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Webworthy-Unique and Interesting Websites

Pamela M. Rose  
*Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo*, pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu

Sandra K. Paul  
*SKP Associates*, Sandy@SKPAssoc.com

Albert Simmonds  
*SKP Associates*, awsimmo@ibm.net

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Webworthy

Column Editor: Pamela M. Rose (Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo, 3435 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14214-3002 ph: 716-829-2408) <pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu>

Web sites selected for broad appeal, depth of information, and ease of access. Sites are organized by broad subject area and are visited just prior to publication. Please let the editor know of any sites that are not accessible. Comments and suggestions welcome. Unless otherwise noted in square brackets following the description, Internet addresses were published in Science, NetWatch column edited by Jocelyn Kaiser.

Alternative Medicine

If you’re confused about complementary and alternative medicine, you’re not alone. With increasing numbers of patients using alternative therapies, the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), part of the National Institutes of Health, provides guidelines for consumers on criteria for assessing the safety of a particular therapy and locating a practitioner in your area, and offers guidelines and grant application information for investigators in this area. The site also links to research databases, including the CAM Citation Index (CCI), derived from Medline. http://nccam.nih.gov/nccam/

Bonnie Snow clearly defines what is important in evaluating Websites, and applies that acumen to rating sites on alternative medicine. In this article which appeared in DATABASE, August 1998, she evaluates resources accessible solely through the Internet and provided free-of-charge. “Internet Sources of Information on Alternative Medicine” clearly defines the author’s criteria and philosophy, and provides a no-nonsense guide. Ratings range from “no rating” to 4 stars. As she notes in the beginning, “authority is automatically suspect, and humility definitely misplaced, in the context of scientific data.” http://www.onlinenc.com/database/D81998/snow8.html.

Animals

The World Animal Net includes the World Animal Net Directory, the “world’s largest database of animal protection societies - with over 10,000 listings, including more than 3,000 links to Web Sites” available on line or in print, a Resources page with background information on cosmetic testing, anti-fur and animal protection laws, e-mail lists, and related links. Search topics include anti-vivisection, fur, farm animals, animals in entertainment, and genetic engineering. You can also choose areas geographically, see an extensive list of vegetarian societies. http://worldanimal.net/

Music

Do you have perfect pitch? Also known as absolute pitch, the subject fascinated Richard Bedingfield, now a business administration student at the U. of Michigan, who has played piano since he was 5 years old. While still in high school, Richard was particularly interested in “the physical way in which the human brain could detect and remember” absolute musical tones, and why this ability is found only in a small percentage of people. The result of his research is the “‘home’ of perfect pitch on the Internet.” Here visitors can link to research results; learn about Bruce Koerner’s Etae (D) language which is designed to allow musical instruments the opportunity to speak words through combinations of pitches; find a list of famous people with perfect pitch; learn if genetics plays a role; or download ListenUp 3.0 software which improves pitch listening skills. http://www.provide.net/~bfield/abs_pitch.html.