

Technically Speaking

Movin' On Up

The 'Low Down' on the New Laptops for Residents

By Becky Rainford
Millikan Hall PERT

The new laptops have been ordered and are on their way! As you have probably heard, Northwest is replacing the current desktop computers in the residence halls with laptop computers. The current notebook computer program has been expanded to include all of the residence halls, not just the Tower Suites and Forest Village Apartments. Each resident will be issued a laptop computer to utilize while living on campus. Some have raised the question, "Who gets the older laptops currently being used?" Enough laptops have been ordered to give everyone a new one and the older ones will be used in other places on campus.

The new laptops were purchased through Gateway and will look

almost the same as the current laptops. The major differences are internal to the computer, including the capability to write CDs using a combo CD-RW/DVD drive.

The new laptops will have a 40 gigabyte hard drive, 256 MB DDR SDRAM, and a 1.3 GHz Intel Celeron M Processor 350. The laptops will also have wireless capability. They can access the wireless network already available in the library and will eventually be able to connect in the Student Union, the Station and the Forest Village Community Center.

The laptops will also have a touch pad pointing device instead of a traditional mouse. If you prefer to use a regular mouse, you will need to purchase your

own USB mouse. The laptops will not have PS2 ports (used for many mice and keyboards). If you purchase attachments, make sure they have a USB connection.

Each laptop has 2 USB ports and one parallel port (used for connecting some printers). If you plan on connecting more than 2 USB devices such as your printer, a mouse, flash/pen drive, etc., then you might want to purchase a USB hub that increases the number of ports available so you will not have to constantly be unplugging devices.

When you pick up your new laptop, you will also receive a laptop carrying case with the Northwest logo. The case is yours to keep and will be used throughout the remainder of your time at Northwest. 🐾

On the Web!



Fun Links

www.bearcatgreetings.com

- Pick from a large selection of Bearcat-themed electronic greeting cards to send to your friends and family—100% free!

www.jokemonkey.com

- A huge collection of funny cartoons, jokes, pictures, pranks, videos and games.

www.uGoTo.com

- A website dedicated to people who like to show off their own creations. The site features funny pictures, videos and jokes.

Network Security

By Adam Clark
Franken Hall PERT

As the Northwest network expands in both size and purpose, Information Systems has made decisions to make it more secure. The broadest change will involve new password requirements for all users of the Northwest network.

The new requirements went into effect on April 4th. The requirements will not affect currently set passwords, but they will be enforced the next time you change your password. Under the new policy, passwords must:

- be at least 8 characters long
- have at least one alphabetic and one numeric character
- contain at least one of the following special characters: @ ! # \$ * _ + (Note: For VMS, only a \$ or _ will work.)

Remember, your password expires every four months. With this in mind, you should change your password during finals week before you leave for the summer. By changing your password during finals week, your password should not expire while you are away for the summer.

Another security change will eliminate the campus-wide use of the 'Bearcat' account. Starting this summer, use of the bearcat account will be limited to certain areas within the library, which will be monitored with video surveillance. The purpose of restricting the bearcat account is to reduce the number of anonymous users on the Northwest network. 🐾

Newsletter Staff

Becky Rainford
Contributing Editor/
Author

Adam Clark
Contributing Author

Tabatha Verbick
Editor in Chief

Merlin Miller
Assistant Editor

Kim Todd
Assistant Editor



Computer Tips

- Change your Northwest login/email password during finals week to keep it from expiring while you are away for the summer.
- Backup all email messages in your Northwest email account that you want to keep.
- Only computers running Windows XP Professional with SP2 will be able to access the wireless network. Access points will be located in Owens Library, the Station, Forest Village Community Center and the Student Union.

PERT Contact Information

Adam Clark **x-6628**
Franken Hall

Becky Rainford **x-5217**
Millikan Hall

Help Desk **x-1634**

Help Desk Hours

M-T	8 am—10 pm
Fri	8 am—5 pm
Sat	11 am—4:45 pm
Sun	1 pm—10 pm

Firewall Ports to be Disabled



Over the course of the current academic year, students have requested specific firewall ports to be opened to allow some games and other applications to connect to the internet. After the spring trimester ends, these ports will once again be disabled. This annual procedure helps to ensure that the open ports on the firewall are used and scrutinized on a regular basis.

Students wanting to have the same ports reactivated will have to resubmit their request in the fall. Hence, no game ports will be open during the summer trimester.

Computer Lingo



Terms you should know

Network— Two or more computers connected to each other. The purpose of a network is to enable the sharing of information between many computers. The internet can be described as a global network. Networks can be either connected with cables or wireless.

Bandwidth— The amount of data you can send through a network, usually measured in bits per second or "bps." A good analogy for bandwidth is a highway with cars traveling on it. The highway is the network connection and the cars are the data. The wider the highway, the greater the number of cars that can travel on it at one time. The same principle applies to computer data -- as the bandwidth increases, the amount of information transferred increases.



Packing It In Storing Your Files for the Summer

By Becky Rainford
Millikan Hall PERT

As the end of the spring trimester quickly approaches, the realization that you will be moving out of the residence halls for the summer may make you feel the time crunch. But as you start packing your belongings, don't forget about your electronic baggage. One thing students forget before they leave the halls is to back up their files from their university-owned computers. Any documents that you have stored on your computer need to be moved to either your student storage (a.k.a. N:\ drive on Catbert) or any other removable media such as a USB flash/pen drive. Floppy disks can be used, but they have a tendency to become defective and lose data. CD's, Zip drives and flash drives are more reliable. A good place to store documents is your student storage, which is a safe, reliable place as long as you are still a student at Northwest. But remember, you can only access your student storage from a computer on-campus. If you have a lot of large files that will not fit on your student storage, another option is to sign up for an email account like Gmail that has over two gigabytes of storage. Both Hotmail and Yahoo! Mail offer 250 MB of storage. To utilize a non-Northwest email account for storing your files, send yourself an email message with your files as attachments.

Other Storage Options

Another good option for moving a large amount of data is to sign up for online storage through a provider like xdrive.com, who offers 5GB of storage for \$10 a month. If you do not need quite that much space, services like Yahoo! Briefcase are available for free, offering 30MB of free file storage in addition to email storage space (250 MB). Another perk of signing up for a free Yahoo! account is that with Yahoo! Photos, you can store an unlimited number of photos for free. The nice thing about storing information on the web is that you can access it from any computer connected to the internet. Also, some of

these services offer the option of being able to share your files with others.

What to Back Up

Most people backup their assignments and generally anything they have stored in their 'My Documents' folder. However, many forget about their Internet favorites. If you have important links you would like to keep, you can reach your favorites folder by opening 'My Computer'. Open the 'Local Disk (C:)'. Then open the 'Documents and Settings' folder. Next, open the folder with your username and copy and paste the folder named 'Favorites' to wherever you are backing up your files.

Another thing to remember is to save any email messages you might need from your Northwest email account. In August, all email messages older than 120 days are deleted. After these messages have been deleted, there is no way to retrieve them. The annual deletion is done to ensure that all student email accounts are below their allowable size limit. The deletion of old messages will ensure that you will be able to receive important messages from Northwest before the fall trimester begins. The easiest way to save your messages is to just forward them to another email account.

You can still access your email through the web-based system from any computer off campus and you will continue to be able to send and receive email messages. But remember to change your password before you leave so it will not expire while you are away. It is much easier to change your password while you are on campus than when you are away.

One thing that you do not have to back up is your Outlook calendar, tasks or contacts. Any dates, tasks or contacts you have stored will be there when you come back to Northwest. 🐾

Preview for Next Month...

This is the last edition for the 2004-2005 academic year. Please check us out next year!

Technically Speaking is a monthly PERT Newsletter for residents in Dieterich, Millikan, Franken, and Phillips Halls.

This publication is written and produced by the PERT staff. All text and graphics are © 2005 by Northwest Missouri State University's Information Systems and their respective copyright holders.