them around and started preparing the barbecue. Some other participants were stuck in traffic and joined us a while later when the barbecue was already going on, but everyone did get something in the end. This was a good chance to get to know each other, and people were soon talking about the latest developments in FreeBSD, as often happens when the right people come together. When it was getting dark, we all met in the room assigned to us by the Linuxhotel staff for beers and drinks to talk some more. Around midnight, tired from their travels, most people went to sleep.

On Saturday, which was the main hacking day, we met for breakfast (there was another group there from the Serendipity project) and then met in the hacking room to do some work. The room had everything we needed: cables, WiFi, chairs, tables, a projector, as well as a coffee machine and

fridge with various drinks. Lars and I welcomed everyone a second time, talked about some organizational things, and mentioned our sponsors. The owner of netzkommune.de (who also sponsors BSDCan and will go there for the first time this year) sponsored everyone's accommodation and joined us in the afternoon. As representative of the FreeBSD Foundation, I said a few words about our efforts in Europe and we then distributed the swag. The backpacks and bags were received with applause by the surprised participants.

After that, we had a short impromptu presentation about how the shell works and processes inputs by Jilles Tjoelker. We then continued to talk about some of the things we had as agenda points. After that, people hacked on their own little projects they had brought with them or formed small groups to work together. Commits were marked with a "Sponsored by: Essen Hackathon 2016" (<http://freshbsd.org/search?q=+hackathon+2016+%21openbsd+%21bitrig+%21pkgsrsrc+%21netbsd+%21edgabsd+%21pfsense+%21pcbsd+%21hardenedbsd>).

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## Open Source Datacenter Conference

The Open Source Datacenter Conference (OSDC, <https://www.netways.de/osdc/>) took place April 26–28 in Berlin, Germany.

Overall, OSDC is a very well organized conference. We were a bit stunned by the entry price for regular participants of 899 Euro. This includes the hotel stay, but is still pricey if you are an open source person not associated with a company and want to inform yourself on things like DevOps, Jenkins, Puppet, Cloud Infrastructure Management, and everything else you might need in a Datacenter context. It is clearly intended for open source users in companies that can afford to send their employees there. The talks are recorded and the slides are available from previous years. It is not a marketing event, besides the "we're hiring" and booth area from a few of the sponsors.

Allan Jude and I gave a presentation on ZFS and it was the only one focusing on storage and FreeBSD. Our talk was well attended. We asked at the beginning how many people in the audience knew about ZFS, and a couple of hands went up. The talk went well, and we had a couple of good discussions afterwards. It is clear that the whole GPL/CDDL licensing issue and Ubuntu's course of action create some FUD

in the Linux world and results in a "wait and see" attitude, while we advertised the availability and stability of ZFS on FreeBSD.

For lunch, we ordered pizza and hacking continued well into the late afternoon. Sometimes we were interrupted by bigger discussions relevant for everyone; sometimes we only communicated via IRC. After our netzkommune.de sponsor arrived and we thanked him for his generosity, we carpoled to that evening's restaurant. The food was great and we shared many stories over dinner and drinks. When we came back, we all gathered in the breakfast room on comfy couches to talk some more, while some others continued hacking.

The next morning, I found out that some people stayed there until 1 a.m., while most people went to bed much sooner than that. After breakfast, we once again gathered in the hacking room to make some more progress before we had to leave in the evening. Doner kebab was ordered for lunch and a couple of hours after that, people started leaving one by one. Overall, people were very happy with the location, equipment, accommodation, food, and drinks, as well as the evening event. They encouraged us to do such an event again next year and said they will come back then for some more hacking.

In the afternoon, we had a good exchange with Colin Charles about MySQL. He was very glad about the state of MySQL on FreeBSD and mentioned the good relationship that the MySQL project has with the FreeBSD committer for these ports.

We spoke with one of the organizers who said that the high entrance fee for non-speakers has been bothering them as they also want more non-commercial attendees and open source enthusiasts. They said that they were glad that we were there to represent a non-Linux operating system. They encouraged us to submit again next year.

Next year's conference is May 16–18, 2017, and I would encourage BSD people to submit talks for it. Not simply to show presence and that there are alternatives available, but also because Berlin is a nice city to visit. Since everything is in English, you should have no problem talking to other attendees and getting around. ●

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