

mathNEWS

Engineer:
Mostly harmless.

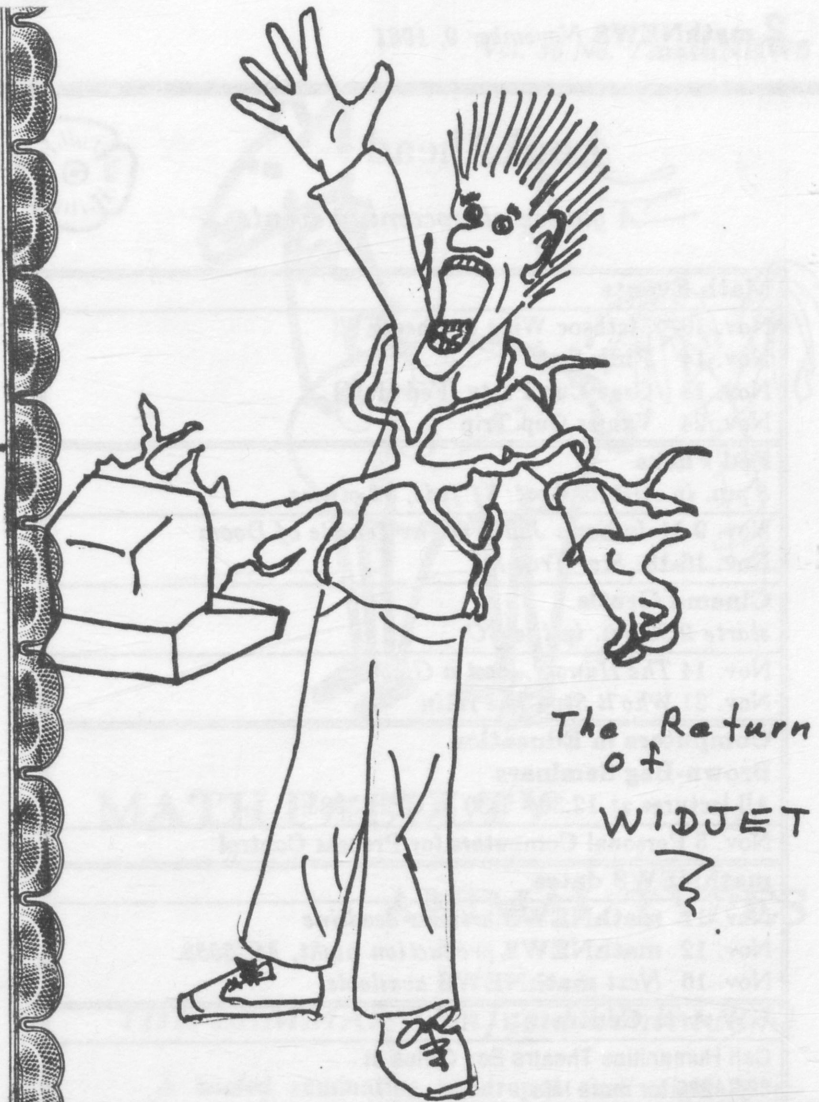
Volume 36

Number 7

November 9, 1984

Abn Assar	K. Bounpraseuth	Eddie Lau	B. Krasowsk
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V. G. Goobie	S. Hai	Jack Huang	Mike Suski
P. Y. F. Hui	P. K. In	Jennifer Jinot	Frankie Yam
Mak Kim			

mathNEWS is a free publication for students enrolled in the Faculty of Mathematics and for anyone else who picks up an issue. There are, however, certain students who are not allowed to read mathNEWS. I'm referring to a group of deadbeat students that got their mathSOC fees refunded. If you spot any of the following people reading mathNEWS, confiscate their copy and report the crime to mathSOC. These are the creeps that got their fees refund-



Exams

How to Study and Relax for Them

On Monday, November 14, Laurel Thom will be giving pointers for studying and for writing exams. (Laurel Thom is the reading and study skills counsellor at Counselling Services.) Ron Walsh of Counselling Services will talk on techniques for relaxing before and during exams. (Good! I need it! - XEditor)
This seminar (at 4:30 in MC 2065, by the way) is sponsored by mathSOC and the Faculty of Mathematics.



goblet

mathSOC presents the notorious
WINE & CHEESE



Saturday November 10th 1984

tickets @ mathSOC

mathies \$4.00
others \$5.00

LookAhead

A glance at upcoming events



Math Events
Nov. 10 Mathsoc Wine & Cheese !!!!
Nov. 14 Pink Day
Nov. 18 Grey Cup Party (Fed Hall!)
Nov. 24 Vanier Cup Trip
Fed Flicks
8 pm. in AL116 Cost: \$1 feds, \$2 others
Nov. 9-11 <i>Indiana Jones & The Temple of Doom</i>
Nov. 16-18 <i>Star Trek III</i>
Cinema Gratis
starts 9:30 pm. in the CC
Nov. 14 <i>The Hunger, Just a Gigolo</i>
Nov. 21 <i>Who'll Stop The Rain</i>
Computers in Education
Brown-Bag Seminars
All lectures at 12:30 - 1:30 in CPH 3385
Nov. 5 Personal Computers for Process Control
mathNEWS dates
Nov. 11 mathNEWS articles deadline
Nov. 12 mathNEWS production night, MC3038.
Nov. 16 Next mathNEWS available
UW Arts Centre
Call Humanities Theatre Box Office at 885.4280 for more info
Nov. 21 <i>Solid Gold Bach</i>
Nov. 26 <i>Primadonna</i>
DCS Courses
Free! One to three one-hour lectures; contact DCS to register.
Nov 12,13,15 Introductory GML
Miscellaneous
Nov 10, 1:00 Games Club Organizational Meeting in CC 195
For Co-ops Only
Nov. 9 Interviews end.
Nov. 9 Ranking forms due.
Nov. 20 Placement Results posted

Christmas Already?

Rarely do we consider, it seems, what it is like to be unable to go home for Christmas. This year some programmes are being organized for students who would like to share the celebrations. Between December 22nd and 27th a Christmas Camp is being held near Cambridge; also, some students can stay for Christmas in the homes of participating families in various Ontario towns. Interested persons should contact Will Fick at 884-6155.

Platter Spatter

Hello there! Well I'm back again (after a short sabbatical). Anyone who wants to offer opinions, possible records to review and/or is from other interested campus publications, can reach me through Mr. Tom Ivey of **mathNEWS**. This week I review two recent releases, one good and one bad.

Let's start with the bad. Please don't spend your hard-earned money on the new **Bronski Beat** album. It's trash. The boys from CFNY will endorse it to the hilt, but don't be fooled. The disc contains a shorter version of the upbeat "Why?", a castrated version of the haunting "Smalltown Boy" (which is their only really decent work), a destruction of George and Ira Gershwin's "It Ain't Necessarily So", and many other really bad "filler" tracks, most of which have blatantly homosexual lyrics. These guys are all gay, and make no bones about it. The title "Age of Consent" is explained in the liner notes as being the minimum age for legal homosexual relations between males. The album is on the "Forbidden Fruit" label. What more can I say? Oh yeah, the lead vocalist, "Jimmy", who is supposedly only seventeen years old and whose voice can supposedly shatter glass, cannot sing. His voice grates like slate pencils and I could not bear more than one listening. Enough said! This is an awful record.

Contrariwise, the new LP from **Aztec Camera** is wonderful. Roddy Frame and the boys sound much more fluid with Mark Knopfler on the production end. The lyrics are potent and the imagery striking. The record contains "All I Need Is Everything" as well as seven other tracks. The title track "Knife" particularly shows the Knopfler touch, and is stalwart. This is a strongly recommended album. It will wear well.

That's all for this time kiddies; see you later.

Slash Sinatra

1984 CSC Open

Computer Othello Tournament

The CSC Open is here! The tournament will be held tomorrow, November 10th, in the Math and Computer building. If you have not yet registered, and wish to do so, be at the CSC office, MC 3037, before 9:00 am tomorrow. The entry fee is \$5.00 for CSC members (for others \$6.00, or you can join the CSC for only \$1.00 and get a nifty membership card (with your favourite number on it (unless it's already gone (possible, but not likely (Compiler internal error --- bracket nesting overflow ***)))))).

The tournament consists of five rounds, Swiss style. The times for the rounds are posted at CSC. There will be an awards presentation at about 9:00 pm, after which there is the optional MathSoc Mega Wine & Cheese...

Spectators are welcome (it beats watching golfing...), and pizza will be served sometime during the day. Prizes are provided by MathSoc, CSC, Abacus Computers and Computerland of Waterloo.

Dr. Ernie Goes Off the Deep End

Quick! How many people realise that cabbage does not exist? It's true! At least, anything that you say to the contrary I won't listen to. But, never-the-less, I maintain that the existence of cabbage is an unprovable axiom. All vegetables are based upon the axiom that cabbage exists.

The next logical step is the existence of herbivores: cows, sheep, engineers, pigs and rabbits. After all, something has to eat cabbage. You do realize of course that without cabbage there'd be no spinach, no rutabaga and none of the other yucky vegetables.

And now we have cows and god said, "Wow! this is pretty neat! Damn! But those cows make a mess." And lo and behold there were carnivores like: lions, and tigers and bears oh my! And god saw it and it was good.

From here it is simple step to show the existence of omnivores, birds and mathies. This is an exercise for the reader. But, I can hear you muttering to the person reading over your shoulder, "But where does calculus come in?" Well this is a good question.

To answer this question we must first demonstrate the existence of man. His existence follows clearly from the above. Someone has to clean up the mess left by those bloody animals.

From here it is simple. Man was sitting, contemplating his cabbage when he noticed that he was regarding only one cabbage. This was a really deep thought. He examined the cabbage for a couple of minutes, trying to figure out what this meant. All of a sudden his wife came out, cuffed his head and cooked the cabbage for supper (Bubble and Squeak). The man was astonished! And he thought for some more and realised that there was no cabbage left. The poor man was so disturbed that he went on and invented calculus, algebra and C & O 230. Twenty minutes later his wife called him for supper, saw him rolling on the ground foaming at the mouth and promptly postulated (correctly) the existence of the Psychiatric Hospital.

And all this happened because somebody decided that cabbage should exist (and the universe promptly followed).

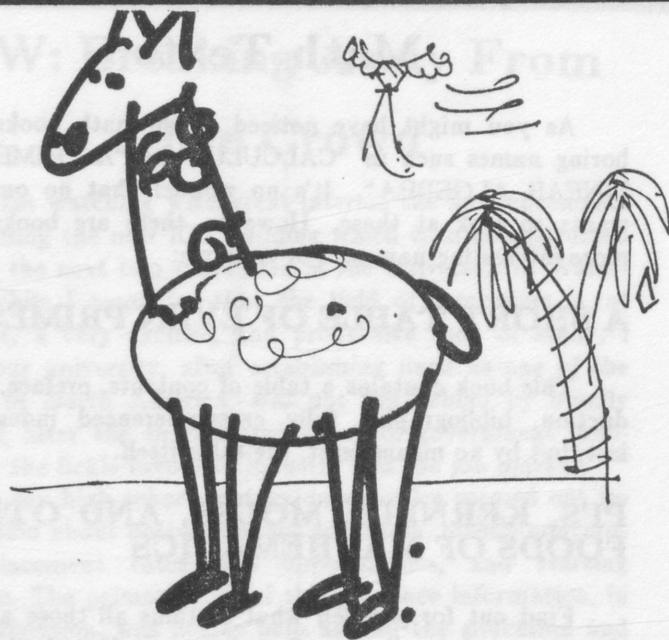
There is one really neat thing about all this. If we postulated that all parallel lines meet at the point (1,2) and that carrots are soft, red, juicy and grow on vines; even then Fed Hall wouldn't be built on time. And we'd have the same imaginary Fed. Pres. as we do now.

Thank you , and goodbye:
Dr. Ernie

A rather amusing quantum of graffiti was recently (depending on how long this text file has been sitting in electronic limbo) observed in a V2 washroom beside the toilet paper roll:

U of T Engineering degrees
Take one please

(observed by Center of
Gravity)



MATH FACULTY

ANIMAL TYPES

THE LEMMA: (Confusid Continuum)

A hooved ruminating quadruped that originally ranged throughout the entire Mathematics and Computer Building, but through excessive use by over zealous professors may now be found only in the darker regions of the 6th floor and the roof. This unusual creature can generally be induced to reveal all through the use of "Truth Theorem". The lemma usually spends its evenings as a functional illiterate by humming "Home on the Range" to itself.

A Day In The Life ...

November 10, 1984 8:45 pm: suspect leaves house. He's easy to follow. His pink tie is a dead giveaway

9:00 pm: suspect arrives at **South Campus Hall**. Informants tell me this is the **mathSOC Wine and Cheese**. Rumour has it it's notorious.

9:01 pm: suspect pays **\$4.00**. He's secretly slipped **3 free wine tickets**. The pink tie must have been the signal.

9:04 pm: not a "mathie", I pay **\$5.00** and enter the tumult of music and dancing. Getting a glass of wine for a song. Lose suspect.

9:05 pm: then she walked into my life ...

Math Texts

As you might have noticed, most math books have boring names such as "CALCULUS" or "A PRIMER OF LINEAR ALGEBRA". It's no wonder that no one ever wants to look at these. However, there are books with more interesting names. For example:

A SHORT TABLE OF EVEN PRIMES

This book contains a table of contents, preface, introduction, bibliography, fully cross-referenced index, and last, but by no means least, the table itself.

PI'S, KERNELS, MOLES, AND OTHER FOODS OF MATHEMATICS

Find out for yourself what sustains all those axioms, theorems and corollaries. Surprise yourself with the wide variety of foods, other than just quiche, that real numbers eat.

THE FINAL MILLION DIGITS OF PI

This 200 page book contains page after page of the last 1,000,000 digits of π . I can quite honestly state that this is the most boring book that I have ever read.

1001 UNMEMORABLE FORMULAE OF LAGRANGE

Lagrange's formulae for English, Psychology, Gymnastics, History, and tiddliwinks, among others.

As most people realize, the main problem with math books is not in the title but in the content. They are usually boring! Nonetheless, there are books out there that try to integrate the math into a story. For example:

THE EXPLOITS OF THE EIGEN FAMILY

Follow the day to day activities of the Eigen family (Mr. EigenFunction; Mrs. EigenSpace; their sons EigenFunction, Junior and EigenValue, and their daughters EigenVector and EigenFrequencies) and their neighbours the Matrix family with their dog Identity Matrix.

THE ANNIHILATOR OPERATOR

The Annihilator is the prime force behind cleaning up mathematics. Read about his exploits in getting rid of sets, functions, and vector spaces in nasty isomorphic fashions. His job will not be finished until all complicated, convoluted, incomprehensible math that not even math profs understand (but like giving to their class anyway), is annihilated!!!

THE NATURAL PROPAGATION OF N

Observe the never ending genealogy of the Natural family as N has descendant $(N + 1)$. This might seem to be a linear operation but it is actually curvilinear (i.e. it involves the interaction of curves and lines).

SCHIZOPHRENIC FUNCTION

Schizophrenic Function is the outcast of the Function family since he can't decide what he wants to be. Follow him in his trek through R^n space as he searches for the answer to his ultimate question of life: At which points am I supposed to be 42?

Igor

Our Mathematical Alphabet

As I recite the alphabet to one who's only three
The world of mathematics is opened up to me.

For a, b, c are constants or parameters assigned
And D is a determinant or distance undefined.

The image which e gives to me is one I can't erase
For it can only mean for me the logarithmic base.

F, G, H are functions with appropriate domain
And i 's a unit vector in the Gauss or complex plane.

J 's a Bessel function and another kind is K .
 L 's a linear operator or inductance one could say.

M and N are integers but m could be a mass.
 O is the number zero but O 's the empty class.

P and Q give odds that you will win or lose a bet.
 R gives correlation of two variables you have met.

I see before me Einstein's world when I hear S and T
For they make me think of space and time and relativity.

At this point I'm so deep in thought of time and space
That velocity components u, v, w don't seem much.

Some day, when fully grown, that three-year old may learn
Why x, y, z imply for me how much there is unknown.

M. R. Spiegel

LOST

One 4.5" black and white furred giant panda. Answers to the name of "Monkey", but only when the speaker is blonde. Lost in Needless Hell. Probably following females. Please contact dan (at mathNEWS).

Movie Review

What do you do when you're in beautiful London, Ontario on a Friday night? The possibilities are endless - you could go to the Spoke, the Elbow Room, the arcade or sleep. Any of these options are quite acceptable; unfortunately, at my suggestion, and my mistake we went to see a movie. That would have been fine for there are plenty of great movies (e.g. Terminator, Amadeus, etc) except that, at my suggestion, we went to see *Body Double*.

My tragic mistake, I must admit, was honestly made - I mean the TV ads were interesting and Brian de Palma has made quite a few movies such as *Carrie*, *Scarface*, and *Dressed to Kill*.

I am now going to give my interpretation of a review for this movie. If you saw this movie and liked it, stop reading immediately.

Those who have just quit reading enjoyed the movie for one of the following reasons:

- 1) They were on heroin at the time.
- 2) They went to the wrong theatre by mistake.
- 3) They are close relatives of Brian de Palma.

Before I start this review (no, I haven't started yet) I'd like to tell you that I like movies, they're great! I rarely dislike a movie. I have one of those vegetative brains (it comes from seeing too many Burger King and Wendy's commercials) that allows me to enjoy almost anything that's called a movie.

The Review

Overall Opinion := (bad)ⁿ, $n \rightarrow \infty$!!!!!!! It was more interesting talking to the derelict outside.

Detail

I won't say much about what actually goes on in the movie (I'm trying hard to forget that!), nor about the actors. Yes, there are actors - a girl called Holly Body played by Melanie Griffith, a guy named Sam and another guy called 'Jake' (?maybe?). I shall refrain from criticizing their acting because it's better than mine, but then again I'm in math, not Acting School.

The Plot: No comment except to say that I didn't realize there was one until the last fifteen minutes of the movie. Seriously.

Well, since I can't think of any more headings under 'Detail' (one is pretty good, isn't it?) I'll just give some general comments.

The murder scene was sick—I mean who in their right mind would use a drill bit as long as 3 copies of math-NEWS laid end-to-end to kill a beautiful woman? The guy in front of us thought it was great.

If you want to see a movie, see anything but *Body Double*. I would suggest *Where the Buffalo Roam*—it's a classic.

Well, this review is too long, so ... Ronald's Rating: In the words of my companion, "This movie is hurtin'!"

D R McDonald's

UW: Breaking Away From The Crowd

I am watching with great interest the announcements concerning the new ICR building which is to be constructed within the next two years here at the University of Waterloo. While I recognize that the field of computers is, at present, a very exciting and productive area of study, I hope our university, after establishing itself as one of the finest in North America, will not fall behind by blindly trailing after the shortsighted vision of government funding, or the fickle favour of industry and the job market.

In my high school, our guidance office spewed out information about post-secondary education, mostly concerning placement rates, job opportunities, and starting salaries. The primary goal of this guidance information, in my estimation, was not to help us find the education and career we would find the most enjoyable and rewarding. It was to direct us to an area where we could make the most money. As well, all their advice was based on the premise that they could accurately predict the future by observing the present. We were encouraged to follow a pre-fab rainbow rather than make our own.

Now consider the situation here at the University of Waterloo. UW was involved in the field of computer science and research well before the computer mania of the past few years began. As a result, our university is now a leading academic institution in the area of study which is now in vogue. Governments are willing to pour millions of dollars into the construction of the new Institute of Computer Research, while at the same time they search for inconspicuous means to cut general university funding. Industry itches to get on campus and benefit from its research resources.

So what, you ask, is the problem? Government and industry, those institutional guidance counsellors, have their eyes on present profits more than long-range potential. By buying in on the foresight of our university, these groups hope to reap in the present where they did not sow in the past. As a result, they continue a never-ending game of catch-up, forfeiting the future to stay with the crowd. Our university must not fall into this same trap by siphoning resources from other areas to fuel the present pleasure of these fair-weather friends.

As with the computer field in the past, it is quite likely there are inconspicuous areas of study which are preparing to spring forth as the new "waves of the future." While cashing in on present success seems wonderful, it can, if not carefully watched, lead to selling out on the future. It would be a grave mistake to let other academic groups on campus stagnate while one prospers. This amounts to intellectual tunnel vision.

UW must protect its academic diversity to stay ahead of a truly unpredictable, changing world. It is not by following the crowd, but by continuing to break away from it that UW will remain a leader.

Barry Turner

Frosh Letters

Continued from 2 weeks ago.

Dear Ellen:

How are you? I am fine. This has been an interesting C.S. lab. I hope that some day I can access your PERSONAL files. Maybe we can interface when you have some time. How about at 2400 baud? Or how about if we could go out for a BYTE. It would only take a BIT of your time. My number is in the DIRECTORY. Please give me a call.

Your frosh friend, Rey.

Dearest Ellen:

I'm sure you'd like to know what I did this summer. Well to begin with I had to work for the main part of it. The money wasn't bad and K-MART is one of the finest establishments in the free world. The summer really started cookin' when my friend, Rob and I left for Daytona Beach. We drove down in his Camaro and dared the cops to try and catch us. For two straight weeks we partied in the hot Florida sun, picking up as many beach-bunnies as we could handle. Actually we did have to put one day aside for rest. But for the other days, well, the drinks were cheap and the ladies were tanned.

Sincerely yours, Doug
Scharley.

Dear Ellen (worshipper of bonde-type guys),

In response to that demeaning form letter you forced us to display on our screens, I have a few things to say:

1. I do not in the least way think of myself as moronic (sometimes morbid, but never moronic). Perhaps you misspelled mighty, or even manly -- hardly insignificant at any rate.
2. I've always prided myself on attaining a Creative revenge on all my adversaries, so there! (anything in the name of morbid fun).
3. As to pledging my eternal service to you or any others of your highly (?) self-opinionated kind, don't get me wrong -- I do favours, but it's a mutual thing (I scratch your keyboard; you scratch mine).
4. In respect to supplying you with "members of the opposite sex", all the big, blue eyed blondes that I know have girl friends. Sorry. Now that we have a more viable overview of the situation, I will be looking forward to a favour filled future and some computer science, too.

Sincerely,
David D'silva

P.S. However, I do know a fun type big blue eyed guy named Ray who does have a girl-friend but is looking for marks. (His phone-number was here). He gave me permission to give you his number. Honest.

Dearest Ellen:

Some deranged people really enjoy typing and thus become quite proficient at it. Other socially accepted people such as yours truly, believe that keys were made to start automobiles and other such mechanical devices utilizing electronic ignition.

To these deranged specimens, typing is one of their daily highlights, but to us, socially accepted persons, typing is the time consuming, pain inflicting, mandatory practice connected with computer programming. Don't get me wrong, letters like these are intellectually stimulating and provide a medium for opinionated people such as I; but when will we invent a computer that will understand human speech?

Yours truly,
Murray Toll

HEY SAM,

HOW'er ya do'in buddy?

After enduring a week of good old frosh orientation, I must say that your terrific teaching methods are a welcome experience. You do for screen editing what the front-end loader has done for pulling teeth. When I think of all the years that I've lived in utter shame due to lack of knowledge with regards to using an I.B.M, I realize that life wasn't so bad up to this point. APPLES FOR EVER.

But let's get down to why I'm here. This program was not my first choice. I really wanted to get into the Devry institute for clinical ditch-digging but unfortunately, my darn high-schoolmarks were too high for that course. So, to make a long story even longer, I wound up here (Somebody up there really like me <REALLY>).

There comes a time in a person's life when he/she (no sexism with this boy ...) has to leave the nest (watch that first step, It's 40 feet above the ground). It's lonely and scary at first, but it sure is good to get those feathers and pieces of nest out of your hair and TAKE A GOOD BATH!!!! (My favorite part of the whole process is changing from a diet of normally mundane bland-tasting earthworms and getting down to some good(?) cafeteria chow!!!!)

My university career is laid out in front of me and I hope I don't trip over it. I know that I can sleep now knowing that you and Ellen and Jill and possibly Carlo will start me off right.

Thanks for the computer intro, Keep on Tutor'in,

Your CS cohort,
Gord Payne.

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Editor: Cary Timar

Dear Sir,

Personally, I am of the opinion that there are far too few math frosh on campus. I have reasoned logically in my mind to hopefully achieve the answer as to why I have made absolutely no friends. I am normally very amusing and fun to be with, but it seems to me that no one likes me. I've even gotten so desperate as to change deodorants, toothpaste and mouthwash but nothing seems to work. Perhaps you can tell me if my approach is all wrong.

mathfrosh: "Hi, my name is Sue what's yours?"

me: "Good day. My name is Linda. By the way, how do you feel about the molecular structure of Einstein's hair follicles?"

Anyway, I'm sure a remedy to my situation will be to accept far more math applicants into your university. Please see what you can do.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours desperately,
Math Frosh/84.

Dear Sam:

I would like to take this opportunity to let you know that I,

- a) am glad you are my tutor
- b) don't mind having you for my tutor
- c) I can stand you for a tutor
- d) would rather have someone else

*note choose the letter which corresponds to my final grade

This year I know I will have,

- a) A whole bunch of fun
- b) A good time
- c) A real shock
- d) A nervous breakdown

*note choose the letter corresponding to final grade

Please excuse me for being a moron frosh. I went to the doctor and he said the only cure for M.F. was high marks. He further went on to explain, if your marks are high you will pass, and in doing so no longer be a M.F., as you would become a second year moron. So keep this in mind, when marking my assignments, you can do your part to lick M.F. Remember, M.F. can be beaten.

Most Sincerely,
Pete Saddler M.F. future
computer whiz.

Another Complex AECTvN Masthead!

This week started with an AM assignment so nasty that both Tom and dan said they couldn't help much. Johns, who had the same assignment, did as much of their work as he could. Thanks, Johns, for writing typing, troubleshooting, proofreading, I-O, layout, editing, correction, pizza handling, and everything else. Thanks also to Tom, who did show up in the end, and fixed everything that was still wrong. dan also showed up, and gave some advice, and did much of distribution (by the time you get this).

Where credit is due

(Toronto-coop)

1. It is worth noting that certain parts of mN Vol 36 N5 (Oct 26) came from Smullyan's time of logical reasoning (*What is the name of this book?*). I was also astounded to see some of my own work appear in V36 N4, likewise uncredited. Enough Said.

2. Even if IChOR is to be named inappropriately, let us cast our efforts to assuring that its colour scheme is not that of the Hole. The Fed Shed looks worse than ES2.

3. Why doesn't your stream do cover pages? Just curious.

Until January, Sauron.

P.S. Mathie proof of existence:
I'm pink, therefore I am.

P.S.S. "Warp factor 6 to production night, Spotty!"

"I kenna do it, Captin, we're still off stream!"

"drat it, Jim, they need the filler we're carrying!"

"I know, bonus, but there's nothing we can do."

We don't do cover pages because we have nobody this term who draws or photographs. If we've printed your articles, it must be because they were submitted to us (unless someone else has published it). If we've printed someone else's, somebody must have submitted it to us as his own. I give credit when I know something is a reprint.

Alfred

More Masthead

The others who showed up were also much appreciated. This includes (in order of appearance) Sam (typing), Paul (typing, layout), Camille (typing, layout), Kevin (typing, editing, I-O, layout, proofreading), Rick (I-O, layout, proofreading), and Barb (token female, who's going home with me this weekend). I'm sorry, I got order of appearance slightly wrong.

I'd also like to thank our contributors for this issue. These were Igor, D.R. McDonald's, Barry Turner, Lisa Seabrooks, Slash Sinatra, Dr. Ernie, Centre of Gravity, Tom Watts, MathSec, Sauron, John Vonfor, Martin & Siegfried, Tag, Sam, and the students in CS180. Particular thanks go to Melvin Vockler and his little brother, who provided us with some artwork long ago, but we couldn't get our photoreductionist to work until now, so you haven't seen any until now. I'd also like to apologise for our gridword editor, who claimed in last issue that we only had one correct solution to the previous gridword. I've been told we had at least two.

I forgot to mention that Rick did most of the layouts, with help from John (not John O'Melian), and all of the rogue, plus a large share of the pizza consumption. Thanks Rick. I should also mention that dan and Bob didn't get me any graph theory notes during my interview, and that I can't stand this blotchy approximation to a pen, and mention nothing about Deb.

Alfred Ed. *Car* von Newman

Feedback

Hey editor,

I just did a breadth-first search on the sixth floor—it was a drag. How about some signs so I don't always have to find rooms by brute force.

John Wonfor (4A Math)

What evil lurks ...

Yes, it's true. An evil far worse than Tom A. Memorial Fed Hall dwells on the fourth floor of the Mathematics and Computer building. That's right! Those hulking refugees from the Neolithic era that pass for (dare we say it?) photocopiers in the EMS Library. And we are not referring to those modern electronic copiers that take especially charged plastic cards and are capable of warp six if necessary. Rather, we mean to draw attention to the queue of coin-swallowing monsters that glow and grind in a timeless ritual in our building.

Mad with desire for copies of important documents (correct solution sets notes, love letters, Fed referendum ballots or student visas), the trusting individual tempts the fates by placing his faith (and his nickel) in the whirring monoliths. Yet one may reasonably expect a certain number of the "copiers" to be "out of order" with service calls made. (Incidentally, there is a mathematical relationship here: the number of inoperative machines is directly proportional to the number of people waiting for copies.) Who do the library staff call for service (assuming that a call has been made)? The Man from Glad? Nelson Eddy? Susan (888-6102)? We have yet to observe persons racing to repair the "copiers" before their coffee-breaks begin.

And should the individual be so fortunate as to obtain a functioning "copier" before their next dental appointment or court appearance (whichever comes first), what is the result? Accurate originals yield vague, creased, faint copies with streaks! (And for this one pays a nickel?)

An appeal to the authorities proves generally to be a waste of time. The typical response usually includes the following triumph of idiocy: "You shouldn't use the copier if it is broken." How is one to determine if the machine doesn't work, if a sign was not posted, before one inserts a coin? Survey the library population at large!

(The only resort in MC is to turn to the copier in the mathSOC office. Try to avoid small talk with the person behind the desk or you may find yourself associated with one of any number of outlandish Math Society projects.)

And yet the evil remains among us. Have you ever wondered where those blank-faced, quiet and subdued people who compose the EMS Library staff come from? A fate worse than Math 234B induced by chronic use of these same photocopiers. Fact proves stranger than fiction.

Martin + Siegfried

Dear mathNEWS:

I was very sorry to see that your *Gazeteer of Programming Languages* (vol 36, no 6) did not make reference to my personal favourite: APL. This language, as I'm sure you are aware, was developed in the late 1800's by an otherwise unknown mathematics lecturer and was named after his young friend, Alice Pleasance Liddel.


The standard APL implementation comes in two parts. The first includes many functions relating to geometrical dilation; the second, to reflection. Several logical operators are also present. APL includes, of course, the standard arithmetic operators, ambition, distraction, uglification, and derision. The primary data type is assumed to be purely imaginary, but is actually quite complex.

APL has been used for simulation, for natural language processing, and even for games of cards and chess. While it was intended originally for children, it is rarely used by them today, for they have difficulty with its syntax, and its meaning. In fact, APL programs may seem to any inexperienced user to be simply nonsense. APL's primary purpose, of course, was to keep Alice seven-and-a-half forever.

APL implementations are in widespread use. It's also in the public domain now; get a copy! Compilers exist, although the language seems to be more often interpreted. In this case, however, the computer must run as fast as possible just to keep in the same place. (This should be familiar to anyone who has used the WATCOM languages.)

In conclusion, I would like to express my regret that mathNEWS did not choose to include any reference to this fine language in its *Gazeteer*. (Noter that mathSOC has seen the light; they sell APL T-shirts.)

Yours sincerely,

Taq 

There was an engineer who had a flagpole in front of whatever he lived in, and he was going batty trying to calculate its height. He couldn't climb it, the law of sines was driving him to distraction, and the batteries on his TI-59 were running low. In desperation, he called the manufacturer, who asked, "Why don't you take it out of the ground and measure it?" To which the engineer replied, "But I want to know the height, not the length!"

Apology

In our last issue, mathNEWS stated that dan would be having his hair dyed again on the 24th. This has turned out to be incorrect. He will actually have it dyed on the 10th. Watch for his fluorescent hair Monday. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.