



OTTAWA

# PC NEWS

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## PRODUCT REVIEW

### Swiss File Knife *by Chris Taylor*

When it comes to searching for and manipulating files, there are a lot of utilities out there. I recently came across an interesting free program called Swiss File Knife (SFK). This utility has an incredible array of capabilities built into a single, compact, command-line program. There are versions for Windows, Linux and MacOS. While there is probably not a lot about SFK that is unique, it might be able to replace a couple of dozen or more separate programs.



SFK is a portable program. You don't have to install it. Just open a CMD prompt, and run the small program (under 2 MB) with the appropriate command line option to

have it perform the function you want. If you run it with no parameters, it will provide help information. The small size and portable nature of the program makes it ideal to have on a flash drive you carry with you. Then you have it available when working on any computer.

SFK can do a lot!

In basic searching, it can find files that contain specific text strings, report on the size of folders or folders with files or a certain age, count the lines in text files, and find files over a given size. There is a duplicate file finder. You can compare two folders to find different or added files. *Head* and *Tail* functions list the starting or ending lines of a text file. SFK can create and verify MD5 checksums, which is a way of uniquely identifying

files and often used to verify that a file has not been modified in any way.

SFK can also manipulate the contents of files: replace tabs with spaces, eliminate duplicate lines, sort files, insert text at the beginning or end of files, replace a given string with other text, and split large files into smaller chunks.

There are some more esoteric functions built into SFK. You can it have remove spaces from file and folder names. This can be useful when you are doing batch processing of files where spaces in file and folder names can cause problems. It can grab text from the Windows clipboard or put text onto the clipboard. You can search for text strings in environment variables. The *pathfind* parameter allows you to see where a program on your path actually loads from.

One of the odder functions is phonetic spelling; a way of speaking a word or phrase when you have to make sure the receiver gets the exact correct spelling. *SFK spell packet* will return *Peter Alpha Charlie King Echo Tango*. If you prefer NATO phonetic spelling, *SFK spell - nato packet* will return *Papa Alpha Charlie Kilo Echo Tango*. Say either to someone and they will understand you mean *packet*, as opposed to what they might think if you say *Phishing A isle Cue Knot Eye Tsar*.

SFK can even create an FTP or Web server on your computer. They are not particularly full-featured, and the security (or lack thereof) is such that intranet-only use is recommended. But if you need a quick and dirty way to transfer some files, SFK can do the job.

The functions in SFK have a myriad of

option switches to modify the way they operate. The functions I have mentioned just scratch the surface of what SFK can accomplish. For full details, see the web site.

The built-in help may be sufficient for many. If you want all the built-in help in a single text file, *SFK dumphelp > sfk-help.txt* will produce a 320K file called *sfk-help.txt*. If you want more, you can buy a \$5, 260-page PDF file with complete details, including 60 pages of tutorials.

#### Bottom Line:

Swiss File Knife  
Version 1.8.2 (2016-11-15)  
Operating System: Windows, Linux and MacOS  
Price: free  
<http://stahlworks.com/dev/swiss-file-knife.html>

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Annual PIZZA Night and eWaste Event: WEDNESDAY, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## June Raffle

### The June raffle prize is the **Hype i-FX Virtual Reality Headset**

Pop in your smartphone and presto! You're transported into an amazing virtual 3D world! This Optix virtual reality kit immerses you in a full 3D world that you'll never forget. Just secure your smartphone in the mount and you'll experience a vivid 360 degree environment that's amazingly lifelike. Features screen magnification for wide angle cinematic view, adjustable pupil and focal point distance, high-grade 42mm resin lens and more. Designed to worn with most eyeglasses, everyone can comfortably use this virtual reality headset. Memory foam padding ensures a comfortable fit for a better experience.

Tickets are \$1 for one, \$2 for three, or \$5 for ten.



### May Prize Winners

The raffle prize at the May monthly meeting was an Xtreme Red Mini Bluetooth speaker, won by **Mike Doyle**.

Not to be outdone were our door prize winners. **Anthony Toscano** took home a coveted 'Goup' mug while **Bill Palamar** won a copy of an E-mail client software.

## Coming Up...

### Wednesday, June 14th, 2017

Annual Pizza Night & eWaste event, followed by a presentation.

#### 5:30 - 7:00 pm: [eWaste Event](#)

Once again, the OPCUG will have its annual eWaste collection on June 14th. If you have electronic items that you no longer need, please bring them to the tent in front of the museum; they will be taken to a processing plant and properly disposed of safely and responsibly with respect to OES guidelines. The eWaste event will be from 5:30pm to 7pm near the tent beside the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, 11 Aviation Parkway.

6:00 - 7:30 pm: Annual Pizza Night (free for members and their guests)

7:30 pm: Presentation

Speaker: Dr. Beth Robertson, Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies, Carleton Univ.  
Topic: Omeka: An Open-source web publishing platform

Created by Carleton University's Disability Research Group, "EnvisioningTechnologies: Historical Insights into Educational Technologies for People who are Blind or Partially Sighted in Canada, 1820 – Present", is a virtual exhibit which endeavours to tell the stories of the people and technologies that have shaped, and been shaped by, social, cultural and historical understandings of disability, blindness and vision loss in Canada from the nineteenth century to the present.

Omeka is a free, flexible and open-source web-publishing platform for the display of library, museum, archives and scholarly collections and exhibitions. Its "five-minute setup" makes launching an online exhibit as easy as launching a blog. Aptly named, Omeka is a Swahili word meaning "to display or lay out wares; to speak out; to spread out or to unpack". Designed with non-IT specialist in mind, Omeka allows users to focus on content and interpretation rather than programming. It brings Web 2.0 technologies and approaches to academic and cultural websites to foster user interaction and participation. It makes top-shelf design easy with a simple and flexible templating system. Its robust open-source developer and user communities underwrite Omeka's stability and sustainability.

For meeting updates and additional details, visit <http://opcug.ca> and click on the **MEETINGS** button. June is the last newsletter and meeting until September. See you after the summer hiatus.

## 2017 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, June 14 <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>
Q&A Session	Wednesday, June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, June 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 p.m. (after the Q&A) at Liam Maguire's, St. Laurent Blvd. at Innes Rd.

## Annual PIZZA Night & eWaste Event

For our June meeting, the OPCUG will have its 5th annual eWaste collection event at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, 11 Aviation Parkway, in association with the Ontario Electronic Stewardship (OES). Items will be taken to the processing plant and properly disposed of safely and responsibly with respect to OES guidelines. Everyone is invited to rid their homes of items no longer needed.

The drop off zone is under the tent, at the left of the entrance of the museum. There is plenty of parking near the tent, please do not block the driveway of the museum. Let us know if you need some assistance, we will have many volunteers happy to help you.

The EOS will collect the eWaste for recycling. There will be some revenue generated per metric tonne of items accepted for disposal - so the big old heavy TVs and such are happily taken away.

In parallel to the eWaste collection, the OPCUG will hold its Pizza Night including drinks and 35th Anniversary cake, free for members and their guests.

Afterwards, you are invited to our regular meeting at 7:30 pm in the museum, which is open to all as always. The presentations will be about "Omeka: An Open-source web publishing platform" by Dr. Beth Robertson. Please check out our meetings web page or our Facebook page for more information.

The OPCUG thanks the museum for the permission to hold the event.

### WHEN

**Wednesday, June 14, 2017  
17:30—19:00**

### WHERE

**Canada Aviation & Space Museum,  
11 Aviation Parkway, Ottawa, ON**

For more information please check the web page at: <http://opcug.ca/public/history/eWaste/2017/eWaste.html>

## OPCUG Fallback Meeting Location

The OPCUG met for many years at the Canada Science and Technology Museum (CSTM) on St. Laurent Blvd, until the mould problems that caused them to shut down. Although we knew the Canada Aviation and Space Museum (CASM) was not ideal, it is part of the same corporation and we were given priority access. We were able to shift quickly and maintain the same evening for meetings. We have always hoped to move back to the CSTM and expect we will get the highest priority by remaining a client of theirs.

Earlier this year we had a survey to gauge members' interest in moving to the Heron Road Community Centre (HRCC) in the event that we are unable to return to the CSTM. There was strong support for such a move even though we knew we would be unable to maintain the meeting night of the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

As of now, we have booked the auditorium at the Heron Rd Community Centre for the 2nd Tuesday of the month for September through December. If we end up not using the space, we can cancel with no penalty.

The board feels it is important to make just one move. We will remain at CASM until availability at CSTM is determined. We don't expect to get final word on that until the fall some time. If we can move back to the CSTM, we will stay at CASM until then. Otherwise, we will move instead to the HRCC.

Stay tuned to the newsletter, the web site and the Announcements list for further details as we learn them.



# A Comprehensive Backup Plan by Chris Taylor and Alan German

**H**ave you backed up your computer lately? You know that you should. But, have you done it? Perhaps the problem is that you don't know the best method to backup your entire system or just parts of it. If so, we have the solution – four ways to back stuff up. Use one of these, or several. In fact, for complete peace of mind, use all four to create a comprehensive backup plan!

## Disk imaging – Full backup

Want to be able to quickly and easily restore an entire computer? Disk imaging is the way to go. Free software will do an admirable job. Try Macrium Reflect Free Edition or EaseUS Todo Backup Free.

A full image backup backs up everything – the operating system, installed programs and data. You can tell the backup program to backup one or more partitions, one or more disks (which can each have multiple partitions) or an entire computer (which can have multiple drives).

When you need to restore a backup image, everything comes back. No need to re-install your operating system or programs. All your customizations will be intact. All your *favourites*, all your files, the wallpaper and icons on your desktop, even your *Recycle Bin*! Everything comes back to the state things were at when the backup was run.

Of course, it is also possible to recover individual files and folders. You don't have to restore the entire computer just to recover that accidentally deleted file with your favourite muffin recipe or all your photos from your trip to Timbuktu.

## Disk imaging – Incremental backup

Given that disk images contains *everything*, they can get quite large. To help ensure you don't rapidly consume all the space available on your backup drive, disk imaging programs allow you to create *incremental images*. The way it works is it starts with a full image backup. Then, each time the backup runs, an incremental image, which just contains the changes since the last backup ran, is created.

In a full restore, the backup program first does a complete restore using the initial full system backup, followed by restoring each incremental image in turn.

If you are restoring just files or folders, you can choose from any date when a backup was run and the backup program will find the version of the file modified that date or earlier.

## File and folder synchronization

Typically, you modify your data files (e.g. digital images, word processing documents, financial records) on a much more frequent basis than you update your operating system or install new applications. And, personal data files, if lost, cannot be recovered from original installation media – there aren't any! Consequently, a strategy for frequent data backups is highly desirable.

One way to achieve this is to use a file synchronization tool such as FreeFileSync. You can set FreeFileSync to duplicate (mirror) the contents of one or more folders, or even an entire data partition on your main hard drive and create a backup copy on a second drive. This second drive will typically be a USB memory stick or an external USB drive, depending on how much backup storage space is required.

Once you have added, modified, or deleted files on the main hard drive, running FreeFileSync results in all of the changes being reflected on the backup disk. While this is a manual operation, the beauty of this system is that, by default, FreeFileSync displays only those files that are different between sessions, so it is quick and easy to back up your important data files each time you have made any changes.

## Real-time backup

By using the appropriate software, even file synchronization can be automated. QuickShadow Backup runs in the background and mirrors specific folders to a backup drive. Almost as fast as you can make changes, the new and updated files, and also file deletions, are reflected in the backup.

This technique can also be used in addition to the above-noted manual synchronization process in order to provide a further backup set of data files. However, since the backup disk must be present at all times for the real-time backup process to function, such a backup will be limited to the size of the available backup storage device.

One useful storage medium for this process is an SDcard. These are of reasonably high capacity and low cost, and when left plugged in, even on a laptop, they are relatively inconspicuous. However, since their storage capacity is finite, they are probably best suited to backing up a subset of current (working) data files and folders or a relatively small dedicated data partition.

## Further considerations

Note that it is advisable to create backups of all types on an external drive that can be removed from the computer. Any drive that remains plugged in could be affected by malware (e.g. ransomware!) in the event of a successful attack on the system. Make sure that you have your copies of your backup files secured!

You could also potentially lose a backup disk to fire, theft, and electrical surges. While such occurrences are likely to be infrequent, a further protective measure is to have an off-site backup. Make an occasional full backup to a separate drive and store this at a friend's house, in a desk drawer at the office, or even in the trunk of your car!

## Bibliography

- Backing it up (<http://opcug.ca/public/Articles/1303.pdf>)
- Managing Backups (<http://opcug.ca/public/Articles/1606.pdf>)
- Finding a Backup Program (<http://opcug.ca/public/Reviews/BackupPrograms.htm>)
- Restoring to a new computer (<http://opcug.ca/public/Articles/1611.pdf>)
- Reflections on Disk Imaging Software (<http://opcug.ca/public/Reviews/MacriumReflectFree.htm>)
- EaseUS Todo Backup Free 6.5 (<http://opcug.ca/public/Reviews/EaseUSBackup65.htm>)
- File and Folder Synchronization Revisited (<http://www.opcug.ca/public/Reviews/FreeFileSync.htm>)
- Travel Tips - Backing up Digital Photographs (<http://opcug.ca/public/Articles/1701.pdf>)
- Me and My Shadow (<http://opcug.ca/public/Reviews/Me&MyShadow.htm>)
- A Fiasco with Backups (<http://opcug.ca/public/articles/0712.pdf>)



## WINDOWS 10 ARTICLES

# Advertising in Windows 10

by Chris Taylor

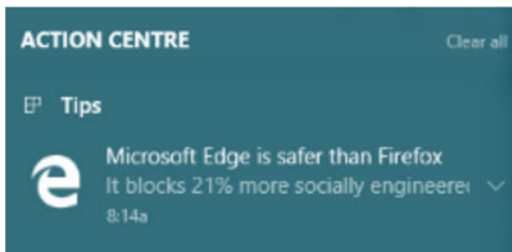
I am offended.

Okay, maybe there really is no such thing as a free lunch. Microsoft gave free Windows 10 upgrades to those running Windows 7 or 8.1. So I was sort of willing to look the other way when ads for Microsoft products and services appeared in Windows 10...and grew in number in the Fall Update (1511) and the Anniversary Update (1607)...and spread out to File Explorer in the Creator's Update (1703).

It would be *really* nice if Microsoft would add an option in *Settings* to remove all advertising in a single slider, but I doubt we will see that. It is possible to remove pretty much all advertising, but it requires going to many locations and performing many steps, most of which are worded strangely. I guess Microsoft really doesn't want people to remove ads when they name things "Windows Spotlight", "Occasionally show suggestions in Start", and "Get tips, tricks, and suggestions as you use Windows". I am guessing ads are the "tricks".

Paul Thurrott wrote a great article on how to remove advertising in Windows 10 – <http://tinyurl.com/zgw2lly>

Now when I use Firefox in Windows 10, I get admonished that "Microsoft Edge is safer than Firefox". Don't get me wrong – I do think that Edge has done a great job when it comes to security. But is it really safer than Firefox (or Chrome or Opera or...)?



A little bit of research returns the correct answer for most things related to technology – *that depends*. One recent article that has a balanced feel to it comes from *How-To Geek* (<http://tinyurl.com/gpl8a4r>) and concludes;

"Right now, Google Chrome and Microsoft Edge have very similar security features. The claim that Edge is "safer" than Chrome merely comes from the fact that Microsoft keeps a better list of bad websites than Chrome does, though if you're protecting yourself well with antivirus and anti-malware software, you should be pretty safe. Mozilla Firefox is behind the other two large browsers, but is on track to catch up in 2017. It is, however, currently better at protecting your privacy, so at least it has its own advantages."

I would be a lot less offended by Microsoft pushing Edge based on security if, a few short years ago, they had been just as insistent that Chrome, Firefox, and Opera were far more secure than Internet Explorer, a view that was widely held.

## Opening a CMD shell in Windows 10

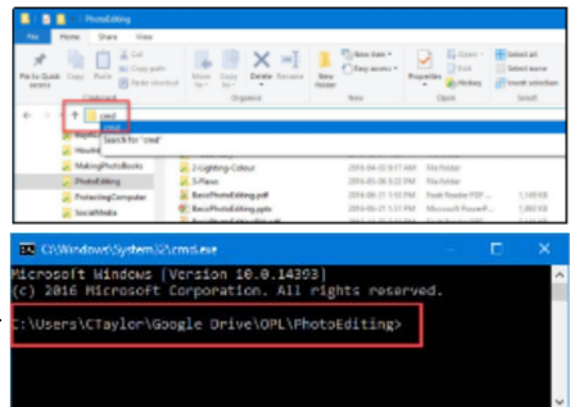
by Chris Taylor

Power users will often use the CMD shell to accomplish tasks that are either difficult or impossible to achieve any other way, or simply because it can be a lot faster to operate in a command line environment.

Opening a CMD shell from any of the "normal" ways, such as the Start menu, the Win-X menu, the Cortana search box, a shortcut, etc., will open it at a default location that is perhaps not where you want to be. This might be `c:\windows\system32`, or your profile folder, or some other location you have set.

If you are in File Explorer, there are a few handy ways to open a CMD shell at your current location.

- Press Alt-D (or click in File Explorer's address bar), type `CMD`, and press Enter.
- Click on *Open command prompt* on the *File* tab.
- Hold down the *shift* key and right-click on a folder. From the context menu that pops up, choose *Open command window here*.
- If you need an admin-level CMD shell, on the *File* tab, click on, or hover over, the right arrow beside *Open command prompt* and choose and click on *Open command prompt as administrator*.



# PRODUCT REVIEW

## A Sticky Problem *by Alan German*

In a previous newsletter article ([Pushing Back on Windows 10 Updates](#); June 2016), I discussed how to avoid having Windows 10 push updates automatically by telling the OS that the computer's Wi-Fi system was running over a metered connection. I have been using this tactic for quite some time on my laptop computer. (I don't actually have a metered connection, but Redmond doesn't need to know that!)

So, the good news is that I no longer have updates for Windows thrust upon me. The bad news is that I no longer receive any notice of updates being available. With Windows Update being effectively disabled, it's now up to me to go looking for, downloading, and installing any pending updates.

Now, I can live with this situation. For me, this is preferable to having my machine "hang" without any apparent cause (the actual cause being automatic downloading and/or installing of Windows updates!) However, one thing I like to keep really up to date is my anti-virus software and, since I currently use Windows Defender, I decided that I should ensure I have a reminder that Windows Update has to be run manually.

My first thought was to stick one of those little yellow notes on my computer screen indicating that the Wi-Fi system was running as a metered connection. But, rather than using a physical note, my preference was to use an electronic version. So, I tried the Sticky Notes app that comes with Windows 10. It was easy enough to establish the note, but I found that, while I was able to change the background colour of the note, I was unable to change the font.

My solution to this dilemma was to switch to a similar, freeware offering – Stickies – from Tom Revell at Zhorn Software in the UK. This package does basically the same job as its Microsoft equivalent but has far more flexibility.

In the screenshot of the program's context menu, we can see that the options include, setting the note's title, colour and opacity. A note's appearance can also be customized with one of more than 250 skins (layouts). My preference was to download the xp.ssk skin – a Windows XP look-alike. An interesting feature of this skin is that the minimize button on the note's title bar causes the note to "roll up", with the body text disappearing and leaving just the title bar displayed. The button acts as a toggle between displaying the full note or the rolled-up version.

Clearly, there are many more options (e.g. one can set a reminder alarm), but for my purposes this simple note being displayed in the top-right corner of the screen when I boot my machine is sufficient for my needs.

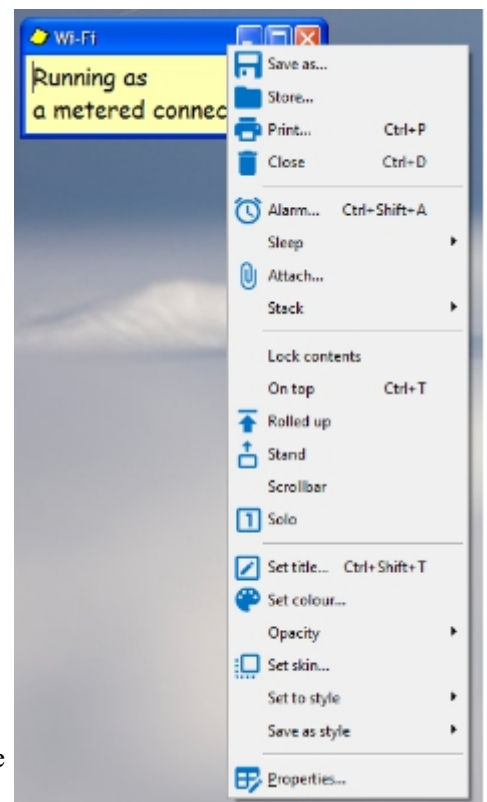
### Bottom Line

Stickies (Freeware)

Version 9.0d

Tom Revell, Zhorn Software

<http://www.zhornsoftware.co.uk/stickies/>



# OPCUG Free Software Guide—Part 72

Compiled by Alan German  
and Chris Taylor

**T**his 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.

## Multi Commander

This multi-tabbed alternative to Windows Explorer uses the very popular and efficient dual-panel layout. It has all the standard features of a file manager, like copy, move, and rename. But, the program's strengths are its ability to easily accomplish advanced tasks – such as searching for and viewing image files, and even editing the Windows Registry.

Current Release: Version 6.9

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



## Miro

The open-source music and video player that lets you break free! Miro can play almost any file format. Just “Watch” your media folders and your music and video files will show up in Miro (without moving or duplicating any files).

Current Release: Version 6.0

Web Site: <http://www.getmiro.com/>

## DriveCleanup

If you use a large number of USB-connected drives, Windows can eventually have problems with any new devices that you connect. If you want to remove info. about old devices, DriveCleanup can do the job swiftly and easily.

Current Release: Version: 1.2

Web Site: [http://www.uwe-sieber.de/drivetools\\_e.html](http://www.uwe-sieber.de/drivetools_e.html)

## Penzu (Android)

Create your own personal journal/diary on-line with military-grade 256-bit AES encryption. Being web-based, your information is available everywhere you go on your Android device.



Web Site: <https://penzu.com/>

## Etherpad

Etherpad is a highly customizable, open-source, on-line editor providing collaborative editing in real-time. Just set up a pad, share the link, and start collaborating!

Current Release: Version 1.5.7

Web Site: <http://etherpad.org/>

## Syncplicity

Access, edit, and store your personal and shared content, from any folder, on any device. Synchronize up to 10 GB of files on all of your devices with the free edition of Syncplicity.

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



## Mailbird Free

Unlike most of the competition, Mailbird is designed to change the way you manage your E-mail, scheduling, communications, tasks, and more. However, it doesn't require you to sign up for a bunch of new accounts and services. Instead, Mailbird lets you bring all your existing accounts onto one amazing platform where you can do everything you need.

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

## EdgeDeflector

Is Edge taking the edge of your browsing experience by hogging access to certain web links? This utility will give you back control. EdgeDeflector intercepts links that would normally open in Microsoft Edge and redirects them to the your default web browser.

Current Release: Version 1.0.1.0

Web Site: <https://github.com/da2x/EdgeDeflector>

## Hotspot Shield

Use this virtual private network (VPN) to surf the Web anonymously and privately. Get complete Wi-Fi security. Unblock websites. Hotspot Shield creates an encrypted tunnel between your computer and the Internet.

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

## Tail Gun Charlie

Man the tail gun in this WWII action/arcade shooter! Use your phone's gyroscope or touchscreen to aim your guns, and touch either red button to open fire. Rack your twin .50-cals to defend against the ever-growing waves of Me-109s, Fw-190s, Bf-110s, whatever the Axis can throw at you!

Current Release: Version 1.0.8

Web Site: <https://tinyurl.com/TailEndCharlie>





# 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, in the **Bush Theatre** of the **Canada Aviation and Space Museum**, 11 Aviation Parkway, Ottawa.  
<http://casmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/index.php>

Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. followed by a Q&A Session until 10 p.m.

Parking is available at the museum for a flat fee of \$3 after 5pm.

Details at <http://opcug.ca/public/regmtg.htm>

**OPCUG Membership Fees:** \$25 per year  
**Mailing Address:** 3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ontario, K2G 1S6  
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**Bulletin board—The PUB (BBS)** <http://opcug.ca/default.htm>  
**Follow us on Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/opcug>  
**Follow us on Twitter:** <https://www.twitter.com/opcug>

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## 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.

