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Thursday, Dec. 12, 1996

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## HA High School students surfing without boards, water

Hoopeston Area High School students started surfing this week. And they're not even getting wet.

A new computer lab and new technology are allowing students to "surf the Web" on the Internet.

The lab is comprised of 32 multi-media Pentium computers, said district computer coordinator Larry Jahn.

All computers in the lab are networked, or linked together. Eventually, all computers in the school will be networked, said James Eyrich, district computer/network technician.

Access to the Internet was provided through a matching grant from the Illinois State Board of Education, said principal Mark Conolly. The district received a \$45,000 grant from the state to connect to the Internet.

Thus far, \$67,000 has been allocated, including grant money and funds from the Hoopeston Area district and high school, Conolly said. The money has paid for a high-speed T-1 connection, wiring throughout the school and peripherals.

Students are already making use of the new technology, said computer teacher Jeff Wise. His classes went on-line Monday, looking for information and interesting sites, called home pages or Web pages.

School officials will monitor what information students may view on the Internet. "We're keeping it real tight," Wise said. "If any organization would consider (materials) inappropriate, we won't have it."

There are two options available for monitoring Internet use.

First, the district can purchase a program to block sites, although such programs are expensive, Conolly said. Also, he said, students knowledgeable about computers can circumvent the program.

The second option is to establish a policy banning

such sites.

Students and their parents would sign copies of the policy and students who violate the policy would be subject to various punishments, ranging from being unable to use the computers to expulsion, he said.

How the school will monitor students is expected to be decided at the Dec. 19 school board meeting.

Wise and Conolly said if the board approves the second option, teachers will have to decide each infraction separately because some inappropriate sites are linked to sites that are useful.

Even with a policy, administrators expect students to take the risk of finding inappropriate sites. "We expect to be challenged," Jahn said.

Students will be able to use the lab and the Internet in all kinds of ways. "It crosses all academic and vocational lines," Conolly said. "It's just not a math and science type of thing."

Students are not the only ones who will benefit from the additions. Beginning in January, the lab will be open to the public one night each week, allowing Hoopeston Area residents to access the Internet.

Public sessions, like classroom use, will be restricted to acceptable sites, Wise said.

The new technology is part of the district's commitment to keeping students current, Conolly said. In the high school alone, there are more than 130 computers, a 4-to-1 ratio between students and machines. Two computer labs are enhanced by "mini-labs" in various departments, such as writing, graphic arts and shop classes.

All schools, including elementary and middle schools, have computer labs. Computer training begins in the primary grades and lasts through graduation.

Younger students learn colors and shapes with a computer. By fourth grade, students are using the

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computer-

See SURF on other side

### Surf continued from other side

ized version of Compton's Encyclopedia.

Fifth graders learn keyboarding skills, and in sixth grade, students learn basic word processing. That is followed in middle school by creating spread sheets, data bases and performing practical applications for learned skills.

By the time students reach Wise's advanced computer classes, they are designing Web pages and learning higher-end applications, such as graphics manipulation and creating macros. "We start them out so young that by the time they get to me...we have to do some things they don't do at some colleges," Wise said.

The leap in technology has been rapid. "Last year, we were an average school, but in the last six months, we've gone from average to 10 years ahead," Wise said.

Part of the rapid progression is because Hoopeston Area has employees who can do things other schools must hire a consultant for. "If we had to hire consultants, we wouldn't get as much bang for our buck," Conolly said.

Jahn, a former teacher, now tends full-time to the district's computers while Eyrich is responsible for most of the lab's installation, including running 27,000 feet of cable, and preparing the school for the Internet.

Further cost savings come through use of the Illinois State Board of Education's network, rather than a commercial Internet provider. The Hoopeston Area district pays related telephone charges but is not charged for band width, the amount of information transferred through the network.

With the new lab open and Internet availability here, officials are now eyeing the other buildings for upgrades, but Conolly said it will be a while before

## Obituaries

**GREGOIRE** - Raymond Louis Gregoire, 62, of Hoopeston, died at 3:20 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10, 1996, at Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital. Funeral services will be at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at the Brown-Alkire Funeral. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be 4-8 p.m. Friday at the funeral home. Memorials are suggested to the Margaret A. Gregoire Memorial Scholarship Fund at the Danville Area Community College School of Nursing.

### Thursday Trivia

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Today's question: What was the first U.S.  
coin to carry the likeness of a president?

Last winner: Steve Eyrich  
Last answer: Uriah Heep was the rock group  
that got its name from a Dickens novel.



**NEITZEY** - Verna C. Neitzey, 88, of Hoopeston, died at 3:40 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10, 1996, at United Samaritans Medical Center, Logan campus, Danville. Funeral services will be at 9 a.m. Friday at St. Anthony Catholic Church. Burial will be in St. Luke Cemetery, Beecher. Visitation will be 5-8 p.m. Thursday at the Hamilton-Orr Funeral Home. Memorials are suggested to St. Anthony Catholic Church.

### In the hospital



Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital  
Dec. 10, 1996

Admitted: Joyce Whiteman, Hoopeston.

Discharged: Alice Sharp and Herbert Roberts,  
Hoopeston.

### Weather



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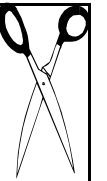
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