

IAT INFOBITS

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About INFOBITS

Infobits is an electronic service of the Institute for Academic Technology's Information Resources Group. Each month we monitor and select from a number of information technology and instruction technology sources that come to our attention and provide brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

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COMPUTER GRAPHICS CONFERENCE

SIGGRAPH is the ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics. SIGGRAPH 94, the 21st SIGGRAPH International Conference and Exhibition on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques, took place last month in Orlando, Florida. Commercial fields -- movie animation production, multimedia publishing, and graphic art in advertising -- dominated the exhibitions; nonetheless, there were many opportunities to see what is being done in the field of education. The conference included SIGkids -- a special area for children to "experience the latest interactive technologies; video and animation production; computer graphics tools for art, design, and music production; mathematics; and science." Several groups from the area K-12 schools had booths set up with children assisting in demonstrating their projects. Virtual environment demonstrations were a large part of both the educational institution and the commercial areas in the conference. Since SIGGRAPH has a reputation for promoting leading edge technologies, it will be interesting to see if more virtual reality programs show up in the near future in academe.

To learn more about SIGGRAPH and its activities, connect to their World Wide Web (WWW) site (URL = <http://siggraph.org>), their Gopher site (<siggraph.org>), or their anonymous ftp site (<siggraph.org>). The SIGGRAPH Library is also available at these addresses. It includes a searchable collection of over 16,000 unique computer graphics and computational geometry bibliography references, written transcripts of SIGGRAPH conference panel discussions, and a collection of slides from previous conferences.

GET A GRIP ON GRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Speaking of computer graphics, the article "Images on the Internet" by Jennifer Cox and Mohamed Taleb [*Database* 17 (August 1994): 18-22, 24-26] provides a good overview of what is available for viewing and downloading on the Internet and tools that are useful for retrieving the images. Addressing the complicated issue of dealing with graphics file formats, it provides a chart of some of the more popular utilities that are used to view image files. A listing of several Internet image collections and suggestions on hardware configurations (MS-DOS-compatible, Macintosh, and UNIX boxes) also contribute to the usefulness of the article.

Database [ISSN 0162-4105] is published bimonthly by Online, Inc., 462 Danbury Road, Wilton, CT 06897-2126 USA; tel: 203-761-1466. Subscriptions are \$99/year (USA and Canada), \$121/year (Mexico), and \$134/year (airmail to all other countries).

For even more information on computer graphics file, see *Encyclopedia of Graphics File Formats* by James D. Murray and William vanRyper (Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly & Associates, Inc., 1994. 1st edition. 928 pp. ISBN: 1-56592-058-9. Cost: \$59.95 US). The book covers graphics file format specifications, code, images and software packages for PC (MS-DOS, MS Windows, OS/2), UNIX, and Macintosh platforms. Included with the book is a CD-ROM that contains freeware and shareware software packages to help you view, convert and manipulate the nearly one hundred file formats covered in the book. You can read a more detailed description of the book using a World Wide Web (WWW) browser to connect to the publisher's WWW site. The URL (Uniform Resource Locator) is <http://gnn.com/gnn/bus/ora/item/gff.html>

For a catalog of O'Reilly's computer books and ordering information, contact: O'Reilly & Associates, Inc., 103A Morris Street, Sebastopol, CA 95472 USA; tel: 707-829-0515 or 800-998-9938 (USA and Canada only); fax: 707-829-0104; email: order@ora.com; WWW: <http://gnn.com/gnn/bus/ora/catalog/index.html>; Gopher: <gopher.ora.com>. The publisher also has several international distributors that are listed on their WWW and Gopher sites.

KIDS ON CAMPUS WEB SITE

From a WWW site set up by the Cornell University Theory Center, educators (especially those involved in K-12 teacher training programs) can get ideas on how the Internet, and particularly World Wide Web, can be used in children's programs. The Center sponsors an annual "Kids on Campus" program during the National Science Foundation's National Science and Technology Week at Cornell. The web site was set up for easy use by third, fourth, and fifth graders to explore Internet resources on dinosaurs, the solar system, weather, and other science topics.

To access the web site, use a World Wide Web (WWW) browser such as Mosaic. The URL (Uniform Resource Locator) for the site is <http://www.tc.cornell.edu/Kids.on.Campus/>

An article about the "Kids on Campus" program is in *Forefronts*, the Cornell Theory Center's newsletter (Vol. 9, No. 5, Summer 1994, pp. 1, 14). The issue can be read online using a WWW browser at URL <http://www.tc.cornell.edu/Forefronts/forefronts.html>

Forefronts [ISSN 0889-4833] is published quarterly by the Cornell Theory Center, External Relations, 514 Engineering and Theory Center Building, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-3801 USA; tel: 607-254-8686; email: forefronts@tc.cornell.edu. There is no charge for USA hardcopy subscriptions; others should contact the Center. Subscription forms are available on both the WWW and the Gopher sites.

U.S. FEDERAL INFORMATION POLICY

"Keeping Track of Current Developments in Federal Information Policy" by Joe Ryan, Sarah Haining, and Michael Persick. *Internet Research*, vol. 4, no. 2, Summer 1994, pp. 67-81.

Using information compiled by members of Syracuse University's School of Information Studies, this paper provides pointers to print and online resources for keeping current on developments in U.S. federal information policy area. Resources listed include columns appearing in professional journals; regularly-appearing publications; federal agencies and sources concerned with information policy on the Internet; looseleaf law and regulatory services; names and address of organizations, lobbyists, and media contacts; address of listservs, Usenet newsgroups, and online bulletin boards. The authors also provide an extensive list of recent information policy documents along with retrieval information.

Currently, there is no electronic version of the information; however, a printed report, "A Guide to Government Information Available on the Internet," is available. Contact Publications Officer Rebecca Freeland by mail: Syracuse University, School of Information Studies, 4-206 Center for Science and Technology, Syracuse, NY 13244-4100 USA; or tel: 315-443-2911; or fax: 315-443-5806. Individual copies cost \$8.50 post paid [Make checks payable to Syracuse University.] Proceeds from the sale of this guide will be donated to Syracuse University's School of Information Studies. For group discounts, contact the author Joe Ryan by email: joryan@suvvm.acs.syr.edu or joryan@suvvm.bitnet.

Internet Research [ISSN 1066-2243] is published quarterly by Mecklermedia Corporation, 11 Ferry Lane West, Westport, CT 06880 USA; tel.: 203-226-6967. Subscriptions are available for \$115.00/year (USA), \$133.00/year (Canada, Central, and South America). Subscriptions for other countries are available from Mecklermedia Ltd., Artillery House, Artillery Row, London SW1P 1RT, UK; tel: +44-071-976-0405.

FROGS ON THE INTERNET

The widespread occurrence of frogs and other amphibians is a sign of a healthy ecosystem. Perhaps the widespread availability on the Internet of information about frogs is a sign of a healthy "infosystem." Anyway, here are some sites to explore if you are looking for information to use in biology classes. Unless otherwise noted, you will need a World Wide Web browser like Mosaic to access the information.

The Imaging and Distributed Computing Group of Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory has an interactive frog dissection kit on the Internet. Images of the frog from various views, and in various stages of dissection, are generated on-the-fly based on parameters set by the user. The URL is: <http://george.lbl.gov/ITG.hm.pg.docs/dissect/info.html>

The University of Virginia/The Curry School of Education's Instructional Technology Program has developed another interactive frog dissection tutorial. The tutorial combines text with 60 in-line color images and 17 QuickTime movies illustrating dissection procedures and internal organs. Numerous clickable image maps provide interactive practice. The URL for this site is: <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/~insttech/frog/>

Sandra Loosemore at Yale University maintains The Froggy Page, a site containing links to frog pictures, frog sounds, stories about frogs ("The Frogs" by Aristophanes, Grimm Brothers' "The Frog Prince"), words to songs about frogs, and information about the most famous frog, Kermit. The URL for this site is: <http://www.cs.yale.edu/HTML/YALE/CS/HyPlans/loosemore-sandra/froggy.html>

The Australian National Botanic Biodiversity Server includes a section on the frogs in the Australian National Botanic Gardens. The URL is: <http://155.187.10.12:80/projects/frogs/anbg-frogs.html>

Finally, there is Frog-Net, an electronic forum for researchers engaged in the study of the behavior and the underlying neural mechanisms in amphibians. The list is moderated by Jim-Shih Liaw, Department of Computer Science and Program in Neuroscience, University of Southern California. To subscribe to the mailing list, send email to: liaw@rana.usc.edu. To send email to all members of the list, address it to: frog-net@rana.usc.edu

URL: <http://www.unc.edu/cit/infobits/bitaug94.html>

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