NETWORKING 101

WEST VIRGINIA NETWORK (WVNET)

BLACKBOARD LEARN 9.1

As mentioned in our last newsletter, WVNET now has Blackboard Learn 9.1 Learning Management System (LMS) installed in our Morgantown cloud for the following campuses: Blue Ridge Community & Technical College, Glenville State College, Kanawha Valley Community & Technical College, Northern Community College, Mountwest Community & Technical College, Eastern Community College, and WV Department of Health and Human Resources. WVDHHR is in full production, having made their migration from WebCT over the summer. The other campuses are now running pilot courses in production and preparing to go full production for all their courses with web components in Spring 2012. This project began earlier this year when Fairmont State decided they wanted to move some of their equipment to WVNET to start building a disaster recovery site with us and WVNET agreed to take over the Blackboard hosting service that Fairmont has been providing for some of the schools. After months of upgrades and training, we will be in full production for all these schools next semester and will be ready to take on new customers as well. Our Blackboard application and database servers run on high performance blade servers selected and sized specifically for the application and configured to make full use of the capabilities of the VMware ESX 4.1 Hypervisor. This allows us to move servers instantaneously from one hardware platform to another to balance performance among our 11 Blackboard servers. It also allows us to bring up additional servers in a matter of hours. The data for our Blackboard servers is stored on state of the art storage arrays with fully redundant data volumes. We are able to make almost instantaneous snapshots of the data. With the implementation of this new SAN technology, we will eventually be able to replicate all of the data at WVNET (not just Blackboard) to our future disaster recovery site in Charleston. This combination of equipment and functionality makes it practically impossible to lose critical LMS data.

WVNET is providing full test and production installations for each hosted campus. Licenses have been upgraded to include Community Engagement and Content Management features, and work is underway to implement integration with Banner to synchronize enrollment between Banner and Blackboard as well as to support single sign-on capabilities. As part of our service, we perform nightly system-level and course-level backups of the Blackboard servers. We also provide configuration, patch and update management services for the systems. These services relieve our client LMS administrators of the tedium of back-end system management and allow them to focus on developing their learning environment. WVNET is uniquely positioned to offer LMS hosting services to our Academic Blackboard Consortium members. Our staff has been providing hosted application services since well before the term "the Cloud" was coined. You could say, "We were Cloud before Cloud was cool." WVNET routinely manages many mission critical applications for educational and governmental agencies. These services range from web and email hosting all the way to enterprise-class academic applications such as Banner. *Continued on page two.*

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DID YOU KNOW...

This flu season, for your own protection, get the BUG!!

Did you know that anyone may join the monthly **B**anner **U**sers **G**roup conference call by simply requesting your name be added to the related listserv? Conference calls are held on the third Thursday of each month and start at 2:00 p.m. During the last BUG call which was held on October 20, important people from the following institutions of higher learning participated: *Blue Ridge CTC, Bluefield State College, Bridgemont CTC, Eastern CTC, Fairmont State University, Glenville State College, Kanawha Valley CTC, Mountwest CTC, New River CTC, Pierpont CTC, Pierpont CTC, WV Northern CC, WVSOM, and WVU-Parkersburg.* Now, about that listserv, Mail to: listserv@listserv.wvnet.edu and in body of email: subscribe WVNET-BUG@LISTSERV.WVNET.EDU

Welcome to our world...

Bob Roberts

WVNET is pleased to welcome Bob Roberts as Human Resources Manager, WVNET/HEPC.

Bob brings nearly 15 years of diverse human resources experience to WVNET. He has spent significant time in higher education having worked at West Virginia University, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and the North Carolina School of the Arts. Beyond his higher education experience, Bob brings human resources experience from the retail, health care, and staffing industries. Additionally, he holds the Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) certification from the Human Resources Certification Institute.

Bob holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from WVU in business administration and industrial labor relations, respectively. Additionally, he earned a B.A. in philosophy from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is currently enrolled at United Theological Seminary pursuing the Master of Divinity degree and is a candidate for ordained ministry through the United Methodist Church.

Years of Service to the State of West Virginia

Seven WVNET staff members were recognized for their *Years of Service to the State of West Virginia* during a meeting of the general staff on Wednesday November 2, 2011. WVNET Director Dan O'Hanlon presented each recipient with a certificate signed by Earl Ray Tomblin Governor and a lapel pin. *Recognized were: Verne Britton (25); Yvonne Howdershelt (25); Barbara Long (25); Mark Saffron (25); George Cook (30); Kathy Musick (35) and Bob Lint (40).*

Verne Britton (left)

Barbara Long (right)

Bob Lint (left)

Not pictured: Yvonne Howdershelt, Mark Saffron, George Cook, and Kathy Musick.

Blackboard Learn 9.1 continued from page one...This experience has allowed us to develop many best practices and procedures to maximize application availability and performance. Learning management systems like Blackboard have been called a "disruptive technology" because of the huge impact of online education in changing the way we educate our students. We are very excited to be involved with providing these on-line learning solutions for our WV schools and learners and look forward to making this technology even better going forward.

ON A MORE PERSONAL NOTE...

⇒ Here's a big ***HAPPY BIRTHDAY*** to the following WVNET staff members with *birthdays in November:: Verne Britton, Peggy Connell, Chris Freeman and Dianne Sisler.* ***AND...***

⇒ Just when you thought we couldn't be happier, word has been received that WVNET Director Dan O'Hanlon was one of three alumni who were inducted into the LT (Lyons Township) High School Hall of Fame on Friday November 4, 2011 at the LaGrange Country Club in LaGrange, Illinois. O'Hanlon is most recognized for his work as a judge and other work in the judiciary system, according to the news site of the Lyons Township High School. The Hall of Fame not only acknowledges the great work of some great people, it also gives current students the opportunity to meet and work alongside accomplished individuals and leaders who walked the same hallways and may have sat in the same seat or shared the same locker. There are plaques on the wall outside the Community Room with a short biography about every member of the Lyons Township Hall of Fame. "Enjoy your time there-study hard-but remember that there is more to high school than what you learn in class," O'Hanlon said as words of advice to LT students.

Dan O'Hanlon

⇒ Lastly, WVNET wishes to acknowledge the one-year anniversary of WVNET Director Dan O'Hanlon on November 17, 2011. Significant changes have occurred within and outside of the organization in that year's time, i.e., Governor Joe Manchin is Senator Joe Manchin; there is a new Vice Chancellor for Administration—Rob Anderson, and former WVNET Director and Associate Director Henry Blosser and Jay Justice respectively have retired. Roberta Linger is WVNET Deputy Director/Finance and Allen Daugherty is WVNET Deputy Director/Operations. Under the strong leadership of Dan O'Hanlon, WVNET is heavily focused on networking, distance learning (Blackboard), administrative applications (Banner, DegreeWorks), data-warehousing, and other new and diverse lines of business.

WVNET

Dan O'Hanlon, Director
837 Chestnut Ridge Road
Morgantown, WV 26505
304.293.5192 x267 office
304.293.4439 fax
dohanlon@mail.wvnet.edu

Fran Barnes, Newsletter Editor
fran@mail.wvnet.edu

Fran Barnes

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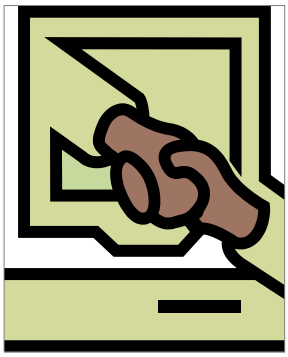

Reaching out —- 24/7/365

DegreeWorks Progress: Due to availability of SunGard technical resources, installation of the software and actual scribing for the first cohort of schools will not begin until January. We are working to schedule a demonstration of the software and a preliminary scribing web session to help participants understand the process and identify where there may be issues that need addressed with catalog issues. Plan is for sometime in late November or early December for these sessions. WVNET will be scheduling bi-weekly conference calls with the groups. Next cohort will begin in September 2012. If you haven't turned in your blackout dates to Roberta Linger Roberta@mail.wvnet.edu, please do so as soon as possible.

Argos Demo: On November 14, Evisions, Inc. conducted a demo and training session on the Argos Enterprise Reporting Solution. This demo was conducted using a copy of Argos installed here at WVNET and one of our test databases (which has been transformed using the Evisions DataMasque product which masks personally-identifiable data so that no privacy rules are violated). Feedback from the demo so far has been very positive. Argos is designed to easily build reports that range from simple ad hoc queries to advanced dashboards and data cubes without having to go to your IT people every time you need a new report. Reports are displayed in your browser and can also be printed, saved, or emailed and can also be set up on an automated schedule. It can report against Banner, DegreeWorks, ODS, or any other data source you may have. Evisions also offers FREE ongoing training for all their products, both live on the web and recorded. Evisions is offering what amounts to an 83% discount for Argos if we purchase and host it centrally (databases do not have to be hosted at WVNET for this service). We have this demonstration system available for users to test drive, either running against our test database or connecting to your own database application. If you want access to Argos, contact the WVNET Helpdesk or log a ticket in OZ. Check it out and let us know what you think!!

WebLogic Training: Oracle is providing a series of free webinars October-January on their Web-Logic middle tier product, which is an important component for Banner (the part that makes Banner forms and self-service components work on the web). WVNET also arranged for a free live workshop that was conducted at WVNET earlier in November, which was attended by tech support folks from campuses all over the state and even from our neighbors at IUP. These seminars are worthwhile sessions targeted specifically for Banner installations, to help make the transition to this new replacement software. We applaud Oracle for their support for this new product.

FLYING UNDER THE RADAR

Click on the new WVNET logo below (and send an email request) to receive a celebratory magnet.

West Virginia NETWORK
Enhancing Education through Technology

*A big **THANKS** goes to WVHEPC Science & Research Graphic Designer **Leigh Taylor** who created the logo for us!!*