

Linux, radio, and rock 'n' roll converged in San Francisco

LUGRADIO LIVE USA

In mid-April, LugRadio Live landed at the Metreon Theater in San Francisco for two days of music, mixing, Linux, and live recording. **BY RIKKI KITE**

LugRadio Live is unlike any other conference you have attended (Figure 1). For one thing, conference attendees were greeted by loud rock music playing in the conference hall as they wandered between booths and talks. The music and “Nut Sacks” filled with SWAG set the tone for an upbeat conference in which having fun and meeting new people were just as important as the Linux technologies presented at the conference booths and talks.

LugRadio is a “British radio show that takes a relaxed, humorous look at Linux and open source” [1]. LugRadio also hosts live events in the UK, including the 2008 event scheduled for July 19-20. The April event marked the first appearance of LugRadio Live in the US.

Archives of previous radio shows, as well as the LugRadio Live USA event recording, can be downloaded from the LugRadio.org site [1].

The LugRadio Live USA list of speakers was impressive and included Miguel de Icaza (Mono, Novell, and co-founder of Gnome), Val Henson (kernel, VAH consulting), Liana Holmberg (Second Life/Linden Lab), Alison Randall (Parrot, Perl, OSCON), and Ilan Rabinovitch (SCALE) [2]. In addition to the main stage, smaller talks were held on a second stage near the entrance.

When was the last time you saw someone running through the crowd in boxer shorts, yelling for everyone to head toward the main stage? On Saturday, Aaron Bockover, lead developer of the Banshee media player, ran through the conference hall in his short-short boxers and socks, leading the crowd to



Figure 1: LugRadio Live arrives in San Francisco.

the Gong-a-thong Lightbulb Talk Extravaganza [4]. Bockover then stayed on stage manning the gong, playing host as attendees took turns presenting their open source projects in five minutes or less (Figure 2).

One project presented at the Gong-a-thong is the OpenStreetMap free editable world map [5]. Free Geek, which recycles old computers, also had a moment of Gong-a-thong fame [6], and one of the more enjoyable presentations was Solomon Chang’s Irish Ballad [7].

Emma Hogbin discussed women in open source and also offered suggestions to increasing participation in general. She suggested sharing open source technologies with charities, for example, which also tend to employ a lot of

women. Hogbin organizes the HICK Tech (“How the Internet Connects Knowledge”) conference [8], a one-day rural technology conference. She said that more women than men registered for the 2008 event. In fact, two thirds of “early bird” registrants were women. Hogbin also commended LugRadio organizers for making the effort to include women – as presenters and attendees – in their event.

A few grumbled about network availability and lighting at the event, but overall LugRadio Live got rave reviews from attendees. Hopefully there will be another USA LugRadio event at conference soon [9]. ■



Figure 2: Aaron Bockover led the Gong-a-thong Lightbulb Talk Extravaganza.

INFO

- [1] LugRadio: <http://www.lugradio.org/>
- [2] LugRadio Live USA 2008: <http://lugradio.org/live/USA2008/>
- [3] Haiku: <http://www.haiku-os.org/>
- [4] Gong-a-thong host announcement: <http://www.jonobacon.org/?p=1167>
- [5] OpenStreetMap: <http://www.openstreetmap.org/>
- [6] Free Geek: <http://freegeek.org/>
- [7] Solomon Chang’s lyrics: <http://www.bytebot.net/blog/archives/2008/04/13/gong-a-thong-at-lugradio-live-usa>
- [8] HICK Tech: <http://www.hicktech.com/>
- [9] Booking for LugRadio Live: <http://www.lugradio.org/performance/>