Carl Bulger presided.

May 2, 2013 - Field Trip - Ms. Penny Van Dyke of Prince George's County Public Safety Communications accepted our invitation to speak about the operations of the *911 Call Center*. She wrote, "We encourage the members of the community to visit and monitor the 911 processing of calls, and dispatch of Law, Fire and EMS. We are located off of Melford Blvd in Bowie not far from ... [the Senior Center]." The Call Center processes calls and dispatches police, fire and ambulance response throughout PG County. The Prince George's County Public Safety Communications Center is located at 17321 Melford Blvd, Bowie, MD. This is a **Field Trip**, we will meet at this location. Dan Lee will try to arrive 15 minutes early to greet us outside the entrance. The tour starts at 12:30 pm. We will first view a film, and then visit the 911 Center.

Belair Drive becomes Melford Blvd as the road continues to the east of Route 301 (Crain Hwy/Route 3). https://maps.google.com/maps?q=Melford+Boulevard,+Bowie,+MD&hl=en&ll=38.958942,-76.709719&spn=0.031168,0.04828&sll=38.964348,-76.955928&sspn=0.068739,0.154324&oq=Melford&hnear=Melford+Blvd,+Bowie,+Prince+George's,+Maryland+20715&t=m&z=15 Control+Click to follow this link to the Google Map.

Computer Problems and General Discussion:

Bob Liberati has a 2002 Dell Inspiron 2600 which is too slow. Dan found that it had only 128GB of RAM. This could be doubled to 512GB, the maximum RAM capacity for this machine. It has only a 20GB hard drive. If the hard drive is almost full, this could slow down the machine. Bob Blum also suggested trying a simple Linus operating system to speed operation.

Bob also had trouble opening a .gif file. He told me later that he has solved this problem.

Dave Hackenberg said that his wife asked if there is a way for her to copy movies from their DVR to DVDs to make more room for other movies/programs. Carl Bulger said that his wife does it often, but he didn't know the procedure. He thinks that she plays the movie or program and burns it to DVD via a cable connected between the DVR and the DVD burner or between the TV and the DVD burner. Dennis Evans suggests using an HDMI cable if possible.

Dan Lee says that between now and late June, the City's IT Department will be surveying the City's buildings investigating the cost and feasibility on installing WiFi capabilities. Dan says that the City Council will be considering the IT portion of next fiscal year's budget on April 29th. He'll try to attend and in the meantime will try to send letters to one or more council members promoting the idea, especially for the Senior Center.

Carl Bulger brought in his son's broken laptop. It had been dropped and now it won't boot up. He was trying to determine whether the problem is in the hard drive, motherboard, or somewhere else. Bob Blum recommended removing the hard drive and connecting it to a hard drive adapter, available for about $40, to see it will work outside of the laptop. Carl's objective is to recover his son's photos stored on the drive without incurring the costs of a professional data recovery.

We then got into a discussion of how to be sure that all of the data is erased from a hard disk in a computer you are getting rid of.

Submitted by Barry Hammond

Irv Salzberg asked if anyone used Bit Coins or did Bit Coin Mining. He noticed an article in the Washington Post recently regarding Bit Coins. They are a virtual coin which has become a commodity subject to monetary supply/demand. He says that daily quotes can fluctuate wildly, depending on the perceived supply/demand. Bit Coin Mining is accomplished by downloading an algorithm that is run on your computer until you generate one or more bit coins, which you can then use to purchase goods at participating stores or websites. You can also buy bit coins. You don't have to deposit your bit coins or pay taxes on them. You do have to worry about hackers and counterfeiters.

A new member asked about multiple backups of his genealogy data. He is currently backing up to a Western Digital SmartBook External Drive. He asked if there would be any problem to also backing up with the Windows 7 backup software. The answer was "None". In fact, everyone recommended it. It happened that he was sitting near Dale Grant and Dick Henthorn, both genealogists. Dale recommended backing up to thumb drives. They're quick, portable, and you can back up to several and keep one in your car, another in your pocket, and another in another remote location to minimize loss in case of fire. Bob Blum keeps a copy in a safe deposit box. Bob also mentioned RAID drives, although he thought this was a little complicated. Dick recommended backing up to "the cloud" and several other techniques.

There was some follow-up discussion of programs used for genealogy. Dick uses RootsMagic which has both free and paid versions. Dale uses Personal Ancestry File (PAF) v.5.2 which is free from the Mormon church. All three geneologists pointed out that genealogical data can be exchanged between different software programs in the form of GEDCOM (.ged) files.

Carl mentioned that the City is conducting an online survey regarding the need/desire for facilities for indoor sports and swimming.

Someone mentioned that Microsoft has "recalled" one of the security updates KB2823324 they issued on Patch Tuesday (April 9th): because it causes more problems than it solves. Look it up in Control Panel and uninstall it.

Submitted by Barry Hammond