



OTTAWA

PC NEWS



An International
Association of Technology
& Computer User Groups

Volume 43, Number 10

October 2026

ARTICLE

Computer Magazines at OPL by Alan German

In the late 90's and early 2000's many print magazines focused on the computer industry were discontinued. Some magazines, such as Byte, went out of publication completely while others, such as PC World, switched to digital versions that are available through online subscriptions. The Ottawa Public Library (OPL) has followed these trends, initially making hard-copy magazines available in library branches and, today, providing library patrons with access to some digital magazines.

With a library card, any citizen of Ottawa can logon to OPL's website (<https://about.biblioottawalibrary.ca>), scroll down and select *Online Resources > Read > Digital Magazines*. On the subsequent page, scrolling down to *Overdrive Magazines* displays a control button labelled *Overdrive Magazines (Formerly RBDigital Unlimited Magazines -Zinio)*.

Having selected this option, rather than scrolling through the 5,599 available entries, the *Filters* in the left margin can be expanded (the *More* button) in order that the *Tech & Gaming* category can be selected. The main window is now filled with thumbnails of related publications, including *Wired* and *PC World*. Alternatively, a search can be made for the full or partial title of a magazine. For example, using "PC" as a search term will list available magazines such as *PC World* and *Maximum PC*. [Hint – Also, try "computer".]

Selecting *PC World*, displays a thumbnail of the magazine's cover and a link with which to *BORROW* the item. The subsequent screen asks for your library, card number, and PIN, after which one must once again press *BORROW*. [You can never tell OPL too many times what you wish to do!] Finally, selecting the option to *Read now in browser* loads the magazine's cover page into the display.

In general, navigating through the pages is achieved by clicking the mouse on the right side (next page) or left side (previous page) of the double-page display. However, on the Table of Contents, simply clicking the mouse on an item loads the relevant page of the magazine.

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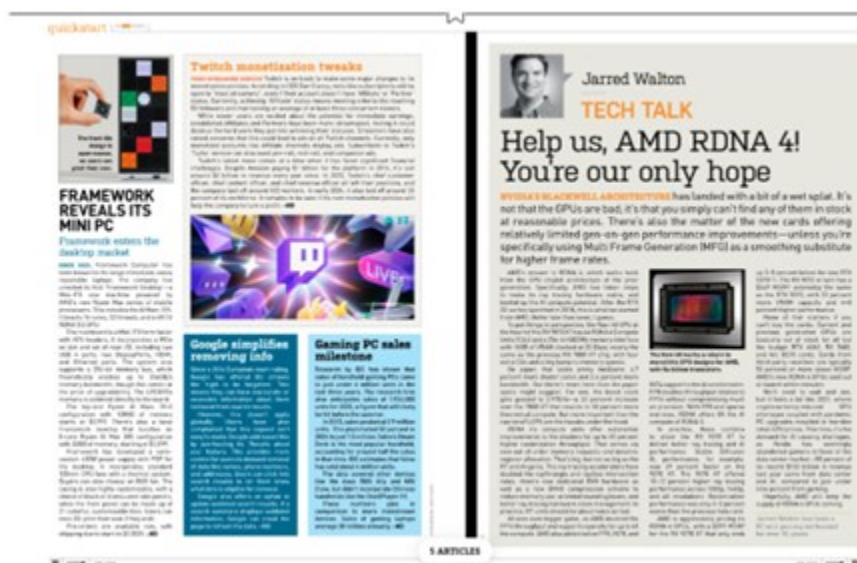


Figure 1. Two-page Display of *Maximum PC Magazine*

(Continued on page 8)

Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, October 14th, 2026**

Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 14th

Vibe Coding Competition

OPCUG will offer two prizes for submissions using vibe coding in a competition to be held at the club's monthly meeting in October. **Holding the competition will be subject to having multiple entries submitted.** The use of vibe coding will be on the honour system. For those providing entries, there will be two prizes offered: (1) the most useful product, and (2) the best presentation of the development process. Note that the project doesn't have to be successful for this second portion of the competition. Stories of trials and tribulations, and even abysmal failure will be happily accepted. So, get started on your vibe-coding project (see the article "You Too Can Be A Programmer" in the [March newsletter](#)). Refine both your code and the associated presentation and when you are ready, **submit your entry to the competition to: SuggestionBox@opcug.ca.** Non-members are welcome to participate.

This meeting will be via Zoom video conference.

Join us at <https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting>. The Zoom link will be live at 7:15 pm. The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm.



Coming Up...

23 Sep

Next [weekly Q&A session](#)

21 Oct

[SPECIAL EVENT: Get-together at Big Rig K&B, Iris St.](#) (see [next page](#))

22 Oct, *Thursday* (Bonus Presentation)

[Experiences aboard the family's boat in the 60s](#) (Lynda Buske, OPCUG)

11 Nov

[Get Better results with your Genealogical Searches](#) (APCUG Guest Speaker)

09 Dec

[The Dark Web – Revealed](#) (Alan German, OPCUG)

See all our scheduled events [here](#).

OPCUG Presentations at the OPL:

Monday, 02 Nov, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Quick PC Tips: Enhancing Capabilities and Performance with Free Tools (Chris Taylor), Carlingwood Branch

Monday, 16 Nov, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Armchair travel: Newfoundland (Lynda Buske)
Carlingwood Branch

See all our presentations with links to the OPL [here](#).



CALENDAR

Event	Date	Time and Venue
Next Monthly Meeting	Wednesday, October 14 th	7:30 pm via Zoom video conference: https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting See all our scheduled monthly meetings here .
Next Q&A Session	Wednesday, September 23rd	Q&A sessions are held weekly except on monthly meeting nights. Join us most Wednesdays at 7:30 pm for weekly Q&A .
Next OPL Presentation	Monday, November 2 nd	See all our presentations with links to the OPL here .

SPECIAL EVENT

Social Get-Together

NOTICE: There has been a change of venue. The event is now at the **Big Rig Kitchen and Brewery**, 2750 **Iris Street** in the **west end** (not Ogilvie Rd. like the last time).

There will be no Zoom Q&A session that night.

Members and non-members are welcome.

- When: Wednesday, October 21st ; arrive early, starts at 7:00 pm.
- Where: **Big Rig Kitchen and Brewery**, 2750 Iris St, Ottawa, ON K2C 3C9
<https://bigrigbrew.com/restaurant/locations/ottawa-iris/>

Wednesday evening was chosen as many members already block off Wednesday evenings to attend Q&A. The location was chosen for a couple of reasons:

- easy to get to:
 - <https://maps.app.goo.gl/CqedFSipSHTr5bqXA>
 - just off the 417 at Greenbank Road South exit (Exit 129), go south to Iris St.
- lots of free parking

While the OPCUG is making the reservation, all attendees will pay their own tab.

We need to let **Big Rig** know how many people we expect. If you hope to attend, please send an email to BigRig@opcug.ca and let us know the number of people who will be in your party.



Pictures might be taken at the restaurant and then posted on our website. If you do not want to be photographed, please step out of the frame (or hide behind a plant).



THROUGH THE LENS

A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts. After the click of your camera, you're only half done!

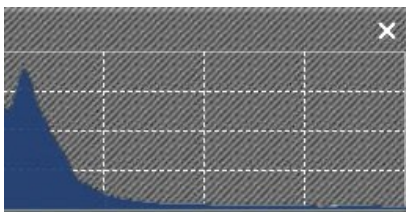
How to use photographic histograms

by Lynda Buske

While I have written about histograms before, I feel they are important enough to revisit every few years. A photographic histogram is a graphical representation of the distribution of the various levels of brightness in your photo. If you think of a black and white photo, the histogram displays the frequency of pixels that are pure black (no brightness) those within the grey spectrum (mid-tones) and those that are pure whites (brightest sections).

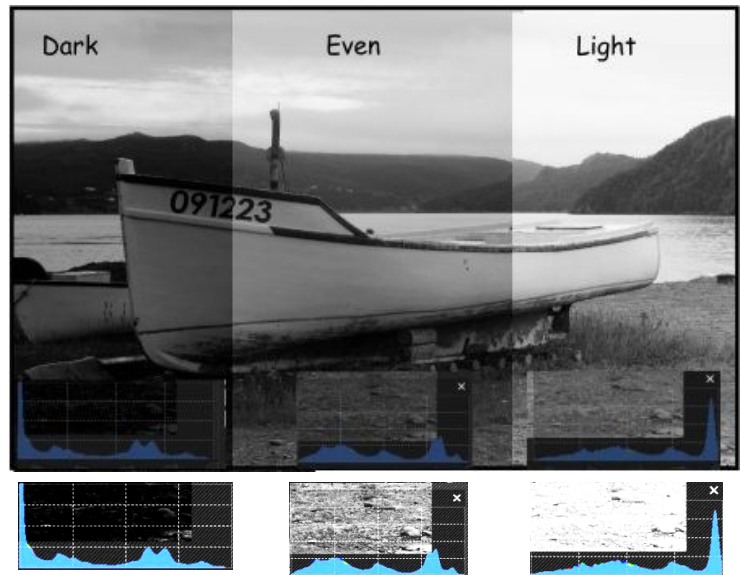
The histogram below represents the distribution of pixels in the photo above it. The far-left side shows the amount of pure black pixels and the far-right side is the amount of pure white pixels. In this example, you can see there are a lot of dark areas (high on the Y axis) indicating that perhaps the photo needs to be lightened. There is no pure white so the overall image could be lightened a bit without making the water overly white (i.e. blown highlights).

Histogram of dark photo

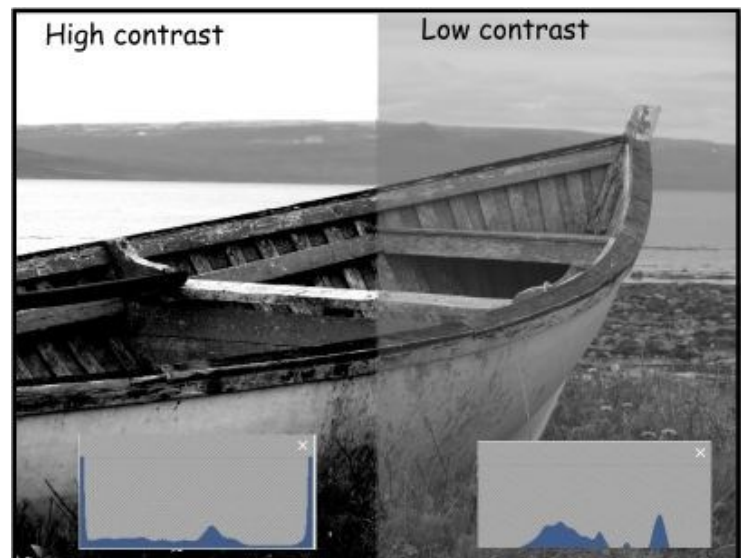


Some cameras provide a histogram view while taking a photo (or while reviewing the photo in-camera) so necessary adjustments can be made on site. If your camera doesn't have this feature, the exposure can be adjusted (to a certain extent) with photo editing software during post processing on your computer.

A lot of pure black and pure white in a histogram usually indicates a photo of high contrast. If you wish a more even distribution, you can lighten shadows and darken highlights causing some pure black and white areas to shift to grey. If you prefer instead to add contrast, you can do the opposite or set black and white points if your software allows. See examples with accompanying histograms below:



(These three histograms were extracted from the picture above and amended by Brigitte Lord, editor. Please excuse the amateurish handiwork.)



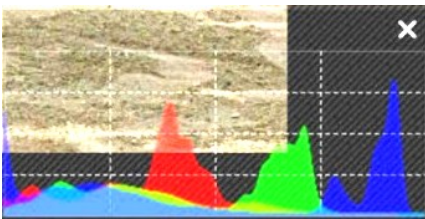
(Continued on next page)

Histograms *(Continued from previous page)*

There is no right or wrong when adjusting light; it simply needs to reflect what you want the image to look like.

In some circumstances the areas of pure black and white may not be adjustable in post processing. This is called clipping (e.g. crushed blacks or blown highlights). In this instance, your camera sensor is saturated (if clipping occurred in the highlights) or the sensor was unable to capture any information (if clipped in the shadows). Even if you don't have a histogram on your camera, it may indicate overexposure by blinking areas in the playback mode, however there will be no indication of underexposure. In some cases, it is unavoidable (e.g., having the sun in your photo) but it is usually best to limit areas of extreme darkness or brightness to small areas of your image.

Histograms usually display information for three primary colors – red, green and blue – and are known as RGB histograms. Coloured histograms can show if clipping is happening in only one of the colour channels. This is usually only problematic when all three channels are clipped.



Read all of Lynda's articles [here](#). See her [presentations](#) at the Ottawa Public Library (select **Lynda Buske** as **Organizer**).



APCUG ARTICLE

Am I the Only One? – Part 1

By Tom Kuklinski, Webmaster at Computer Users of Erie
CUE Newsletter, April 2026
Grimcyber (at) yahoo.com

A few weeks ago, I looked at the chaotic mess that was my photo collection and declared, “Enough is enough.” After thirty years of digitizing, scanning, and hoarding memories like a digital squirrel, it was finally time to bring order to the madness.

Let me take you back to the Stone Age of storage. Once upon a time, I could fit my entire digital life on a single 1.44 MB floppy diskette and feel like a tech wizard. That was a glorious upgrade from the old 5.25-inch floppies that held a measly 360 KB. Soon I had a shoebox full of them, each one labeled in my terrible handwriting. Then technology smiled on us with CDs—640 glorious megabytes! I thought I’d died and gone to heaven. DVDs came next, and suddenly I had space I didn’t even know what to do with.

Life was good. Then came the pocket digital camera, and I completely lost my mind.

No more scanning faded prints. Now I could capture every precious (and not-so-precious) moment in real time. I photographed everything—sunsets, sunrises, my lunch, my cat sleeping, my cat not sleeping, the weird stain on the ceiling that kind of looked like Elvis. The quality was decent, the memories priceless. I told myself my future children would thank me for this digital treasure trove.

Fast-forward a few years, and the smartphone arrived like a glorious wrecking ball to the old way of doing things. One tiny device in my pocket started taking better pictures than my fancy dedicated cameras. Photos, videos, burst mode, night mode—I was hooked. I fell headfirst into the trap, blissfully unaware of the monster I was creating.

About ten years ago, I sat down at my computer with noble intentions. “I will organize everything by date,” I declared. Hours turned into days. I proudly copied it all to an external hard drive and spent evenings happily scrolling through my life, showing friends and family like a proud grandpa with a new wallet full of pictures.

But I never stopped taking more photos. Of course not. Why would I?

Over the next decade, I became a backup evangelist. Google Photos, Amazon Photos, iCloud, OneDrive—I spread my memories across the cloud like a cautious investor diversifying a portfolio. Every few months, I’d promise myself I’d finally consolidate everything “when I had time.”

Then came the past several months, when I finally ran out of excuses.

I started by digging out boxes of old paper photos I’d inherited from my mom. I couldn’t throw them away—there were too many stories hidden in those faded images. So I scanned for

hours, days, even. Then I began the great download: pulling every photo from every cloud service and scattered drive I owned. My master plan was simple: dump it all onto one giant storage device, delete the duplicates, and organize it once and for all.

I figured I had maybe 30 gigabytes. Cute, right? Am I the Only One?

When everything finally landed in one place, the total came to 404 gigabytes. Four hundred and four. Mostly duplicates, of course, but still. My humble little collection had quietly grown into a digital beast.

Downloading that much data made my computer wheeze like an old man climbing stairs. Windows slowed to a crawl. Errors popped up. But I pushed on, even putting off doing my taxes because “the photos come first.” (Uncle Sam can wait. My memories cannot.)

On a brighter note, I treated myself to two shiny new 2-terabyte USB thumb drives—bargain price from Amazon, brand name Dianww. I tested them first, copied some files, and everything looked perfect. I was ready for the final victory lap.

Day after day, I transferred files. Finally, the moment came: 404 GB safely tucked away on the drive. I leaned back in my chair, smiled like a proud parent, and thought, “It’s done. My life’s memories are secure.”

Then, because the universe has a wicked sense of humor, I found one more folder of photos I’d forgotten about.

I started copying them over. The transfer bar crept along... and crept... and crept. Then—bam—Windows threw up error 0x80070570: “The file or directory is corrupted and unreadable.”

My heart stopped.

I ran chkdsk. It chugged along for two full days. Two. Days.

When I researched the error, the truth hit me like a brick: those cheap “2 TB” USB drives sold online are often complete frauds. They’re usually only 8 GB or 64 GB in reality, with clever hacked firmware that lies to Windows and pretends they’re massive. You can copy files happily until you hit the real limit... then everything after that point turns into digital garbage.

I sat there staring at my screen, whispering, “Please don’t do this to me...” And that’s where I’ll leave you—hanging on the edge of digital disaster. In my next story, I’ll tell you how I fought back, what I discovered, and how (spoiler alert) I eventually gave this saga a very happy ending.

Stay tuned. The photos—and my sanity—were saved... but it was one wild ride.

To Be Continued - Cliff Hanger!

(Part 2 will be in next month’s issue of Ottawa PC News)

APCUG ARTICLE

Try the Paint App in Windows 11

By Jim Cerny, President
Sarasota Technology Users Group
April 2026 issue of the Monitor
<https://thestug.org/>
president (at) thestug.org

Windows comes with many free applications (apps, programs, or software), and one of the most enjoyable is the Paint app. Every version of Windows has included Paint, and over the years, it has gained many additional features and menu options.

There are many helpful videos available online, especially on YouTube, that demonstrate how to use Paint. Our goal here is simply to show what is possible, so you can decide whether Paint may be useful for working with drawings, photos, or clip art. (Some features mentioned are available only in Windows 11.)

While Paint offers many useful tools, it is not a full-featured photo editor or professional drawing program. However, it does provide a number of practical and easy-to-use features. With Paint, you can:

- A. Open a photo or other image file and make changes. You can draw on it, add text, change colors, rotate the image, or crop it.
- B. Change the size of an image by adjusting its resolution (number of pixels).
- C. Save an image as a different file type.
- D. Create a new image from scratch. You can choose colors and use a variety of brushes, such as pencil, crayon, spray paint, oil, or watercolor, to create your artwork.
- E. Use the eraser tool to remove parts of an image, or use “Undo” to correct mistakes.
- F. Zoom in or out of an image. You can even zoom in far enough to adjust individual pixels.
- G. Share your creations with others. Anyone using Windows can open and edit the file in Paint.

3. Background removal – You can remove the background of an image and keep only the portion you want.

If you found yourself thinking, “I didn’t know that,” then we have accomplished our goal of sparking your curiosity. Even if you simply want to experiment or doodle for fun, Paint can help you explore your creativity.

You may wish to search online for “Windows Paint tutorials” and watch a few short videos. The features are not difficult to learn, and you may discover new ways to enjoy working with your computer.



Call for articles

My stack of local articles is very thin. I am seeking articles written by OPCUG members to adorn the pages of our monthly newsletter.

Do you have a topic you’d like to share but are too shy to present at our weekly Q&A sessions?

Although I have access to many APCUG articles, these are not unlimited.

Consider writing an article about any computer related topic (smartphone, tablet, non-Windows OS) and submit your magnum opus to newsletter@opcug.ca.

Thank you.

Brigitte Lord
Editor, Ottawa PC News



NEW TOOLS IN WINDOWS 11 PAINT INCLUDE:

1. Layers – You can create foreground and background layers and work on each separately without affecting the others. These layers can then be combined into a final image.
2. Text-to-image (AI) – You can type a description such as “create an image of a dog walking on the moon,” and the Copilot Image Creator in Paint will generate an image. A Microsoft account is required, and usage limits or costs may apply.



Computer Magazines *(Continued from page 1)*

A page footer will display the number of articles available on the page that may be listed for display individually. For example, in Figure 1, clicking on the “5 ARTICLES” footer produces a list of the titles of the articles from the two pages being displayed. Selecting any individual item from the list puts the browser into *Reader* view where the text of the article, and its images, are displayed in a single column using a larger font than on the full page.

Additional navigation and accessibility features in reader view include controls (Figure 2 - left to right respectively) to move to the previous article; access the magazine’s table of contents; move to the next article; and access the Appearance menu from which the size of the font used to display the text and the lighting (light, dark, or sepia) for the display may be selected.



Figure 2. Navigation Controls in Reader Mode

A number of other controls are located in the top-right corner of the main browser window (Figure 3.). From left to right, these controls toggle between single- and double-page view, zoom the page display, and access the *Appearance*, *Search*, and *Bookmarks & Highlights* menus respectively.



Figure 3. Navigation Controls for Magazines Pages

A digital magazine that has been borrowed is treated in the same manner as a book that has been checked out. Logging on to the library’s website and navigating to *My Library Dashboard > Checked Out* provides a link to *Return* the item once it has been read.

There are many computer-related magazines available from the library; however, be aware that not all are published in English. For example, while LinuxUser has an English-sounding title, it is actually a German publication. Similarly, PC Home is a Taiwanese computing magazine that is published in Chinese.

It’s also worth noting that there are many digital magazines available that may suit the non-computer-related interests of readers. For example, New Scientist and Popular Mechanics are among the technological offerings of Overdrive Magazines, together with National Geographic, Vogue, Cook’s Illustrated and The National Enquirer (for those with more eclectic tastes!) Other publications listed on OPL’s digital magazine’s web page include Consumer Reports and Maclean’s.

So, if you have a library card, check out (quite literally) the digital computer, and possibly other, magazines that you find interesting. You will need to manually review each month’s offerings as, regrettably a service by which notification of new issues was provided by E-mail has been discontinued. Nevertheless, regularly scanning these magazines for items of interest can provide current details of computer hardware and software and give useful information on trends in the technology.



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Nominations for OPCUG Board for 2027

Once a year, the OPCUG holds elections for the 9-member Board of Directors. We are once again coming up to this annual event.

We encourage all members to consider running for a board position or getting involved in some other manner in the operations of the OPCUG.

If you want more information about what is involved, please talk to me or any current or past Board member. Names are listed in the Newsletter and on the web site.

Nominations can be submitted via email to Lynda Buske, Election Chair, at nominations2027@opcug.ca.

Nominations must be received by midnight, December 31, 2026.

Please get involved. Please help the OPCUG continue in its role of **Users Helping Users!**

Lynda Buske
Election Chair



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).

To receive the monthly newsletter by email, send an email to:

opcug-newsletter+subscribe@googlegroups.com (leave subject and body fields blank)

You do **not** need to create a Gmail or Google Groups account.

To subscribe to other OPCUG Google Groups member services, go to:

<https://opcug.ca/google-groups-how-to/>

Group Meetings

The OPCUG holds its regular monthly meetings on the second Wednesday in the month via video conference (details at <https://opcug.ca/venue/>).

OPCUG Membership Fees: \$20 per year (<https://opcug.ca/join-or-renew>)
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Q&A IS ON-LINE! Weekly!

Since the pandemic, the OPCUG has been holding weekly Q&A sessions in Zoom video-conferences.

Join us every Wednesday (except on regular monthly meeting nights) at 7:30 pm to discuss computer issues. Questions (and answers) on any computer-related issue are welcome. Or, do you have a favourite computer program or topic that you would like to share with the group? Send your questions, answers, or the details of what you would like to share to: SuggestionBox@opcug.ca

Everyone is welcome to attend Q&A sessions and to ask questions about their specific computer-related problems. Join us at: <https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting> (if you use the Zoom client, the meeting ID is 924 9556 0898 and the password is opcug).

OPCUG



Users helping users
for over 40 years