

CE Workgroup

Status of Embedded Linux November 2018

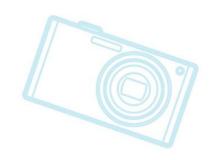
Frank Rowand

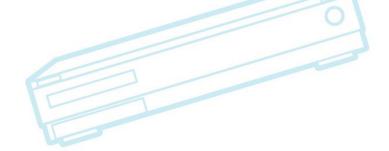
Sr. Staff Software Engineer, Sony Electronics
Linux Kernel Maintainer – Device Tree sub-system
181130 1306



Nature of this talk...

- Quick overview of lots of embedded topics
- A springboard for further research
 - If you see something interesting, you have a link or something to search for
- Not comprehensive!
 - Just stuff that I saw







Outline

Kernel Versions
Technology Areas
CE Workgroup Projects
Other Stuff
Resources



Outline





Kernel Versions

- Linux v4.15 28 Jan 2018 77 days
 - Included Spectre and Meltdown fixes
- Linux v4.16 1 Apr 2018 63 days
- Linux v4.17 3 Jun 2018 63 days
- Linux v4.18 12 Aug 2018 70 days
- Linux v4.19 22 Oct 2018 71 days
 - Author: Greg Kroah-Hartman
- Now on Linux v4.20-rc4
 - Expect 4.20 on Dec 23



Linux 4.15

- Cramfs supports mapping persistent memory
 - Can use for XIP
- AMD display core system accepted
- Device tree compiler has support for overlays
- RISC-V support
- Spectre/Meltdown mitigations
 - KPTI
 - retpolines



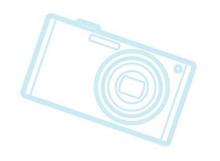
Linux 4.16

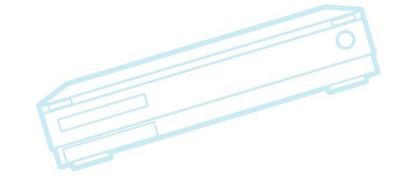
- Initial support for the Jailhouse hypervisor
- eBPF support for functions
- arm64 mitigations for Spectre and Meltdown
- More Spectre migitations (general)
 - array_index_nospec()
- High resolution timers now have two modes, to allow them to be run in software interrupt context



Linux 4.16 – cont.

- F2FS miscellaneous improvements
- Slimbus and Soundwire sub-systems added
 - These are MIPI audio bus standards
- Flex and Bison are required for kernel build







Linux 4.17

- 8 old architectures dropped
 - Blackfin, CRIS, FRV, M32R, Metag, MN10300, Score, Tile
 - Removes about 460K lines of code
 - Only 3rd time ever that a kernel release has shrunk
- Rework of kernel idle loop
- Finished full in-kernel TLS protocol support
- Improved CPU load estimation



Improved CPU load estimation

- Is a modification of the per-entity loadtracking (PELT) mechanism
 - PELT decays the load information about processes too slowly
 - New estimator avoids this
- Load estimation can clamp more quickly
- Good for mobile and embedded
- Adds 1% scheduling overhead
 - Requires setting SCHED_UTILEST scheduler feature bit
- See https://lwn.net/Articles/741171/



Linux 4.17 – cont.

- A formal kernel memory-ordering model
 - With tests for formal proofs of adherence
 - See https://lwn.net/Articles/718628/
- Kernel build now requires gcc 4.5 or later on x86
 - This is a problem for some architectures where gcc has dropped support
 - But there's a workaround:
 - https://lists.linuxfoundation.org/pipermail/ksummitdiscuss/2018-September/005554.html
- Changes to x86 system call implementation



Linux 4.18

- power domains now support active state management
 - Instead of enable/disable, can now handle different idle states (continuum of operation)
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/744047/
- fscrypt supports Speck128 and Speck256 ciphers
 - Somewhat controversial ciphers
 - Enables encryption for lowest-end devices
- bpfilter user mode helper system
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/755919/



bpfilter user mode helper

- Complicated mechanism to:
 - compile user space code
 - from the Linux source tree
 - bundled in a kernel loadable module file (.ko)
 - with execution initiated from kernel space
 - code runs in a user-space process
 - communicates via two pipes

Backwards compatibility with netfilter

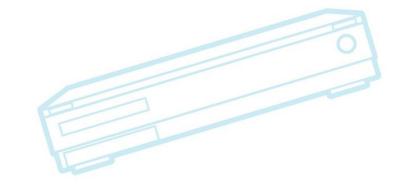
- compiles iptable rules to BPF
- As a mechanism, may lead to all kinds of crazy stuff



Linux 4.18 - cont.

- Support for Qualcomm Snapdragon 845
 - Use in high-end mobile devices
 - Support is incomplete, but it's a start







Linux 4.19

- L1TF mitigation (a variant of meltdown)
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/762570/
 - The fun continues...
- time-based packet transmission
 - Allows a program to schedule data for transmission in the future
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/748879/
- EROFS enhanced read-only filesystem
 - High-performance
 - Good for certain embedded situations
 - (in staging)



Linux 4.19 - cont.

- block I/O latency controller
 - regulates latency instead of bandwidth
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/758963/
- Common Applications Kept Enhanced (CAKE) queuing discipline
 - devices behind consumer-level routers on relatively slow broadband links
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/758353/



Linux 4.19 - cont.

- new asynchronous polling interface
 - yet another API, not a replacement for existing APIs
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/743714/
 - https://kernelnewbies.org/Linux_4.19#New_asy nchronous_I.2FO_polling_interface





Linux 4.20 (expected)

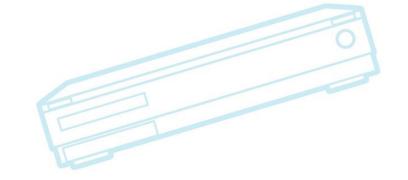
- C-SKY processor architecture support
- XArray data structure
 - a reworking of the radix tree structure
 - the page cache has been converted to use it
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/745073/
 - https://linuxplumbersconf.org/event/2/contributions/259/
- PCI subsystem support of peer-to-peer DMA operations between peripherals (P2PDMA)
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/767281/



Linux 4.20 (expected) - cont.

- Many block drivers converted to multiqueue API
 - Plan to remove the legacy API in the next development cycle
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/552904/





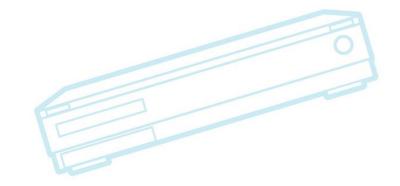


Linux 4.20 (expected)

- new filesystem mounting API
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/759499/





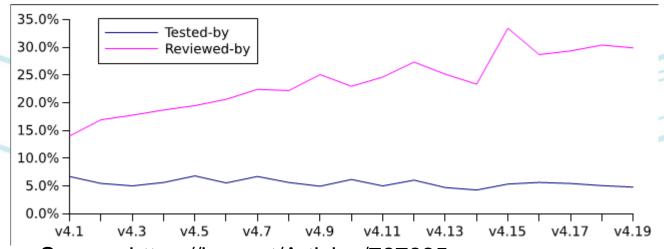




Contributor stats for 4.19

- 14,043 non-merge commits
- 552K lines added, 245K lines removed
- 307K more lines added than removed*
- 1710 developers
 - 253 made their first contribution

% of patches carrying test/review tags



Source: https://lwn.net/Articles/767635



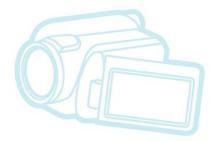
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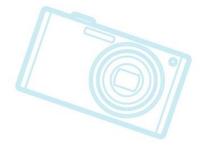


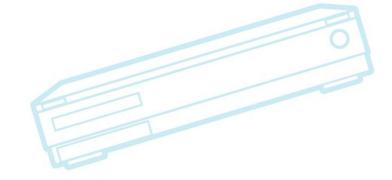


Bootup Time

Nothing new, here is older stuff...









Device Tree

- Device Tree validation
 - Schema for binding language, validator for bindings and for device tree data
 - Patches from Rob Herring under review
 - Expect change to require bindings in new format
 - YAML encoded output format option for dtc
- dtc compiler build checks
 - 19 commits add warnings since February 2017
- Device Tree specification replaced ePAPR



Device Tree - cont.

- Size reductions
 - dtc deletes unreferenced nodes annotated with: /omit-if-no-ref/
 - reduce size of struct device_node
 - eg full_name no longer includes node path
 - use %pOF for warnings and errors
 - field removal savings only if not using overlays
 - Nicolas Pitre report of a test case:
 - went from 118072 bytes down to 11732 bytes
 - https://elinux.org/images/e/e0/Size-kernel-fdt.pdf



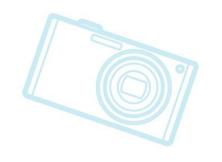
Device Tree - cont.

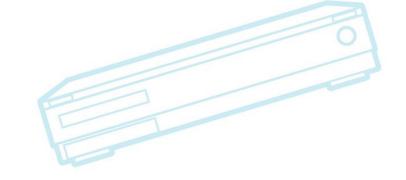
- Overlays
 - Quit hand coding overlay metadata:
 - fragment nodes, ___*__ nodes
 - dtc will generate the metadata
 - U-Boot support to apply overlays
 - more robust than run time overlay apply
 - memory leak checks added, with ERRORs and WARNINGs
 - https://elinux.org/images/8/86/Overlay_frank.pdf



File Systems

- EROFS enhanced read-only filesystem (4.19)
 - High-performance
 - Good for certain embedded situations
 - (in staging)
 - expect on-media format to change



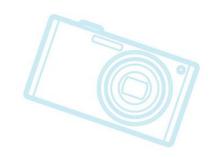




File Systems - cont...

• F2FS

- Miscellaneous fixups (4.17)
 - Lost & Found support
 - Better tuning for low_end devices
 - See https://www.phoronix.com/scan.php?page=news_item&px=F2FS-Lost-Found

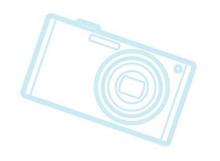


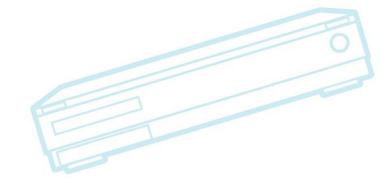




Graphics

- Nothing new, here is older stuff...
- Working on support for virtual reality
 - LCA 2018 Driving Virtual Reality from Linux -Keith Packard







GPU drivers

- Nothing new, here is older stuff...
- ELC 2018 Progress in the Embedded GPU Ecosystem – by Robert Foss
 - Watch the video the slides don't have enough text
 - Nvidea, Intel, AMD, Broadcom, Qualcomm, Vivante have upstream support
 - Of varying quality
 - ARM some stuff happening recently with Mali T series, but not upstreamed yet.



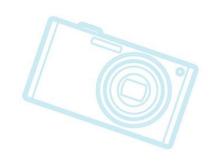
Networking.

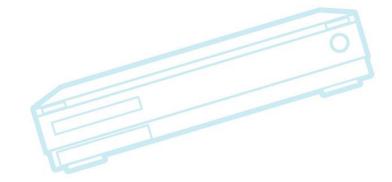
- Time Sensitive Networking
 - ELC 2018 The Road Towards a Linux TSN Infrastructure – Jesus Sanchex-Palencia
 - ELCE 2017 Deterministic Networking for Real-Time Systems (Using TSN) – by Henrik Austad
- Time-based packet transmission
 - Allows a program to schedule data for transmission in the future
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/748879/
- Bluetooth 5 supported



Networking - cont.

- experimental support for future 802.11ax standard
 - also known as: Wi-Fi 6
 - https://www.wi-fi.org/news-events/newsroom/wi-fi-alliance-introduces-wi-fi-6







Power management.

- Rework kernel idle loop (in 4.17)
 - Prevent CPUs from spending too much time in shallow idle states
 - Reduces idle power on some systems by 10% or more
 - See
 - https://www.phoronix.com/scan.php?page=article&item=linux-417power
 - https://lkml.org/lkml/2018/4/11/337
- power domain state management (4.18)
 - Instead of enable/disable, can now handle different idle states (continuum of operation)
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/744047/



Power Management.

Presentations:

- ELC 2018 An Unbiased Look at the Energy Aware Scheduler (EAS) – by Vital Wool
 - Qualcomm has their own big.LITTLE scheduler (QHMP)
 - QHMP does better than EAS in some regards
 - But cannot be mainlined (code is messy)
 - Want to use features of QHMP in EAS, which still has shortcomings



Real Time.

- RT-Preempt patches give good real-time performance
- RT-Preempt patch still out of tree
 - What's left:
 - Hotplug locking
 - Timer wheel rework
 - dentry cache locking
 - Lots work goes into maintaining RT trees out-ofmainline
 - Don't support every kernel release
 - Focused on supporting kernel LTS releases



Real Time - cont...

Presentations

- ELC 2018 Steering Xenomai into the Real-Time Linux Future – Jan Kiska
- ELC 2018 Not Really, but Kind of Real Time Linux – Sandra Capri
 - Discusses how much RT performance you can get, without Preempt-RT patches
- ELC 2018 Preempt-RT Raspberry Pi Linux Tiejun Chen
 - Demonstrates that Preempt-RT is very effective on Raspberry Pi
- ELC 2018 Maintaining a Real Time Stable Kernel – by Steven Rostedt



Security (review).

- Spectre and Meltdown
 - Break security via side-channel timing attacks using speculative execution
 - Variants 1, 2 (Spectre), and 3 (Meltdown)
- Is a family of vulnerabilities related to speculative execution
 - Many modern processors vulnerable
 - Many embedded processors not affected
- Very severe problem:
 - Can read data you're not supposed to
 - Vulnerability has existed for 20 years!
 - Cannot be fixed with CPU firmware updates
 - Mitigations are expensive



Security.

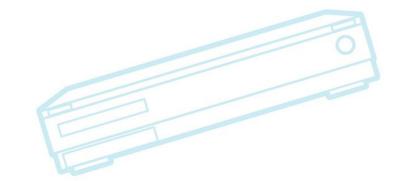
- New Spectre variants
 - Variant 3a Rogue System Register Read
 - Variant 4 Speculative Store Bypass
- New Meltdown variant
 - L1TF L1 Cache terminal fault vulnerability
- No surprise
 - We were expecting new variations of speculative execution vulnerabilities to be discovered
- Fixes are:
 - More microcode updates for Intel processors
 - Kernel patches to use new speculative execution control flags
- See https://lwn.net/Articles/755114/



Security - cont.

- Spectre and Meltdown
 - Patches continue to dribble in
 - x86, ARM64, PowerPC
 - generic code, from gcc warnings



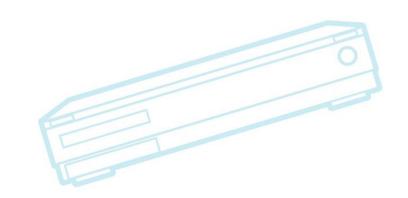




Real Time / Security

- ELCE 2018 Spectre and Meltdown vs. Real-Time: How Much do Mitigations Cost?
 - Ralf Ramsauer
 - Jan Kiszka
 - Wolfgang Mauerer

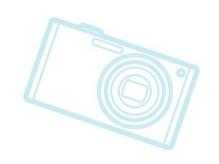


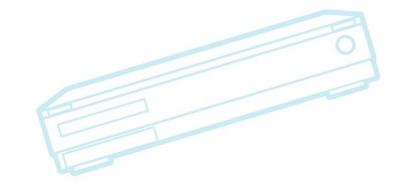




Security Presentations.

- ELC 2018 Secure Boot from A to Z by Quentin Schulz and Mylune Josserand
 - Overview of secure boot techniques and issues







System Size..

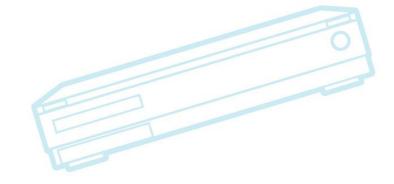
- See Devicetree.
- Presentations
 - ELC 2018 Poky-tiny and Beyond, or Trying to the put Yocto in Yocto Project – by Scott Murray
 - Gives status of poky-tiny project, available for Yocto Project
 - ELC 2018 BoF: Embedded Linux Size By Michael Opdenacker
 - Great overview of reduction techniques and status
 - Toybox and musl (smaller libc) are worth looking at
 - Long list of things that can be worked on



Testing.

- Kselftest
- Fuego
- Kernelci.org
- LKFT
- Work to make 'next' more testable

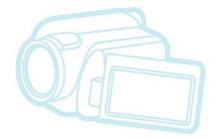




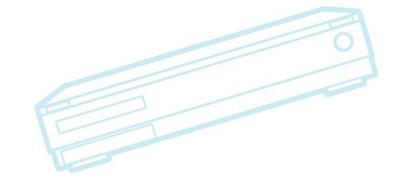


Kselftest

Nothing new, here is older stuff...









Fuego.

- Test Framework for collaborating on tests and test infrastructure for Linux
- v1.3 released May 2018
 - More report output formats (rst, csv, excel, html, pdf)
 - Hardware board control
 - Test phase execution
- Tests being added on a consistent basis
 - 18 new tests in 1.3 release (some are self-tests)
 - 7 are realtime tests
- Presentation:
 - Japan Jamboree 63: Fuego Status and Roadmap December 2017 – by Tim Bird



Kernelci.org

- Does continuous build/boot testing of kernel
 - Builds 126 trees continuously, reports any errors
- Working on creating a project in Linux Foundation (more later)
- 10 labs with 250 boards and 37 SoCs being tested
- Has done 4,000,000 boots
- Added Auto-bisection
- Adding post-boot testing
- https://lwn.net/Articles/772525/



LKFT.

- Linux Kernel Functional Testing
 - Relatively new Linaro kernel testing effort
 - Focused on Functional testing (as opposed to build/boot testing)
 - Focused on embedded devices
- Presentation:
 - ELC 2018 Keeping Up With LTS: Linux Kernel Functional Testing (LKFT) on Devices — Thomas Gall



Making 'next' more testable.

- Linux-next is the integration tree used during the kernel release cycle
- It's hard to test, because things break a lot
 - Automated testing doesn't work
- Stephen Rothwell (the 'next' maintainer) created a 'fixes' branch
- Isolates fixes intended for next release, from other code being integrated into 'next'
 - Should not break automated testing rigs as much
- Result: fixes will get more testing in 'next'



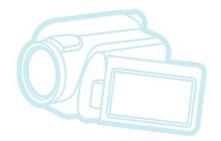
Toolchains.

- gcc 8
 - Major effort on usability improvements
 - Provides much better messages for some errors
 - Shows fix-it hints
 - Shows what to change to fix the error
 - Can be automatically processed
 - Detects missing include files, saying which files are needed
 - See https://lwn.net/Articles/749450/, and
 - https://developers.redhat.com/blog/2018/03/15/gcc-8-usabilityimprovements/

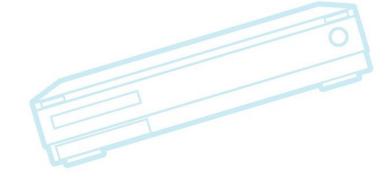


Toolchains - cont.

minimum version changed to gcc 4.6









Tracing

- Nothing new, here is older stuff...
- Dynamic function tracing events
 - Ability to create a tracepoint for a function at runtime
 - Goal is to avoid having a tracepoint become part of kernel ABI
 - Is work-in-progress
 - See https://lwn.net/Articles/747256

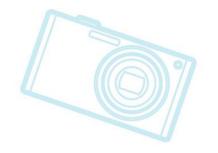


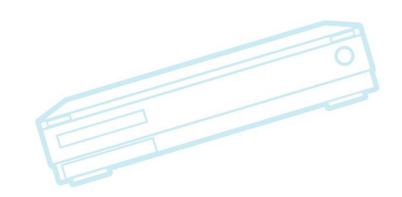


Miscellaneous

- Year 2038 work
- Git protocol version 2
- Android kernel status









Year 2038 work.

- Status update:
 - Lots of small driver fixes in 4.16
 - Changes to system call entry points for timekeeping related syscalls
 - Patches for structures with new 64-bit timestamps have been submitted
 - Still need more work converting the VFS layer
 - Lots of stuff intended to land in 4.18
- See https://www.mail-archive.com/linuxkernel@vger.kernel.org/msg1674216.html



New git protocol (version 2).

- 3x performance improvement for no-op fetches on repositories containing 500k references.
- 8x reduction of overhead bytes sent from server
 - Due to filtering references to those the client expressed interest in
- Worked on by Google
 - See https://opensource.googleblog.com/2018/05/introducinggit-protocol-version-2.html



Android kernel status.

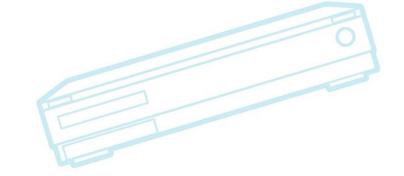
- Progress being made
- diff from 4.14 Android and LTS
 - 432 files, 41K changes
 - sdcard, netfilter, Energy Aware Scheduling, USB gadgets
- Linaro doing android mainline tracking
 - Test Android-common patches on latest mainline Linux
- ELC 2018 Android Common Kernel and Out of Mainline Patchset Status – by Amil Pundar



Android kernel status - cont.

- Bringing the Android kernel back to the mainline
 - Summary of Linux Plumbers talk
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/771974/







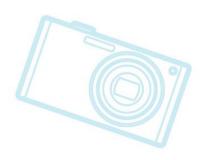
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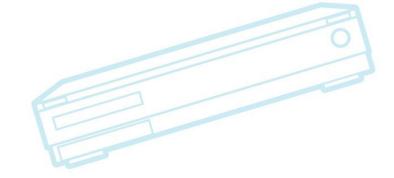




Projects and initiatives.

- Shared Embedded Distribution
- \LTSI
- Automated Testing
 - Fuego
 - Automated Test Standards
- eLinux wiki







Long Term Support Initiative

- LTSI 4.14.75-Itsi is current LTSI kernel
 - https://ltsi.linuxfoundation.org/software/releases
- Most of industry is using LTS or LTSI
- Using upstream-first policy for patches
- Security fixes are very important
- Presentation:
 - ELCE 2018 Technical Showcase poster: Longterm Embedded Linux: Testing & Field Update - Pengutronix



Long Term Stable Releases

Version	Maintainer	Released	Projected EOL
3.16	Ben Hutchings	2014-08-03	Apr, 2020
4.4	Greg Kroah-Hartman	2016-01-10	Feb, 2022
4.9	Greg Kroah-Hartman	2016-12-11	Jan, 2023
4.14	Greg Kroah-Hartman	2017-11-12	Jan, 2020
4.19	Greg Kroah-Hartman	2018-10-22	Dec, 2020

Source: https://www.kernel.org/category/releases.html



Fuego - Linux Test Framework.

- CELP funding for Fuego self-test project
- Fuego now has an integrated release test
 - A Fuego job to build the Fuego docker container from scratch, and test it
 - Includes tests of user interface using Selenium and Chromium
 - This adds packages to base Fuego distribution for doing this type of web-based and image-based testing
- Work completed by ProFusion Embedded Systems

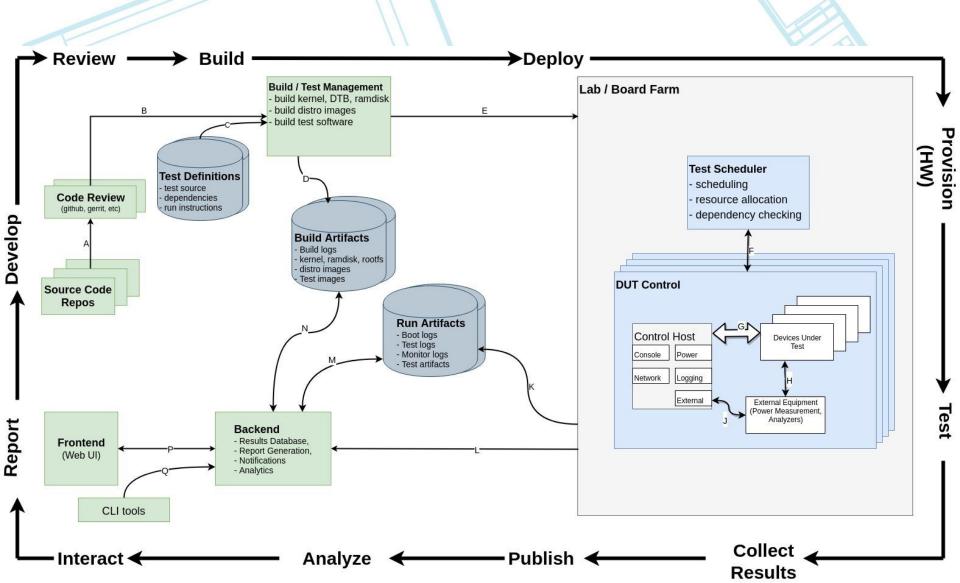


Automated Testing Standards

- Automated Testing Summit after ELCE
 - https://elinux.org/Automated_Testing_Summit
 - minutes, slides, videos, action items
 - see https://lwn.net/Articles/771782
- First standards by summit attendees will be:
 - test definition
 - results format
 - test execution API
- Discussions on:
 - automated-testing@yoctoproject.org



Continuous Integration Loop (high level diagram)





eLinux wiki.

- http://elinux.org
 - Web site dedicated to information for embedded Linux developers
 - The wikipedia of embedded linux!
- Hundreds of pages covering numerous topic areas: bootup time, realtime, security, power management, flash filesystem, toolchain, editors
- Slides and Videos for 13 years of ELC!!
- Please use and add to site



eLinux wiki...

- Recent topics
 - Board farm and automated testing pages
 - Lots of Renesas board information
 - Developer guidelines
 - Community Doc Translation
 - Event pages (ELC, Jamboree, and others)
 - Test resources.



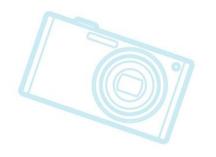
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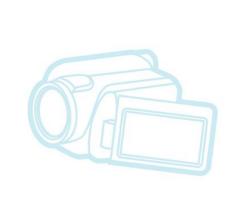


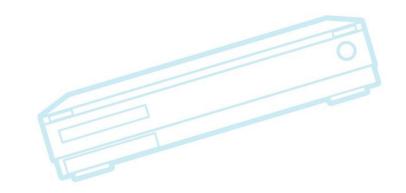


Other Stuff

- Community issues
- Trade associations
- Conferences
- Legal issues
- Industry changes





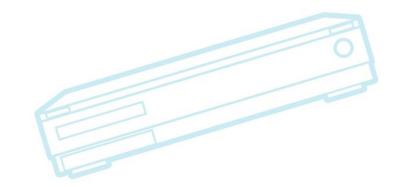




Community issues

- Linus takes a break!!
- New Code of Conduct for the kernel community







Linus takes a break.

- Linus announced on Sept. 16 (4.19-rc4) that he's taking a break
- Made an apology for "flippant attacks in emails that have been both unprofessional and uncalled for"
- Announced that Greg Kroah-Hartman will take his place for 4.19 release cycle
- See
 - https://lkml.org/lkml/2018/9/16/167
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/765108



Linus' break - cont...

- Linus says he's not burnt out, but will be back
- Needs time to reflect
- Is seeking help on how to behave differently
 - BBC article: Linus Torvalds: "I'll never be cuddly but I can be more polite"
 - https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-45664640
- Attended Maintainer's Summit in Edinburgh (October 22)
- He is back: 4.20 merge window.



New Code of Conduct.

- Linus also accepted a patch from GregKH that replaces the "code of conflict" with a new "Code of Conduct"
- Based on widely used Contributor Covenant (version 1.4)
- Lots of discussion in community about CoC
 - Concern over new responsibilities for maintainers
 - led to deletion of some maintainer responsibilities
 - Uncertainty over enforcement policies



New Code of Conduct

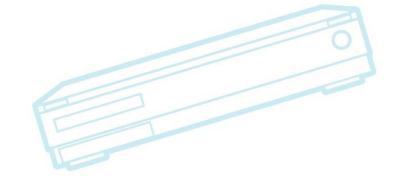
- Patch from GregKH added an interpretation document
 - Documentation/process/code-of-conduct-interpretation.rst
 - Documentation/process/code-of-conduct.rst
- Discussion in community continued
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/765108/
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/766699/
- Discussion: Maintainers Summit
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/769117/
- Discussion: Linux Plumbers conference
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/772565/



Trade associations

- Linux Foundation
 - Possible creation of KernelCl Testing project
 - KernelCl developers working on getting additional sponsors for project
 - Project may expand scope (remains to be seen)







Conferences.

- Embedded Linux Conference 2018
 - March 12-14, Portland, Oregon, USA
 - See https://elinux.org/ELC_2018_Presentations
 - Did really good at collecting slides and videos
- Japan Jamborees
 - Continuing
- Open Source Summit Japan/Automotive Linux Summit
 - June 20-22, Tokyo, Japan



Conferences - cont.

- ELC Europe 2018
 - October 22-24, Edinburgh, Scotland
- Automated Testing Summit
 - October 25, Edinburgh, Scotland
 - https://elinux.org/ATS_2018_Minutes

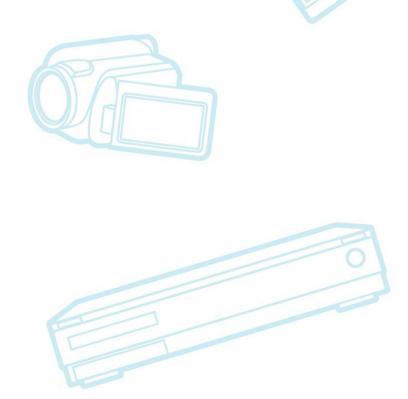






ELCE 2018 topic clusters.

- Kernel drivers
 - Camera, Audio, others
- Testing
- Yocto Project
- Security
- Bootloader
- Virtualization
- Realtime
- Networking





Conferences - 2019.

- Embedded Linux Conference 2019
 - August 21-23, San Diego, California, USA
- Japan Jamborees
 - Continuing
- Open Source Summit Japan/Automotive Linux Summit
 - July 17-19, Tokyo, Japan
- ELC Europe 2019
 - October 28-30, Lyon, France
- Linux Plumbers
 - November 8-11, Lisbon, Portugal



Legal issues.

- McHardy withdraws suit against Geniatech in Germany
- Geniatech fought back, with arguments:
 - Suit scope is too broad (covered all kernel versions, not just ones McHardy had contributed to)
 - Did not show that his commits fulfilled requirements for copyright protection
 - Did not show which of his commits were used by Geniatech
 - McHardy is not following community norms, with regard to GPL revocation terms
 - McHardy is approaching multiple companies for monetary gain



Legal issues cont...

- McHardy withdrawal lessons learned:
 - Don't sign the cease-and-desist declaration
 - Ensure GPL compliance
 - Prepare a legal defense strategy
 - Geniatech arguments seem sound, and can be used elsewhere
- Community wants to fight McHardy, but still allow for proper legal enforcement of GPL
- See https://lwn.net/Articles/752485/
- Details: http://laforge.gnumonks.org/blog/20180307-mchardy-gpl/



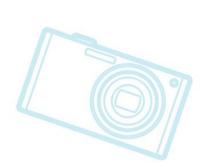
Industry changes.

- Intel selling Wind River (March 2018)
 - https://www.windriver.com/news/press/pr.html?l D=20982
 - Not sure what this means for Yocto Project
 - Intel has discontinued Edison, Galileo and Joule
- Microsoft acquires github (June 2018)
 - https://techcrunch.com/2018/06/04/microsofthas-acquired-github-for-7-5b-in-microsoft-stock/



Industry changes - cont.

- IBM to acquire Red Hat
 - https://lwn.net/Articles/769762/







Outline





Resources

- LWN.net
 - http://lwn.net/
 - If you are not subscribed, please do so
- Kernel Newbies
 - http://kernelnewbies.org/Linux_4.??
- Phoronix
 - https://www.phoronix.com/
- eLinux wiki http://elinux.org/
 - Especially http://elinux.org/Events for slides and videos

