

math

NEWS

Volume 98, Issue 1

Friday, May 13th, 2004



**Save Our
Greenspace!**

We wanna play frisbee!



lookAHEAD**mathNEWS**

May 13	Issue #1 preens for your enjoyment
May 24	Issue #2 Production Night 6:30 PM, MathSoc (MC 3038) NOTE the fashionably late date
May 27	Issue #2 appears in all its glory

Math Faculty

May	Faculty prepares for new Dean, cream pies baked by the dozen
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Mathsoc Movies Night – Thursdays, MC2066

May 19	No movies (go see Episode III!)
May 26	7:00PM - <i>Ladder 49</i> 9:00PM - <i>Coach Carter</i>

MGC

We need an MGC chair! Speak to the MathSoc Prez!

Co-op

Postings continue throughout the month
Workshops are also ongoing; see CECS for details

Miscellaneous

May 23 Victoria (aka kegger) Day

Calling All Mathletes!

It is nearly that time of year... time for the twelfth annual Canadian Undergraduate Mathematics Conference (CUMC)! This fun-and-math-filled extravaganza will be held at Queen's University from July 13-17. All undergraduates with an interest in any aspect of mathematics are invited to attend and to present a short talk on any topic (25 or 50 minutes) should they wish.

For more information, to download posters, or to register, please visit our website at <http://cumc.math.ca>, or contact us at cumc@cumc.math.ca. The deadline for registrations is June 1; abstracts for talks will be due two weeks later, so start brainstorming now! Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to meet fellow mathletes from across Canada, and to ensure your summer isn't completely bereft of your favourite subject!

PCFAV.COM

I'd like to introduce a new anti-viral service called PCFAV. PCFAV is a free virus-filtering proxy which stops viruses before they get to your computer. It does this by directing all of your HTTP and FTP traffic through its proxy server and then scanning it with two different up-to-date engines. Give PCFAV a try: go to www.pcfav.com.

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Back in Action: Eric Logan and Ian MacKinnon

**MEF Update**

Greetings from your friendly Math Endowment Fund Director! Here are a few tidbits regarding everybody's favourite endowment!

Refunds

Each term, every student makes a tax-deductible donation of \$31.42 (10π) to the fund. Given all that MEF does, it's a bargain! If for some reason, though, you wish your contribution refunded, visit the MEF office (MC4046) before May 20th during office hours. Office hours are posted on the door, and on the MEF website, <http://www.mef.uwaterloo.ca/>.

Funding Proposals

This term, roughly \$42,000 has been allocated to fund various projects. If you or someone you know can think of a project that would be of direct benefit to undergraduate mathematics education, you should submit a funding proposal. The paperwork (it's very easy!) can be downloaded from the website.

Funding Council

Decisions on funding are made by the Funding Council. The council is made of three undergrads per academic year, two undergrads per department or academic program, plus an undergraduate representing St. Jerome's. Nominations for all positions are presently open; forms are on the website. Email me at mefcom@student.math.uwaterloo.ca if you have any questions.

Eric Logan
MEF Director S05

mefcom@student.math.uwaterloo.ca
<http://www.mef.uwaterloo.ca>

MathSoc Movie Nights*Do you like movies?*

Welcome to another fun-filled term for Movies! This term, we're planning on showing a lot of pre-release movies all at the rock-bottom price of 2 movies for 0 dollars (for now, at least). For those of you that came out last night, you got to see the first two Star Wars movies (Episodes I and II), so that you're ready for Episode III next week. Next week, we're not showing movies because I'm going to see Episode III, but the week after, we're trying to get *Ladder 49* and *Coach Carter*. Stay tuned for other movies in next term's issue!

Mark the MathSoc Movie guy

Two Movies, Zero Dollars!

Thursdays in MC2066

mathNEWS wants YOU!

Write some stuff, win some money

mathNEWS works entirely on submissions from undergrads and some especially crotchety alumni. We're constantly looking for new writers in order to reduce dependency on crotchety alumni types. In order to encourage more submissions from Mathies, we've come up with this great idea! The "best" submission to each issue this term will win **\$25 Gift Certificate to HMV**. Anyone is eligible! Faculty, alumni, staff, students, even that random guy from Iran!

How do we define "best"? Well, my co-editor and I will put our heads together and our subjective decision will be final. We promise not to choose ourselves, though, nor the editors that are off-stream right now.

We're not particularly choosy here at mathNEWS. Our criteria for publishing material is pretty simple: your article should be informative, interesting, insightful or funny. Long, rambling, pointless material is out. So are in-jokes, rants, and flamebait (ie. no more articles about the damn exambank).

If you have a modicum of writing skill, feel free to submit. You have many options:

- Write it down on some paper and shove it in the **BLACK BOX**, conveniently located on the 3rd floor of the MC between the C&D and the Comfy Lounge. If you type up your article and print it off and then put it in there, we will be very upset, because you should...
- Email it to mathnews@student.math.uwaterloo.ca with the word "article" in the subject line. Alternatively, you can...
- Drop by Production Night! Write an article, and while you're there, help us with the proofreading and editing of the issue. All are welcome! The date of the next production night is given in the *lookAHEAD* of every issue.

See, isn't that simple? So, in summary, write for mathNEWS, win \$25 to HMV!

Eric "inkEd" Logan

If you have questions, send them to mathnews@student.math.uwaterloo.ca

mastHEAD

B2 Green 4 Life

It's good to be back at the mathNEWS production system, we've got a great term ahead, but we need you to send in those *profQUOTES* to help us out. Remember, you can also submit an article to mathNEWS by simply emailing mathnews@student.math.uwaterloo.ca with "article" in the headline. The best submission to mathNEWS scores the winner a \$25 gift certificate to HMV for each issue.

So we asked all the production staff, "What would you name the building going on the B2 green?": Mark ("No more ultimate here" building), Richard (It's not like anyone will see it. It'll be too small), Brad (The Totally Sweet Tower of Awesome), Dan (I don't know, but it should have a dirty acronym like the CECS building or CLT), Jenn (B2 Green [and it should be painted green]), Michael (Co-op got a new building, we want one too).

Thanks again to Campus and UW graphics for making all of this wonderful magic happening.

Eric Logan (There's a funny acronym here somewhere...)

Ian W. MacKinnon (Chakma Memorial Building)

mathNEWS Editors

The Presidential Briefing

Fancy Words for Prez Sez

I'd like to welcome everyone back to a wonderful spring term at this University. The manure smell and weird temperatures aside, it promises to be a great term for us all.

So who is this guy who is writing this column, you ask? I have been visible around MathSoc for the last five years in multiple capacities, from a random volunteer grunt to your VP Activities and Services in F03. Simply put, I'm old and I'm well seasoned.

One of my main goals for the S05 term is to increase the visibility of the Society as well as the services it offers amongst the general student populus. We will be making small changes inside and outside the Soc office to optimize communication and minimize clutter, all in an attempt to serve each of you better.

As President, it is my duty to represent your views on issues that affect you, the everyday student. There are a few contentious issues that I will be dealing with this term, and it is my attention to fully gauge the opinions of students before forming a response. To facilitate discussions, we hope that you will attend the **Town Hall Meetings** MathSoc will be organizing throughout this term. Issues being discussed currently include:

- New graduating/syllabus criteria for ALL Math/CS students
- Modification of the criteria for the Dean's Honour List
- Full-week reading week for Math/CS students
- Re-allocation of office space for Math Clubs

Remember, apathy is NOT an option.

That's all from me this week. I have an extremely open door policy. In fact, if my office had no door, I would have a "no door" policy [*Not that he'd have any choice in the matter... — inkEd*]. Don't hesitate to stop by my office at MC3039 and perform a stack dump of your ideas and opinions.

Raymond Lai

MathSoc President S05

VPA Sez

Hey y'all, I'm Leander, your new VP-Academic. Since I've barely been on the job for 24 hours, I've got little to "Sez." However, if you have any academic questions, concerns, or jokes, send them to vpa@mathsoc.uwaterloo.ca. Or stop by and visit me in the Exec office - my schedule's on the door. Hopefully I'll have more to say soon.

Leander Quiring

MathSoc Vice-President Academic S05

VPF Sez

Well the term has started and already things are getting underway. In my corner of the exec office the budget for MathSoc has begun its creation. Do you have a great idea for an event? But don't have the money to do it? Come have a chat with me (don't worry, I'm not that scary), and hopefully we can work something out.

Also feel free to stop by the office if you would like to find out more information about the finances of the society. I'm around the office every Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00 to 2:00pm.

Happy Friday the 13th!

Catherine Hicks

Vice President, Finances

Math Society Spring 2005

ElseWhen

N Years Ago in mathNEWS

Welcome back to the hallowed halls of the *mathNEWS* archives, where I unearth material long ago forgotten. Ordinarily, I'd do "25 Years Ago in *mathNEWS*", but Volume 23 contains only one issue that I will cover in June. Instead, I present the fun and games of some other first issues of the summer term.

inkEd

Volume 14, Issue 1

This week's Theorem: Sleeping in class is not detrimental to your learning.

Proof:

- Make a mental note of what is going on at the start of class
- Go to sleep
- Wake up
- Notice that you understand as much of what is going on on as you did when you went to sleep

q.e.d.

Assumption: Nobody understands what is going on anyway!

Alex

Prez. of Sleeping Student Ass.

Volume 17, Issue 1

A short review of *Westward the Tide* by Louis L'Amour (\$1.50):

This is a romance western. An interesting method of getting rich quick is the main plot line. Score: 62 (Only if you want to relax for a couple of hours)

Volume 25, Issue 1

Quote of the Week: Taken from the Math 124B Information Sheet:

"Final Exam: The exam will cover material from the entire course and will be incredibly difficult. You will write the exam blindfolded and suspended from the ceiling of the gym by a thin metal wire tied around your ankle, using a quill pen and invisible ink on a balloon filled with toxic chlorine gas. Full marks will be awarded for complete and correct solutions; all other scribbles will receive 0. Start studying now."

[I hope my profs aren't getting any ideas... — inkEd]

Orientation Applications Re-Released

Did you miss the application deadline last fall? Did you find out that you're going to be on campus in September after all? If so, then pick up an Orientation Leader application outside the MathSoc office (MC 3038) soon. We only have 36 interview timeslots this term, because we already selected most of our leaders over the winter term. Interviews will take place on May 14, 17, 18, and 19. Sign up on the MathSoc office door. Get your slot before they're all filled!

For more information, you can email orientat@student.math.uwaterloo.ca or approach any of the directors in person.

Sam Leung, Lino Demasi, Adam Felix, Chris Alexander
Math Orientation Directors 2005

Daily Bulletin Articles Translated to Japanese...and Back!

Every morning at 9am the Daily Bulletin is posted off uwaterloo.ca which provides news and a listing of upcoming events at UW. A more recent post had news about how the admin wants to put a nanotech building (no, not a small building, but a building to house the employment-deficient nanotech program) right on the B2 green between the MC, B2, and the Bomber. Just for kicks, we put this announcement through the babelfish Japanese translator, and back.

Original Announcement:

A planned new academic building "will be situated in the centre of the university's campus", an announcement said this week. But where exactly? "The proposed site under consideration is the area between Math and Biology," provost Amit Chakma replied. University architect Daniel Parent added that the building is to be west of the Peter Russell Rock Garden, which sits directly between Math and Computer and Biology II. The building — to house activities in quantum computing and nanotechnology engineering — got a big boost this week with a multi-million-dollar gift from Research In Motion founder Mike Lazaridis.

Japanized Announcement:

Was planned position for the building of new science, was said this week of announcement which is put "on the center of the university enclosure" by A of the new building. But exactly? "Area between place mathematics and the biology where under of consideration is proposed," Amit Chakma it is the study dormitory leader who answers. The Daniel Parent university architect added the fact that the building is proper in mathematics and the computer and west of the stone garden of Peteri Russell which sits down directly between biology II. The building in order from research of the founder Mikei Lazaridis of the movement — activity calculation of the quantity and to accommodate in nanotechnology engineering, — obtained this week of gift of multi 1000000 dollars in large boost.

Ian W. MacKinnon
mathNEWS Editor

Paul McCartney is heading to Toronto

Beatles fans rejoice

One week ago (from production night), Paul McCartney announced that he would be stopping in Toronto on October 10th in his North American concert tour. A week ago today (as you're reading this), tickets went on sale (of course, if you're reading this article before 10 am, then you're early for tickets going on sale). I am the proud owner of two of those tickets. I probably should have gotten 4 tickets and sold the ones that weren't so great to pay for the good ones. That would have rocked. Oh, and the best part: I don't have to worry about having a mid-term that evening (nor a night class), because it's on Thanksgiving Monday!

Mark "Beatlemaniac"
Going to see Sir Paul!

profQUOTES

“I actually went to the grocery store to try to find a broccoli with the [self-similar fractal] characteristics I am looking for.”

Collins, AM/PM331

“Why is PeopleSoft called PeopleSoft? It’s because the software doesn’t do the job right, so people have to do the job.”

Cowan, SE382

Prof: “What do you do if your program doesn’t allocate and free memory properly?”

Student: “I submitted it anyway!”

Cowan, SE382

“Oh, look at that! You can’t get a nifty pattern like that in Power Point!”

Cowan, SE382

“This is just thrown in for cultural illumination. No extra charge.”

Karl, AM 261

“Not too many decimal points. You get penalized for putting down too much information that nobody cares about.”

Karl, AM 261

“I’ll try to make a drawing. Please don’t laugh.”

Karl, AM 261

“He also discovered the second law of Thermodynamics, which I’m sure you don’t understand.”

Karl, AM 261

“I’m going to discuss damped harmonic oscillator... There is a ‘p’ in there. DamPed!”

Karl, AM 261

“General method used in all university is guessing the solution.”

Karl, AM 261

“If I am lecturing really well on this, half of you should be asleep, because this is a hard topic that puts you to sleep... unless you had really good sleep the night before, but I presume you did not.”

Karl, AM 261

“If you take a sufficiently nasty force, solution is not known. So if you can’t solve it, don’t feel stupid.”

Karl, AM 261

“Well the most important lecture is the one where you get all the hints for the final exam, but other than that, this is the most important lecture.”

Steiner, Stat 231

“Somebody suggested we have the midterm on February 14th. That’s Galileo’s birthday. That’s also Valentine’s day, which is famous for all those massacres. But I’ll try to avoid that.”

Karl, AM 261

“[writes a formula] You must have done this in your math courses, because if you ask me to prove it, I don’t know how to prove it.”

Karl, AM 261

“Escape velocity, velocity you need to break free and go on forever and ever, with a nice song like the Anthem of the United States, hoping there are other thinking beings out there, so we can send them a present.”

Karl, AM 261

“I am sure you understand it better, since your mind is younger and less cluttered by rubbish.”

Karl, AM 261

“If you have a good quality wine glass... [looks at the class] I presume you only drink beer.”

Karl, AM 261

“I always wish I had green chalk to write “Green’s” function, but it never materializes. [pauses] I’ll write it in pink.”

Karl, AM 261

“I’m telling you an executive summary for those of you who want to go to sleep soon. This is what you need to remember.”

Karl, AM 261

“If I tell a joke that’s politically correct, somebody will get offended and I’ll get fired.”

Karl, AM 261

“Some people think that a three-body problem is when you are together with your girlfriend and there is someone there.”

Karl, AM 261

“You drive a car. And you naturally steer away from the trucks. At least, I do. Cause you instinctively know that truck is not the one who’ll get hurt. Unless you have a very large car.”

Karl, AM 261

“This is very hard stuff. If you don’t get it, don’t think you are stupid. Well, maybe you are...”

Karl, AM 261

“I presume that you don’t know properties of an ellipse. I should admit, I don’t know what properties of ellipses are. So I’m going to presume you don’t know what an ellipse is.”

Karl, AM 261

“Do you know Maple?” “No.” “That’s a shame. It’s wonderful! You should learn Maple... I don’t know Maple. But it’s trivial.”

Karl, AM 261

“That’s a bad x... Oh it’s a t, that’s why it’s a bad x!”

Poulin, AM 353

“This holds true in all of mechanics [list]. It’s used everywhere. And imagine, some idiot Kepler GUESSED it in the 1600s.”

Karl, AM 261

“At the present stage, as you know I oscillate and change my mind every six hours.”

Karl, AM 261

“You can always send an e-mail. Depending on how bad a day I’ve had, you get a correspondingly unfriendly answer.”

Karl, AM 261

Feds kill ESA

European Union angered by decision

Last fall, Feds made a bid to collapse the ESA. Apathy led to students not caring, because they figured that Feds wanted to shut down the Embassy Students Association. This was not the case. Feds had decided a month before, in a small backroom closet (no, not the *mathNEWS* closet... but it was similar), that it was making a hostile bid to take over the European Space Agency in order to shut it down. Most people would wonder why countries such as France, England and Germany didn't fight this hostile takeover. They just never took it seriously. According to *mathNEWS* sources, the takeover bid came with dirty Tim Horton's money, generated from the sale of overpriced and undersized donuts sold on campus. The reported \$250M is astronomical when compared to the measly \$11M they sued the Administration for just three years ago. Feds decided at the outset that they were going to stick to their guns and actually do it this time.

mathNEWS was startled to learn that the only reason Feds decided to buy out and shut down the ESA was so that they could move the program from random locations to the B2 green and take advantage of the soon to be popular space flight fad. A Feds representative told *mathNEWS* that they will be the next "Wal-Mart of space flight", with rock bottom prices of \$1M for a "weightless experiment". Feds also stated their desire to have new satellites in orbit that would rival Google's new satellite map capabilities. It was as if Feds wanted to be able to read your textbook while you were out studying on campus (we later found out that the job of tasking these satellites would be a joint venture with the school of CS and Real Time students). What Feds failed to realize about this is that Real Time students are normally locked away in a lab, trying to make trains go around tracks, and could care less about what's going on outside unless it pertains to a frisbee being thrown around, or a game of ultimate.

While contacting various countries that were once a part of the ESA, *mathNEWS* typically got the same response: "We didn't really take them seriously. I mean, what could a student society *really* want with a space agency?" I guess they found out.

Mark "Beatlemaniac"

Kinesiology professor studies ability of Mathies to stand

As we all know, the atmosphere of the MC is unlike anywhere else in the world. Mathies breathe thin and pungent air while standing on an ever-moving floor. Anyone who has ever gotten lost knows how easy it is to forget that things in this building tend to migrate at random. Likened to sea-legs, math-legs are becoming a huge problem when these seasoned problem solvers venture into the real world.

Prof. Jim Frank has studied this phenomenon, looking at the "neural strategies which control upright stance." He has seen that mathies develop various methods to counteract the strange movements, such as slouching, crouching in a "Mission: Impossible" manner, and swaying at random times. In a normal environment, these acts can cause an unsuspecting mathie to fall over or stumble quite embarrassingly.

Frank has shown that this is "because their sensory information is dulled," and as such, all mathies should be given a cane to provide extra sensory input. He says all mathies should "swallow what little pride they still have left, and use a cane because that can help a lot."

Star Wars Reviewed

mathNEWS was recently able to attend a preview screening of Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith. Since everyone else out there who's seen it has done a review, then we are going to too.

Spoiler Warning all the "spoilers" mentioned in this review are in fact totally false. You don't need to worry about spoilers here, there aren't any. Unless you don't know that Anakin is going to become Darth Vader. If you didn't know that then you deserve to have just had the movie spoiled.

First thing is that although everyone else out there has been saying that this is by far the best of the prequel trilogy, they are just completely making that up. This movie is nothing compared to both of Episodes I and II. First, the humour contained in the other two has been toned down, and nearly removed, by taking away screentime from exquisite characters such as Jar Jar Binks.

There is also a lack of fun and exciting scenes such as the Pod Race from *The Phantom Menace*, which have instead been replaced by many lightsaber fights, but honestly now, we've had nearly thirty years of lightsabers now, let's see something new and innovative, as opposed to these "been there, done that" lightsabers. There's also frankly not enough in terms of special effects, absolutely none of the real stuff looks good at all, they almost should have just animated the entire thing in order to get the style looking right.

The acting was overly dramatic in this movie, and really should have been toned down to be on par with both of the previous movies, especially the various scenes in both Eps I and II with contained interaction between Anakin and Padme. Speaking of Padme this movie was also had a major absence of things like leather corsets and other revealing clothes, things which only made *Attack of the Clones* that much better.

All in all I'd have to say that this movie was sorely lacking and really could have used more of the truly inspiring efforts that Lucas had in both of the other prequels. It really is too bad that this one had to be the last of the Star Wars movies.

DanS

The good professor has concluded that it is unhealthy for anyone to exist in such an environment, especially those mathies who spend over 75% of their lives in the MC (you know who you are). He recommends, as well as the cane and other programs to reintegrate mathies into normal walking society, that the MC be torn down to make way for a healthier design, like that of the DC. However, everyone knows that the MC is an indestructible bunker, and no one wants to take classes in a McDonald's Play Place.

Thus the argument of Prof. Frank was discarded as the ramblings of an arts professor with tenure.

Another popular explanation for the mathies' inability to walk is that the average mathie has so much going on in his/her brain that he/she cannot afford to waste valuable brain power on the movement of muscles. It is much easier (and arguably much more interesting) to let them move as they will, and go wherever they are taken. A new branch of math may soon be devoted to the study of the randomness of the mathie brain.

Dirty Mathie

Security Advisory

mathNEWS vulnerabilities rated “Extremely Critical”

Two unpatched vulnerabilities have been discovered in mathNEWS, which can be exploited by malicious people to compromise any copy of it, inconveniencing and possibly injuring its users.

First, due to its paper content, a copy of mathNEWS may be used to inflict paper-cut injuries on those in its immediate vicinity.

Second, a lack of adequate fireproofing allows malicious users to burn copies of mathNEWS. This vulnerability may be prevented by coating mathNEWS in a fire-retardant substance; however, this will not address the first vulnerability and its seriousness.

Suggested workarounds include:

1. Handling mathNEWS only when wearing adequate fire protection.
2. Finding a victim, er, colleague to read mathNEWS to you.
3. Avoid handling or being near mathNEWS.
4. Ignoring this advisory, and reading mathNEWS anyways.

Richard

Funding Your WoW Addiction

World of Warcraft, Blizzard’s foray into the world of MMORPGs, is the newest and hottest means by which you can exchange a monthly fee and your social life for the privilege of fighting dragons and crap alongside people named “SSJ_Gandalf_420.” If you don’t play it, it’s time to start now. “But,” you ask, “how am I going to come up with \$15 every month?” Simple: be the child of a multibillionaire. Failing that, here are a few tips for financing your fantasy life as an Orcish librarian or whatever:

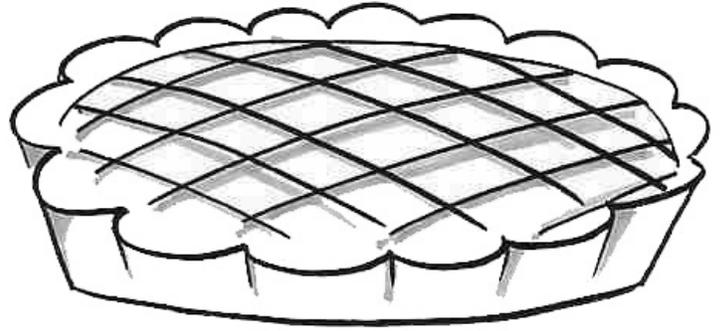
- Knock over a laundromat - it’s not like you ever go there anyway
- Take someone hostage. Experience shows that hobos aren’t the best targets for this sort of thing
- Hold a telethon and keep whatever’s left after the lawsuits
- Two words: street corner
- Use your STAT230-honed sense of probability to conquer the world of competitive poker
- Charge your friends and family for admission to your residence
- Sign a contract with FOX for the new reality show “Watch Some Geek Live His/Her Life, So You Don’t Have to Live Yours”
- Sell all of your EverQuest accounts on eBay
- Get a damn job

Just follow these simple tips and you’ll be gaining XP and mana in no time! Or something!

Disclaimer: mathNEWS takes no responsibility for any bad things that may happen to you as a result of following the above simple tips, and neither does the author while we’re at it.

Brad H-D

Hey Look! A Pie!



Microsoft Reveals Next Console

Last night, Microsoft finally did what the internet has been doing for the last couple of weeks, revealing their next game console. If you missed it, you can do what everybody else out there did and probably find it on your favourite general purpose bittorrent site, it ought to be well seeded by now.

However, we also have all the details from last night’s events right here for you now and a few other exclusive details that weren’t even announced last night.

- First of all, although word leaked out that it was going to be called the Xbox 360, they made a last minute change to Radians so that it will instead be the Xbox 2Π. It was mostly because they liked the theme, but wanted still wanted to make reference to the fact that it is the 2nd Xbox.
- In order to keep the theme of the name, all games for the system are going to require a completely circular display on the screen. You know like at the beginning of James Bond movies, all Xbox 2Π games will be looking like that. As such Halo players will enjoy the fact that at the very least it will appear that the pistol again has a scope in Halo 3.
- Members of various internet communities were worried about rumours of no backwards compatibility. Well, Microsoft sure showed them by announcing backwards compatibility with not just the Xbox, but also every version Windows and MSDOS ever produced, if you are willing to purchase the special keyboard. In order to get these games onto the machine it will include both a 3.5" and 5.25" floppy drive.
- Although there were many rumours of wireless controllers, nobody was expecting that they would also be batteryless so that you won’t need to spend any time not playing games while waiting for them to recharge. Each button is itself a magnet, and all the buttons are surrounded by a coil of copper wire, so that when you press each button, it creates its own electric current, which is then used to power the IR transmission to the actual console.
- In a blatant attempt to rip off what is really one of the only things Nintendo had going for it this generation, Microsoft announced a special connectivity for this Xbox and any device running “Windows Mobile” in much the same way the GameCube and GBA worked.

Well, that pretty much amounts for the special features that this new Xbox is going to have, other than the obvious things like “It will play games” so, now all there is is the long wait till November for our new Xbox 2Πs.

DanS

Molly the Frosh

Chapter 1: Christmas in March

Molly was not yet a frosh in March. In fact, she still attended high school. She went to class with her high school friends, she hung out after class with her high school friends, and on this occasion, she was taking the bus home with her high school friends after a labourious afternoon of non-subsistence shopping at the mall (you know, the high-school kind of shopping). They sat at the very back.

"I think I've been losing weight lately," said Amy.

"Oh, yeah, I've noticed," said Brian. The look on his face clearly said he didn't.

"But that means I should have bought jeans a size bigger," said Amy, "or else they won't fit when I gain the weight back."

"Umm, well..." Brian was at a loss for words.

"Don't worry, I'm sure you'll keep the weight off," reassured Molly, "we'll put you in restraints if you eat too much."

"And don't date a pizza delivery guy," added Clara, "you'll gain, like, 20 pounds. Grow fat."

"Do you think pizza guys are hot?" asked Molly.

"Hey, Amy, I can dress up like a pizza guy," said Brian, "with a uniform and everything."

Amy giggled and elbowed Brian playfully in the guts. "Ow."

"That reminds me, you can help me with the math homework tonight, right Molly?" asked Clara.

"Oh, I can't tonight, I'm sorry. I really want to, but it's my dad's birthday tonight and I really, really don't want to miss that."

"I'll help you with math," said Brian, "if you tell me what's going on in that bird book we gotta read for English. I just don't understand the thing."

"Oh, and I'm sorry I won't make it to tae kwon do on Saturday," added Molly, "I'm going curling with my dad. Profs versus daughters."

"Aww, we'll miss you," said Clara.

Through the windows, suburban development whizzed by block after block. As the bus wound its way along its convoluted route, relatively grand and new subdivisions gradually gave way to older and more modest ones, with single-storey houses and uneven rows of trees lining the streets.

"So, you like fat pizza guys, Clara?" said Amy.

"I wasn't talking about the obesity of pizza guys, I was talking about their...hotivity."

"Hotivity, eh? Tell us about hotivity," said Molly.

"Well, it's the measure of a man's hotness," said Clara.

"Or woman's," added Molly. "A man's or a woman's hotness."

"Fine, it's the measure of a man's or a woman's hotness. It's got units and everything."

"So how do you measure hotivity, Clara?" asked Brian.

"With a hotivity measurement tool," replied Clara.

"Like what, a yardstick?" asked Molly, "I mean..."

"I think your standards are a little too high," said Brian.

"Or maybe Amy's just settling for too little," said Clara.

"Shut up!" giggled Amy. She likes to giggle.

"Oh, I can always count on Clara to be my knight in shining armour," said Molly. She leaned her head on Clara's shoulders as Brian looked on with interest.

The mud-splattered GRT bus whined mightily as the driver engine-braked through the sloping intersection at Krug and Weber. Then the lower frequencies of its hum regained volume as the bus laboured up the incline of Weber street. Downhill and to the west, the setting sun back lit the low rectangular outlines of downtown Kitchener and careened cheerfully off of patterns of snow on the roofs. In the north, some clouds were gathering; the lower parts glowed red in the twilight, but the upper parts were darker than the surrounding sky. It seemed like Spring was coming a week later every year.

"Well, my stop's coming up," said Molly, "see you tomorrow."

"Goodbye."

"See ya." The bus stopped, Molly got off, and went home.

Molly's house is unremarkable.

"Oh Molly, you're just in time for dinner, dear!" said her mother when she got home.

"That's great, Mom, just let me get washed up!" Molly ran upstairs, dropped off her books, and went to the washroom.

"Honey! Dinner!" called out her mom as she came down the stairs.

"Coming, Mom!" replied Molly, whose words were echoed by a booming male voice from the study.

"I echo those sentiments!" he called out again.

"Oh George, of everyone here you should be the most excited," said her mother, "come help me set the table, dear."

"Happy birthday Dad," said Molly, as he came to the table, "So how old are you now?"

"About 46 times e to the half i , actually — I feel like I've been living in an alternate time-dimension these past few weeks, I've been so busy," said George, "I'm really sorry to the both of you if I haven't always been here for you lately."

"I'm sure your work as a math professor is so much more worthwhile than your own family," said Molly.

"And don't worry, George, you've always been here for us," said her mother, "Today's your birthday and Molly's home for dinner and as far as I'm concerned, all is right with the world — pass the potatoes, dear?"

"Of course I'm home for dinner!" said Molly indignantly, "It's my dad's birthday! I wouldn't miss it for the world!"

"You missed my birthday," pointed out her mother.

"Oh, well I had band practice, mom, I couldn't just get out of that."

"Band practice, that's a lame excuse," commented her father, "Evelyn, I think your daughter doesn't love you any more."

"Dad!"

"George!"

"Oh, don't worry, dear, at least I still love you," said her father, laughing.

"I think you'd better stick to your math, George, and leave the conversation to the people at the table with people skills," said her mother, "That reminds me, Molly, you got an acceptance letter in the mail today."

"Oh my God!" shrieked Molly, "that's so awesome!"

(continued next page...)

Then, calming down, she said, “excuse me, I mean, of course I’ve been accepted. Didn’t you know Mom, that I had a man on the inside?”

“What?” said, her father, mocking incredulity, “You suggesting I had anything to do with this? I’m a man of principles, Molly, I stayed well within the bounds of rules and regulations and good ethics and all that.”

“Well thank you anyway, daddy, I love you.”

“Oh, you’re always welcome, Molly.”

Cutlery clinked on plates.

“So, how was your day, dear?” asked her mother.

“Oh, it was fine, I went shopping with some friends.”

“Did you get anything for me?” asked her father, “it is my birthday.”

“You’ll find out after dinner.”

“And how were your classes?” her mother asked.

“Great, just great. We’re reading *A Bird in the House* for English.”

“Hmmm...” said, her father. He swallowed and continued, “You know what that means, don’t you?”

“What?”

“A Bird in the House’ — it’s an omen — it’s a sign that someone is going to die soon.”

“Well thanks for spoiling the book for me, Dad.”

“You’re welcome as always, my little girl.”

“Are you going to finish that?” inquired her mother.

“No, I’m ready for the cake now.”

After much cake and merriment, the family watched *Lethal Weapon 3* and *A Beautiful Mind* simultaneously. George had always wanted to try that. Molly was so excited that night that she needed to read two chapters of *A Bird in the House* just to fall asleep.

Outside, a medium thick snowfall drifted down past her bedroom window. Just beyond the edge of the horizon, the brilliant lights of the Dana Porter library created a shining halo in the snow-laden atmosphere — a cheerful beacon of the good times to come.

- Peiran, of all the people least qualified to write this story...

More chapters of Molly the Frosh in future issues!

High Technology of the 31st century B.C.

It was an idyllic early autumn afternoon in a small Babylonian village. The trees were wearing stunning coats of crimson and gold leaves and Alice was wearing a rather revealing little dress with cute flower patterns. A Babylonian named Bob asked his friend, “If Alice had a basket of three apples and then added four more apples to the basket, how many apples would she have in the basket?” and his friend replied, “Heck, how should I know? Why don’t you go find Alice and give her a basket and a bunch of apples and find out for yourself!”

Well, Bob was curious, and he was a little too shy to ask Alice, so he thought very hard about it and he ended up inventing “numbers” as abstract representations of quantities in the real world. He demonstrated this to his entire village by predicting the number of apples in Alice’s basket. “Holy fricking cow!” said the villagers, “This guy can use ‘arithmetic’ to predict the future!”

Well, at this point, Bob realized he could make some sweet cash with this “arithmetic” of his, but, you see, they hadn’t any patent protection in ancient Babylon. So Bob was now faced with a little conundrum. If he started using “arithmetic” for his personal gain, then all the other villagers would soon figure out what he was doing and how. So, Bob’s idea was to trip up all the industrial spies his fellow villagers were sure to send by using methods that no sensible person would understand.

It was common knowledge at the time that on average, the human mind can easily enumerate about a dozen or so separate objects at a time, such as the ten fingers on both hands. Psychologists at the time had done several studies involving blindfolds and sheep in a pasture to pin down that number at precisely “a dozen or so”. Bob, being a n engineer, knew that convention, for safety reasons, required that his number system be over-engineered by a factor of 5, so he did his arithmetic in base 60. To anyone who asked, Bob happily disclosed his technique of “carrying” sexagesimigits and of “borrowing” them just as readily. As a result, the rest of the village concluded that Bob was a freak and depended on him and only him to do all their taxes.

With this brilliant invention of a base-60 number system, Bob was able to gain and maintain a full monopoly on all the accounting services provided within the empire. He lived a wealthy but ultimately unhappy life because soon after his breakthrough, Alice married an apple farmer and moved out to the country. He never saw her again.

Peiran

Tips for Working in California

- If you’re in the Bay-area, consider living right in San Francisco. The hour commute is a pain, but it beats living around old people (people 30+).
- For the next while Arnold is going to be your governor. You’ll wake up in a cold sweat about this a few times, but it soon passes.
- Don’t break any laws, no matter how stupid they are. The last thing you want to tell a cop is “oh, I’m on a student visa” when you’ve just jaywalked in front of some landmark.
- Since the healthcare, and your coverage, can be a little sketchy, it’s best to always wear a helmet.
- Since the drinking age is 21, be prepared to get carded....EVERYWHERE. “This Nyquil has alcohol in it, can I see some ID?”
- “Intern” and “Co-op” mean more or less the same thing. It’s not worth the effort to correct every person who introduces you “the company’s new intern”. If you get picky about it, they’ll start to refer to you as “the company’s new biatch”.
- Nothing interesting happens in LA anymore. If you want to see a movie shoot, go to BC.
- No matter how many people tell you differently, you say “about” the proper way; all Americans say it wrong.
- Any time someone makes a crack about Canada, you get to respond with “Anyone citizen of a country where Bush isn’t President? No, no, keep your hands up, I want to count.”
- Since their money isn’t coloured, you’ll need to do insertion sort on your wallet whenever you get cash.

Ian W. MacKinnon
mathNEWS Editor

Across

1. lesser known IM
3. nunnery mother
7. mythical
9. large body of water
10. gave food
11. off white
14. mollusks
15. speed
19. birthed for characteristics
20. arid
21. Sunday ender
24. army general, sometimes
25. death
26. type of plane

Down

1. move abruptly
2. therefore
4. boast
5. bone at base of spine
6. finished
7. most probably
8. sailors
12. physics unit
13. insane
16. degraded
17. common target?
18. cry or whine
22. holes in one
23. auction offers

This is a picture of a cow



Some guy on the Internet

gridCOMMENTS

We're baaaaaack....

Welcome to another term of the *gridWORD*! We're your hosts, the ConMaster and CryptMaster [*cept the ConMaster went AWOL... — inkEd*], back with another term. For those of you around last term, we welcome back the CryptMaster from his hiatus and hope you'll enjoy puzzling out the dual *gridWORD* once again!

And remember to submit to us! There's a \$5 C&D gift certificate each for the Conventional and the Cryptic...the puzzle doesn't even have to be complete! Most importantly, make sure you answer the *gridQUESTION* as the big tie breaker (and to make marking grids more fun for us!). Submissions can be put in the **BLACK BOX** between the C&D and the Comfy. Otherwise, email submissions to mathnews@student.math.uwaterloo.ca.

This issue's *gridQUESTION* is: Why is there something rather than nothing?

Hop to it!

ConMaster



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