



FreeBSD[®] Developer Summit

BY ANNE DICKISON

Every summer, members of the FreeBSD Developer Community and their guests gather at the FreeBSD Developer Summit. The planning committee began meeting in early 2022 with great hopes that we would be able to bring everyone together — in-person — for the first time in 2 years. Sadly, Covid had other plans and we soon realized yet another virtual event would be in the works. The committee worked together to recruit speakers and working groups and find new ways to make the virtual event feel just a little more personable. First up, an extended Hallway track. By using the SpatialChat virtual meeting service, attendees could wander about a virtual room and speak with whomever they were near. We also extended the breaks to 30 minutes to allow more time for communication among attendees. The Developer Summit was sponsored by the FreeBSD Foundation and took place June 16 and 17. The event was recorded and live streamed on YouTube. You can find both the full days of content and individual talks [here](#). Slides can be found on the [wiki](#).

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Day one kicked off with a welcome from our Planning Committee leader and longtime emcee John Baldwin. Following the welcome, the FreeBSD Foundation's Deb Goodkin, Ed Maste and Joseph Migrone gave an update on what is happening in the Foundation, the latest on the technology roadmap, and what folks can expect the rest of the year.

Following the first break, which even included a rick roll in the hallway track, Brooks Davis gave an update on the exciting CHERI/Morello project. His talk included a discussion of what CHERI is, what ARM's Morello CPU is all about, and what the implications of these projects are for FreeBSD.

After another rousing break in the SpatialChat platform, Ed Maste and Warner Losh headed up a round table discussion on FreeBSD Pre-commit CI. The goal of the session was to explain why Pre-commit CI was important to FreeBSD, what is currently in place and then encourage other developers to join those working to enhance the Pre-commit CI process.

A 30-minute break followed as the Pre-Commit CI conversation continued in the hallway track. Next up, Mark Johnston, Mariusz Zaborski, and Ed Maste hosted a panel on FreeBSD Security. During the session, they discussed the Sec Team and some of the changes that have happened over time, as well as what changes may be on deck moving forward. They also reviewed how issues are discovered and dealt with including vulnerability mitigations that have been added to FreeBSD. Finally, they discussed some proactive approaches to improving security.

To keep things on schedule, a 20-minute break followed. We then headed into the last session of the day. Since the Developer and Vendor Summits have gone to an online format, the committee has typically reserved the final session on the first day for a special fireside chat about the history of FreeBSD. Past summits have included talks by [Kirk McKusick](#) and Warner Losh and can be found on the Project's YouTube channel. This year, Jordan Hubbard joined us to speak about the early days of FreeBSD. The session was more of a q&a than a formal talk and it was probably my favorite part of the Summit. Jordan has some great stories to share, and I envy his ability to recall the past with such detail. If you are at all interested in the FreeBSD of yore, I highly recommend checking out Jordan's talk.

Day two of the Summit opened with another welcome from our fearless leader John Baldwin and then dove straight into what may be the most hectic yet productive part of the Summit — the Have, Wants and Needs section, a.k.a 14.0 planning. To cover as much ground as possible, the planning session was broken into two parts with a break in between. The updated HackMD page from the discussion can be found [here](#).

After a much-needed break, Warner was back with a session on the QEMU BSD-user emulator they are using to build packages and the state of getting it upstreamed. Warner ended with a call for help in reviewing patches, refactoring, submitting system calls and fixing bugs. Check out his presentation for more information on how you can help.

The last break of the day was followed by a session on the Linux Professional Institute's BSD offerings. Fabian Thorns from LPI spoke not only about the BSD certification exams but also LPI's mission and the new membership program. He also put out a call for help in creating training materials surrounding the BSD certification exams. Be sure to check out Fabian's full presentation for more information on how you might be able to either help or learn from LPI.

The Summit wrapped up with a closing from John Baldwin where he discussed upcoming FreeBSD events and sent out a reminder to take the summit survey. As someone who has helped organize her fair share of conferences and events, I can tell you that post-event surveys are incredibly valuable to planning committees. It really does help us figure out what worked, what didn't and helps us decide what we might want to do in the future. The committee is already at work planning the Fall 2020 FreeBSD Vendor Summit. More information on that should be available soon. With any luck, we'll finally get to see each other in person.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the June 2022 FreeBSD Developer Summit. We look forward to seeing you later this year, one way or another.

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ANNE DICKISON joined the Foundation in 2015 and brings over 20 years experience in technology-focused marketing and communications. Specifically, her work as the Marketing Director and then Co-Executive Director of the USENIX Association helped instill her commitment to spreading the word about the importance of free and open source technologies.