



From the Vineyard



Issue 10, 2006

Cathy O. Swift - Editor

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From Your Wine Steward – Gerry Hanley

Dear MERLOT Leadership Community,

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving, filled with family, friends, food, and fun. Thank you all for giving so much of your time, talents, insights, and initiative. This Vineyard once again highlights a real strength of MERLOT – YOU.

We continue to grow – we’ve reached 40,000 members in November 2006 and we’re getting over 300 new materials submitted to MERLOT per month. I believe your reach into so many communities to personally share MERLOT is a core reason for our growth.

I’m looking forward to our Midyear Meeting in Atlanta, GA. This meeting begins our yearly cycle of progressive strategic planning to keep MERLOT in step with the needs of faculty, students, librarians, academic technology staff, and a variety of administrators. MERLOT’s ability to serve this complex set of constituents with integrated and inclusive services is our growing strength. One of the major topics of the Midyear Meeting will be aligning MERLOT’s current and future services to your institution’s initiatives and priorities in clear ways. For example, if your campus has an “Academic Transformation” initiative, what are the challenges faced by faculty, department chairs, deans, and provosts to implement the initiative in a timely and successful manner? How can MERLOT help each of these groups overcome these challenges efficiently, effectively, and in ways that are welcome. Through our collective wisdom and experiences, we’ll be mapping the value of MERLOT to higher education which will in turn enable us to

grow our institutional partners and develop services that will immediately and directly serve the needs of higher education.

I wish you all an uneventful end of the semester/quarter and a joyous holiday break. Thanks again for giving!

Gerry



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Update on MERLOT Community



going live very soon)

conference at your institution and with any other professional organizations. We will notify you later about a MIC flyer for you to distribute at your institution(s).

It's not too early to be thinking about the 2007 MERLOT International Conference which will be held August 7-10 in New Orleans. The MERLOT Leadership Community will meet on Tuesday, August 7 beginning at 9 AM. Mark your calendars now. The Call for Papers will soon be posted on the conference website (which will be

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Feature Article

Fire Safety Editorial Board a Reality

The Project Directors officially approved the establishment of the Fire Safety Editorial Board at the PD Council meeting in Ottawa. Fire Safety is the first of the new Workforce Development Initiatives. Members of the Fire Safety Editorial Board include: **JD Brown** (Oklahoma), **Don Beckering** (Minnesota), **Fred Landry** (Louisiana), **Steve Gervais** (Louisiana), and **Bill Goswick** (Oklahoma).

JD Brown, from Oklahoma State University has started working on the Fire Safety Portal, and the Editorial Board will soon begin the peer review of the 130+ materials that have been added to the collection. As more fire trainers become aware of the new portal, we are sure that the collection as well as the membership will continue to grow.



In November, **Phil Moss** (Interim Chancellor of the Oklahoma Board of Regents) and **Cathy Swift** (MERLOT) visited the Fire Protection Publications (FPP)

Department at Oklahoma State. They are responsible for most of the publications used in training fire fighters around the country and around the world. Their publication, *Introduction to Firefighting* has been translated into Spanish, Hebrew, German, and Icelandic.

Pictured to the right are FPP employees Chris Neal, **JD Brown**, Nancy Trench, Cindy Finkle, and **Phil Moss**. The department will be working to post some of their publications to the MERLOT site and also to promote the use of MERLOT materials to many of the firefighting-related professional organizations.



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Editorial Board News

Tennis Anyone?

Recognize anyone in the picture? How about the handsome devil in the back row on the left? Yes, it's our very own **Ray Purdom**, Editor of the Teaching and Technology Editorial Board. Ray and his partner Sherry (in black jacket) won the North Carolina State Senior Mixed Doubles Tourney at their level. They



then played in the Southern Sectional against teams from nine other states. They ended up tied for third out of the 10 states. Congratulations Ray!

MERLOT Ambassadors

William Paquette, Editor of the History Editorial Board, continues to be a great ambassador for MERLOT. His recent accomplishments include:



Presented various MERLOT topics to:

- October 24, 2006, Adjunct History Faculty, Portsmouth Campus, Tidewater Community College.
- October 26, 2006, English Faculty Peer Conference, VCCS, Williamsburg, VA.
- November 16, 2006, New Faculty, VCCS, Glen Allen, VA.
- November 30, 2006, Administration of Justice Faculty Peer Conference, Charlottesville, VA.

Authored

- Fifth Edition of the Instructor's Manual to accompany the textbook *Western Civilization* by Noble et al. published by Houghton Mifflin.

Elected

- Governor of the Virginia Society of Mayflower Descendants, on November 18. He will serve a three-year term.



Laura Franklin (Editor of the World Languages Editorial Board) continues to promote MERLOT. She did a CCID (Community Colleges for International Development) broadcast to 78 Community Colleges and also conducted several MERLOT workshops in Nashville, one to Community Colleges and the other to ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.. Keep "spreadin' the word," Laura!

New Editorial Board Members

A warm MERLOT welcome is extended to two new Editorial Board members from Louisiana:

- **Ralph W. Brown** – University of Louisiana at Monroe, to the History Editorial Board
- **Brian Barton** – Louisiana Tech University, to the Math Editorial Board

Editorial Board Members Awarded



Elizabeth (Beth) Smith, a University of Louisiana at Monroe mathematics instructor and MERLOT Mathematics Editorial Board member, was honored at the Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics/Louisiana Science Teachers Association Joint State Conference, with the 2006 Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics (LATM) Outstanding College Mathematics Teachers Award.

Beth has participated in several grant-funded workshops for in-service/pre-service teachers, given numerous presentations at state, regional, national, and international conferences, presented workshops, and developed several online courses. She is a member of several professional organizations including the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics, the Mathematical Association of America, the International Society for Technology in Education, and Kappa Mu Epsilon. Beth has been an active MERLOT editor and contributor since 2004.

Jim Rutledge, editor-in-chief of the Mathematics Editorial Board, was nominated by the provosts at Technology Award based



St. Petersburg College for the 2007 Instructional Council (ITC) Outstanding Distance Learning Faculty (<http://www.itcnetwork.org/>). In addition, his project-online Liberal Arts math course was nominated for the ITC Outstanding Online and Blended Course Award.

Jim has written a project-based textbook entitled *Math Is Everywhere! Explore and Discover It!* that promotes active learning and makes extensive use of MERLOT resources. He has been with MERLOT since the inception of the Mathematics Editorial Board in 2000.



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Out and About with MERLOT TLT Broadcast



Ray Purdom, Teaching and Technology Editor, and **John Prusch**, Teaching and Technology Board will be presenting, “MERLOT: Teaching with Technology” in conjunction with The TLT Group’s Steve Gilbert. During the workshop, participants will become familiar with the collection of resources and will learn to take full advantage of MERLOT features.



A series of three workshops is scheduled for November 28, December 5, and December 15, all at 3 PM Eastern. This is an excellent opportunity for people to

find out about MERLOT and all it has to offer. MERLOT members receive a substantial discount for these sessions. For further information see <http://www.tltgroup.org/Registration/DescriptionPage/MERLOTWebcast.htm>

MERLOT Roundtables

The 3rd MERLOT Roundtable of the year was held at the 2006 EDUCAUSE meeting in Dallas, Texas. MERLOT staff who attended include **Gerry Hanley, Sorel Reisman, Cathy Swift** and **Regan Caruthers**. We were pleased to welcome Academic Partner representatives:

- University of North Carolina – **Frank Prochaska** and **Karin Steinbrenner**,
- University of Wisconsin – **Ed Meachen** and **Ron Kraemer**

The discussion focused on how MERLOT can help institutions with their strategic initiatives and strategies. The information gained from the Roundtables will help MERLOT set our strategic direction as we go into 2007.

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MERLOT Miscellaneous

Peer Reviewer Success

David Wicks of Seattle Pacific University, the 2006 Volunteer of the Year Award



Winner, recently published a chapter in the book, *Using Wiki in Education*, by Stewart Mader. David's chapter is entitled, "Navigating the Wiki Maze - Using a Wiki Tool Within a Course Management System." David has added the first two chapters, which are free to MERLOT.

(<http://www.merlot.org/merlot/viewMaterial.htm?id=222122>)

Congratulations on your work, David.

University of Michigan News



In the [September 2006 issue of *In the Vineyard*](#), we reported that the University of Michigan brought 11 people to the MERLOT



International Conference, expecting them to attend the Peer Review Training workshop.

Those attendees are now meeting on a monthly basis as the "MERLOT Community of Practice." The group has discussed adding U of M learning objects to the collection as well as tying more U of M

MERLOT

events to MERLOT. Thank you **Nancy Kerner**, MERLOT Chemistry Editor (left) and

Victor Wong, University of Michigan Project Director (right), for finding ways to spread the word about MERLOT on your campus.

Sorel is on a Roll!

At the recent EDUCAUSE meeting, **Sorel Reisman**, Managing Director of MERLOT, was interviewed for one of the EDUCAUSE series of podcasts. He was asked to discuss the role of MERLOT as well as what the future holds for MERLOT. You can read...er...hear all about it at: http://connect.educause.edu/blog/mpasiewicz/an_interview_with_sorel_reisman/10261



The results are in for the 2006 IEEE Computer Society Elections and **Sorel Reisman**, Managing Director of MERLOT has been elected to the office of Second Vice President of the society. Sorel is currently serving a 2 year term as Vice President of the Electronic Products and Services board for the IEEE Computer Society. Congratulations Sorel!!!

In the last issue of [The Grapevine](#), we mentioned the webinar that **Sorel Reisman** did with Ali Jafari (Indiana University), demonstrating how MERLOT resources can be dynamically integrated into the Epsilon Learning Environment. Epsilon provides the framework for the next generation of eLearning. In case you missed the webinar, you can see and hear the archived session at: <http://cdl.breezecentral.com/p78096118/>

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National Study to Focus on Understanding Higher Ed Faculty Use of Digital Libraries



What kinds of content and services are higher-ed users and potential users looking for from digital libraries? How would your users like to interact with the content in your digital library and what do they see as barriers to using it? Based on focus groups around the country, researchers have developed a survey that should take instructors approximately 15 minutes to complete, http://serc.carleton.edu/files/facultypart/mcmartin_etal_2006_jdcl.pdf. The survey will be offered to community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities, public and private. It will gather information that will be sorted by institution classification, instructor rank, and discipline.

Researchers would like to include your institution and the institutions of your users. Participating institutions will receive the answers of their respondents. Analysis of the aggregated data will also be shared with the MERLOT and NSDL communities and

beyond. Please visit <http://serc.carleton.edu/facultypart/> to find out more, and, or contact Alan Wolf alanwolf@wisc.edu for more information about the study.

MERLOT Innovation Projects

Tom Carey continues to be involved in several Innovation Projects with MERLOT. First, the CASTL Project. The MERLOT team in this project is investigating how to enhance contributions to MERLOT with more explicit scholarship. They are part of a larger initiative in the scholarship of teaching and learning sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation. Currently, the MERLOT partners in this project are the California State University, the SUNY Teaching Learning and Technology Program, the UNC TLT



Collaborative, and Seton Hall University. You can visit the wiki for this project at: www.seedwiki.com/wiki/ELIXR_CASTL

Tom's second project which recently received a FIPSE grant involves collaborations with a number of partners and organizations. The MERLOT team in this project is developing new collaborations between learning resource repositories and faculty development centers. Currently, the MERLOT system partners in this project include the California State University, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the University System of Georgia, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Other partners are Coastline Community College [from the California Community College system], Indiana State University, Brigham Young University, the Ohio State University, the Teach the Earth portal for Geoscience faculty hosted by the Science Education Research Center at Carleton College, and the CSU's Center for Distributed Learning. The wiki for this project can be found at:



www.seedwiki.com/wiki/FIPSE_ELIXR

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Sympathies Extended

Our sympathies go out to the family of David Adams of Macon State University. David won the 2006 Classics Award for Information Technology with his site, *Web Tutorials: XHTML, DHTML, ASP.NET, JavaScript*. David passed away on October 21st. His wife says that he valued his award a great deal.



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MERLOT Meeting Notices

MERLOT Leadership Community – Editors and Project Directors

Make plans to attend the Midyear Meeting Now.

Project Directors Meeting – Renaissance Atlanta Hotel Downtown, Georgia East Ballroom. Begins Thursday, January 26, 9:00 AM and ends Friday at 5:00 PM. (Project Directors will meet with Editors from noon – 5:00PM on Friday.)

Editors Meeting - Renaissance Atlanta Hotel Downtown, Georgia East Ballroom. Begin on Friday, January 26, noon and end on Sunday, January 28 at noon.

Hotel

Renaissance Atlanta Hotel Downtown
590 West Peachtree Street
404-881-6000

The hotel room rate is \$149.00 and is subject to applicable state and local taxes. The rate is good three days prior to January 24 and three days after January 28. **The cut-off date for room reservations is January 2, 2007.** After January 2, rooms may not be available at the group rate. Hotel reservations may be made online [Reservations](#) [Marriott Renaissance Atlanta](#) (Note: Link did not work in Firefox/worked in Explorer) or by calling the hotel at the number above.

Ground Transportation

The Renaissance Atlanta Hotel Downtown is conveniently located one block of exit 249D on Interstate 75/85 and is diagonally across from MARTA's North Avenue Station. For those arriving by plane into Hartsfield International Airport, both MARTA (\$1.75 each way) or taxi (\$24.00 one way) provide ground transportation to the hotel.

Mid-Year Meeting Registration

Please register your attendance at the Mid-Year Meeting. There is no registration fee. We just want to be prepared for your arrival and be good stewards of your partnership fees by planning appropriately for materials and meals. Do not register until you have your flight arrangements. To register go to [MERLOT 2007 Mid-Year Meeting Atlanta](#).

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Cathy's Corner

Hi, Cathy:

I've got a gripe. I had a problem with something in the new Workspace, and as requested, I documented it and submitted it to the Webmaster. But nothing was done. It's now been three weeks. What gives? Why

can't they make the fix?

- Frustrated

Dear Frustrated,

I know that most of the time we want things fixed right away. However, it is important to know that the MERLOT Development Team has procedures for responding to bugs and enhancements. After a problem is reported to the Webmaster, the first step is for the team to replicate it or get additional information. Once the bug has been verified, the needed change is added to a 'to do' list and a priority is established (Is it a show stopper? Is there a work-around?). After the fix is made, a release schedule must be followed to update MERLOT. Unless it is a show stopper, we generally try to combine many bugs and enhancements into a single new MERLOT release to minimize downtime for our members. Please keep in mind that our developers are working steadily on getting the kinks out of the system. Just hang in there for awhile and continue to report any issues or problems with as much detail as possible to the webmaster when they happen. Waiting a few days or a week can make it difficult to locate the problem in the system.

Cheers,
Cathy

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Job Posting

Educational Technologist

Daniel A. Reed Library
State University of New York at Fredonia

The State University of New York at Fredonia seeks an experienced and creative individual, beginning January 2007 for a full-time (12-month) position as an Educational Technologist for the Educational Technology office located at the Daniel A. Reed Library. Requirements include:

- Masters Degree in Instructional Technology or related field
- Background in pedagogical theory and practice
- Teaching and training or instructional design experience, especially at the University level
- Experience with course management systems and other cutting-edge learning technologies
- Hands-on multimedia experience
- Experience with SQL queries and reporting tools

Review of applications will begin on November 16, 2006 and will continue until the position is filled. To apply, consult the specific guidelines for this position on the Human Resources page of the SUNY Fredonia website:

<http://www.fredonia.edu/humanresources/professional.htm>



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MERLOT Statistics

MERLOT Collection as of December 1, 2006

15,547	# items in Collection
2,084	# of materials w/ a Peer Reviews
835	# of materials w/ an assignment
40,490	# of Registered Users

Usage Statistics for August – November 2006

241,034	Total # of visits
1990	Avg. # visits a day
22%	Avg. visitor repeat rate
22	Avg. # pages/visit
7 minutes	Avg. length of visit

Are you interested in writing for *From the Vineyard*, or adding news and updates? *From the Vineyard* is published December, March, June, and September. Getting your information in print is easy. Send your submission to [Cathy Swift](#) by the first Wednesday of the month in which you wish it to be published. Unfortunately we can't publish all articles/stories in each issue; if you don't see your story in the issue, we promise to try to get it into the next one!