



OTTAWA

# PC NEWS

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## SPECIAL 'TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES' ISSUE—PART 2

### A Practical PDF Reader for Android *by Alan German*

The ability to easily read PDF files on a smartphone is somewhat restricted by the small size of the display screen. Practically, only a portion of a page can be displayed at any one time. The problem often comes when it is necessary to move to the next page.

Let's suppose, for example, that I have finished reading the text at the bottom of the first page. When trying to scroll down the document, most PDF reader apps will move the pointer laterally, and place it at the bottom of the second page. Clearly, this isn't all that useful. I need to be able to restart reading the text at the top of the second page, not at the bottom! It's very inconvenient – I would say unnecessary – to have to scroll up to the top of the page before being able to do so.

But, it's amazing how many apps follow this model. I tried several different apps, including the "industry leader", with no success in finding a logical approach. That is, until I came across MuPDF, a free, cross-platform app for Android, Linux, Windows and IOS.

With MuPDF installed on my phone, reading a PDF file became much more user friendly. The program is lean and mean. It doesn't have a lot of fancy features. It loads documents very quickly, provides a sharp rendition of the content, and just lets you read your PDF file.

moves the pointer – to the top of the next page!

As might be expected, tapping on the bottom the screen scrolls down through the document, while tapping at the top scrolls upwards. And, in the latter case, when moving up between pages, tapping on the screen takes you from the top of one page to the bottom of the previous page. So, as when scrolling down through the document, scrolling up also maintains the focus on the current material being read.

As indicated, MuPDF is a lightweight app – a PDF reader no more and no less – but it achieves this purpose admirably.

#### Bottom Line

MuPDF (Freeware)  
Version 1.7  
Artifex Software, Inc.  
<http://mupdf.com/>

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Best of all, with a document loaded, one tap in the lower-right corner of the screen scrolls down the page. And, when at the bottom of one page, the on-screen tap

Pizza Night & eWaste event: **WEDNESDAY, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## June Raffle

**F**or the June raffle, courtesy of VMWare Canada, we have a copy of **VMWare Workstation**.

Those who attended the April OPCUG meeting got to see just how powerful virtualization can be.

VMware Workstation is a hypervisor that runs on most 64-bit Windows or Linux operating systems. You can set up one or more virtual machines, and use them simultaneously along with the host operating system. Each virtual machine runs its own operating system, which can be any of over 200 different operating systems including Windows, Linux, BSD, and MS-DOS.

VMWare Workstation is valued at \$250

Tickets are, as always, a good deal at \$1 for one, a great deal at \$2 for three or the unbelievable bargain of \$5 for ten!

## Coming Up...

REMINDER: All events will be at the **Canada Aviation and Space Museum**, 11 Aviation Parkway.

### Wednesday, June 10, 2015

5:30 pm: eWaste event (beside the tent at the museum, details at <http://opcug.ca/public/history/eWaste/2015/eWaste.html>)

6:30 pm: **PIZZA PARTY** (free, under the tent at the museum, details at <http://opcug.ca/public/regmtg.htm>.)

7:30 pm: Regular meeting in the Bush Theatre

**Speaker:** Eric Jacksch (<https://securityshelf.com/>)

**Topic:** Cybersecurity for Individuals

Eric is a leading cybersecurity analyst with over 20 years of practical security experience. He has consulted to some of the world's largest banks, governments, automakers, insurance companies and postal organizations. Eric writes a weekly security column for IT in Canada, was a regular columnist for Monitor Magazine, and has contributed to several other publications.

Eric will survey the cybersecurity landscape with an emphasis on how it impacts individuals. Topics will include common attack vectors, advanced threats, and protecting yourself at home. Time will be reserved for questions and answers.

**Our next meeting will be in September.** Check our website at <http://opcug.ca> later this summer for our Fall line-up.

## May Prize Winners

**Howie Macumber** was the winner of the door prize at our May monthly meeting.

Enjoy your new Abobe speaker Howie.

And **Jeff Dubois** won the monthly raffle prize of a copy of VMWare Workstation.

I'm sure Jeff will put it to good use.

## 2015 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, June 10 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 p.m. <b>Bush Theatre</b> of the <b>Canada Aviation and Space Museum</b> , 11 Aviation Parkway. <a href="http://casmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/index.php">http://casmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/index.php</a>
Beginners' SIG	Wednesday, June 10 <sup>th</sup>	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Linux / Open Source SIG	Wednesday, June 10 <sup>th</sup>	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, June 10 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 p.m. (after all other SIGs) at Liam Maguire's, St. Laurent Blvd. at Innes Rd.

Please note that unless otherwise noted, SIGs meet at 9:00 p.m. (immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting).

# PRODUCT REVIEW

## Speech to Text App *by Alan German*

One of the problems with smartphones is their tiny keyboards – and their even tinier keys! For those of us who are getting a little older, just seeing the keys can be a problem, but actually pressing the one we want can simply be an exercise in frustration.

I was complaining about this issue to a friend who said why don't I just use the speech to text feature by pressing the microphone button on the drop-down keyboard. Great idea – but, there was no microphone button on my phone's keyboard.

In their wisdom, the manufacturer of my smartphone chose to install a custom keyboard, and this doesn't have any speech to text capability. However, this problem was quickly resolved. A Google search for speech to text applications for Android identified many candidate apps, including one from Google itself – Google Keyboard.

Google Keyboard is a free download from Google Play, so I downloaded the app, installed it, and used it to replace my phone's default keyboard.

The application provides several options for text input – in one of 25 languages if need be. Obviously, it functions as a normal keyboard, complete with the usual tiny keys, but it also allows spell-

ing out words by swiping across the keyboard – a process that Google calls Gesture Typing. It has both word recognition and next-word prediction as you type. So, after typing just a few letters, one click will often allow selection of the entire word. Another feature, that may be of interest to some users, is the ability to call up screens full of emojis – the “smiley face” icons – and insert these into the text.

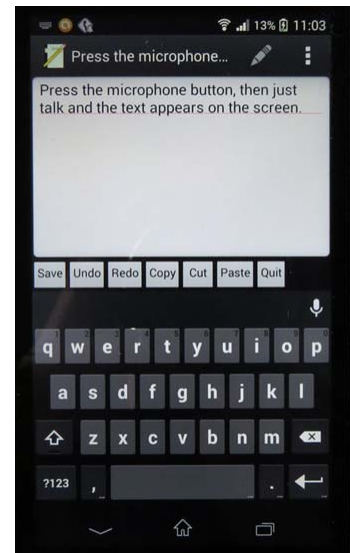
However, the best part of all is Google Keyboard's ability to do voice recognition and translate speech into text. Using this feature one can compose text and E-mail messages, and even write an entire document, without having to use the on-screen keyboard as a text-entry device. And, what is really amazing is that, without any training, the voice recognition system is incredibly accurate.

As an example, I opened Jota Text Editor, my favourite Android app for producing, editing, and saving text documents. The on-screen keyboard appeared below the editor's display window (see Figure). However, note the microphone control button in the top-right corner of the keyboard display (immediately above the “P” key).

I pressed this key and said: “Press the microphone comma then just talk and the text appears on the screen pe-

riod”. The result, as shown in the screenshot, is self-evident.

So, if you need to send me a text message indicating that you will buy me a beer at Liam Maguire's, or have a burning desire to dictate an article for Ottawa PC News on your smartphone, the voice input feature of Google Keyboard may be just what you need!



### Bottom Line

Google Keyboard (Free)  
Google Inc.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.inputmethod.latin&hl=en>

## Review of 2014 Financial Records

*by Richard Aylesworth*

I reviewed the Treasurer's financial records for the year 2014, and found them to be in good shape. The dollar amounts agree with those in the Treasurer's financial report submitted to the board.

There were a few minor errors with the reporting of some transactions. These were dealt with to my satisfaction by the Treasurer.

I made a suggestion for a new section in the books to contain notes that refer to the current year but not pertaining to specific transactions.

Thanks to Alan German for a job well done.

*Richard Aylesworth,  
April 2015*

The Board of Directors would like to thank Richard for his thorough review of the club's accounts.

## ARTICLE

# The Five Most Common Words by Jeff Dubois

I've become the technology "go-to guy" for most of my family and many of my friends. It's not a title I loathe and, admittedly, I gain some pleasure from being able to share the knowledge I've been fortunate enough to have gained.

Over the past couple of years, there have been some dramatic shifts in the way we access content, a shift most notably evidenced in the market. Desktops and laptops have been dethroned by mobile devices, a shift which has also substantially changed my counsel. People no longer ask me which computer to buy. Instead, the most common five words I hear these days are: "Which tablet should I buy?"

What follows is a choreographed dance, arranged to an inquisitorial adagio with an aim to the best advice. As with any dance, you have to move one foot first. "What do you want to use it for?", I always ask. The response which follows is always the same: "To check my email and browse the web".

A low-end device is sufficient for browsing the Internet and checking email if the device will be used infrequently. A \$37 Ubislate will do the job, although it will be slow, have low resolution and short battery life. I know; I have one. They're inexpensive, small, you can carry it in a knapsack or carry-on and if it gets lost, stolen or broken, you haven't lost the Crown jewels.

What I've discovered, however, is that most people want more from a device

than to merely browse the internet and check email; they just don't know it.

Browsing the Internet and checking email is a slow waltz; everyone knows how. Being able to use the tablet as a viable VoIP telephone or attaching it to a television so it serves as a robust media streaming device, however, is the Rumba or the Tango. In those instances, you'd better make sure you're wearing the right dance shoes.

If, for example, you recognize the advantage of being able to use the device as a VoIP telephone over WiFi, then sound quality (and volume) are important considerations. That means a good microphone, speaker and headphones/ear buds.

If, on the other hand, you recognize the utility of the device serving as a robust media streaming device then the ability to connect the device to a television (usually via HDMI) means that the device should have that ability. The 7" Samsung Galaxy Tab 3, for instance, cannot be connected to a television whereas the 8" model can. I know; I purchased the former. Some devices will require the use of a special adapter (an MHL converter) while others, such as the Asus Transformer T100, has a built in micro-HDMI connector.

Tablets are wonderful devices for consuming data but, in my view, their on-screen keyboards make them woefully inefficient devices for inputting any quantity of data. In other words, while it might be practical to read War & Peace on a Kobo eReader, if Tolstoy

were alive today, I can't imagine him writing his missive on one. Mercifully, a number of tablets are Bluetooth capable or have USB ports so attaching a keyboard or wireless desktop combo may serve to address this issue. You may not find these options on the lower end tablets.

Another, often overlooked, consideration you may wish to keep in mind is whether or not you have any specific software needs. For example, if you're joined at the hip to Microsoft's Office Suite, then a Surface may be the way to go. I actually looked at the Surface and discovered it came in two flavours: the Surface RT, a Windows wannabe version not capable of running generic x86 software and a Surface Pro, the real deal. Unfortunately, the Surface Pro was priced beyond what I wanted to spend so settled on the Asus Transformer T100 which was half the price and had all the bells and whistles I wanted/needed.

In sum, there is no simple answer to the five most common words I hear: "Which tablet should I buy?" Rather, the question should be "Which one should I not buy?" in which case the answer is "whichever one doesn't meet your needs."

Best advice? Make a list of what you need and expect the tablet to do. Having a flashlight might be good, but if it means you can't run mandatory software then you've just bought an expensive flashlight. Make a list of non-negotiable features as your starting point.



# PRODUCT REVIEW

## SwiftKey Keyboard *by Chris Taylor*

I was a BlackBerry user for over 10 years at work and really liked having a physical keyboard. When I retired 2 years ago, BlackBerry was already in decline, so I opted for a Samsung Galaxy S3. I knew having an on-screen keyboard was going to be a frustration for me, and Samsung delivered that in spades.

I asked around for recommendations on replacement soft keyboards and a friend recommended SwiftKey. It cost a couple of bucks at the time, but I figured it was worth it to see if it made it easier to type more than a few words.

Once installed from Google Play, it took me through some configuration screens to set up various options. One option I declined was to learn the words I use by accessing my Gmail account. Felt a little too “Big Brotherish” to me.

There are three main aspects to SwiftKey that make typing easier.

First, you can choose various layouts including ones with split keys (very useful if you type on a larger device such as a tablet and hold it by the sides), ones with separate numeric keys, arrow keys for moving the cursor, and more.

Second is *flow*. With flow, you just drag your finger across the keys rather than lifting it and pressing individual letters. It is pretty amazing when it works and, if it works for you, it can speed up your typing immensely. Unfortunately, I found it was a little hit and miss. I found I spent more time verifying it guessed right and correcting wrong guesses than it saved me, so I very rarely use flow.

Third is what *really* works for me – word prediction. It turns out most people have a fairly limited vocabulary and use certain phrases frequently. SwiftKey learns quickly about the words you tend to use. As you type, SwiftKey tries to guess the word you are typing and presents three options at the top of the keyboard. As you type more letters, the list changes. When you see the word you want, you can tap it. If it is the centre word of the three, you can also just hit space to select it.

*“...most people have a fairly limited vocabulary and use certain phrases frequently.”*

SwiftKey then takes it a step further and, based on its learning of the words and phrases you use, tries to predict the word you will use next. For example, if you frequently type *Home late for dinner tonight*, within a few times of typing that phrase, when you type *Ho*, you are very likely to see the words appear in the predictions and with 5 taps, you can complete the phrase.

SwiftKey has other tricks up its sleeve, such as auto-correcting typos, accessing accented letters by holding down the letter in question, voice input, ending a sentence by hitting space twice (which removes the first space, then inserts a period and a space), auto-capitalizing the first word of a sentence, and more.

SwiftKey has support for 81 languages, and you can have three active at once.

SwiftKey keeps track of how effective it has been in helping you. Right now, SwiftKey has saved me 162,465 keystrokes, completed 71,253 words, corrected 81,290 typos, flowed 972 words (remember, I rarely use this feature), and made me 30% more efficient at typing. I mentioned that SwiftKey used to cost a couple of bucks. It is now free. They make their money by selling keyboard themes. But not to worry; it doesn't nag you to buy something while you are typing. You will occasionally receive a notification of an available theme. That's about it.

I still miss my BlackBerry physical keyboard, but SwiftKey has probably kept me from throwing my phone against the wall more than once. Highly recommended.

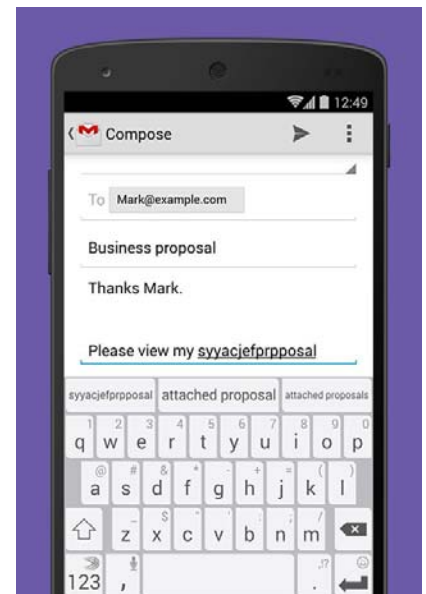
### Bottom Line:

SwiftKey Keyboard

Free

<http://swiftkey.com>

Available through Google Play for Android and iTunes for Apple iOS



# PRODUCT REVIEW

## Virtual CD Management *by Alan German*

In order to be able to load topographical maps from a tablet computer onto a hand-held GPS unit, I needed to install Garmin's MapSource program, and the associated maps, onto the tablet. However, while the tablet had a USB port, it didn't have an optical drive and, of course, the software was available as a set of CD's. Installing the mapping program, and some of the maps, was mostly straightforward. I simply copied the relevant CD's to a USB flash drive and installed the software directly from the USB. However, the Canadian topographical maps proved to be a challenge. The relevant installation program ran fine from the USB, but then insisted on me inserting the appropriately numbered CD!

A Google search identified many users who had experienced the same issue, and one of the suggested workarounds was to create ISO files of the CD's, use software to load these files into a virtual CD drive, and then use this as the installation medium.

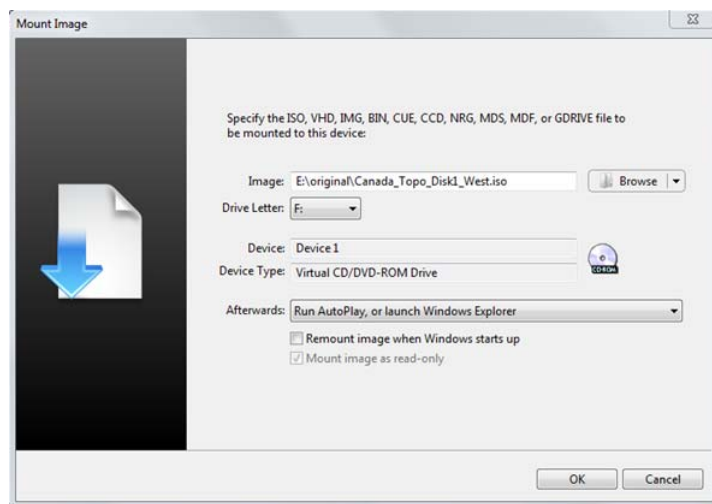
The next trick was to find a freeware package to accomplish this. My initial attempts weren't too fruitful. My favourite CD burner (on a desktop computer running Windows 7 and having a "real" CD drive) didn't want to create ISO files of the map CD's. Then, a program that would create the necessary ISO files on the Windows 7 machine, wouldn't run under Windows 8 so that the ISO files couldn't be mounted on its virtual CD drive on the tablet.

Eventually, I tracked down Gizmo Central which includes the ability to create ISO files from CD's, and to mount the resulting images on a virtual CD drive. Since I only needed these two features of the program, I opted to only install the core Gizmo Central utility and the companion Gizmo Drive module.

Although nominally having been written for Windows 7, the package also installed and ran flawlessly under Windows 8.

The utility offers several additional functions, including the ability to customize the program's user interface (the Gizmo Toolbar). Without doing any customization, the user interface is a little strange. A window pops-up in the lower-right corner of the display and provides the option to run Gizmo Manager. The resulting Start Screen includes the options to "Create ISO from disk" and "Mount ISO, BIN, VHD to virtual drive". These two options satisfied my requirements and so I opted to simply run these and not bother customizing the user interface.

Using the program in this way is extremely simple. Choosing to create an ISO file, pops up a dialogue box which selects the available optical drive by default, and provides the option to browse for, and name, the resulting ISO file. Similarly, when mounting an existing ISO file, the program has ten pre-defined virtual drives (Device 1 through Device 10) and so it is simply a matter of selecting one of these drives, pressing the "Mount Image" button, and browsing for the required ISO file.



The drive letter (e.g. drive F:) to be used for the virtual CD can be selected from a drop-down menu of available options. Another control allows selection of the action to be taken once the virtual CD is mounted, such as running the AutoPlay file, launching Windows Explorer, or doing nothing.

So, the beauty of this system is that the ISO file can be created on a machine equipped with an optical drive, copied to a USB flash drive, and mounted on a tablet computer as a virtual drive with a specific drive letter. In my case, I could then run the setup program to install the topo. maps from this virtual drive. The installation process runs normally since, instead of a series of CD's (Disk 1 through Disk 4) being loaded into a physical drive, the associated ISO image files are mounted sequentially as the assigned virtual drive.

Gizmo Central is a useful utility for machines that don't have a physical optical drive. Create an ISO file of any CD on a machine equipped with an optical drive and then mount the resulting image as a virtual CD drive on a netbook or tablet computer. The contents of the CD can be displayed, individual file and folders copied, and executable programs run – all from a virtual copy of the physical disk!

### Bottom Line

Gizmo Central (Freeware)

Version 2.7

Arainia Solutions LLC

<http://arainia.com/software/gizmo/>

# OPCUG Free Software Guide – Part 57

This guide features an annotated list of free computer programs. The software mentioned has not been reviewed (except where noted) nor have any tests necessarily been conducted. Consequently, no guarantees are provided that the individual programs will perform as described. Rather the list of available software is provided for the information of our members who may find one or more of the programs useful.

## Unchecky

Has software tried to install additional unwanted programs? Ever missed a checkbox, and spent hours removing adware? Ever opened your browser to find that you have a new home page or a new search engine? Unchecky aims to prevent such unwanted changes to your computer.

Previously Reviewed: Checking Out with Unchecky, Alan German, <http://opcug.ca/public/Reviews/Unchecky.htm>

Current Release: Version 0.3.2

Web Site: <http://unchecky.com/>



## DslrDashboard



Use this app to control your Nikon DSLR or any other PTP compatible camera from your smartphone.

You will need an USB OTG cable to connect the two devices, and Android 4.x (or higher) with USB host support.

Current Release: Version 0.2.7

Web Site: <http://preview.tinyurl.com/bparw4k>

## Dashlane

Keep track of all your passwords in a highly secure password vault with this free utility. Automatically import passwords from any browser, and save new passwords as you browse. Use Dashlane's auto-login feature, and you'll never again have to remember or type a password on any of your devices!

Web Site: <https://www.dashlane.com/>

## CutePDF Editor

Use this on-line editor utility to create and modify PDF files. Convert scanned images into PDF documents. Combine multiple PDF documents into a single PDF file. Extract, re-order, duplicate, delete, rotate and crop pages, and much more.

Web Site: <https://www.cutepdf-editor.com/>

## HouseCall

Trend Micro's HouseCall can quickly identify and fix a wide range of threats including viruses, worms, Trojans, and spyware. Use Quick Scan, full or custom scan and keep your machine protected.

Current Release: Version 8.0

Web Site: <http://housecall.trendmicro.com/>



Securing Your Journey  
to the Cloud

## Office Remote for Android



Start your PowerPoint presentation, advance the slides, see your speaker notes, and control an on-screen laser pointer with a touch of your finger — all from your smartphone. Requires Microsoft Office 2013, Bluetooth, and the desktop add-in for Office Remote installed on your PC

Web Site: <http://preview.tinyurl.com/npf983r>

## What's my computer doing?

This small yet powerful free utility will give you exhaustive information about all the processes running in your system at a given time. These will include processes that have been launched automatically by your operating system, and those which seem to be working in the background without your permission.

Current Release: Version 1.08

Web Site: <http://preview.tinyurl.com/okvbner>



## Plank



This utility for Linux is the underlying technology for Docky and is meant to be the simplest dock on the planet. The goal is to provide just what a dock needs and nothing more. However, it is a library which can be used to create other dock programs with more advanced features.

Current Release: Version 0.8.1

Web Site: <https://launchpad.net/plank>

## Darik's Boot and Nuke

Want to dispose of that old computer or hard disk at an OPCUG eWaste event or silent auction? Use DBAN to safely wipe the entire contents of the drive before sending it for recycling or reuse.

Current Release: Version 2.2.8

Web Site: <http://sourceforge.net/projects/dban/>

# OTTAWA PC NEWS

**Ottawa PC News** is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Member participation is encouraged. If you would like to contribute an article to Ottawa PC News, please submit it to the newsletter editor (contact info below). Deadline for submissions is three Sundays before the next General Meeting.

## Group Meetings

OPCUG meets on the second Wednesday in the month, except July and August, at the 7:30 p.m. **Auditorium of the Canada Aviation and Space Museum**, 11 Aviation Parkway, Ottawa. Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) go until 10 p.m.

Parking is available at the museum for a flat fee of \$3 after 5pm. Limited street parking is available for free. Details at <http://opcug.ca/public/regmtg.htm>

**OPCUG Membership Fees:** \$25 per year  
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**Follow us on Twitter:** <http://twitter.com/opcug>

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Linux / Open-Source SIG

(vacant)

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# OPCUG



*Users helping users*

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

**B**ring your old computer books, software, hardware, and paraphernalia you want to GIVE AWAY to the General Meetings, and leave them at the table near the auditorium's entrance. Please limit magazines to publication dates under two years.

You may TAKE AWAY any items of use to you.

Any items left over at the end of the meeting have to be taken back home by those who brought them in.

