

# Bowie Seniors Computer Club Minutes for Nov. 20, 2008

Dan Lee presided.

We will 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. If you choose to carpool from the Senior Center, plan on leaving at 11:30 to be able to get to the luncheon by 12:00 noon.

Presentation: Steve Deming, Microsoft's Technical Specialist for the Washington area and adjoining states spoke on a variety of topics. It was mostly a question and answer session which lasted even after it finally broke up after 4 p.m. It was probably the longest BSCC meeting ever and people were still gathering around Steve to ask questions while he was packing up. He loved it. He said that Microsoft only asks him, "How many minutes did you speak?"

He refused to speculate on the features of Windows 7, the next version of the operating system, except to say that it is tentatively scheduled to be released in 2010, or, at the very earliest, late 2009, and to say that it may be more modular instead of having multiple versions such as Vista has. It will probably be purchased as one version plus an ala carte selection of features that each user wants. Windows XP's deadline

for critical support has been extended until June 2009 and for minor support until April 2010. Both may be extended further.

Steve related his father's frustrations with Vista on his new computer. His father, by the way, is a retired electrical engineer, just as many of our members are. His father complained that the "Classic View" wasn't like the Classic View in Windows XP; menus had become overloaded and confusing and icons had changed. Steve suggested going to the upper right hand corner of the screen to the search box. Type in what you want to do or where you want to go and it will take you there. You don't have to remember menus, icons, etc. In the Search Box, wildcards \* and ? are supported.

Eric Hein replied that Search is context sensitive and can be very slow. Steve suggested that the Scope of the Search be defined in the box to the left of the Search Box. Microsoft has been trying to standardize search rules across Internet Explorer, Office, and other applications. The rules have not been standardized in Internet Explorer 8 yet, because it is still in Beta (still being developed). In Advanced Search you can specify your own search rules.

Internet Explorer 8's search box has a predictive drop down table. For example, when searching for addresses there are drop down lists as well as maps. It has multiple tabs and gives you the choice of closing ALL tabs or only the

CURRENT tab. Microsoft has gone from its own standard for websites to the higher level of internet website standards. There is a backward compatibility link so old websites will still work.

Steve had just returned from vacation and had taken hundreds of pictures, so he enthusiastically shared his ideas on picture files. In picture database files, you can define your own metadata tag to help you search for pictures. You can have multiple tags on each picture. Most image editing software force you to edit one EXIF file at a time. Steve Deming uses a free Bulk EXIF File Editor which is command line driven.

When you rotate a picture, you lose a little information if they are .jpg or .jpeg files. In some cameras you can rotate in the camera. It is better to shoot in RAW format but it requires more memory sticks. He always takes enough memory chips on trips or vacations so he never has to reuse one. His method of tagging his pictures includes the number of the memory chip and the exact time the picture was taken. It prevents confusion later.

For archiving pictures, Deming recommends hard disks for longer term archiving. Next, he recommends DVD+R format disks. DVD-R has random failures and he is uncertain about long-term archiving on DVD+RW disks.

Vista and XP are compatible on networks based on the TCIP pro-

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protocol and the Simple Messaging Blocks (SMB) language. Vista keeps a record of all networks to which it has been attached. There are three levels of internet security: Home, Private, and Public.

In Vista, the normal mode of operation is Least Privileged User instead of Administrator. If a hacker should gain access to your computer he will have limited access to critical areas of the computer if you go online as the Least Privilege User. User Account Control (UAC) makes sure that you are aware of when something is trying to gain access to one of your processes or applications. It can bother some users so much that they turn it off and lose that security feature.

Deming recommends at least 1.5 to 2 GB of memory for Vista or 50% more than the amount of memory being used (as shown in Task Manager). The hard disk size should be at least 25% larger than the stored contents, or put another way, you should never use more than 80% of the space on your hard disk if you want the hard disk to function efficiently.

In Vista, Task Monitor has a resource monitor for the CPU, Disk, and Network. If your computer is slow, he recommends going to Run > msconfig > StartUp to check/uncheck startup items.

Microsoft's ActiveX and Sun Microsystems' Java are very different but both should work. For

internet resources, Java often works better.

Cynthia Bravo has problems with getting connected to DSL on her Vista laptop. Deming suggested she try going to a command prompt and type IPConfig /renew (there is a space between the g and the /.) to renew her IP Address through the DNS Server. If this doesn't work, she should contact her DSL provider. Vista is not the problem, Deming said.

Office 2007 uses the XML-based file format adopted by an international standards body. But it is compatible with Office 2003, XP (2002), and 2000 which can only save in their local formats unless you have the Office Converter Pack downloadable free from Microsoft.

Someone asked about the Red X's that we often get in emails instead of the actual picture. Deming said that sometimes this is a security precaution because viruses can be embedded in .jpg files. He said a safe way of transmitting a picture is to embed it into a zip file. Anti-virus scanners will scan anything written to the hard disk. He said that one way to overcome the security filters is to right click on the Red x's. You'll be asked "Do you trust this source? One time? or Always? Also, in Internet Explorer you can go to Tools >> Internet Options >> Security Tab >> Trusted Sites >> Sites. You can add or subtract trusted sites. If you receive a picture file

from a "trusted" source, it should be visible right away.

For "flaky" hard drives, >>My Computer >> hard drive >> Properties >> Tools >> Error Checking >> CHKDSK /F will scan every sector and fix physical errors on the disk. SCANDISK scans for logical errors.

Steve Deming covered a lot of ground. If you have further questions he invites you to email him at [SDeming@Microsoft.com](mailto:SDeming@Microsoft.com)

Be patient. He'll get back to you.