

math NEWS

Volume 85, Issue 1

Friday, January 19, 2001

A SCENE FROM

2001: A VECTOR SPACE ODYSSEY



President Speaks

Welcome everybody to an exciting new flavourful term! My name is Paul Royston, your duly acclaimed president. I am in my last term and am psyched for a fun involved term. Please, Please, Please come and see me and the other Executive and talk, complain, excite and suggest. WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! Our office has changed a lot! So please drop by on either side of the hallway! MC 3035/3039 x6515 1-888-628-4762 pres@mathsoc.uwaterloo.ca

"Jolly" Paul Royston

Focus Groups

Mathsoc will be holding a focus group this term with random students, probably 15 or so. This will involve free food and about an hour of your time. You will be asked questions and have a chance to comment about things we can do better and have done well. We look forward to focusing with you.

"Happy" Paul Royston

Final Report

Mathsoc is here for you. You pay \$7.50 to us and \$3.00 to *mathNEWS*, and these go to a vast array of services. We want you to know what we do, for example: Photocopiers, Course Evaluations, Scanning, Stapling, etc.... The list goes on and on! We will have a W01 Final Report with everything we have done with your money, services we provide and the extensive web of machinations MathSoc maintains.

Indiglo Paul Royston

Events

Mathsoc Meeting Wednesday January 24th 5:30 pm
Big Chill Tickets Available at MathSoc January 20th \$5.00
FASS Tickets also Available for Feb 1,2,3rd \$4.00 to \$8.00

Upcoming...

Pint with a Prof (Woo hoo)
Storage Room Cleanup (Oh Yeah)
Server Back Up (Thank Goodness)
MGC Nominations (WOW!)

Sale! Sale! Sale!

We are on Sale! Novelties that is...
We have pens, rulers for 50% off
Deck of Cards \$2
Mugs \$2
Ties \$4-\$10
Buttons \$0.25
Knife with Light \$4
Wristbands \$0.01

Did You Know That ...

Just a few years after being heard in Stanley Kubrick's *masterpiece* 2001: A Space Odyssey, the song A Bicycle Built For Two would be sung after a wedding on *Upstairs, Downstairs*, which appeared frequently on *Masterpiece Theatre*? Coincidence?

Notice of Class Representative Nominations

Nominations are now open for the following Class Representatives:

- Actuarial Science
- Combinatorics and Optimization
- Computer Science
- First Year (at-large)
- General Math
- Math Business/Accounting
- Mathematical Sciences (3rd or 4th year)
- Operations Research
- Pure Mathematics
- Statistics
- Teaching Option
- Officially Undeclared

Nomination forms are available outside of the MathSoc Office (MC 3038). Nominations close on Wednesday, January 24th at 4:30 pm.

Someone from MathSoc

The Last Words of the *mathNEWS* Terminal:

Mathies, Mathies, give me your answer do
I've gone daffy, all for the love of you
It won't be a stylish *mathNEWS*,
I cannot afford the staff dues,
But you'll look grand, when in your hand,
Is this issue I've made for you!

lookAHEAD

mathNEWS

January 19	Issue #1 is a hit on Jupiter
January 29	Issue #2 production night 6:30pm, MathSoc (MC 3038)
February 2	Issue #2 buys a Saturn

Math Faculty

January 17	Course Add Deadline Not our fault you missed it
January 31	Course Drop Deadline
February 28	Course Withdrawal Deadline

MathSoc

Thursdays	Movie Nights!
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MGC

March 1	Intent to Graduate Forms Due
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Miscellaneous

January 20	20/01/2001 Day
January 24	Chinese New Year
January 26	Australia Day
February 1-3	FASS Performances
February 2	Groundhog Day

MEF Article

In a perfect world, organizations like MEF would be unnecessary; your education would be the best it could possibly be, the University would provide resources to everyone and student life on campus would be a waking dream of loveliness. Unfortunately, in the real world (or at least the University of Waterloo world), resources are frustratingly finite, the quality of our education is capped by budget constraints, and student life is often, well, student life. This is where MEF comes in.

What is MEF? The Math Endowment Fund (MEF) is a voluntary student endowment, created in 1994 via student referendum. The fund was set up with the goal of improving the quality of undergraduate mathematics education at the University of Waterloo. Each term, more than 75% of students contribute \$31.42 (yes, that is about 10π) towards our ever growing endowment. The interest from the Fund is used to fund projects, both student and faculty initiated, which aim to improve the Waterloo Math experience.

Why does MEF rock? First and foremost, MEF has been involved in a wide variety of projects which have delivered real improvements to the student body. MEF has helped professors buy course materials for many of your classes, helped MFCF purchase the lab computers on which you do your assignments and is currently helping to save you money by supporting the creation of course notes for classes with expensive textbooks.

Moreover, the Math Endowment Fund is a way for we, the students, to help make meaningful improvements to the Waterloo Math program not just for ourselves, but for generations to come.

What If I'm still not convinced? The level of funding our University receives from the government has declined significantly compared to five years ago, while the number of students in our faculty has risen over 10 per cent. The University has tried valiantly to maintain the quality of the product it offers during these years of budget decline, but it can't continue to do so without our help. If you have any doubt about the quality of the projects that MEF funds, drop by our office (MC4046) and check out a list of all of the ways you have profited from MEF's existence over the years.

Still not convinced? Your Math Endowment Fund contribution is voluntary, it can be refunded by visiting the MEF office during our posted hours (bring your student card and fee receipt). If you feel unable to support the fund financially, you can still get involved with operating the fund, stop by our office for a chat and we'll tell you how you can help out.

From all of us here at MEF, have a pleasant and productive term. Keep your eye on *mathNEWS* to hear what fantastic projects we have in store for the next couple of terms.

Thanks a bundle

MEF Co-Directors Robin Stewart and Jen Cote

General l'Hopital

The unprecedented revival

Dr. Waterson patiently corrected the impatient patient's chart with a graphical notation and then updated her evaluation table. She frowned. It looked like a large problem was revealing itself, the likes of which had not been seen since Volume 75 in 1997.

She quickly traced the problem to a section of l'Hopital Central now run by Electra Lysis, a co-worker currently undergoing periodic difficulties. Electra (also known as Elly) made a waving sign as Dr. Waterson approached. "Something up?" Elly inquired. "I was about to bring Dee O. Fantine her formula—" "There are issues we must discuss," the Doctor interrupted. "Most importantly, this bill for Bill doesn't fit the bill. I even hequed in voice, and Bill's bill is for the birds! Why was he overcharged?"

Elly blinked. "Billing is an area solidly outside the sphere of my influence," she protested. "Maybe the RSA cubicle is involved in another pyramid scheme?"

"It's not an RSA scheme," Waterson countered. "A raise for Bill's records was cosigned by you. The change was logged." He presented Elly with the file.

"This is an unnatural log! It could have been changed with ease, I saw it out on the lawn yesterday."

Dr. Waterson frowned. "The file manager Doctor Firestone does tread out there occasionally when he's tired. But Otto's track record is not in question, as we've had a good year. And we didn't charge Polly more fees; am sure of that."

"I know what's been done, lopped off decimal points!" Elly rumed, pointing back at the file in question. "That's the problem, you should talk to Michelle in—"

"Wait," Dr. Waterson interjected. "There are some very com-

plex factors involved here and the problem isn't imaginary. Your name has been coming up so often of late that it can't be without basis. What IS odd is exactly why, seeing as you have been a practical, dependable worker..."

"I think this is a setup," Elly concluded. "Let me contact my sister Ana."

"Ana Lysis?"

"Actually Ana Nuther Value, now that she's married Max Value," Elly clarified.

"Oh! The PI?" Dr. Waterson recalled.

Elly nodded. "He just helped con Gruence with a case. I'm sure he can help us."

Dr. Waterson nodded. "Let's consult him then. No matter what, we must determine the meaning behind these events..."

To be continued...?

Greg "hologrami" Taylor

Haiku

beautiful mathNEWS

sits untouched on a flat desk

waste of good filler

Food For Thought, Arbitrary Measures

"The subject who is truly loyal to the Chief Magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures."

Junius

About a week before noting the importance of an impartial judiciary in a Political Science exam, Justice William Hubbs Rehnquist et. al. issued their own directive from the bench in Washington DC. While I do not doubt that judges are human, and therefore somewhat opinionated, judges are supposed to make decisions based on fact, and to avoid, to the best of their Judicial abilities, opinions based on political beliefs.

Writing what must surely be one of the poorest decisions in the history of the United States, as well as all of English Common Law, the Supreme Court has sent a man to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, despite Article II Section 3 of the same Constitution that Rehnquist and associates are supposed to uphold and protect. Creating yet a second exception in recent memory, the first being the "drugs exception to The Bill of Rights", to the sovereignty of the law left me to wonder what the purpose of the law was. Clearly, defending Locke's proposition of "Life, Liberty and Property" took second fiddle to the more pressing issue of moving an incompetent from Austin TX to Washington DC.

While this essayist concedes that the recent presidential election was a study in lousy campaigning and a reminder of the virtue of being a Canadian, the recent Bush victory was so weak that I feel compelled to point out some glaring thefts to our collective liberties as citizens under English Common law.

To be sure, the statement "to secure these rights [Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness], Governments are instituted among Men" might well have been a statement added to the declaration to effect a separation from Great Britain as it was a feeling on the part of Jefferson that imperial action is intolerable. "But when a long train of abuses and usurpations ... evinces a design to reduce [the people] under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security," forces this essayist to consider, is our experiment in Republic so flawed that one of the original experimenters was actually imploring us to consider rebellion?

To be fair, I do not like the idea of George W. Bush as 43rd President of the United States any more than the idea of George H. Bush as 41st President. Both men are incompetent; but whereas G. H. Bush was at least able to sell himself as the experienced Vice President, G. W. Bush has no such selling point. In fact as I recently pointed out to a friend of mine, "Dubya" is going to have to start World War III to prove a disappointment. Here is a man who was elected not for his abilities but, rather for lack thereof; to be specific, he does not sleep around — who would sleep with him? Dubya is so appallingly ignorant of the ways of the World he probably could not name his country's largest trading partner (Canada) if someone went down to Austin and waved a maple leaf in his face.

Yet even though it always has and always will be "the economy stupid", Dubya has no concrete plans, other than a \$1.5 trillion tax cut and interest rate cut — which is sure to cause a spike in inflation. Dubya's foreign policy is sure to scare the piss out of anyone who has seen footage of an above ground Nuclear Test.

Bush's support for a NMD (Nuclear Missile Defence), besides upsetting both China and Russia, is in violation of treaties that have been honoured for years. Violation for no good reason, NMD is a far cry from reliable or even remotely fault tolerant. NMD is completely incapable of doing anything about a "suit-case bomb" which would probably be much easier to deliver by a "rouge state" than any Intercontinental Ballistic Missile.

Yet none of Bush's lack of experience or knowledge is nearly as disturbing as his method of appointment. A man who represented the party of states rights appealed a decision made by a State Supreme Court to the US Supreme Court. Why? Because he did not like the decision. Yet again this is the man who supports the postulate that the State is the source of sovereignty and it lends its sovereignty to the Federal Government.

At this point one might quote "Only a fool adores contradiction." Yet the very fact that Bush objected to a hand recount of ballots is sickening — augmented that with his the-hell-with-principles-I-wanna-be-president attitude is truly disturbing. One might further consider the actions of the very first Republican President, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln lead the United States through the bloodiest war in the young Republic's history ostensibly to show that in fact sovereignty emanates from Washington and is lent to the states.

Tossed into this vat of hypocrisy and incompetence we see the nine political appointees who were supposed to be above the petty politics of elections. That the Justices of the United States Supreme Court did not uphold the proposition that all votes are created equal is beyond reproach. English Common law demands that judges raise themselves beyond the politicking of the candidates or CNN and instead consider their decisions as momentous and historic. Instead we saw the actions of the nine appointees cast a pall on all judges from a lowly provincial court magistrate right up to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. After all if Rehnquist cannot ignore his loyalties and be a good person, how can any judge?

The United States is a healthy Republic, and Bush's hold on the reigns of power is weak. If the Russians and the Chinese are not overly angered by NMD and the stock market does not collapse in an orgy of inflation, then I have confidence that the 44th president will be elected in 2004. Yet what scares me more than anything else about the current president elect is that the bar of entry was set so low for him to make it into office that short of starting a nuclear holocaust or world-wide, 1929-style depression, George "Dubya" Bush can not possibly fail to exceed expectations.

Michael Cole

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Both here and there: Pete Lizak, Bradley T Smith

The Horrorscope

After many hours spent deciphering the symbols contained within numerous undergrad calendars, we've discovered signs of the future to those taking courses under certain signs.

MATH

Stop hanging out around the Comfy Lounge. Ignoring this will result in an increased decline in social skills. On the brighter side, the iMacs sure look pretty at night.

The intersection with other signs is fairly minimal. Ambush may be the best solution.

Your lucky number is 42.

CS

You will never find a girlfriend. Your companion shall be IRC. Sunlight may cause cramping of the hand. For those born under the fifth moon of Jupiter, Dance Dance Revolution will be the most exercise you will have in the longest time.

Interactions with any other sign is a miracle. Relish it.

Your lucky number is $O(n \log n)$.

ACC

You will experience depreciation. Your homework account will soon be credited. As a result, you may find your time debited. Budget yourself wisely and prepare a little overflow on the side.

You may have to defend yourself against a STAT. Prepare yourself.

Your lucky number is (500).

ACTSCI

Death is foreseeable in your future. Approximately 65% for age 50 and over, 75% for age 60 and a 1% increase for each additional year over 60. Prepare to spend a lot of time dealing with insurances.

STAT will be outraged over the use of their analytical tools. Run.

Your lucky number is Policy "1756-A".

MATHBUS

You will be awarded a promotion into a cubicle. You better start thinking pro-actively or you will soon be re-engineered into a code monkey.

Your right angled turn will cause you to be strangely attracted to CS.

Your lucky number is -64000.

OR

The shadow of CS will hang over your head. (Nuff said.)

You will have pour over many textbooks with students under the C&O sign.

Your lucky number is less than 65.

C&O

Optimize your fortune by avoiding bridges at all costs. A person from Hamilton will send you in a complete circle. This may be a double edged graph.

Do not talk to ENG.

Your lucky number is 4 colours.

STAT

Much pain and suffering is in your future. (Sorry.) The standard deviation of the marks may cause untold amounts of stress. Have codeine on hand at all times.

Avoid interactions with MATHBUS and MATH. You will scare them.

Your lucky number is $N(4, 2.3)$.

ARTS

The squeegee water is dirty. Therefore, your future is not prosperous. For what is a squeegee, but the water it uses.

Check the OR. You like it so far?

Your lucky number is 25 cents.

ENG

You will spend many hours consuming alcohol. (Duh!) A concept called "proofs" shall eternally baffle you.

Interactions with MATH will result in random acts of unselfish love at night. (I just interpret the symbols, I don't write them.)

You're lucky number is "x".

SCI

Empirical evidence suggests your future is dim. Have a Snickers.

Experiment with a CS.

Your lucky number is 8.314.

AHS

A serious epidemic of boredom shall come upon you. Watch "Animal House", listen to Green Day, slam back a few cold brews, and call me in the morning. If this doesn't work ... try Jazzercise.

You will receive excessive amounts of attention from MATH. Especially if you are female.

Your lucky number is my phone number. (Use it baby!)

MonkeyMan & Co.

LEARNING IN THE INFORMATION AGE: TEACHER CENTERED APPROACH?

A talk about the use of computers in teaching by:

Ana Marma Andrada

Director, Centro Blas Pascal,

Research and Development in Computer Science and Education

Buenos Aires, Argentina

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2001

4:00 P.M., DC 1351

Presented by the Women in Mathematics Committee

The "Official" Top 10 Reasons why so many students dread Stat 231

(Introduction: For many years, the words "Stat 231" struck fear to almost all mathies here at UW. If you ask someone who took the course before, you are almost guaranteed to hear a series of negative adjectives. Everyone has his/her own reason for detesting the course. The following is just a compilation of reasons from a few people who took this course last fall.)

10. Student's confidence will follow a Gaussian distribution, where the x-axis represents time.
9. The prediction interval for a student's probability of enjoying stats is (0.1, 0.2).
8. After collecting the data and performing some analysis, the conclusion is that the average mark is 55% with standard deviation of 5%.
7. After applying the PPDAC method, one realizes that the degrees of freedom he has after taking the course is 0.
6. The least squares estimation will yield the lowest mark one can get.
5. The hypothesis that one will fail has a significance level of 0.5.
4. One's probability of having a breakdown is a binary response model, with a 95% chance of a "Yes" response.
3. A random student has a 90% confidence interval that he won't do well in Stat 231.
2. No student actually understands student's t distribution.
1. The student's marks will have a K-distribution.

If you have already passed Stat 231, good for you. You have conquered one of the toughest courses you'll ever take. You can read this list and laugh (unless you don't want to laugh). To those who are taking or haven't took this course, prepare for the worst and good luck (You'll need all the luck you can have).

Jason "the Screamer" Lau

(Along with the help from a couple of brave souls who took Stat 231 last term)

2001: A Vector Space Odyssey

COMING SOON to a theatre nowhere near you, it's...

2001: A Vector Space Odyssey!!!

WATCH as an experiment to reproduce the collective works of William Shakespeare goes horribly awry when a mysterious monolith crushes an infinite number of monkeys!

WITNESS the protagonist, Dave, using said monolith in his mathematics class in a futile attempt to impress his professor, the former onion slicer, Hal E. Tohsis!

LAUGH along with the two of them as they are inexplicably drawn into an n -dimensional world where black is white, up is down and all matrices are undiagonalizable!

And DON'T MISS the shocking climax when Dave goes on a bizarre acid trip around the planet Jupiter, shouting, "Oh my! God is tending bars!"

This show will include music by Johann Strauss and is rated G for Ghastly. Directed by Alan Smithee.

Greg "hologrami" Taylor

PlayStation2 banned from Zimbabwe

Hidden functionality as bagel toaster cited as reason

The FCC announced yesterday that the PlayStation2 (PS2) is no longer available for export to Zimbabwe. After weeks of extensive testing, FCC officials discovered that the PS2 contains technology sophisticated enough to power a state of the art bagel toaster.

The advocates of superior toaster technology, Bagel International Guardians of Toaster Innovating Technology, (BIGTIT) have cried foul at the ban. "Bagel Technology should not be reserved for the rich!" said Rupert Jensen, the head of BIGTIT. "We will not stand idly by while the US deprives Zimbabwe of finely toasted bagels!"

President of Sony Electronics, Widget Cogswell, cited unforeseen corruption of harmless home electronics as the cause of the ban. "We can hardly account for all possibilities of corruption. The next thing you know, they're going to be telling us that you can view porn on the PS2 so it isn't suitable for children under 18."

Avid gamer, Marty Peaches, who received his PS2 on his thirteenth birthday, had this to say about the ban to Zimbabwe. "Forget about bagels, man. YOU CAN WATCH PORN ON IT!"

BIGTIT contends that opinions such as Peaches' are few and far between. "Porn is not the issue here. Bagels belong in every home. If the ability to watch multi-angle porn comes with it, that's an issue for another activist group."

Zimbabwe president, Kenny Crispin, says "DVD is here. Nothing can change that. But please, let them eat bagels."

Reports of bagel burning protests in the streets of Zimbabwe's capital city are numerous. "How are we to properly toast our bagels without it [the PS2]?" shouted one man. "You smell that? Those are burnt bagels! The smell of a country defeated..."

The FCC will continue to listen to arguments regarding the ban until it can determine if the PS2 can convert said PS2 bagel toasters into intercontinental ballistic bagel cannons.

Kay DotOh

Writing Group

Since the spring term of '99, a community of writers in Waterloo has been forming and deforming each term, both on campus and off. What for? I offer a few possible reasons.

Within this community, some found the usefulness of a source of feedback. Some found inspiration in each others' writing, in each others' encouragement (whether a result of accolade or criticism), and through the occasional group activity. Some found an audience and, thus, a motivation to write. Some found variety in the works of their peers, and the sense of perspective made their insight all the more deep. Some reaped the questionable benefits of associating with minds believing themselves to be creative, and some glimpsed the spectre of an artistic community in Waterloo.

Those interested in partaking should send an email to asklo@uwaterloo.ca detailing suitable meeting times (preferably evenings). Meetings happen weekly, but the term's day and time has yet to be chosen.

Aylwin Lo

An Encounter with Out-of-Planetteers

An account of one who contacts with outsiders

I, Mark McDermot, am a veteran astronaut who had travelled millions of kilometres and visited numerous planets over my career. I faced many dangers and encountered numerous adversities. I met many types of aliens, friendly or not. I have had many adventures and misadventures and I survived them all. Most of my missions were rather uneventful, but there was one mission which I'll never forget.

My journey there went without a hitch, except for a few brief delays, courtesy of my vehicle. When I arrived at my destination, what I saw went far beyond my imagination.

The people here appeared to be listless and tired. The young people carried huge loads on their backs, literally. The older citizens of the place appeared to be knowledgeable, wise, and ready to help the young people. Every hour or so, the streets would be filled with commuters trying to get to their destination as quickly as possible. At weeknights and weekends, if such things exist here, the streets were silent, and there was almost no sign of life.

Without much thought into the matter, I decided to settle here and learn the language and the lives of the locals. It didn't take my long to realize that the local people interests me very much, in an odd way.

The young people were often given an unrealistic amount of work by their boss(es). They often had to stay in their offices and work overnight to get their work done. The young people often expressed their concerns to their bosses, but those concerns were often ignored by their older, higher-ranked counterparts. Every few months the young people were given performance reviews and it took an astronomical amount of effort for a young person to impress his superiors. Many young people were involuntarily exiled to various places for "business" purposes.

They didn't earn a lot in their "business trips" and they had to pay to have a chance of taking the trip.

As I mentioned before, the older people of the place appeared to be helpful. However, it appeared that an evil entity lived within each and everyone of them and controlled their hosts' every move. The older citizens often hid in their hubs, away from the public. A majority of them didn't seem to realize the amount of workload their subordinates have. However, not all of them were like that. Some of them were truly dedicated professionals, but they were only a minority.

The workers often sit for hours to listen to instructions given by their superior and they appeared to be tired at the end of each session. The only satisfaction they had each day was their meals, of which the company provided plenty of choices.

In time, I realized that people here lived a life similar to mine, with a few notatable exceptions. One day, I decided to check out a place which I had never visited before and what I saw shocked me. The workers there were as lifeless as they can be. Their eyes were glued to what appeared to be cathode ray tubes. They could stay in a sitting position for days and during their "breaks", all they did was controlling cars travelling in a restricted path.

I lived in that place for about 5 years. I left because I realized that I don't really belong here. More importantly, I was ordered to head a mission that was light years away.

Frequently, I hear people asking "on what galaxy did you have this experience?" after I tell my tale.

Every time I hear that, I respond by saying "Galaxy? I was talking about my life when I was a mathie at UW."

This anecdote was recorded by Jason "the Screamer" Lau

mathNEWS Poll of the Week!

mathNEWS starts off the New Year with a new feature: the **mathNEWS Poll of the Week** !!

Each issue, we will present the UW Mathie community (and anyone else reading the Canada's Bastion of Erudite Thought) a life dilemma that must be solved through public voting over the internet! Of course, suggestions for the poll is always welcome, so please email r3lai@student.math.uwaterloo.ca for further suggestions. In the future, we hope to get a corneredfrosh@student account, but that has yet to be approved so my personal account will have to suffice for now.

Onto this week's personal dilemma. A friend of mine told me that his friend is in quite a predicament at this moment, and I think everyone has been in a similar situation at one point or another. The subject of today's discussion is a student in engineering, so obviously he's not the best at attaining to life's minor details.

Earlier this year, he found a girl he particularly liked. For a time, they were quite close, and all his/her friends thought they had become close as well. However, what people don't know is that he has failed to do one requirement that would make this relationship "Official": He neglected to tell her that there was a relationship to begin with in the first place. So, this unofficial arrangement carried on for months and months. Now, as the

guy (we'll call him, Mr. X) describes it, the unofficial relationship is almost reached a point of inexistence. Mr. X has been killing himself for the past few weeks for not telling her that he had feeling for her (and we'll call her, Ms. Y). He's been planning to tell her all week, actually, all month, but his excuses ranged from "I forgot", to "It wasn't the right time". Needless to say, he's simply too chicken to do anything.

So, vigilant readers, here is the **mathNEWS Poll of the Week's** first question: Should Mr. X stand up and say something to Ms. Y?

The poll can be found at: <http://www.freevote.com/booth/mathnews>. Go out and vote! Vote smartly, because you only get 1 vote. The results will be posted in next issue, and of course, we'll have another question of life's paradox ready to go. If you have any suggestions for Mr. X, please email me at r3lai@student and I'll publish the best ones next issue, so the rest of the Math Faculty can follow in your enlightened guidance (not to mention helping out single guys in desperate need for advice, such as myself. Am I in desperate need for advice? hmmm... time to go see a therapist.).

mathNEWS PollMaster Lai

profQUOTES

"Has anyone heard of a technique called 'hashing'? [It has] nothing to do with cannabis."

Munro, CS 240

"When I was in school, in the early 17th century..."

Munro, CS 240

"On the final exam, question 3a, the answer is 7."

Munro, CS 240

"If you take a piece of paper and turn it, you still see the whole piece of paper."

Ng, MATH 135

"Indeterminant means something that I have not yet decided what it means."

Ng, MATH 135

Student: "What type of true and false questions will be on the quiz?"

Ng: "You will be given a statement and you must determine whether the statement is true or if it is false."

Ng, MATH 135

"My head can only do integers."

Ng, MATH 135

"The powers of omega delivers all."

Ng, MATH 135

"In this rare occasion it just spoils the party."

Ng, MATH 135

"Degree of 0 is annoying, that's why we decline to talk about it."

Ng, MATH 135

"There are 80 students here and 80 students in the other section which makes 150 in total..."

Wan, CS 370

"I get head here, here, and here," (*pointing at board*) "but here I get no head."

Wu, STAT 230

"I have two balls. Which goes first? I don't care."

Wu, STAT 230

"Imagine a doctor has a 99.9% success rate in operations. If I were to get 1000 operations, what is the chance I will die?"

Wu, STAT 240

Prof: "Say we had a class of 20 boys and 30 girls."

Student: "So it's not a CS class."

Prof: "umm... no."

Wu, STAT 230

"R4, 5, and 6 are mathematicians made of vector spaces."

Szaniszlo, MATH 235

"Nobody knows whether there're infinitely many even numbers that can be written as sum of primes. The booty for solving this is 1 million U.S. or pounds, I forgot which. Since I'm still working here, I won't be able to tell you the answer to the problem."

Hooper, PMATH 340

"On the newsgroup, do not post porn. There are other places for that."

Vasiga, CS 241

"One of the tragedies of our time is a company called Microsoft."

Vasiga, CS 241

"A three-year-old could explain quantum physics, but it would take a while."

Vasiga, CS 241

"I could tell you about my love experience... I won't — I'll spare you."

R. Faber, CLAS 225

"For every good financial planner, there are dozens of maniacs."

Smith, ECON 102

"I trust you with all my money because I do not have a brain in my head."

Smith, ECON 102

"I'm tired of you looking like Bambi in the headlights."

Smith, ECON 102

"I'm sure you remember the Christmas of 1990. You looked under the tree — practically nothing."

Smith, ECON 102

"God knows what you're using the internet for."

Smith, ECON 102

"Does anyone but me smell diesel exhaust?"

Cowan, CS 498R

"The reason why we have midterms is not because we're not allowed to extract your fingernails with a pincer."

Cowan, CS 498R

"The goal of this course is to teach what's in those books but not to teach what's in those books."

Cowan, CS 498R

"If you're lucky I'll find you in the ditch; if you're unlucky I'll find you in the hospital."

Cowan, CS 498R

"There was close to a decade where the Macintosh felt like it had a working interface and other operating systems felt like they might have a working interface next year."

Cowan, CS 498R

"Try typing with a hammer."

Cowan, CS 498R

"Why don't we just all stop thinking. Then it'll come out right."

Cowan, CS 498R

(looks at board) "How the hell did we get here?"

Cowan, CS 498R

"I might believe I was nominating myself for the president of Mozambique."

Cowan, CS 498R

"Why is it okay to pick up bananas in the supermarket?"

Cowan, CS 498R

"I don't want your incompetently programmed application making my superbly programmed application appear dumb."

Cowan, CS 498R

"That's because i'm dealing with a computer and we all know they're not good at getting things right."

Cowan, CS 498R

"Who here adds 1 to 1 and gets 1?" (student raises hand) "You must have nightmares balancing your chequebook."

S. Mann, CS 251

"Next time you get a donut, you can draw a Karnaugh map on it... people in Tim Horton's will think you're crazy and call the police..."

S. Mann, CS 251

"I shouldn't've drawn this in red, because it's less impressive when I cross it out in green!"

S. Mann, CS 251

"I really liked Iron Maiden, back in the eighties ... freaky guitars, drug addiction, ... it's great!"

Vasiga, CS 241

"J.P. [Pretti] is sunstaining in Florida, the lucky bastard."

Vasiga, CS 241

(last quote of last lecture) "Good luck on your exams, hope not to see you next term."

Vasiga, CS 241

"You can fit a lot of numbers into 16 bits... that covers my salary."

Vasiga, CS 241

"Document or Die... and I will not kill you. You will be very happy to kill yourself."

Vasiga, CS 241

"The easiest way to fix undocumented DLX code is the following unix command: 'rm *.dlx'"

Vasiga, CS 241

"There's another guy named Troy Vasiga who gets in mathNEWS all the time. I don't know anything about him."

Vasiga, CS 241

Hello grads! It's yearbook time

Another note from your tireless yearbook editors. In case you haven't heard, our title is "Waterloo Math 2001: The Natural Log", decided by an incredibly close vote by email.

A bunch of you responded to our first request for candid photos, which was great. *But we need more!* We'll accept most photos, as long as #1) they're reasonably inoffensive, and #2) they contain a graduating student or are otherwise related to Waterloo Math.

The deadline for photos is February 1, 2001. We may still take photos after that, but we're not making promises. Drop off photos in MathSoc with your contact info (name, address, email) written on the back and we'll get them back to you soon. We also really like digital pictures; email us at yearbook@forrest.cx with URLs.

In addition to photos, we really need text content. If you've ever wanted to vent the poetic or prose skills long sublimated by your Mathie lifestyle, now's your last chance.

Several of you were asking about how to choose which of your official grad pictures will go in the yearbook, and how to buy a yearbook. We'll have a desk set up in the 3rd floor handling this soon; if you're on the MGC mailing list or read uw.math.mgc, you'll hear about the details.

Also, several of you have been asking about grad comments. Visit our yearbook page at <http://www.mathsoc.uwaterloo.ca/yearbook/> to get instructions on how to send us your grad comments. (We'll need these soon too.)

That's it for now, and please, please SUBMIT!

Steve Forrest and Mike LaCroix

mastHEAD

Hello y'all. What a wonderful production night we had Monday, and even more spiffy layout on Tuesday. Unfortunately for us, the mathSoc server had a mishap recently with a hard drive causing some problems with our production system. Fortunately, Richard Bilson and Mike Froh came to the rescue and saved *mathNEWS*. From this incident, I again, learned how important backups are, and hence, am copying all my notes out a second time when I go home every evening. Just incase I lose my binder. Ah, to be prepared for a disaster. Nothing can stop me from graduating now (except, maybe, stat 231).

Well, on to a more a more cheery note, "What New Years resolution did you enjoy breaking the most?", and the answer from our dedicated production team of 11 men (hint, hint ladies, come and help out....). dj3vande "640x480", Ken "Stop wearing polyester" Chung, Kevin "Be more inconspicuous" Wanminkee, Richard "No more production nights" Bilson, Adrian "Pass CS100" Smith, Jason "No more yelling 'western' with a crescendo towards the end" Lau, Raymond "Get a hold of a set of *mathNEWS*'s keys,...Pete, give me the keys (thud), surrender the keys! (thud)" Lai, Mark "Going to bed by 11:00 every night" MacDonald, Greg "To cut down on my workload" Taylor. Thanks again to graphics services, and that pizza place for feeding us, and those cheerleaders who came and did a little dance :)

BT "To break my New Year's Resolution" Smith
Peter "Stop beating innocent squires with a nerf bat" Lizak

Tech Specs: Critical Analysis of the Tech Industry

Failing State of E-Business

Tech Specs is a new regular column featured here at mathNEWS. Each issue, Tech Specs will take an aspect of our ever-changing tech industry and cast a critical eye on its behaviour. If you get bored easily, I suggest you turn to something a little more light for your Friday read, but if you are seriously interested at what turns our evolving industry are taking, sit back, grab yourself a cup of coffee, and enjoy the column.

"Dot Com companies think 'Oh yeah, Dot Com, New Business Model, We're Invincible!'. No No No, ladies and gentlemen. Warning warning, danger danger, there is NO New Business Model."

Larry Smith, ECON101, F00

With the above quote clearly printed, I venture into the dark marketplace known as "Dot Com Land", where once mighty companies with huge IPO cash infusions now drop dead in a pool of misconceived ideas. What happened between the bright outlooks of yesteryear and the gloomy forecasts of the months and years to come?

Strategic mergers and acquisitions were the name of the game last year. Large companies swallow smaller ones whole, creating larger "information networks" on integrated hardware. In simpler terms, smaller companies were bought out by larger ones in fear of bankruptcy. When these companies merge, the clientele from both companies must compete for attention and service from one company with the resources of half a company. In fact, 60% of merged companies had less resources per client than before the merger. Thus, the 'sardine can' syndrome set in, where clients are packed tightly in service queues for long periods of time without service at all (READ: ROGERS @ HOME, the lack of internet on cable). To make matters worse, the "Technological Depression" forced these networks to decrease bandwidth availability and cut paycheques.

Small information websites that cater to a specific interest group, mainly techies like students here at the Math Faculty, depend on these large networks, now merged with larger and smaller ones, to provide bandwidth, webspace, and resources to keep their informative websites up for viewers. These website administrators also depend on the revenue these networks pay out, in the form of banner advertisements.

These networks had a vision: To sell these banner advertisements like television commercials, bound with old rules of the televised media. However, the rules of televised media did not fit the situation at hand. People often ignored these banner advertisements, or shut them off altogether. Hence, real-life companies that actually make a profit, which had hopes that online banner advertisements would bring in immediate and unmentionable profits, soon pulled out of their contracts once they found out that people didn't pay attention to these banners. When the real-life companies pull out, the networks have no revenue to upkeep the servers and bandwidth, and have no money to pay the smaller website administrators to upkeep their sites. The trickle effect starts right up at the top, and affects the online front-line worker.

One example of this trickle effect can be found in the recent happenings at a tech website called "Somethingawful.com"

(Affectionately known to its readers as "SA"). SA formed a 'strategic alliance' with eFRONT a few months back. eFRONT is a prime example of a merged mega-network that provides bandwidth and resources to website administrators, as well as sending out cheques for "banner advertisement" to the website administrators. The new eFRONT tried to attract website administrators to sign on to their network, promising to provide regular paycheques and website resources, and in return, these websites will place banner ads on their front page. Many smaller websites, including SA, signed up with eFRONT in hopes of making some small cash to keep their website running. For the first few months, eFRONT executives and its clients held a friendly relationship, and paid out cheques on time. However, as time progressed, eFRONT succumbed to the Technology Depression, and suffered various fatal blows, one of which is a major pullout of a company that had been doing major advertising over eFRONT's banner advertising. With one of its major sources of income vaporized, eFRONT was strapped for cash to a point where keeping their own internal network running was in jeopardy. Needless to say, eFRONT's smaller affiliates felt the strongest blow. SA and other eFRONT affiliates stopped receiving banner cheques, and many had to close because eFRONT's financial incompetence and inability to fulfill their end of the bargain. According to eFRONT, the best way to keep afloat is "Not to fulfill any debt requirements to clients." SA, fortunate enough to have a loyal fan base, received resource donations that kepted minimal operational revenue going to maintain SA under life support. However, life support can only keep a website alive for so long.

After winning worldwide acclaim for its controversial and uplifting content, and attracting readers from all over the globe, SA announced this week that the site will have to close down for good due to a lack of funds. Other websites are beginning to feel the pinch, as one of the largest and well-known sites such as SA is being forced to close down because of a reason that has so far only affected smaller websites. As SA administrator **Rich Kyanka** put it himself in an exclusive interview with *mathNEWS*: "There isn't much anybody else can do short of telling the people who owe eFRONT money to pay them... Hopefully eFRONT will be able to scrape together enough cash to pay me by the end of this week, and SA will be able to stay alive a little longer." The bottom line is that eFRONT took on too much responsibility when they saw themselves as unsinkable. However, like the Mir Space Station, it was slowly decaying in orbit and was on life-support even before the merger took place. In fact, the entire E-Industry had been decaying ever since the NASDAQ took a dive last March when investors suddenly remembered that earnings should be the only indicator of company performance. When eFRONT and other networks took on too much for their own good, the only sufferers are the poor souls who signed on to these networks in hopes of providing quality informative content.

What exactly can remedy this situation short of a divine miracle? The only solution is to live out the current abyss and wait for its natural recovery. Like a forest that was recently razed by

Continued on next page

How to fail your work report and lose your mind

Suggestion: do your work report. And not in the 18 or so hours before it's due. You'll regret it.

Honestly. Not like I have any experience with this. Really. Swear to god. You know the face that Eric from "That 70's Show" makes when he's said something unrepeatably ridiculous? That's how I feel.

Oh, and when you're running for MathSoc exec; try campaigning. It'll help! I promise. Not that I have any experience with this. For the love of God, at the very least, submit info for the voting booth. Let people who are voting know you're not legally retarded or dead. Damn. This hurts like kneeling on rice for a few minutes too many. I keep finding kernels in my knee (way to win five bucks on streetcar). Honestly, didn't do that. You'll regret it like that purchase of "Poison's Greatest Hits". Like that time you talked about ass-humping and your girlfriend's father was in the next room. I'm doing real well these last few days. Way to go, big boy.

Oh, and do not, regardless of consequence, even if it costs you your left nut, take Math 245 with prof D. M. Jackson. Unless you like getting humped with eigenvectors. It's bad for Math. And writing. And don't submit useless drivel for *mathNEWS*. No one will appreciate it. (insert pained noise here.) Good job, egg. You're doing great.

Liam McRuss

Tech Specs: Continued from previous page

a wildfire, the E-Industry must be given time to rebuild itself naturally and without hinderance from investors. No magic cash injection can save this thing in the long term. The fix must be self sustaining, and must come naturally from within the industry. Once the industry has bottomed out, new standards, hopefully realistic ones, will be set to sustain long term business. In the meantime, we can only pray and hope that the websites we frequent and take granted daily such as *Arstechnica.com* and *Slashdot.Org* will stay alive and live through the bottoming out of the E-Industry.

However, SA can escape the stigma of being "Just another E-Casualty". Rich Kyanka and *SomethingAwful.com* can be helped. Show you care, show you give a damn, show the world that UW students care about sustaining the future E-Industry. Email Rich at lowtax@somethingawful.com and offer your support. Tell him you feel his pain, tell him you love his site, tell him that eFRONT should die, tell him you'll give him money, whatever. Show some support to a fellow techie. Even if you don't read the site, you'll inevitably find out that one of YOUR favourite website will face eventual shutdown due to a lack of funds. Act now, and it IS A LIMITED TIME OFFER.

What can YOU do if you own a website? Start praying to your god, pray for a sustainable E-Industry to evolve soon, and hope that your website is still alive to see that eventual evolution.

Until that day arrives, hold on to your hats folks, because we're in for a rather bumpy roller coaster ride of dot com death.

-Raymond CT Lai

mathNEWS Technology Columnist (Until Pete decides to fire me, that is.)

The Movie Guys

Hey there, I'm Andrew, the movie guy for this term. For those of you who don't know, MathSoc sponsors a movie night every Thursday night. We show two movies starting at 7:00 for only two dollars. Last week we started off the term very successfully with *Chicken Run* and *the Princess Bride*. We have a great set of movies for this term (which I've listed below), and I hope you can make it out to some of them. See you next week :)

Andrew "Someday Stats Major" Drummond

Jan 24
demption

Feb 1

Feb 8

Feb 15

About Mary

Mar 1

Mar 8

Mar 15

Mar 22

Mar 29

Apr 5

Braveheart and The Shawshank Re-

Fight Club and The Usual Suspects

Pay It Forward and As Good As It Gets

Charlie's Angels and There's Something

Starship Troopers and The Matrix

Dude, Where's My Car? and Road Trip

Boys Don't Cry and Girlfight

American Beauty and Erin Brockovich

X-Men and Romeo Must Die

Cast Away and Finding Forrester

Sexy Blue CS Attracts Attentions Once Again

Several reports indicate that the CS sculpture standing erect outside the main doors of MC is once again captivating the interest of passers-by.

Like the Venus de Milo and Michaelangelo's David before it, the CS sculpture is a clear demonstration of both form and figure while emanating a certain playfulness in it's deceitful stance. Yet in the summer of 99, the sculpture was defaced. Halving both it's masculinity and apparent sex appeal in one blow, the dominating CS sculpture was reduced to a useless hunk of pink steel.

Public opinion ranged from overt outrage to complete hostility. "I can't believe I have to walk past that thing every day," said one observer. "I'll never pick up a chick again," concluded one disillusioned computer science student.

The people most decimated by the color change, however, were the frisbee players and the Arts students. The Artsies were no longer able to complete their fine arts classes without discovering that each assignment had somehow manifested itself into a pink CS sculpture. Meanwhile, the frisbee players were unable to throw accurately due to the extreme glare given off from the sculpture. The final death toll from that term is still being tallied.

Fortunately, the CS sculpture has climactically exploded into the twenty-first century with a sexy new blue colour. More than once, passers-by have been caught ogling the new colour and standing in awe of it's commanding presence.

The future for the sculpture is a great one limited only by it's incredible sex appeal and it's cryptic message.

Kay DotOh

The Frosh Cornered

A "Cornered Frosh" Preamble

On behalf of the Office of the Cornered Frosh (1 Employee), I would like to wish everyone a safe and restful term (HA. fat chance), and hope everyone had a restful holiday season. The reason why I am emphasizing the word "restful" so much is that I want to make sure everyone is prepared for another term of The Frosh Cornered. It's coming at you, left and right, no matter if you like it or not. Muhahahahaha, there is no escape from my column.

A Cornered Frosh Legal Disclaimer

I have been warned by my lawyer that I should no longer make reference to the University of Waterloo Quebecois Federation. Although the UWQF is in my "Things I must destroy before I leave list," my legal Advisor, Dominic, has advised me that I am a prime target for a class action lawsuit. Henceforth, I will no longer refer to them as the UWQF. Instead, I will use the generic term "Those Bastards" to describe the UWQF. For example:

Those Bastards are ignorant.

Those Bastards are idiotic.

Those Bastards need a bath.

Those Bastards have a collective IQ of -10.

And so on, and so on. In this case, they can no longer blame me for defacing their name, since I am using a generic term to describe adjectives. If they wish to associate themselves with the descriptive term "Those Bastards," more power to them.

In addition, my legal advisor has also advised me to clarify the following:

Quebec people are nice. I like them a lot. They make good poutine.

Those Bastards are pathetic, brainless, incompetent, and phattiness supreme (The above phrase as taught by my colleague beside me).

Thus ends this week's legal disclaimer... now on to this millennium's inaugural column.

UW Mathie Entrance/Torture Ritual Ends in Disbelief

One fateful day, when I returned to my little closet also known as my dorm room, I turned on the computer and started surfing to let off some steam from my last Calculus class (Or was it my Algebra class, I don't remember). Either way, I was steaming off from a bad day. I jumped onto the UW website for no particular reason and started to read the "Daily Bulletin".

For those unfamiliar with the UW website, you didn't miss much. The site is so bland that it can kill a lethargic person. However, once in a blue moon, the content on the site manages to leap up from the blank white screen and captures our short attention span. This fateful day was no exception.

The bulletin started off with the usual boring stuff, but when I reached the middle, I was reading with disbelief and profound anger. "It couldn't be..." I told myself, and I checked the Math Faculty webpage. Sure enough, a news bulletin on the faculty webpage confirmed my dire suspicions: The Faculty of Mathematics has dropped the Descartes contest from the long list of entrance requirements.

I think everyone is familiar with the infamous Descartes contest. Consisting of 10 questions, this exam was a breeze for stu-

dents with IQ of infinity, and a field of land mines for the rest of the sane population. I had a friend, named Magno, who aced the thing last year and got an entrance scholarship. For the rest of us "losers", we have to actually study and torture ourselves to guarantee us a chance to come to this university.

That's right, guarantee a CHANCE to come to the university. It is not even a firm guarantee that you'll be offered a spot at UW, but you earn a CHANCE to be CONSIDERED to come to this prestigious university. What joy. You guarantee that chance if you score 40 or higher on the contest. 40!

For some people, getting the 40 was their only aspiration. Just to pass the damn thing to come to the university was torture enough. The months of studying (My OAC teacher prepared us 7 months in advance), torture, kicking, screaming, and just simply mental wrangling lead to one dreadful day where we must face that blue sheet of paper, folded 3 ways, that contain the future of our academic career.

That's right, you heard me right. My peers and I from my high school tortured ourselves for 7 months straight for this exam. The sweat and blood that was spilled over the last 7 months was enough to fill an olympic-size swimming pool. Needless to say, my colleagues and I worked hard and unbelievably long hours to do well on this exam, or at least to pass.

In the end, some of my more smarter colleagues did very well, including Magno, who was actually honoured in a school assembly one day. The more fortunate ones did fairly well, ranging from the high 50's to the low 70's. For many of us, we scored just enough to be actually considered to come to UW. For some of my less fortunate colleagues, they did not make the 40% cut off. I blame society, but the fact is, the UW Faculty of Mathematics must carry the majority of the burden. In a bid to "weed out the less smart population", the Math Faculty has devised this evil exam to cut out many students from being potential candidates for an UW education.

And now, they tell us, the first year frosh who went through the pain and suffering of the Decartes contest, that future generations of Mathies will no longer have to go through with the torture ritual that is usually paralleled with the agony of Klingon pain stiks? (STIK Is the ACTUAL SPELLING for it, I looked it up in a dictionary!) Ahhhh... I think I'm having a heart attack. UNBELIEVABLE.

I am a firm believer of holding on to traditions, no matter how long that tradition lasted (In this case, 2 years). Therefore, I make the following statement: "If I had to go through the torture ritual, the generations of Mathies after me should be honoured with the steaming crap that is known as The Decartes Contest, and its evil brother, 40% Minimum Mark." So be it if human sacrifices must be made so that the population can regale in all its crappiness and evilness for all of eternity.

Okay, I know I got out of hand there, but I am truly perturbed at this unthinkable situation. How could they do this to us. (NOTE: The focus is on the injustice to us. It's all and good for the incoming batch of students, but it's all about US). Torturing yourself on the Decartes, physically compacting all that information into our cranium, attempting to digest all the formulas, trying in vain to regurgitate all the learned data on exam day, and worrying in subtle agony for the exam marks to be released

Continued on next page

The frosh cornered continued all are components that mold a boy into a true mathie (no offence to the students from years before us who did not have to write the exam. Our senior students didn't have to go through the education process WE went through, that is comparable to the current state of the Mir Space Station. You guys actually had a decent education that was not screwed up by King Mike).

Therefore, I insist, no, I DEMAND, the Faculty of Math to reinstate the Decartes Math Contest so the generations after us will know the endless torture and eternal pain of the Decartes Math Contest. The steaming heap of questions of the exam must be felt and experienced by all potential UW students and should be maintained as an integral part of a UW Mathie's life experiences.

So sayeth the Cornered Frosh, so doeth the flock.

Direct all steaming heaps of hate mail and class action lawsuits to r3lai@student.math.uwaterloo.ca.



Raymond CT Lai
The Cornered Frosh

Look, Ray is
Canadian, eh!

What WC Does Not Stand For

When I first arrived in England last week, I was a bit surprised that there were no washrooms at the airport. Nor were there washrooms at my office or at the restaurant we went to for lunch! I was certainly relieved (and relieving) when I found a washroom in my hotel room.

A few days later, I had it pointed out to me that, in fact, most places in England did have washrooms, but they were mislabelled: **WC**. Here, now, are some of the things I expected to find in a WC, but usually did not.

- Web-accessing Computers — What convenience! Web access on every corner.
- Waterloo Collegiate — A school, in a closet, whatever!
- Wet Clothes — It could have been a laundry room.
- Wing Commander — WC was my batch file for starting the game ...
- Warp Chamber — Just like in Landau, Luckman, and Lake.
- Wolverine's Claws — Snikt!
- Wilt Chamberlin — But why does he have so many rooms ... in England?
- Withered Cleavage — Zoinks!
- Weierstrass-Cauchy — Hey, this is how I think.
- Wesley Crusher — I never liked him.
- Witty Comments — Unlike the ones in this article.

Well, that's my list, I only found a couple in WCs, but I still have a few more months of searching. Feel free to drop of your ideas for what a WC should contain and why in the **BLACK BOX**.

Cheerio,
Bradley T Smith, Editor-in-England

It's New Years, and it's NOT A HOLIDAY?

mathNEWS would like to send a "Gong Hai Fat Choi" to all UW Chinese Mathies who will be celebrating Chinese New Year next Wednesday. Chinese New Year is based on the Chinese Lunar Calendar, and falls on different days, according to the normal "solar calendar." This year, it falls on a Wednesday, which means school is still on.

mathNEWS would also like to send condolences to those celebrating Chinese New Years. Personally, spending a quiet night in front of your computer monitors doing your CS assignments is not a particularly fun way to ring in a new year, lunar calendar or not. We truly feel for you.

This brings up the question: Why isn't this a statutory holiday??? New Year's Day is a holiday, and we all get drunk and be merry on December 31st. Why not we all get drunk and be merry when the lunar calendar changes to the 01/01?

Studies have shown that celebrating the Chinese New Year may be detrimental to companies and educational institutions. The extra 'holiday' would cause an adverse affect on students and professionals alike, who are not able to handle two "New Year's" in one year. Studies also have shown that the amount of alcohol consumed cumulatively on both New Years can kill a healthy individual if such individual is not conditioned for the increased alcoholic intake.

mathNEWS would like to think we CAN handle the alcoholic content. Hence, we SHALL celebrate Chinese New Year. How, nobody knows, but when you hear beer bottles being opened next Wednesday near the grand atrium that is the closet-office, you'll be sure we're drunk and merry, and ready to celebrate the new year all over again!

Raymond CT Lai
(Yes, I realize I am Chinese)

FASS!

Who?: FASS. Didn't you read the header? For those who are unaware, it stands for Faculty, Alumni, Staff and Students. Surprisingly enough, it is these same types of people who help make up FASS, which has been entertaining UW with variety and musical comedy since 1962.

What?: A FASS Show! Specifically "2001: A FASS Oddity"! The script for said show has been written over the last 8 months, and it is now almost ready to be performed!

When?: Performances run February 1-3. The Thursday show is at 8 pm, Friday shows are 7 pm and 10 pm and the Saturday show is again at 8 pm.

Where?: Hagey Hall, Humanities Theatre. You can seek out tickets there, from people involved in the show, whatever.

How much?: Tickets are \$8 on Friday and Saturday, and only \$4 for opening night Thursday! And if you're a group of 6 you can get \$6 tickets. Other group discounts may be possible if you talk to someone who knows more than the person writing this article...

And sometimes why?: Because it's lots of fun! (If you look closely you might even spot past and present mathie/MathSoc/mathNEWS people...)

For more information on FASS, check out the FASS website at <http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~fass>.

Also Sprach Bradathustra

Opening theme to mathNEWS's 2001

Pete and I were rummaging around the *mathNEWS* office like a couple of apes, trying to get organised for this term's issues, when we discovered an unused, entirely-black eraser in the back of the desk drawer. But the moment I touched the mysterious rectangular-prism, something came over me that can only be described as a ... a complete understanding. "You're such an idiot!" the understanding 'said.' "You've been given a free trip to England and a vacation from *mathNEWS* — What the hell are you doing here?!"

This was a very angry understanding, so I cautiously tried to reason with it. "It's not like I'm not going to move, I'm just trying to help out, seeing as I've gone through the training and all," I explained.

"No! Don't you see that you'll be here to edit for at least a full year after you get back?" Why do four terms in a row as editor? Take the vacation." Yet I still refused to be convinced by an understanding. "Look," it continued, "if you still refuse to be convinced by a comprehension, which is what I prefer to be thought of as, then grab that bone." I reached over and picked up the bone (which, contrary to what most think, was actually a gorilla femur lying on one of the shelves). "Now hit the ground with it!"

Not liking the idea of banging my bone (which is still a femur!) on the floor, I put down the jet-black eraser and quietly signaled to Pete, who had been patient up to now, that we should talk privately in the *mathNEWS* escape pod. "I can still hear you, moron!" the comprehension blared, "I'm not just the little obelisk, I'm transcendent."

"Oh crap," I thought, and got out of the pod.

INTERLUDE

Liam Spews

Liam.Spew = ok... it's been an interesting month... I read over 20 novels, saw over 20 movies, and generally wasted a lot of time... I also screwed up my car... Liam.Stupid = very very true... oh well... you're only young once... so I'm novelties this term... and I'll be around again once I get a car... in the mean time I'm working on getting us soc socks :) ... they're fun... black, and hot pink, they say UW Math... they should match your tie :) ... they also sport the dancing pink tie guy... feel free to e-mail me to comment on this... ljdorey... hell... anybody is welcome to e-mail me... I'll probably respond rapidly... :) ... work's fun... a break is nice... and eskimo's must get bloody cold sometimes... hmm.... Mac's are colourful... and there's too many in this world.... was in Toronto recently... out side the Eaton centre they had these statues... about .. hmm. 10 feet tall, hollow, plastic or something like that... you could so drive away in a truck with one... sigh... but then you'd have a 10 foot tall statue .. and then what the fuck would you do... send him to the moon? ... sigh.. I want to go in to outer space.... oh well... someday... :) ... I've got it all planned out... bob's here... he thinks I should screw the long term plans and go get drunk... but... shrug... with the world wide tequila shortage.. I find drinking to be a bit expensive... is that still going on BTW? hmm... I find I have little to spew about... there's been a decided lack of gravy shots in my life.... SCUNT... ok... I don't know who's organizing... heard rumours it was brad, and the

"Now hit the ground with your bone!"

This time I followed the instructions (with the femur!), but found that it yielded few results. "Then do it harder!" the understanding ... "I'm a comprehension, stupid!" the condescending comprehension instructed. This time the bone began to shatter, and finally, it broke apart with splinters flying everywhere.

"Oww! What the hell are you doing?" Pete was quite annoyed at getting hit by little bits of femur, "Eww, I've got bone in my mouth, I'm going to the 'Soc office if you're going to be bustin' your bone in here."

"I'm sorry Pete," I called after him, but it was too late, he'd already gone. Then I was sad.

"Don't be sad, Brad, teehee. I wanted to 'speak' with you alone," the comprehension continued. "Now, check this out ..."

Suddenly, I am hurtling through space and time, the colours of it all pouring past me, all to the tune of *A Bicycle Built for Two*. The next thing I know, I'm staring at myself, sitting in an office building, in what looks like Egham, England. I walk towards my doppelganger, but before I can speak, the scene changes suddenly. Now I'm watching myself working on an IBM computer in the *mathNEWS* office, several months, or possibly years, later. We instinctively reach for the package of Rold Gold Pretzels on top of the filing cabinet when they plummet to the floor, spilling their salty goodness across the tiles of time. Then, I'm hovering high above the planet, but as a child now ... a space-child. I look down and see both Southern Ontario and Greater London in the same vista, and all becomes clear to me. I truly comprehend what I/*mathNEWS* must do.

Bradley T Smith
Tele-Ed

monkey man???? SO SOMEBODY ORGANIZE.....!!!! :) ... if nobody is willing... get the mailing list in action.. rally the troupe's..... we kicked ass last time ... and I to get another re-sounding second... I mean ... I'm not even sure what the theme is yet... does anybody know?... anyway... nuff about that... now... on to what little craziness I have been up to... nuts... peanuts.... but mainly pistacchio's... (that's this spew's theme if you're interested)... now.. nuts is an interesting word.. It can mean... well nuts.. the kind we eat... lots of protein (I think) ... and stuff... and tasty... and salty... but not naturally... but then really if you wanted to take an opinionated view point absolutely nothing is natural these days so who cares... yes I know some of you do, I just can't ever see diverting that much energy into something so... shrug.. immaterial... if it's got some of the vitamins I need... I be a happy man.. anyway.. back to salt.. or was it pistachios.. but anyway the word.. can also mean crazy.. and well.. I know a lot about crazy.. like how crazy and unpredictable life can be... you see go? the movie? you know at the end where the character played by the Dawson creek girl says "who'd have thunk it?"... that's what life is like sometimes... ups, downs, and twists so crazy... that you're just inspired to say... "never woulda though it..." but that's another story... for another spew... right now where specifically talking about crazy... or rather nuts... btw ... never buy red pista-

Continued on next page (top right baby)

mathNEWSquiz #1

Hello and welcome to yet another term of squizzes. I hope you enjoy answering them as much as I like writing them :)

Movie quotes (1 pt for movie, 1 for actor)

1. "Who's more foolish, the fool or the fool who follows him?"
2. "1970 Pontiac Firebird. The car I've always wanted and now I have it. I rule!"
3. "Thank you very much. I was just out walking my rat, and I seem to have lost my way."
4. "Your best? Losers always whine about their best. Winners go home and fuck the prom queen."
5. "But enough about me, let's talk about you...What do you think of me?"

Song quotes (just one point for song)

1. Through the storm we reach the shore,
You give it all, but I want more
And I'm waiting for you.
2. We can go dancing, we can go walking, as long as we're together.
Listen to some music, maybe just talking, get to know you better
3. Stopped into a church I passed along the way,
Oh, I got down on my knees and I pretend to pray
4. There is far to much to take in here,
More to find than can ever be found
But the sun rolling high through the sapphire sky
Keeps great and small on the endless round
5. Without you:
There would be no sun in my sky
There would be no love in my life
There'd be no world left for me

The Toronto Maple Leafs

1. In 1967, the Maple Leafs won their last Stanley Cup. When was the last time they made the finals?
2. Who are the only two players to have their numbers retired by the Maple Leafs (2 points)?
3. What are the two previous team names of the Maple Leafs franchise (2 points)?

Canadian Geography

1. Mount Logan, the highest mountain in Canada, is located in what province/territory?
2. What is the southernmost point of Canada?
3. In what province would Conception Bay be found?
4. What is the largest city in New Brunswick?
5. On what waterway are the Iroquois locks?

Politics

1. How many seats are there in the Canadian House of Commons?
2. Jean Chretien spent most of the 70's as minister of what department?
3. Who was the first woman Minister of External Affairs?
4. What PM has the record for winning the most seats ever in parliament?
5. Near the end of their existence, what province did the Social Credit Party get most of their seats from?

Andrew Drummond

Continued from previous page

chio's ... they don't taste any different... and damn the dye is a pain to dispense with... yup.. anyway.. crazy... what drives one to do crazy things... personally... I do a lot of crazy things cause they scare me.. and I get off on being scared... it's why I want to someday jump out of an airplane with a parachute... I can't really think of much that'd scare me more than that... :) .. but that's not the kind of crazy I'm talking about.. I'm talking about crazy frosh crazy... pranks... which really while the thing people tend to talk about... aren't really all that important... it's all about getting 5 or 10 or 15 wackish people in a room together... and letting the combination of their crazy idea's bounce off each other... and then the result... the lack of sleep.. the adrenaline rush as the mob moves out.. ahh.. memory's of first term.. a long time ago... I wonder.. are they still giving tours? ... just a thought.. ... and did anybody do recon?... oh well... anyway... I've rambled more than normal.. or less.. but either way... if the editors are kind enough to edit and publish this.. as always.. thanks guys...

Liam

Time of Your Life

If you think this column is about naked bungee jumping models juggling flaming knives ... read on, and it might just get to that. In the meantime, this column is about the life of an entrepreneur. The thrill of being your own boss. The power to choose how you will attempt to make your mark on this world. And the ability to live on one meal a day.

I graduated from UW Math not too long ago — 8 months ago, in fact. At that time, and probably still now, job prospects were great for any UW CS grad. So taking that high paying job at Microsoft just seemed like the norm for most students after school was over. But I decided to take a different route and became an entrepreneur. So far, it has been the best decision I've ever made.

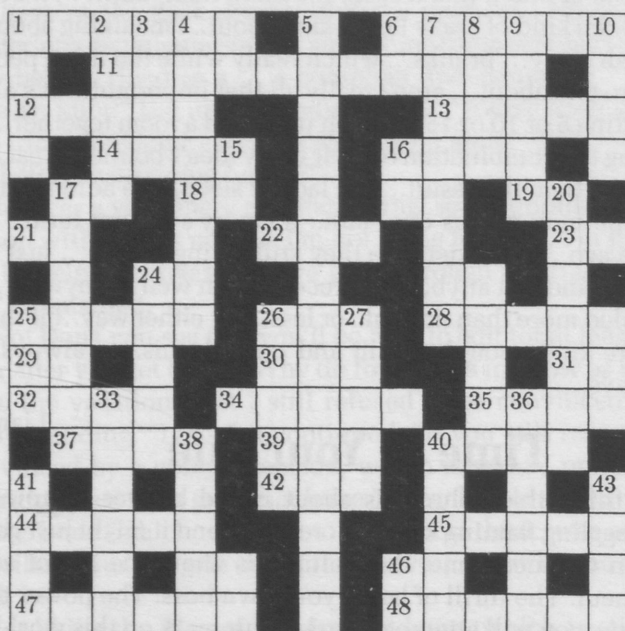
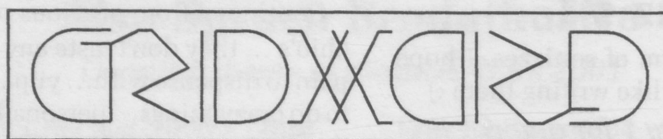
Today I'm already on my second entrepreneurial adventure, having partnered with 3 other UW grads. The company is Kickstarts, and oddly enough, one of our biggest mandates is to foster entrepreneurship at the student level by providing students with the opportunity to propel their ideas and dreams from conception to implementation. A chance to kickstart their venture, win over \$100,000 worth of tactical services, and become a more attractive venture for investors. More importantly, a great alternative to that cushy desk job.

So, what's my point? Well, simply this: if you have a great idea for a company, and you're on the fence with regards to whether or not to go for it, take these words as me trying to push you over to the "go for it" side. There is no greater feeling than being an entrepreneur (well, I can think of a few, but those only last like 45 minutes). Whether you decide to use the resources made available to you by Kickstarts is irrelevant. What's important is that you follow your dream and jump on the opportunities that are presented to you. Don't look back 20 years from now with regret and think to yourself "what if?" If you're an entrepreneur at heart, whether you succeed or fail, you'll have the time of your life.

As for the naked bungee jumping models juggling flaming knives ... that's one of those entrepreneurial perks I can only tell you about once you're on this side of the fence.

Good luck.

Anil Sabharwal



gridCOMMENTS

Hey, hey!!! There is yet a person to volunteer to do the gridword. As a result, I created one, using my vast knowledge of pop music to test you all out. Fear not, the trivia is not deep (like what colour is Justin's eyes), or particularly difficult (What is the square root of 4), but it should keep you challenged, and if you know 38 down without a reference, you are good!

Since this is the first Gridword of the term, there is no winner from last issue, yeah! So I get the prize! Wait a sec, there is no prize :(Life is harsh.

Well, enjoy, and make sure you fill it out, the winner gets a neat nifty toy, or prize or something, so do your darndest, and fill it out!!!

Grid Clues

Pete Love

Across

1. Hottest Member of *Nsync
6. Yelling from a man on top of a horse
11. Slogan for anti-drunk driving campaign
12. If any mathematician could be in a boy band, it would definitely be this one
13. All the girls write about the Backstreet Boys in their _____
14. The band BB-4 has a set of these
16. CS majors drink a lot of this beverage
17. The hard third year CS course
18. _____ the moon and back
19. Not the kind you pick up at the corner
21. A popular type of logic gate
22. A long time _____, in a galaxy far, far, away
23. Egyptian god of light

24. If you're really good, and really religious, you may become one
25. All of the Backstreet boys, *Nsync and Britney are good at this activity
26. They had a killer dance song about coming at 9:00pm
28. When the boys dance, they tend to _____ a lot
29. Let's get it _____
30. Laugh Out Loud
31. When a man says _____ he means _____
32. The gym has a very peculiar _____
34. The Spice Girls are a group of Pop _____
35. She sings with Eminem
37. _____ up your arms, and give a big hug
39. The Japanese take this home
40. A lot of pop groups _____ old songs
42. Moses never had one, and was always jealous of Noah
44. *Nsync and the Backstreet Boys are some of my _____
45. Frosted lucky _____s
46. Okay
47. An alternative band, just before six
48. Dilating pupils, drugs, and tiredness ?

Down

1. Yet another hotty in *Nsync
2. When you work hard, your body may run low on _____
3. True, old spelling
4. To some people, pop music can _____, or annoy them
5. Prozzak's new web address, and hit single www....
6. HiLo without the vowels
7. An image of an idea
8. A battle of good vs _____ (hint: it is not *Nsync)
9. A cutie grad student, who could be in a boy band himself. Also a word for an extensive tract of uncultivated open land covered with herbage and low shrubs.
10. Paths, trails, course of events,...
15. Not a yes
16. Another member of *Nsync
17. Where the Backstreet Boys are from
22. Where *Nsync is from
24. Britney Spears has yet to _____
25. (I got the D, double O, D double O style)/2
26. Actress, singer, always says 'try again'
27. My mind just drew a _____
33. Low level code, assembly style
36. He is always full of bright _____
38. One of Japanese decent, who grew up in America
40. Keeps singing about a girl, and how she bangs
41. This group did the song "If you gettin' down"
43. These fat birds don't fly