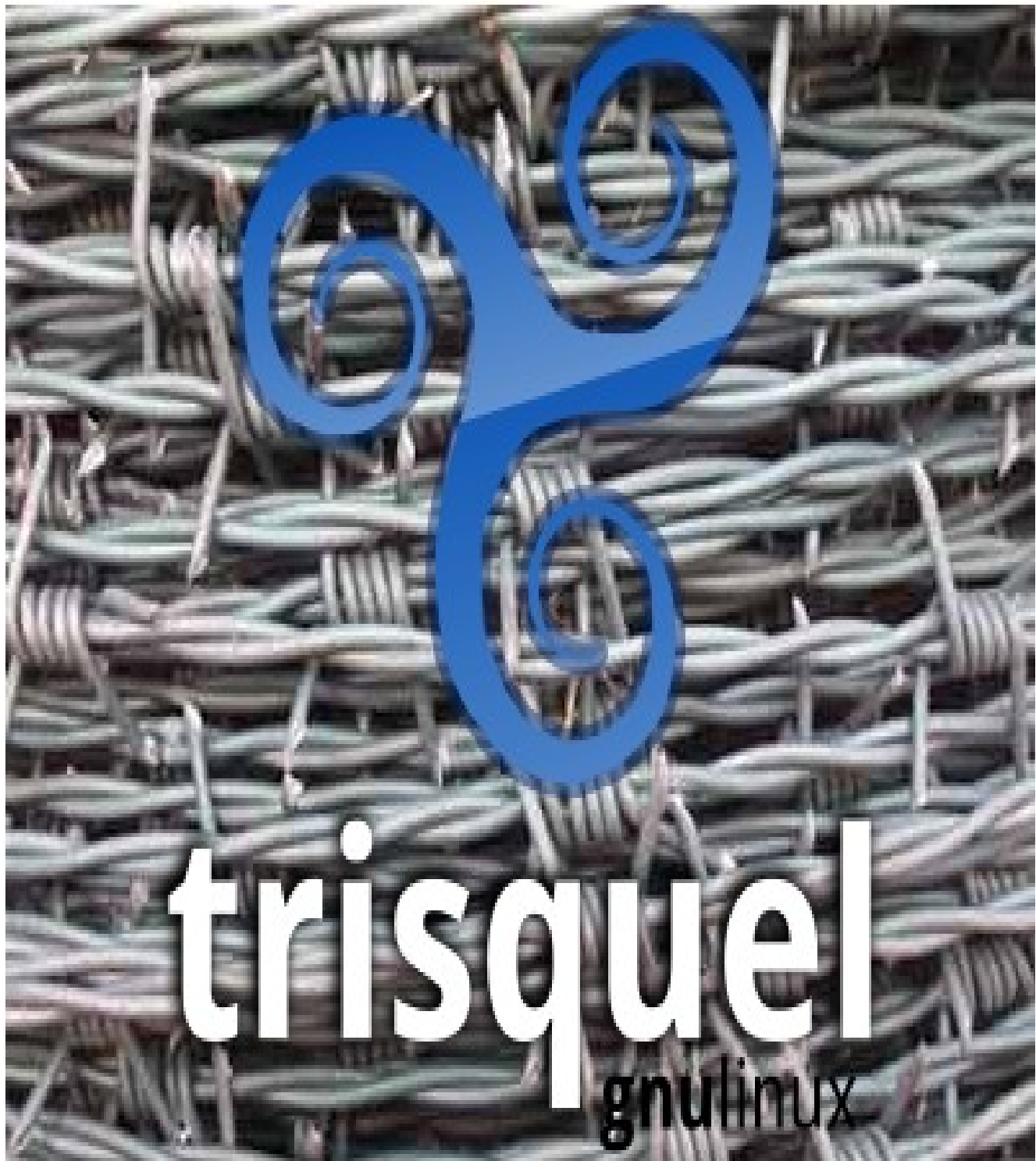


# The \*Nixed Report

Issue 03

Unix and Overlooked Pop Culture

April 2013



## ./

Yet another computer has been acquired. Pictures of this custom built machine are included in this issues ./ column. (P. 3)

## Unix

Distro Journey: Trisquel GNU/Linux (P. 4)

The previous issue covered an OS that was easy to use and took care of the user. How does a distro that's endorsed by the FSF fare? Find out in this issue.



## Overlooked Pop Culture

Documentary Review: Barbed Wire City (P. 8)



Stephen Kelley takes a look at a fan made documentary about Extreme Championship Wrestling. ECW was a well known wrestling company that managed to get the attention of World Championship Wrestling and World Wrestling Entertainment (then known as the World Wrestling Federation).

Extreme Championship Wrestling wasn't just known for brutal matches with blood and gore. It was also known for impressive wrestling matches as well as introducing the audience to luchadores from Mexico as well as stars from Japan. How does this documentary stack up? Read Kelley's review to find out.

## Yet Another Desktop

By Thomas Holbrook II



The family of computers keeps growing. The new addition was acquired from Central Pawn in Warrensburg, Missouri. Upon noticing that the system itself did not have a price, I asked about it. For \$135 USD, I was able to obtain the tower, keyboard, mouse, and LCD monitor.

The reason why I chose to acquire the system is because it's mostly Intel. From the CPU to the motherboard to the graphics, Intel has its name on it. This new system has the following specs:

- Intel D946GZIS Motherboard
- Intel Core 2 6300 CPU at 1.83 GHz
- 1 GB DDR-2 PC-5300 RAM
- 80 GB Hard Drive
- DVD/CD-RW Combo Drive
- Intel GMA 3000 Graphics
- Intel Audio
- Ethernet

I am currently debating upgrading the hard drive and RAM at the moment. Other than that, the system itself is perfect for future OS evaluations. The first step with this system will be Debian Wheezy.

By Thomas Holbrook II

The following systems were used to evaluate this distro:

ZaReason Breeze 3110

- 1.6 GHz Intel Atom CPU
- 1 GB RAM
- 320 GB Hard Drive
- DVD-ROM Drive
- Intel GMA 950 Graphics



Toshiba Satellite L305-S5921

- Dual Core Pentium T3400 (Max Speed: 2.16 GHz)
- 2 GB RAM
- Intel GMA X4500 Graphics (mobile version)
- 120 GB Hard Drive
- DVD burner
- 1280x800 LCD Display
- Multimedia buttons
- Atheros Wireless adapter
- Ethernet controller
- VGA Port
- 3 USB Ports

Acer Aspire One 722

- Dual-Core AMD C60 (Max Speed: 1.33 GHz)
- AMD Radeon HD 6250 Graphics
- 2 GB RAM
- 320 GB Hard Drive
- Ethernet
- Atheros Wireless Adapter
- LCD with 1366x768 resolution and integrated webcam.

## HP Pavilion Elite 410y

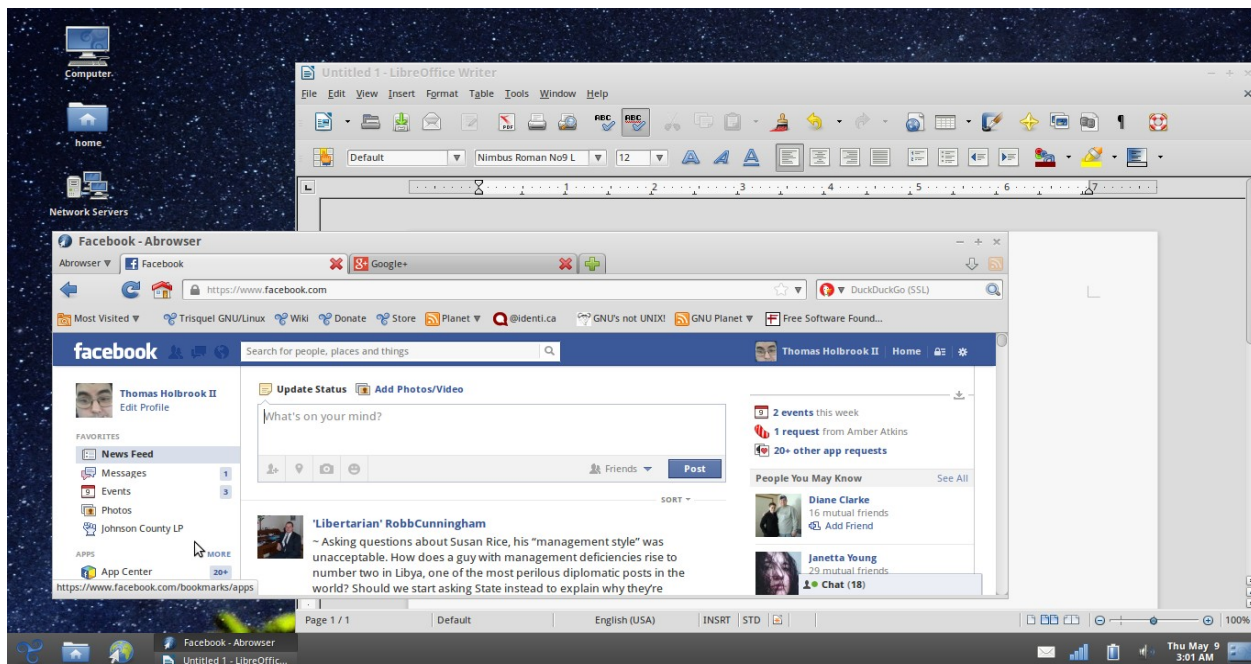
- AMD Phenom II X6 1045T (Max Speed: 3.2 GHz)
- 8 GB RAM
- AMD Radeon HD5570 with 1 GB RAM
- 1 Terabyte Hard Drive
- Ethernet
- Wireless adapter (note used)

The phrase “open source” is well known in various technology circles. The concept itself involves having the source code of any project available for the world to see while emphasizing cooperation with one another via the web. The phrase “free software” came before “open source” and takes things further.

- Freedom to run the program for any purpose
- Freedom to study how the program works and make changes.
- Freedom to make and distribute copies.
- Freedom to distribute copies of modified copies of the program.

Anything that is proprietary will not fall under the above four requirements. Free software is a concept that is based in liberty as opposed to monetary price. For example, one could charge money for copies of a particular piece of software along with coding, manuals, and in some cases, support.

The Free Software Foundation is an organization that promotes software freedom around the world. Various operating systems using the Linux kernel exist today, but few of them have this organization's stamp of approval. In this issue, we'll look at one of the few that are endorsed by the FSF: Trisquel GNU/Linux.



*GNOME 3 Fallback Mode*

Version 6, codenamed Toutatis, is based on Ubuntu 12.04 LTS. The environment uses GNOME 3's Fallback Mode to provide a traditional desktop interface. Some of the applications included are:

- LibreOffice 3.5.7.2.
- Abrowser, an independent Firefox build that has its own plugins repository that follow the FSF's guidelines regarding free software.
- Pidgin for instant messaging.
- Rythmbox for playing music.
- Gwibber for social networking.
- Evolution for e-mail and calender.

What sets this operating system apart is that there are no proprietary drivers being used. For example, on the Acer Aspire One 722 and the HP Elite 410y Desktop, llvmpipe is used for 3D rendering. The kernel versions used do not include the necessary parts to support hardware based 3D rendering. The Toshiba notebook and ZaReason Breeze 3110 do have hardware 3D rendering due to the fact that both utilize Intel Graphics.



Gnash is used instead of Adobe Flash. The good news is that YouTube works most of the time. The bad news is that not very much else that's flash based will function properly. Thankfully, the plugin repository for Abrowser had the appropriate tool for downloading YouTube videos.

Other than the two caveats, everything worked perfectly. Wireless worked flawlessly on the Aspire One 722 and Toshiba notebook respectively. My HP scanner/printer worked perfectly on the 410y desktop. The only other snag that I ran into was Rythmbox. It wouldn't always stream 8bitX very well, so I simply switched to Audacious.

Installing libdvdcss2 for DVD playback required some command line magic as I was not about to add another repository. Enough software options exist to fulfill basic needs. Depending on hardware, there may be issues with drivers, but that situation has been improving over the years.

As soon as HTML5-based audio and video solutions take off, the need for Flash will dramatically decrease. As for the interface options, one can also use KDE and XFCE. Curiously, Mate was absent from the list. When inquired about it on the forums, the response indicated that there were currently no maintainers for it.

As soon as I learn how to be a package maintainer, I shall be doing the maintenance of Mate if they'll have me.

Though drivers may be an issue depending on the hardware, it does well in fulfilling the basic needs of home users while following the guidelines first set forth by Richard Stallman. With the actions of AMD releasing documentation for their graphics cards in addition to the progress made by the Nouveau Project, things are changing for the better.

Those who are wanting an easy solution for following the FSF's ideals may want to give Trisquel a spin. The OS is endorsed and promoted by the FSF, and the community behind it is quite supportive of those wanting to be involved as users and contributors.

### Websites

More information may be obtained via the following websites.

<http://www.trisquel.info> (Distro itself)

<http://www.fsf.org> (Free Software Foundation)

<http://www.gnu.org> (GNU Operating System)

### Next Stop on the Journey

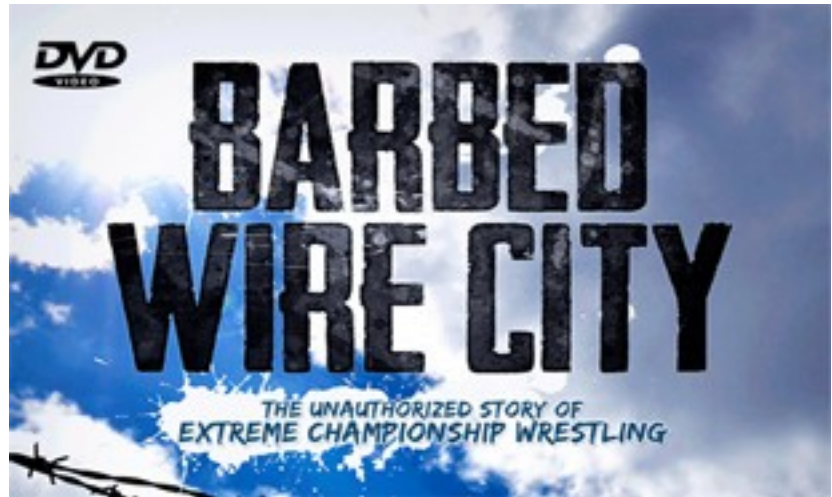
The next stop on the journey is Debian Wheezy (7.0). The new stable release has some updated software, including GNOME 3's GNOME Shell. The newly acquired desktop will be utilized after determining whether or not to upgrade the components. Different desktop environments will be used on each system as well.



By Stephen Kelley

### **Blood-Soaked Memories**

A review of *Barbed Wire City: The Unauthorized Story of Extreme Championship Wrestling* (2013, BWC Films)



Extreme Championship Wrestling (ECW) has been dead for well over a decade. People involved such as Paul Heyman, the cultish former owner, have moved on and seemingly distanced themselves from their one time passion, thus leaving multitudes of fans clamoring for something to whet their appetites. In a post-Benoit world, professional wrestling has sort of lost its way, alienating a lot of its former fans that kept it going in the late nineties. People have tried to replicate the magic of the extreme wrestling movement, but a lot of others have tried to merely capitalize on it. Since 2001, there have been many promotional imitations, direct to DVD lamentations, and even historical revisionism released to the masses. It seems that ECW is the “dead horse” that everyone has their clubs ready to beat the hell out of. When I saw that there was yet another ECW documentary in the works via Kickstarter, I was skeptical. I thought “what else can be said?” Boy was I wrong, *Barbed Wire City: The Unauthorized Story of Extreme Championship Wrestling* is exactly the sort of DVD that any wrestling fan should have on their shelf.

I think my main problem with a lot of posthumously made ECW media, is that people have a tendency to use the whole thing as some sort of political device. WWE’s *Rise and Fall of ECW*, once thought of as the ultimate tribute of the company, reeks of a Vince McMahon victory lap over the failed venture. Another documentary, *Forever Hardcore*, was seen as a “counterpoint to WWE’s slightly revisionist offering, but was plagued by bitterness by those interviewed and suffered from a lack of actual ECW video footage. Possibly the most egregious misuse of ECW comes from a company that I am very fond of. TNA, the current number two wrestling federation in the United States, even did a “re-union show” called *Hardcore Justice*. While it had a solid card, they really had no business doing it as they were founded well after ECW’s demise and had no pony in the proverbial race. The whole thing seemed like a cash-grab.

The reason *Barbed Wire City* is different is that it comes from a different viewpoint; we’ve had the victorious billionaire, we’ve had the wounded former employees, and we’ve even had the copy-cats, now let’s hear from a fan. John Philapavage, the man behind the documentary, was like so many other rabid ECW fans: he lined up in long lines in the snow, huddled in crowded bingo halls, and got to meet



some of his heroes. The thing that really set him apart from other fans is that he had the sense to record interviews of himself talking to the people involved. These interviews are combined with wrestling footage, and the odd Ken Burns-esque still photograph with a nifty 3D effect added in.

*Barbed Wire City* is notable for using actual ECW wrestling footage. The aforementioned problem with a lot of these ECW remembrance things is that Vince McMahon, owner of WWE, owns the rights to the ECW video library – thus making it hard to do any justice when making an ECW film. Luckily, the ONE thing Vince doesn't have access to is a huge selection of what could be essentially labeled "bootleg" footage from live events and other tapings – most notably from a company called RF Video. Using this footage, the documentary gets extra life that would have been wasted had the entire production been guys talking about things without being able to show clips of it.

I have to tip my hat to Mr. Philapavage on the quality of his interviews. Mostly taken around the time that ECW was on its last legs, these interviews are both entertaining and heartbreaking. Considering the decade worth of interviews here, there are some insights that many documentaries simply cannot hope to achieve. Sometimes you would see an interview from 2001 followed by a snippet of one made more recently to compare someone's attitude change. Take, for example, Angel Medina in 2001: as he watched the company crumbling around himself with guys jumping ship left and right, he stayed positive. More recently he talks about why he stayed in there, and the mistakes he made by doing so. Balls Mahoney was another notable interview that really got to me. He goes from very optimistic in 2001, saying that there was no way the company could go under, to a very different man a decade later. He talks about some really dark times such as a bout with depression, an episode that nearly cost him his life.

It isn't all sadness in modern times, as the film is bookended by clips of an upstart federation out of Philadelphia called Extreme Rising ran by ECW alumni Shane Douglas. From meager beginnings, the story of Extreme Rising seems to both mirror and be haunted by its connections to ECW right from the get go. By the end of the film we are left wondering if Douglas can really re-capture the magic from a decade past. I liked seeing this stuff in here because it acts as the anchor to our modern world, and really shows how much the wrestling world has changed. While one is left with a little glimmer of hope that we really could see this style of professional wrestling come back, there is a lot of shadows there as well. What was once cutting edge and trendy almost seems depressing today.

I commend the documentarians discussing the dark times when ECW was said to be "taking it too far". They were on the cusp of being so big that the glamorized violence and dangerous stunts were causing problems, but too small to chance upsetting loyal fans by toning it down. Some ECW documentaries have a tendency to not talk about bad things aside from the occasional reference to Paul Heyman's poor business decisions. By having wrestlers discuss their personal issues, and problems within the company, the documentary seems more "balanced". Instead of having an agenda, John Philapavage has stayed fairly neutral. He discusses the good things, the bad things, and the downright ugly side of

professional wrestling here.

My one real quibble with the film is that there was no footage of the “Mass Transit Incident”. This was a notorious controversy involving an untrained and underage wrestler that got hurt during a match, then tried to sue ECW out of existence. The man in question lied his way into filling a slot in a show and was “cut open like a stuck pig” when he allowed a wrestler named New Jack to cut him. One thing most casual wrestling fans don’t realize is that wrestlers used to have small strips of razor blades hidden either on their person or some other strategic spot to cut themselves open. This was done for dramatic effect, as the “fake” nature of the violence needed to sometimes be “spiced up” to tell a story. “Mass Transit” was not comfortable doing this himself, and asked New Jack to “help him”, which was a bad idea. This controversy was a main talking point towards the end of the film, and there was no footage, or even a stock photo of what happened. I felt that this was a missed opportunity, and could have confused someone that did not already know about it.

On a technical standpoint, the DVD is a class act; it even has its own composed music. While I would have LOVED to see this in HD on my widescreen TV, the standard definition print is very professional and looks great. There were no stutters or other anomalies, something that can’t be said for other fan productions. There are extended interviews and deleted scenes in the special features tab including a series of clips involving Billy Corgan of The Smashing Pumpkins. Despite many appearances on many wrestling shows, fans don’t seem to realize how much of a wrestling fan Corgan is, to the point that he owns his own federation. This special feature was cool because you really got to see his passion for ECW, and how it got him into the business. One thing I would love to see is an eventual “Director’s Cut” edition of this film with more outtakes, deleted scenes, and maybe some more interviews. I bet the guys at BWC films are sitting on tons of footage for this, why not get it out there!

All in all, I loved this DVD. For years *Beyond the Mat* was seen as one of the few great wrestling documentaries out there; now we can add *Barbed Wire City* to the same level of prestige. The RF video footage, the interviews, and the 3D still images all mesh in such a way that I could really see BWC Films going somewhere in the world of independent filmmaking, and I can’t wait to see what they do next. So if you are even a small fan of ECW, do yourself a favor and watch this DVD, you won’t regret it.

*Stephen Kelley is a video game and professional wrestling enthusiast who has written well regarded pieces for VGChartz. He is the co-host of The \*Nixed Report Podcast and is a fan of British Science Fiction. His website, [anamericanviewofbritishsciencefiction.com](http://anamericanviewofbritishsciencefiction.com), covers well known shows across the pond from Dr. Who to Red Dwarf X.*