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2002 Free Press favorite Michigan Web sites: Other notables

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Advocacy/Community

Mom2Mom

www.Mom2MomList.com

This useful site links mothers and offers child-rearing tips, support and encouragement through discussion boards and a resale service for outgrown clothing and baby furniture. It's run by a bunch of moms from metro Detroit.

Pasty Central

www.pasty.com

Talk about community. This Upper Peninsula-based site sure has a lot of fans -- lots of them stuffed our ballot box with e-mails imploring us to pick it. But we love this site and its devotion to the Keweenaw Peninsula's delicious pasties. Besides selling the concoctions, the site offers an eclectic look at UP life and business.

Better Investing

www.better-investing.org

This is the official site of the Madison Heights-based National Association of Investment Clubs, advocates of slow and steady personal investment. The site collects and delivers a bunch of resources aimed at helping individuals become better investors.

Asparagus Online

www.asparagus.org

We didn't even know there was a Michigan Asparagus Board. But there

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is, and its site is a delight. The recipes are terrific. We can't wait to try Fat-free Asparagus Guacamole. The site seeks to promote the production and consumption of asparagus grown in Michigan as well as assist in the agricultural research and development of asparagus farming.

Business/ e-commerce

AAA Michigan

www.autoclubgroup.com/michigan

At this amazingly deep site, you can buy discounted entertainment and amusement park tickets, book a trip, buy insurance and, in the process, find out about Michigan events and activities, construction zones and even the latest fishing report.

Sophisti-Cuts

<http://sophisti-cuts.com>

This is an excellent example of how even a small business can effectively use the Internet. This St. Clair Shores salon for men and women built a site loaded with pictures of hair and makeup looks, using its own clients as models. There's information galore and tips on how to look better, too.

Nurseryman

www.nurseryman.com

Based in Grand Haven, the site opened in 1997 as an information and marketing service for the wholesale nursery industry. It sells daylilies, evergreens, perennials and all sorts of other green goods, and also sells advertising exposure to other nurseries throughout the country. We like the planting instructions and advice on feeding.

Tek-Tips

www.tek-tips.com

The site is a collection of forums dealing with hardware and software issues faced by computer professionals. It's owned by Tecumseh Industries of Plymouth, which publishes a similar tip site for engineers. The forums here offer great resources for troubleshooting and staying abreast of high-tech issues. It's creatively supported through banner ads, forum sponsorships and mailing list ads.

Culture

Cadillac Postcards

www.cadillacpostcards.com

Speaking of cool images, this site collects historical postcards from and photographs taken in the city of Cadillac. Not just a curiosity for those who live there, this site is a glimpse of history that could have happened anywhere in the state.

The Detroit Institute of Arts

www.dia.org

Detroit's venerable arts institution has the standard items you'd expect on its Web page, including upcoming schedules and event information. But the complete catalog of art and culture books in the DIA library, teacher lesson plans and student writings help to make this a useful site for parents and anyone interested in art.

Great Lakes Photos

www.greatlakesphotos.com

Not the most professionally designed site, but its continuously updated collection of all types of Great Lakes seafaring and sea-loving photos make this tour of the state worth bookmarking. Not only that, but the pictures are darned good, taken by Frank Frisk, a real Great Lakes sailor.

Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village

www.hfmgv.org

This well-designed site offers about anything you'd want when planning a visit. Directions, what's happening, games for your kids, how to preserve your own artifacts, how to get copies of historic photos -- you name it, it's all here.

Education

Michigan Virtual University

www.mivu.org

Michigan Virtual University is a private, not-for-profit corporation established in 1998 to deliver online education and training opportunities to the Michigan workforce. More than 2,000 online courses can be taken here. There are courses for corporate professionals, courses for manufacturing workers, community college courses and even high school courses. The site is deep with career advice and is growing daily.

Internet Public Library

www.ipl.org

If it's on the Internet, you'll find it through this site, a service of the University of Michigan's School of Information. From almanacs to trivia

collections, this site is jam-packed with searchable data. It's one of our favorite resources when we need to look up a biography, find a quote, chase down an obscure fact or get background for a news story.

Animal Diversity Web

<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu>

Here's another site from the University of Michigan. This one comes from its Museum of Zoology and is an online database of animal information. If it creeps, croaks, crawls, stands, waddles, swims or flies, you'll find it here. There are thousands of species described with text, photographs, movies and even recordings of animal sounds.

Michigan State University Extension

www.msue.msu.edu/home

From East Lansing comes this really handy site. Though it's not as simple to navigate as we'd like, click on the information resources link and then the Home Maintenance and Repair section and you'll find a huge amount of how-to help for your weekend projects. There's lots more here, too, about agriculture, food preparation and scores of other subjects. Browse around.

Government

Michigan Votes

www.michiganvotes.org

This site offers concise and objective descriptions in plain language of every single bill, amendment and vote that takes place in the Michigan Legislature. It is searchable by legislator, keyword and almost 100 subject categories. You can even create your own custom voting guide.

Detroit Metro Airport

www.metroairport.com

If you use Metro, you need to use this site. Besides offering a virtual tour and a comprehensive guide to Midfield Terminal, there are airline and flight information links, parking information, maps and the latest security information.

Michigan.org

www.michigan.org

This site is organized along three areas: tourism, job opportunities and business development. It's run by the Michigan Economic Development Corp. and serves as a recruiting vehicle for businesses and workers, hoping to boost the state's image and lure new investment and development.

Oakland County

www.co.oakland.mi.us

Want to find out about beach closings? Property foreclosures? Applying for a marriage license? This site tells you where to go and how to do it, offers phone numbers, maps and even a fascinating history section. It's very well designed and offers lots of services of its own, like buying a park permit or checking out the official ballot for the August primary.

Hobbies

Flygirls of Michigan

www.flygirls.ws

Even if you aren't a female fly fisherman (fisherperson?), you have to appreciate the work and know-how that went into this site. A photo gallery of women with their catches is fun to scroll through, and advice, articles and information on upcoming events are abundant.

Great Lakes and Seaway Shipping

www.boatnerd.com

Like to watch the big ships on the big lakes? This site will tell you everything you need to know to spot who's going where and what others have seen. The information is easy to find, well laid-out and a joy to read.

PalmLoyal

www.palmloyal.com

Owners of handheld computers of all types will enjoy this comprehensive resource that's already garnered national attention. We liked the links to cool handheld PC software and the ongoing educational articles and discussions, but we loved the interactive "Pick the best handheld for you" feature.

Weather Underground

www.wunderground.com

It's not the prettiest weather site on the Web, but it's well-known for its continuously updated, microscopically detailed weather information on 60,000 U.S. and international cities. Not bad for a little company located in Ann Arbor that's been online forever.

Miscellaneous

Everything Michigan

www.everythingmichigan.net

It isn't comprehensive, but this Michigan search engine is easy to use, organized the way folks actually think, and contains many of the state's most important Web sites. It's also been in business for seven years, a dog's age online.

Michigan Morels.com

www.michiganmorels.com

Hunting for the bumpy mushroom delicacies is a great Michigan pastime, and this well-designed site might woo some dedicated couch potatoes into the woods. It's worth visiting for the funny, always-changing comment at the top of the page, but you'll stick around to read people's constantly updated morel-hunting diaries, to learn more about this haute cuisine treat and to figure out where to go to find the best caches.

Television History: The First 75 Years

www.tvhistory.tv

Watching TV is America's favorite recreational activity, and this site deserves to be one of the most-visited accounts of how the television evolved. Organized into decades, the site brims with great photos of early TVs, old manuals, magazine covers and other historical paraphernalia about the box you love to watch.

The Tom Bowl

www.tombowl.com

No teams have ever played in the Tom Bowl, but it's not for lack of trying. This amusing site chronicles the efforts of the Bowl's organizers to entice the country's best football teams into playing to determine who is the real national champion. Scans of the rejection letters are hysterical. The whole site is a monument to wasted effort -- and a wonderful place to spend some of your time.

Travel

Mackinac Island Tourist Information www.mackinac.com

This site has everything a Mackinac visitor wants: discounts, loads of travel information, detailed maps and pictures galore.

Dana's Lakeside Resort

www.danasresort.com

We're making our reservations for Dana's the next time we head up north, thanks to this beautiful, constantly updated and touching site

about the inn and its Au Train surroundings. A frequently updated journal with photographs lets you know what's happening at and around the resort, ranging from special events to special wildlife.

Greatrentals.com

www.greatrentals.com

This national site is run by a Michigan company, and it's a dandy way to find a place to stay no matter where your journeys take you. They're paid listings, but there are tons to choose from, most with detailed descriptions and photographs.

Lake to Lake Bed and Breakfast Association of Michigan

www.laketolake.com

You can find great lodging here at the state association for B&B owners, which has impressively comprehensive listings of where to crash when you're tooling around Michigan.

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