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07) Webmaster report

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Topic:

Topic author: rjellison

Subject: 07) Webmaster report

Posted on: 27 Jan 2008 09:13:06

Message:

Apart from minor edits and an occasional news item, no changes have been made to the website. I have not been able to devote the time to make major revisions and all points raised in last year's report remain valid.

I have not produced regular updates to the salt lake bibliography this year. The server where a searchable version was kept is no longer available and the widespread availability of a large number of bibliographic search software and bibliographic indices largely negates the need and/or purpose of a separately-maintained bibliography on salt lakes. I propose and will delete this from the website unless someone else thinks it is worthwhile and wants to take over the task.

The bulletin board (Open Forum) receives little use and as noted last year receives an inordinate amount of persons registering with no legitimate salt lake purpose. Last year, Aharon suggested only dues-paying members be given access and since then, all new registrants must be approved. There were some 4000+ registrants most "sex-- this or that", real estate agents, salespeople of unrelated interests, and various scammers. There were some legitimate posts (see those forums under "Member Forums"), but these were few. To be truly useful, the bulletin board would have to be promoted, restricted, and moderated. I plan to leave it as is for now pending discussion of the society's future.

No progress was made on a photo gallery. In last year's report, I asked for information from Wayne on his ASLO image gallery. I see limited use and utility in this endeavor and ask that a strong advocate take over this task or find a volunteer to do so.

If we want to promote salt lake research, it might be more advantageous to provide images to a gallery that has a wider audience (e.g. ASLO). I do note that SIL has about 3,000 members and no image gallery.

There have been some recent developments by Google that might be worth pursuing. Panoramio (recently acquired by Google) is an image sharing site that posts images that then are accessible to all Google viewers. This is rapidly changing as now over 6 million photos are in the Google Earth Photo Layer. There is much discussion on how to control this flood and retain its usefulness to Google Earth users. You can now also create a file of georeferenced photos that any Google Earth user can click on and display photos maintained at any other site. For instance, ISSLR could have a link on our web site that when clicked on loads Google Earth on the users machine and displays georeferenced photos (as dots) across the globe on which the user can click to see the image, presumably of a salt lake, salt lake researcher, or salt lake organism. I could envision a link prominently displayed on our home page (e.g. Salt Lakes of the World) of this type. This would have the potential to publicize and reach many persons.

At the last meeting the use of the website for posting auxiliary data was discussed. No definite conclusion was reached on this item (see 2007 meeting) and any further consideration requires a volunteer.

In sum, the website fulfills a limited purpose, but that it could be much better. I am not attached

to controlling it and would gladly give most of it over to someone else. However, I would like to keep some of the functionality.

Replies:

Reply author: btimms

Replied on: 27 Jan 2008 11:40:11

Message:

Thanks Bob for your thorough report. Not being a great web user myself, I am not too upset by its shortcomings. I do agree however that when I search for salt lake literature I find Google satisfactory, thus negating a need for our own bibliography. Maintaining a website is a lot of work and is for a dedicated person with loads of time and who loves the technical challenge for its own sake. We apparently do not have such a person in our midst; besides most of us are busy with far more pressing matters directly related to our work. In the meantime I thank you Bob for your effort, limited as it is should we maintain a rip-snorting, knobs and bells website.

Reply author: aoren

Replied on: 27 Jan 2008 11:52:00

Message:

I gladly join Brian in thanking Bob for all the effort he put in the web site.

Aharon

Reply author: shurlbert

Replied on: 27 Jan 2008 16:01:08

Message:

I agree Bob has did a great job setting up the website, as well as creating this forum mechanism, etc. But fast evolution of the internet combined with information overload from increasing numbers of sources, may make our website useful mainly just for maintaining mission statement, lists of our past conferences, and other basic records of the organization?

Reply author: sarosj

Replied on: 30 Jan 2008 13:16:07

Message:

I agree that the bibliography is likely not used much, and that the focus of the website should be kept on highlighting the ISSLR meetings and closely related ones, the news, and the related websites. As for photos, I think a few are great, but I agree that the ASLO website would reach a much wider audience- my lab group has posted some there.

Reply author: mcoleman

Replied on: 30 Jan 2008 15:04:35

Message:

I thought that you had done a rather good job Bob.
I think that the bulletin board could be dropped as there are so many other ways of communicating. Will there still be a point of contact? I am assuming so.
Google links certainly sounds interesting but sounds like a lot of work. It is an area where people may be interested in keeping up to date. I certainly would use it to look at lakes and there location.

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