

THE COMPUTER CORNER

No. 256: Windows vs Linux Presentation

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Our Bill Shadid (W9MXQ), recently asked me to present a talk on **Windows versus Linux** at WiARC, the Wisconsin Amateur Radio Club (formerly the Falls Radio Club) in Germantown. Bill, an ORC member, is also the President of the Germantown-based club. So, I prepared and gave the talk to approximately 40 members on Wednesday, 26 June. It was great fun and they were cordial hosts. They have a good series of talks coming up, a few of which are listed below with dates. You will note that Gary Drasch (K9DJT) is giving two, so with Bill Shadid, the presentations are well represented with ORC members. For more info, look at their website: <https://www.wiarc.org> and try to attend those that interest you.

31 Jul	Bill Shadid, W9MXQ	Tuning a Vacuum Tube Radio Final Amplifier
28 Aug	Gary Drasch, K9DJT	Using a Digital Voltmeter in the Shack
25 Sep	TBA	
30 Oct	Gary Drasch, K9DJT	Features and Use of ClubLog
27 Nov	TBA	Using an Oscilloscope in the Ham Shack
18 Dec	Patrick Moretti, KA1RB	ARRL Update (Patrick is ARRL Wisconsin Section Manager.)

So what did I talk about? First, I explained my computer credentials, including the rebuilding and distribution of over 700 units (Windows and Linux) to Wisconsin ARES/RACES groups between 1995 and 2015. Then I covered the upcoming changes in Windows – to a rental fee basis – and some of the other Microsoft changes in store. I spoke briefly about the origin of Linux, and how widely it is found today (it is now the largest installed base of all general-purpose operating systems). Linux Mint 19.1 Cinnamon, nicknamed “Tessa”, is the most popular version today.

Next, I compared the differences and similarities of Linux and Windows, especially how Linux can now handle most any Microsoft Office chores with nearly perfect compatibility, thanks to the Libre Office that comes with the Linux package. I showed pictures of the Windows and Linux desktops to point out how similar they are, and therefore how easy it is to use Linux or even switch to it. We explored the minimum hardware necessary to run Linux, including memory and hard drive space needs. I pointed out how easily updates are done (reboots rarely needed!) when compared to Windows.

Finally, I finished up with the three ways to get it. 1. A completely free method, by downloading a file from the web which you use to burn a boot “live” Linux disk. 2. By ordering a boot disk for under \$6, plus \$3 shipping (no shipping charges for orders over \$20, so groups can get together to order several and save some bucks). 3. By ordering a bootable thumb drive with the installation files on it for \$14.95 plus shipping (again, no shipping charges for orders over \$20. By edict of Linus Torvalds, the original writer of Linux, the operating system must remain completely free. The charges noted above are just payment for preparation and shipping of the media. Happy Computing!