freezing, hard locking, and debug.mpsafenet=0

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Hi there,

I'm sharing my experiences with this in the hopes that it saves someone else many many hours of troubleshooting and headaches. A client of mine has a Dell Poweredge tower server with FreeBSD 6−stable on it which was acting as their firewall. At some point in time about 6 months ago the box started locking up every day or couple of days. I imagine this was probably after a buildworld / installworld but I can't remember. It would hard lock with nothing logged or any sign of anything, and no response from the keyboard. In my experiences this usually resulted in bad memory but after swapping out the memory for new memory the issue still persisted. As time went on I eventually pulled the hard drives out of the server and put them into another server with completely different hardware (minus the transfered hard drives). After bringing the install up on the other server I still had the hard locks. I googled like mad and tried all sorts of things to narrow down the problem but kept coming up with nothing. Now, I admit I'm not an elite user so I'm sure lots of you could probably have figured it out quicker. Eventually I put new hard drives into the original firewall (the Dell Poweredge) and did a clean install of FreeBSD 6.2−RELEASE. Unfortunately after bringing the box online as the firewall again it continued locking up. I then updated to −STABLE and still experienced the issue. Finally, after even more countless hours of googling I found this thread http://www.freebsdforums.com/forums/showthread.php?t=38765&page=1&pp=1 <http://www.freebsdforums.com/forums/showthread.php?t=38765&page=1&pp=1> which seemed to describe the same freezing I was having. One person mentioned setting debug.mpsafenet=0 in /boot/loader.conf and not having a problem since doing so. Well, I ended up doing the same thing and it's been about 25 days with not one freeze / lockup.

It's my understanding that the ability to even disable this has been taken out of 7.x, I only can hope that it's not an issue in 7.x like it is on some systems in 6.x. So anyway, I hope this helps someone out.

Kind regards,
Elvar

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