

Westfield Technology Center

TECH TIMES
ISSUE 3: 2013



Issue 3

City Hall Move P.1
Tech Center Update P.2
Helpdesk P.3
Moving Forward P.4

CITY HALL Relocation Information

Extra! Extra! City Hall Moved

We all remember what City Hall looked (and smelled and felt) like. The building is currently going through a revitalization, which means all employees had to move out. In order to make this move possible, everyone from every city department had to pitch in their share of work. Aside from physically moving furniture, files, equipment, and people, let's not forget the technology. Without it, no one would be able to properly do their job. The Tech Center, along with their vendor partners (Westfield Gas & Electric, Metropolitan Telephones, Hogan Communications, and Verizon) put forth a valiant effort to get everyone and everything functioning, connected, and ready to work.

Let's break the move down a little bit. City Hall was moved to four separate locations: The Westwood, Angie Holmes, Westfield Vocational Technical High School, and the University Housing building (near the police station). Since a city department moved into Angie Holmes, the students from Angie Holmes were moved to Russell Road. Every move involved physically moving all computers and peripheral equipment (including printers, stands, cables, and any other equipment). The most common problem we encountered was a lack of power or connectivity for the number of units in any one area. Switches were placed in each location to allow internet connectivity. We were able to get a bit creative and managed to get everyone up and running within the week.

A special thanks goes to our Purchasing Director, Tammy Tefft, for her overall coordination of the move and for giving the Tech Center the flexibility it needed to work.

Quarterly Update

Did you miss us? We've been very busy up here the past few months, so we've decided to make this a quarterly newsletter. Let's break down what's happened since February in a few key points:

- **City Hall Move**—All of City Hall has been displaced across this great city. Office locations and details can be found on the city website.
- **PowerSchool**—With the end of school comes some major changes, including a new student information system. Find enclosed the details.
- **Budget Entry**—This year's online budget entry caused some headaches. The first time is always the hardest and we assure you it will get better.
- **MUNIS Leaps and Bounds**—MUNIS has been successfully upgraded to 9.4. We continue to push forward with training.

Tech Center Update

Welcome Newcomers:

Lisa Edwards & Aayan Baraka



The Westfield Tech Center would like to introduce their newest member to the City of Westfield

community, Lisa Edwards. She is joining our Network Technician team. If you see this face around the city or in the schools, go easy on her, she's new.

Lisa attended Westfield State University and is proud to be back and working for the City of Westfield. She currently attends Springfield Technical Community College. We are all very excited to have her here at the Tech Center and look forward to working with her and helping her grow in the technical field.



Westfield Tech Center is pleased to introduce the youngest member of the team, Aayan Baraka. Baraka and Maria Baraka gave birth to their first son, Aayan, on May 22th. We've decided to start recruiting younger to ensure the best possible fit for our team. So far, we like what we see.

PowerSchool Update:

The Eleventh Hour



Here's a riddle for you: What do you get when you combine Westfield Public Schools and Pearson (other than a headache)? Give up? PowerSchool!

With the end of school comes fun in the sun and waking up late. Wait, that's just for the students. Here at the Tech Center, we are hard at work preparing to deploy PowerSchool for Westfield Public Schools. We're in the final stages of migrating away from Starbase and its grading systems (please hold in your applause) and are preparing to roll out PowerSchool, a Pearson product.

All teachers, students, and staff to date have been added into PowerSchool. We are working with the school department to train the necessary staff to enroll new students coming into the district. Five years of historical grade data will be imported into PowerSchool. The PowerSchool team, along with school admins, are working together to prepare training schedules. We anticipate having a parent portal up and running in the Fall for home access to parents for grade and course information. We are confident that everything will be ready to go.



News From the Director

Much has happened since we published our last newsletter. We've had staff changes, relocated City Hall to four separate locations, moved the IAES program, and upgraded switches in Munger Hill School.

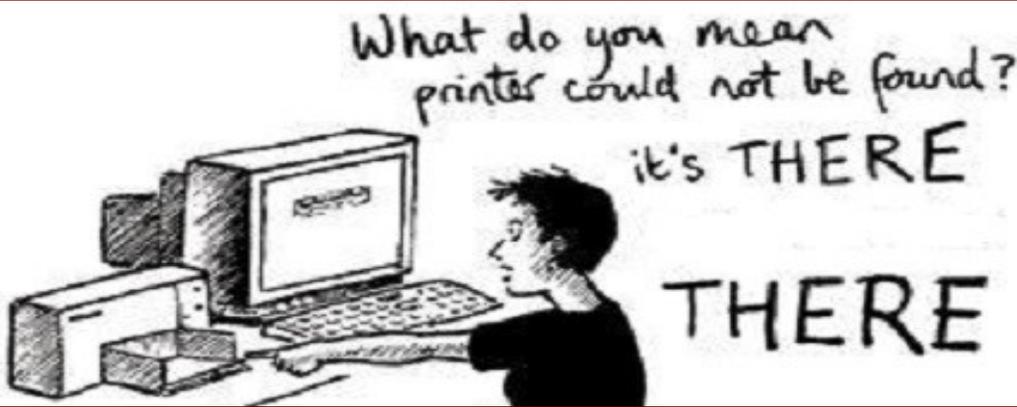
Schools may have the summer off, but we will be busy implementing Powerschool, with its highly awaited Parent Portal. Updates to Westfield High School starts the last week of June. All desktops and laptops will be reloaded and the wireless network updated. Plans also include replacing the switches in the remaining elementary schools. Installation of wireless access points in many of the schools is on our agenda. Copier and printer contracts are being reviewed, looking for the best ways to economize our paper impact.

On the City side, upgrades are planned for many of the older computers. The Animal Shelter software will be upgraded, with eventual plans for online licensing and renewals. We are working with Personnel to place training videos and testing materials online on our Intranet (our internal website).

Training will be back in force in the fall, as it is difficult to coordinate schedules over the summer. We had a great turnout for the Adobe Acrobat classes offered in May and June. Please let us know if there is a class you would like to see offered and we will try to meet your needs.

We hope everyone has an enjoyable summer, and we look forward to seeing you this fall!

Lenore Bernashe,
Information Technology Manager



Helpdesk: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I need a printer added to my computer ASAP and cannot afford to wait because I needed to print something yesterday. Can I do it myself? How can I add one? Do I need to submit a request?

A: There are a lot of people, a lot of computers, and a lot of print capable machines in the city and school departments. When people move or if they want access to a printer outside of their department, a new printer needs to be manually added to their machine. Did you know you can add printers to your own computer without us?

It's not a joke; and yes, we're serious. Users can search through most of the printers connected to our network and can add printers to their computers. The hardest part is trying to figure out the name of the printer you wish to add. Let's go through the steps.

Whether you are using Windows XP or 7, these steps will all be relatively the same. First, navigate to the Devices and Printers menu. Click to add a printer.

- Add a networked printer. This screen will vary depending on your computer, but just choose network printer.
- On the next screen, select "Find a printer in the directory", then click Next. For Windows 7, you will get a screen that says "Select a printer".

Click on "The printer that I want isn't listed", then select "Find a printer in the directory" and click Next.

- You will see a large list of printers under the search results section. Find your location and choose the right printer and double click to add it.
- Follow the prompts in the remaining screens to install the printer. Drivers will automatically be installed with the printer.

If you still have issues adding a printer, give us a call or send us an email so that we may assist you.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Internet Speeds

The Westfield Technology Center is proud of its network, computing capabilities, infrastructure, and bandwidth speeds. Our strong partnership with Westfield Gas & Electric helps maintain our overall network. We are one of the best technological cities in Massachusetts and we remain on top with the help of all of you.

But, and we know it happens, sometimes you may not feel that positive about your technology. Maybe your computer is slow. Maybe the internet is slow. Well here are some ways to keep up internet speeds for you and everyone around you.

- Try to avoid streaming media on your computer. Every department shares the same internet connection. For example, if I start streaming media, it will inevitably slow down everyone in my office.
- Avoid having more windows/applications open than you feasibly need. Not only does this slow down your computer, but it may slow down your internet too.

Helpdesk Updates

Did you know there was a place to go for self help?

Before calling for assistance, the City of Westfield's [FAQs](#) page is the place to visit. Give it a try! If you do not see your question, suggest that we add it!

Create Support Request

Staff can submit online helpdesk tickets directly to the Tech Center without calling the helpdesk. You can track the progress of the request as soon as it is received. Go to the [helpdesk](#) to submit a request. The link can also be found on the website.

Support Line

If you need immediate tech support, our team is available:
Monday—Friday, 8:00 AM—4:30 PM EST.

Contact us by phone (413) 572-6565 or helpdesk@cityofwestfield.org.



Smartphone Protection

We've come to depend on our smartphones so heavily it is hard to remember what we did before we had them. If you have a smartphone, you now carry a fully functional computer in your pocket or purse. That's a tremendous amount of information at your fingertips! Therefore, it is paramount that you safeguard the smartphone. Here are some common risks for all smartphones:

- Loss of device/Information theft—Phones are small and easily misplaced, stolen, or lost. Unauthorized users may gain access to accounts, passwords, pictures, messages, bank information, or anything else that can be used to harm you or your friends and family. Be sure to be safe with the placement of your phone and mobile device. Password protect your device and enable a time-out feature. In the event it is lost, no one will be able to gain access to your information.
- Social Engineering—Whether via text message, image download, or application, an incoming communication may just be an attempt to gain access to your information. Do not open any links or messages from anyone or anything that you do not know or that might look suspicious. Be sure to know the sender before opening a message.
- TMI (Too Much Information)—Mobile devices enable instant capturing, posting, and the distribution of images, videos, and information. Do not post or send anything you are not comfortable with; you never know who can see or read your message.
- Public WI-FI—Smartphones, just like computers and laptops, are susceptible to malware and hacking when connected to a public network. Be cautious of the work you are doing while connected to a public network, and never check personal information like bank records while connected to a public network.
- Bluetooth and NFC (Near Field Communication)—We are all familiar with Bluetooth, but NFC is the technology that lets you simply touch another phone to transmit voice or data information from one device to another (the Galaxy S3 has this capability). Risks of using these technology include eavesdropping, where criminals can intercept the data transmission. When not in use, disable these features to ensure no one else gains access to your device.

End of Year File Clean-up

Time to spring clean your files. Just like in your home, you need to periodically review the contents of your computer. Often this gets overlooked and neglected. Files from years ago often go unused, and should be deleted or archived.

Everyone has personal documents on their computers, but please do not abuse the privilege. The most common concerns are storage of media like music and photos. If you store music, contact us to move the storage locally.

Long term storage of personal files is discouraged—please copy them to alternative storage solutions (flash disk, DVD, etc.).

Training

We have made good on our promise to continue with program and technology trainings. We just finished with Adobe Acrobat Level 1 & 2 trainings. We received some good feedback and plan to keep up with offering new and relevant courses for all employees. Have a particular course interest? Please let us know!

We recently completed a training for school administrators on scheduling in PowerSchool. We are looking forward to continuing to work with Pearson and all of the members of the school department to kick off the new school year with a new student information system.

TECH TIMES

ISSUE 3: June 2013

TECHNOLOGY CENTER

179 Apremont Way
Westfield, MA 01085

PH: (413) 572-6565

FX: (413) 562-3187

www.cityofwestfield.org