

News from IT,  
August 31, 2005



Welcome back, everyone!

**Residence Life adds additional Technical Support:** IT would like to welcome Tina Cassada to the Mansfield family. Tina is an IT technician dedicated to Residence Life in charge of *TechConnect*, the University's effort to supply technical support and advice to our Residence Hall students. Tina also supports the TechConnect Carry-In Center, offering computer diagnostic services on a walk-in basis. While Tina will not be performing hardware repairs on student computers, she and her staff of trained student technicians will offer software support and computer diagnostics intended to assist students prior to seeking costly outside assistance. TechConnect can be reached at x-5806. You can learn more about TechConnect and the Carry-In Center here:

<http://it.mansfield.edu/students/2004/techconnect.cfm>

**Wireless Expansion Continues:** MU's wireless rollout continues with additional services now available in Retan Center's lounge and surrounding area as well as the Academic Advising Center area of Hemlock. The Alumni Hall Student Center (AHUB), much of the South Hall Mall, Butler Center's Soupy Sales area, Elliot Hall, the lawn area between Elliot and Memorial Hall, and Lower Manser are in-place, and North Hall coverage is nearly complete but still under-construction. For more information on MU Wireless Hotspots and how to obtain access, consult the web page: <http://wireless.mansfield.edu>.

**Wireless Clinic Scheduled for September 26-27:** IT will present a wireless clinic on the “deck” of Memorial Hall September 26 and 27 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Alex Miller and Loren McNett of our staff will be there to answer questions and assist interested faculty, staff and students. If you need help getting your wireless laptop to work on the Mansfield network, have questions about how wireless works or how to set up secure wireless connections at home, stop on by! Hot dogs will be available for those who might be interested but are either too busy or too hungry to manage lunch AND a workshop! In case of inclement weather, the clinic will be held in the IT meeting area, Memorial Hall ground floor.

**Math/CIS Networking Lab Ready-To-Go:** A lab dedicated to computer networking technologies has been readied for classes this fall. Funded by a grant from State Farm Insurance and Student Technology Fee funds, the lab consists of four racks of state-of-the-art networking equipment typical of what might be found in a small to mid-size company’s Internet backbone. Designed to accommodate a maximum of 16 students per class, this lab will allow a level of hands-on training not possible before.

**Antivirus and Anti-Spyware products available:** The latest versions of McAfee antivirus and anti-spyware products are available for faculty and staff use as a download from the my.mansfield web page. As antivirus products have become absolutely essential over the past few years, anti-spyware products have become equally necessary as threats to computer security have become ever more varied and prevalent on the Internet. Check out <http://my.mansfield.edu> and click on “Software Downloads” located on the upper-left portion of the first page.

The university also can provide a copy of the Microsoft Office suite and certain other Microsoft productivity products for personal use by faculty and staff. These are available for check

out at the library main desk. Your university ID is required to remove these materials from the library.

Materials are for use by faculty and staff only and should never be shared with friends and family. Operating Systems software, such as Microsoft Windows XP is NOT part of the Microsoft agreement with the PASSHE system and can not be provided.

**Backups and Thumb Drives:** It happens all the time. IT receives a panic call from someone who has just suffered a hard drive crash, whose diskette just got dropped into the dog's water, or whose child just carved their initials into a CD containing very important data. And all too often, no electronic backups of those files exist. We'd like to add one more OOPS! to the list of possibilities – those wonders of modern technology known as thumb drives or USB Dongles. Plugging in to a USB port, these thumb-sized solid-state devices appear like a hard drive to the computer, and hold anywhere from 128 mb (megabytes) to 2 gigabytes of information, making transporting relatively large amounts of data easy. That said, these slick little units are susceptible to damage by liquids, sharp impacts and static discharge just like any other piece of electronic equipment. There is no repair for thumb drives; once they fail the data they contained is gone forever. And, believe us, they DO fail! Similarly, diskettes, those quaint devices everybody has and nobody uses, hold a paltry 1.4 mb of data, and should be expected to keep it reliably for about 10 years if protected from extremes of heat and cold, kept dry and out of strong magnetic fields. The same is true for USB hard drives that some folks use to port large amounts of data. CD's can hold about 700 mb of data, and can be expected to last indefinitely if gently stored away from sources of abrasion, extreme heat and light. Newer DVD technology holds far more data, allowing the possibility of backing up virtually all your personal information to a single disk. This is great for backups and short-term storage, though because several different formats are still vying to be "the" standard, the notion of stashing data on DVD-type media for indefinite storage is probably not a good idea just yet.

So, please remember! You should always have at least one reliable long-term backup source kept away from the location where your primary data is housed. Two copies are always better than one! One should always check-read a backup to insure it is useable before placing in long-term storage. A USB thumb drive attached to your key chain is NOT a good place to store critical data without having every bit of it backed up to more reliable, passive backup media, such as a CD.

**Get the Most Out of Your Phone:** A Telephone User's Guide containing instructions and helpful information on getting the most out of your telephone and voicemail is available on the IT web page at:

<http://it.mansfield.edu/telecom/phoneoperations.pdf>