

# Bowie Seniors Computer Club Minutes for August 19, 2010

Carl Bulger presided.

New Member:  
Sylvia Taylor

Computer Problems:

I was having problems with the Firefox browser in Windows 7. Its performance in Windows XP was excellent, but in Windows 7 I could not get it to list the plug-ins and add-ons that had been installed. Even though I had installed FireFTP, there was no way to use it because it wasn't listed anywhere. FireFTP is a Firefox plug-in that allows files to be uploaded to or downloaded from a server, such as the Comcast server that hosts our club's website. FTP is an acronym for File Transport Protocol.

At the meeting Dan Lee had hooked up his Windows 7 laptop to the Center's projector. Bob Blum talked me through the process of downloading FireFTP from the [www.Mozilla.org](http://www.Mozilla.org) website and installing it on Firefox. Then Bob gave a little demonstration of how he organizes the toolbars on FireFox.

The first step in organizing the toolbars is to click on View in the Menu toolbar, then click on Toolbars and then Customize. A popup appears that shows many icons that you can add to the toolbars including icons representing any add-ons or plug-ins that you downloaded. Bob clicked and dragged various icons to the toolbars, placing a "separator" or

"space" icon between each of the icons to present a pleasantly uncrowded toolbar. He also dragged the URL box to the second line so there would be more room on the first line for the search box.

Nancy Lewis asked why I use the Firefox browser instead of Internet Explorer. I use both and jump back and forth between them depending on what I'm doing. My Internet Service Provider is Verizon FiOS and they provide me with MSN Premium which has its own browser called MSN Explorer. Since the "MS" in MSN stands for "Microsoft", you would expect them to use Microsoft Internet Explorer in MSN Premium. So whenever I read my email, I'm using Internet Explorer and other Microsoft software. Also, whenever I want to go to a Microsoft website, I use Internet Explorer because it may be more compatible.

Hackers love to hack browsers. When Internet Explorer has a problem, I switch to Firefox. Firefox gets hacked, too, but Mozilla is usually faster in providing patches or newer versions than Microsoft.

Some users say that Firefox is faster than Internet Explorer. I haven't noticed that, but maybe that is because I have too many add-ons and plug-ins added to Firefox. I could do the same thing to Internet Explorer.

Others in our club use other browsers as well. Google has a

fast browser called Chrome which is becoming popular. They issued several patches this week. There are other browsers such as Opera. And, for Apple or Mac users, there's the mandatory Safari browser.

Someone also asked why I used FireFTP. Eric Hein got me started when we started posting the minutes on our website. Now both Dick Henthorn and I use it because of its ease of use and efficiency. After I finish these minutes, I'll convert this document to a PDF file and use FireFTP to upload it to the server that hosts our website. Dick will then establish a link between the PDF file and his short note about the meeting on our website's Meetings page. By the way, during this process Dick will use FireFTP to download the Meetings page, and after he has made the changes re-upload it. Eric Hein has posted links to both the FireFox and FireFTP download sites under Web Clients and Browsers. <http://bsccclub.home.comcast.net/freeware.htm>

Someone asked how they could speed up their computer. In addition to a larger, faster hard drive, perhaps a faster CPU, and cleaning out unnecessary programs and files, someone suggested that the computer would start faster if the number of programs that start at bootup are reduced to the minimum. "msconfig" is the utility to run. In XP, Start >>Run >> type "msconfig". Select the "Startup" tab. In Vista and Windows 7,

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Start >> All Programs >> Accessories >> Run >> Type "msconfig" >> Click the Startup tab. There you will see all of the programs that start at bootup. Uncheck those programs you think you don't need at startup and restart your computer. If you are satisfied with your selections, select "Don't show this again" in the box that appears. Some people go the extreme of selecting "Disable All" on the Start Up tab. Windows then only starts those programs and utilities that are absolutely necessary. Make sure that your firewall and antivirus get started and that they get started before you are connected to the internet. If you are using the Windows firewall, it will be listed as "running" under Services rather than under Startup.

Someone mentioned that the batteries in a Canon device had to be replaced. Canon was quoting \$90 to replace them. He got them for \$3 online at Amazon.com.

Dick Henthorn, I think, mentioned that he installed the Google Desktop which includes a file indexer. (Windows also has a file indexer.) Indexers search the entire computer so that you can find files faster. Google, of course, can also search the web.

Dan raffled off a spare external hard drive he had brought in. Vic Kiviat was the winner.

Charlotte Melichar has a "boom box" that has good acoustics and reception but a disk or tape is stuck in the machine and she cannot get the door open. She was wondering whether there is anybody or anyplace locally where she might get it repaired for a reasonable price.