Northwest’s Department of Biology recently acquired a scanning electron microscope as a gift from Hallmark Cards. Often referred to as an SEM, the device is capable of magnifying objects more than 100,000 times their actual size with far greater resolution than is possible with a conventional microscope.

Using the SEM, Northwest faculty members and students are now able to view high-resolution images of objects as small as 4 to 5 nanometers. A nanometer is a billionth of a meter, which is about the distance a human fingernail grows in a second.

Viewing such infinitesimal bits of matter is possible because, unlike conventional microscopes that use light to form an image, SEMs emit a beam of electrons produced by a metallic filament.

Dr. Gregg Dieringer, associate professor of biology and department chairman, said the SEM is used in classroom demonstrations and by students assisting faculty members with research projects.

The 10-year-old apparatus would have sold for about $150,000 when first manufactured, Dieringer said.

Bohlken named to listening hall of fame

Dr. Bob Bohlken, professor emeritus and former chairman of Northwest’s speech and theatre department, was recently inducted into the International Listening Association’s Hall of Fame during a conference in Salem, Ore.

Bohlken, who joined the organization in 1984, has been a frequent presenter at ILA conferences and is a former vice president and member of the executive board.

Bohlken served the Northwest family for 30 years, joining the Northwest faculty in 1970 and retiring in 2000.
Northwest conducted its centennial commencement Aug. 1 in Bearcat Arena.

Several special features were added to the traditional graduation ceremony, including dozens of flags representing the home countries of Northwest’s international students. In addition, each of the University’s three colleges and the Graduate School displayed its own banner.

Dr. Patricia Lucido, professor of chemistry/physics, carried Northwest’s new ceremonial mace. Carved in the shape of one of the Administration Building’s landmark towers, the mace was created by President Dean L. Hubbard, a skilled woodworking enthusiast, from the wood of an Austrian pine that once stood on the lawn of the Gaunt House, Northwest’s historic presidential residence.

Following the ceremony, graduates, family and friends attended a reception near Colden Pond, which was adorned with floating candles.

Two MBA programs soon to be offered in Kansas City

Beginning in January, Northwest’s Kansas City Center in Liberty will offer a general MBA and an MBA with health management emphasis.

The general MBA will offer 21 required core hours, plus 12 hours of electives. The MBA program is designed so it can be completed within one calendar year when all prerequisites are met.

Students enrolled in the MBA with health management emphasis will take predetermined courses in health management taught online by faculty of the School of Health Management, a division of the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Eckert-Stewart is new director

Dr. Sandra Eckert-Stewart was named director of Northwest’s Kansas City Center in July.

She said her goals are to expand the variety and scope of the center’s academic offerings while working to promote those already in place. These include courses and degree programs in guidance and counseling, educational leadership, curriculum and instruction, alternative teacher certification, health and physical education, recreation and computer science.

For more information, visit www.nwmissouri.edu/NWKC, e-mail nwkc@nwmissouri.edu or call (816) 736-6600.

Owens Library enters eBook age

Electronic book databases, now part of the research arsenal of Northwest’s B.D. Owens Library, make it possible for students to search and cite the complete texts of thousands of volumes with only a few keystrokes and mouse clicks.

Whether working on or off campus, students can go to the library’s homepage, select the eBooks button, then choose either Ebrary’s massive Academic Complete collection or the Gale Virtual Reference Library.

“Combined, the two resources contain the equivalent of more than 30,000 bound texts,” said Frank Baudino, head librarian for information services.

Academic Complete, which contains fully searchable books on everything from Shakespeare to terrestrial mollusks, is similar to the University’s general circulation collection, Baudino said. The Gale database comprises a variety of reference materials, including encyclopedias, almanacs and annotated lists.

For those old enough to remember preparing term papers using typewriters and 3-by-5 cards, the real gee-whiz feature may be Academic Complete’s automatic inclusion of citation material when text is inserted into another document. When a user pastes a quote into a word processing document, the correct citation for the quote automatically appears.

But for all the labor-saving technology, Baudino said, it’s still going to be a while – and maybe never – before the average undergraduate can complete four years of college without opening a printed book.

“Certainly this gives our students and faculty some very powerful tools,” he said.