May 8th

Gary Wang (Wáng Wēi)
Born: May 8, 1973;
Fuzhou, Fujian, China

Wang founded the Chinese video sharing company Tudou.com in Jan. 2005 (a month before YouTube [Feb 14] debuted), and the site was officially launched on April 15, just over a week before YouTube's "Me at the Zoo" first video was uploaded [April 23].

On March 12, 2013, Wang formed "Light Chaser Animation Studios" to produce animated films targeting the Chinese market, with the aim of building "The Pixar of China". By 2016, the company had grown to a team of 190, including several veterans from Pixar [Feb 3] and DreamWorks Animation [March 15].

Wang's first full-time job out of college was as a salesman of apparel snap fasteners.

Kaypro II Portable
May 8, 1982

Kaypro Corporation was started by Non-Linear Systems in 1981 to develop computers that competed with the then-popular Osborne 1 [April 3]. Kaypro's chosen niche was rugged, "luggable" CP/M-based [June 22] machines, pre-loaded with lots of software.

Despite the name, the Kaypro II was the first model to be released commercially (perhaps named in honor of the Apple II [June 5]).

Residing in a somewhat boxy aluminum case with a keyboard that snapped onto the front, the II weighed 29 pounds and was powered by AC only. It used a Zilog Z80 chip [March 9], had 64K of RAM, two 5.25-inch floppy disk drives, and serial and parallel ports. Its 9" green monochrome screen compared favorably to the Osborne 1's tiny 5" display.

Nevertheless, the press mocked its design – one magazine described Kaypro as "producing computers packaged in tin cans". However, by mid-1983 the company was selling more than 10,000 units a month, briefly making it the fifth-largest computer maker in the world. Indeed, its rugged design made it a popular choice in industry. Arthur C. Clarke [Dec 16] also chose a Kaypro II to write his 1982 novel "2010: Odyssey Two" [April 2].

A Kaypro II. Photo by Autopilot. CC BY-SA 4.0.

The Kaypro II was followed by several machines marketed with variations of the number '2', including the 2X, "II Plus 88", "New 2", and "2X MTC".

Kaypro's success was one reason for Osborne's decline, aside from its self-inflicted Osborne Effect [March 6], but Kaypro was otherwise slow to react to the rise of IBM PC [Aug 12] compatibility. Compaq [Feb 14] eventually grabbed away most of its market share with its Portable [Nov 4], which was similar to Kaypro's CP/M luggables but could run MS-DOS.

John Resig
Born: May 8, 1984;
New York ??, USA

Resig is known as the lead developer of the jQuery JavaScript library [Aug 26] which simplifies client-side HTML scripting, and has produced several other notable JavaScript libraries, including Processing.js, Env.js, Sizzle.js, and QUnit. He was also responsible for Khan Academy's [Nov 16] online environment for learning to program.

An interest in art history led to his development of two image databases: Ukiyo-e.org which collects Japanese woodblock prints, and "PHAROS Images," a photo archive.

Incorrect reports that he was attacked by a vampire in 2014 refer to the actor John Resig and his role as the goofy town deputy, Kevin Ellis, on the TV show "True Blood".

Mother's Day Outage
May 8, 1988

A broken power cable came in contact with a telecommunications line, causing a fire in the main switching room at the Hinsdale Central Office of Illinois Bell.

The Hinsdale station was one of five hub gateways through which all Chicago suburban calls were switched, processing more than 3.5 million calls each day. As a result, cellular services, mobile telephones, and beepers were affected by the fire, compounded by the improbable fact that each hub operated without a backup.

An alarm at 4:20 pm brought firefighters to the scene, but their efforts were hindered by the office's electrical generators which continued to produce power until they were shut off at 7:15 pm. Fire departments from 15 suburbs battled the blaze in high winds and a thunderstorm, before bringing it under control at about 8:30 pm.

All phone services in six western suburbs were cut off, affecting scores of towns and the O`Hare International and Midway airports. Some customers were

left without services for a month.

In 1989, Illinois Bell announced a $80-million, five-year program to construct a duplicate telephone network system, and to redesign its fire protection systems.

For more network outages, see [Jan 15], [April 13], [April 20], [Oct 4].

Copland Described
May 8-12, 1995

Apple's Copland project focussed on replacing Mac System 7 [May 13] with an OS that ran on top of a microkernel called Nukernel that could better handle memory management and preemptive multitasking. A second stage, known as Gershwin, would add multithreading and other advanced features.

Aaron Copland (1962). Photo by CBS Television.

Copland relied on the newly defined Common Hardware Reference Platform, or CHRP, which was intended to standardize the Mac hardware. In particular, CHRP would be able to run other OSes, such as Solaris [Sept 4] and AIX.

Inevitably, Copland began to be referred to as System 8/Mac OS 8, and was a central topic at Apple's developers conference in May 1995. However, there were suspiciously few live demos at that event.

Problem began to arise as new features were added more rapidly than they could be completed, including most of those originally intended for Gershwin. The completion date for the beta was pushed back several times, and the press began to smell blood.

In 1996, Apple's new CEO Gil Amelio [Feb 2] put Ellen Hancock in charge of getting the OS back on track. She instead decided to cancel the project outright in Aug. 1996. This was so late in the development cycle that CD envelopes had been printed for the developer's release.

A Mac OS 8 was launched on [July 26] 1997, but was little more than a renamed System 7.7. In the meantime, Amelio was forced to turn to outside companies for a new OS [Feb 2].

Patching KDE 2 under FreeBSD
May 8, 2004

'Как пропатчить KDE 2 под FreeBSD?' or 'How does one patch KDE 2 [Oct 14] under FreeBSD [Nov 1]?' is a meme [Nov 15] largely confined to Russian and East European Internet culture.

The question was posted to the #anime channel of the RusNet IRC network [Aug 16] on this day, and was intended to satirize the disproportionate large number of technical conversations occurring on a channel supposedly focused on anime.

It gradually became a popular question across many Russophone forums, and even reached the mainstream media when it became the third most popular proposed question for an online question-and-answer session with Russian president Vladimir Putin. Sadly, it wasn't chosen as an actual question for that versatile everyman.

In 2007, the query did reach political circles when Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko were asked for their opinions. Nazarbayev mentioned open-source [Feb 3], while Yushchenko referred to KDE 3 (although version 3.5 was current at the time).

In 2014, the question mutated into "How does one patch KDE 4 under OpenBSD?" but again became outdated when KDE was split into three parts (Frameworks, Plasma, and Applications), and reached version 5.

The three most notable descendants of BSD [March 9] are FreeBSD [Nov 1], OpenBSD, and NetBSD [May 19]. NetBSD and FreeBSD started life in 1993, as derivations of 386BSD [July 14], and OpenBSD was forked from NetBSD in 1995. As a consequence, there's not much difference between FreeBSD and OpenBSD, although FreeBSD is probably the more popular. OpenBSD places more emphasis on security, and being as free as possible.

Foldit Debut
May 8, 2008

Foldit is an online puzzle game about protein folding. It taps into the human brain's pattern matching and spatial reasoning abilities to help solve protein structuring problems. This is important in several areas, including bioinformatics, molecular biology, and medicine.

David Baker, a protein research scientist at the University of Washington, founded the project with the help of Seth Cooper from the Center for Game Science at the university.

There are currently over 240,000 registered players.

A 2010 paper in the *Nature* credited Foldit's players with providing results that matched or outperformed algorithmically computed solutions.