

## Go and read a journal!



Kerry Webb

This hasn't much to do directly with the Internet and you can't read it on the Net, but one of the most stirring presentations around was Rebecca Lenzini's keynote address at the *Online* conference in January. I couldn't attend that session but I heard the applause and the comments of the people streaming out. Finally, thanks to Marie Murphy from the ALIA national office, John Levett the distinguished editor, and Rebecca herself, it's made it into print. The February issue of *Australian Library Journal* contains her address 'Surviving victory' and it should be read by anyone who cares about libraries and librarians. ALJ has a new look, and some extremely good content in this issue. Well done, the team!

### Something new

The Australian Academy of Science has launched its 'Nova: Science in the news' service, and online exploration of the scientific current affairs. It is pitched at secondary school teachers, and provides accurate and up-to-date information for use in their teaching. Students doing assignments (and parents who occasionally have to help them) will find it a useful resource. Some of the topics covered so far include gene technology and plants, biological control of Rabbit Calicivirus Disease, and the Mad Cow Disease. It's at <http://www.science.org.au/nova/index.htm>.

### Describing your site?

There's some discussion going on about AltaVista's practice of indexing only the first few layers of a web site. This has interesting implications. Obviously, site-level metadata may help to bring to users' attention the extent of the content of a site, but we might even start to see some tables of contents right up there on the top page, which may be useful but not necessarily pretty. So why not a link from the top page directly to a table of contents?

### New look Lycos

In case you haven't looked recently (and it is easy to get into a habit of only using one or two search engines), Lycos (<http://www.lycos.com>) has been revamped. In addition to the simple search facilities, it now has a top level index incorporating News, Travel, Entertainment, and Government. Unlike Yahoo though, it doesn't continue the index any further, but has links to a number of featured sites as well as 'headlines' which feature a summary of a story and then a hotlink to the site (such as NewsBytes, Wired or PC World) which has the full text of the story. It's an interesting ploy, as they're trying to differentiate themselves from the other search engines which often have more powerful searches. I'm not sure if I'll use it that much as I find AltaVista produces pretty good results in pure searching, but Lycos is bound to attract some of the market back to it.

### Thesaurus list

There's a new electronic forum for the exchange of information about the creation, maintenance and use of thesauri and classification systems within Commonwealth government agencies. To subscribe to the list, send an e-mail message to [majordomo@dpie.gov.au](mailto:majordomo@dpie.gov.au) with subscribe thesaurus in the body of the message. For further enquiries, contact the list owner at [Maryanne.Rosenberg@mailhost.dpie.gov.au](mailto:Maryanne.Rosenberg@mailhost.dpie.gov.au).

### FlashPix

If you're interested in images on the Web, check out Kodak's FlashPix digital image format, which stores information about various sizes and resolutions, as well as header information all in the image file. Full details are at <http://www.kodak.com/daiHome/flashPix/flashPixHome.shtml>.

### The Wallis Report

The report of the Wallis Inquiry into the Australian financial system was released by the Federal Treasurer on 9 April. From that day, the report has been available for download, as well as a range of supporting documentation, such as submissions, transcripts of public consultations and discussion papers. You'll find them all at <http://www.treasury.gov.au/fsi/index.html>.

### We're all still learning

You need to be careful with using the various tools on the Internet. There was a case recently where a conference was being organised, and the people responsible had the good idea of creating a mailing list for all the potential attendees, so that bulletins could be sent out and changes of speakers could be notified, and so on. The problem was that many people on the list didn't realise that it was a list, and their replied to the organiser (or the address that they thought was the organiser's) bounced around to the list and then there were the complaints to the list about all these strange messages, and one person had changed her address so 'undeliverable mail' messages started proliferating.

I suppose the lesson is that for dissemination of information to a group of people where there isn't an expectation of much interaction, standard listserv software isn't what you want. And if you are using listserv software, make sure that when people are joined up to the list, they get the usual 'welcome' message with the all-important information about how to unsubscribe.

### Metadata search engine

The Resource Discovery Unit at DSTC in Queensland — one of Australia's premier sources of Internet research — has announced its metadata index and search service. The Metadata Search Engine (MDSE) both indexes

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META tags in HTML documents and provides an attribute-based search interface to the indexed sites. It currently supports the metadata element sets from the Dublin Core, AltaVista/Lycos, and ERIN, but they are also interested in other metadata element sets that could be supported by the MDSE. They are asking for sites that use significant META tag pages to submit their URLs to the MDSE to enable the index to grow and cover a wide range of sites. See it at <http://purl.org/dstc/mdse>.

### Queensland Hansard

The Hansard from the Queensland Parliament is now available on the Internet with fully indexed search capabilities at <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au:81/hansard.htm>. The unrevised proof of parliamentary debates is available within two hours of the rising of the Legislative Assembly. Further developments will include a browsing capability, but at the moment you need to use the ISYS index search, which is quite powerful. You can view in either a text or Word Perfect format.

### CILLA

The AVCC and the NLA have agreed in principle to undertake a joint procurement process for systems to provide local request management capabilities, as described in the feasibility study for the Coordinated InterLibrary Loan Administration Project (CILLA). They say this will optimise the advantages of integrating the three major interlending and document delivery initiatives currently being developed for the Australian library community: the National ILL Utility service, as part of the Networked Services Project (NSP), local interlending and document delivery request management software (the CILLA Project), and the electronic document transmission software (The JEDDS Project). There's more on CILLA at <http://www.gu.edu.au/alib/iii/docdel/cilla/>. The joint AVCC/NLA RFT was released on 19 May, with responses from Tenderers due by 23 June.

### Australia's future online

The Australian Coalition of Service Industries commissioned a report 'Australia.com: Australia's future online' by the McKinsey company. The fact that its genesis was outside the IT and telecommunications sector may mean that is likely to get more attention than otherwise — an indictment on the way that the sector has treated its clients for many years.

It's available in hard copy only, and can be obtained from ACSI for \$60. Details are at <http://www.acsi.asn.au/publicat/australi.htm>.

### Inquiry into the Queensland CJC

John Myrtle at the Institute of Criminology alerted me to the Web pages of the Connolly-Ryan Inquiry being conducted by the Queensland Government into the Effectiveness of the

Criminal Justice Commission. Information about the Inquiry, including terms of reference, news, profiles of the Commissioners, and public transcripts can be found at <http://www.coicjc.qld.gov.au>.

### US digitisation news

The Library of Congress and Ameritech have announced the winners of their latest awards for grants to digitise historically significant American collections and make them available for the first time via the Internet. Winners come from universities, public libraries and historical societies, and the projects range from African-American sheet music through photographs of American Indians to texts documenting 19th century Southern culture. Information about the grants is at <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/award/>.

### CNI White paper

CNI has produced a draft of its white paper 'Access to and services for federal information in the networked environment' and has been asking for comments. Unfortunately the deadline for comments was 30 April, but the report as it stands is worth reading. It focuses on issues related to federal information from the perspective of institutions serving users. The challenges and opportunities addressed in the paper include an examination of what 'collecting' information means in the networked environment; locating federal information; preserving federal information; and, providing services and infrastructure to support the delivery of federal information. It's at <http://www.cni.org/projects/fedinfo/>.

### Internet Filters

Karen Schneider from Berkeley has reported on the Internet Filter Assessment Project. It aims to have reviewers select filters (such as Cyber Patrol and Net Nanny), evaluate them and report back. She stresses that the evaluation of filters will not be an endorsement of their use, but it will provide members of the public with an indication of what they actually do and how well they do it. The project page is at <http://www.bluehighways.com/tifap.htm>.

### JURIST in time?

An international resource of Law Professors on the Web has been established at <http://www.law.pitt.edu/hibbits/jurist.htm>.

JURIST has links to law professors' home pages, course pages, resource pages and online articles (both 'pre-prints' and 'post-prints'), making it a valuable resource for other law professors, lawyers, and law students, as well as to the public at large. It also offers listings for the Web sites of major professional and legal associations, directories of law review and law school home pages, pointers to law listservs, and access to a law-dedicated search engine. ■

The ALIA home pages and the ALIA web service, ALIANet, can be found at the following URL:  
<http://www.alia.org.au/>

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TYPING THESE  
URLS!**

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Contributions and suggestions for this column are always welcome. Please e-mail Kerry Webb at [kerry.webb@alianet.alia.org.au](mailto:kerry.webb@alianet.alia.org.au) or via the ALIA National Office, [incite@alia.org.au](mailto:incite@alia.org.au)