SVRTC Newsletter
Spring 2011

www.svrtc.org

MISSION: The Southside Virginia Regional Technology Consortium will assist members with coordinating the acquisition and effective integration of viable up-to-date and emerging technologies, valuable training for K-12 students, staff and other citizens in our communities to enhance learning at all levels and encourage economic development in Southside Virginia.

2011 SVRTC Awards

The 2011 SVRTC Awards Banquet was held at Longwood University March 23, 2011. Sam Nixon Jr., Chief Information Officer of the Commonwealth of Virginia was the guest speaker. Congratulations to this year's award recipients!

Division Leadership Award: Nottoway

Technology Leadership Award: Dr. Anthony Jackson, Superintendent, Henry

Technology Support	Technology Teacher	Instructional Support
Jason Cubbage, Amelia	Deborah Jamerson, Appomattox	Daniel Richardson, Appomattox
April Johnson, Appomattox	Kate Davis, Charlotte	Emily George, Charlotte
Lamont Thompson, Dinwiddie	Erin Ford, Colonial Heights	Honor Zalewski, Cumberland
Teh-Way Lee, Henry	Margaret Korrow, Cumberland	Betty Spiers, Dinwiddie
John Nemeth, Lunenburg	Jenney Walters, Dinwiddie	Nicole Matthews, Henry
Margie Agee, Martinsville	Tim Fowler, Lunenburg	Debi Sutphin, Lunenburg
Tracy Ellis, Mecklenburg	Joyce Hankins, Martinsville	Steve Tatum, Martinsville
Elizabeth Hendricks, Nottoway	Kristopher Reed, Mecklenburg	Janelle Langford, Mecklenburg
Dale Pruitt, Prince Edward	Alexa McMilliian, Nottoway	Jason Buchanan, Nottoway
Eric Boyd, Sussex	Justin Collins, Patrick	Somer Ojodeagua, Patrick
	Lori Jones, Pittsylvania	Suzanne Smith, Prince Edward
	Kacey Potter, Prince Edward	Pat Bagley, Sussex
	Chris Waugaman, Prince George	
	Tocarra Patterson, Sussex	

ITTIP and SVRTC Represented in World Education Summit

On March 9-13, 2011 Longwood University's Institute for Teaching through Technology & Innovative Practies' (ITTIP) Director, Dr. Mano Talaiver and SVRTC Senior Technology Engineer, Bill Wilson attended the HP World Education Summit in New Delhi, India. The ITTIP received a grant to participate in Hewlett-Packard's Catalyst Initiative, a global social innovation program designed to develop more effective approaches to providing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education worldwide. The ITTIP was among 50 organization world-wide to receive the HP grant.

Welcome to Paula Klonowski!

Paula Klonowski has joined the Institute for Teaching through Technology and Innovative Practices as the STEM specialist. Paula was previously the Science Coordinator at the State Department of Education and conducted the new SOL institutes in fall.

Paula has expertise in mathematics, science, and special education and is excellent at working with teachers. The ITTIP is here to meet your professional development needs on STEM new math and science SOL, and 21st century skills. Paula's contact information is:
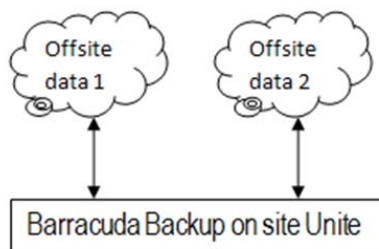
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Are You Comfortable with YOUR Disaster Recovery Solution?
By Timothy Ampy

Looking for a product for backup and disaster recovery? Perhaps Barracuda's Backup Service that is designed for organizations of various size and need might be a solution. As the Director of Technology at Dinwiddie County Public Schools, I chose to use the Barracuda service to maintain backups of our critical data. The Barracuda Backup Server maintains a local copy of our data on site while efficiently duplicating the data offsite, all without placing additional burdens on our production servers. The Offsite cloud storage at Barracuda Networks is monitored and managed by Barracuda Central as part of our monthly Barracuda Backup Subscription .

The Barracuda Backup Service makes it easy for us to select the data we need to have stored offsite for disaster recovery. It is great knowing our data is being reliably backed-up off site and maintained in both locations. Barracuda's Backup Service includes technical support and emergency assistance when restoring data in the event of a system failure or disaster. The data is always available and may be viewed from any place or time because of its very useful web interface. For more information on Barracuda's Backup Services please visit:

http://www.barracudanetworks.com/ns/products/backup_overview.php

SVRTC RSAP Relocated

The SVRTC's Regional Service Access Point (SVRTC-RSAP) was relocated during early April from the Halifax STEM Center to GCR Company's newly renovated co-location building. The RSAP houses the SVRTC's regional video bridge, gatekeeper, video archival server, and iAccess virtual desktop servers currently being used in regional pilots. As one of the first customers to be housed in GCR's new building, the SVRTC's RSAP equipment occupies only a tiny amount of the large space available to GCR's Customers. The new location includes a large HVAC system, dual emergency power generators, and co-located fiber terminations that run between the major locations in South Boston including the ITTIP offices in the Bank of America Building.

"GCR's new building is providing us [SVRTC] with resources that we simply could not afford with the minimal funding we receive" stated Bill Wilson, Senior Technology Engineer for the SVRTC. "Locating in GCR's colocation building gives us direct access to fiber that connects us directly to our regional partners through the Southern Virginia Education Network (SVEN). Another benefit is the redundant paths to the Internet and other locations around Virginia including gateways into the Internet-2 and the National Lambda Rail (NLR) networks.

Glenn Ratliff, owner and CEO of GCR company, offered comments on the consortium. "The SVRTC is a core part of the Southern region's initiatives for promoting and developing a more efficient and productive education system in the Southside Virginia. GCR is happy to assist the SVRTC in its efforts by allowing its members who are GCR customers to have direct access to the SVRTC's RSAP and to the Internet-2 and NLR gateways".

The SVRTC and GCR have developed a mutually productive relationship since the SVRTC moved its regional Internet gateway from Level-3 to GCR in order to reduce costs and compensate for budget cuts. Utilizing the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative's fiber optic infrastructure through an IFB awarded to GCR, the SVRTC continues to develop additional opportunities to benefit its consortium members.

ITTIP Receives Math Science Partnership Grant

ITTIP has received a Mathematics and Science Partnership (MSP) grant through the Virginia Department of Education for K-3 mathematics and science teachers. The grant, *K-3 STEM Kairos: Engineering Everywhere,* focuses on professional development for K-3 mathematics and science teachers and integrating engineering and technology with mathematics and science. A week-long institute will occur this summer in which teachers will be engaged in using new software and inquiry and problem based methods to design STEM unit plans to use during the school year. A number of SVRTC school divisions are participating in this grant including Amelia, Brunswick, Charlotte, Colonial Heights, Cumberland, Danville, Dinwiddie, Halifax, Hopewell, Lunenburg, Martinsville, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, and Sussex. For more information on this project please contact Paula Klonowski (paula@ittip.us).

SVRTC and FIRST Robotics

SVRTC school divisions participate in FIRST Robotics competitions annually. Depending on the focus of the school, they participate in a variety of FIRST programs. For example, some participate in the FIRST Lego League®, some in the FIRST Technology Challenge® (FTC), and some in the FIRST Robotics Competition® (FRC). Regardless of the program, students, teachers and mentors must study the game requirements, robot building guidelines, and a list of specific rules that must be satisfied in order to compete effectively. In a period of a few weeks the teams will have to develop a robot design that includes the needed hardware, electronics, and computer programming to accomplish the goals of the game.

The 2011 season's FRC Logo Motion Competition included the following teams from the SVRTC:
- Team 1413 - Skipwith, VA (Mecklenburg County Schools)
- Team 1262 - Martinsville, VA (Imagery Award in honor of Jack Kamen)
- Team 1095 - Chatham, VA (Pittsylvania County Schools)
- Team 1598 - Danville, VA (Danville City Schools)

Each team is paired with two other teams to form an alliance which is pitted against another three-team alliance. Alliances change in every match allowing a significant number of pairings to even out the competition. Each team receives the points awarded to their alliance that are used to determine the standings of each team. Alliance pairings are randomly decided and the luck of the draw, so to speak, can play heavily in how well a teams robot is ranked. Even so, a well performing robot can easily find itself included in the eliminations matches.

I observed Mecklenburg's team 1413 who participated in the North Carolina regional competition held at the Dorton Arena in Raleigh, NC. The Mecklenburg team had unfavorable pairings in earlier matches in the beginning with their robot sometimes being the only one to score for their alliance. This took its toll on the Mecklenburg team. However, as the competition moved forward the Mecklenburg team began to receive some good pairings resulting in decent alliance scores which raised this team's overall standings.

I am available to assist schools interested in starting a FIRST robotics team. I can also assist existing SVRTC teams with design and development in C and LabView programming, electronics, motor control, pneumatics, sensors, and mechanics. SVRTC members wishing my assistance can contact me via bill@svrtc.org.

SVRTC Presenting AT the Region 8 Infusion Conference

The SVRTC will be presenting at the Region 8 Infusion conference to be held on June 20, 2011 at Nottoway Middle School. Bill Wilson will provide presentations on identity theft and 3d technology used in education. The SVRTC will also have a booth at this conference.

DirecTV Goes to School

Timothy Ampy, Director of Technology for Dinwiddie County Schools has taken advantage of a new beneficial program offered by DirecTV. The program is providing his schools with access to free equipment and programming from DirecTV. From the DirecTV website:

"*DIRECTV is committed to fostering education at all levels and stages by offering the best educational television experience in the world. Through the DIRECTV GOES TO SCHOOL*® *program, qualifying state-accredited schools (k-12) can receive a FREE DIRECTV System and a programming package specially designed to enhance the classroom learning process.*"

SVRTC schools are encouraged to look into this free offer. For more information on DirecTV's offerings, please visit their web site:

(http://directvgoestoschool.com).

From Timothy Ampy:
"*We have installed DIRECTV in most of our schools here in Dinwiddie because it has great programming, picture, and* **no cost to our schools!** *DirecTV has a program called DirecTV Goes To School. DirecTV will give your schools FREE equipment (you can request up to 4 standard receivers or up to 3 standard receivers plus 1 DIRECTV PLUS*® *DVR) and it will be shipped to your school once all your application materials are received and approved. This equipment has been installed in our school libraries. DirecTV has been a great asset to our school division. Now our students and staff can look at many different educational programs with the potential to record them to use later. Think about having great programming available for all your schools, students, and staff for no cost!*"

(Much thanks goes to Stephanie Poe and Prince-George for continuing to develop our SVRTC Newsletter!)