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Wandering the Web — Cooking and Blogging

Column Editor: **Jack G. Montgomery** (Western Kentucky University) <jack.montgomery@wku.edu>

What's Cooking on the Web

by **Dan Forrest** (Access Services Coordinator, Western Kentucky Univ. Libraries)

For librarians faced with questions about recipes and cooking, the Internet has become the world's biggest recipe box. Many times a patron will know an ingredient or two and perhaps how a dish is prepared, but without more to go on, a long search of the library's cookbook is the result. All the recipe sites profiled here have some facility for keyword searching, and most have a variety of other search methods (such as course, preparation method, geographic region, and complexity) and special features.

General Recipe Sites

Chef2Chef recipes — <http://recipes.chef2chef.net/> is one of the largest recipe sites on the net, with 280,000 recipes. This site also contains much of interest to cooks: links to cooking schools, a large section of kitchen supplies, and even a section on culinary travel.

Recipecenter.com — <http://www.recipecenter.com> is a commercial site, and contains over 100,000. In addition to recipes by cuisine, course, type of preparation, and occasion/season, this site may also be searched by diet (e.g., diabetic). It also includes games and info on cooking for/with kids, and an ask a chef feature. (Parts of the site require login.)

Recipe Archives — <http://recipes2.alastra.com/> has 37,000 recipes mostly collected from a recipes newsgroup. About 10% of the database is searchable without logging into the archive. Recipes may be found by cuisine, course, and ingredient, among other categories.

Allrecipes — <http://www.allrecipes.com/> has the ability to scale its over 25,000 recipes from 1 to 300 servings. A meal of the day, a guide to ingredient equivalents, and links to brand recipes are other features. A meal planner and personal recipe box require login.

Food Network: Recipes — <http://www.foodtv.com/food/recipes> has 25,000+ recipes, a food encyclopedia, and a fat/calorie calculator. This site also contains demos for some of the recipes. In addition to the usual search categories, recipes on this site can be found by which Food Network chef cooked them.

RecipeSource — <http://www.recipe-source.com/> divides its over 20,000 recipes by region/ cuisine and type of dish. These categories are further divided by ingredient and preparation method.

Epicurious — <http://eat.epicurious.com/recipes/> is produced by the publisher of *Gourmet* and *Bon Appetit* magazines and contains 16,000+ recipes, many from the above titles. The site also includes a food dictionary, etiquette guide, and a guide to kitchen gear.

Cooks Recipes — <http://www.cooks-recipes.com/> has food substitution and equivalent guides and many other pages of tips to complement its over 10,000 recipes.

Foodgeeks.com — <http://www.foodgeeks.com> has over 6,500 rated recipes. The recipes are also scalable, and measurements can be converted from metric to Imperial.

Specific Foods Sites

There are many sites on the Internet that are more limited in scope than the ones listed above, but they have much to offer the cook interested in a particular cuisine or food.

New Orleans Cuisine — <http://www.gatewayno.com/cuisine/cuisine.html> has over 500 recipes, mostly Creole and Cajun, but there are others from the many groups who call the "Big Easy" home. Also included are pages on such essentials as making a roux and blackening things.

Tarladalal.com — <http://www.tarladalal.com/> is the Website of the best-selling Indian cookbook writer. The recipes are searchable by ingredient, region, course, among other subjects. The site also has sections on cooking with kids and for beginners. Registration is required for full access. There are links to help the cook locate hard-to-find ingredients.

Food producers' associations often have Websites with many varied recipes that feature their particular products. Some good examples are:

<http://www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com> — Cattleman's Beef Board
http://www.potatohelp.com/recipes/feature_recipe.asp — US Potato Board
<http://www.usapple.org/consumers/recipes/index.shtml> — US Apple Association

Other Sites of Interest

The USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion Website — <http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/> contains much useful information on diet and nutrition in addition to its famous food pyramid. There are also food plans, tips for healthy eating, and a guide to food nutrient content.

KitchenMath.com — <http://www.kitchenmath.com/> is just what its name suggests. Enter any amount into a particular measure, and this site will tell you its equivalent in nine other units of measure (e.g., 1 cup = 1/2 pint = 16 tablespoons).

The Gallery of Regrettable Food — <http://www.lileks.com/institute/gallery/index.html> consists of illustrations and excerpts from cookbooks of days gone by. The most inexperienced of cooks will draw confidence from a comparison of their maiden efforts to the illustrations from actual cookbooks of yesteryear. Prepare yourself for the "Unbearable Sadness of Vegetables" and "The Decline and Fall of Western Civilization as seen through the medium of Jell-O."

Something Blogging This Way Comes....

by **Roxanne Myers Spencer** (Coordinator, Educational Resources Center, Western Kentucky University)

Blog (or Web log) — A Web-based journal of short, dated entries in reverse chronological order. Most blogs focus on one subject area and are updated daily. Entries typically consist of links to external Web pages with summaries of or commentary on the content.

— from **OCLC's 2003 Environmental Scan Website**
<http://www.oclc.org/membership/scan/appendices/glossary.htm>

About Blogs and Blogging....

OJR: Online Journalism Review (USC Annenberg) — http://www.ojr.org/ojr/page_one/index.php. "Blogging as a form of Journalism" (part 1), <http://www.ojr.org/ojr/workplace/1017958873.php> and "Blogging as

New Form of News" (part 2), <http://www.ojr.org/ojr/lasica/1019165278.php>. Both articles are by **J. D. Lasica**. These two online articles describe the potential and existing use of blogs as vehicles for disseminating amateur and professional news stories and editorials.

Lasica predicts, in part one, "While no one is really sure where this is all heading, my hunch is that blogging represents Ground Zero of the personal Webcasting revolution." **Lasica** goes on to say that in some ways, blogs are the "anti-newspaper," citing the differences between professionally edited journalism and the often impassioned, individualistic reactions to world events described in personal news blogs.

Rebecca's Pocket — <http://www.rebecca-blood.net/>. Maintained since April 1999, **Rebecca's Pocket** is an informative, often wry, Website that includes pages and pages of links, her Weblog, and useful articles on the evolution of the Internet. Novices to the world of blogging will find her article "Weblogs: A History and Perspective" (http://www.rebecca-blood.net/essays/weblog_history.html), an

continued on page 14

Wandering the Web from page 12

excellent introduction. Although written in 2000, it contains interesting information about the rise of the blogging phenomenon. **Perseus Publishing** issued her *Weblog Handbook*, an excellent starter kit for the world of blogging (details on the handbook at <http://www.rebecca.blood.net/handbook/index.html>).

Adam's Smile Zone — <http://www.smilezone.com/blogs/>. "Everything you wanted to know about..." includes a section called "Blogging Basics: What Is a Blog and Why Should I Care?" This page lists several attempts at describing blogging, but goes on to suggest that "no one can be told what blogging is. You have to 'see it for yourself.'" Reasons for starting a blog are convincing: Sharing Knowledge, Connecting and Collaborating with Others, Providing a Creative Outlet for Yourself, and Improving Your Business-Related Communications. (Of course, one cannot resist asking the question, at the risk of rampant Luddite-ism, "Whatever did we do before all this technology?") Worthwhile site for first-time blog exploration.

100+ Stories on Blogging — http://lisnews.com/blogging_stories.html. Although no longer active, this site features a long list of links to blog press and prose. Site hangs off the **Library and Information Science News** (<http://lisnews.com/>) Website. Of note among the dozens of links are: "Indecent Exposures and Passions on the Web," from **Computer Bits** (<http://www.computerbits.com/archive/2002/0200/blogs.html>), with the caveat (which some might quibble with) that "Whatever a blog is, it's not simply an online journal or diary or list of links, although some bear more than a passing resemblance;" "Blogonomics: Making a Living from Blogging," from **PressFlex** (http://www.pressflex.com/news/fullstory.php/aid/54/Blogonomics:_making_a_living_from_blogging.html), which explores the myths, predictions, and off-track betting on the future of blogs and their impact on "old media" and potential for becoming cash cows for savvy online business entrepreneurs.

Weblogs Compendium — <http://www.lights.com/weblogs/index.html>. A good place to start to find out about the world of blogging, with information on tools, directories, definitions, and online discussions; the technology of blogging, such as information RSS technology, and other resources. The "Definitions" link includes articles that attempt to describe the purpose, impact, and functioning of blogs. Check out **Jorn Barger's** 1999 "Weblog resources FAQ" (<http://www.robotwisdom.com/weblogs/index.html>), or **Dave Winer's** introduction to blogs, "What Are Weblogs?" (<http://www.userland.com/whatAreWeblogs/>). Oh, interested in creating your own blog? Want the cheapie free version (perfectly adequate) or looking for something with all kinds of bells and whistles—interactive, tracking, mp3 files, photos, and animation? Check out the **Compendium's** blog hosting list (<http://www.lights.com/weblogs/hosting.html>).

The Blogging Glossary — <http://www.samizdata.net/blog/glossary.html>. This site is a compilation of terms coined by various seasoned

bloggers, which the **Blogging Glossary Editor-Gods** have deemed worth presenting to the rest of us peons. Did you know, for example, that a *blawg* is "A Web log written by lawyers and/or concerned primarily with legal affairs," or that to *fisk* is "To deconstruct an article on a point by point basis in a highly critical manner. Derived from the name of journalist **Robert Fisk**, a frequent target of such critical articles in the blogosphere (qv)?" Admittedly not an exhaustive resource, the Editor-Gods also confess that many of the terms defined, though in use, are often whimsical. All the better to blog with, my dears!

The Weblog Review (TWR) — <http://www.theweblogreview.com/>. **Brent Todd** wanted to find a way to help folks who are interested in blogs but are tired of reading the many really bad blogs out there. So, after a process of trial and error, as with most useful things, he developed **TWR**, where volunteers preview and review the good, the bad, and the just plain dumb-ugly. Blogs have weird names, some of which are descriptive, like "A Constant Stream of Useless Information," (<http://toottert.blogspot.com/>) which, says **TWR**, lives up to its name, despite a clean design and too-cute bubblebath-à-deux photo; and others, such as "eternal autumn" (<http://www.fly-trap.net/neko/main.html>), which, while not readily clear what the blog is about, nevertheless features nice graphics and probably more than you ever wanted to know about the blogger—but, wait, isn't that the point?

Other Interesting, Random Blogs

The Doc Searls Weblog — <http://doc.weblogs.com/>. Called "one of the deep thinkers in the blog movement" by **J. D. Lasica** (see **OJR: Online Journalism Review** above), **Doc Searls** is a writer and speaker on the interfaces of business and technology. Senior editor for *Linux Journal* and co-author of *The Cluetrain Manifesto: The End of Business as Usual*, this chockablock blog touches upon everything you ever wanted to know about developments in Web technology.

Instapundit — <http://www.instapundit.com/>. Written by the prolific and self-confessed "compulsive writer" **Glenn Reynolds**, **University of Tennessee** law professor. **Reynolds** himself admits, in his FAQ page (http://www.instapundit.com/faq_archives/001220.html), that "...there's very little independent factual reportage on **InstaPundit**..." In fact, he describes his concept of this enormously popular blog pretty well, "Think of **InstaPundit** as being like a card catalog in a library—it steers you to other things, mostly, and the fact that something is in the card catalog doesn't make it true." He also cautions readers to take the posts as a starting point for their own research if the topic interests them. **Reynolds** make no claim to posting the truth, but he will correct factual errors if

notified. One of the better-known and most popular information blogs, its popularity spread by word of...blog.... Readers blogged or emailed other readers, and finally the "Best of" blog collectors, such as **Blogspotting** (<http://groups.msn.com/Blogspotting/bestofblogs.msnw>).

Living in Europe — <http://www.livingineurope.net>. Get the skinny on what it's like to...live in Europe...! Part of an evolving network called **Living on the Planet** (<http://www.livingontheplanet.com/>), this blog site uses the vastly popular RSS syndication feeds (a system for sharing content on blogs and other frequently updated Web content). Content on **Living in Europe** is determined by the various contributors—the mission is to provide varied, original, creative, useful, and by its very nature as a blogsite, frequently updated information to curious readers. Whether it's business and technology, arts and culture, or more personal blogs on travel and photo collections, Europhiles can get insight into what it's like to live across the pond. Other, similar blogsites are **Living in Australia** (<http://www.livinginaustralia.net/>), **Living in China** (<http://www.livinginchina.com/>), **Living in Latin America** (<http://www.livinginlatinamerica.com/>), and **Living in India** (<http://www.livinginindia.com/>).

Bon Desktop Voyage!

Snail (or Snail's Trail) — <http://www.zip.com.au/~vvsnaill/>. This Sydney librarian mines library and information knowledge links with tantalizingly sparing detail—a minimalist blog with a treasure-trove of links to blogging, science-fiction-fantasy, social commentary, meme research, tired pop TV shows from the 1970s, and other fancy-tickling gems collected from October 2002 and ongoing.

kottke.org: undesign — <http://www.kottke.org/index.html> — **Jason Kottke's** blog page, **kottke.org**, was launched in March 1998, to give this Web designer a forum to discuss just about anything, but particularly, Web technology, media, network science, and rip/mix/burn culture, uh, whatever that is. Also a type designer, in 1999, **Jason** created the Silkscreen typeface (<http://www.kottke.org/plus/type/silkscreen/index.html>), "...a small font perfect for Web graphics" and virtually gave it to the world, where it has been used by the likes of **Adobe**, **Volvo**, **Britney Spears**, and **MTV** for Web projects. By the time you read **Kottke's** April 4, 2004, post on **Google** (<http://www.kottke.org/04/04/google-operating-system>), it will be old news—another thing old blog posts and newspapers have in common, but with less clutter in the garage and at the recycling plant—but it makes for fascinating reading about this Web info powerhouse.

Happy Blogging!

Rumors from page 10

the rescue. But they still cost money and need money for processing. How does a library continue to provide books to over 70,000 citizens without librarians, administrative staff or even a building? That's the problem **Barbara Shapiro**, Director of

buy books for the library. Meanwhile, we have eBooks that are coming to

the Cherry Hill Public Library encountered as construction of a new 71,000 sq. ft facility went underway in August. **Barbara** decided to follow in the footsteps of **Las Vegas Public Library** and **Burlington County Library** and purchase digital content at a Website where patrons could browse, checkout, and download popular fiction and reference materials in the meantime. <http://cherryhill.lib.overdrive.com/>

continued on page 22