# The Scout Report

*Surf Smarter*

## November 29, 1996

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# Research and Education

## Two Project Solicitations from the National Science Foundation
Learning and Intelligent Systems (LIS)
**http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/lis/home.htm**
Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI)
**http://www.nsf.gov/od/osti/mri/mriintro.htm**

The NSF has recently announced two program solicitations. LIS "seeks to stimulate interdisciplinary research that will unify experimentally and theoretically derived concepts related to learning and intelligent systems, and that will promote the use and development of information technologies in learning across a wide variety of fields." Pre-proposals are due February 7, 1997. Background, the solicitation, and proposal examples are available at the site. The MRI Program "assists in the acquisition or development of major research instrumentation by U.S. institutions. The maintenance and technical support associated with these instruments are also supported. Proposals may be for a single instrument, a large system of instruments, or multiple instruments that share a common research focus. Computer systems, clusters of advanced workstations, networks, and other information infrastructure components necessary for research are encouraged." The proposal deadline is February 20, 1997. The complete program solicitation is available at the site. [JS]

## ThinkQuest 1996 Awards Announced
Winners and Finalists:
**http://www.advanced.org/tq96/winners96awards.html**
All entries:
**http://tqd.advanced.org/**
ThinkQuest Home page      [FRAMES]
**http://www.advanced.org/ThinkQuest/**

On November 25, 1996, the first annual ThinkQuest awards were presented for educational web sites created by 12-18 year old students. The winning sites are great examples of ThinkQuest's vision of "the 'Internet style' of learning, which emphasizes exploration, collaboration and creative use of the vast resources of the Internet." Winners were selected in the categories of science and mathematics, social sciences, arts and literature, sports and health, and interdisciplinary, as well as best entry in contest, outstanding technical achievement, and outstanding educational design. But there are no losers in this contest. Sit back and enjoy any of the hundreds of entries (browsable and searchable) or 34 finalists, and you will quickly see just what teens and their coaches are capable of. Proposal concepts for the 1997 ThinkQuest contest are being taken until January 31, 1997. Information is available from the ThinkQuest Home Page. [JS]

## Two U.S. Crime Statistics Sites
Uniform Crime Reports 1990-1993
**http://www.lib.virginia.edu/socsci/crime/index.html**
*Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1995* [PDF]
**http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/**

The University of Virginia Social Sciences Data Center (discussed in the April 26, 1996 Scout Report), and the State University of New York at Albany have each made a valuable US crime statistical resource available on the web. Uniform Crime Reports 1990-93, from the Social Sciences Data Center, is a searchable dataset from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that allows users to retrieve county level data for arrests (Part I and Part II offenses) and reported crimes (Part I offenses only). Users choose area, time, and crime variables to submit. Data can be retrieved on the screen or as comma-delimited files from an FTP location. *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1995* is produced for the U.S. Department of Justice by the Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center at SUNY-Albany. Its six sections are searchable and browsable and consist of 654 tables and 5 figures of mostly national data time series of varying lengths, in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format. Sections can be downloaded for printing in their entirety or individual tables can be printed (a real plus as individual table size is usually less than 10KB.) The data is compiled from over 100 sources (annotated with selected links). Connections to the Acrobat Reader are available at the site. [JS]

## The Interactive Fly
**http://sdb.bio.purdue.edu/fly/aimain/1aahome.htm**

Produced by Dr. Thomas Brody of the Society for Developmental Biology and hosted by Purdue University, this site offers users the benefit of a great deal of original research into the genes involved in the development of the fruit fly. Genes are organized three ways: alphabetically, by biochemical function, and by developmental function. Each gene's page begins with summary information and a FlyBase ID, followed by a biological overview, and then sections on gene structure, protein structure, regulation, developmental biology, and finally a list of references. In addition to the genetic information, there are sections on tissue and organ development, and morphogenesis. As Dr. Brody points out, "Currently, Drosophila is the only organism for which one can begin with a list of genes active in the egg and follow the morphological changes and gene interactions through to adulthood." The biological overview for each gene is written with the non-specialist in mind. [ML]

## Social Policy from the Left and Right
*Why America Needs a Tax Cut* (Heritage Foundation)
**http://www.heritage.org/heritage/taxcut/**
*What Would a Balanced Budget Mean for...?* (Twentieth Century Fund)
**http://epn.org/tcf/caliintr.html**

One of the most powerful aspects of the Internet is the availability of information from all political perspectives. On the issues of US tax cuts and the balanced budget, the right-leaning Heritage Foundation and left-leaning Twentieth Century Fund have recently released studies supporting their points of view. *Why America Needs a Tax Cut*, authored by Heritage foundation taxperts, is a nine-

part monograph presenting the view that government deficits can be lowered while tax rates are dropped and the tax system reformed (the flat tax is championed). The Twentieth Century Fund, a nonpartisan foundation that researches and writes about progressive public policy, has recently released five state studies under the general title of *What Would a Balanced Budget Mean for...?* (California, Ohio, Wisconsin, Washington, and Oregon). Prepared by state budget experts in those states, these studies conclude that a balanced federal budget would hinder states' abilities to "keep up with demands for services, especially in the important areas of education and criminal justice." Each state study is hyperlinked to the others. Interested Internauts may find these studies useful to achieve some balance when grappling with these complex issues. [JS]

## Adventures in Education
**http://www.tgslc.org/**

Anyone who has gone through the agony of the college financial aid process, or will be in the future, will find this site extremely useful. Sponsored by the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation, Adventures in Education contains lots of information on how to fund an education, including "Paying for School: A Guided Tour," loan management advice, information on scholarships, grants, fellowships and loans, and many links to sources of information elsewhere on the net. You can even download deferment forms in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format, and, if TGSLC is your loan guarantor, you can bring up a summary of your student loans. [EH]

## AgEcon Search [PDF]
**http://agecon.lib.umn.edu/**

Agricultural Economics is not just about the economics of cows. It is a multi-disciplinary field that includes development economics, natural resource and environmental economics, and global markets and trade, among others. AgEcon Search, provided through a cooperative effort of the University of Minnesota, the American Agricultural Economics Association, and the US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, is a searchable and browsable working paper archive that to date includes over 100 papers from eleven universities and research organizations, available in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format. Papers are available from 1992 onwards. While AgEcon Search is in no way as comprehensive as the Economics Working Paper Archive of Washington University at St. Louis (discussed in the May 31, 1996 Scout Report), it is a dynamic site that seems to concentrate more on applied aspects of economics than theoretical ones. Connections to Acrobat Reader are available at the site. [JS]

## hr-law - Human Rights Law Mailing List

hr-law is a mailing list for law students studying international human rights or humanitarian law, or who are just interested in the subject. The purpose of the list is to provide a forum where people can share information, experiences and ideas. Some of the appropriate topics for this list include: information on how to do research in the human rights area, and sharing of hints; exchanging help on papers or research projects; discussion of topics related to human rights law; and sharing information on employment, internship and volunteer opportunities. [JS]

To subscribe send email to:
>       hr-law-request@lists.best.com

In the body of the message type:
>       subscribe


# General Interest


## 1996 U.K. Budget Materials
**http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pub/html/budget.html**

Late every November the Chancellor of the Exchequer presents a major budget address to the United Kingdom Parliament that "reviews the nation's economic performance, announces the Government's plans for public spending for the coming year, and explains how the Government proposes to raise revenue to cover its spending, and what changes it plans to make to the tax system." The HM Treasury web site contains the speech and the *Financial Statement and Budget Report* (Budget Red Book), which summarizes the budget, contains economic forecasts, and analyzes public finances, among other topics. The site also offers a snapshot view of budget information, several government news releases containing budget information, and information on the 1995 and 1994 budgets. [JS]


## Mars Pathfinder
**http://mpfwww.jpl.nasa.gov/**
Text Only:
**http://mpfwww.jpl.nasa.gov/mpf/alltext.html**

Mars Pathfinder, "one of the first NASA Discovery class missions," is slated to launch the week of December 2, 1996, with the goal of landing "a single vehicle with a microrover (Sojourner) and several instruments on the surface of Mars in 1997." At the NASA Pathfinder website, interested Internauts will be able to follow the flight and landing (scheduled for July 1997). In addition, the site contains information about mission objectives, images of Mars (including images of possible Pathfinder landing sites), information about the Sojourner Rover that will actually explore the planet, and a downloadable cutout model of Pathfinder for construction (under Education and Outreach—very large image files). [JS]


## The American Presidential Election—Encyclopedia Britannica    [.wav]
**http://www.eb.com:180/elections/**

Encyclopedia Britannica has made a vast array of information about American presidential elections available at its web site. The site can be browsed by election, president, vice-president, the electoral process, and presidential documents (nearly 140, including 7 sound files). Text articles are taken from the encyclopedia, and there are many cross-referenced hypertext topics within these articles. But the highlights of the site are electoral maps of each election and memorabilia that includes over 45 pins, cards, and ribbons. Since the site permits a free peek into the fee-based online

encyclopedia, it is, in a sense, a subtle advertisement. That, however, in no way diminishes the usefulness of the site, which is an excellent introduction to American history in general, as well as American political history in particular. [JS]

## VIBES—Virtual International Business and Economics Sources
**http://www.uncc.edu/lis/library/using/services/reference/intbus/vibehome.htm**

Individuals learning to do business on the Internet will no doubt want to take advantage of the international reach of the global network, and VIBES can help. This well organized pointers page contains links to full-text files (in English), statistical tables, and graphs on topics related to international business. The sites are organized into three major categories: comprehensive sites, which are not restricted to a single nation or region; regional (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern/Western Europe, Latin America, Middle East, and NAFTA); and national, organized alphabetically. Most entries indicate the source of the information, and some offer a very concise statement of the scope of the data available. The site is maintained by Jeanie M. Welch, Reference Unit Head and International Business Subject Specialist at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and the 1996 Dun & Bradstreet Online Champion of the Year. [ML]

## The Medical Tribune Online Edition
**http://www.medtrib.com/**

The Medical Tribune, provided by Jobson Publishing, has been issued 21 times a year for over 36 years, and now comes to the web. Aimed at physicians in family practice, each issue offers articles that, while research-based, are written so that non-professionals can make use of the information. In addition to the feature articles and physician forums, users will appreciate the MD CyberGuide, which provides fully annotated pointers to medical information elsewhere on the Internet; the annotations describe not only what each site offers, but how the resource might be useful to both doctors and patients, all written in a critical yet engaging style. The Medical Guide also contributes content to "Your Health Daily," a publication of the New York Times Syndicate directed toward health care consumers (discussed in the January 5, 1996 Scout Report). [ML]

## ReelViews
**http://www.cybernex.net/~berardin/**

Provided by James Berardinelli, ReelViews is an impressive film review site that contains, at present, nearly 1,000 reviews. Berardinelli, an electrical engineer by trade, writes reviews because he "enjoys doing it," and his avocation is the Net's gain. Reviews are available alphabetically and by rating (a 1-10 scale), mostly from 1993-6. They are well written, opinionated, and contain basic descriptive information (cast, rating, and film aspect ratio when available). In addition, there is a weekly commentary on various topics. ReelViews is an example of an individual, a beloved hobby, and a great service provided. [JS]

## Generations Mailing List

Generations discusses how the US has cyclic generational cultures, of which GenX and Boomers are the current flavors of Reactives (e.g. Truman, Carnegie, Mark Twain, George Washington) and Idealists (e.g. Thoreau, Ben Franklin). It discusses how those cultures and their interactions impact(ed) real events and influence(d) ideas. [JS]
To subscribe send email to:
      generations-request@lists.handmadesw.com
In the body of the message type:
      subscribe

# Net Tools

## Year2000 Information Network
**http://web.idirect.com/~mbsprog/**

The Year2000 Information Report, sponsored by the Year2000 Information Network, offers several articles discussing how IS managers can deal with the hardware and software bugs that will be revealed by the coming of the next millennium. A large number of the programs currently in use for payroll and other important applications use only two digits to represent a year; these programs will interpret the year 2001 as 1901. The site also includes links to other related sites and email lists. If you are responsible for mission-critical information systems, you should be aware of these problems, and the Year2000 Information Network site is a good place to start. [PJD]

## *Javaworld*
**http://www.javaworld.com/**

*JavaWorld*, a printed publication with a corresponding web site, is an excellent source of information for people interested in the Java programming language and related Internet news. The web site has three major sections: Nuts & Bolts, containing programming tips and techniques as well as other information of interest to Java programmers; News & Views, aimed at people interested in implementing Java; and Resources, offering a guide to Java-related stocks, applets, information on Java-related events and courses, source code, and links to other Java sites. [PJD]

## Network Newsletters Mailing List

Net Scout's Gleason Sackman is legendary for his moderation of the Net-Happenings mailing list, one of Net Scout's major services to the Internet community. He also moderates a less well known but very informative list, Network Newsletters. This list, usually distributed several times a week, contains the contents of over 20 Net-based newsletters, including Washington Ed. Net Briefs, Report Card (an update on America's education reform efforts), Seidman's Online Insider, Edupage, NBNews Daily Electronic Journal, the Mecklermedia Letter, InfoBits (Institute for Academic Technology Information), and Tech Talk's Hot News, among others. If you can't keep track of all your

email subscriptions, and would like to stay up to date on Net developments, Network Newsletters is for you. [JS]

To subscribe send email to:

LISTSERV@LISTSERV.NODAK.EDU

In the body of the message type:

subscribe newsltr yourfirstname yourlastname

# Scout Report Information

## Subscribing to the Scout Report

**Send email to:**

listserv@internic.net

**In the body of the message type:**

info scout-report

**Or visit our web site and subscribe using a web form:**

http://rs.internic.net/cgi-bin/lwgate/SCOUT-REPORT/

http://rs.internic.net/cgi-bin/lwgate/SCOUT-REPORT-HTML/

## The Scout Report Online

**The Scout Report's Web page:**

http://www.cs.wisc.edu/scout/report/

http://wwwscout.cs.wisc.edu/scout/report/

http://rs.internic.net/scout/report/

**Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) versions of the Scout Report:**

http://www.cs.wisc.edu/scout/report/pdf/

http://wwwscout.cs.wisc.edu/scout/report/pdf/

**FTP:**

ftp://rs.internic.net/scout/

## The Net Scout Team

Susan Calcari, Project Director

Jack Solock, Editor and Internet Librarian

Amy Wells, Internet Librarian

Peter Devries, Internet Tools Specialist

Eric Hazen, Internet Media Specialist

Matthew Livesey, Production Editor