

Technology Newsletter

April, 2008
Volume 4, Issue 3

Bernet Revely, Director;
Danny Richardson, Susie Fisher,
& Marion Wood, Division
Instructional Technologists



Director's News

Hello, I'm Bernet U. Revely III, the new Director of Technology and Career Education for ACPS. I would first like to thank everyone that I've met so far for making my transition here go as smooth as possible.

I'm a native of Appomattox, but moved to Lynchburg in the 6th grade where I attended Linkhorne Middle and eventually graduated from E.C. Glass. I earned a B.S. in Technology Education from Virginia Tech in 1995. I taught a combined 10 years in Loudoun and Nelson County before receiving an M.S. in Educational Leadership. I served as assistant principal of Forest Middle School for 2 years before coming back to Appomattox.

One of my goals is to help demystify technology and make it more prevalent in our school system. My belief is that technology can help schools close the

gaps that we typically find in education. There are tons of resources designed to help students and teachers reach their personal and educational goals. I also hope to encourage myself and others to design and develop materials that would benefit our educational community. I have a love for producing multimedia websites, CDs and DVDs, which could interactively deliver information. This interactivity is essential to the effectiveness of educational technology and with everyone participating; I know that we can reach our educational goals. Thanks again to everyone responsible for me being here and I look forward to working with everyone here in the district.

Bernet U. Revely III

Contents

Director's News	1
Martha's Note	1
Two Honored	2
Keeping Up to Date	2
Taking Stock	3
Academy Graduates	3
Assistive Technology	4
State Conferences	4
Wireless Slates	5
Web 2.0	6

Martha's Farewell

Where do I begin to express how excited I am for the future of ACPS as a whole, and also for me as a professional? I appreciate all the hard work each of you do every day as evidenced by our student achievement. The incredible transition that some of you have made in technology in the past 11 years I have worked in this county is beyond words. I think of some, who are even retiring this year; I had in basic computers back in 1995. We go way back and our skills have been enhanced annually. Good Job to ALL!!!

I am excited about the direction technology has taken to ensure that this wonderful tool is used to enhance instruction.

I am excited about how comfortable some of you have become and how some of you are opening up to the wonders of it all.

I am excited about the professional development opportunities and resources we have in this division.

Most of all, I am excited about the chance to come in daily contact with our instructional staff and students as they utilize this technology.

Thank you for all you do for my children and all children in Appomattox. We are blessed!!

Martha Eagle ☺

Upcoming Events

- ◆ 2 new Academies offered during the summer
- ◆ The Technology portion of ACPS web site has a new URL, go to <http://www.appomattox.k12.va.us/acpstech/>



Two of Our Own Receive Honors *By Susie Fisher*

Eagle Flies With Technology Leadership Award

The Southside Virginia Regional Technology Consortium presented Martha Eagle with a Technology Leadership Award. Dr. Manorama Talaiver, Director of the Institute for Teaching through Technology & Innovative Practices and Secretary of Technology for Governor Kaine, Aneesh Chopra, presented Martha Eagle with this special award. Dr. Talaiver said, "Martha Eagle has encouraged and facilitated interactions among the SVRTC members and challenged the SVRTC to take a proactive role in the Southside region. Under her leadership SVRTC committees were reformed, a new mission was drawn, and publicity of the SVRTC spread through the development of a SVRTC brochure and requests to the school divisions to publicize their technological accomplishments and their involvement in SVRTC. With monthly programs targeting specific interests and needs within the consortium, attendance from across the widespread region increased dramatically."



Martha and Freda honored at recent Southside Virginia Regional Technology Consortia Banquet!

Layne Named Technology Teacher of the Year

Freda Layne was named Technology Teacher of the Year for Appomattox County from the Southside Virginia Regional Technology Consortium at a banquet held in March.

Freda has been teaching math, science and technology for 32 years and continues to be on the cutting edge. Although her classroom uses the latest technology using Amtek modules of programs like flight simulation, digital photography, and flash, she goes beyond the given. Freda has brought in experts for using GPS/ GIS and the students have participated in Geocaching. In just the second year of participating in the Lego League Competition, Freda took her team to the state tournament.



Staying Up-to-Date with your Professional Journal Reading *By Marion Wood*

In this age of information overload, you could benefit from a service that gathers your news and puts it all in one place. There are a number of ways to set up your RSS news reader. Since I have a pageflakes account, I set mine up there. I was able to set it up in about 5 minutes. See the picture to the left. Go to www.pageflakes.com to set up your pageflake account.

Google Reader, see picture below, also allows you to gather feeds from online resources and read them as easily as you read your e-mail. Go to http://www.webware.com/8301-1_109-9745368-2.html Here, you will find a newbie tutorial on setting up your newsreader account.

Edutopia

- Learning Vessel
- A Learning Laboratory: Montclair State University Prepares Tomorrow...
- Thanks Again for Participating in Our Readers' Survey
- Marking Time: Back to the Future on Web 2.0
- Supporting Teachers: Notes from Mentors in the Field

eSchool News Top Stories

Cell phones test schools' outreach efforts



A seismic shift in mobile phone use calls for new communication strategies, award-winning eSN columnist Nora Carr argues. >>

- CoSN strives to empower superintendents
- Comcast to stop hampering file sharing
- Adobe launches free web version of Photoshop
- Hope inspires educators at ASCD conference

Add subscription Discover >

Show: updated - all Refresh

- Discovery News - Tech...
- BBC News | Technology... (10)
- Educational Technology (10)

subscriber

Tools, resources, grant ii with beginning and advan <http://etec.hawaii.edu/rs>

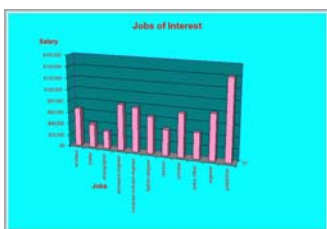
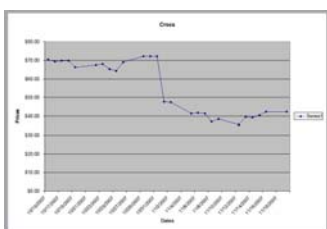
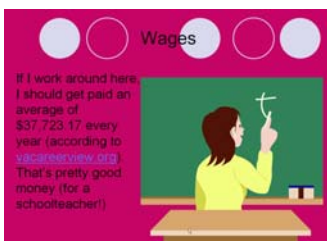
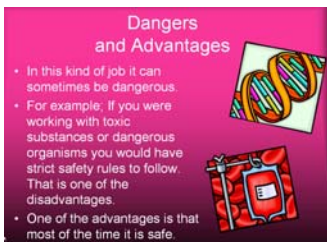
Subscribe

5,260 subscribers

techLEARNING.co

The Resource for Educa Site contains a Software <http://www.techlearning.c>

Subscribe



The above pictures are examples of career powerpoints and excel recordings of stocks created by students in Karen Cyrus' class.

Taking Stock in Technology *By Karen Cyrus*

This past fall the fifth grade Advanced Learners' participated in the Stock Market Game, a simulation of buying and selling real market stocks. I cannot say students earned a great deal of money, as the market was not as cooperative as we would have hoped. However, I can say that they learned much about the use of technology as a tool while we worked through the process.

The Stock Market Game is a great fit for fifth grade. *In math*, students are to collect, organize, and display a set of numerical data using bar graphs and line graphs; draw conclusions and make predictions based on graphs; read, write, and identify the place value of decimals through thousandths; round decimals to the nearest tenth or hundredth; create and solve problems involving addition and subtraction of whole numbers; and estimate and find the sum, difference, or product of two decimals through thousandths. *In English class*, they are to Use text organizers, such as type, headings, and graphics, to predict and categorize information: locate information to support opinions, predictions, and conclusions; identify cause-and-effect relationships; organize and summarize information to present reports of group activities; and use available technology to access information.

As we began, the students used the internet site finance.yahoo.com to research public companies. They collected data concerning current price, 52-week high and low, price/earning ratio, and any timely news events. They learned to read and

interpret line graphs that displayed price information for the past day, week, month, or year. They also were able to compare and contrast information about two companies in order to make the best decision possible.

Using the site www.smgww.org, students were able to make buy and sell transactions. This involved them learning to compute the total cost and broker's commission fees. They were able to track the progress of their team portfolio and compare their team's performance with other participating teams from the state and/or region.

In addition, students learned to record the progress of their stock using the Excel program. By keeping a record of daily stock prices, they were able to create line graphs that displayed the up and, sadly, mostly down, movement of the companies they had chosen. Excel helped them produce graphs that were more "user-friendly" to them, and therefore, better able to help them make team decisions.

In the stock market, there is a huge smorgasbord of companies to choose from. Teams needed to justify their choices. Writing skills were promoted through the use of Word as a means of publishing team reports. Students also chose areas of career interest to research using sites such as www.bls.gov/k12/, and created PowerPoint programs to present to the class. Salary comparisons, based on career areas and educational attainment were compared using bar graphs created on Excel.

[Congratulations to our Technology Academy graduates.](#)

They are Dana Hamlett, Barbara Ansted, Valerie York, Gail Hunter, Kathy Dickerson, Felicia Pickeral, Donna Paulette, Vic Meadows, Debbie Jamerson, Jackie Johnson, Charity Torrence, Judy Johnson, Mary Marshall, Lisa Richardson, Maggie Whorley, Tracy Mace, Kelley Hall, Tonya Ickes, Vivian Davis, Renee Hounsel, Amy Stump, John Pettyjohn, and Anita Hogan.

Two Online Resources Suggested by Dorinda Grasty

AccessIT



What Resources are Available Through AccessIT?

"The AccessIT website is a resource for educational entities and their constituents regarding accessible information technology. The website includes accessibility checklists, best practices, frequently asked questions, links to resources, and case studies, tailored to applications of information technology in education. It features a [searchable knowledge base](#) of questions and answers, case studies, and promising practices."

"Additional resources include a pair of videos related to IT accessibility, free web design course curriculum for high schools, an online course on IT accessibility, an IT in Education Accessibility Checklist, and a mock site for demonstrating web accessibility issues. These and other resources are listed and linked from the [AccessIT Home Page](#)."

For more information, go to <http://www.washington.edu/accessit/>



Rehabtool.com

"Our mission at [rehabtool.com](#) is to help children and adults with disabilities enhance their lives, increase their independence and productivity, and gain greater social inclusion through the use of leading-edge [assistive technology](#)."

"[rehabtool.com](#) offers a variety of high-tech assistive and adaptive technology products, augmentative and alternative communication devices, computer access equipment, multilingual speech synthesis and voice recognition software. We propose a great selection of virtual on-screen keyboards, voice-enabled communication boards, as well as cognitive rehabilitation tools adapted to the special needs of the disabled."

"[rehabtool.com](#) specializes in computer adaptations and builds custom software solutions for children and adults with disabilities. Our flagship product [Vocalize](#)® is an innovative speech assistant that we developed with speech impaired persons to enable them to speak in a friendly human voice using standard computer equipment. We also offer [FREE product searches](#)."

"For the past six years, [rehabtool.com](#) has strived to meet your special education and rehabilitation needs, often exceeding your expectations. So be sure to check out our attractive and cost-effective product and service offerings."

The following quote was taken from an academy participant's email.
"I tell ya, I really dreaded taking this class but I have had a Ball! And I can really use this stuff in the classroom. It takes a lot of work at home to prepare, but the kids really get into it! And that makes it all worthwhile. Plus, once it's created I don't have to do it over. I can just modify from year to year! Whoppee!"

Martha, Susie, Danny, & Marion Present at 2 State Conferences.

Our Division Technology Team presented at the VDOE Technology Leadership Conference in December and the VSTE Conference in February. We used a hands-on interactive approach to show how we have used the Technology Academies to help our

teachers utilize technology in an integrative way. We had great attendance and experienced a lot of enthusiasm for our approach. We appreciate Donna Paulette, Natasha St. John, Susan Williams, and Freda Layne for assisting us.

Interactive Slates Change the Way Teachers Teach

By Susie Fisher



I love my Airliner and use it at least 3 times a week. I have found that it is particularly good for geometry concepts because I am able to import actual figures rather than trying to draw them or always using a worksheet. **Students love to use the Airliner.**
Cheryl Servis

The Airliner has greatly improved my drawings for all of my geometry students. The shapes have been a lifesaver when it comes to drawing ellipses and circles for Algebra 2. The students are now getting use to me handing the Airliner to them and they will start working, while the rest of the class is trying to figure out how I can put the answers up and not have the Airliner in my hands. **It brings fun back into the classroom!** Most of my students will now volunteer to work out examples, because they like to use the Airliner.

Mary Marshall

Probably the best kept secret in technology in ACPS is the wide use of the School Pads and Airliners. This wonderful tool has changed the way teachers teach. Here are some quotes from teachers:

"I love the School Pad and can't imagine teaching without it! Because I am no longer tied to the board, I am better able to watch my student's reactions and anticipate questions. I use the record feature of the Interwrite software to record lessons for my students when I am absent. Another great feature of the software is the ability to export the slides created in class in pdf format. I can then email the file to students who were absent so they can see exactly what I taught in the class they missed."

Mary Turner

"I love using the SchoolPad. I don't have to worry about the mess of overhead markers, and I can use it with any program on the computer. It is especially useful when I want to add a little pizzazz to a PowerPoint presentation."

Bethany Hunter

"I have been able to use it not just for PowerPoints that I do but also the students are getting to use the airliner. Textbook companies are putting out more interactive activities for students as well as some that are on the Internet. **It lets the students become part of the lesson** by handing the airliner off to the students and let them place things in a table or label diagrams, etc. "

Felicia Pickrel

"Whenever I present information with a Power Point (all the time in AP; periodically in 1st year) I use the school pad in order to elaborate whatever it is that I am teaching (do example problems, etc). During SOL review, I use the school pad while presenting one

released question at a time."

Ceil Fahrman

"I can teach from anywhere in the room and write on the screen, and it can be used with PowerPoint, internet, or any software. I don't have to clean 100's of transparencies.

You can highlight, block, or put a spotlight on what you have written."

Ann Swanberg

"I have an airliner that I use A LOT and love it and the kids love it. Interestingly, **the kids work hard to get math problems correct so they can show their work on the airliner.** It is an incentive for the kids to participate in class."

Vickie Davis

"I use school pad almost daily. It's a great classroom management tool. It allows me to walk about the classroom and control the computer. While teaching, I walk around the class using the school pad to teach the lesson and control the computer. With this ability to teach and stay close to students, they are more likely to pay attention and not disrupt class."

Brandon Mawyer

"As a business person, I use my school pad in accounting for demonstration purposes. I have students do the actual writing on the school pad so that I can be free to walk around the room. The school pad allows me to personalize the forms to my taste and give students practices using the technology. At the same time I am free to assist students who may or may not be copying the examples down correctly."

Joyce Leslie

If you are interested in trying this piece of technology in your classroom, contact your Media Specialist, School Instructional Technologist, or any of the three Division Instructional Technologists.

Web 2.0 *By Danny Richardson*

<p>According to Wikipedia, Web 2.0 is defined as, “a trend in the use of World Wide Web technology and web design that aims to facilitate creativity, information sharing, and, most notably, collaboration among users.” So, what does that mean for teachers? I have put together a list which is by no means comprehensive, but can provide a start to looking at Web 2.0 use in the classroom.</p>	
	<p>Imagine being able to access your word processing, presentation, and spreadsheet documents anywhere you had access to the Internet. Now imagine a grade level or committee being able to share and edit those documents <i>from any location</i>. That is the power of Google Docs available at http://docs.google.com.</p>
	<p>Are you a visual learner? Have you ever wanted to create a mind map, but didn't have access to Inspiration or Kidspiration? Well, never fear because bubbl.us is a free web application that lets you brainstorm online! It is available at http://bubbl.us.</p>
	<p>Engrade is a free web-based application that allows teachers to create gradebooks, attendance charts, assignment calendars, progress reports, and secure online messaging. All of this is available at http://www.engage.com.</p>
	<p>Backpack allows you to create to-do lists, share files, create calendars, and create announcements online. These pages can be personal, or shared with anyone you choose. This free service is available at http://www.backpackit.com.</p>
	<p>The web based application allows you to create a bibliography free, easy, and OttoMatic-ally! Available at http://www.ottobib.com.</p>
	<p>Like YouTube, but teacher friendly. A great site for sharing instructional videos. Available at http://www.teachertube.com.</p>
	<p>Have difficulty remembering the small things, or the large things for that matter? Use rminder to create a text reminder which this service will convert to a voice reminder. It will then call you and remind you! Available at http://www.rminder.com</p>
	<p>CircaVie allows the creation of a digital timeline. Very cool site available at http://www.circavie.com/.</p>
	<p>Footnote allows you access to images of original source documents for free. Additional services are available for a nominal fee. Available at http://www.footnote.com/index.php</p>
	<p>Record a sketch with or without voice/sound. Use this to demonstrate something, to illustrate, or to explain. Available at http://sketchcast.com/</p>
	<p>Showbeyond is a multimedia slidocast creator, online publishing platform and story sharing community. Think of it as an online presentation tool. Available at http://www.showbeyond.com/show/home</p>
	<p>This site allows you to create free educational games, activities, and diagrams in Flash. Very cool and very easy, available at http://www.classtools.net/</p>

Appomattox County Schools
316 Court Street
Appomattox, VA
24522

Phone:
(434) 352-8251

Fax:
(434) 352-0883

E-mail:
burevely@appomattox.k12.va.us

Going From Good to Great - One Relationship at a Time
We're on the web at www.appomattox.k12.va.us