

8-2-98

At a camp for teachers, rustic is out; Web-page design is in

By Louise Harbach
INQUIRER CORRESPONDENT

MOUNT LAUREL — What happens when the Music Man embraces the World Wide Web?

If he's Rob Reimer, a music teacher at Cherokee High School in Marlton, the result is Camp Design-a-Web Page.

Assisted by a head counselor — in this case, Reimer's 12-year-old son, Michael — Reimer spent each Monday in July showing his fellow teachers how to design Web pages at the Educational Technology Training Center at Burlington County College's technical center here.

"Technology can be intimidating, which is why we're emphasizing the camp idea," said Reimer, who has integrated technology into the music courses he teaches. "It's summer, and the last thing we want to do is create high anxiety. We want people to relax and have a good time."

Reimer, who has taught music at the high school for the last 13 years, said he never expected to be using a computer to help him teach music until his brother-in-law gave him a used computer six years ago.

"It just took off from there," Reimer said of his desire to learn as much as he could about computer operations.

Learning along with him was Michael, "who now knows as much as I do about the subject," Reimer said.

After Reimer taught many of his colleagues in his district, the Lenape Regional High School District, how to design Web pages, Alysa Cummings, the training center's director, asked him to teach the course at the training center.

"Such a course is part of a county initiative to integrate technology into the schools," Cummings said. "And we thought by marketing it as a 'camp,' we'd attract more people."

The marketing ploy worked: Within a week after the course was advertised, all 45 slots were filled with teachers such as Dennis Perry, a

math teacher at Riverside High School, who said the half-day course was exactly what he needed to meet a mandate set by Riverside school administrators.

"I consider myself computer literate, but I don't know a thing about designing Web pages," Perry said. "I was asked to create a Web page for the school and have it online by Sept. 1, and now I don't foresee any problems in meeting the deadline."

The course also will be a help to Amy Thornton, a first-grade teacher at the Eleanor Rush School in Cinnaminson and the school's technology resource person.

"This is just what we need to help get our school up to speed, technology-wise," Thornton said.

Shawnee special-education teachers Bonnie Gooley and Marcie Aaron decided to take the course after being asked by their supervisor to design a special-education Web page for the high school, which is a part of the Lenape district.

"Right now, I'm totally confused, but we're determined to do it," Gooley said.

The center, which is housed in the community college's technology center and operated with the New Jersey Institute of Technology, is one of 21 such facilities established in each county in the state.

ETTC opened a year ago with a \$200,000 federal grant to provide teachers with technical assistance so that no matter what they teach, they can comfortably use technology, Cummings said.

For More Information

■ The Educational Technology Training Center can be reached at 222-9311, Ext. 3882.