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# VITAL News

Virginia Initiative for Technology and Administrative Leadership



*From Karen's Email Files*

## News, Views, and Resources

*Now that the summer training season is over and the holiday lull is upon me, I've had time to sort through several email lists I belong to. I've discovered some real gems that I think you'll find of interest. In addition, I've included the source of each item as you might be interested in subscribing to several of these listservs. If you're not*

*sure what a listserv is, check out the article entitled "There's Gold in That Inbox." We also give you a few tips for managing your email.*

*In the article "One Thing Leads to Another," I start with one website and see where it leads as I let myself get lost in the web.*

*Happy Thanksgiving, Karen*

### One Thing Leads to Another: Karen's Web Adventure

SBC's [Blue Web'n Library](#), Blue Web'n, a database of web resources for educators, sends out a weekly update. A recent update featured [edtechNOT.com](#). An archive of all the Blue Web'n updates can be found at [Topica](#).

Jim Forde runs edtechNOT.com. According to his "About Us" page the site was created "to encourage debate on the merits and pit falls of using educational technology in real schools." The site highlights those that Forde calls the "mavens" who include both the techno-enthusiasts as well as the techno-phobes that are part of the national debate on educational technology. In addition, Forde offers links to news and information.

From Forde's site, I took a side trip to Ray Schroeder's [Educational Technology blog](#). Schroeder is with the Office of Technology Enhance Learning (OTEL) at the University of Illinois. The blog provides news, techniques and theories of effective use of technology in

education. The site featured on today's blog (11/12) is [Nick's Mathematical Puzzles](#). Warning: these are not puzzles for the faint-hearted!

According to Ray, the link to Nick's website came from the [Internet Scout Report](#), published by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This report, which has been published weekly since 1994, includes links to news, research and web resources in the areas of math, science, engineering and technology.

In one of the issues of the Scout Report, I found a link to a website offered by the North American Mycological Association designed for [teaching about fungi](#) the included links to lesson plans and other resources. Another part of the site features great [pictures of fungi](#).

So, there you have it: from ed tech mavens to fungi in just four steps. I guess that's why they call it the web.

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# There's Gold in That Inbox

The web can be overwhelming with the amount of information available at your fingertips. You need help filtering that information, and one way to do that is by subscribing to an email listserv that delivers content to your inbox. A listserv is a mailing list that sends the same email to anyone who signs up. Some listservs are also discussion groups that allow anyone who belongs to send messages to the group.

While it is tempting to subscribe to lots of listservs, your inbox can become quickly overloaded. Most email readers allow you to set up rules for filtering email so as a message from a listserv arrives in your Inbox, it is redirected to a folder. Then, when you have some time to read, you can navigate to that folder and view the messages from the listserv. That way, your Inbox is reserved for more immediate emails.

We will be referencing several listservs in this issue. If you would like to see a more complete list, visit [CataList](#), the official database of email listservs. You can search for lists and find out how many users are subscribed to each one.

Many journals, organizations and vendors run their own mailing lists. For instance, Education Week distributes a weekly update that highlights news of interest being featured online that week. To learn more, visit [Education Week on the Web](#). Please note that you will need to create a free account in order to take advantage of this feature.

Interested in more general news? [CNN](#) offers a variety of mailing lists from breaking news alerts to a morning news roundup to reminders of scheduled guests on the different news shows.

Finally, many listservs maintain archives on the web so you can see both how active the list is and what kinds of items get posted before you subscribe.

## USDOE Makes Changes to ERIC

The Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC, offers archives of education-related listservs. For those of you familiar with the excellent resources provided online by ERIC, please note that the service will begin a transition in late December as the U.S. Department of Education works with a new contractor to develop a new model for the ERIC database and services. ERIC clearinghouses' Web sites, including AskERIC, and their toll-free telephone numbers will close on December 19, 2003. As of that date, you will be able to use the <http://www.eric.ed.gov> Web site to search the ERIC database and Calendar of Education-Related Conferences, link to the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) to purchase ERIC full-text documents and to the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility to purchase ERIC tapes and tools.

Many schools link to ERIC resources so they will need to update their links to <http://www.eric.ed.gov>.

## Classroom Connect Sponsors Lists

One of my favorite sources for good quality websites is the Library Hot Five list, published weekly by Classroom Connect. This list features five websites related to one topic. This past week, the topic was geography, in recognition of Geography Awareness Week, which begins November 16. The email included a link to [National Geographic's website](#) about the week-long celebration.

Classroom Connect also offers ten mailing lists for K-12 teachers. Subscriptions are free. Just visit the [Classroom Connect](#) website to subscribe. Each list is archived so you can search through past postings.