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## EDITORIAL

Time for mince pies and christmas pudding yet again! As I get older Christmas seems to be always just around the corner whereas it used to seem millions of years away when I was small!

This year has really raced by and there is never enough time for all the things we want to do!! Lists and schedules govern our existence, computers are never fast enough and we certainly didn't diarise time to barcode our ID books, register as voters and handle all the bureaucratic red tape that is being flung our way at one of the busiest times of year!

Sometimes one has to just find time to stop and smell the roses and Christmas at home or on holiday with family and friends is the ideal time to do this. Enjoy the break, take it easy and come back refreshed and raring to go!

**Merry Christmas to all our members and all the best for 1999!**

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## FUTURE MEETINGS

Please diarise the following proposed dates for meetings for 1999.

Friday 12 February 1999

Thursday 25 March 1999

8-11 June - Conference

Thursday 14 October 1999.

Speakers and topics to be arranged.

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## **PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Meet you at the Highlander! On the 18th of November in the pouring rain we waited with grim anticipation for the few and the brave to join us at the Highlander, an authentic Scottish pub in Midrand.

Tracy Campbell, sales director at McGregor BFA, explained how the merger between McGregor Information Services and the BFANet under the Naspers umbrella, changed the products and services of both systems through technology and what the new company perceives as their niche market. Tracy showed online examples of RAID Excel, an Excel-based product that generates a 'full company report' on a specific listed company, and RAID Library, a MSWord database of their annual report product that includes official notices of listed JSE companies from April 1995.

And then the party started with spare ribs and prawns, 'slap chips' and anything you want to drink! What a way to end off an exiting year!

*San-Daleen de Wet*  
*Alexander Forbes Library*

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## **CONFERENCE NEWS**

Call for Papers: IEEE ADL'99. Advances in Digital Libraries Conference

May 19-21, 1999. Baltimore Hilton and Towers, Baltimore, MD, USA

Sponsored by IEEE Computer Society, Library of Congress,

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, CESDIS, Rutgers University CIMIC, National Library of Medicine

Digital Libraries are a critical component of the emerging

"`distributed knowledge environments" that will provide people with universal access to virtually all areas of human knowledge, with the concomitant hope of improving standards of health, education, and economic well-being as well as the quality of life. As such, the field of digital library research and technology encompasses information creation, acquisition, access, distribution, evaluation and processing. Major applications of digital library research and technology include education, science, commerce, medicine, and the arts.

The goal of this conference is to share and disseminate

information about important current issues concerning digital library research and technology. This goal will be achieved by means of research papers, invited talks, workshops, and panels involving leading experts, as well as through demonstrations of innovative and prototype technologies. The conference has the additional goal of indicating the importance of applications of digital library technologies in the public and private sectors of

the economy.

Papers are solicited describing technical advances in ALL areas of digital library technology, including, but not limited to the areas of:

Agent Technology

Authoring and Scripting

Collaborative Research

Data mining

Digital Library Testbed Systems

Document Models

Economic Issues and Billing Mechanisms

Human-Computer Interaction

Intellectual Property

Knowledge Integration

Knowledge Representation

Meta-information

Publishing

Resource Discovery and Management

Searching and Browsing

Semantic and Systems Interoperability

Standards and Protocols

Telecommunications and Networking

Transition from Traditional Libraries

User Workspaces

In particular, ADL '99 will focus on novel applications and associated issues in the areas of:

Digital Art

Digital Earth

Digital Law

Digital Music

Geospatial Information

Health Applications

Integrating Digital Technology into Traditional Libraries

Social and Natural Sciences Applications

Socio-Economic Impact

Authors are invited to submit manuscripts, not to exceed 6000 words or proposals for panels or workshops, not to exceed 1500 words, by December 15, 1998 to:

Professor Elke Rundensteiner, Computer Science Department

Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 100 Institute Road

Worcester, MA 01609

Tel: (508)831-5815

rundenst@cs.wpi.edu

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### **NEW LEXIS-NEXIS UNIVERSE JOINS THE FIELD**

LEXIS-NEXIS has announced its new end user product, Universe, which is in a class with Dow Jones Interactive as an all-in-one service combining browsing, current awareness, and retrospective searching components.

LEXIS-NEXIS brings unique collections of legal and public records materials to the party, as well as a highly customisable interface and source selection options. A "more like this" function adds a level of search capability that competitors lack. In Outsell's opinion, LEXIS-NEXIS has now joined Dow Jones Interactive as a provider of state-of-the-art Web-based end user products for business users. Each player has its own content advantages, but now the real battle is shifting to the marketing challenge of getting the products into the right hands.

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### **NEW GALE GROUP HITS THE GROUND RUNNING**

Since the merger of IAC with Gale Research, the new company has already announced a couple of new deals. It has acquired Graham & Whiteside, publisher of a database of information on 8,000 world-wide companies. It also announced that the first Gale product to use Aeneid Corporation's technology for indexing and searching selected Web-based content will be ComputerSelect Web. A separate product for competitive intelligence gathering, Knowledge Manager, will also be based on Aeneid technology. Gale is in a position to pull

together both the content and the technological platform that would be needed to become and alternative to other online systems, with the advantage of a lot of proprietary content.

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## **BACK TO THE FUTURE**

Dialog announced the availability of DialogClassic, a high-speed Web-based mode of access for information professionals who prefer the traditional user-hostile interface. It has the speed and flexibility of the old dial-up command-driven Dialog along with some Web-like enhancements such as high-quality images. This move is good news for Dialog's core market of power searchers.

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## **DIALOG, DIALOG, AND YET MORE DIALOG**

10 November 1998, Vanessa Katz, The Dialog Corporation South Africa.

As the South African agent for The Dialog Corporation we would like to clarify a few points relating to the local market in reaction to the article in the September SAOUG newsletter. We would also like to take this opportunity to reinforce our commitment to our local client base.

### **DialUnits**

Although change is always difficult DialUnit pricing has now settled down to a more acceptable level. A positive outcome from the DialUnit is that it has illustrated Dialog's ability to change and respond to its users' requirements, and that the information professional still has a strong influence with regard to setting prices.

Dialog remains the largest system of its kind with approximately 30% (158) unique databases on Dialog that do not appear on any of our competitors  
<http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/sep/kassel.htm>. The results from a recent survey's indicate that it is still more cost effective to search Dialog (in some cases by 35%)

that any of our competitors. Herewith links to a recent reviews:  
<http://library.dialog.com/quantum/wp/scibioip.html> by Dr Kenna Mawk

[http://www.dialog.com/info/corporate/pressroom/dialog\\_archive/press\\_chronological/miller.shtml](http://www.dialog.com/info/corporate/pressroom/dialog_archive/press_chronological/miller.shtml).

We would like to encourage our South Africa clients to contact us if you are still finding any discrepancies with regard to pricing, as only you, the users, can assist us in perfecting this new pricing structure.

### **Invoicing**

Dialog's introduction of electronic invoicing at the beginning of the year has **not** been enforced for our South African clients. This is because we offer billing in South Africa Rands and felt that our clients would prefer to receive hard copy invoices. Should you have any account queries or would like to move to electronic billing please contact Leoni Dauth on Tel: (011) 807 5750.

### **Incidental charges**

As mentioned, we have successfully moved the majority of the South African clients onto our main account avoiding the \$75 minimum charge, illustrating our commitment to our local clients.

Dialog has recently implemented a new means of fast cost effective access via <http://www.dialogclassic.com>, used for command searching. Access via DialogClassic should reduce connectivity charges experienced using Telnet and more DialogLink functionality will be added shortly. A new version of DialogLink will be available in the new year.

## **Developments**

Flat Fee pricing has been incredibly successful and other online providers are now implementing similar pricing plans. Flat Fee plans give the users unlimited access to Dialog content within a predefined budget with a fixed negotiated increase ratio.

Locally we have structured a unique offer through the Gaelic consortium, offering academic organisations with limited budget the ability to access unlimited data by leveraging consortium-buying power. Should you require further information on plans available, please contact Mark Bellingan on [profound@iafrica.com](mailto:profound@iafrica.com)

The Dialog Corporation has also invested significantly in fast secure technical infrastructure. This investment includes the introduction of DialogNet and the integration of many Datastar databases onto Dialog. The future holds many exciting developments that are sure to improve the searching experience.

## **Training & Support**

Dialog South Africa has implemented a successful training program that includes refresher training and web conversion courses. Our classes are small and are run by an information professional with years of Dialog searching experience: <http://mars.iafrica.com/dialog/>. An excellent help desk facility is available to our clients on Tel: (011) 807 5750.

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## **WHEN CONTENT IS NOT ENOUGH**

We've been reporting that content companies can enhance the value of their data by providing ways for users to integrate it into their workflow once it is delivered. That's the model behind LEXIS-NEXIS' new partnership with Aurigin Systems (formerly SmartPatents), which provides companies with a system for tracking and analysing a firm's intellectual property assets. Under the deal, LEXIS-NEXIS content will be provided to users of Aurigin's tracking products, and LEXIS-NEXIS will provide sales and marketing support for Aurigin products in intellectual property markets.

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## **ADS AS CONTENT**

Advertising Age is creating a new service called Ad Age Edge that will focus on the advertising industry. A partnership with Intel will provide the infrastructure that will allow heavy multimedia content like television ads to be delivered to customer PCs. Information providers of all types are watching the development of multimedia applications for corporate markets. Most corporate desktops lack the capacity to deal with multimedia, but key applications like this one will break ground for future developments.

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## **WOLTERS KLUWER WILL ACQUIRE OVID TECHNOLOGIES FOR APPROXIMATELY \$200 MILLION**

(New York City and Chicago, September 29, 1998) -- Wolters Kluwer U.S. Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Wolters Kluwer N.V., and Ovid Technologies, Inc. [NASDAQ: OVID] today announced that they have entered into a definitive agreement pursuant to which Wolters Kluwer will acquire all outstanding shares of Ovid on a fully diluted basis for \$24.59 per share, or approximately US \$200 million, in cash.

Pursuant to the terms of the definitive merger agreement, Wolters Kluwer shall commence a cash tender offer for Ovid's common stock no later than October 5, 1998. As part of the transaction, Mark Nelson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Ovid, and certain other shareholders, who currently beneficially own an aggregate of approximately 5.1 million shares of Ovid, or approximately 63% of the outstanding shares (on a fully diluted basis), have agreed to tender their outstanding shares and have granted to Wolters Kluwer an option, under certain circumstances, to buy all their shares for \$24.59 per share.

The tender offer is conditioned upon the tendering of shares representing a majority of Ovid's outstanding common stock (on a fully diluted basis), satisfaction of applicable regulatory requirements and certain other customary conditions. Any shares not purchased in the tender offer will be acquired in a second-step merger for \$24.59 per share in cash. Holders of employee stock options will receive cash in an amount equal to the difference between the offer price and their option exercise price.

The agreement obligates Ovid to pay to Wolters Kluwer a fee of \$7 million and up to \$500,000 of expense reimbursement, if the transaction is not consummated under certain circumstances.

Ovid is a leading provider of subscription based electronic information services primarily to medical and scientific markets. Ovid develops sophisticated search software for research-intensive institutions and

bundles this technology with full text journals and bibliographic databases. This information is licensed from many renowned publishers, societies and database providers and is channelled to customers through CD-ROM products and online services. Ovid's products are used by thousands of prominent institutions around the world, including private and public universities, library consortia, pharmaceutical firms and governmental organisations.

Ovid's information solutions aim to help users find answers to research and clinical questions. The company has developed advanced and value adding search and linking tools, which provide links between and within documents. This allows users for example to search for articles that share references, and easily jump from one publication to another. The user may also seamlessly link from content of one publisher to content of another publisher.

Through acquisitions and autonomous growth Wolters Kluwer has become a world leader in medical/scientific markets, owning an extremely rich content base.

The acquisition of Ovid will provide Wolters Kluwer with an opportunity to substantially accelerate its electronic publishing strategies in the medical and scientific marketplace.

Through Ovid, the content of more than 900 journals of Wolters Kluwer's medical/scientific publishing companies can -over time- be made fully searchable and navigable linked to bibliographic databases and to journals of other prominent publishers and societies in the field. Ovid can make these electronic journals immediately accessible via the World Wide Web to thousands of customers world-wide.

Ovid will remain a standalone company, maintaining existing management, within the Wolters Kluwer International Healthcare Division and will continue to partner with other information providers in medical/scientific markets.

Ovids annual sales in 1997 on a reported pro forma basis amounted to US \$37.4 million. In the first half of 1998 revenues increased (on the same basis) 21.3% to USD 21.8 million. Operating income improved in the first six months of 1998 (on a pro forma basis) 38% to US \$3.2 million. The company has almost 200 full time employees.

Wolters Kluwer is a multidomestic publishing company active in 26 countries. Core activities are legal and tax publishing, business publishing, medical/scientific publishing and educational publishing/professional training.

Wolters Kluwer has a sales level considerably over Dfl. 5 billion and has almost 15,000 employees. The corporate web site of Wolters Kluwer on the Internet can be accessed at <http://www.wolters-kluwer.com>.

We wanted to make sure that you were aware of MedXtra, a free Internet service for SilverPlatter customers interested in medical or health sciences information. MedXtra supplements database subscriptions with organised Web medical resources and current biomedical information. The site is located at: <http://www.silverplatter.com/medxtra.htm>

SilverPlatter customers should send an email to: [medxtra@silverplatter.com](mailto:medxtra@silverplatter.com)

in order to obtain a Username and Password . Information contained in MedXtra changes weekly and new resources are added on a regular basis.

Features in MedXtra include:

Free WebSPIRS v4.0 access to the MEDLINE Advanced demonstration database.

Database of the Month: A one-month free preview of a featured SilverPlatter medical database is available. This month's featured database is EMBASE: Pharmacy which covers all aspects of drug formulation including the manufacture of drugs and related chemicals. A critical resource for pharmacists working in the pharmaceutical industry, EMBASE CD: Pharmacy fills the information

gaps noted by the Information Managers in the Pharmaceutical Industry Working Party. Based on the IMPI's recommendations, Elsevier Science made significant changes and enhancements to EMBASE to meet the need for a single source of information for pharmacists. Areas of coverage include drug packaging and storage, drug vehicles and excipients, formulation procedures, drug delivery systems, additives, regulations and legal aspects, quality procedures, and pharmaceutical technology. No other database provides the unique mix of coverage in EMBASE: Pharmacy.

WebMedLit: A weekly updated index of biomedical literature published on the Web, includes many articles not yet indexed in MEDLINE.

MD Internet Library, includes resource sections such as biomedical journals, patient information, practice parameters, continuing medical education and other important categories. This section is organised by a medical librarian for medical librarians.

MD Digests feature summaries of current medical news stories, updated weekly and enhanced with pre-configured literature searches and links to related sites elsewhere on the Web.

IntIndex is an Internet "Reference Shelf" of resources for librarians.

EDGAR-Online has signed new distribution agreements with seven Web-based providers of financial information including CBS.MarketWatch.com, Stockpoint, and five online brokerage firms. This is another web-based content provider that is not sitting around waiting for users to come to its interface. Many successful content vendors are seeking out users who are already in the arms of the vendors of related content, and asking if they can cut in. It's a strategy that is showing signs of success.

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## **NEWSPAPERS FILE COPYRIGHT LAWSUIT AGAINST WEBSITE**

LOS ANGELES - In a case with broad implications in cyberspace, the Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post filed a copyright infringement lawsuit against a Web site that posts their stories without permission.

### NOTABLE

The federal lawsuit accuses the Free Republic site of using hundreds of stories from the newspapers, violating their copyrights and diverting users and potential revenue from their own Web sites. Rex Heinke, an attorney for the newspapers, said the Free Republic site has been posting the stories "on a very large scale for a very long time". The Fresno-based site posts the stories and allows users to write comments about them. The site's operator, Jim Robinson, said he has ignored warnings from the newspapers because the practice is protected by the First Amendment and the "fair use" doctrine of copyright law.

The doctrine allows portions of copyrighted works to be duplicated when presented in the context of commentary, such as a book review that contains excerpts. The suit is widely seen as a potentially groundbreaking attempt to address how copyright protections apply to the internet.

### QUOTABLE

"The Net is one giant copying machine, and producers, authors and content providers have been worried that the Net would threaten their basic economic incentives," said John Shepard Wiley Jr, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Summaries by netAssets reporters

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## **LIBRARIES PROVIDE ROAD MAP FOR 'NET NAVIGATORS**

Libraries aren't just the on-ramps to the information superhighway. Now they're making the road a lot easier to travel. An innovative joint library project unveiled today will give World Wide Web users a single point of access to all library web sites, online catalogues, databases and other online resources across New York State.

The New York State Electronic Doorway Library Network ([www.nyedl.net](http://www.nyedl.net)), established by New York's nine Reference and Research Resources Councils, is a virtual network of all online resources of public, school, hospital, academic and special libraries state-wide.

Libraries provide access to online resources because more and more of the information that people need to live and learn and work is available electronically. Now, through the links provided by just one site—the EDL Network—users in libraries, homes and offices can look up information on Alzheimer's disease in a consumer-health database provided by New York City libraries, reach microfilm images of historic newspapers at the State Library in Albany, or

discover information on the Pan-American African Village through the Buffalo Museum of Science's research library.

The World Wide Web home page of each of the nine Reference and Research Resources (3Rs) Councils contains a gateway to the new EDL Network web site: a state map divided by colour into nine regions. Every region is linked to its respective Council's web page of local online library resources. Users can navigate between the web pages of all the regions and the EDL Network map to reach local resources throughout the state.

The EDL Network is also accessible through the New York State Library's web site at <http://unix2.nysed.gov>.

The 3Rs Councils, which are regional multi-type library organisations, established the network cost-effectively by using their existing technology and network infrastructures. The project was funded, in part, by New York State Electronic Doorway Library Services Aid of 1996. For more information, please contact Joseph Spadaro, Director of Programs and Services, New York Metropolitan Reference and Research Library Agency

(METRO), at (212) 228-2320 or [spadaro@metgate.metro.org](mailto:spadaro@metgate.metro.org).

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## **LIBRARY LIFE: A COLUMN OF ECLECTIC RANTINGS**

**by Katie Buller, Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin - Madison**

[kbuller@maccc.wisc.edu](mailto:kbuller@maccc.wisc.edu)

(Annemarie, perhaps you can identify with Katie here...)

I'm such a goody-two-sandals. A few years ago, during the initial stages of the internet explosion, I perceived a topical void (not to be confused with a topical ointment) in a particular area, so I started a listserv to fill that need. The subject of the listserv is not important, because I feel no matter what the topic, the end result would be the same : 95 percent of the subscribers are sane, while the remainder seem to be on a different planet.

Those of you who are listowners might be scratching your heads and thinking "she's just figuring this out NOW?" Actually, I figured it out right away. Let me give you an example:

Listowner A has set up the guidelines for using the list, which include the phrase "no foul language".

Subscriber B sees these seemingly innocent words and posts a message containing six of the seven words George Carlin describes. He only misses one word because he couldn't get it to rhyme with "scurrilous".

Listowner A warns subscriber B that if he does this again he will be barred from the list.

Subscriber B responds predictably with a cry of "censorship", failing to explain how the use of these six words on a public list contributes to intelligent thought.

Listowner A states that if he can't express himself adequately without the use of these six words, then perhaps he should take a few remedial courses in English composition.

Subscriber B writes back to her, using the seventh word very succinctly and directs it personally toward listowner A.

Listowner A bans subscriber B from the list.

Subscriber B now decides he cannot live without the list and begs to be unbanned, promising to clean up his language.

Listowner A, being just an old softie, reinstates subscriber B.

Subscriber B instantly posts another message with all seven words.

Listowner A bans subscriber B again, this time for good, and is now doomed to receive nasty notes accusing her of censorship for the next several weeks before subscriber B sinks back into the morass he came from.

This is normal for this particular list. It is political in nature and I have learned to accept the fact that if all subscribers are happy, then someone will decide that they need stirring up. On my list, many of the subscribers have learned how to flame without actually flaming, cuss without actually cussing. Some of them seem to get their jollies by seeing just how far they can go before I'll step in and slap them up. The creativity of these individuals is astounding. Some have even reached a pinnacle of vitriolic expression that might be equalled only by the old masters. As a result, I have to scan each post for disguised flameage ("your perception of the situation is tainted by the fact that you seem to be most closely related to the posterior end of an equine quadruped."). When I remind the list that this is still flaming, I usually get a lot of whining from the flammers and several offlist "attagirls" from people who never seem to be able to agree with me publicly.

Then there is the matter of staying on-topic. The list topic is broad in nature, so I am quite lenient when it comes to sticking with the subject, but occasionally even I can't see the connection between the discussion and the list topic. In other words, what does Karl Marx's toilet habits have to do with the world labour market and unions? When I ask, someone always seems to be able to make a dubious connection however ("If Marx had not flushed twice, the Sewer Union movement would have been destroyed!") . But I am not above reminding the list to make the relevance of the list discussion more obvious for the apparently ignorant listowner, who had no clue that Marx flushed twice.

After a year or so of my activity with this list, which could be compared to dancing on a bed of nails, the opportunity to host yet another list already in operation came along. In contrast to my first list, this particular list seemed innocent enough—discussion of pet birds. Full of happy people, happy little birds and sugary sunshine, right? I took on the list—small in comparison to my other list—and proceeded to introduce myself as the new listowner and all received me warmly. Until the first flame war. Yes..happy happy people with their happy happy birdies have flame wars that would put my first list to shame. As a result, I stepped in with my usual "behave or else" attitude. The subscribers went into shock—I was actually trying to CONTROL the list?

Accusations began to fly—if I expressed an opinion would it be as listowner or a list participant? If it was as the listowner, then if someone disagreed with me, would I ban them from the list? And what happened to the old listowner---after all he still OWNED the list, right? Of course some thought that because the old listowner was still around (he was the listserv guru) it meant they could just ignore me as some old biddy crackpot who only had the power to unsubs and ban them from the list forever. They felt that if I got out of line they could just go run to the old listowner who would naturally put me in my place. Naturally, this isn't true, but no amount of reassurance would placate these people. Even now, a year later, I feel the tension from certain folks and when I post a participatory message, they ignore me completely. If I post a listowner message, I might get a cold "thank you" but that's about it.

Still I keep on slogging through the hundreds of bounced messages that come in weekly, weeding the subscriber lists of invalid addresses, posting netiquette guidelines or warnings and occasionally even contributing to the conversation. But somewhere out there, yet another one

is sure that I am intending to censor the universe if I can, trodding the Bill of Rights underfoot as I go, a regular despot with sinister designs on destroying that person's freedom of expression. When that person tests me, I'll again feel like the old gunfighter facing down the raw ambitious youth, but will emerge triumphant when the list remains intact, on-topic and all is right with the world!

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### **I SHOT A QUERY INTO THE NET**

I shot a query into the net.

I haven't got an answer yet,

But seven people gave me hell

And said I ought to learn to spell;

A posted message called me rotten

For ignoring mail I'd never gotten;

An angry message asked me, Please

Don't send such drivel overseas;

A lawyer sent me private mail

And swore he'd slap my ass in jail --

I'd mentioned Un\*x in my gem

And failed to add the T and M;

One netter thought it was a hoax:

"Hereafter, post to net dot jokes!";

Another called my grammar vile

And criticised my writing style.

Each day I scan each Subject line

In hopes the topic will be mine;

I shot a query into the net.

I haven't got an answer yet ...

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Southern African Online User Group  
<http://www.saoug.org.za>  
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Update: November 2001