

LUGS ON TOUR

Pycon Sei

Josette Garcia reports on what's new in Python or how to enjoy a bunch of friends.

A few weeks ago, I received the most wonderful email – an invitation to attend Pycon Sei in Florence. Who could refuse such an invitation – not me for sure!

I could spend weeks there enjoying the views, the food and going mad at the number of tourists! Unfortunately Florence is loved by many people and sometime you feel that you are not going where you want to but you are carried somewhere.

In Italy the Pycon meetings started in 2007 in the centre of Florence and continued until Pycon Quattro – I fell in love with Florence during Pycon Due when Richard Stallman gave a talk at the Palazzo Vecchio. In 2011, Florence hosted EuroPython – a partnership that lasted three years (pretty good when EuroPython had to move on to another city after three years). Unfortunately the hotel in the centre could not cope with 1,000 delegates and the conference was moved to the Grand Hotel Mediterraneo, a few yards from the Arno and almost opposite the Piazzale Michelangelo. 2014 saw the return of Pycon with

Pycon Cinque. During that year, the Associazione Python Italia with Tinker Garage APS also organised Django Village.

For 2015, they decided to combine the two conferences and produced Pycon Sei with a minimum of four tracks: Python, Django, PyData and Odoo.

Lots of the talks were in English. My favourite speaker, Alex Martelli, started the day with Modern Python patterns and idioms first in Italian and later on in English – I do not understand Italian nor Python but to see Alex's passion is pure magic – all of his body is moving. He is the epitome of Italians, the way we like them and sometime make gentle fun of them.

Other good presentations

“There are no techie conferences without networking, and the first event was PyBeer on Friday.”

included Asynchronous Web Development with Python 3 by Anton Caceres; *PostgreSQL 9.4* for Devops by Gabriele Bartolini; Odoo disaster recovery con Barman



Over 1,000 delegates attended Pycon Sei – so many that the venue needed to be changed.

by Giulio Calacoci; Does Python stand a chance in today's world of data science by Radim Rehurek; Packaging Django projects for PyPI by Roberto Rosario, and more.

Saturday saw a recruiting session – it was fascinating to see the different ways that companies try to entice new recruits. It went from the big PR spiel to the down-to-earth approach: that's the job, that's what we want from you, that's what you get from us. The companies hiring included InfoCert, Zalando, Kuldat, Develer and 2ndQuadrant.

There are no techie conferences without networking, and the first event was PyBeer on Friday, which took place at the James Joyce pub. To consolidate our new friendships, on Saturday we met at the Ristorante Zazà for PyFiorentina. There you can taste the famous bistecca alla Fiorentina – a T-bone steak grilled over a wood or charcoal fire, to be eaten with a glass of wonderful Italian red wine. Just delicious!

Pycon Italy is organised by the Python Association of Italy, and Develer SRL (www.develer.com) spends a lot of time and resources putting the show together.



Despite our not understanding his Italian, Alex Martelli's talk on modern Python patterns looked fantastic!

Libre Graphics Meeting 2015

Greg Pittman reports on this year's finest open source graphics event

LGM 2015 has just taken place in surprisingly sunny Toronto, Canada, from 29 April to 2 May, at the University of Toronto. It was a smaller crowd than at some previous LGMs, yet a dedicated one, and we saw an impressive array of presentations. Not only did we find, as expected, that our major projects such as *Gimp*, *Inkscape*, *Scribus* and *Blender* are very much alive and still developing after this decade of LGMs, but we continue to see new ideas coming to the open source graphics community. Lively discussions occurred following presentations, and in various formal and informal meetings.

Early on we received some encouragement and prodding for the vector graphics artists out there to submit work to Wikimedia Commons in order to improve the quality of Wikipedia articles. We also learned about an Android app (*The List*) in development so that users can learn about image requests from Creative Commons, take photos with their phones, then automatically submit them. From the W3C we learned about developing guidelines for accessibility features for the web, even some ideas about considering how to make graphics accessible to the visually impaired. Also from W3C we learned that an effort has begun to create guidelines to encourage the ability to read ePubs and other ebooks within browsers.

Work on font creation, manipulation, and usage has become a major part of Libre Graphics Meetings in the past several years. Although work continues on FontForge, others are working in other directions, such as the ability to edit entire character sets at once by manipulating various font metrics (metapolorator), and OSP continues their pioneering work on font creation, usage, and publishing. A concerted effort has begun to start the groundwork



Blender, Gimp, Inkscape and other teams get together once a year to synergise their awesome visions!

for making use of the advanced features of OTF fonts.

Animation and video editing

Blender continues to rise in its stature in the world of not only open, but also commercial animation. A new open source video editor, *Natron*, is working on closer connections with *Blender* for various video compositing tasks. *Pitivi*

like loading a JPEG into *Audacity*, editing there, and seeing what happened.

From some ideas coming out of steganography we get to new ways to compress 3D images into 2D image formats, which leads to ideas on image manipulation. And LGM wouldn't be LGM without some selected sessions on small bits of code having powerful effects, like graphically manipulating the code itself (*Microraptor* GUI). *GEGE* on a server can be used to automatically modify images on a web page (*imgflo*). *LibreOffice* is undergoing some major changes in its rendering scheme, promised to bring improvements in results as well as cross-platform economies of coding. The Documentation Liberation Project continues its vital work on unlocking proprietary and aging file formats, and managing colour in all of our various devices continues to become easier with the availability of open source software and hardware.

LGM 2016 will take place in London, at the University of Westminster (Harrow). Anyone interested in open source graphics is encouraged to attend.

www.libregraphicsmeeting.org/2015 

“We continued to see new ideas coming to the open source graphics community.”

seems to have gotten some renewed energy in recent years, and is now approaching version 1.0. We also heard from a university educator using open source software, finding he not only empowers his students, but they seem more creative, and are encouraged to interact with the projects. A group (Theory Animation) has managed to create a virtual animation studio by regularly interacting online from numerous sites on three continents, using *Blender* to create animations.

We learned about glitch art, various ways to “mess up” image files for interesting effects – things