NETWORKING 101

REMOTE DISASTER RECOVERY SITE SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE AT WVNET

Dave Tamm

WVNET is pleased this month to present a feature article by Dave Tamm, CIO and Vice President of Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College in Fairmont, West Virginia, dtamm@fairmontstate.edu

"As Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College grow and expand, we have seen disk space requirements more than double, and this has caused heavy strain on our current three-head LTO4 tape library. As our space requirements increased, and as the 24/7 requirement for access to this data from anywhere increased, we realized that any storage solution we chose would not only have to meet current and near-term requirements, but to also "do more with less," as all organizations these days are being asked to do. We chose to partner with WVNET, so more state institutions can benefit from resources that we both share.

Approximately 15 months ago, Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College replaced its SAN (storage area network) with a new IBM XIV SAN. There were many reasons for replacement, not the least of which was the fact that our existing SAN, an IBM DS4800, was five years old. Replacement, however, also allowed us to reclaim a full rack in our data center, as well as allow, under our two-year plan, for expansion into SAN replication for disaster recovery at a remote location upon purchase of a second XIV. We chose the XIV over other SAN models due to the built-in advanced features, ease of configuration and management and its complete support model from IBM. This allows a small IT group to provide enterprise class services without the need for specialized SAN skillsets.

As we began planning the purchase of the second XIV in year two, analysis of our remote sites revealed that the infrastructure at all of our remote sites would not meet the needs for a second SAN. Furthermore, with budgets becoming tighter every year, it quickly became clear that sufficient funding would not be available to completely build out those requirements and purchase a second XIV. Upon that realization, we cast about for opportunities that would allow us to gain the same functionality within our existing budget. To that end, we and WVNET have partnered to help accomplish mutual goals with fewer resources: expansion and growth of services. Discussions with WVNET on their needs highlighted some in common with us, including:

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DID YOU KNOW...

Blackboard Learning Management System Rolled Out in WVNET Cloud

WVNET began rolling out Blackboard Learn 9.1 for our WebCT hosted customers this spring and is *now in full production mode for WV DHHR.* In addition a number of schools, including *Blue*

Ridge Community & Technical College, Glenville State College, Kanawha Valley Community & Technical College, Northern Community College, Marshall Community & Technical College and Eastern Community College. are now running pilot courses hosted at WVNET on Learn 9.1 with a target of full production spring

semester. Learn provides a number of improvements and new features over WebCT and its more recent predecessor Blackboard Vista and is being deployed at WVNET in a robust, load-balanced environment which can grow as user requirements increase. ***"Learn" more in future issues of Networking 101!!***

1. **Last book read:** *First, Break All the Rules by Marcus Buckingham & Curt Coffman*

2. **Favorite movie:** *Beverly Hills Cop #1. (I am from Detroit and big Eddy Murphy fan.)*

3. **Favorite comfort food:** *Pizza*

4. **If I were king for the day, I would…***Create a time machine.*

5. **Striking success:** *The art of being able to motivate others to want to struggle with me for shared aspirations.*

6. **Striking failure:** *Not growing up until I was 40 years old.*

7. **Major pet peeve:** *Individuals that say & think they know it all.*

8. **Favorite childhood memory:** *Playing football and wrestling.*

9. **Favorite junk food:** *Ice Cream*

10. **A person who has had a great influence on me:** *Father and Lee Iacocca*

11. **What I like most about WVNET:** *A quick and easy resource for us to work with.*

12. **What I like least about WVNET:** *Location*

City: *Doddridge County, WV*

Employment: *VP/CIO Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College*

Family: *Andrea Renee Tamm (wife); Brandon Ferrell Tamm (9 year-old son); Ryan David Tamm (1 year-old son)*

Hobby: *Working on my land and limited production vehicles.*

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- Remote replication to a quality data center
- Increased operational utility efficiencies
- Simple, seamless configuration and replication options

Because Fairmont and Pierpont cannot field a 24/7/365 technical staff, the availability of WVNET staff to act in this role for our data replication, coupled with IBM's real-time remote monitoring and support, is very attractive to us.

As a result of these initial discussions, as well as further discussion of the efficiencies that could be gained for the state as a whole by letting WVNET assume Fairmont State's Blackboard license and hosting, Fairmont State and Pierpont have partnered together with WVNET to accomplish both. WVNET has secured its own XIV SAN, and Fairmont and Pierpont are currently replicating select SAN data (including Blackboard Vista) to WVNET's SAN for disaster recovery. Additionally, WVNET, Fairmont, and Pierpont have partnered to transfer the knowledge necessary to allow WVNET to provide Blackboard hosting for more institutions in the state than Fairmont and Pierpont could offer alone.

Fairmont and Pierpont's hopes in planning for disaster recovery and remote failover are to reduce our dependency on tape as the sole source for recovery from failure, and to increase system availability to our users. To that end, starting in December we plan to also begin replication of our Banner environments in near-real time to WVNET's XIV SAN. Because we're also a strong VMWare shop, we'll be housing an IBM Blade Center at WVNET running VMWare for our replication endeavors, which will include our Microsoft Active Directory, web services, Microsoft Exchange, and cloud computing environments.

In short, we look forward to a long-lived partnership with WVNET to accomplish our remote disaster recovery site needs."

ON A MORE PERSONAL NOTE...

⇒ Here's a big **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to the following WVNET staff members with *birthdays in October:* **Jerry Burchard, Kim Jenkins, Bob Lint, Phil Snitz and Dave Watson!!**

⇒ Speaking of *happy*, check out these *Blue Ribbon* award winning Chocolate *No Bake Cookies* from this year's annual *Preston County Buckwheat Festival* in Kingwood, WV, done by none other than our Dianne Sisler, *WVNET Administrative Applications Software Specialist Senior*. Send an email to the editor newslettereditor@wvnet.edu if you'd like a copy of the recipe.

⇒ And also, just in time for Halloween, take a look at this blue ribbon award winning picture done by none other than the youngest daughter of Dianne Sisler —- Abby —- also awarded at this year's annual *Preston County Buckwheat Festival* in Kingwood, WV.

⇒ And speaking of Abby Sisler (*little buddy to the newsletter editor which you've probably figured out by now)*, what a snapshot of Abby and her piggies *Bubbles and Floppy* (white pig) weighing in at 250 and 223 respectively (starting out each at about 35 pounds in May). While they didn't win any ribbons at the Preston County Buckwheat Festival, we think they're blue-ribbon accomplishments anyway!!

⇒ Andy and April sitting in a tree…k-i-s-s-i-n-g!! **Here's a big CONGRATULATIONS to Andy and April Parker who were married on October 8.** We wish them nothing but happiness for many, many years to come. BTW, Andy is one of WVNET's Network Operators.

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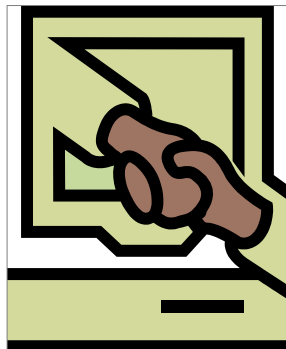*304.293.4439 fax*
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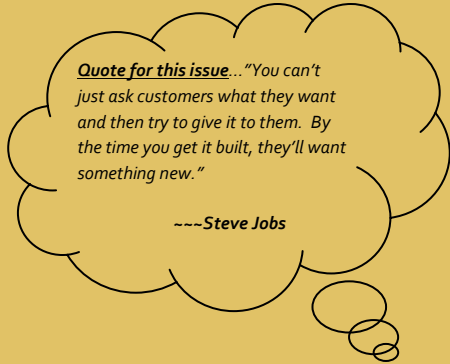*Education through*
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24/7/365

Update

DegreeWorks Progress: First focus calls for the first eight schools were held early in the week of September 15. WVNET is waiting on clarification on whether the hardware we have is adequate to get started or if we need to wait for the hardware upgrade that is currently in the ordering phase. More information will be coming out on the listserv lists set up for the two groups of four. If you are part of the first two DegreeWorks implementation team and have not received an email indicating you have been added to a listserv list, please let Roberta Linger Roberta@mail.wvnet.edu know so you can be included on the list.

Argos Demo: WVNET has Argos installed on a test server and will be announcing availability soon. Evisions has been developing some reports for WVNET, including dashboard type reports, which were demonstrated at the Computer Center Directors' Meeting held at WVNET on September 21-22 (probably demonstrated again at a later date for those not attending the meeting). WVNET should have this installation and database available for testing for at least a couple of months. More info to come!!

WebLogic Training: Oracle has offered to provide a **free** 2-day technical workshop on WebLogic Server for Banner. This will be a hands-on workshop for technical support staff, and will be offered once at WVNET and again in the southern part of the state. **The WebLogic Training has been scheduled for November 3 at WVNET.** WebLogic is a replacement for Oracle Internet Application Server used by Banner for both INB (Forms and Reports) and Self Service. IAS (the Oracle webserver that supports Banner forms and Self-Service) is end of life as of December 31, 2011.

Quote for this issue…*"You can't just ask customers what they want and then try to give it to them. By the time you get it built, they'll want something new."*

~~~Steve Jobs

FLYING UNDER THE RADAR

Charles Terrell

In a late breaking development, *Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College* has entered into an agreement with WVNET to share services and funding for Ron Hamilton's position. WVNET recently welcomed Ron Hamilton as Database Consultant and was not the only institution to gain a talented employee. This helps Eastern meet their campus support needs with a highly qualified IT staff member, helps us better support new initiatives, and forges new ground in staffing solutions for the WVNET community. As Eastern President Charles Terrell said to WVNET Director Dan O'Hanlon concerning the agreement, "*I think this is a win-win situation for WVNET and Eastern."* For more information on how WVNET may better help you meet your campus support needs, please contact *Deputy Director/Operations Allen Daugherty* at 304.293.5192 or allen@mail.wvnet.edu

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WVNET is pleased to announce the following recipients of *2011 Certificates of Appreciation for Loyal and Dedicated Service to the State of West Virginia*: *Verne L. Britton* (25 years); *Yvonne C. Howdershelt* (25 years); *Barbara A. Long* (25 years); *Mark R. Saffron* (25 years); *George E. Cook* (30 years); *B. Kathleen Musick* (35 years); and *Jonathan R. Lint* (40 years).