

math

Volume 80, Issue 3

NEWS

Friday, June 4, 1998



Linux at UW

The Linux at UW project was formed last term to create easy-to-install Linux packages for software used in CS courses. We have just released a CD containing the following packages:

- Java JDK 1.1.7v1a (CS 134, 240)
- Modula-3 (CS 246, 240, 241)
- Scheme (CS 241)
- DLX (CS 241)
- μ C++ 4.7 (CS 342)
- gcc-mips and utilities (CS 354)

The CD also includes a copy of the Red Hat 5.2 distribution of Linux, and is bootable for easy installation. However, the software packages are provided in .deb and .tgz format in addition to .rpm, so that they may also be installed with distributions of Linux other than Red Hat. We also have a limited number of CDs containing Red Hat 6.0 instead. However, the Java JDK and the Modula-3 packages do not work with this version, so please ask for the Red Hat 5.2 CD if you intend to use Java or Modula-3.

The CDs may be borrowed or purchased from the MathSoc office for \$4. If you only wish to borrow the CD, you must leave a deposit of \$4 at the MathSoc office. You may return the CD within one week to get your \$4 back. We will be providing MathSoc with CDs each morning, so if they are sold out, please come back the next day.

For more information, please see the Linux at UW web page at <http://www.csclub.uwaterloo.ca/u/uw-linux/>

If you would like to help with the Linux at UW project, please contact olhotak@undergrad.math.uwaterloo.ca

Regards,
The Linux at UW Team

USENIX Student Outreach Program

Did you know that the USENIX Association is interested in giving money to students to attend conferences? Many UW students have taken advantage of this program. All you have to do is apply, and you could be on your way to a conference on some hot topics in the world of computing. Meet people, share ideas, make contacts, check out prospective employers, have some fun! They're accepting grants right now for a Security Symposium in Washington DC in August.

USENIX is also interested in funding undergrad software projects and publishing your research papers.

Visit my web page at <http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~rblander/usenix/> where you'll find some basic information about USENIX, their Student Programs, links to details about these conferences, and links to the grant application forms.

Check it out! It could work for you.

Robyn Landers
UW's USENIX campus outreach representative
rblanders@math.uwaterloo.ca

MEF Sponsors Midnight Sun

The Midnight Sun Solar Car V recently qualified to compete in Sunrayce 99, North America's largest long-distance solar car race, thanks in part to generous contributions from the Math Endowment Fund. MEF's first contribution, \$2300, was used towards the purchase of solar cells, while its second contribution, \$3000, helped the team to afford to encapsulate the solar cells in a protective coating.

MEF, along with other notable organizations, such as RIM, 3M and NRC-CNRC, qualifies as a Bronze Sponsor of the team, and Midnight Sun is grateful for MEF's support. "Midnight Sun relies on donations from the university and the private sector so MEF's sponsorship was crucial, allowing us to construct one of the most important parts of the car, the solar array," says Lukasz Pawlowski, Business Manager for Midnight Sun. "Additionally, MEF's support is helping to dispel the myth, once and for all, that Midnight Sun is purely an engineering project. We welcome students from all disciplines, including the Math Faculty, to help make Midnight Sun a rewarding experience."

The University of Waterloo's solar race car is a serious contender in this year's 2175 km race from Washington, DC, to Orlando, Florida. Midnight Sun IV, the predecessor car, finished first among all Canadian universities and seventh overall in the last race, Sunrayce 97. Come see the solar car that MEF helped build on June 4th at 1:00 p.m. when Midnight Sun V is officially unveiled across from Environmental Studies I, next to Laurel Creek.

Michelle K Lam

lookAHEAD

mathNEWS

June 4	Issue #3 wins the election
June 14	Issue #4 production night
6:30pm, MathSoc (MC 3038)	
<u>June 18</u>	Sucks to be Issue #4

Math Faculty

June 4	Last Day for Winter Term
Pre-Registration!	
<u>June 25</u>	Course Withdrawal Deadline

MathSoc

June 10	In Dreams/8mm OR
Simply Irresistable/Cruel Intentions	
June 17	You've got Mail/City of Angels
<u>June 24</u>	Prince of Egypt/Antz

MGC

June 4	Grad Portraits taken (last day?)
<u>June 19</u>	Convocation

MEF

June 25	Deadline for funding proposal submissions
June 25	Deadling for Nominations to Council and Board of Directors

Co-op

June 23	Interviews end
<u>June 25</u>	Rank a job, any job...

Miscellaneous

June 20	Father's Day
June 28	A Perfect Birthday

Hello 00Grads!

Did you get your grad photos taken this past week? If not, and you're not here in the fall, e-mail mgc@uwaterloo.ca immediately. If there is a demand for future grad photo dates I will contact Jostens and try to make arrangements.

There will be a meeting on Monday June 7, at 11:30 in the MGC office for anyone interested in joining the yearbook committee. Positions available on the yearbook committee include writers, photographers and layout specialists.

Do you have a class button? Our buttons have arrived and are available for \$2 at Pizza Day.

Our next social event will be a BBQ tentatively scheduled for Friday June 11, at 7:00 pm; the location will be announced later.

If you are graduating in the class of 2000 and are not on the e-mail list send mail to mgc@uwaterloo.ca with the subject "addlist".

'Till Next Time,

Esther Small

Math Grad Committee Chair 2000

MGC 00 — 00Grad: The Class of the Year, Decade and Century

mastHEAD

Guest Editor: Col. Mustard

Talk about being in the wrong place at the wrong time! There we were, enjoying a quiet dinner party, when a *mathNEWS* editor turns up dead in the closet!

Naturally, my fellow guests pulled out their little notepads and started to question each other feverishly, trying to figure out who did the dirty deed. I had bigger fish to fry, myself. Oh, I asked my share of questions, so that those other fools wouldn't get suspicious; but then, when they weren't looking... I stole away to an XTerm and put together this issue. At last! My chance to twist the minds of math students! And it cost me so very little...

Of course, there were other, little people who likewise helped with this issue. They said some strange things during the investigation: Greg "Blue" Taylor ("Revolver? I didn't even know her!"), Gigi "Purple" Garbett ("I'm *not* the stapler. I resent that!"), Matt "Yellow" Walsh ("Revolver was first, but snooker was worse."), Chad "White" Severn (*[pointing at Matt]* "It was her... him."), Steve "Green" Hanov ("You're dropping your fly?"), Mike "Red" Thorsley ("I like my muscle tension."), Chris "Invisible" McGuire ("No comment. No, I really mean it. What part of the words *no comment* don't you understand?"), and Jean "Adjudicator" Knetsch ("Honey, darling, dearest, sweetheart... don't."). Richard "Corpse" Bilson was also around, but was keeping suspiciously silent. I think he knows something...

Blast! That infernal strumpet Mrs. Peacock is sneaking around the Conservatory again. I had best make myself scarce. My regards to Marion at Graphics, though, for bringing my megalomaniac dream to print.

Colonel Mustard

You'll never take me alive!

I like monkeys.

Letter to a co-op employer

Don't ask me about work
I'm not gonna tell you why I'm sour
I'm just gonna work at your job
for 15 dollars an hour
I want you to pay me for my degree
I think it's only right
cuz I will be paying it for it
the rest of my life

I'm just gonna take the money I make
and I'm gonna go away

We barely have time to think in this world
let alone analyse
and I don't think that I'm smarter than you
but I don't think I wanna buy your lies
The Man learns to be a master
and I've learned to be his slave
I don't blame it all on you
but I don't wanna play your game

I'm just gonna take the money I make
and I'm gonna go away

I was 19 years old
they taught me about life
they taught me how to sacrifice
my sanity and my mind
so don't tell me about ethics
and don't tell me about pride
just give me something for my trouble
cuz this time it's not a free ride

I'm just gonna take the money I make
and I'm gonna go away

(Apologies to Ani DiFranco for mutating Letter to a john)

Aziz Ebrahim

2B Operations Research

Top 10 Things Heard in the Server Room After It Goes Down

10. "Pedal faster, you guys! The power's dropping!"
9. "Hmm.. maybe we shouldn't use the undergrad server to keep coffee warm."
8. "I should've cut the *blue* wire! RUN!"
7. "Does anyone have any glue? The gum's not working."
6. "Y2K? Yeah, I was going to look into that someday."
5. "Okay, we've given them nearly ten minutes notice. Pull the plug."
4. "I'll admit, the system boards do get kind of dusty. But we don't normally use furniture polish."
3. "If we do this a couple of times a week they usually give us some more money."
2. "Maybe the new shag carpet wasn't such a good idea."
1. "Damn squirrels! OUT!"

Steve Hanov

Cynic's Corner

Add ministration

Yes, it's me again, and once more I shall resort to cheesy sayings in order to get across my points and ideas. In this case, the idea I will employ is that the more things change the more they stay the same. I think that's rooted in bureaucracy, and the fact that no matter how many different people you go to, you still tend to get the same answers. These answers also tend to be either "please hold" or "I don't don't know, why not ask Mr. Green in the mailroom?". Actually, odds are good that you could get both of those, as they delay for as long as possible before redirecting you. It can be rather hard to cut through some of the red tape when there are too many people involved.

For example, a case of the right hand not recognizing the existence of a left. If you have some sort of multiple choice questionnaire where the option "other" is given, it's usually helpful for people reading it later to know what this "other" is. Like a doctor who wants to know if a certain 'other' medication is being taken by an unconscious patient who needs surgery, or a student who wants to know the meaning behind the mysterious 'other' reason for not having their marks released. (Hypothetically speaking, of course.) So the doctor goes to the Registrar's Office, and there he finds out that the person who originally filled out the form for the patient can't be immediately reached.

Now, the first thing to recognize is that it's no use getting upset at the people who are the first contact, because they don't have a clue what the answer is either. They're just trying to clean up the problems that the right hands have given them, of which there are a large number capable of filling out forms. Yelling at these people just tends to upset them and make them less inclined to help, so avoid that (unless it looks like they're really doing this on purpose). But when they do help by directing our good doctor to a potential place, due to provincial cutbacks to health care, the doctor can't send anyone else to figure out just what's going on with phantom 'other' hands. He has to continue following up himself. But of course unless people keep similar hours, the person he wants is on now lunchbreak or out sick

for the day. And when you go back to the original first contact place, the person you talked to before is gone so you have to start anew. Problems are happening already, as the hapless patient will end up waiting another day before surgery. (I suppose on the bright side, the doctor is getting his exercise.)

So over the next few days, Doc tries to follow up to a few places, everyone being rather congenial about the whole thing, yet ultimately they cannot say for sure the reason for 'other' being checked off on Doc's multiple choice questionnaire. One gets to a point here where a likely answer will satisfy the good doctor just as well as an actual answer from the original person dealing with forms. (Hey, his patient might appreciate less delay and Doc probably has other things to do). So when and if he finds something, at this point we just hope that there won't be any complications in the future arising from an assumption being made.

Naturally this has all been hypothetical, but to apply it to real life we could look at voting enumeration. I think it's bothersome enough to have to register, but I've heard a couple of people commenting on the dial-a-vote line being busy quite a bit, the need to find conclusive proof of residency... most people have some better ways to spend their time. (Then again, I'm not thrilled with the whole election deal, and not just because I didn't manage to keep up with what was going on all the time, there were also those Liberal ads that just seemed to spend all their time trying to put down Mike Harris when there was enough of that going around already... I think I'm digressing.) Why don't I just conclude by tossing out two points to ponder then. Firstly, if you're doing something one way only to save time or money, is it really worth it if it annoys others? And secondly, if n doctors have n patients that they need to operate on, just how much does it matter that they're getting exercise via a runaround?

Greg "hologrami" Taylor

Boy howdy, what an election!

The winning party fended off all opponents in Thursday's provincial election, heading to power for a probable four-year term. This marks the second time in the last 15 years this party has won an election. The voters sent a clear message: "We want this party to run this province."

And in the aftermath of the shortest provincial campaign on record, it's clear to all who the winners and losers are. Many key ridings were won, although a few were lost. We won't bore you with specifics here; you probably heard about them through other media outlets by now. After all, it's Friday!

The two parties that didn't do as well in this election still had lots to say on election night. The spin-meisters from both parties were confiding to reporters that this was really a victory for their party, if you look at it from the right point of view.

As usual, journalists had a field day with this election. Pundits began wondering if the winning party's television advertisements, which attacked the other parties, had any effect on the outcome of the election. It's clear now, that although the other parties had confrontational ads as well, they just weren't as effective.

And there were other parties in the running as well. Although the Green, Communist, Family Law or Natural Law party won't

be running the province any time soon, they accomplished what they wanted in this election: getting a few votes.

Here in Waterloo, the campaign posters and signs will be coming down this week. They've served their purpose: we now have chosen our local MPP. Who knows? We may see our MPP become a cabinet minister, although it's too soon to tell. The premier will most likely announce the cabinet positions in the upcoming weeks.

And now that the provincial election is behind us, we can expect to see the winning party begin to implement its platform and policies in the next few months. You can pretty much guess what the government will be doing in the areas of health care, education and taxes. They've spent the last four weeks drilling their policies into us!

This is the government that will lead us into the next millennium. Will Ontario be better off? We shall see if the voters chose right.

As the winning leader said during the campaign, he was in this to win, and by golly, he did.

profQUOTES

“Am I QED? I think it’s QED.”

Nica, PMATH 351

“I had my page upside down. I wonder if I could still give the lecture if I continued to hold the page this way.”

Nica, PMATH 351

“There will be a problem in the homework that will refer to the definition I’m going to give five minutes from now ... I won’t tell you which problem because that would be like giving away the end of a movie.”

Nica, PMATH 351

“Maybe if you cross your eyes and stand on your head, you’ll think it’s obvious.”

Dickey, PMATH 360

“I think one should be able to think of higher things and not get one’s elbows dirty.”

Dickey, PMATH 360

“He was in an animal up to his armpits ... That’s how I feel sometimes dealing with operating systems.”

Dickey, PMATH 360

“My mind goes at a different speed than my chalk. I’m not saying it’s faster or slower ... it’s just at a different speed.”

Geelen, C&O 350

“One question you might ask: ‘If you met an LP on the street, how would you know it’s non-degenerate?’”

Geelen, C&O 350

“And now I’m going to use multi-media.” (goes for overhead)
“This is very high-tech for me.”

Geelen, C&O 350

“I told my kids a matrix is just an array of numbers, it has nothing to do with Keanu Reeves.”

Liu, PHYS 363

[referring to Maupertuis’ Principle of Least Action] “one of the theories was based on a theological argument. A certain quantity had to be minimized because of the ‘wisdom of God.’ You can not do that on your exam!”

Liu, PHYS 363

MFCF Installs “Express Terminal Service”

Don’t you hate it when you want to log in quickly between classes just to check your mail or something, but all the terminals are taken by people trying to do the same thing, and the flurry of sudden activity makes it take forever to log in and start up all those windows?

Why not try the new “Express Terminal Service” recently installed by MFCF. Six terminals in MC3007 offer a short list of choices for simple telnet connections. No windows to wait for, nothing fancy — just log in, do your quick e-mail check or whatever, and be on your way.

We hope you’ll find this a useful service.

Ask a CS 452 Student

Dear CS 452 Student,

I’m a man in his early twenties who has never had a real relationship with a woman. I’ve looked around, but it seems like the good ones are all taken. What can I do?

—Lonely in Lindsay

Dear Lonely,

```
RegisterAs("Lukin4Luv");
do {
    baby = AwaitEvent(SexyMama);
    response = Send(baby,
                    "Hey baby, wanna go for a ride?");
} while (response == FALSE);
```

Dear CS 452 Student,

I’m in real trouble at work. My boss is expecting more from me than I can deliver, and the work is piling up. I can’t take this, but I’m afraid I’ll lose my job. Please help!

—Frustrated in Fonthill

Dear Frustrated,

```
task = ReceiveSpecific(boss);
Reply(boss, "Up yours!");
Put(task, my_ass);
Delay(MAX_DELAY);
sucker = WhoIs("assistant");
response = Send(sucker, task);
Put(response, my_ass);
```

Dear CS 452 Student,

I’ve become obsessed lately thinking about death, of my own and of the people I love. It’s hard to live my life when I’m always afraid of what might happen next. Can you give me any advice?

—Anxious in Arnprior

Dear Anxious,

```
Kernel initializing...
Copying GDT entries...
Initializing GDT entries for first process...
Creating process stack...
Launching first process...
ERROR: Unhandled system call exception 0xC3
General Protection Fault exception on selector 0x0
Unrecoverable error. System Halted.
```

Dear CS 452 Student,

I love my girlfriend, but she spends more time in the real time lab than she does with me! Last night I tried to talk to her about it, but she just kept saying the words “context switch” over and over. What does this mean?

—Petulant in Petawawa

Dear Petulant,

```
NMI button pressed. Rebooting.
```

Richard Bilson is a syndicated advice columnist whose weekly column, *Ask a CS 452 Student*, appears in over one newspaper nationwide. He is also the author of the book *What I Did On My Summer Vacation*.



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The Latest Buzz. Check out what's [new](#) at eBay!

Search Result

Current Auctions

18:45:25 PDT

Item#	Item	Price	Bids	Ends
108349243	Wallet found on alley floor with \$20 in it	\$28	5	in 45 mins
109425743	RARE! Star Wars poster signed by me! Only one in existence!	\$1.99	1	06/02 14:12
110238484	STAR WARS Domain! www.maytheforcebewith.yo	\$10000	0	06/02 23:01
115034832	Taco Bell Star Wars piece: R2-D2! Win \$10000!	\$3333	0	06/03 0:15
119123232	*LOOK*! The Toronto Numb parody paper <small>pc</small>	\$15	15	06/03 10:54
123743432	INCREDIBLE Les Nessman mug! WKRP!	\$18.99	5	06/03 13:43
125384313	Hand carved Vic-20! Demo-model, never publicly released!	\$130	2	06/03 15:12
127123171	Gently used MLB Team: The Expos! (Stadium Extra)	\$1500	1	06/04 14:12
129172361	Blank DVD! Holds 4 gigs! (No reserve)	\$26	4	06/04 15:59
130977432	Rare Cigar Store Indian! Real! Eats little, sleeps standing up	\$10000	4	06/04 16:44
138349243	**FINEST** Star Wars Ep 1 Cotton Candy	\$2.99	2	06/04 15:14
139425743	Used pair of implants: D-size <small>pc</small>	\$1432	54	06/04 22:12
140238484	Celine Dion CD collection HARD-TO-FIND!!!!	\$100	0	06/04 23:01
145034832	Tim Hortons Coffee-Double, Double (N/A in USA!)	\$1.49	1	06/05 0:15
149123232	VERY COOL operating system NACHOS add own features!	\$10	0	06/05 10:54
153743432	10 Empty Canon ink cartridges, make thousands in profit!	\$1000	5	06/05 13:43
155384313	LAPTOP computer: 386/33mhz...but it's a LAPTOP!	\$350	7	06/05 15:12
157123171	Refugee from overseas (loves basketball!) (N/R)	\$20.10	1	06/06 14:12
159172361	*LOOK!!!* Wacky MOUSE PAD showing Bugs Bunny <small>pc</small>	\$1.50	0	06/06 15:59
160977432	HARD-TO-FIND belly button lint: LIKE NEW! <small>pc</small>	\$0.01	0	06/06 16:44
161543434	BIG roll o carpet: VERY NICE BLOOD RED-LIKE COLOR	\$0.01	1	06/06 23:01
165034832	BID.COM online auction house (N/R)	\$140	6	06/07 0:15
169123232	Thumb tack *LOOK!* Shipping extra <small>pc</small>	\$10	0	06/07 10:54
173743432	FLUFFY animal MOST LIKELY A HAMSTER (N/R) <small>pc</small>	\$5	3	06/07 13:43
175384313	Tickets to Maple Leafs vs. Buffalo Sabres Game 6 (In BUFFALO!)	\$268.50	13	06/07 15:12
177123171	SCRIPT TO STAR WARS 2!!!!!! (empstrkback) STAR WARS 2!	\$100	1	06/08 14:12
179172361	DOMAIN! www.imptint.com	\$360	1	06/08 15:59
180977432	DOMAIN! www.mathnews.com	\$1589	79	06/08 16:44

Spermatikos Logos #3

Howdy, folks! Due to the fact that I received no submissions for the Spermatikos Logos #2, it is obvious that I made a mistake. So I'll correct that mistake, and then you've got until June 14th to submit to me. *[grin]* Or I'll have to discipline you all thoroughly. So the one additional clue you should need for the Star Wars Logos is as follows:

7. *The photographer was not dressed as Obi Wan Kenobi.*

There you go. Finish your puzzles and hand them in, like good little children, and we'll give you some very nice prizes. And they're better than a gold sticker on the top of your page! Submissions are due on Monday June 14th at 6:30pm, in the **BLACK BOX**, in the MathSoc office, or by email. Or else you can just lick my boot.

Answers to Logos #1

There were two submissions this week, from Duncan McGregor and Glen McMillan. Both entries were correct. So according to Matt's handy-yet-invisible two-sided die, the winner is Glen McMillan! You will receive a lovely C&D gift certificate. (Free food Mmmm!) And the runner up receives an honourable mention for having completed and submitted to me his solution to my evil (Eeevil, I tell you!) torture device. Otherwise known as a Logos. And for those of you who completed the Logos, but were too afraid to submit (or those of you who were close, but just gave up trying), here are the answers:

Day	Club	Class	Time	Preference
Monday	Volleyball	CS 351	6:00	5th
Tuesday	Fencing	AM 433	9:00	4th
Wednesday	Ultimate	CS 342	8:00	1st
Thursday	Akwafit	C&O 350	4:00	2nd
Friday	Social dance	PMATH 330	7:00	3rd

This Week's Puzzle:

Summer is Warm II - the Firemen

This puzzle's a challenge, but I know you're all up to it. And just to get your attention (if I haven't already), I'm gonna spice this challenge up a little. The prize this week will go to the person who is closest to the correct answer. In the case of a tie, the winner will be the person with the most interesting response to the following: Whodunnit?

A team of local firemen got together to raise money for charity. These hunks volunteered to shave their heads, after trying to grow their hair long for one month. Can you figure out each fireman's name, hair colour, achieved hair length, type of facial hair, the amount he collected for charity, and the order in which each person's head was shaved? (You may assume that the female firefighters did an alternative activity to raise money for charity.)

1. The six people are: Lister; the person with black hair; the person with both a moustache and a beard; the person who collected \$35; the person whose hair is 11" long; and the third person to get their head shaved.
2. The blond fireman (who has no facial hair) was shaved immediately after the purple-haired fireman.
3. The person with blue hair collected \$40, and was not shaved fifth.
4. The third-shortest hair is twice the length of the shortest

hair (which is an even number).

5. All money collected is in multiples of \$5, and each amount is unique. The total collected was \$240.
6. The first two people shaved both had moustaches only.
7. Mike had his head shaved after the person with blue hair, who was shaved immediately after one of the two people with no facial hair.
8. The blond fireman has hair 4" longer than the fireman with purple hair.
9. The lowest amount of money collected (by the fireman with both the beard and moustache) is half the second-highest amount collected.
10. The fireman with red hair has both a moustache and beard.
11. The person who collected \$60 had no facial hair, and did not have the longest hair.
12. Only one person has a beard but no moustache. This person had his head shaved before the brunette.
13. The person with 17" hair was shaved immediately before Dan, who was shaved before the person with only a beard.
14. Neither Chris nor Fred (who collected the least amount of money) has black hair.
15. The person with only a beard does not have blond hair.
16. The person with 15" hair collected more money than Rimmer, who collected \$15 more than the person who was shaved last.
17. The highest amount of money collected is twice the second-lowest amount collected (which was not by the fireman shaved first).
18. Chris had longer hair than the second person shaved, whose hair was 3" longer than the redhead's.
19. The fireman with brown hair also had the shortest hair, and had no moustache.
20. The person whose head was shaved fifth had longer hair than both the person shaved immediately before him and the person shaved after him.
21. The second-longest hair is three times the length of the second-shortest hair, which is not red.
22. Chris collected \$10 more than Rimmer. Neither of them have brown hair.

Gigi "crack that whip, baby" Garbett
gngarbet@artsmail.uwaterloo.ca

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You're So Pretty!

Notes from a Y2K Skeptic

Over the last year and a half, we've all heard from the media that come January 1st, 2000, computers will destroy the world. Estimates of the damages range from simple accounting errors to nuclear disasters. But things can't possibly be as bad as the media would have us believe. As a certified Y2K sceptic, I've devised a Y2K preparedness plan to help cope with all the hype and hysteria.

Early 1999 - Carefully examine the way Y2K will affect your life. If you are not running any software written before 1982, you should be fine. No need to worry; there's lots of time.

Spring 1999 - When people tell you how they're preparing for the big bug, smirk and remind them that it will only be a problem for large companies running cheap mainframes from the sixties. There's been so much press about it that every reputable company would have fixed the problem ages ago. Remember the Michaelangelo virus? The world was going to end, and there was such a fuss that everyone eradicated it from their computers and nothing happened. No need to worry; by January 2nd, it'll all be forgotten.

Summer 1999 - Microsoft releases its fifty-second Y2K service pack to deal with "minor issues" regarding its products. (NT users have to wait until the year 2002, when the next version comes out.) Make a point of not installing it. Inform your friends that the problems it fixes are so minor that you'd have to be some sort of Quality Assurance Specialist to even notice them. Point out that it's just a sign of how overly concerned the general public has become. There's absolutely no reason to be concerned; unless you're doing something really obscure, you won't be affected.

Fall 1999 - Write weekly letters to the editors of all the major newspapers and news stations, chiding them for referring to the Y2K "virus". Accuse them of being involved a conspiracy with the huge industry that has sprung up to "correct" Y2K issues. The problem is not real; it's just a money-making scheme for consultants.

Late 1999 - Throw up your arms in frustration when you hear that the US has changed its foreign policy: It will now bomb any country which does not comply with its mandatory Y2K testing plan. Note the tragic disappearance of 9 certified U.S. Y2K consultants in Iraq. What's all the fuss about?! Two lousy digits! That can't affect anything major.

December 1999 - Go to each of your financial institutions and update all of your records, just in case. Wait in line, annoyed by the thousands of misinformed individuals who are withdrawing all of their money. To pass the time, warn everyone you meet of how they are being manipulated by a huge conspiracy perpetuated by the media.

January 2000 - After recovering from the party, sit back and watch the evening news. But the power's out, so you have to use a battery-operated radio. You learn that the electric companies were not ready in time. You try to call someone, but you are informed that you have been disconnected for not paying your bills since 1900. After checking your account, you learn that the economy has collapsed because several million people all withdrew their life savings at the same time. Only one industry is booming. Authorities assure the public that everything will be back to normal as soon as they can scrounge together enough money to meet the post-Y2K consultants' demands.

There you have it! The official Y2K skeptics' preparedness

plan, for those of us who know that the Y2K has just as much validity as the Loch Ness monster. If you think otherwise, you can go ahead and hoard your canned food. Buy your gas power generator. Hide all your money under your mattress. Dig that nuclear fallout shelter in the back yard. But I'm not worried, and I'll tell you why: The real millenium doesn't start until 2001.

Steve Hanov,
Certified Y2K Skeptic

Letters to *mathNEWS*

Legions of the Clueless

Not all of the e-mail that we get here at mathNEWS is critical of our articles. In fact, large sections of it seem to be unaware of our articles at all. We get a lot of e-mail from people who think that we're some kind of weird information service. For example, a few weeks ago, when I was finishing up the previous article with this title, we received an e-mail from someone wanting to know when people started dying their hair.

Now granted, there was a single article last term about dying one's hair, or more specifically annoying one's roommates to no end by dying one's hair. However, I at least consider it odd that someone, upon reading this article, would consider mathNEWS to be a bastion of historical knowledge of the subject. It seems, well, unreasonable to conclude that.

The most common clueless questions, though, are the result of confusion about what we do here. There's rather a lot of people who seem to feel that any publication entitled "mathNEWS" should have something to do with math, aside from being published by students studying it. This leads to all kinds of confusion. The most recent e-mail of this sort ran:

hello. i'm a 13 year old girl with a problem. i have been getting bad marks in math and my teacher said if i wanted to bring up my grade i would have to find some articles about math. while i think you are doing an excellent job, i have not yet found any "real" articles about math. if you could write me back with any information, i will be very thankful.

*In general, we try to be kind to these poor souls, who are suffering from honest confusion rather than malicious idiocy. For instance, about a year ago, we received an e-mail asking if we could provide the author with an example of Mary Fairfax Somerville's work in Algebra. Offhand, of course, the answer is **no**. However, a quick web search turned up some biographical information which proved to be helpful.*

We've also gotten requests for mathematical results, people seeking suggestions for their high school independent studies, and students wanting copies of old CMC problems. Naturally, we can't help most of these people. That doesn't always stop us from trying, but when people ask us strange questions in the middle of a production cycle... well, the results aren't always pretty.

Of course, there's a related class of correspondence which we receive on a regular basis, which also seems to stem from name confusion. However, it's a sufficiently bizarre story, that I'm going to wait until next issue to talk about the Iranian Cult of mathNEWS.

Matt "So-Krates" Walsh

mathNEWSquiz #3

Owen, we barely knew you

Hello to all! I hope all is well in Mathieland, the happiest place on Earth (provided, of course, that you're either a masochist or suffering from a caffeine overdose). There are a couple of things I want to let you know. First of all, I had intended to have the Star Wars Squiz due on May 31, along with Squiz #1. However, that announcement did not get put in, due to an oversight on my part. Therefore, the submissions to the Star Wars Squiz will be due on Monday, June 14 at 6:30 p.m. (Hopefully, you'll at least try it now — darn procrastinators). Secondly, it was my original intention to not have any more professional wrestling questions after Squiz #1. I figured I'd let you either worship or condemn me once, depending on your personal tastes, and then leave it at that. However, with last Sunday's tragic passing of Owen Hart, I have decided to add one category based on his wrestling career, as a hopefully not-so-pathetic attempt at a tribute to him. To those of you who hate wrestling, I sincerely apologize. Please don't let this keep you from doing the rest of the Squiz. And, I promise this will be the last time I throw any pro wrestling questions in the Squiz (for this term, anyway). Anyways, here are the solutions to Squiz #1: **Music Lyrics:** 1) "Charlie Brown" by The Coasters; 2) "(I'm a) Road Runner" by Jr. Walker and the All-Stars; 3) "Superman's Song" by Crash Test Dummies; 4) "Mickey" by Toni Basil; the theme was cartoon characters; **Comics:** 1) a fink; 2) Catbert; 3) Spike; 4) Helga; 5) Attila; **Stanley:** 1) win 3 consecutive Stanley Cups (except that it didn't happen — suckers); 2) Toronto Maple Leafs (their last Cup was 1967); 3) Ron Hextall (1987 as a member of the Philadelphia Flyers vs. Edmonton); 4) Tony Esposito and Danny Grant; 5) Minnesota North Stars (1991); **Wrestling Music:** 1) "Rowdy" Roddy Piper; 2) "Diamond" Dallas Page; 3) "2001: A Space Odyssey"; 4) Insane Clown Posse; 5) Bret "Hitman" Hart.

We had 2 (yes, two) submissions for Squiz #1, so my deepest thanks goes out to the following people: the tag team of Erin, Lisa, and Sko scored 6 points; and our winners this week, with a score of 16 points, the tag team of Erin and Brady! Congratulations! You can pick up your prize in the MathSoc office during office hours.

So, without further ado, it's time to play the Squiz!

Music Lyrics

1 point for naming the title and artist, 1 point for identifying the underlying theme

1. He's never near you
To comfort and cheer you
When all those sad tears
Are falling, baby, from your eyes.
2. Look for a rainbow in every storm
Find out for certain, love's gonna be there for you
You'll always be someone's baby.
3. What do you think you'll do then
I bet that'll shoot down your plane
It'll take you a couple of vodka and tonics
To set you on your feet again.
4. You say, "Yes," I say, "No."
You say, "Stop," and I say, "Go go go."

Owen Hart: 1965-1999

1. Which WrestleMania was Owen's first?
2. Owen held the Tag Team Championship several times, with 3 different partners. Name all 3.
3. Owen rose to wrestling superstardom when he defeated his brother, Bret "Hitman" Hart, at WrestleMania X. What sports arena was WM X held in?
4. In 1994, Owen won the King of the Ring tournament, enabling him to call himself what name?
5. What organization did Owen begin his pro wrestling career in?

Homer does Hollywood

I'll give you the name of a celebrity, you give me the name of the character that celebrity played on "The Simpsons"

1. Danny DeVito
2. Elizabeth Taylor
3. Meryl Streep
4. Sara Gilbert
5. Kathleen Turner

Acronyms

I'll give you the acronym, you tell me what it stands for

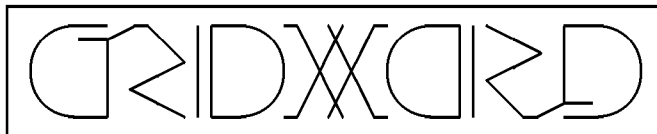
1. CTRL-A
2. WNBA
3. WHO
4. NATO
5. CSIS

Well, that's that. Good luck to all of you. Submissions to both the Star Wars Squiz (Squiz #2) and this Squiz will be due on Monday, June 14th by 6:30 p.m. You can submit your solutions in one of 2 ways: you can deposit them into the BLACK BOX outside of the Comfy Lounge, or you can e-mail them to me at cjmcguire@undergrad.math.uwaterloo.ca. Remeber that we do give prizes for the person or team that scores the highest, and you can't win if you don't submit! Hey, what have you got to lose? Until next time, take care!

Chris "Mr. Subliminal (Rest in peace, Owen)" McGuire

Solution to Issue #1 gridWORD

Q	U	I	D		I	S	O	M	E	R	
U			Y	O	N	D	E	R		L	H
E	V	I	L		R	Y	E		S	I	N
S		N	A	S	A	L		A	U		I
T	A	U	N	T		L	A	C	T	A	T
I		R		Y	E		C	L	R		E
O	R	E	O		V	A	N		A	V	R
N	O		P	R	E		E	L		I	Z
A	D	O	R	I	N	G		E	B	O	N
R	E		A	M		A	R	I	E	L	G
L	O	C	H		F	U	N		N	A	T
E		R		C	A	N	A	R	D		U
	C	Y	G	N	E	T			S	O	U



gridCOMMENTS

The Lazy Man's Grid

Hey everyone, welcome to June. You'll all be pleased to know that I am in fact going to be in graduate school in September, so that's all right. Where is not yet determined, merely the fact, but I'm still fine with that.

Anyhow, so there were two grids due this week. I received six submissions for the grid from Issue 1 this term, despite a number of glaring errors in the puzzle (an across and down clue transposed, a word without a clue, a couple of shakey definitions, and a B which is also mysteriously an R), which probably means something. One of these submissions was even perfect, but that lucky person chose not to write their name on their entry, so sucks to be them. The other submissions came from Erin, Lisa & Sko; John Arnold, Migrant Programmer; Rafael; Garth "wrapped around Linda's finger" Sherrif; and Stefan Larson, who had the fewest errors is thus pronounced the winner of the Issue 1 *gridWORD*; congratulations! You can pick up your prize in the MathSoc office. Answers to the GridQuestion: "The scarcity of both snow and clothes", "Not doing anything with my old friends since I have a girlfriend now", and "Failing exams is less depressing when not combined with Seasonal Affective Disorder".

With regards to the Star Wars grid from Issue 2, there was a bit of a dearth of submissions, so we're keeping entries for that one open for another two weeks. Submit! If you need a copy, either print it off the website, or come by the *mathNEWS* office, and a friendly editor will happily give you a back-issue.

Now, in case you're wondering about the large amounts of black space in this issue's *gridWORD*, it's all very simple. You see, recently my Lovely Assistant has been on a Scrabble™ craze, playing at least two games a day with basically whoever happens to be around. So it was suggested that this week's grid be taken from a Scrabble game. So the two of us, along with Sarge the SAC Guy (sorry, whatever SAC is calling itself these days) sat down and played what turned out to be a really good game, which I then transcribed, and brought to you as your puzzle for this week. Cool, eh?

Anyhow, submissions for this week are due on Monday, June 14th at 6:30 in the BLACK BOX or the MathSoc office, or you can e-mail us. Your GridQuestion for this week: *Is there life after the Phantom Menace?*

Happy Gridding!

Matt "So-Krates" Walsh

Grid Clues (The Great Scrabble Craze)

Across

1. Thirteen, for a baker
3. Irish dance
5. What a pig!
7. Aesop's and LaFontaine's form
9. Swears
11. Mingles
12. You, if you think this clue is about you
14. ___ eleison
17. British "bye"
19. British slang for money
21. Pertaining to
23. Restraints from speaking unpleasant truths
26. Yes
27. Lift sixteen, and what do you get?
28. Put up with

Down

2. The symbol of null and void
4. Doorway
6. What you have at the start
8. Drill
10. Program of food intake
11. A name I call myself?
13. At a distance
15. Not in straight hair
16. When you look into bright light
18. Aid and ___
20. Cold and slippery
21. Hulking monster
22. Recursive computer language
24. Mountain goat
25. Respect and adoration

