

# 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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## GALILEO PROJECT INFORMATION ON THE WEB

On December 7, 1995, the Galileo Probe became the first atmospheric probe to study a gas giant. Radio transmissions indicated that Galileo's Jupiter atmospheric probe mission had succeeded, when it was confirmed that the probe signal had been received by the orbiter as the probe began parachuting into Jupiter's clouds. More details about the project are available from NASA's National Space Science Data Center (NSSDC) on the World Wide Web at URL

<http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/galileo.html>

Timelines of events associated with the mission are located at URL

[http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/galileo\\_today.html](http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/galileo_today.html)

and

[http://ccf.arc.nasa.gov/galileo\\_probe/htmls/probe\\_mission\\_events.html](http://ccf.arc.nasa.gov/galileo_probe/htmls/probe_mission_events.html)

For more information about the mission, contact: Dr. Edwin V. Bell, II, Hughes STX Corporation, NSSDC Project, 7701 Greenbelt Rd., Suite 400, Greenbelt, MD 20770 USA; tel: 301-441-4209; email: [bell@nssdca.gsfc.nasa.gov](mailto:bell@nssdca.gsfc.nasa.gov)

More information on the NSSDC is available at URL [http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/planetary\\_home.html](http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/planetary_home.html)

For ideas for incorporating NASA activities in your curriculum, NASA's Education Division provides educational programs and materials for teachers and students from the elementary to the university level. The NASA Teacher Resource Center Network is a dissemination mechanism to provide educators with NASA educational materials. NASA educational materials are related to art, mathematics, energy, physics, careers, spaceflight, aeronautics, technology utilization, physical science, and social science. More details are available on the Web at URL

<http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/ntrc.html>

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## WORLD WIDE WEB EDUCATIONAL INTERFACE

Marguerite Fuoco, graduate student in the Department of Computer and Information Sciences at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, spent seven weeks during the summer of 1995 working with a group of teachers, media specialists, and technology coordinators from schools in the Birmingham area. During her instructional sessions the participants explored the Internet and provided feedback about World Wide Web sites that are of interest to educators,

as well as the best ways for information to be organized on the Internet to make it more accessible to educators and students. This feedback was used to design the Web page, "Educational Interface to the World Wide Web." Sections include Research Tools and Resources, The Teacher's Room, The Student's Room, Internet and Computer Information, and Schools on the Internet. The Web page is located at URL <http://www.cis.uab.edu/info/grads/mmf/EdPage/EdPage2.html>

Contact the author at: Marguerite Fuoco, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Department of Computer and Information Sciences, Room 115 Campbell Hall, 1300 University Boulevard, Birmingham, AL 35242 USA; email: [fuoco@cis.uab.edu](mailto:fuoco@cis.uab.edu)

## THE PLAYWRITING SEMINARS

"The Playwriting Seminars," by Richard Toscan, [former] Dean of Portland State University School of Fine and Performing Arts, is an experimental site exploring the design and development of a Web-based professional manual of the playwright's craft for would-be playwrights and screenwriters. Topics range from how to come up with a title for your play, to developing plots and dramatic structure, to how to overcome writer's block, to the business aspects of play writing. The site is located at URL <http://www.vcu.edu/artweb/playwriting/>

For additional information, contact: Richard Toscan, Dean, School of the Arts, Virginia Commonwealth University, P.O. Box 842519, Richmond, VA 23284-2519 USA; tel: 804-828-2787; fax: 804-828-6469; email: [rtoscan@vcu.edu](mailto:rtoscan@vcu.edu)

## LABNET AND THE HUB

LabNet, a project conducted by TERC (see [May 1995 IAT Infobits](#)) and funded by the National Science Foundation, is a telecommunications network for K-12 science and math educators dedicated to actively supporting and encouraging inquiry-oriented, project-based learning. LabNet uses telecommunications to provide an electronic meeting place in which teachers can support each other in experimenting with new teaching strategies, reflect on their teaching experiences, problem-solve, share resources, build collegial connections with their peers, and take part in professional development.

To read more about LabNet, see "Veggies...Leaves...Worms: Composting on a Network," by Deborah Muscella and Kelly Wedding (*Hands On!*, Fall 1995, vol. 18, no. 2 pp. 1, 18-19). (The issue will appear on the Web sometime in 1996 at URL [http://hub.terc.edu:70/1/hub/owner/TERC/Hands\\_On](http://hub.terc.edu:70/1/hub/owner/TERC/Hands_On) )

Or visit LabNet on the World Wide Web at URL <http://hub.terc.edu/terc/LabNet/LabNet.html>

For more information about LabNet, contact: Kelly Wedding at [kwedding@aol.com](mailto:kwedding@aol.com); Craig Fox at [scifox@aol.com](mailto:scifox@aol.com); or Deborah Muscella at [deborah\\_muscella@terc.edu](mailto:deborah_muscella@terc.edu)

Another TERC project is the Hub, a World Wide Web link to a growing collection of educational resources and services for mathematics, science, and technology educators. Operated by TERC on behalf of the Regional Alliance, the Hub houses articles, curriculum, newsletters, projects, reports, and software. Hub services can help you join or start a networked community, publish on the Internet, or conduct custom information searches. The Hub is located at URL <http://hub.terc.edu/>

## VRML ADDS 3RD DIMENSION TO THE WEB

VRML (Virtual Reality Modeling Language) is an object-oriented language that lets you create and design navigable 3D spaces for the Web. Web page designers can now add dimensions, texture, and "lighting" specifications to their Web sites by using VRML. Users can download VRML files off the Web to their browser client, which then -- with the appropriate VRML viewer -- handles the 3D rendering and navigation. Some of the areas in which VRML is being used include architecture, scientific visualization, and geography. VRML files can be relatively small, 100 - 500K, so that fairly complex worlds can be downloaded quickly.

The San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) maintains the "VRML Repository" (<http://www.sdsc.edu/vrml/>) where you can find comprehensive information on VRML, VRML viewers and authoring clients, mailing lists, newsgroups, documentation, sample VRML worlds, etc. Another source of examples is located at <http://webspacesgi.com/Repository/index.html>. You might also drop by the VRML page at <http://www.vrml.org/> or the VRML Frequently Asked Questions page at [http://www.oki.com/vrml/VRML\\_FAQ.html](http://www.oki.com/vrml/VRML_FAQ.html) for more information.

Chad Kearsley, Humanities Research Assistant at the IAT, has been exploring the use of VRML in education. Kearsley's Web page on VRML is located at [http://www.unc.edu/~chad\\_k/vrml/vrml.htm](http://www.unc.edu/~chad_k/vrml/vrml.htm). For additional information, contact: Chad Kearsley, Institute for Academic Technology, 2525 Meridian Parkway, Suite 400, Durham, NC 27713 USA; tel: 919-405-1953; email: [chad\\_kearsley@unc.edu](mailto:chad_kearsley@unc.edu).

A book that Kearsley recommends is *VRML Browsing and Building Cyberspace* by Mark Pesce, a pioneer in VRML development. (Indianapolis, IN: New Riders Pub., 1995. ISBN: 1-56205-498-8.) Author Pesce's Web page is at URL <http://www.hyperreal.com/~mpesce/>

## U.S. PATENTS ON THE INTERNET

MCNC, a Research Triangle Park, North Carolina technology center, has been providing AIDS-related U.S. patent information on the World Wide Web (see October 1994 IAT Infobits). Under a \$250,000 federal contract, MCNC will extend its publishing to include every abstract approved by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office since 1976. The free service is searchable and will be updated monthly. Users can link directly from one patent abstract to related documents in the database. You can access the database at URL <http://patents.cnidr.org:4242/>

## IAT LIBRARIAN'S LINKS

Added this month to the IAT Librarian's Links Web pages:

"Internet Op/Ed" -- Opinions, editorials, provocations, criticisms, commentaries, rantings, and ragings about the Internet and Internet-related topics. A hodgepodge of bias, attitude, scholarship, and reflection...and probably something to offend everyone.

URL <http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-43.html>

The Librarian's Links main page is located at URL <http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/subjects.html>

URL: <http://www.unc.edu/cit/infobits/bitdec95.html>

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