

Hacking and hiking at the Linux Bier Wanderung 2006

BITS AND BITES

Geeks don't bite, but insects and spiders do in the Aukstaitija (Highlands) National Park, site of this year's

Linux Beer Hike (aka, Linux Bier Wanderung). **BY HEIKE JURZIK**

From the 13th to 20th of August, around 50 geeks from all over the world met in the tiny village of Paluse to hack, listen to talks, explore the countryside, and enjoy the local food and beer. The eighth annual Linux Bier Wanderung went East again, this year to Lithuania's "Lake District" [1].

Surrounded by seven lakes and scenic forests, Paluse offers lots of opportunities for outdoor activities, such as hiking, mountainbiking, canoeing, rowing, and fishing. The hall on the shore of Lake Luse was an ideal location for campfires and barbecues at the beach.

Honey, Bread, and Beer

Various hikes and excursions took place during the week of this year's Beer Hike, including a visit to the Honey and Bread Festival at the Museum of Ancient Beekeeping [2], as well as star-gazing at the Moletai Astronomical Observatory [3].

A group of geeks went on a trip to the Inn Prie Bravoro ("The Inn by the Brewery," [4]). The beer at this brewery is made with wild bees' honey following an ancient recipe. Talking about beer – it was quite an experience to try the vari-

ous sorts of beer, or as one attendee put it: "9.5% beer? That's just bad news...." Luckily, the Lithuanians serve some interesting beer food like fried bread with garlic and cheese.

Lightning, Talks, and Potluck

Throughout the week, there were talks on a variety of subjects such as "10 Reasons Not To Hate Your Manager" and "Policy Routing with Linux." Another group of geeks met up for a round of "lightning talks": people spoke for a maximum of five minutes on a subject of their choice – preparation was optional and the results were amazing. It was very enlightening to learn more about "European toilets," "Wasps," "Lithuanian road signs," and the winner was "A day in the office" from a technical consultant who found himself spending much of his time sharpening pencils.

The talks were held outside, but fortunately, not on the same evening as the barbecue, which had to be abandoned because of heavy rain. Several geeks had to be fetched in from the lake when lightning appeared.

The next evening, the weather cooperated for the International potluck dinner. Despite the limited availability of cooking facilities, some geeks proved they could cook as well as hack. It was another impressive buffet with fantastic food and drinks from various different countries.

Almost every evening, the geeks with musical talent entertained the rest of the group: Irish, Scottish, and Slovakian folk music was mixed with drinking songs from around the world, providing a nice background in the hall, at the beach, or by a campfire.

The Linux Bier Wanderung 2006 was a huge success. The event managed a nice balance of physical activity, hacking, drinking, and music (with a little bit of sleep mixed in). This year's Beer Hike was probably the most international LBW ever, with attendees from the US, Canada, New Zealand, and various European countries. The Beer Hike was an excellent opportunity to meet up with old friends and make some new ones. ■

The Linux Bier Wanderung

The Linux Bier Wanderung (LBW) is a week-long event that takes place in a different European country each summer, drawing together Open Source and Free Software enthusiasts from more than a dozen countries. It is an entirely volunteer-run event, funded by donations from the attendees for the cost of the hall, Internet access, and other expenses.

INFO

- [1] LBW 2006:
<http://www.mkuncaitis.com/lbw06/>
- [2] Museum of Ancient Beekeeping:
http://muziejai.mch.mii.lt/ignalina/biciu_mus.en.htm
- [3] Moletai Astronomical Observatory:
<http://www.itpa.lt/mao/aboutmao.html>
- [4] Inn Prie Bravoro:
<http://www.culinary-heritage.com/foretag.asp?regionid=46&foretagid=1160>
- [5] LBW picture archive:
<http://lbwpictures.killefiz.de>



Figure 1: Ten reasons why geeks hate managers.