

Networking 101

West Virginia Network (WVNET)



West Virginia Statewide Technology Conference 2017 (WVSTC 2017) will be held on July 18-20, 2017, at the Morgantown Marriott at Waterfront Place and Morgantown Event Center in Morgantown, WV.

It's not too late to register: wvstc.com. Please join us for this very special conference as we celebrate our 13th Anniversary.



Shannon McClintock Miller

WVSTC 2017 will start with the opening of the **Exhibitor Hall at 11:30am on Tuesday, July 18, followed by lunch at 11:50am**. Immediately following lunch, conference participants will move upstairs for the opening keynote event. Judge Dan O'Hanlon, Director of WVNET, will offer opening remarks and introduce the **Opening Keynote Speaker Shannon McClintock Miller, the Future Ready Libraries and Project Connect Spokesperson, Buncee's Teacher Librarian Advisor and Cantata Learning's Teacher Librarian Advocate**. Shannon has a passion for making a difference in the world and lives of others, through education, librarianship, technology and social media. Shannon's topic is "Let Them Be Heard—Giving Our Students a Voice."

This year's conference includes many sessions and demonstrations that reveal the power of STEM. New this year, in addition to the many educational concurrent sessions, in-booth sessions will be held in the Exhibitor Hall on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday. In keeping with the ever-popular theme, the conference will once again host a **STEM Playground**. Join conference participants at 5:15pm on Tuesday in the MEC Lobby as they go hands-on with the latest gizmos and gadgets. This event promises to be a fun interactive experience. It is an all hands-on family affair!

The **WVSTC Exhibitor Hall** will showcase the latest advances in learning technologies, tools, products and services Tuesday from 11:30am till 5:00pm and again on Wednesday from 8:00am until 3:00pm. Beginning at 2:10pm on Wednesday, please join conference participants for a **Vendor Reception** to thank the 70+ vendors for their support.

On Thursday, July 20, the conference closing keynote luncheon will begin with the West Virginia Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Steven L. Paine. He will offer closing remarks and introduce the **Closing Keynote Speaker, Robbie K. Melton Ph.D., Associate Vice Chancellor of Mobilization Emerging Technology for Tennessee Board of Regents**. Robbie's topic is "Catch up, Keep up or Lead." Following her keynote, please stay for a 'meet and greet' with Dr. Melton. She is excited to showcase some new amazing technology!



Robbie K. Melton, Ph.D.

Mark your calendars now for WVSTC 2018 — July 17-19 — Morgantown Marriott at Waterfront Place and Morgantown Event Center, Morgantown, West Virginia.

(Guest feature article by WVNET staff member Fran Barnes)

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dan O'Hanlon, Director

Whew! That was a close one. With just two weeks left in the fiscal year, the Legislature finally passed a budget and avoided a government shutdown this year. This is the second year in a row that they have come perilously close to not having a budget at year's end.

While we are all glad they passed a budget, it came late and was bare bones. The continued concern about furloughs and no paychecks has already cost WVNET one valued employee who left for the private sector. Because of the hiring freeze, we may not be able to replace him.

Our profound gratitude to long-time supporter Senator Bob Beach for working so hard to get WVNET's budget line reinstated by the Governor. Senator Beach has helped us out of many crises and we truly appreciate his support for the work that we do.

The reinstatement of our budget means that our prices for services like Banner will go up much, much less than if we had lost \$1.7 million. As it was, we took about the same cut that most of Higher Education did this year.

So, we will continue to serve our customers as we have since 1975 and continue to do more with less. Just like everyone else in West Virginia this year.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY WINNER

I've enjoyed greatly my 12+ years here at WVNET. However, it is with mixed emotions that I'm leaving the Network as of August 4th, 2017. It has been a wonderful ride, and I've met great people all around the Mountain State. I'm thankful for the opportunities I've had to be a part of this family at WVNET, as well as our extended family within the customer base.



Booker Walton, III

As you know, each month WVNET recognizes a customer who took the time to complete our Customer Satisfaction Survey to tell us how we are doing. We thank everyone who takes that extra time to give us advice, kudos, or criticisms that will help us improve our service.

However, this month I want to give the award to the WVNET staff. There are a lot of people that go behind the scenes here at WVNET, and don't get recognized for their dedicated service to the State of West Virginia, day after day, year after year. I just want to dedicate this article to recognizing them all.

To my soon to be former staff, the Network Operations staff, thank you. I truly believe you are the unsung heroes every day of the state network and all that lies within it. Every day, every hour, the Operations staff is in the building manning their posts and serving the state.

The Business Office at WVNET is not known by many, but the accounting and managing of our accounts and making sure we have money is a daily grind. Their work is done diligently and without fanfare, but behind the scenes it is appreciated by all who know.

The Systems Group at WVNET is another group that works mainly behind the scenes, however, they are responsible for so much here that it's impossible to list within a short article. Whether it's email, backups, VM's, or the laundry list of other things they do, they deserve to be recognized for their efforts in ensuring that there are no problems that stop productivity from occurring from a systems management perspective.

The Telecommunications Team at WVNET provides the backbone of the organization and ensures connectivity throughout the state to our many clients. It's amazing when I watch them look over all their various VLAN's and internal and external connections. They are never confused, they document their work, they know where they are, and they have plans for how to move forward to get exactly where they are going. I've long fancied myself a network admin, but to see it at the enterprise level in which they work is a treat every time.

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The Applications and Development group at WVNET is a little more well known in that they interface with many of our Universities and CTC's that are using the Banner platform. The expertise in their respective profession for each of the individuals associated with Applications is quite impressive. I've always admired their ability to take the data and mold and shape it in a way that is usable and discernable for the many people they serve. They are a true credit to the profession and ultimately an essential asset for this organization.

The Media Services team may be our most public facing group due to their constant interfacing with clients for various development projects. I think the thing I respect the most about their group is the creativity. If the client can think it, Media Services can make it. That's pretty much their motto, and it holds true as they serve our clients around our great state.

It is my sincere hope that WVNET continues to move forward and prosper. There are many great people that work here, and I have very fond memories of the time I've shared with them. It's been a professional honor to share the hallways with these individuals over the years. I wanted a way —this venue— to tell them thank you, and that their work does not go unnoticed.

It has also been a privilege to write these articles for you, the customers of WVNET. I thank you for indulging me on giving one final hand to the great work of the individuals that make up WVNET. If you see a WVNET employee at the West Virginia Statewide Technology Conference on the 18th thru the 20th of July, stop them and say thanks for what they do. I'm sure they will appreciate it because the one thing I've learned about being a state employee is that everything that we do is for the customer and for the betterment of West Virginia.

I'll miss talking to you each month. Thank you for letting me be a small part of your WVNET experience.

(Guest article by WVNET staff member Booker T. Walton, III)

WVNET RELEASES STUDENT PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD TO BLACKBOARD CUSTOMERS



Blackboard is the industry standard in online learning, and WVNET operates this software for over a dozen public universities and colleges around the state. Developers and other third-parties are able to add new functionality to Blackboard through the use of "building blocks" which are collections of Java code that can be installed into a Blackboard instance.

In late June, WVNET installed a new building block for all of their Blackboard customers: the Student Performance Dashboard. This building block, developed in-house by *Systems Programmer Jonathan Lynch*, adds a web page to Blackboard that allows teachers, deans, and guidance counselors to get a top-down view of how students are doing across all of their online courses. Without this building block, faculty had to click into every individual course to get this information, an arduous task for a dean overseeing hundreds of classes!

"The Student Performance Dashboard will allow instructors to identify students who fall behind, contact them, and offer assistance as needed," writes Harmony Garletts, e-Learning Specialist at Pierpont Community & Technical College. *"Our faculty is very excited about this new tool."*

The inspiration for the building block came from Dr. Mary Stewart, who in addition to being the Associate Director of WVROCKS, is also the Director of Distance Learning and Educational Services at WVNET. She originally wanted a simple database report on lagging students, but the idea evolved into a full-fledged application. According to Mary, *"One of the greatest challenges for online educators is student retention. We needed a streamlined solution that would give us a global snapshot of student performance with the click of a button, and that is just what Jonathan created for us."*

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The end result was a simple but user-friendly tool that uses percentages to show how each student is progressing in the course. Students are not only compared to themselves, but also to other students in the same course, making it easy to see how the class is progressing as a whole.

Each student is given a color from green to red to help instructors direct their attention.

The response has been positive overall. Just take it from Jake Bolen, the Director of Distance Learning at Mountwest Community & Technical College, who commented, *"My hope is that the ease of using this tool will encourage faculty to check on the students in their courses more often. We are lucky to have a Blackboard team at WVNET to develop custom applications like this."*

Although they were originally talking about selling the application, WVNET eventually decided it made sense to release the tool to their customers for free. *"Our mission is not just to host Blackboard but to add value for our customers,"* said Steven White, Manager of the Systems department at WVNET.

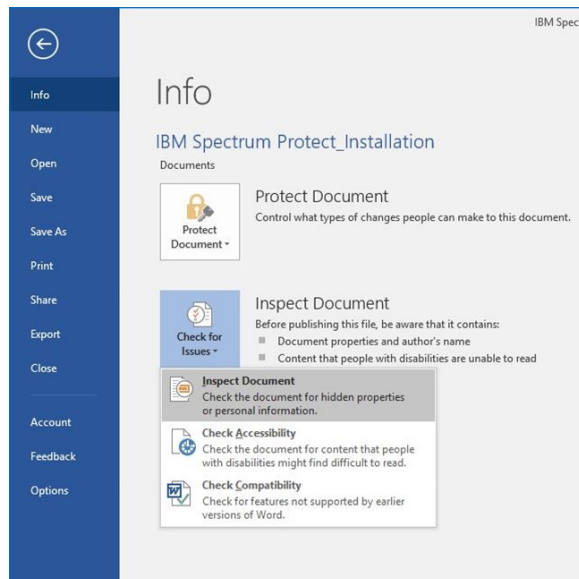
(Guest article by WVNET staff member Jonathan Lynch)

DOCUMENT INSPECTOR FEATURES FOR EXCEL, POWERPOINT AND WORD

It's good practice to remove hidden data and personal information before sharing Microsoft Office documents. Microsoft's Document Inspector tool helps to follow this practice. The Inspector checks for these items and other metadata such as tracked changes and comments within your document. In some cases, it will remove them. In other cases it will alert if it can't perform the removal automatically.

Before using the Document Inspector, ensure that you save a copy of it because the data removed by the Document Inspector may not always be possible to restore. **This is very important to note.**

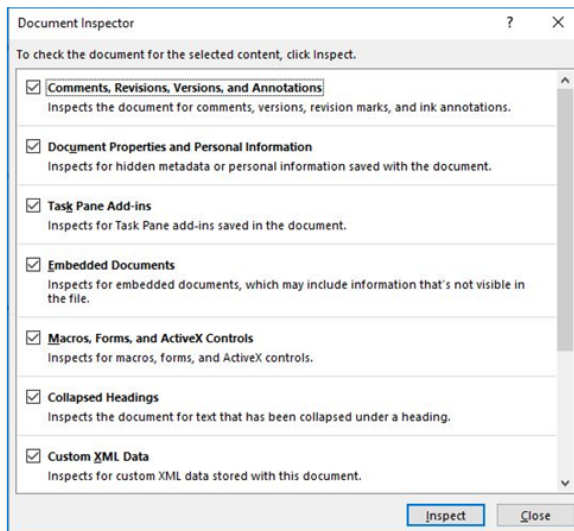
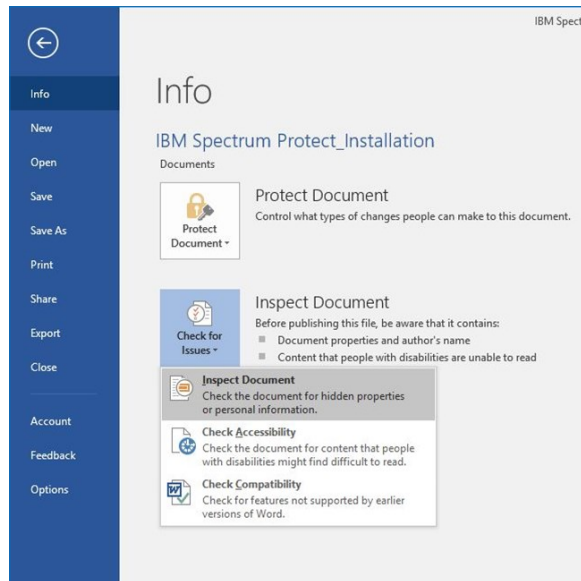
After saving a copy of the original document, open the document and then click the *File* tab in the Ribbon. Then, click *Info*. In the *Info* section, click *Check for Issues*. Choose *Inspect Document* from the drop-down menu.



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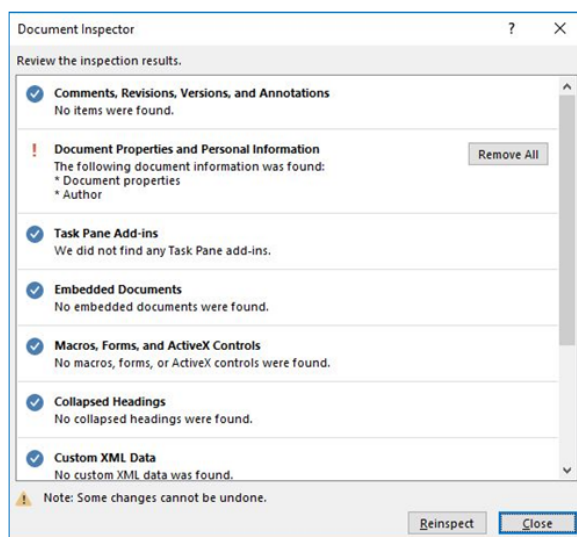
In the Document Inspector dialog box that appears, click the checkboxes for the types of data to find and remove.



When you are ready to continue, click the Inspect button. Word then displays any hidden information for the selected categories in a results page.

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For each category's results, click the "Remove All" button to remove all the data shown within that category.

If you want to keep your Word documents clean of information that shouldn't be distributed, this is an easy way to remove hidden history.

If you want to preserve tracked changes or comments in a document and you want to share the document without others seeing the tracked changes and comments, the best solution is to keep separate copies of the document. Create a public copy for distribution, and keep a private copy for yourself.

(Guest article by WVNET staff member Randall Long)



Save the date!

WVHETC 2017 — October 2-3, 2017

Morgantown Marriott at Waterfront Place and
Morgantown Event Center, Morgantown, WV

Early Registration Open at \$125

Deadline for Concurrent Session Proposals—August 28*

**Discounted registration of \$65 for all accepted presenters*

Please submit your proposal online!

Pre-conference: Blackboard-Humanizing the Virtual Classroom

More info: wvhetc.com

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ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE — POWERFUL EXERCISE FOR EVERYONE!



Walk 100 Miles in 100 Days walk began on April 17 and ends on July 25. This year during 'The Ultimate Challenge,' walkers can turn in unlimited miles per day and per week.

WVNET has 7 participants (6 staff members and 1 spouse) who, to date, have walked a whopping 1326.6 miles! Walkers are currently in Week 9 of the walk.

The goal of Walk 100 Miles in 100 Days is to get participants excited about exercise and to walk at least 1 mile (about 2000 steps) every day for the next 100 days. Walking is a great form of exercise that is easy to do and can be done almost anywhere.

According to the Mayo Clinic, physical activity doesn't need to be complicated. Something as simple as a daily brisk walk can help you live a healthier life.

For example, regular brisk walking can help you:

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Prevent or manage various conditions, including heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your mood
- Improve your balance and coordination

The faster, farther and more frequently you walk, the greater the benefits.

(Guest article by WVNET staff member Fran Barnes)