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Hello and welcome to the March/April issue, where we turn our attention to running FreeBSD on desktops and laptops. We have four main articles this issue: John Baldwin talks about how hard it is to get a suspended system to resume, Ken Moore talks about the Desktop Paradigm, and Allan Jude tells us all about what's coming next in OpenZFS. I got roped into writing an article about running FreeBSD on various modern laptops, which is amusing to me, because it was actually laptops that got me into the BSDs, and FreeBSD in particular.

My first encounter with my own BSD, rather than one shared with a lot of people via a 1980s mini-computer, came in 1993, when I was working at the Universiteit Twente on the eastern side of the Netherlands. My boss at the time was a great fan of Plan 9, AT&T's supposed successor to UNIX, and my research group ran this OS not only on our workstations, DECStation 5000s, which were top of the line at the time, but also on our laptops, which were Compaq Contura's with 4 or 8 megabytes of RAM and 120-megabyte disks. Plan 9 on these laptops was not a pleasant experience—for many reasons—but help was on the way.

Sometime after April 1993, NetBSD 0.8 was released, and I and one other member of the team flattened our laptops and installed this new BSD-based operating system. Shortly thereafter, the rest of the research team followed suit, leaving only our boss still running Plan 9 on his laptop.

When I returned to the U.S. in 1994, I still wanted to run BSD on a laptop, and by then, FreeBSD 2 had been released. At the time, FreeBSD was the best BSD to run on Intel hardware, as the focus of FreeBSD then was "rock solid performance" on commodity hardware, which meant Intel's processors. I bought a used Winbook laptop from a friend, installed FreeBSD 2.2.2, and have continued to run FreeBSD on laptops to this day, nearly 25 years since that first NetBSD 0.8 installation. And so, as a longtime veteran of FreeBSD on laptops, I can attest to the fact that it has never been a better time to run FreeBSD on laptops.

George Neville-Neil
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