



From the SIGHC Chair

All,

Welcome to the December 2008 newsletter of SIGHC with lots of news and some interesting feature stories. I hope many of you submitted proposals for NECC 2009. SIGHC has a few exciting activities in the works as well. A few SIGHC members attended Handheld Learning 2008 in London, including myself, which was an interesting and very well attended conference (about 1,000 participants). You can find many of the presentations on their website (<http://handheldlearning2008.com/>). Don't forget to check the SIG wiki for other upcoming events!

On a not so positive note, our SIG secretary, Debbie Bordelon, has had some serious health issues lately (that's why there was no newsletter in November). Of course, all of us at SIGHC wish her well and are keeping her and her family in our thoughts and prayers, and we hope you will do the same. In the meantime, SIGHC needs an interim secretary/communications officer. The main responsibilities are the creation of this newsletter, and participating in ISTE conference calls when the SIG chair is unavailable. If you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible. Don't forget that the secretary/communications officer position will be up for election this spring, and we will need to elect a new officer in that position. More information about that to follow soon.

Happy Holidays to all of you ☺

Mark van 't Hooft
Chair SIGHC (soon to be SIGML)
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SIGHC News

SIGHC Elections

More information on elections will be following soon from ISTE, but just as a heads up, SIGHC will have to elect the officers into the following positions:

- Chair Elect (Term 2009-2010, followed by the Chair term, 2010-2012).
- Secretary/Communications Officer (Term 2009-2011).
- Member at large (Term 2009-2011).

Specific information about responsibilities for each of these positions can be found at <http://sig-handbook.iste.wikispaces.net/Volunteer+Structure>

SIGHC Award

The SIGHC Award Committee, headed by Veronica McGowan and Cathy Risberg, is looking for additional committee members and your ideas and suggestions for a focus for the SIGHC award. This award, to be given out at NECC in 2010, will be the first award ever given out by the SIGHC. The deadline for submitting our proposal is July 15, 2009.

If you would be interested in providing ideas for an award focus, have leads for a sponsor for the award or would like to join the committee and help with the writing of the award proposal, please contact Cathy Risberg at mindthatsoar@comcast.net. Thank you!

Cathy Risberg

SIGHC Name Change

The name change to SIGML has been pretty much approved so be on the look out for a new logo, etc. The member survey so far has been very, very positive. More info to follow as it becomes available.

New Newsletter Sections

We are still interested in adding a couple of feature sections to the newsletter, as requested by our members. We haven't gotten any responses yet to our calls, so please let us know if you are interested in contributing to one of these sections, or serve as a section editor. Remember that this publication is for you, SIGHC members, and only you can help us improve it.

- ***Member spotlight***: if you would like to be interviewed about all of the exciting things you are doing with mobile devices for teaching and learning, let us know. Interviews can be done by phone, email, Skype, IM, etc. Please contact Mark van 't Hooft (mvanthoo@kent.edu) if you are interested in being featured or would like to help out (as a section editor).
- ***Mobile technology trends***: featuring some of the latest trends in mobile devices and education. **Note that this is not a place for vendors to advertise!** However, we are open to a variety of pieces here, including member submissions, interviews, reviews, etc. More guidelines about this section are forthcoming. Please contact Mark van 't Hooft (mvanthoo@kent.edu) with questions or if you are interested in helping out (as a section editor).

SIGHC Communication Tools

NEW (well, sort of)!!! ISTE Community on Ning

ISTE recently launched a networking community on Ning. SIGHC has its own group set up on this networking site at <http://www.iste-community.org/group/sighc>. We invite you to join and use this site for any community activities and networking related to mobile learning. You will need to register on the main ISTE Ning site (<http://www.iste-community.org/>) to access the SIGHC Ning.

SIGHC Wiki



The SIGHC wiki continues to grow, and we always welcome more participation. Please go to <http://sighc.iste.wikispaces.net/space> to register (free!) and check it out. Just create a user name and password for yourself and start adding content. If you have ideas for topics that should be added to the wiki, please let us know, or add them yourself! Some topics we could add include:

- Mobile phones
- Podcasting
- Assessment
- Informal learning
- Research

We really want the wiki to be a resource for all of you!

SIGHC Website (www.iste.org/sighc)

And of course, if you have updates for the SIGHC website, please send them to Mark van 't Hooft (mvanthoo@kent.edu)

SIGHC Discussion Listserv (sighc-discussion@iste-listserver.iste.org)

We've had a discussion listserv for a while now and we've had some questions about why it's not being used. First of all, make sure that you sign up for the listserv using the SIG Manager tool (<http://www.iste.org/inhouse/membership/myprofile/sig-manager/index.cfm?>). Note that you will need to be logged on to the site using your username and password. You would also log into the SIG Manager tool if you want to unsubscribe from the listserv.

Second, if you have questions, stories, links, articles etc. related to the use of mobile devices for teaching and learning, please post them to the listserv. Somebody has to get the discussion started. If you would like to volunteer to post something to the discussion listserv on a regular basis (say, once per month), please contact the SIGHC Chair Mark van 't Hooft at mvanthoo@kent.edu.

SIGHC Announcement Listserv

If you are a SIGHC member, please make sure you are subscribed to this listserv as well as we use it to make announcements related to the SIG, including elections, newsletters, and NECC events. Note that only SIG officers can post to this listserv. Everybody else should post to the discussion listserv.

NECC News



NECC 2009

Information about the 2009 conference is available here (<http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2009/>). Proposals are being reviewed and acceptance/rejection notifications should be sent out soon.

SIGHC will have a forum, a sponsored session, and the annual business meeting at NECC 2009.

SIGHC Forum

Based on the survey responses and our business meeting at NECC, we have come up with what we think is an awesome forum for the 2009 NECC conference.

Title: Mobile, Connected, and Learning with Cell Phones.
Description: Join SIGHC at the World War II memorial in DC for a hands-on activity with camera phones, the web, and QR codes. Bring your phone!!

Presenters: Thomas McNeal and Mark van 't Hooft

We will need volunteers to help us run the event, so if you're interested in helping out, please contact Mark van 't Hooft (mvanthoo@kent.edu). Volunteers will be asked to participate in a brief meeting on Monday to prepare for the event, and help out during the Forum on Tuesday, June 30, 2009 (3-5 pm). And who knows, there might be cool t-shirt in it for you!!

Feature Articles

Are you doing some cool stuff with mobile devices? Do you have any good stories to tell? Fellow SIGHC members would love to hear from you! Please submit your ideas and stories to the newsletter. Heck, we'll even help you write up your story if need be! Please contact any of the SIGHC officers for details (contact info is at the end of the newsletter)! Here are this month's contributions, thanks to Kyle Menchhofer, Tony Vincent, Catherine Oliveira and Clarena Renfrow.

New Handheld Initiative in St. Marys City Schools, St. Marys, Ohio Kyle Menchhofer Technology Coordinator St. Marys City Schools

This is an updated briefing from the article that was published in the September 2008 SIGHC Newsletter. St. Marys City Schools (SMCS) has two third grade classes in two separate elementary buildings that are using handheld computers (HH) in the classroom. SMCS is continuing to work with GoKnow out of Ann Arbor, Michigan with the Pilot Project for grades 3-5 in these two elementary buildings. GoKnow software that we are using includes MyProjects (create projects), Sketchy (drawing/animation), PicoMap (concept map), KWL (word bank), Word Mobile, Excel Mobile, and PowerPoint Mobile. The third grade students started using the HH on October 27, 2008. There are 22 students in each third grade class.

Prior to distributing the HH to the students, six members of our ten-member group visited Central Elementary School in Valparaiso, Indiana. A fifth grade teacher named Jeannie Sienkowski has been using HH in the classroom there for approximately two years. Our team visited her class and when her students walked in the door, they were intriguing to watch. The SMCS team visited the class for over two hours, and we were truly amazed at the learning environment that Jeannie has created for her students. Her students were very eager to show our team what can be done with the HH in their classroom work. The students were discussing assignments and sharing ideas. They worked on an assignment, then beamed it to their partners via infrared. Each partner checked over the assignment and made corrections. Jeannie emphasized to our team to not create more work for ourselves. If we did a particular assignment with pencil and paper, we should try to use the HH for the assignment. This was great advice from Jeannie, and we were so thankful for our visit to her classroom. They were outstanding to watch!

Our pilot project is off to a fantastic start. During the week of October 27, 2008, the team distributed the HH to the students, and had an informational meeting with the third-grade parents to discuss the pilot project. We let the parents touch and play with the HH. When the parents got to the school, we handed the devices to them and they walked oh so gingerly when carrying the HH back to their chairs. It was very interesting to watch the parents hold the devices as if the HH were so fragile. The team showed a short TeacherTube video clip of Elliot Soloway, co-founder of GoKnow, explaining about handheld devices and how they affect education. The team discussed the acceptable user policy with the parents, along with our expectations for the pilot program. At the end of the meeting, there was a Q & A session so the parents could ask questions. The parents were very involved in the meeting and asked great questions.

The teachers have done a tremendous job of utilizing the HH in the classroom. The third grade teachers have used their HH for the following subject areas: Social Studies (Sketchy and Word Mobile), Math (Sketchy and Excel Mobile), and Language Arts (Word Mobile and Sketchy). The classes have written daily journal entries. Since the implementation of the HH the students are writing more than they used to by traditional standards of pencil and paper. The students are writing constructive and detailed sentences using Word Mobile, which helps the students with spelling issues.

Students with poor spelling habits or poor handwriting are able to focus on the work at hand and not worry about issues that prevent them from completing the assignment. The HH have allowed them to express themselves in ways the teachers didn't think possible. Our special needs students have built up positive self-esteem. The HH has helped create a level playing field for all students involved.

One third grade teacher, who switches classes with another third grade teacher in two subject areas, Math and Social Studies, collected data over a five week period. Both the homeroom class and the other class in which data was collected have 22 students. The home room class has 1 ESL student and 3 special needs students. The other class has 2 ESL and 0 special needs students. Prior to using the HH, the homeroom class average in Math for the first nine weeks was 85.68% and the other class average was 87.45%. After five weeks of using the HH, the homeroom class average for the second nine weeks is currently 90.77% and the other class average is 88.72%. On a multiplication math test given to the third grade students, the home room used Sketchy (animation/drawing) on the HH and scored 92.4%. The other class used traditional pencil and paper and scored 88.19%. On a Social Studies unit test, both classes took a field trip around the city of St. Marys. Both classes discussed the field trip and talked about the different informational stations throughout the field trip. The homeroom used PicoMap (concept mapping), Word Mobile (word processing), and KWL (word bank for vocabulary). The other class used paper and pencil along with construction paper and crayons. The homeroom scored 89.68% and the other class scored 83.27%. The team was amazed at the difference in scores in just five weeks.

In January 2009, both fourth grade classes in each elementary building will begin using the HH in the classroom. The board of education (BOE) and the administration are very pleased with how the project is going at this point in time. We have a long road ahead of us. If the BOE decides to move on with this project, how will the program be financed? Will the district rely on parents to pay the entire cost of the HH? Can the district get donations from community organizations, service organizations, and/or private donations to help fund the project? Are there any grants available to help fund the pilot project? Will all staff members buy into utilizing HH devices in the classroom? Will every third-fifth grade classroom teacher implement the HH in the classroom? As one can see, there are many questions to be answered. The BOE has begun to conduct studies to see what direction is best for the students of SMCS. The pilot project team understands the importance of these decisions. From what we have seen so far, we feel we are heading in the right direction towards having 21st Century Technology in the Classroom.

Name Game: Handheld Learning 2008 Tony Vincent, Learning in Hand

When delegates arrived at The Brewery in London for Handheld Learning 2008, they received a traditional conference bag containing the printed program and other paper materials. The bag also contained a Nintendo DS game since many received a DS when they registered. The interesting part wasn't what was in the bag--it is what was not in it: a name badge.

In his closing speech, conference organizer Graham Brown-Martin said that there were no name tags because everyone was important. Without name indicators, delegates would have to introduce each other, and it didn't matter where they were from or what connection they had to mobile learning.

Out of the three Handheld Learning conferences I've been to, this one was the most interactive. Maybe that was because name badges were absent. Another reason the conference was so interactive was because of those Nintendo DSs. With so many delegates toting the gaming handheld, it was easy to fire up the built-in Pictochat. During sessions delegates shared text and pictures with others DS users in the room. It was fun to look around the room and try to figure out who was who from the Pictochat.

It's unfortunate that there was no way to log the conversations and frivolity that took place in the DS Pictochat. Luckily, there was a way to archive the 140-characters-or-less updates that were posted online to Twitter. Twitter user GillClough noted, "Lively backchannel going on using DS pictochat. Shame we can't capture it."

Many of the Twitter conversations can be found by clicking the archives on Handheld Learning's page: <http://twitter.com/hhl>. The Twitter posts certainly showed variety. Delegates posted humorous musings, serious thoughts, fun ideas, and a few frustrations.

User johnwilkie voiced a problem many at Handheld Learning had. He wrote about keeping his devices charged. He wrote, "found an extremely rare 13A socket... juicing up the MacBook. Now I need a USB cable for my iPhone..."

Having a powered learning tool is important, particularly because johnwilkie also wrote this quote he heard from Professor Stephen Heppell: "Every device turned off is a child turned off."

Quotes and thoughts were a popular thing to share via Twitter. kathtrinder posted, "We have more work to do on assessment than we do on curriculum. Astute final comment from putnam." jont posted, "Nice to hear people trying things and accepting they may fail." I wrote "'Viral Learning' ... Infect a few students and it will spread to the others."

Twitter user xlearn simply shared, "Hungry..." Every delegate I met was always hungry for learning, so I'm betting her purpose was to inform us she was craving food (which, for the record, Handheld Learning 2008's lunch was full of delicious choices. At the two previous Handheld Learning conferences, I usually left lunch still hungry. Not this year).

Twitter was used to post links to resources. GianninaRossini posted each time she blogged live from a conference session. This was a great way to get others to her blog and interact in real time. I posted a link as reminder to delegates that they can search for Twitter posts from the conference using <http://search.twitter.com>. I also shared a link to the class site of the Learner's Y Factor winners. The site, <http://is.gd/46Hn>, is an excellent example of using handheld devices to publish to the Web and to facilitate collaboration and cooperation.

Besides sharing links, delegates shared feedback on presentations. I used Twitter to tell jamesclay, "Great visuals in your Pecha Kucha slide shows!" Admittedly, my favorite Twitter message of the whole conference was from LordLangley. After the conclusion of the conference, he wrote, "Sitting in St. Pancras Station drinking organic beer whilst feeling chuffed that he met Tony Vincent." After I looked up the meaning of *chuffed*, his message made my day.

Like always, Handheld Learning had fantastic prizes. They were of course saved for the very end. Unfortunately, jamesclay wasn't present for the prize drawings. He explained on Twitter, "Alas I am missing the end of hhl08 as I misread the end of the programme and had to catch the 16.30 train. No prizes for me then!"

A favorite occurrence was to meet in person someone I followed on Twitter. Some people actually looked like their avatars and others did not. Without name badges, it was more of a chore to figure out who was who--but so rewarding as I met lots of people by asking.

Names of delegates wasn't the only thing to figure out. Conference speakers made several references to what they have figured "Handheld Learning" to mean. I noted on Twitter that one speaker says that teachers "hold students' hands" and guide their learning using technology. And like Handheld Learning 2006 and Handheld Learning 2007, delegates have suggested alternative names for the conference. This is what I wrote on Twitter while in a session about netbooks: "Handheld Learning could be renamed Hand-Over Learning because teachers become facilitators." The speaker said this quote as she was explaining how teachers should be guiding learning and inspiring their students to take ownership of their learning.

Whether a delegate's name, avatar, or screen name is one that others were familiar with or not, each person at the conference had incredible ideas and thoughts about education. I'm glad that delegates who were not scheduled to speak in a formal session had opportunities to talk in front of groups. The Pecha Kucha game where anyone could speak for exactly 6 minutes and 40 seconds was a highlight for me. I liked the brevity of the presentations. I liked even more that the session was informal and as the three-hour session progressed, more delegates decided to participate and give a presentation.

Participation is how learning occurs. We often talk of how learning is not passive. Handheld Learning's delegates weren't called attendees because they were expected to do more than simply attend; they were expected to participate. They were called delegates since their function in the conference was active. Asking people their names, discussing issues in Pictochat, posting to Twitter, and making presentations were some of the ways that delegates were active participants. My problem with the conference: not enough coffee and power outlets to keep delegates and their technology active all day long.

PHS 8th grade students assist the community in literacy
Catherine Oliveira and Clarena Renfrow
Poultney High School, Poultney, VT

Poultney High School 8th grade students have succeeded in a collaboration of technology and English language arts, which will assist the Poultney community in literacy. Under the direction of Clarena M. Renfrow, information technology teacher, and Catherine M. Oliverio, 8th English language arts teacher, a team of 14 students made podcasts and web pages, which are linked to the school's main web site. The goal was to assist the entire community with reading comprehension strategies. There are ten reading comprehension strategies, which make up the acronym, "I'm a reader"—imagine, make connections, analyze structure, recognize words and understand sentences, explore inferences, ask questions, determine important ideas and themes, evaluate/summarize/synthesize, reread and adjust, and predict.

Technology in education is the wave of the future, and literacy is in the forefront because of the low scores on testing. Both educators felt this was a perfect challenge for the students upon their recent return from VT Fest, a technology conference, as well as meetings with David Liben, a reading consultant. The two teachers tackled this interdisciplinary lesson that dealt with the students teaching the reading comprehension strategies to others within the community.

The students worked in teams of four, wrote scripts, recorded podcasts, and set up the web pages for the ten reading comprehension strategies. During the process, both teachers, and paraprofessional, Sharon Teer, assisted as necessary. "This was an important project, not only learning new technologies, but as an example of how technology can be integrated into content areas such as English, especially literacy," said Renfrow. "This project worked on the students' ability to learn new technologies and create podcasts, as well as practice reading comprehension strategies and public speaking skills."

Eighth grader Devin Waite said, "The reading strategies could really help you in life." "That is so totally true," said one of his peers, Marissa Thomas. Another student, Lucy DeMatties, said, "While working on this project, I felt I was going to make an impact on someone. You have to use reading through your entire life." Student Kylee Phillips chimed in, "It was fun because we got to use a program called Audacity and put music in our podcasts." Thomas said, "We got to work on stuff we never used before, like Audacity, where we made our podcasts." Audacity is a free open source software program that anyone may gain access to via the Internet. "We all worked really hard on our projects," said student Nick Reynolds. One last 8th grader summed it up nicely. Emily LaFlamme said, "It combined with what we're doing in English language arts and 8th grade computer applications. It helps the entire community."

When asked how the students felt about how their families, especially their grandparents, would think, too many to quote shouted, "They'll be very proud of us!"

All students were presented with community service awards for their hard work and commitment in accomplishing their goals and a special celebration. Congratulations to: Dylan Babcock, Brian Birkheimer, Lucy DeMatties, Hannah Grenier, Emily LaFlamme, Killian Lynes-Heiser, Chelsea Martelle, Hayley Mead, Kylee Phillips, Nick Reynolds, Dillon Therieau, Marissa Thomas, Conor Tougher, and Devin Waite!

Michelle Folger, director of curriculum, instruction, title I and ELL coordinator, early ed/even start co-coordinator, CFP grant manager, addressed the students at the celebration, "You have made a huge impact with this project. The value and contribution to the community is immense." She continued, "I have worked with these strategies for quite a number of years and have worked mainly with teachers and their techniques. What a pleasure to see what you have accomplished." "I will be speaking to Nick Boke and Geof Hewitt, author and editor, respectively, and show them what our students did with the strategies," said Folger. "These student developed podcasts to make the reading comprehension strategies part of each student's life and what a way for you to internalize your learning."

Special thanks to Vinnie Covino, technology coordinator/network administrator, for linking this project to the PHS home page. Visit the Poultney High School web site at www.PHSVT.org and click on the Reading Comprehension Strategies link to learn more. For further information, please feel free to contact the teachers at 802-287-5861.

Member News

Events

Mobile Learning Conference 2009

This conference will be held in Washington DC (February 16-17, 2009), and promises to be a very good one. According to Shawn Gross, the Conference Organizer: "We have an incredible list of speakers and attendees representing US and international school systems, policy makers and executives from the education technology and wireless industries." Some recently added speakers include:

- Nicholas Negroponte, Founder and Chairman, One Laptop Per Child
- Alec Ross, President Elect Obama Transition Team Member, Technology, Innovation and Government Reform
- Mohammad Ally, President, International Association of Mobile Learning
- Keith Krueger, Executive Director, Consortium of School Networking
- Liz Kolb, Doctoral student at the University of Michigan and Author of From Toy to Tool: Cell Phones in Learning
- Mark Schneiderman, Senior Director, Education Policy, Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)
- Karen Billings, Vice President, Education Division, Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)
- Kathleen Norris, Regents Professor in the College of Information, Library Science & Technology, at the University of North Texas and co-founder of Go-Know.
- Mark Nieker, Director, Mobile Learning Institute, Pearson Foundation
- Dr. William Rankin, Director, Mobile Learning Research, Abilene Christian University
- Tom Greaves, Chairman of The Greaves Group
- David Whyley, Learning2Go (United Kingdom)

Please visit the conference website at <http://www.mobilelearning09.org> for details and registration information.

We are considering holding a SIGHC meeting during or immediately following the conference. If you are interested in attending this meeting, please contact Mark van 't Hooft (mvanthoo@kent.edu).

Job Postings



Research Professorship
Position 997940

The Research Center for Educational Technology (RCET) at Kent State University seeks a distinguished scholar to serve as RCET Research Professor with tenure. Working with and mentoring an exceptional staff, the RCET Professor will lead RCET's research on the impact of technology on teaching and learning as well as follow her/his own research interests.

We seek a person with an outstanding record of research, with experience in a research center, university or other academic institution and with a record of success in attaining grants and working with funding organizations. Highest consideration will be given to candidates with research interests in technology integration, learning and assessment; understanding of school reform; ubiquitous computing and/or learning in virtual environments.

Established in 1999, RCET is an independent, non-profit research and education center at Kent State University. In addition to research on teaching and learning, RCET's activities include (1) operation of a unique technology-rich classroom with a research laboratory attached for selected K-12 teachers and their students and (2) an on-line multimedia journal. Additional information about RCET can be found at <http://www.rcet.org>.

For a complete description of this position and to apply online, visit our jobsite at <http://jobs.kent.edu> to complete an academic data form. Qualified applicants should submit: (1) a cover letter addressing special interest in the position, related qualifications, research interests and future directions; (2) a current vita; (3) three recent publications and (4) contact information for three professional references, including telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. Items may be submitted to dcook@kent.edu or may be mailed to **Dr. Dale L. Cook, Director RCET and Summit Professor, 323 Moulton Hall, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio 44242-0001; Telephone: 330-672-0611.**

Review of applications will begin upon receipt and will continue until the position is filled.

All documents submitted to Kent State University for employment opportunities are public records and subject to disclosure under the Ohio Public Records Law.

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

And Finally...

As always, thanks to everybody who contributed to this month's newsletter. Don't forget to participate by submitting articles, or adding content to the SIGHC wiki ☺. Its success is depends on YOU!

If you have any news or info for a future newsletter, please send it to Mark van 't Hooft (until an interim Secretary has been put in place). Until the next issue...

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