

Log-on



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Mifflin County School District Technology Department

Issue 29

Technology News

► Unwanted Emails and Email Spoofing

Email spoofing is a term used to describe fraudulent email activity in which the sender address and parts of the email header are altered to appear as though the email originated from a different source. Email spoofing is a technique commonly used for spam email and **phishing* to hide the origin of an email message. It is often an attempt to trick the user into making a damaging statement or releasing sensitive information (such as passwords).

Unfortunately, more and more of us have been getting “bounce-back” emails as a result of this practice. For example, let’s suppose that a spammer sends an email to janedoe@xyz.com disguising himself as sender abc23@mcsdk12.org. If there is no one at company xyz with that address, company xyz will send a “bounce-back” email to the sender stating that the address is incorrect. Because the spammer disguised himself as abc23@mcsdk12.org, the bounce-back email gets delivered here. Since xyz is a legitimate company, we will not block the email and it gets delivered to abc23.

Please keep in mind that approximately 95% of the email we receive at mcsdk12.org is identified as spam and blocked before it reaches you. Both the spam and filtering applications were upgraded over the Thanksgiving break. As always, if you have any doubts about an email, don’t read it. Just delete it.

**Phishing is an e-mail fraud method in which the perpetrator sends out legitimate-looking email in an attempt to gather personal and financial information from recipients. The messages appear to come from well known, trustworthy websites.*

► Computer Training for Teachers

Teachers can still sign up for computer classes. Log on the MCSKD Curriculum Links to see the list of all training sessions that are still being offered.

http://www.mcsdk12.org/curr/Computer_Classes.htm
Sessions are open to everyone at any school. For more information, contact the teacher listed or Karen Galbraith (717-248-6480, gkg26@mcsdk12.org).

► Thumb Drives on Sale

Are you looking for a last minute stocking stuffer? The LAHS student store is now selling 1 gigabyte thumb drives for \$18.00 each until Christmas. After Christmas, they will cost \$20.00. These thumbdrives work on our network without any problems. They have the Panther logo on them and come with a white lanyard. These can be purchased at the LAHS main office or student store or contact Sandy French or Marc Terry at LAHS.

► PSSA Information and Resources

Use the resources on this website to prepare for the PSSA. Because the site is on the intranet, you will be prompted to log on.

<https://intranet.mcsdk12.org/fac/pssa>

There is a link called “PSSA for MCSKD Staff” under the Staff Dropdown menu. There is also a place to submit sites or files that you have found helpful.

Our Goals

Our goals are to provide staff with up-to-date information regarding all areas of technology, share helpful hints and ideas, showcase teachers and students, and communicate staff development plans. Any questions or suggestions can be directed to **Karen Galbraith * 248-6480 gkg26@mcsdk12.org**

► Internet Safety - A Practical Guide for Parents

A district-wide program, *Internet Safety - A Practical Guide for Parents*, was held on November 8, 2007, in the auditorium at LAHS.

Dan Berger, the Educational Technology Coordinator for TIU 11, opened the program and highlighted new and emerging technologies such as social networking tools and the benefits of using them. Trooper Jeff Petucci, Community Service Officer, Hollidaysburg State Police, spoke about computer dangers such as *phishing* and sharing too much personal information online.

Students from Indian Valley and Lewistown High Schools explained how the popular social networking sites MySpace and Facebook worked and showed parents how to set up privacy controls on both websites. Samantha Wheeler and Sarah Kitting presented an Instant Message skit using the text messaging abbreviations that students use. The translations were shown on the screen and parents also received a “dictionary” of text message abbreviations. Students presented the Top Ten Technical Tips to keep users and computers safe.

LAHS Panther Television students, under the direction of Mike Gerhart, filmed the event. The students will

create a video of the event to enter in the Pennsylvania High School Computer Fair. Students from Strodes Mills Middle School participated in Internet Safety Commercial and Bumper Sticker Contests. Their teachers, Kelley Dixon and Lanielle Reese, presented Jared Stufft, Hannah Walters, Kelly Peters and Evan Becker with first and second place awards. Their commercials and bumper stickers can be viewed at the school district Internet Safety Website.

Other district presenters and speakers included Dr. John J. Czerniakowski, Doug Cunningham, and Karen Galbraith. Participating students from IVHS and LAHS Student Councils, with the help of their advisors, Tammy Matthews and Sonya Curry, included: Carly Hinish, Amanda Randolph, Brody Blessing, Kody Crosson, Zach Leight, Abby Hill, Kierstin Walker, Olivia Taylor, Caity Croyle, Hannah Pecora, Brooke Hackenburg, Casey Zimmerman, Jordan Marinos, Matt Snyder, Rachel Hambricht, Annie Leister, McKenzee Walker, Zane Waddell, Maisie Aumiller, Erin Drayer, Olivia Goss and Erin Fite. Lewistown Panther Television students included: Courtney Labatia, Rachel Weber, Mara McKee, Aaron Specht and Tara Warner.

Related Web Sites

MCSD Internet Safety Site http://www.mcsdk12.org/curr/InternetSafety/Internet_Safety.htm

PA High School Computer Fair <http://www.pacomputerfair.org/>

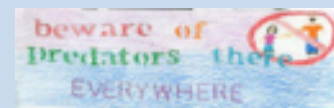
MCSD Internet Safety Program <http://www.mcsdk12.org/curr/InternetSafety/InternetSafetyProgram.htm>



Olivia Goss and Erin Fite record an Internet Safety Announcement at with Lucas Bubb at WCHX.



Jordan Marinos, Brooke Hackenburg, Sarah Kitting and Samantha Wheeler



Kelly Peters
First Place Bumper Sticker



Evan Becker
Second Place Bumper Sticker

What is Second Life?

The World Wide Web is made of many different kinds of sites ranging from the helpful and educational to the bizarre and mind-bending but one of the amazing and thought-provoking sites right now is Second Life.

<http://www.secondlife.com/>



Second Life (SL) is an online 3-D virtual world that is one of the web's most popular activities. Opened in 2003 and inhabited by millions of "residents" all over the world, the program immerses its participants in a virtual world of their own making. This is not a game but rather a place you go to do whatever you want to do, more like an animated version of real life. It is the creation of Linden Labs of San Francisco.

Anyone can enter SL, set up a free account and create an avatar or virtual person. You teleport or fly instantaneously around as this avatar and communicate by typing into a chat box on your screen. You first arrive at Orientation Island where you can get familiar with the software. Then go to Help Island to acquire a volunteer mentor or to the Welcome Area to better understand the concept. SL is huge digital continent full of beautiful natural environments, shopping malls, museums, clubs, homes, apartments and cities. It is also full of people, entertainment, and events, workshops, lectures, performances and museums.

Everything in SL is created entirely by the residents. There is a currency and you can buy and sell anything you create using Linden dollars which can be converted into US currency. Most residents buy land to create various buildings. They can sell the land, the buildings or even space in the buildings. Real business is conducted and at least one person has become a real millionaire from profits earned entirely in SL. SL is attracting the attention of the business world. Wells Fargo has built its own island in Second Life and Wal-Mart, American Express and Intel are considering building corporate training offices there. Land can even be bought and sold on Ebay.

The opportunities for educators on Second Life are pretty amazing. One of the coolest is the *NOAA Earth System Research Laboratory*.

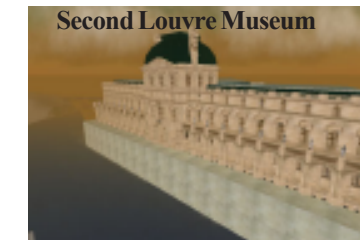
"On NOAA's island, one can soar through a hurricane on the wing of a research aircraft, rise gently through the atmosphere atop a weather balloon, or search for a hidden underwater cave on a side trip from a NOAA submarine." The

Second Louvre Museum is designed to replicate the original in Paris and you can take a ride into space at the *International Spaceflight Museum*. *InfoIsland* is a collection of libraries and *The Temple of Isis* is a realistic Egyptian tomb recreated by using ancient maps.

SL is the perfect educational tool. It affords easy collaboration between people with the same interests across the world; there are no geographical, age, or status boundaries; experts are readily available through presentations and lectures; the interactivity makes it better than video conferencing because you can use videos, presentations, images at the same time in one place; simulations and exhibits and museums mimic real learning situations.

So what are you waiting for? Log on to your home computer and find a fellow educator at ISTE Island (International Society for Technology in Education) to guide you and answer your questions.

It's time to begin your second life!



Resources

Education World <http://www.education-world.com/index.shtml>

Anshe Chung Becomes First Virtual World Millionaire http://www.anshechung.com/include/press/press_release251106.html

Popular Science <http://www.popsci.com/popsci/index.html>

eSchool News <http://www.eschoolnews.com/>

CNN <http://edition.cnn.com/>

Wired <http://www.wired.com/>

MUVE Forward <http://muveforward.blogspot.com/>

Museums and the Web <http://www.archimuse.com/mw2007/papers/urban/urban.html>

Cool Sites!

► **MIT presents Highlights for High School** <http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/hs/home/home/index.htm>

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has created a new website with free online resources that “aim to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) instruction at the high school level”. It is called Highlights for High School and it is for students and teachers. The site includes videos and demonstrations by MIT faculty of key concepts, alternate explanations of scientific theories, preparation for AP exams and samples of college level work. All of the materials are published under an open license that encourages their reuse and distribution for educational purposes.



► **Google Sky** <http://earth.google.com/sky/skyedu.html>

A new feature in Google Earth allows users to view the sky from their computers. The tool provides information about various celestial bodies, from stars to planets, and includes imagery from the Hubble Space Telescope and other sources. It also allows users to take virtual tours through galaxies, including the Milky Way. “By working with some of the industry’s leading experts, we’ve been able to transform Google Earth into a virtual telescope,” said Lior Ron, a Google product manager. The new software also promises users the ability to see planets in motion and witness a supernova explosion. Current Google Earth users must download a new version. The new version will be downloaded on district computers but you can access this free version on home computers right now. <http://earth.google.com/download-earth.html>



► **Open Vault Media Library and Archives**

Engage your students and add sizzle to your lessons by using video clips and interview transcripts from “Open Vault,” a new web site launched by Boston-based public television station WGBH. The site features video clips and interviews from WGBH programming created between 1968 and 1993, including clips of Muhammad Ali discussing his refusal to fight in Vietnam, African American students arriving at school during Boston’s court-ordered desegregation, and Robert McNamara reading from a letter sent by Nikita Khrushchev to President Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Open Vault includes more than 500 streaming video clips and more than 1,000 interview transcripts in all. Users can search by keyword or browse by topic and can view data alphabetically by person and by series.

