MERLOT
Multimedia Educational Resource
for Learning and Online Teaching

From the Vineyard

Issue 39, May 2017
Jane Moore - Editor

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MERLOT

From Your Wine Steward – Gerry Hanley

Dear MERLOT Community Leaders and Members,

We had another amazing conference in close partnership with the Online Learning Consortium in New Orleans, with a number of new projects becoming part of the event.   With funding support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, MERLOT and Southern University hosted the HBCU Textbook Affordability Summit with great success and over 60 colleagues attending over 2 days. The HBCU Summit is just the first event within an ongoing series of HBCU community activities that MERLOT will be supporting. "Our own" MERLOTITE Angela Gunder led the Community College Summit with outstanding panache and our community college colleagues were fully engaged and inspired by the INNOVATE presentations, networking, and community. MERLOT also hosted the TAACCCT@INNOVATE sessions where we shared strategies for advancing workforce development programs and services with OER. We are in our third year of funding from the U.S. Department of Labor to provide the national repository of workforce development OER within www.SkillsCommons.org. All these projects showcase MERLOT capabilities to successfully partner with organizations and institutions to advance our shared mission of improving the quality, access, and affordability of education through open educational services and resources.

At INNOVATE, we also featured the new MERLOT "Smart Search" that is an easy and powerful way to find free and open educational resources from other educational collections and from the web, using a search methodology customized to the needs and goals of educators.

The Online Learning Consortium was wonderful in celebrating our 20th "birthday" as a project which we launched in 1997 within the California State University. I would like to thank you all for your passion, commitment, and efforts to give life to MERLOT over these past 20 years. You have made MERLOT possible and powerful as an educational resource for all.

Gratefully yours,
Gerry

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Feature Article – MERLOT Awards

The Distinguished Service Award is reserved as MERLOT's highest honor. The recipient of this award exemplifies the vision that brings MERLOT members together to create the MERLOT Community. Individuals who receive this award have made many personal contributions to MERLOT and have demonstrated their dedication to MERLOT through serving as visionaries and leaders. The recipients are selected by the previous winners with consultation from MERLOT management. Houston Davis, President of the University of Central Arkansas was selected for his work at the Oklahoma State Board of Regents for Higher Education. He recognized both the value and collaborative nature of the MERLOT community and his strong support helped keep the state's engagement at high levels.

The Innovative Use of MERLOT award is given to an individual, department, or program that demonstrates novel, comprehensive, or creative usage and/or application of MERLOT materials and services. . This year the Cool4Ed site developed by the California State University system was selected for their use of the MERLOT Content Builder in developing faculty and course showcases. The award was accepted by Leslie Kennedy, Director of Affordable Learning Solutions in the California State University Chancellor's Office.

The Institutional Stewardship Award recognizes efforts to promote MERLOT at an institutional level. MERLOT seeks to identify models that can be used to sustain support for MERLOT and that demonstrate the value of MERLOT. Recipients of the award are selected by the MERLOT Management team. This year's recipient was Southern University System who implemented MERLOT's services

in their Affordable Learning Solutions Initiative www.suol4ed.org .

Classics Awards

Eight editorial boards selected Classics Award Winners. These materials were deemed to be exemplars in their fields.

The **Biology Classics Award** was presented to **Louisa Stark** for the Genetics Science Learning Center. The Genetics Science Learning Center is an extensive site that houses a variety of high quality treatments of common topics in a variety of biology subject areas, including basic genetics and math, human health, neuroscience, cell biology, and ecology. The site also links to a variety of teaching materials for instructors.

The **Business Classics Award** was awarded to **Theresa Billitski Clarke** for Paid Search: Using Google Adwords Assignment. The assignment is very comprehensive, and provides students the opportunity to gain skills in web advertising. There are many practical applications, and in fact the author suggests students have a personal site that they want to use for the assignment.

The **Faculty Development Classics Award** was awarded to **Mary Bart** for Faculty Focus. Accepting the award is **Karin Van Voohrees** from Magna Publications

Faculty Focus is one of the most widely used faculty development resources in higher education. Through its free e-newsletter and dedicated website, Faculty Focus publishes high quality articles on effective teaching strategies for the college classroom — both face-to-face and online.

The **ICT Literacy Classics Award** was presented to **Desirae Zingarelli-Sweet** for Information Literacy in the Disciplines. This site contains searchable links and citations to information literacy standards, curricula and best practices developed by accrediting agencies, professional associations, and institutions of higher education

The **Mathematics Classics Award** was presented to **Michal Anvy** for Symbolab Math Solver

Symbolab is an excellent resource for students who not only want to solve a math problem, but also see the steps involved in the solution. It uses an artificial intelligence system that can analyze most mathematics problems that a student enters into the tool.

The **Psychology Classics Award** was awarded to **Peter Lindberg** for NOBA Student Video Awards.

The **Sociology Classics Award** was awarded to the **Department of Sociology at Penn State** for The Association of Religion Data Archives.

The **Teacher Education Classics Award** is presented to **Ann-Marie Womack** for Accessible Syllabus.

This site is useful for educators throughout the disciplines to make their syllabi more user friendly and more engaging.

MERLOT House Cup

The House Cup (modeled on the Harry Potter House Cup) is an award to recognize the level of contributions made to the MERLOT collection during the past academic year. Contributions include Reviews, Contributions to MERLOT, Assignments, Comments, and editor reviews.

The top five editorial boards in alphabetical order are: Biology, Business, ICT Literacy, Sociology and Teacher Education, and the recipient of the 2016 award was the **Business** Editorial Board**,** which made 899 contributions to MERLOT, completing 277 editor's reviews, 126 individual reviews, 66 composite reviews and submitting 291 materials to MERLOT.

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Feature Article – Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire 2017

The MERLOT Peer Reviewer Extraordinaire MERLOT created the Peer Reviewer Extraordinaire award to honor the hard work and generous donation of our members' time, energy and enthusiasm that they direct towards the growth and development of MERLOT. We rely heavily on our Peer Reviewers to help expand the MERLOT collection and perform the Peer Review process. The following individuals completed MERLOT GRAPE (Getting Reviewers Accustomed to the Process of Evaluation) Camp, and worked with the Editors to complete their reviews on a timely basis. These individuals have

completed at least fifteen Peer Reviews in the past 12 months and added at least 5 materials to MERLOT. Our 2017 MERLOT Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire are:

2017

- **Juville Dario-Becker** **Biology** **Central Virginia Community College**
- **Michael Plotkin** **Biology** **Mt. San Jacinto College**
- **K. Camille Freeman** **Biology** **Maryland U. Of Integrative Health**
- **Julie Bonner** **Business** **Central Washington University**
- **Cathy Swift** **Business** **Retired; Independent Consultant**
- **Ray Purdom** **Faculty Dev.** **Retired**
- **Luz Vilchis-Equivel** **Faculty Dev.** **National Autonomous University**
- **Art Finkle** **History** **Empire State College**
- **Lesley Farmer** **ICT Literacy** **CSU-Long Beach**
- **Carol Edwards** **Instructional Tech.** **Kaplan University**
- **Irene Knokh** **Instructional Tech.** **University of Michigan**
- **Deirdre McDonald** **Library & Info Serv.** **Texas A & M – San Antonio**
- **Victoria Packard** **Library & Info Serv.** **Texas A & M – Kingsville**
- **Sergey Belyi** **Mathematics** **Troy University**
- **Larry Green** **Mathematics** **Lake Tahoe Community College**
- **Julie Evey** **Psychology** **University of Southern Indiana**
- **Catherine Honig** **Psychology** **National Louis University**
- **Bruce Bennett** **Teacher Education** **Grand Canyon University**
- **Stephanie Burch-Bynam** **Teacher Education** **American College of Education**
- **Cris Guenter** **Teacher Education** **California State University –Chico**
- **Angela Gunder** **Teacher Education** **The University of Arizona**
- **Elaine Lawrence** **Teacher Education** **SUNY-Oneonta**
- **Jane Moore** **Teacher Education** **MERLOT**
- **Laurie Tenzer** **Teacher Education** **St. Petersburg College**
- **Mary Wall** **Teacher Education** **Thomas Edison State College**
- **Esperanza Zenon** **Teacher Education** **River Parishes Community College**
- **Laura Franklin** **World Languages** **Northern Virginia Com. Colleges**

More information about Peer Reviewer Extraordinaire 2018 will appear in the September issue of   *From the Vineyard*---but start working on those reviews.

Feature Article – Georgia State University – Continuing Education for Master Teachers by Diane Bandow

The first day in a new course can set the tone for engagement and participation. At the Master Teacher program at Georgia State University, Dr. Brightman, Regents Professor Emeritus, proposes a "hook" to bring students in immediately and challenge them to think, explore and apply, and this can be accomplished either in a traditional face-to-face classroom or in an online environment.

Dr. Brightman explains that a 'hook' can be used to bring student attention and interest to a relevant topic on the opening day of the course. In a face-to-face class, this can be implemented as the beginning of a lecture with a picture, a short case, a video, to illustrate a key point the first day. This can also include an opportunity for student pairs to discuss the question in a traditional face-to-face class. In an online class this can be an assignment that is reviewed and discussed the initial discussion board. To start with a 'hook', choose a topic from the course that is familiar to them to stimulate interest. Revisit the topic midway through the course and ask diagnostic questions to maintain student interest, and then bring the answer at the end of the course, to finally answer the question raised by the instructor on day one. Address why the topic is important before addressing the "what" of the topic, but do not ask solution questions or for resolutions to the question, however; instead, ask diagnostic questions to help students focus on analysis leading with such words as "what", "where", and "is". This will allow the questions to be addressed and explored in future sessions. The diagnostic questions will help in developing critical thinking skills as well as stimulating interest to pursue different aspects of the topic.

Develop a goal or sub-goal for this 'hook' exercise, determine how this will be applied, and focus on what question you want the students to explore. Don't forget to determine how effective the 'hook' is; remember to ask students to evaluate how effective this 'hook' and the 'hook' topic was in attracting their attention and their interest.

With the learning objects and resources available through MERLOT, we have a wide variety of material available for this purpose. Articles, demonstrations, videos, and various websites can provide many ideas for that opening day 'hook'. Students may access MERLOT, and design their own 'hook' as part of an assignment for an in-class competition. Students may also make recommendations on the different topics and materials available and provide an array of ideas for effective approaches to enhance their learning in the course.
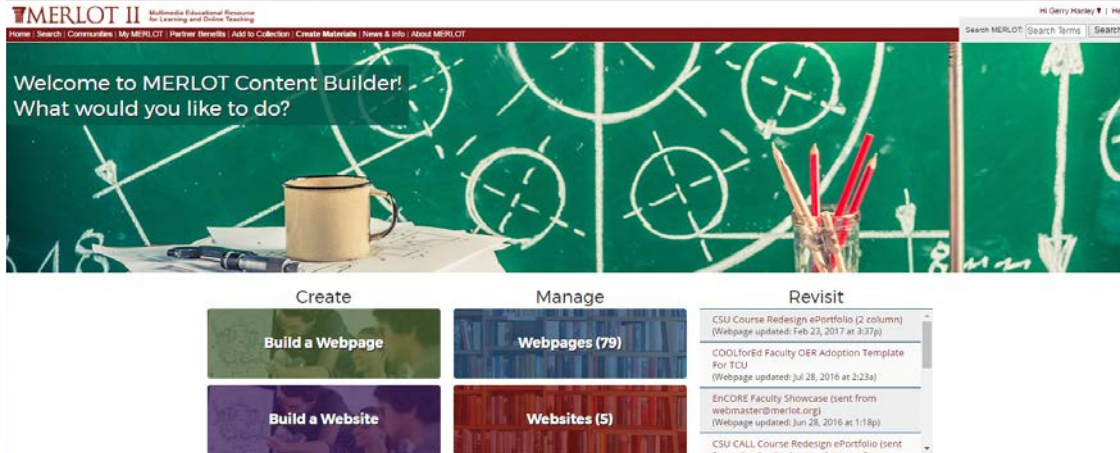
MERLOT Technology

MERLOT announced a new Smart Search, a significant upgrade to searching capabilities and an user interface upgrade to Content Builder at the INNOVATE 2017 conference.

The new **MERLOT Smart Search** extends access to online learning materials well beyond MERLOT's curated and peer reviewed collection. Smart Search searches the World Wide Web specifically for the kinds of learning materials that typical MERLOT users seek. It uses a proprietary MERLOT user profile design to find the newest and most popular learning materials available in digital libraries and also on the WWW. While these resources are not peer reviewed or curated, users can contribute materials that show up in thei results hit lists, to the MERLOT collection for subsequent curation and peer review by our 25+ MERLOT Editorial Boards. And materials discovered by Smart Search can be added to users' MERLOT Bookmark Collections and Course ePortfolios. Smart Search is easy to use: just click on the tab that describes the universe of resources you want to explore and MERLOT does the smart searching for you! For more information on the MERLOT Smart Search, go to http://info.merlot.org/merlothelp/index.htm#basic_merlot_search.htm.

MERLOT also released a new interface design for its popular Web development tool, Content Builder. Originally build and supported by the Carnegie Foundation, MERLOT adopted and integrated the system into "main MERLOT" about 10 years ago.

Since that time we have refined the functionality of the Content Builder and with this latest release, have made the user interface even more intuitive. To give it a try, simply click on the "Create materials with Content Builder" tile on the home page (www.merlot.org). For assistance in getting started, there is a users guide at http://info.merlot.org/merlothelp/index.htm#create_materials_with_content_builder.htm.

IEEE endorses MERLOT Computer Science and IT Portals. The IEEE Computer Society and IEEE Education Society have recently endorsed MERLOT's two new discipline portals – Computer Science (CS) and Information Technology (IT). The endorsement is a consequence of the MERLOT taxonomy for those two disciplines that are aligned with the Computer Science Accreditation Board (CSAB) recommended list of undergraduate course topics. Instructors teaching those disciplines can readily discover MERLOT learning materials that are connected with their CS and IT courses.

Social Networking and MERLOT
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We have many ways for you to stay connected with MERLOT and all the wonderful things happening with the website and initiatives. Please share these sites with your colleagues. . If you have information you'd like use to post on our Facebook or Twitter pages, please send it to webmaster@merlot.org.

MERLOT has a Facebook page and we'd love for you to Like us!

You can also follow us on Twitter.

MERLOT also has a LinkedIn group. We invite you to join us and network with other MERLOT Users.

MERLOT Blog

The MERLOT blog can be accessed at http://blog.merlot.org. Our blog was created to provide commentaries on contemporary issues written by MERLOT Managing Director, Sorel Reisman

Please have a look and follow what we have to say.   Feel free to add your comments and join the discussion about the topics you find there. If you have any suggestions about topics you'd like us to address, please email (webmaster@merlot.org).

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Update on MERLOT Community

Become a MERLOT Peer Reviewer and GRAPE Camp Information – Summer GRAPE Camp Information

To become a Peer Reviewer for MERLOT, individuals must be an instructor in an institution of higher education and have:

- Expertise in the scholarship of their field
- Excellence in teaching
- Experience in using technology in teaching and learning, and
- Connections to professional organizations in their discipline.

MERLOT has developed training for Peer Reviewers to ensure that they become familiar with MERLOT processes and policies on Peer Review. MERLOT Management conducts GRAPE Camp (Getting Reviewers Accustomed to the Process of Evaluation) to train Peer Reviewers on a regular basis. GRAPE Camp consists of a series of three one-hour workshops online, one per week. In these webinars, participants will:

- Develop an understanding of MERLOT
- Learn how MERLOT evaluates Learning Materials
- Conduct a group review
- Complete an Individual Review
- Learn how to use the Workspace tool, and
- Introduce participants to the Editorial Board of their disciplines.

The webinars include people from a variety of disciplines and is archived so participants can review the material as needed. For information about GRAPE Camp, contact Cathy Swift . GRAPE Camps are scheduled for Summer 2017 in:

- June - Mondays (12, 19, 26) at 11 AM Eastern/ 8 AM Pacific
- July- Thursdays (13, 20, 27) at 5 PM Eastern/ 2 PM Pacific
- August – Tuesdays (1, 8, 15) at 11 AM Eastern/ 8 AM Pacific

To register for any one of these sessions or to sign up for asynchronous sessions, please complete the short form questionnaire.
If these times don't work for you, you can also participate asynchronously by completing the questionnaire above and indicating that you want to do it asynchronously. You can also participate in the discussions about GRAPE Camp in MERLOT Voices.
Comments from GRAPE Camp Participants:
"Overall, this was very well done. I'm glad I participated."
"Well-designed orientation."

"It was very helpful for me to do this asynchronously due to changing computer systems in the middle of the training! I am pleased to be part of your reviewer group."
"Respectful of participant's time by keeping sessions valuable and on-time."
"I think it's a great idea and appreciate the time of the facilitator."
"Grape Camp was a good learning experience. The materials were organized and clear."
"The instructor is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and responsive. Thank you."
"It was an enjoyable and comfortable 'classroom' environment."
"I think Grape camp is a good way to learn about doing reviews. The format is flexible, as in my case I missed a session and could watch the archived presentation".
"I thought the amount of time was just right and the instructor was available for questions between instructional sessions."

News

Editorial Board News
We are looking for those interested in becoming editors in **Agriculture, Chemistry, and Communication Sciences and Disorders**. If you are interested or wish to nominate someone, please contact Jane Moore (jmoore@calstate.edu). Thanks!

Monthly Reviewer Incentive Awards

Congratulations to our monthly reviewer incentive award winners!
January - Miriam Kahn, History board, Kent State University
February - Stephanie Medley-Roth, Sociology Board, Indiana University-Kokomo

March - Theresa Wolfe, Biology Board, Oregon State University
April – Stephanie Medley-Roth, Sociology Board, Indiana University-Kokomo (yes, again!)

Thanks to all for the work they do for MERLOT. Each month a name is drawn from those who have contributed reviews to MERLOT during that month. The winner receives a $50 electronic gift card to the store of their choice. The more reviews you do, the better chance you have to win.

Meet the Editors
Cathy Swift, Editor
Business Board

Cathy Swift received her Ph.D. in Marketing from University of North Texas, after a number of years in the corporate world with Cummins Engine Company and Ford Tractor. She was a Professor at Georgia Southern University for 15 years where she taught Business Marketing, Professional Selling, Sales Management and International Business. She became involved in the MERLOT project in 1999 as the Editor of the Business Discipline and helped determine how the peer review process would be conducted.

Her role in MERLOT increased over the years, working with the editorial boards and as a member of the Management Team. She left Georgia Southern in 2006 and was employed by the California State University Chancellor's Office full-time as MERLOT's Director of Academic Partner Services. She officially retired from CSU in 2013, but continues to consult for MERLOT and the CSU Affordable Learning Solutions.
She now volunteers for the North Texas SPCA and the Samaritan Inn (a homeless shelter/program), and is on the board of directors of Friends of Fairview, a support group for the local fire department. She also spends time with her granddaughter, Rhumani, her rescue dogs, Maggie and Mollie, and riding her horse, Cowboy. She recently received an award as the 2016 Volunteer of the Year from the North Texas SPCA. Cathy now resides in McKinney, TX.

Meet the Editorial Board Member – Susan Moncada

Susan Moncada is a Professor of Accounting at Indiana State University. She became involved with MERLOT in 2000 when the Indiana Commission for Higher Education was a system partner. As a result, the Scott College of Business was enlisted to provide a peer reviewer for the Business Editorial Board. Having an interest in instructional design as well as a reputation for being an early adopter of pedagogical technologies, Susan was recruited for the job. In 2003, she became Associate Editor of the Accounting sub-discipline and continues to serve in that role today.   In 2005, she received the MERLOT Volunteer of the Year Award and in 2011 shared the Business Classics Award with Professor Mike Seda from Pfeiffer University, who is also a Business Board peer reviewer. In 2012, she received the University's Caleb Mills Distinguished Teaching Award. Most recently she has been coordinating the Higher Learning Commission assessment for the Accounting, Finance, and Insurance and Risk Management programs. During December, 2016, on behalf of the Accounting Program, she accepted the Provost's Award for Excellent in Student Learning Assessment and Improvement.

New Editorial Board
Edmundo Tovar, Editor
Information Technology Board

MERLOT is pleased to announce that we have "promoted" the reformulated Information Technology discipline to a full Editorial Board. The editor of this new board is **Edmundo Tovar**, faculty member at the Technical University of Madrid - Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, and Vice President of Educational Activities of the IEEE Education Society.

A unique characteristic of the MERLOT IT discipline is that we have designed its taxonomy to align with the undergraduate course topics recommended by CSAB (Computing Sciences Accreditation Board) – the lead society within ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) for accreditation of degree programs in computer science, information systems, software engineering, information technology, and cybersecurity, and is a co-lead society for systems engineering, and is a cooperating society for computer engineering, biological engineering, and information engineering technology.

CSAB is governed by the two largest technical, educational, and scientific societies in computer and computer-related fields: The Association for Computing Machinery, Inc. (ACM) and the IEEE-Computer Society (IEEE-CS). Accordingly, the MERLOT IT discipline portal has been endorsed by both the IEEE Computer Society and IEEE Education Society, and that endorsement is noted with a banner on the IT portal page.

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Out and About with MERLOT

Diane Bandow, member of the Business Editorial Board received track chair of the year award from The International Academy of Business Disciplines

Irene Knokh, editor of Instructional Technology was nominated for the 2017 Learning Catalyst Award, for commitment to excellence in learning and education by the University of Michigan Medicine.

Congratulations!

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Meeting Notices:

Online Learning Consortium Collaborate

Join your fellow online learning professionals, educators and administrators to hear from the experts and collaborate on solving the challenges we all face in online higher education today. You'll get the chance to hear from regional experts regarding current and emerging trends in online learning, collaborate and network with your regional peers during group discussions on top-of-mind challenges that may impact the future of online learning – and your career.

Collaborate with Emerging Learning Design – Montclair, NJ – May 31, 2017

University of Nebraska Medical Center – Omaha, NE – June 6, 2017

University of Alaska – Anchorage, AK – August 21-22, 2017

University of Arizona – Tucson, AZ – September 29, 2017

Online Learning Consortium ACCELERATE 2017

The call for proposals is open through May 22 for Accelerate (formerly the 22nd Annual International Conference) to be held at the Disney World Swan and Dolphin Hotel November 15-17, 2017.

The conference is devoted to driving quality online learning, advancing best practice guidance and accelerating innovation in learning around the world.

Quality Matters Annual Conference

Pathways to Excellence

9th Annual Conference on Quality Assurance in Online Learning

September 24 - 27, 2017
Fort Worth, Texas

Join the QM Community in Fort Worth, Texas to explore fresh ideas, engagement strategies and more as we look at quality assurance in online learning at all levels of an organization. Six concentrations will guide you on your Pathway to Excellence and provide you with the opportunity to connect with colleagues from around the world, exchange ideas and gain solutions to online learning challenges. Be part of the future of online learning.

Registration for the conference is available at https://ww2.eventrebels.com/er/Registration/StepRegInfo.jsp?ActivityID=20774&StepNumber=1

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Moore Musings

Dear Jane:
I hear that MERLOT just celebrated a birthday…which one?

Sincerely,
A Peer Reviewer

Dear Peer Reviewer:

MERLOT just celebrated it's 20th birthday. We've been working with online educators since 1997! For more information on how MERLOT got started, go to http://info.merlot.org/merlothelp/index.htm#who_we_are.htm#MERLOT_History.

Jane

MERLOT Statistics

MERLOT Collection as of April 30, 2017

78,945	# items in Collection
4.667	# of materials w/a Peer Review
12,867	# of materials w/an Editor's Review
6,142	# of materials w/a Comment/Discussion
1,038	# of materials w/a Learning Exercise
146,196	# of registered users

Usage Statistics for January - April 2017

316,864	Total # of visits
3	Avg. # pages/visit
2:30	Avg. length of visit

Are you interested in writing for *From the Vineyard,* or adding news and updates? *From the Vineyard* is published September, January, and May. Getting your information in print is easy. Send your submission to Jane Moore 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!