Wandering the Web -- Laissez Les Bons Souris Roulez -- A GUIDE TO LOUISIANA WEBSITES

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A GUIDE TO LOUISIANA WEBSITES

by Dan Forrest (Coordinator, Access Services, Western Kentucky University)

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Louisiana these days is most familiar to Americans as the site of the Hurricane Katrina disaster, but there is a lot more to the Bayou State. That is why I sought out Dan Forrest, a Louisiana native. Some of you may remember his column about online cookbooks. In this issue of “Wandering the Web,” Dan researched and found excellent Websites on Louisiana food, art, music, and culture as well as truly unique wildlife and environment that make Louisiana a national treasure. These Websites will help your patrons discover more about this state, from jazz and voodoo in the French Quarter to the marshes and bayous of Cajun country, it’s all here. Allons-y!

If you’re working on a homework assignment, planning a vacation, looking for a good place to retire, setting a new business, or scouting a film location, the place to start is http://www.louisiana.gov. The state’s official Website includes all this plus the standard information on state agencies and statistics.

Readers of the Drudge Report will find the look of The Dead Pelican (http://www.thedeadpelican.com) familiar, and anyone interested in keeping up with the contact sport that is Louisiana politics will appreciate this collection of the day’s headlines from around the state. Also included are links to print, broadcast, and Internet media from around the state.

Encyclopedia Louisiana (http://www.enlou.com) has many maps and historic documents about Louisiana, as well as a timeline and biographies of politicians and other notables from the state.

Louisiana has a rich literary tradition. Explore it at the Louisiana Writers Directory (http://www2.state.lib.la.us/cjfb/), a database containing information on over 300 living Louisiana authors. The Louisiana Authors Index (http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/la/) is a complementary database featuring over 1,500 deceased Louisiana writers.

The Encyclopedia of Cajun Culture (http://www.cajunculture.com) is an A to Z listing of topics about all things Cajun assembled by a husband and wife team from New Iberia. The Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism (http://www.cet.cajunculture.com) at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette maintains an archive of Louisiana folk culture as well as many links to resources for the traveler interested in the land and people of Louisiana.

Jean Lafitte National Park (http://www.nps.gov/jela) stretches from the site of the Battle of New Orleans in Chalmette to the Liberty Theater in Eunice (live Cajun music every Saturday at 6). The park’s Website contains a calendar of events, pages for children, and a wealth of information about the history, culture, and wildlife of south Louisiana.

Part of what makes Louisiana so special is the combination of cultures that have gone into it. Voodoo is a mixture of the Catholicism of the French and Spanish colonists with the traditional beliefs of the African people who were transported to the New World. The Voodoo Spiritual Temple (http://www.voodoospiritualtemple.org) has a site with information on the temple and the history of voodoo in New Orleans. The Times-Picayune’s Haunted New Orleans page (http://nola.com/haunted) also discusses voodoo as well as ghost stories and information on the famous cemeteries of New Orleans.

The Jazz Roots page (http://www.jazz.com) was created by Tom Morgan, who also hosts a jazz radio show in New Orleans. Articles on the history and development of jazz, biographies, links, photos, and reviews are found on this site. The Louisiana Music Archive and Artist Directory (http://www.satchmo.com) contains news about Louisiana music and musicians such as upcoming concerts and cd releases as well as online radio stations, links, and much more. To satisfy your desire for Louisiana music, the Louisiana Music Factory (http://www.louisianamusicfactory.com) is the source for everything from jazz to swamp pop to zydeco. They also have a broad range of books, videos, and posters.

The only thing more important to Louisiana expatriates than the music is the food. New Orleans turned Los Angeles chef Chuck Taggart’s Gumbo Pages (http://www.gumbopages.com) is full of recipes and talk about the food of Louisiana. The links for ordering Louisiana foodstuffs are especially useful. Taggart is also the compiler of a box set of New Orleans music so there is plenty of info for music lovers on the site as well.

Tom Fitzmorris is the dean of New Orleans food writers, and his site The New Orleans Menu (http://www.nomenu.com) is full of restaurant reviews and recipes. As an essential service for people planning a trip to New Orleans, he also maintains a complete list of restaurants that have reopened since Katrina. Subscribers to the site get even more info, as well as access to the complete NO/Menu archive.

The McIlhenny family of Avery Island has been making Tabasco sauce for over a hundred years. Their Website (http://www.tabasco.com) contains many recipes and a history of the company and Avery Island (a salt dome turned bird sanctuary and garden) as well as the company online store. A gallon jug of Tabasco sauce is the perfect gift for the hard-to-shop-for foodie in your life.

No discussion of Louisiana these days would be complete without a mention of Katrina and the other hurricanes that have struck the state and region over the years. The National Weather Service’s National Hurricane Center (http://www.nhc.noaa.gov) has an extensive history section in addition to information on current conditions in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean. The Center’s site also offers tips on hurricane preparedness and thorough explanations of meteorological terms and methods.

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priorities are. In the case of Yale, these engagement efforts have included surveys, focus groups, and user forums. Their feedback has been of the decidedly “1.0” variety. A recent survey of 1,000+ faculty indicated that the highest faculty priorities included (1) easier electronic access to scholarly materials for themselves and their students, and (2) better search tools to locate materials across all of Yale’s holdings and collections, not just electronic and not just in the libraries, but also in museums and other information centers. Of the very least urgency were items such as services to publish faculty preprints and postprints and to understand copyright and rights. The best forms of library innovation, Okerson argued, will come from a deep understanding of what a wide swath of library users want.

Isabella Hinds was the session’s final speaker. She presented a unique perspective on how advances in technology and content delivery are influencing e-learning. By way of background, nine in ten schools now have a course management system (CMS), and