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Bet You Missed It -- Press Clippings -- In the News -- Carefully Selected by Your Crack Team of News Sleuths

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The Citadel

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Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

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Column Editor’s Note: Hey, are you reading this? Your esteemed column editor would like to know what you think! Zip off a quick email to pmrose@buffalo.edu. Does BYM fill your needs? Do you have any suggestions for changes? I’m listening! — PR

ALIVE AND GROWING!
by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

At 500,000 articles and growing, it’s currently the largest encyclopedia on the planet. The controversial online Wikipedia has updated the model for encyclopedia-building from “one smart guy” (e.g., Diderot) to “one for all” — a pure form of open source. An encyclopedia by and for the people, it is written by an army of amateurs guided by two principles: neutrality and good faith. Attempts to corrupt the database are quickly spotted and repaired by one of the many volunteers who monitor the site (average repair time 2.8 minutes!). Critics object to the lack of authoritative vetting of content, but this encyclopedia has what Britannica lacks — it’s growing and responding in a way only possible for sources that are alive.

See — “The Book Stops Here” — Wired 13.03 (March 2005), p. 125-139

HIGHER ED AS A BIZ
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Constantine “Taki” Papadakis, President of Drexel got the faculty in an uproar when he responded to complaints of library budget cuts by telling them he wanted an all digital library. He says he was exaggerating to make a point, but is not about to pursue prestige based on how many library dollars per student Drexel spends.

Coming to Drexel from Bechtel Corp., Taki is part of the new run-a-college-like-a-business trend and wants to dump the 25% of the faculty who are part-timers and replace them with e-Learning.


FOX FROM THE ASHES
by Sandra Beehler (Lewis & Clark College)

From the ruins of Netscape comes the open-source, secure browser Firefox which is cutting an noticeable swath in Microsoft’s IE market share. It appeals to the many users tired of dealing with the viruses, spyware and pop-up ads plaguing IE. Techies like the ease of writing add-ons, and general users like its simplicity and speed. While Microsoft had been putting most of its energies into its next operating system, Longhorn, and virtually ignoring IE, the loss of 5% browser market share in the last 6 months has forced it to return to the browser warfront. This time around, the war is not mano-a-mano (IE v. Netscape), but Microsoft v. thousands of open source programmers behind Firefox’s freeware — and the outcome is far from certain. Firefox had its beginnings in 1998, when a demoralized Netscape released its code — renamed Mozilla — to the world. A 14-year-old in Florida, Blake Ross, began tinkering with the code; he then teamed up with a former Netscape programmer and “forked” the Mozilla code, with the idea of offering a simpler interface that would appeal to the mainstream user. Firefox 1.0 was released in November 2004 and now has over 10 million downloads (I just downloaded it myself).


OLD MEDIA GLOOM
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Wall Street applauded when Tribune Co. acquired rival Times Mirror for $8.3 billion. Then the Internet bubble burst and advertising slumped into its worst mire in decades.

Now the Trib is reeling from non-reading youngsters and ad sale competition from new-media. And of course the Tribune’s Newsday got caught inflating its circulation numbers and $90 million has been set aside to pay for that.


Well, it’s true. The numbers-guy Bob Molyneux <mdata@molyneux.com> has indeed moved. His new address is 6275 University Drive NW, Suite 3113, Huntsville, Alabama 35806-1776. And he is, to quote him directly, “Busy busy.” He also says that after he gets public libraries working, he is moving on to academic libraries. Statistics, that is Bob’s game, in case you don’t remember...

weresiris.com/

Couldn’t believe it! Heard from the truly perfect and flawless Mike Markwith <michael@knet.teldan.com>!! Mike says he’s now officially a member of the “Old FarTes” Club (he turned 60 last week). Here’s some info Mike knows we will find relevant. Exciting services are happening with TDNet! They are the first company to work with OCLC on a pilot project to provide an efficient means of setting and maintaining holdings in OCLC WorldCat for electronic resources, including individual e-journals and aggregated databases. Very exciting since OCLC will set and maintain the holdings automatically from the information continued on page 26