

NetVet. Access: <http://netvet.wustl.edu>.

NetVet, a rapidly expanding World Wide Web (WWW) server, originates from and is provided courtesy of Ken Boschert at Washington University's Division of Comparative Medicine (KEN@WUDCM.WUSTLEDU). NetVet was developed in early 1993 from the Electronic Zoo (E-Zoo), a gopher file which began in 1992 as a textual listing of veterinary and animal-related computer resources. In mid-1993 Boschert turned E-Zoo into a simultaneous WWW site. E-Zoo now includes many of the resources referred to in its text, with pointers to other major Internet resources in veterinary medicine and related fields, as well as animal-related WWW and gopher sites, ftp archives, telnet sites, and electronic publications.

NetVet, consisting of textual and graphical veterinary and animal resources, is thorough in scope, well organized in structure, and informative in content. It currently provides access to most of the Net's resources related to the veterinary medical profession. It also provides an expansive collection of information about most animal species. In addition to homing the E-Zoo, NetVet provides pointers to colleges, publications, and laws and regulations, and to organizations, including the American Veterinary Medical Association's Network of Animal Health, the Veterinary Information Network, and the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science. NetVet also serves as the gopher and WWW home for the National Agricultural Library's Animal Welfare Information Center, the archive site for a multitude of veterinary and animal-related Net mailing lists. Finally, NetVet is the gopher and Web home for the topic of veterinary informatics and general information about Washington University's Division of Comparative Medicine.

Part of NetVet's appeal is that it provides useful information to veterinarians and related health professionals, as well as to animal lay-

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Internet Reviews

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persons and hobbyists. Through NetVet, one can find professional information such as the Veterinarian's Oath, scientific publications, and recreational information such as David Letterman's "Top 10 Signs You've Gone to a Bad Veterinarian." Some files, such as the Equestrian Web Pages of horse resources, might interest the professional and hobbyist alike. Through NetVet's virtual library, Net surfers may

use interactive graphics capabilities to link to Jose Perez's oil painting "The Veterinarian," from the National Library of Medicine's collection. They may click through the veterinary images file to view the latest in computer-assisted instruction. The NetVet Web also allows linkage to related areas of the WWW virtual library, such as those for agriculture, bioscience, biotechnology, and medicine. Finally, Net surfers may browse the animal resources on the E-Zoo, including its excellent animal images collection.—*Tamera P. Lee, Auburn University: Tammylee@lib.auburn.edu*

NASA Spacelink. Access: <http://spacelink.msfc.nasa.gov> or telnet or gopher to: spacelink.msfc.nasa.gov.

Provided by NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, Spacelink is an exceedingly rich source of space-related information in many forms. Since its inception in 1988, Spacelink has grown in direct proportion with the explosive interest in and use of the Internet. Today direct dial is supported, as is access via telnet, gopher, ftp, and the World Wide Web.

NASA Spacelink's content reflects its mission: to help teachers, faculty, and students reach the national education goals as outlined by the president and the NASA Strategic Plan for Education. Though primarily space oriented, Spacelink's offerings reflect its interdisciplinary charge. Available through the system are text files, software, and imagery. Subjects covered include science, math, engineering, and technology education, as well as lesson plans, historical information related to the space program,

current status reports on NASA projects, NASA news releases, and various publications with educational or research relevance. Spacelink may be used by educators to create space- or science-oriented lesson plans, by those researching NASA's history or current programs, or by students in support of papers, projects, or curiosity.

Given particular coverage are the Space Shuttle program and the nascent International Space Station. Activities concerning these are exhaustively documented, and photographs from shuttle missions are usually available before the spacecraft returns to Earth. Also available are astronomical images from the Hubble Space Telescope and NASA planetary probes.

Originally configured as a direct-dial access system, Spacelink still offers this option to sites without Internet access. Schools that have no link to the Internet or no access to commercial online services may contact Spacelink by mail, on official letterhead, to arrange for special services. For more information, contact Flint Wild, NASA Spacelink Administrator, Educational Programs Office, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, AL 35812.—*Kurt W. Wagner, William Paterson College of New Jersey; wagner_k@wpc.wilpaterson.edu*

Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man.

Access: <http://gdbwww.gdb.org> or gopher.gdb.org (under 'Search Databases at Hopkins').

The explosive growth of molecular biology has increased research in and knowledge of genetic diseases, often identifying the specific chromosomal location of genes and holding out hope of possible treatment for some inherited afflictions. The standard reference for genetic disease is *Mendelian Inheritance in Man* (edited by Victor McKusick and published by Johns Hopkins Press), now in its 11th edition. The first edition in 1966 was 344 pages; the 1994 edition is more than 3,000 pages in two hefty volumes. Each entry includes a concise description of the discovery history of the particular genetic disease, extensive references to the research literature, and a clinical synopsis to aid in diagnosis. *Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man* (OMIM) is the electronic version, under active development and revision with daily updates as new literature ap-

pears. OMIM is accessible via WWW and gopher. The WWW version offers a forms-based search interface, incorporates a growing array of multimedia additions (images, video, and sound files in some entries), and permits links to chromosome maps from the Genome Data Base (GDB). In the WWW version entries appear as hypertext with links to related entries and to bibliographic citations. The gopher version is limited to keyword searching.

OMIM is an essential tool for medical and genetic research, but it has a more general utility as an example of the Web's evolving potentials as an information delivery medium. Reference librarians and Internet trainers who have no particular interest in genetic diseases can use OMIM as a means to answer questions and illustrate searching strategies in indexed databases. A few examples will make this clear.

A query by keyword, by author's name, or by specific OMIM heading returns a relevance-ranked list of entries in which the search term appears. Boolean searching and wild-card matching are supported. Try: **jumping Frenchman** in the title field [a favorite example, readily understood by lay audiences]; **Wallace and D.** in references field [retrieves 69 entries with references to articles by D. C. Wallace, a leader in mitochondrial DNA research]; **hepatomegaly** in clinical synopsis field [entries where enlarged liver is a symptom—an example of a possible diagnostic use].

If you have a graphic browser with sound and video capability these examples indicate OMIM's future development: **143100** in OMIM number field [Huntington Disease, with several .mpg video clips]; **"cri-du-chat"** in title field [contains a .gif image and .au sound file].

OMIM is a marvelous example of the possibilities for timely distribution of complex information.—*Hugh Blackmer, Washington and Lee University; blackmer.h@wlu.edu* ■



The logo for NetVet on the World Wide Web.