

# Bowie Seniors Computer Club Minutes for Nov. 6, 2008

Carl Bulger presided.

We decided to have the Holiday Luncheon on the **second** Thursday of December (Dec. 11) at noon at the Old Country Buffet in Laurel. It's located in the shopping center on the north side of the intersection of Routes 197 and 198. Cost will be \$8.47 per person (pay as you enter the buffet). Spouses and guests are welcome. We'll take a preliminary count at the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. Charlotte Melichar has suggested that we go "green" by carpooling to the event.

## Computer Problems:

One of Sam Atcherson's friends had a problem with Internet Explorer. The address bar, menu bar, and some toolbars had been lost. Recently visited websites appeared in a list at the left and the space for opening and viewing messages had increased. There were several solutions thrown out including clicking on Tools, which wouldn't work because neither the toolbars nor the menu bar was visible. Charlotte Melichar had the answer. Push the F11 button which toggles Internet Explorer between Full Screen and your preferred view with the toolbars, menu, etc. in view. Apparently, Sam's friend had accidentally pressed the F11 button and gone to Full Screen.

Someone mentioned font size. Internet Explorer 7 has an adjustment for text size under View in the Menu Bar.

I had problems with text/font size in the meeting notice I sent the members. The font sizes in the meeting notice came out radically different from what I intended. Someone suggested that I use an external text editor such as Notepad or Note Tab or Word or Write to compose the message, then copy and paste it into the email message.

A friend of Charlotte Melichar has a Canon printer in which the ink cartridge won't center itself so it can be replaced with a fresh cartridge. It also won't print. Various suggestions were offered: Try pushing various buttons. Try removing and reseating the cartridges, but that's difficult to do in the uncentered position. Try a test print. Check for a broken drive band or whatever it is that moves the print head back-and-forth. Look for something like a pencil that may have fallen into the printer jamming the print head.

Charlotte also asked if a computer is capable of using Bluetooth. Bob Blum suggested a card adapter. Carl Bulger suggested Googling the question.

Bob Blum, Vic Kiviat, and Sam Atcherson all have Comcast as their Internet Service Provider. Bob has recently been having problems with his Thunderbird email client being unable to connect to all of his email accounts and download his messages. Vic

and Sam have also been having that problem.

Dale Grant and I have occasionally found that our Verizon FiOS accounts were inaccessible. It seems to occur during and shortly after updates and upgrades to the Verizon software. In my case, it occurs after my email client, MSN Premium, updates or upgrades.

Sam Atcherson can't access System Restore points on his computer. Someone suggested going into Control Panel >> System >> System Restore tab and make sure the box in front of "Turn Off System Restore on All Drives" is not checked. Then highlight the system drive and adjust the System Restore settings. There is a slider that can be adjusted between minimum and maximum amounts of disk space to be used for storing System Restore data. The higher you set the slider, the more Restore Points you will be able to store. Setting it too high will increase the time required to defrag your drive and to access data as well as reducing the amount of free hard disk space. To work efficiently, a disk drive needs to have at least 20% free space.

Charlotte Melichar also had problems accessing System Restore points after she tried to remove all of the Logitech software that came with a Logitech Wireless Mouse that she wanted to return. Afterwards Hibernate wouldn't work. Bob Blum suggested specifying the number of Restore

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Points and saving permanent restore points. Vic Kiviat suggested asking Steve Deming, the Microsoft Technology expert who will be giving the presentation on Nov. 20.

Don Shycoff's ISP is CCCOnline. Don has to send out 330 meeting announcements. His ISP will allow him to only send out 12-13 at a time. Does anyone have any suggestions for getting around this inconvenience?

Dennis Edgington got the Blue Screen of Death (BSOD). Dell didn't help. Bob Rapczynski suggested writing down the Error Code and the Location of the Error in Memory. This will help the Dell technicians or computer help experts on the web. Also, try Googling the Error Code. Of course, the natural reaction is to panic when you see the BSOD and to ignore the information presented because it means nothing to us.

Vic Kiviat passed along a tip from Rob Pegoraro of the Washington Post:

## Take Screen Shots of Error Messages

"Troubleshooting errors is easier when you remember what they said. And the quickest way to record long, cryptic alerts is to take a picture of them.

In **Windows XP**, hit the Print Screen key (see, it actually does

something!) to copy everything on the screen.

Then go to the Start Menu, select All Programs, scroll up that menu until you hit its Accessories sub-folder and select Paint.

In the Paint program, hit Ctrl-V to paste the screen shot you just took, then go to the File menu, choose "Save As..." and change its file type to JPEG before saving it to someplace where you'll find it later on.

In **Windows Vista**, a "Snipping Tool" program greatly simplifies the task; to run it, type "snip" into the Start menu's search box."

Bob Blum suggested using the Operating System recovery disk to repair it. If you didn't receive an operating disk, you probably have the recovery software in a recovery partition on the system disk.

Carl Bulger said that the October issue of Smart Computing has several articles on troubleshooting and instructions for recovery or reinstalling the operating system on XP and Vista computers.

Someone suggested that if the harddrive was suspected to be the problem, one could either remove the hard drive and put it in another computer to test it or to try to retrieve data from it.

Carl also recalled that at a previous meeting someone, perhaps Vic Kiviat, had shown an IDE harddrive/USB adapter/converter

that would allow you to connect another computer directly to the harddrive and suggested looking for one on the CyberGuys.com website >> Cables & Adapters > Cable Adapters/Converters > USB Adapters. There are two listed: Koutech Easy IDE USB 2.0 to IDE ATA Converter for \$24.95; and the GWC AS1200 USB 2.0 to IDE Cable Adapter for \$21.95. If you have a SATA drive, you'd want the GWC AS-1200 USB 2.0 to SATA or IDE Adapter for \$39.99.

Dan Lee is setting up a wireless LAN at home. He is looking for a power adapter for a Westel 327 Gateway (router plus modem). It would be helpful for Dan just to find out what model power adapter to look for. Dan also needs a couple of DSL phone line adapters if you have any lying around the house.

Bob Blum's Ethernet Card will work with XP, but not Vista. The same is true with his TV Tuner card and software. Someone suggested that he query the manufacturers for Vista drivers.