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Makeover in the Works**

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<http://iwarrrior.uwaterloo.ca>

ECE Symposium Showcases Engineering Innovation

**BAHMAN HADJI
4B COMPUTER**

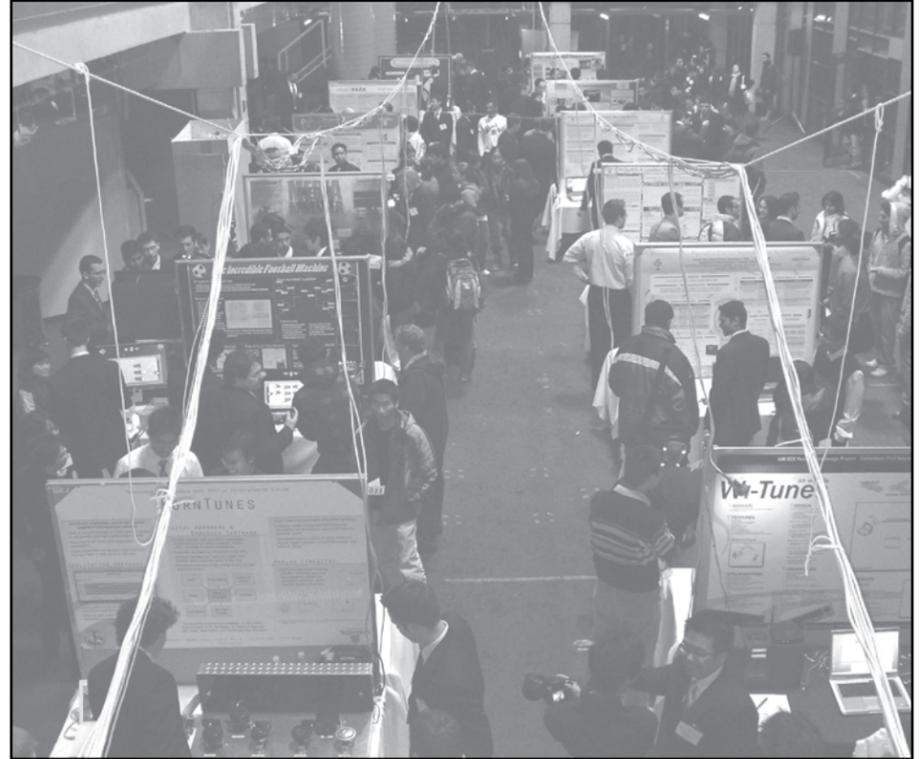
A system for automatically recording work-outs on a bench press, an automated snow-removing bulldozer, a programmable automobile musical entertainment system using car horns, a motion-tracking paintball turret, an automatic bicycle transmission system, and even an electric hookah – these were some of the 60 projects on display at the eight annual Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) Design Project Symposium on January 23rd at the Davis Centre. Over 250 ECE students showcased their fourth-year projects, the culmination of over a year of work that has been in progress since their 3B term.

The groups began the day at 8 a.m. to set up at their pre-assigned booth in the atrium outside the DC Library. The symposium was open to the public until 8 p.m., with each group always having at least two members working the booth to showcase their project. Groups were marked on the design and technical content of their poster, as well as

a 20-minute seminar given during assigned timeslots throughout the day, with projects being categorized into areas such as robotics, transportation, entertainment, and power distribution.

In September of 2006, when students in the class of 2008 were just beginning to form their fourth-year project groups, the ECE Department announced that through sponsorship by Infusion Development and Infusion Angels, the group judged to have the best project at the 2008 symposium would be rewarded for their efforts with the Infusion Cup – a trophy and a \$2000 cheque. At the end of the day, the prize went to the group that created The Incredible Foosball Machine, consisting of Evan Murphy, Adam Neale, Chris Olekas, and Richard Winograd. The project involved the building of custom foosball controllers interfacing to a PC through USB that allowed users to play two-player or four-player arcade-style 3D foosball games, complete with power-ups like a brick wall and tilting.

See **MEDIA COVERAGE** on Page 9



Referendums, Feds Candidates Face Scrutiny at Media Forum

**SUNNY NG
3B COMPUTER**

On January 30th, a media forum for the Federation of Students Elections was held at the Student Life Centre Great Hall. *The Iron Warrior* was one of the three media outlets represented at the event, along with *atuw.ca* and *Imprint*. Voting in this year's Elections will be happening Tuesday, February 12th at 8 a.m. to Thursday, February 14th at 8 p.m.

Due to acclamations of Justin Williams for President and incumbent Del Savio Pereira for Vice-President Administration & Finance (VPAF), only the Vice-President Internal (VPI) and Vice-President Education (VPEd) positions of the Executive will be up for a vote. Only the Math and Science Faculties, along with as St. Jerome's University, are electing Student Council members this year, as the remaining Student Council positions were acclaimed. The three Engineering positions were acclaimed by Jeffrey Aho, Abhilash Jayakumar, and Han Xu.

With the campaign period having begun for over a week now, students are beginning to pay attention to the races and issues and deciding who will be in charge of putting to use their \$33-per-term Feds fee. At the media forum, questions were asked by the media representatives and then, time-permitting, from audience members. None of the acclaimed candidates sat on this forum, though there were still plenty of heated debates. Aside from the candidates running for office, there will be two referendums on this year's Feds ballot – one for the addition of a fee, and one for the removal of a fee. Engineering students are only eligible to vote for the VPI and VPEd positions in addition to the two referendums.

The Referendums

Both of the referendum questions to be asked are related to student fees, namely the World University Service of Canada

(WUSC) Student Refugee Program Fee Referendum and the CKMS (Radio Waterloo) Fee Referendum.

The WUSC Referendum will ask whether students support "the implementation of a refundable fee . . . at a cost of \$1.00, to be paid by every full-time undergraduate student" every term to support their Student Refugee Program. This referendum was initially declined by Feds due to concerns about implementation, causing the students supporting the referendum to trigger it by turning in a petition containing over 3000 signatures.

WUSC currently sponsors two students at \$25,000 a year per student to study at the University of Waterloo. These students are chosen from three refugee camps in third-world countries. There are 56 universities across Canada participating in the program. At present, they obtain funding through donations and are seeking for a more sustainable method to support the program. The reason for the wording indicating that the fee is "to be implemented at the discretion of [Feds]" is to make sure the fee can be refundable, according to the Yes Committee. However, questions were raised from the media and audience members whether it was the role of students to fund a charity and if it was appropriate to include such funding as a student fee. "We don't like to think of the Student Refugee Program as a charity," the Yes Committee claimed – unlike traditional charitable organizations, all of the money going to the refugee students as a result of this fee would be spent at UW and would support students studying here.

A No Committee on this referendum was not formed and as such the Yes Committee was the only side represented at the forum. When questioned about the lack of the No side, a member of the Yes Committee initially indicated that it was due to the rushed nature of the referendum barely meeting the deadline, and that they weren't sure there would



Ira Sherr and Steve Krysak from the CKMS Referendum No Committee field a question while Yes Committee Chair Jeffrey Aho looks on.

have been enough time for the No side to organize. However, this was quickly clarified by another member of the Committee: "The No Committee has had a chance to form. . . . At this time, nobody has [come forward], and I would interpret that as, nobody wants to have a No Committee."

For more information about WUSC, see www.wusc.ca, and for more information about the Student Refugee Program, go to www.uwsrp.ca. If the Referendum passes, the fee would be added to undergraduate students' tuition statements starting this Fall.

The CKMS Fee Referendum poses the question, "Do you support the removal of the \$5.50 per term fee for CKMS, the campus community radio station at the University of Waterloo, effective the Fall term of 2008?"

On his opening statement, the Chair of the Yes Committee, Jeffrey Aho, accused the CKMS of "lacking in areas of management and governance, transparency, accountability as well as representation" as a reason for revoking the student fee to the campus radio station. He later said as a way to increase quality of student life, "A vote for the Yes Committee will open up the opportunity to use the funding for services [students] prefer."

On behalf of the No committee, former CKMS programmer Ira Sherr defended the lack of representation: "When you pay your student fees for CKMS, you can be on the Board of Directors, which has seven members, and UW students make up four."

See **STAYING INFORMED** on Page 6

The Internet and Society



DAVID MORRIS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

After a bit of pondering, I've decided to dedicate this editorial to something that's consumed a great deal of my life, and that's appeared on the news a surprisingly large amount recently: the Internet.

The (Lack of) Internet

It's safe to say that most of us take the Internet for granted; if we go to university, we would expect the wireless network to be up, and for all the lightning-fast NEXUS computers to all have an ample supply of YouTube and Facebook for our viewing pleasure. The Internet connects the entire world, and as such, must span it in one way or another. This is mostly done through huge wires that are laid on the bottom of the ocean. Recently, one of these undersea wires was cut, apparently thanks to a ship's anchor, causing an enormous dip in Internet bandwidth between Iran and the rest of the world. Then, a few days later, it was reported that two more of these cables may have been cut, and that Iran had lost almost all of its Internet connectivity.

It really is amazing to see something that we thought to be so intangible, so isolated from the real world to be severed by something as simple as an anchor. That being said, cutting off a country like Canada or the US would be much more difficult, thanks to our larger bandwidth consumption, and thus, larger number of cables, but still possible. So does that mean that we should start having the Navy patrol the seas, looking for "renegade terrorists" armed with anchors, or that we should start arming all our major bandwidth-cables? Most likely not, but it does bring to light some of the more physical vulnerabilities of the Internet.

The Internet and University Life

The Internet is the perfect source of distraction. Forums, imageboards and videos full of opinions, rants, debates, and arguments, nearly every TV show and movie you've ever wanted to watch (and many more that you don't), wikis full of more text than you could physically read in your entire lifetime, and social-networking websites on which you can spend hours, all provide the perfect excuse to delay studying, a project, or even, in extreme cases, eating (one man even killed himself after he lost his character in Everquest, a role-playing game).

All this has led to the rather self-explanatory phrase "Information Overload" being coined; our natural curiosity obsessively drawing us into nearly every new fact and tidbit that we find. Of course, in moderation the Internet can be an extremely powerful tool that can be used to create and share information and enable mass-scale collaboration that allowed for open-source software to be truly realized, along with gigantic projects like Wikipedia. Even so, human beings seem to be somewhat lazy in nature, and we tend to prefer passive

consumption over active participation (when both are equally pleasurable); not thinking over thinking. This leads to the large majority of Internet-users to be consumers, rather than creators, and it practically becomes a big, flashing, constantly updating, and changing TV set which gives the illusion of accomplishment and value, but often leads to very little personal development or growth.

And I do feel that this is a major factor that is causing the high turnover rates that our university is currently experiencing. The current generations just entering university in the past few years have grown up with the Internet playing a rather major role in life. And, as I said earlier, human beings do seem tend to try to find the easy or convenient way out of things, and what's more convenient than shoving upcoming deadlines out of your mind with a good 2-hour romp on Facebook or a newly-downloaded videogame (personally, I would highly recommend *Cave Story* or *Barkley's Shut Up and Jam: Gaiden*). That being said, though, this is all from my personal experience as an "Internet addict", so grains of salt should be applied wherever necessary.

44.6 Billion Dollars

Internet addiction or not, the amount of revenue hauled through advertisement through the Internet is enormous, and if the Internet had a throne, Google would most certainly be sitting on it. Google's major competitors Yahoo and Microsoft's MSN (yes, for those who didn't know, MSN isn't just about instant messaging), may soon be merged together, with Microsoft bidding for Yahoo at a whopping \$44.6 billion dollars. Microsoft hopes that with their combined power (and with the help of the big I-word that companies love to throw around these days), they hope to knock Google off its perch, or, at the very least, humble the beast.

The "War on Scientology"

This source of mass-collaboration that is the Internet can also be used for less constructive means. An excellent example of this is the recent "War on Scientology" that has been declared by a sizeable portion of the Internet, calling themselves "Anonymous". This group of people (the main collaborators calling the attack "Project Chanology") has managed to bring down many Scientology-based websites primarily using DDoS attacks. DDoS stands for Distributed Denial of Service, and generally uses the bandwidth of computers infected with Trojans to bombard a server with data until it crashes, or their ISP (Internet Service Provider) disconnects them. They also managed to obtain a sizeable number of documents worth a significant amount of money (in order to go up in the ranks of Scientology, you must pay hefty training fees), potentially causing large amounts of damage to the organization.

But the attack doesn't just stop on the Internet; protests have been organized and are being planned around the world, including the USA, Canada, South America, Europe, Oceania, Asia, and even one at the nearby Church of Scientology at Kitchener, Ontario. Large-scale prank

calls have been made and are uploaded to various websites. The primary collaboration wiki can be found at: www.partyvan.info/index.php/Project_Chanology

Scientology isn't the only organization to suffer such a massive attack, however. Another albeit slightly smaller-scale attack was set upon a website called eBaum's World in response to the website allegedly stealing content from another website. Protests, prank calls and letters were all made on a huge scale that all seemed to occur (and end) spontaneously.

Whatever the focus of the energy or attention, it's quite amazing to see the pure collective power of humanity when socially united with a tool that can nullify distance and allow a strange kind of universal freedom through anonymity.

Privacy and the Internet

So where should the line be drawn between Internet freedoms and laws and regulation? This question is becoming more and more prominent in politics, and various bills have been passed in the US (potentially) restricting Internet freedoms, and allowing governments and law enforcement agencies to have more control over the information being passed through the Internet. China, on the other hand, jumped into the censorship of the Internet a while back, and has a large amount of control over what Internet search engines spit out, and even what kinds of web-based programs people are allowed to use (using technology that can decrypt packets and analyze them).

In the end, our society still has a lot to learn about the Internet, its effects, and its proper regulation (if regulation is necessary at all), and I have no doubt there will be many, many more interesting stories and debates to come out of it.

Letter to the Editor

Re: Point Vs. Counterpoint: Is Vegetarianism a Smart Choice? (Andrew Dodds, January 23)

Argument against Vegetarianism Biased towards Male Readership

While the Faculty of Engineering does make up a large portion of the readership of *The Iron Warrior*, to assume that everyone reading your article is male does ignore a significant portion of the readership.

Unfortunately, your claim that there are no health benefits from eschewing meat leads to one of three conclusions: You are woefully uninformed on the topic about which you are writing; you are addressing only men, or that you have information which your piece not only neglected to list, but didn't even mention the existence of, which contradicts the widely-known fact that low-meat diets have significant benefits for women.

Christine Steele

THE IRON WARRIOR

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The Iron Warrior is a forum for thought-provoking and informative articles published by the Engineering Society. Views expressed in The Iron Warrior are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Engineering Society.

The Iron Warrior encourages submissions from students, faculty and members of the university community. Submissions should reflect the concerns and intellectual standards of the university in general. The author's name and phone number should be included.

All submissions, unless otherwise stated, become the property of The Iron Warrior, which reserves the right to refuse publication of material which it deems unsuitable. The Iron Warrior also reserves the right to edit grammar, spelling and text that do not meet university standards. Authors will be notified of any major changes that may be required.

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Future Submission Deadlines

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Send your submissions to iwarrior@engmail.uwaterloo.ca

POETS Renovation Coming This Year



KEVIN CEDRONE
4B MECHANICAL

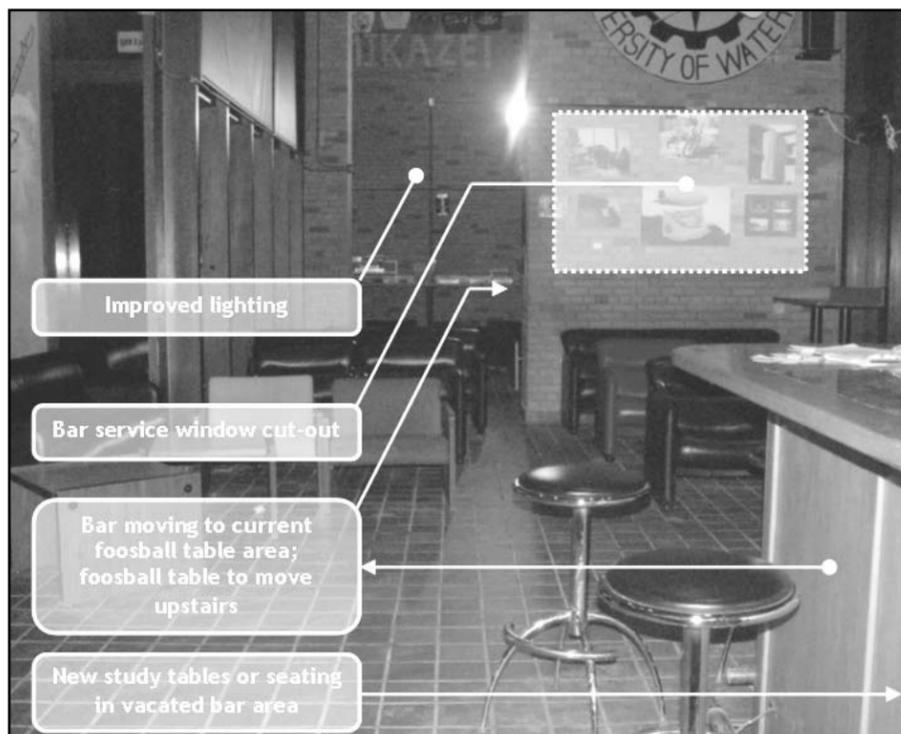
POETS plays an undeniable role in day-to-day Waterloo Engineering life. The Engineering Society student lounge is a convenient place to kick back with a coffee from the C&D and watch a movie, play a game of foosball, kill time between classes, or enjoy a cold beer between interviews on Thursday and Friday afternoons when POETS becomes the only faculty pub on campus. It is a nice place to recharge and it's about to get even better.

I spoke with Mary Bland, the Engineering Society Corporate Director, about the renovations planned for POETS. The objective of the renovations is to give POETS more of a pub feel. "We want to make POETS a bit more inviting," Mary said referring to the slight intimidation students might feel when strolling into a lounge full of people staring back in their direction (watching movies on the screen above the entrance). Mary's hope is that by relocat-

ing the bar to the back, improving the lighting and relocating some furniture, POETS will become more inviting as a place to socialize. "With the bar at the back and better lights, students will be able to have a beer, play darts, and talk to their friends . . . [It will be] less of just a room full of people watching movies".

Funding for these renovations is slated to come from donations from the Engineering graduating classes of 2006 and 2007, as well as possible EngSoc contributions depending on the overall cost. "Right now plans have been sent to the University's architect and we're waiting to find out when work can start." The goal is to have the work completed by September before the start of Frosh Week, but there is also a small chance of taking advantage of the month-long shutdown this April (during exams and before the start of the Spring term) if all goes well.

Decompressing in POETS has been an integral part of my time at UW and I am glad to see that people like Mary Bland are working hard to ensure the success of future generations of Waterloo Engineering students.



A summary of the planned renovations to POETS.
The bar will be moved from its current location to the back.

Wild West Semiformal



MICHELLE CROAL
2A CHEMICAL

The theme was "Wild Wild West", and engineering students from first to fourth years donned their cowboy hats and semiformal wear last Tuesday and came on down to the hoedown at Knights of Columbus, in Waterloo. The decorations were hot and prickly, and many a mean shoot-off was fought amid the cacti.



Dinner was served promptly at 7, consisting of a veritable feast of delicious treats, from the parmesan chicken to the range of salads (dessert was especially good!). After a while, which was mostly dedicated to the effort involved in digesting something other than the usual starving student fare, the music picked up and the dancing began! With the lights down low, and the music turned up it would soon prove to be the party of the week!

The DJs played a sweet mix of tunes, from country beats matching the theme of the swinging cowboys and girls, to the hottest rhythms from the dancehall scene. A few individuals with the power of Square Dancing bestowed their knowledge on others in the group, and soon the whole dance floor had been transported to Texas! Whereas the night had started with people dancing in couples or their own familiar groups, by this point everyone had forgotten their

inhibitions and was partying together like friends of old. The Latin music was excellent at the beginning of the evening, for getting things started, and a few Rock favourites had everyone jumping and rocking the air guitars. And of course, no party is ever complete without the Macarena and the YMCA!

Later in the evening, the engineers were graced by the presence of their beloved Tool, in all its Rigid 60" glory! With all its secrecy, it is very easy to forget how truly awesome the Tool really is, and Semiformal was a good reminder. The Tool Bearers were their usual icy cool selves, but they did allow photo ops with our favourite Chrome friend, as long as there were no touchies...

The thing with the semiformal is, that even though it's held every term, it still seems to be the best kept secret party on campus. Next term, don't be shy to grab a bunch of your friends and head out to an engineering event that you may otherwise not get a chance to experience! Upper years and those EngSoc exec aren't actually as intimidating as they would like to think, and a dance is a great place to meet people who are actually wearing something classier than the common "I just rolled out of bed and came to class" look. Semiformal means a night off cooking, and getting to wear those fancy shoes that are normally kicked to the back of your closet.



The night wound down fairly early, in consideration of those with 8:30 class... or maybe just in consideration of those who wanted to catch last call elsewhere! And as we headed out into the bleak slushy night that is late January in Waterloo, our minds were not concerned with Wednesday's thermodynamics, but with the good feeling that comes with an awesome party. That, and we got to take the toy guns home with us.

Fourth-Year Traditions: IRC and IRS



BAHMAN HADJI
GRADCOMM CO-CHAIR

This February 15th, Waterloo Engineering students in the Class of 2008 will be participating in The Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer, more commonly known as the Iron Ring Ceremony (IRC). The Iron Ring Ceremony dates back to 1922, when Herbert Haultain, a Civil Engineering professor from the University of Toronto suggested to seven past presidents of the Engineering Institute of Canada (EIC) that a statement of ethics and obligation to which graduating students would subscribe was important in binding together the members of the engineering profession in Canada. Haultain wrote to poet Rudyard Kipling, who had often made reference to the work of engineers, and asked him to help to develop a ceremony and an obligation for graduating Engineering students.

Kipling shortly after produced a ceremony entitled The Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer. The Ritual is administered by The Corporation of the Seven Wardens Inc. (named after the original seven wardens, the past EIC presidents), which has created Camps across Canada, with locally residing Wardens, that oversee every Ceremony in all of the locations where Canadian Engineering undergraduates receive their education.

The Iron Ring Ceremony can only be attended by Iron Ring candidates and previously Ringed engineers who would like to observe, and its details are private.

This year, the over 900 graduating Engineering students from the University of Waterloo (the largest to date) will be divided into three Iron Ring Ceremonies, which begin in AL 116:

4:30 pm: Mechanical, Mechatronics, Environmental, Geological

5:30 pm: Chemical, Software, Systems Design

6:30 pm: Computer, Electrical, Civil

At Waterloo, Engineering students have traditions of our own. Celebrations on Iron Ring day begin long before the Ceremony itself. Beginning in the morning, the tradition is for each class to get together for a party and usually dress up in amusing, often embarrassing costumes. By mid-morning, the students head to campus and pay a visit to old professors and lab techs. It is important to note that the faculty members will have been asked about this in advance, and students only do this if the faculty member is comfortable with the interruption of their class.

Just before noon, all the members of the graduating class get together in the CPH Foyer to watch the POETS Countdown Clock tick down to zero at noon, something they have been anticipating for years. The celebrations usually subside shortly after, as students go home to change and prepare for the Iron Ring Ceremony.

The Iron Ring Stag (IRS) is a party held after IRC, when the newly Ringed fourth-years can celebrate their achievements and unwind. This is also the first time most students get a chance to touch The Tool, the Waterloo Engineering Society mascot, now that they have their Iron Rings. The only attendees of this event are the volunteer students doing security and the graduating Engineering students. As part of a decades-long tradition, there is a "black rule" in effect during IRS for the newly Ringed: All clothing being worn that is not black is torn off throughout the evening (the cost of an IRS ticket includes a black pair of shorts). This is, of course, optional, and people who do not want to participate in this ritual but attend the Stag simply wear all black clothing.

This has been a general overview of the traditions surrounding the most important day in an Engineering undergrad's career. Of course, it is hard to describe the experience until you actually go through it yourself. And every member of the Class of 2008 will be able to – in nine short days.

Fourth-years, please read my other article on Page 6 for information on ticket sales. Nine days 'til IRS...

ENGINEERING SOCIETY EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Presidential Report



TYLER GALE
PRESIDENT

Things have been quite busy on the engineering society front over the last couple of weeks, but we expect this to slow down a little for midterm season. The dean of engineering attended the engineering society council meeting held last Wednesday. He spoke to three topics that will be quite relevant to the student population in the near future – the first phase of construction for new engineering buildings (engineering

5), the planned independent review of the PDEng program, and first year attrition rates. Just a few quick comments for you this time around:

- The next council meeting will be held February 27th

- Pending minimal road blocks, expect a beta version of a new Engineering Society website to go public during the month of February

- Initial planning is underway for a unique talk given by economics Prof. Larry Smith tentatively entitled “Strategies for Career Success in Good Times and Bad.” More on this later.

Keeping it quick this week, Tyler.

VPED Report



JEFFREY LIPNICKY
VP EDUCATION

Round 2, Write!

Following up on the success of last issue’s self-interview, this issue, I have decided to do something a little different. This issue is going to be written with an Australian accent. Be sure to listen carefully.

Crikey! The shrimps are on the barby! And PDEng is on the radar! Be sure to read my other article about the PDEng Independent Review so that you are up to date and informed about the current going-ons. It is truly an interesting read.

Look at how peaceful she is. I think I’ll poke her with this stick. CECS is holding some sessions to solicit student feedback on the cooperative education system. When you are reading this, they are likely already completed, but I thank everyone who volunteered. I will give everyone some more information when I know it myself.

I saved a spot for you on the beach. The Coop Working Group has gotten underway and we are making really good progress. Currently, we are reviewing Work Term Report guidelines to ascertain what the

current procedures are. Once all of this information is gathered (which should be very soon), we will move to try to come up with a standard that will be applicable across the Faculty. I do not want to mislead people into thinking that every department will have the exact same policies regarding Work Term Reports, because each department has its own unique requirements. However, what we are trying to make sure is that there is consistency within the Faculty so that students are aware of the requirements and are able to achieve them. Concurrently, the group is working on formulating a definition for what makes an Engineering coop position. Right now there are no documented rules to outline the requirements and exclusions, so we are trying to make the process more transparent. That way, students will know before their work term if their job will give them credit, and not need to roll the dice and hope for the best afterwards.

No, I am not British. The last item I wish to mention is the Exam Bank. I would like to encourage everyone to submit their old midterms (and finals) to the exam bank so that others can benefit from them. You will get P**5 points and a warm fuzzy feeling in your stomach. Don’t worry though, it is healthy. You can submit them online at engsoc.uwaterloo.ca.

WEEF Report



BRANDON DEHART
WEEF DIRECTOR

Greetings and salutations to all of you, the loyal readers of *The Iron Warrior*, as you prepare for (and may have already written some) midterms.

As you all know, WEEF returns finished on January 25th. The results are published in a graph on Page 8 to give you a better feeling for which classes don’t use any labs, aren’t on student teams, and don’t really understand the tax system. :P Starting this term, the classes with the lowest return rates will be getting P**5 points for their class just to reinforce the fact that without WEEF, most of the things we love to do in Engineering at Waterloo could not happen.

Things to look out for this term:

There will be posters and displays to show you all just how much WEEF benefits you directly, as well as indirectly, in all that you do both at the school and once you’re done.

WEEF stickers applied to all of the various equipment and computers that have been provided by WEEF, as some have fallen by the wayside.

A rotating display case outside of the Orifice with highlights on different student teams that WEEF sponsors. If you are a member of a student team that you want to be represented, please send an e-mail to weef@engmail!

More information about how WEEF’s \$1 million contribution to the new Student Design Center, and will get us \$4 million worth of say in how it is run, and what you can do to benefit from the contribution.

Finally, proposals are now open! You can find the format online at www.weef.uwaterloo.ca! Not part of a student team? Not a lab instructor? It doesn’t matter! The whole reason WEEF exists is to benefit YOU! If you think your labs have out of date equipment, if you think your education is suffering because of broken down classrooms, or even if you want to start up your own initiative to create the next greatest invention! Submit a proposal, and a council of WEEF Representatives (one from every engineering class on campus) will judge it against all other proposals that have been submitted. If your presentation can convince them of the need for your proposal, then that’s that!

Editor’s Note: Information on WEEF returns for the Winter 2008 term can be found on Page 8.

VPI Report



LEE ANNE BELCOURT
VP INTERNAL

Over the past couple of weeks, the details of some great events have been buzzing around campus. Paintball was a great event to bring back into action and semi-formal last Tuesday brought over thirty cowboys and cowgirls out for a lot of tasty food and fine music. Some were especially eager to show off the skills they picked up at dancing lessons on the previous Saturday. On an unrelated note, people say that you get what you ask for. The statement was almost proven to be true with the immense amount of snow we are getting, but the delay in its arrival has unfortunately postponed the Blue Mountain ski trip until just after reading week. However, this weather did not stop an avid group of individuals whose plans simply involved a later start time in order to accomplish all of the necessary goals for their mission.

In order to get a better perspective on which types of advertising are working best for students, I am going to be putting out a survey on events and directorships. Beyond the obvious reason, I also plan to use this information to brainstorm ideas with individuals outside of engineering to get new ideas.

It’s getting to be that time of the term where gathering evidence for documentation of your crazy class experiences to rack up those P**5 points. As well, I would like to quickly remind directors to keep track of volunteers for your events to pass on to the P**5 directors. Keep your eyes open for upcoming events that include a squash tournament on Sunday, February 10th and lots more after reading week. Scunt applications will be available as soon as we return to school and will be due before the EngSoc meeting the following week. Also, the sign up list for acts for TalEng will be available over the next week, so don’t forget to start practicing. Many thanks to all of my directors who have volunteered their time to help events run smoothly!

VPX Report



DAVE HALFORD
VP EXTERNAL

My exec report is in point form because it’s quick to read and it’s 12:30 am the night before the First Year Integration Conference and I still haven’t packed.

1. We are sending 18 students to represent Waterloo A at the Ontario Engineering Competition being held at McMaster on Feb. 8th to 10th. We wish them luck.

2. I took 4 first years to ESSCO’s First Year Integration Conference at the University of Windsor, on February 1-3.

3. Bus Push will be held on Saturday March 15th and will benefit “Sleeping Children Around the World”, a charity

which “raises funds to provide bedkits to the neediest of children in underdeveloped and developing countries. www.scaw.org/.

4. Our major charities initiative this term will be a ginormous Can Drive and Can Sculpture to benefit the local Food Bank. Architecture will most likely be joining us for this event.

5. I had Phuc Kien Chow Mein during our exec dinner.

6. Architecture has proposed holding a joint event with Engineering and I am looking for people who would be interested in joining a committee to work with Architecture to plan this event. The date proposed for the event is Friday March 14th and if you are interested in joining the planning committee please send me an email.

7. Tyler found his Toque in the Dean’s Lost and Found.

8. GOOD LUCK ON MIDTERMS

VPF Report



ADAM MELNIK
VP FINANCE

Greetings! The last two weeks have been quite the dog and pony show within the Engineering Society. The Proposed Budget was unveiled at EngSoc Meeting #2 and the response from the engineering student body was less than subdued and equivalently jazzy. As this was the initial proposal, a second will be released for approval at meeting #3 on February 27. You are more than welcome to come out and help pass this term’s budget! I am looking forward to splitting a vegetarian burger and a packet of mustard with someone at the next meeting of record breaking attendance! Please note that Donation Proposals are due by February 26!

I am glad to hear that everyone had a blast at Semi-Formal – I know I did! Though I was nearly blinded by the sheen

of the TOOL, blown away by the DJs who were spinning unreal tracks, and fed gourmet food to the point of no return, I kind of wanted to see a panda. For all you Dave Attell fans out there, it was just one of those nights!

I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize a point I exclaimed at the past meeting that if you have any requests for certain items you would like to see as a University of Waterloo Engineering Novelty products, please do not hesitate to send an email to asoc_vpin@engmail.uwaterloo.ca to get your ideas on the shelves as soon as possible! We have had recent requests and orders from as far away as Indianapolis – let’s get more UW Engineering memorabilia out in the world!

Finally, keep your eyes peeled in the C&D for efforts of the Engineers Without Borders emphasizing the importance of global fair trade and support of third world development.

“What new items, events, or services would you like your Engineering Society Student Fee to cover?”

Please send your responses to asoc_vpin@engmail.uwaterloo.ca or submit them to the dropbox outside of the IW office.

Is Canada Safe for Tourism?

POINT

COUNTERPOINT



DAN ARNOTT
4B ENVIRONMENTAL

According to the *Globe and Mail*, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs's 'Smart Traveller' website has deemed Canada an unsafe place to travel. Citing pickpockets, unpredictable weather, and a constant threat of terrorism, the department has given Canada an 'exercise caution' rating that many Canadians feel is unwarranted.

First, we need to look at Australia's rating scale to see if we're overreacting. Surprise surprise, we are. The 'exercise caution' category they've put us in is their second-safest out of five. Several countries have been given the worst rating ('do not travel'), and over 80 have been given the second-worst ('high degree of caution'). Australia is clearly trying to protect its citizens by alerting them to perceived threats; no harm in that. And there are clearly a lot of places far more dangerous than Canada. Mind you, in the *Globe and Mail* article, this info only appears at the end of the article, after everyone's already sufficiently worked-up. And who ever reads an article to the end once they've gotten to the juicy bits? Hopefully you, constant reader.

However, the damning accusations of terrorism, pick-pocketing, street theft, and killer weather do require some thought. If we have an unsafe country, we should know about it and address it. So first of all, let's look at the terrorism threat.

The issue of terrorism in Canada could be debated at length in an article much longer than this one without even scratching the surface. However, I should be able to assert two points without much resistance. First, although we are being a bit anal about it, we are less scared of terrorists than the United States (evidenced by their constant claims that we're harbouring all the terrorists). Second, the United States is the bigger and more likely target anyway. Although both Canada and the United

States received 'exercise caution' ratings from the Department's website (source: Smart Traveller website), terrorism is discussed much more extensively on the United States web page. The Canadian general population's lack of fear of terrorism should tell Australian travellers all they need to know.

As for the pickpocket problem: I have travelled extensively on packed Toronto subway cars without having anything stolen. And if it's going to happen, it's not going to happen there; the biggest theft threat to tourists comes from the local wildlife on camping trips. And a hungry chipmunk is going to want your peanut butter much more than your traveller's cheques.

Another one of Canada's many threats to Australian tourists is its supposed propensity for tornadoes. Although tornadoes are an impressive destructive force, they have been responsible for less than two hundred confirmed Canadian casualties since 1900, not exactly a spine-chilling number. Additionally, according to a global tornado distribution map (source: Wikipedia), tornadoes are approximately as likely to occur in populated areas of Canada as they are along the eastern and western coasts of Australia (I use the term 'approximately' because the tornado map had only two colours, 'likely' and 'unlikely'). Furthermore, tornadoes do not respect international boundaries, and 'American' and 'Canadian' tornadoes may be products of the same meteorological system. It is once again noteworthy that the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs ranked America the same as Canada in terms of safety.

With the exception of the west coast, our winters are much more severe than anything an Australian will ever see back home. Some would argue that this is a real danger to the inexperienced. Winter roads, in particular, are cited as dangerous. But in reality, Australians driving in Canada have more to worry about from adjusting to driving on the opposite side of the road than they do from winter conditions. Some Canadians even find Australian accents irresistible, and would be more than happy to keep a lonely tourist 'warm' for the night.

Besides, blizzards and avalanches are natural phenomena, and do not reflect on the character or hospitality of the Canadian people. We shouldn't take it so personally.

Upon considering the facts, we have once again overreacted. But if that overreaction has caused us to re-evaluate the safety of our country to tourists, it was worth considering in the first place. Of course, when we think about it, we come to the conclusion we've known all along. Canada is safe. Or at the very least, it's safer than we think the Australians think it is.



STUART PEARSON
1B CIVIL

When the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs announced that Aussies should "exercise caution" during visits to Canada, the declaration was met with some indignation and confusion by Canadians. Our less-than-squeaky-clean record puts us on the same list as countries including South Korea, Serbia, and Cambodia. People might get touchy when the Australians think we're dangerous, but I think that's more out of principle than anything. The fundamental question: is Canada a dangerous place?

The biggest issue that the Australians have with Canada is the potential threat of terrorism. After all, with such close ties to the US and Britain, we're a prime target for all sorts of anti-western extremism, our generally positive image on the global stage be damned.

Then there's that whole issue of winter. Unlike the positively balmy Australia, it gets cold and stays cold for at least five months of the year around here. The coldest recorded temperature in Canada was -63°C in Snag, Yukon in 1947, but even just last week, temperatures out in Alberta plummeted to -50°C with wind chill. Hypothermia and frost bite are a serious danger unless precautions are taken to bundle up properly.

Heavy snowfalls and freezing rain can contribute to miserable driving conditions, as anyone who has driven in Canada can attest to. When confronted with black ice, whiteouts, and colossal dumps of snow, even veteran drivers run into problems. It's not unreasonable to conclude that someone used to the lovely tropical weather found in places like Australia would have an even tougher time navigating the roads safely. Look no further than last Friday's gargantuan snowstorm, which buried southern Ontario beneath nearly 20cm of snow and forced a closure of the school. Mountainous regions of British Columbia and Alberta are also prone to avalanches, which have in recent years have actually killed several Australian skiers.

It's not just the winters than can be deadly. Tornadoes frequently form during the summer months, particularly here in southern Ontario. While most of these are minor, some including a tornado in Elie, Manitoba last June have been classified as F5, the highest possible magnitude on the scale used to measure tornadoes. The oppressive heat during the summers, particularly in large urban centres like Toronto, can be miserable for those not blessed with air conditioning. Smog on hot days can cause serious issues for the elderly or those with asthma and other breathing problems.

Seasonal flooding is also a serious problem in Manitoba and Quebec. The Red River flood in 1997 caused over \$3.5 billion in damage and required the

army to help control the deluge. The year before, a massive flood occurred on the Saguenay River in Chicoutimi, Quebec after over 11 inches of rain fell in the span of just a few hours.

Even when the weather isn't causing problems, there is still the potential for other severe natural disasters. There are a number of dormant volcanoes along the Western coast, and Canada boasts three seismically active zones, located along the West coast, around Ottawa and Montreal, and in the Arctic.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs is also quick to warn visitors that brush and forest fires can occur "at any time" in Canada. The wildfires near Kelowna, British Columbia in 2003 destroyed over 260,000 hectares of trees and forced the evacuation of 45,000 people from the area. The federal and BC provincial governments spent approximately \$550 million to contain the fire and repair damages to property and the region's infrastructure.

Canada is also home to a number of large carnivores including cougars, black bears, grizzly bears, polar bears, lynx, bobcats, wolverines, and wolves. While most of these animals tend to shy away from human contact, they still have the potential to cause severe harm in a confrontation.

In 2007 there were 2353 cases of West Nile in Canada, most of which occurred in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Canada's larger animals aren't the only ones to pose a threat: insects including black flies and mosquitoes are responsible for spreading diseases among both humans and livestock.

During the 1970s, black flies were responsible for killing several hundred cattle in regions of Saskatchewan and Alberta. The current problem of West Nile disease can be attributed to rising mosquito populations who carry the virus from birds to humans. In 2007 there were 2353 cases of West Nile in Canada, most of which occurred in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

If you're Australian, you have an especially good reason to fear the Great White North. Out of the eight Aussies killed abroad last year, two of the deaths happened in Canada. When compared with the 5.2 million Australians who visited foreign countries in 2007, the odds of survival seem quite generous. Though a rather tenuous argument, it is statistically true that Australians are more likely to die in Canada than anywhere else.

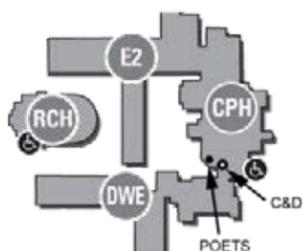
When you compare Canada to a "perfectly safe" country by Australia's standards (like New Zealand for instance), it becomes clear that we just don't make the cut. The most prominent warning on Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs website for New Zealand merely cautions travellers to be aware of unprotected rail crossings in rural areas. Compared to our many meteorological monstrosities and hazardous wildlife, New Zealand seems positively harmless.

I love my country dearly, but there's no denying it, Canada is a dangerous place to be!

MORE THAN JUST COFFEE & DONUTS

The EngSoc C&D has more than just Coffee and Donuts. Stop by for a variety of freshly prepared sandwiches, baked goods, soups, and more! It is run by students for students, so the prices can't be beat!

There are a variety of specialty coffees available - including fair trade. Bring your own mug to help the environment too!



ENGINEERING SOCIETY



HOURS OF OPERATION
MONDAY-THURSDAY 7:30AM - 7:00 PM
FRIDAY 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Editor's Note:

Point Vs. Counterpoint is a feature meant to stimulate discussion on thought-provoking topics. The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the authors, *The Iron Warrior*, or the Engineering Society.

PEng Independent Review Update



JEFFREY LIPNICKY
VP EDUCATION

As many students and staff are aware, the Dean of Engineering (Adel Sedra) has commissioned an Independent Review of the PEng Program. The review was promised to begin this term since the first cohort of students has completed the entire program. The details of the review are slowly being released, and this article will outline the information that is currently available.

Dean Sedra has modeled the review after the formal Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) reviews. It will be comprised of four main components: 1) Self-Study; 2) Stakeholder Feedback; 3) Review by External Review Board, and; 4) Final Report.

To start the review, the staff of the PEng Program will conduct a Self-Study based on six predetermined characteristics. At present, these characteristics have not yet been made known to me. The staff will prepare the report by gathering the required information and critically analyzing it. They will present possible solutions to any identified issues, and then select the optimal solution. The self-study will be the main source of information for the reviewers.

At the same time, the Associate Dean of Engineering, Undergraduate Studies (Wayne Loucks) will gather feedback from relevant stakeholders. The means by which the information will be gathered is not yet finalized; however, it is expected to collect comments and suggestions from staff, students, faculty, and other personnel. When details of this process are made available to me, I will be sure to pass this information

on to the student body as soon as possible.

The data collected through the self-study and stakeholder feedback will be provided to a committee of three or four external reviewers selected by the Dean of Engineering. The reviewers will be from industry, academia, and professional organizations. It is proposed that there be at least one reviewer from each of these areas. The individuals currently under consideration include past PEO presidents, former Deans of Engineering, and prominent cooperative education employers. The individuals have not yet been contacted, so names cannot be provided. Once the specific timeline for the review is established, the review committee will be formally announced by the Dean.

The review committee will spend limited time on campus (estimated to be a few days) to gather some input from stakeholders and collect the relevant data. However, most of the information they will be using for their review will come from the self-study and feedback collection. They will not be collecting much data themselves.

Once the review committee has all of the relevant data, they will prepare the final report to be presented to the Dean of Engineering. Dean Sedra has stated publicly at the last EngSoc Council Meeting (January 30, 2008) that he will make the final report public.

This is the general structure that the review will follow. I will provide more information as it becomes available. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me (asoc_vpedu@engmail) as soon as possible. I love to hear what everyone has to say, so that I can bring this information to the attention of the relevant persons and regulatory bodies. I am here to work for you, and the only way I can to that effectively is if you tell me what you want me to do.

GradComm Event Tickets and IRS Slave Auction



BAHMAN HADJI
GRADCOMM CO-CHAIR

Tickets are on sale all week (except Friday) during lunch in the Engineering Society office for the graduating class. Payments must be in cash or by cheque, made out to GradComm.

The Graduation Ball is a formal gala taking place on the night of March 29th. Individual tickets are priced \$65, which includes a reception with hors d'oeuvres, a three-course meal with wine, dancing until 1 a.m., and a complementary photograph.

The Engineering Yearbook is a 9x12 480-page compendium of our five years at the University of Waterloo. It contains grad pictures and blurbs, as well as several pages compiled by each individual class's editor containing pictures and stories from the years past. A Yearbook costs \$60, but for \$65, you can get a personalized version which includes 29 characters (your name, or whatever you decide) embossed on the front.

IRS is the Iron Ring Stag, this year taking place at the Waterloo Inn (refer to the accompanying article for general info on the traditions). Individual tickets are priced \$30, which includes food and transportation between the event and UW, as well as a pair of black shorts with the IRS 08 logo on them.

Until February 13th, save \$10 when you buy all three together and only pay \$150 to get one GradBall ticket, one IRS ticket, and one personalized Yearbook.

GradComm 2008 will be having an IRS Slave Auction fundraiser with proceeds going to the graduating class. The auction will be run on Thursday, February 7th from 11:30am – 1:30pm in the CPH Foyer.

We are looking for people to volunteer to be sold as slaves on auction day – and everyone is welcome: Frosh, upper-years, or eager non-engineers who enjoy our company. This is a completely fun event meant to raise money for the grads, and has historically had a great turnout. As a slave, you'll be hanging out with the fourth-years on Iron Ring day (Friday, Feb. 15th), which is a lot of fun, and you'll be doing whatever they tell you to do (that you're comfortable with). Tasks can include making the fourth-years breakfast, driving them to places, and taking notes in class.

If you'd like to volunteer to be a slave, just show up between 11:30am – 1:30pm on Thursday to the CPH Foyer and let us know. And fourth-years, this is a great chance to have help around on your most important day, so be sure to come out and see what's up for grabs!

A list of some of the slaves up for auction: *Sarah Anema, Will Farrell, Paul Fugere, Cecilia Hou, Anthony Iseyemi, Ryan McCreight, David Morris, Sarah Scharf, Erica Waugh, Meghan White*

VPI, VPed Positions Contested

STAYING INFORMED
Continued from Page 1

Sherr further explained the benefits of CKMS that are offered to students such as the professional facilities and training of which students are free to use. It also offers an additional voice for the student body as well as an alternative media coverage that includes diverse music programming and ethnic programming not found anywhere else. While it was argued that CKMS may survive if the student fee was to be removed, the Yes Committee argued that 90% of the station's revenue is from student fees, and that it would be unreasonable to expect any corporation to survive after such a loss.

In his closing statement, Aho slammed CKMS for being poorly run and violating the Ontario Corporations Act. The No Committee summed up by making the final point that if CKMS goes under, not only does the Corporation still own all of the equipment, but the CRTC will not grant another licence for the area and there will not be another campus radio station in the near future. Both committees are blogging throughout the campaign, at defundckms.wordpress.com (Yes Committee) and supportckms.blogspot.com (No Committee).

Feds Executive Candidates

The candidates for the Vice-President Education executive position are former Mechatronics Engineering, now Peace and Conflicts Studies student Fatima Ahmed, and Political Science student Andres Fuentes. Fatima Ahmed's platform is to increase awareness of administration, better access to education such as alternatives to OSAP, increase support to foreign students and increase accountability. Ahmed also wants to see a greater push in experiential learning, asking the question, "Why do we always hear students complaining that a lot of times they are learning things in school that are not inappli-

cable in the real world?"

Andres Fuentes would like to use his past experiences to help lobby the provincial government for more funding, putting students in committees to get them involved, changing the ELPE (English Language Proficiency Exam) and working along with organizations such as OUSA (Ontario Undergraduate Students Association) to resolve our issues. On the subject of differential fees, which refers to how an Engineering student currently pays more to take an Arts course than an Arts student, Fuentes said that he would work with OUSA to make it a priority to gain a stronger position at lobbying the provincial government. On the other hand, Ahmed suggested starting a grassroots movement to convince the University administration that it is an issue before lobbying the provincial government. Fuentes was less optimistic about such a strategy, arguing that talking to administration about this issue is a dead end.

For the Vice-President Internal race, the candidates are Sociology student Steve Hayle and Science student Andrew Falcao. Hayle's platform consists of providing a stronger resource for students and organizations in terms of funding and support, and having regularly-scheduled meetings with organizations for innovative solutions. Falcao aims to be more approachable by removing bureaucracy, increase funding to UW Campus Police and for cross-society events, initiating communication with various clubs and organizations on campus and eliminate the "aura of social elitisms" in response to the lack of student involvement with Feds.

For further information, go to vote.feds.ca and read more about each candidate's platform along with the Yes and No Committees that were formed for the referendums. There are also podcasts on each candidate and the referendum committees, as well as Facebook groups for all sides.

P. E n g .

The licence to engineer in Ontario

To practise as a professional engineer in Ontario, you must be licensed by PEO. It's the law.

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www.peo.on.ca, or
www.engineeringstudents.peo.on.ca



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Standards in Practice: How Engineers Rule the World



KEVIN CEDRONE
4B MECHANICAL

In preparation for Superbowl XLII and the four month transatlantic absence of my girlfriend, I decided buy a big screen TV system. I had no idea what I was getting myself into. It is a battlefield of nascent standards and technologies out there. There are different display technologies like LCD, Plasma, DLP, resolutions like 1080p, 720p, connections from composite to HDMI and formats like HD DVD and BluRay. That's just video; there are also a few audio options out there too!

Some of you may be too young to remember BetaMax or Mini-Disc, but from the outset I the last thing I wanted was to drop a few hundred hours of overtime earnings on technology that might be obsolete after a few months. It got me to thinking, why are there so many viable but competing standards? Why do some prevail and others flounder?

Like many things, it comes back to engineers. There's an amusing quote on the wall of the *Iron Warrior* office: "Engineers are the center of the universe; we choose the coordinate system." The engineers have each picked their own approach to solve a problem or reach a given outcome. Their companies back them and spend a fortune in development money, and hardware manufacturing infrastructure. It's make-or-break. Each company has to push their technology to capture market share and recoup

their investment. That's basic business but what may surprise you is that sometimes the inferior technology wins. Let's look at some examples to show you what I mean.

Metric vs. Imperial

This debate dates to the 17th century. On one side we have an intuitive and convenient system of seven fundamental units, some Greek prefixes, a host of handy derived units named for prominent historical scientists. SI Metric even plays nice with the decimal system. On the other hand you have the pomp and tradition of the Imperial system which originated in the United Kingdom. This wacky system has seemingly arbitrary definitions for many units depending on context. A grain weighs in at 1/7000th of a pound, a drachm at 1/256th of a pound, while the inappropriately named hundredweight is 112 pounds. We have our economically powerful neighbours to the south to thank for this debate. Most of the industrialized world uses metric. As engineers in Canada, we learn to work with both systems because we do considerable business with Americans, and we need to communicate using their unit system. It would cost an astronomical amount of money to convert general trade and commerce in the US over to metric so those in charge live with a system which has like fathoms (6 feet) and hogsheds (63 US gallons).

"A grain weighs in at 1/7000th of a pound, a drachm at 1/256th of a pound, while the inappropriately named hundredweight is 112 pounds."

AC vs. DC

Here we have Nikola Tesla's scientific genius pitted against the industrial juggernaut Thomas Edison. Edison had commercialized and installed DC first in industry, but AC was inherently easier to transmit over long distances and had lower losses. To help his cause, Edison launched a propaganda campaign to sell industry on the merits of DC. At one point he electrocuted an elephant to show the dangers of Tesla's AC current. We know the ultimate result of this contest, but propaganda was nearly the deciding factor. In fact, there were more than a thousand DC customers in Manhattan (where Edison got his start) until November of 2007!

BetaMax vs. VHS

Sony developed the BetaMax cassette format a year before JVC developed VHS. VHS came to dominate because its engineers worked for longer recording times and lower media cost. The North American market was more concerned with being able to record an entire American football game than the number of horizontal lines of resolution. Eventually VHS technology got to be cheap enough that it resisted several laser-based rivals like LaserDisc, finally being dethroned in the late 90s by DVD. Contrary to the urban legend that adult entertainment's adoption of VHS led to its victory of the format war, porn was readily available in both formats well into the 1980s... Or so I've

heard. From other people.

The final standards battle that I would like to discuss is closer to my heart. And liver. There are few things as important to an engineer as professionalism, integrity, calculus and beer.

Pry-offs vs. Twist-offs

Both caps do the admirable work of keeping your beer fresh but why are there two different kinds of bottlecap? On the face of it, one might identify pry-off beers as more expensive upscale beers. Maybe manufacturers hope for a correlation between effort and quality. Some maintain that pry-offs have the advantage of better preservation of beer, and easier re-use by home bottlers. First off, who lets their beer sit long enough for that to matter? Second, fan of homemade alcohol or not, who has the energy to look for a bottle cap opener after a hard day at the library, or breakfast? It is more likely that the bottle cap style is just integral to beer's identity like the scantily clad models in its commercials.

Where does this rambling tangent leave me and my home theatre dreams? Well I'm paralyzed by choice. Right now it's an optimization problem, but not the kind I've seen before on calculus finals. Here I have a few thousand dollars of my money on the line.

The above examples convinced me that no matter how well engineered the technology, a myriad of other factors will influence the eventual outcome. So instead I'm going to sit closer to the TV on Superbowl Sunday and spend the money on airfare to go see my girlfriend.



Sandford Fleming Foundation

Professionalism.
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There's more to an engineering education than engineering.



The John Fisher Award for Leadership

The John Fisher Award for Leadership is made to a graduating student who has shown outstanding leadership throughout the student's academic career in activities that relate to Engineering Education. These leadership contributions can be associated with the Engineering Society, the Departments, the Faculty, the Sandford Fleming Foundation, and with other activities with a professional orientation. Nominations for the John Fisher Award can originate from student groups, faculty members and others. Nominations should document the nominee's outstanding leadership and other contributions. The award consists of a certificate, a citation and an honorarium of \$1,500. All nominations must be submitted to the Secretary of the Foundation by April 1.

Debates

The Foundation has established the Sandford Fleming Debates in order to encourage the art of debate among engineering undergraduates. Each term there is one faculty wide competition. Please contact Prof. Scott Jeffrey of Management Sciences (sajeffre@engmail.uwaterloo.ca) if you are interested in participating. The overall winning team will receive \$300 each and the runners-up will receive \$150 each.

March 10 at 10:00 – 11:30
March 11, 12 at 11:30 – 1:00
PLACE E2 - 3324

FINALS: CPH Foyer, March 14 at noon

Refreshments will be served at finals
Everyone is welcome

E2-3336, ext 84008, sff@engmail.uwaterloo.ca
www.eng.uwaterloo.ca/~sff

Marketing and Engineering Design



MICHELLE CROAL
2A CHEMICAL

The world we live in today is full of things that would have been unbelievable 100, even 50 years ago. Especially in the developed world, we have everything that we could possibly ever need in our lives, and more; for any application you can think of, from food to getting us up in the morning, without even touching on the enormous chunk of our society that is computers and the internet. The sheer amount of manufacturing, processing and design involved in our modern world is absolutely mind boggling! One of the interesting things to note is how many of these things have been designed properly from a functional point of view, and how many of them are just overburdened with fluff, designed for marketing appeal.

It seems like in the past, the general quality of products was a lot better. You could own a car or washing machine for over a decade, and only need a reasonable amount of servicing and good care. These days however, objects like appliances seem to break much more quickly, or are just really plain low-quality to begin with. Why? I could be really cynical and say that manufacturers under-design on purpose, realizing that customers will want to replace or repair their purchases, and that this means more revenue for them. What is the purpose in designing a vacuum cleaner that just makes a ridiculous amount of noise, but doesn't actually have enough wattage to actually suck up the dust? Advertising and marketing schemes bombard us every day, with new products and services that are apparently vital to our lives, and how can we validate these new purchases if our current possessions are still all in working order? A decrease in product quality means more money in the pockets

of manufacturers and the people they pay to tell us what to think.

Think about chemical cleaners for a minute here. You can go to the grocery store, especially the larger ones like Sobey's or Zehr's, and find an entire aisle dedicated to cleaning. Out of all these products, do you think you can find one that will allow you clean your shower properly without scrubbing at all? No. What about those 40 variations of mops that are advertised on infomercials? At the end of the day, you've got a closet full of things that still don't clean your floor. Consider all the chemical additives that are present in our society, in our food, cleaning agents, air fresheners, candles, laundry detergents; the list goes on and on. I am under the impression that so many of these additives are just adding to the costs of the engineering design involved, while their main purpose is marketing and increasing product sales. Apparently it never occurred to anyone in the processing department that all these artificial flavours in our food could be harmful to our health, and that all the chemicals we pour down the drains go straight into our rivers and soils. And yet the fact remains that all these "things" are such an integral part of our modern society.

I guess my point here is really just to think: Think about the quality of a product that you're planning to buy, and consider that something a little pricier initially may save you cash later. In terms of designing and engineering products, consider the raw materials and the manufacturing, but also take into account what people actually want out of your product, and make it substance instead of fluff. Is your product going to stick out because of its quality and design and its fulfilling a purpose, or because of the way you grab consumer attention with a flashy package? Let's take a little time to engineer with purpose, slim down on the excessive media focus, and fatten up on product functionality!

Mechatronics Accreditation on Track for June 2008



KEVIN CEDRONE
4B MECHANICAL

An e-mail went out from the Department of Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering regarding the rules of the Ontario Engineering Competition. Competition rules limit the composition of design teams because the mechatronics program at UW is not yet accredited. This news piqued my interest. I have said more than a few times that "mechatronics is an option, not a program". Making light of the fact that mechatronics engineering exists as an option in mechanical engineering. This sarcasm is my way of ribbing my colleagues in mechatronics engineering. All joking aside, official program accreditation by the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) has far reaching implications. It's what qualifies us to work towards a PEng, and what excuses us from comprehensive examinations on engineering fundamentals that some of our American counterparts are obliged to take. In short, lack of accreditation is a serious matter so I decided to pursue the matter.

Professor Davidson, Director of First Year Admissions, replied to my e-mail inquiries by saying, "The CEAB inspects

and accredits any new engineering program at the time when the first class graduates. ...UW does not anticipate any problems with accreditation for Mechatronics since we are aware of CEAB requirements and obviously structure a new program to meet or exceed them in all areas."

Professor Loucks, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies added that "...we will not hear the status of Mechatronics until shortly after the June 2008 meeting of the CEAB."

As Associate Dean of Cooperative Education and Professional Affairs, Professor Aplevich from ECE is actively involved in the accreditation of engineering programs at UW. It turns out that all 10 of UW's programs were visited last fall for a periodic accreditation renewal. His e-mail to me emphasized that "The normal accreditation process is happening" and that "We are waiting for the visiting-team report on all 10 programs at UW that were visited last fall, but in the mean time we have every reason to believe that Mechatronics will be accredited for the first time and the other programs will be renewed."

This is good news for all engineering students at UW but it does mean that after July, I will have to find a new way to make cracks about mechatronics students.

Feds Express Open for Business



JEFFREY AHO
2T MECHATRONICS

On January 28th the Federation of Students's Vice-President Administration and Finance, Del Pereira (soon to be serving his second year in the position), cut the ribbon to Feds's newest business, Federation Xpress, a convenience store and successor to the "down under" Aussies, which was located in the basement of the SLC beside the Used Book Store. Greeting the public with free cake and coffee, employees with new Feds Xpress branded polos manned the greatly expanded convenience store.

Feds Xpress is a change of pace for Feds's convenience store operations with more emphasis on perishable goods and catering to fast paced students with Grab and Go items (and offering a microwave to heat items) and the more ethical product oriented students with Fair Trade coffee (bring your own cup to save waste!). Feds Xpress will also be the new sales location for Fed Bus tickets with the elimination of a full-time Feds front desk staff member. Fed's ice cream shop, Scoops, was also absorbed into the new retail space.

Located directly across from Tim Horton's on the main floor of the SLC, Feds hopes to bring more visibility to its convenience store and compete with sales that have went to Tim's and the Turnkey Desk. The opening was not without some snags such as a delay in the milk order and some common convenience items

missing (notably condoms). Feds hopes to resolve these some issues over the coming week as staff adapt to the new product line.

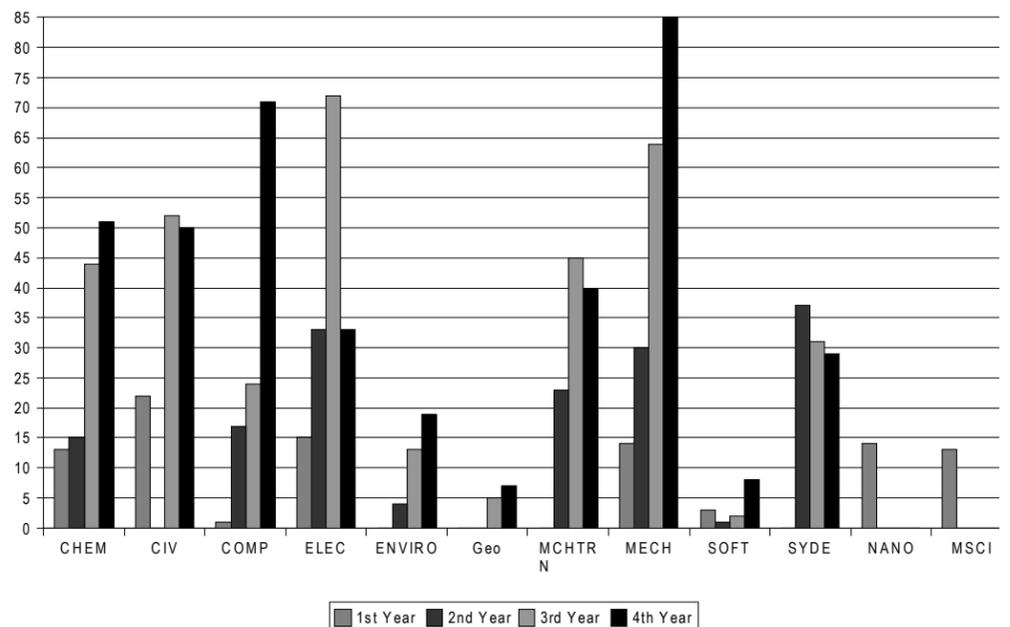
In an attempt to expand service, Feds Xpress will be open Monday to Friday 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM, and Sunday 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. These new hours are extensions compared to Aussies with later nights and new weekend operations.

Originally approved by the Feds Board of Directors in the Spring 2006 term, the move and new store construction have taken a significant amount of time to come to completion, having fought numerous delays and setbacks. Along with the move has come renovations to the Feds main office, which have were not able to be completed in time for the Feds Xpress opening. The new entrance to the Feds office will be through glass doors in the SLC near the Turnkey Desk.

Impressively, under VP Pereira's management, the overall project was significantly under its original \$270,000 budget. It is yet to be seen if Feds Xpress will be able to overcome the losses that plagued Aussies and become a sustainable service business for Feds and not a financial liability for the corporation. One of the first challenges Feds Xpress will have to face in the near future is the implementation of a campus wide ban on tobacco products dictated by a new University policy. A significant portion of Aussies's revenue came from tobacco products and Feds Xpress will need to diversify to keep its costs low.

Jeffrey Aho is a member of the Federation of Students Board of Directors.

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VeloCity: The Dorm for Entrepreneurs



ASHOK RAJU
3A ELECTRICAL

Put some of UW's most talented engineers together in a residence and throw in some meeting spaces, mentorship resources, high-tech gadget labs and a 12-foot projection screen – and what do you get? Many long nights of flip cup and games perhaps? Or maybe, just maybe, the birth of the “next big thing”.

That's the vision and hopes of Sean Van Koughnett, VeloCity's creator, the Director of UW Graphics and the Manager of UW's Media & Mobility Network Project.

“When I first started thinking about this concept, I thought of all the high tech success stories that were started by students working together in their dorm rooms, such as RIM, Google, Facebook, Dell and Yahoo!, and I thought...what if we were to concentrate our best talent and resources all in one place? Let's create an environment where great things can happen,”

says Van Koughnett.

The initiative called “VeloCity” is being billed as an incubator for ideas in the areas of mobile communications, new web and digital media. They are on the prowl for '70 of UW's most talented students' to call VeloCity their home for the upcoming Fall term – and will provide them with the chance to work on projects of their choice.

Minota Hagey, a single-rooms residence, is being renovated over the summer to provide all the amenities to support entrepreneurial-minded students – everything from collaborative spaces to a device lab, from workstations to WiFi throughout the entire residence.

And if students get sick of their dorms and feel it's time to get some much needed sunlight – they can attend professional development workshops for entrepreneurs delivered at the nearby Accelerator Centre,

down a block from Columbia Icefields.

This isn't the first time that we have seen entrepreneurial initiatives come out of UW. In fact, Canada's largest student entrepreneurship organization called Impact was founded by 4B Software Engineer Kunal Gupta.

“I think we're going to see many great projects and start-ups as a result of VeloCity, and from an entrepreneurially minded student's point of view, the opportunity to live, study and work with like-minded

people is rarely found, and hardly ever expected at an educational institution,” Gupta says.

And there is no shortage of enthusiasm. As

the only known initiative in North America, VeloCity has already received public endorsements from Apple, and word has it that they are already in talks with every big tech corporation out there.

As the word is spreading, even engineers from schools like UT have been

asking if they can apply as well. Unfortunately for them, this is an opportunity exclusive to only students from the University of Waterloo. Yet another soon-to-be reason of why UW engineering is the envy of all other schools!

As an engineer, you're probably thinking to yourself that you don't even have time to eat or sleep let alone work on a separate project on the side. As Van Koughnett puts it, “Realistically with heavy course loads, the time that each individual will have will be limited. However, unless you decide to work on your 4th year design project, nothing you do at VeloCity will be graded, so the motivation to be successful will come from within each student.”

With the chance to pitch their projects to Venture Capitalists and Angel Investors at the end of the term...who knows? The “next big thing” may very well be brewing inside VeloCity this coming fall. Another RIM? Another Google? Only time will tell.

If you're up for the challenge, you can apply and learn more at www.velocity.uwaterloo.ca



EWB in Malawi

KIMBERLEY THOMAS
ENVIRONMENTAL '07

It wasn't so long ago that I was a fourth-year Environmental Engineering student, wandering the halls of UW wondering to myself what on earth I should do next. After five years of being consumed with all things academic and theoretical, with only smatterings of “real world experience”, a couple things were for certain: I needed a change of scenery and I needed to do something that I felt really mattered.

So, what did I do? In August I traded my car for crowded minibuses, bubble baths for bucket showers, Conestoga mall for a bustling market. I packed up my bags and headed to Lilongwe, the capital city of the little country of Malawi: “the warm heart of Africa”.

Malawi is a landlocked country in southern Africa, and is among the world's poorest countries. Nearly 85% of the country's population live in rural areas where the population density is one of Africa's highest. High population density, rapid population growth, and erosion due to poor land management practices is resulting in severe pressure on the agricultural industry, which employs the vast majority of the population.

I am here on a 13 month overseas volunteer placement with Engineers Without Borders Canada (EWB), an organization I first became involved with during my undergrad at UW.

overseas to implement them. This approach is common and often involves drilling a well, building of a school, or installing a new technology developed in western labs. Instead, EWB believes that we can have the greatest impact overseas through a focus on capacity building, rather than the delivery of technological goods. Our overseas volunteers are partnered with local organizations already helping communities gain access to appropriate technologies. By strengthening the extent and effectiveness of local organizations, EWB helps them become better at helping communities, ensuring the greatest possible positive impact.



My partner organization is Total Landcare, a local Malawian NGO working to increase production and income levels of small-scale Malawian farmers through improved agricultural practices with sustained conservation and management of the natural resource base. Our focus is on small-scale irrigation and forestry projects. My specific role is within the Monitoring and Evaluation team, where I work to ensure that information collected is accurate and useful, and ultimately leads to more effective operations that have the most positive impact possible.

For more information on EWB, check out a UW chapter meeting (look for posters in the hall!) or the website (www.uwaterloo.ewb.ca). I'll be providing more insights into my life and work here over the course of this term through a series of articles, so stay tuned until next time!

Kim's full blog can be found at www.kim-thomas.blogspot.com.

Projects Featured on TV

MEDIA COVERAGE
Continued from Page 1

The winning group will be entering their project into the Ontario Engineering Competition taking place this coming weekend (February 8-10) at McMaster University.

Every year, the symposium is well-attended by the media, and this year was no different – in addition to campus media outlets such as *Imprint* and *The Iron Warrior*, reporters from *The Record* and CKCO-TV, CTV's Southwestern Ontario affiliate, were present. *The Record* featured an extensive piece on the Electric Hookah, a project that modified the traditional Middle Eastern water pipe to use electric heat instead of coal, and the Automatic Garbage Pickup Robot, which used a camera and robotic arm to pick up garbage off the floor.

CKCO featured other projects, including Cover Me, a paintball turret that used motion-tracking to shoot anything that moves, and HornTunes, a system that adapted the idea of mobile phone ringtones to cars, playing user-made tunes using real car horns. The Cover Me group showed their project in action on a video taken outdoors due to the safety issues associated with firing a paintball gun. The HornTunes group, however, blared the bizarre car horn versions of The Imperial March and the X-Files theme as well as the cliché La Cucaracha and other tunes all day long at the request of interested onlookers and car aficionados, often to the chagrin of other groups who had to withstand the 100-decibel honking.

While these projects were featured in part due to their ostentation, there were other projects at the symposium whose

technical breadth overwhelmingly impressed students and professors alike, such as H-QUAD, a lossless high-quality audio decoder. H-QUAD was the implementation of a decoder for the FLAC compressed file format, popular with audiophiles who prefer CD-quality audio to MP3s. While software FLAC decoders are freely available online, H-QUAD was fully implemented in hardware and presented on a prototype board – something that had not yet been accomplished in industry or academia.

Dr. Bill Bishop, the fourth-year design project coordinator, acknowledged that the quality of the projects this year was outstanding and declared the symposium a resounding success. The students were for the most part glad that the exhausting but memorable day was over, many having lost their voices by nighttime. They now look forward to another special day, February 15th, when they will be receiving their Iron Rings. A full list of the project abstracts from the 2008 symposium can be found online at eceprojects.uwaterloo.ca.

Planning has already begun for the 2009 Design Project Symposium next January. The 4-stream Electrical and Computer Engineering classes currently in their 3B term had classes cancelled on the 23rd in order to attend the symposium and gather ideas. They will be finalizing their topics and submitting their abstracts next week, while their 8-stream counterparts completed theirs last Fall. Like every year, by the end of this Spring term when the classes finish their 4A term, they will demonstrate a prototype version of their projects to their advisors, leaving four months to make them presentable for the symposium.



The EWB approach is not what people often expect. Indeed, at first glance, it may seem that the most natural role of western engineers in development involves the identification of solutions, followed by a trip



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Better Know a Beer: Sports



RORY ARNOLD
3B MECHANICAL

Beer and sports go together like the Scottish and sheep. The relationship between beer and sports is so strong in fact, that my articles are part of the Sports & Recreation section of the IW website, thus I determined it would be fitting to discuss proper drinking habits while watching sports.

The great thing about drinking with sports is that you don't really have to choose which beer you should drink, just let the marketers choose for you. For example, while watching hockey, drink Canadian; during a football game, drink Budweiser, Bud Light or Miller Lite. And since I grew up on Labatt Blue Jays baseball, I drink Blue while watching the boys of summer. If you're wondering what I'll suggest to drink while watching soccer, don't; soccer is for pansy Europeans. And to show you just how pansy, the next three sports I'm going to talk about are golf, curling and NASCAR. With golf and curling (and the exact opposite for NASCAR) I suggest drinking the same beer while watching the sport as you drink while playing the sport. This gives you the feeling of being right in the action that even HDTV can't beat. As far as NASCAR, I love it, though it's not actually the watching

that I enjoy (I have an IQ higher than my age so watching cars go around in circles for 3 hours is not that appealing), but I do love the thought of getting drunk with a bunch of rednecks at 10am on Busch.

Because of the vast amount of dollars spent on marketing associating beer with sports, it really only seems fitting that we drink these major national brands with each associated sport. These beers are most often lagers, which have little taste but can be drunk by anyone and in vast amounts. Molson Canadian has become synonymous with hockey all over this country, and for good reason: Molson has been brewing beer in Canada since 1786, making it Canada's oldest brewery and is very fitting that it be associated with Canada's national pastime.

Watching football on an American channel, you will see a Budweiser, Bud Light or Miller Lite commercial at least once during every break. Their commercials have become so big that everyone looks forward to the beer commercials during the Super Bowl.

It's hard to pick just one beer to drink while watching the boys of summer. Obviously, being from Canada, we would drink something different than fans of the Milwaukee Brewers, but since we watched Labatt Blue Jay's baseball during the Jay's championships of the early 90s I still stick with this classic. Also, since Blue is a light tasting pilsner, it can be drank easily during the summer and the

high carbonation keeps the beer from going flat in the heat of the Roger's Center [It's still called the Skydome in my heart -ED] seats.

Marketers have always used the male's sense of machoism related to sports to sell beer. It basically does two things for us: It relates the common man to the professional athlete, as can be seen in Steelback commercials using former NHL superstars in their commercials, and helps us escape from the real world. Sports allow men to enter a spiritual world of the super fast, the super tall and the super talented, forgetting the hustle and bustle of work and becoming a fanatic sports fan where the team depends on your support in order to win. The beer allows us to become those fanatics that without us, the team would not succeed (or so it would seem).

The relationship can become so evident that it can be hard to picture one without the other; visit the Molson Canadian website and you notice that hockey is a link on the toolbar. Beer is so important to the sport of baseball that there is even a team named the Brewers. As far as Budweiser goes, half my gym shirts are from a NFL related marketing scheme, and who hasn't heard of a Maxim Golf Party. Even your basic social team joins a "beer league". Sports like golf and curling are perfect for your typical Joe, because they supply the social and competitive needs for human beings, and are at a slow social pace that allow for a couple brews both

during and after the game.

If you still don't believe that beer and sports go together like Dutch and phlegm, take a trip across the border to see a Monday Night Football game. Last season I had the privilege of seeing my Cowboys Monday night in Buffalo. We started by stopping at a gas station and buying a 12 pack of fancy imported Labatt Blue for \$8, and after paying someone to allow us to park on their lawn, we cracked opened our cans of Blue and the local cops pointed us in the direction of Ralph Wilson Stadium. We were able to find the Dallas tailgaters and make a few new friends before the gates opened. It was the most exciting game of the season and I was right there screaming with 70,000 other drunken fans.

There are, of course, improper ways to drink beer while watching sports as well. At Safeco Field in Seattle, they offer a number of local and craft brews on tap. While I do much enjoy craft brews of national brands, this breaks rule number one of beer and sports: the sport comes first, the beer second; beer should only be used as an enhancement, making it possible for you to yell at the officials and heckle the opposing team.

Beer and sports share a long history tracing its roots back to the first time a beer was drank during a sporting event, and it will continue to weave a rich tapestry until the end of time.

Classroom Review

The Washroom Now Known as DWE 1502



ALEX GIROUX
3A MECHANICAL

Last issue of the esteemed *Iron Warrior*, I reviewed the renovated lab in CPH. This issue, I was dispatched to conduct a similar classroom review of DWE 1502. Why that room in particular? Well, with new programs being introduced, the resulting increase in the number of Engineering students on campus at any given time, and the fact that construction on the new building (Engineering V) can't come soon enough, it's a little crowded around here these days. Needless to say, classes still need to be held, and as our faculty expands, creativity will be required to ensure that this happens.

This leads me to DWE 1502. Located just across from the large lecture hall by the tunnel to RCH, rumour had it that it was originally a washroom. A quick email was

fired off on Friday afternoon to a professor teaching a class in 1502, and he very courteously confirmed the rumour. Later Friday evening, after I had had quite enough of karaoke at the Spur, an expedition was undertaken to the room in question. The purpose of this expedition was two-fold: first of all, to examine DWE 1502 so that I would have something to write about, and secondly, to locate a women's washroom.

We were successful on both counts. Conveniently, there was a very nice women's washroom located right next door to DWE 1502, with a door that looked quite similar to the door to DWE 1502, which made sense given that we had already confirmed that 1502 was at some point in the not-too-distant-past used for purposes other than teaching. After all, classroom doors tend not to have large vents built in. We looked around and searched for any further evidence, but alas, the one thing I was looking for, a floor drain, was nowhere to be found. This of course, does not say much, since I've been known to miss things right in

front of my face.

But you're probably wondering what a classroom that was once a men's washroom looks like, even if it no longer has a floor drain. As a matter of fact, it looks like every single other small classroom I've been in. There were about forty chairs, tables, blackboards, and a podium. Since it's in the basement of DWE, there are no windows, but there are a couple of random doors, probably left over from the room's past life. Overall, nothing particularly special. Unfortunately, I have nothing to say about what it's actually like to have a class in there, since although I was offered the chance to sit in on a two



hour class on what I think was contaminant transport, I was unable to attend.

After poking around for a couple of minutes, the expedition was declared to be a success, and the expedition members continued on our merry way.

POETS

MOVIE SCHEDULE

SHOWINGS BEGIN AT NOON

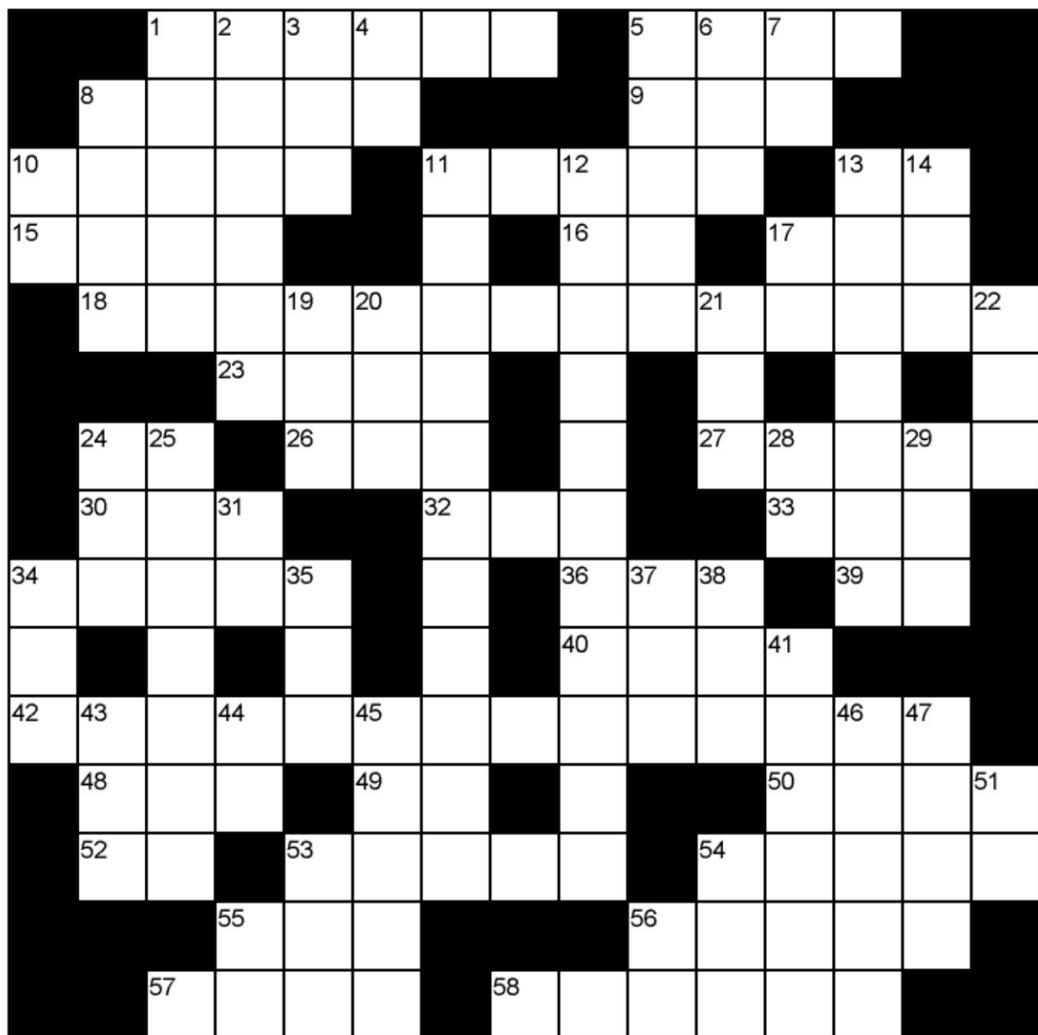
Wednesday Feb 6	Thursday Feb 7	Friday Feb 8	Monday Feb 11	Tuesday Feb 12
John Cusack Day High Fidelity Gross Pointe Blank Being John Malkovich	Star Wars Trilogy A New Hope The Empire Strikes Back Return of the Jedi	Judd Apatow Day 40 Year old Virgin Knocked up Superbad	Die Hard Trilogy	Death Proof Planet Terror Shaun of the Dead
Wednesday Feb 13	Thursday Feb 14	Friday Feb 15	Monday Feb 25	Tuesday Feb 26
Mary Bland's Choice a.k.a. Jason Statham Day Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels Snatch The Transporter	Monty Python Day The meaning of life Life of Brian The Holy Grail	IRS! Bartender's Choice	Will Ferrell day Anchorman Talladega nights Blades of glory	Mel Gibson Day Brave Heart The Patriot Mad Max

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Iron Crossword

It's all Greek to me!

ALEXANDER GRANT
2A SYSTEMS DESIGN



A&E Challenge Results

Congratulations to Brandon DeHart (3B Mechatronics) for being the first to complete the 3D Sudoku from the last issue – enjoy your (practically) brand new microtape answering machine. Honourable mentions go to Adam Capoferri and Nigel Merger (2A Mechatronics), Ewa Przemieniecki (4B Systems), and Rob Gorbet (ECE Professor).

The challenge for this issue is this special Iron Crossword, with a Greek theme. That means that it's fair game to use Greek letters phonetically in the solutions!

Crossword Clues

Down

- 1 Dote
- 2 Short fingers
- 3 Toddler
- 4 Air conditioner
- 5 Keyboard errors
- 6 Bro.'s sibling
- 7 Comes before a vowel
- 8 Fresh
- 10 Kilogram
- 11 Black-coloured powder, mineral Wüstite (2 wds.)
- 12 An organism's protection mechanism against disease (2 wds.)
- 13 Occurring twice a year
- 14 Moray or Electric
- 17 Not alternating
- 19 Honey maker
- 20 Electroencephalography (abbr.)
- 21 Large computer co.
- 22 Lay
- 24 Not amateur

- 25 Represented in sculpture
- 28 Roman four
- 29 Target arrival time (abbr.)
- 31 Not a Mac
- 34 Oolong, Green, etc.
- 35 Body of water
- 37 Some
- 38 Where a mouse sits
- 41 Between tall and venti
- 43 Science guy
- 44 Neuter pronoun
- 45 Man-made fiber
- 46 Speak
- 47 Movie-_____
- 51 At the end of a letter
- 53 "Sippin' on _____ and juice"
- 54 Cause of sickness
- 55 Peat and vamp prefix
- 56 Weight (abbr.)

Across

- 1 Achieve company
- 5 Male
- 8 Specific case only (latin, 2 wds.)
- 9 Yang's partner
- 10 Leather whip
- 11 What a gymnast does
- 13 "To _____ or not to _____"
- 15 Cootie
- 16 Month (abbr.)
- 17 Stamping tool
- 18 Cats, Evita and The Phantom (2 wds.)
- 23 Oracle
- 24 Paid (abbr.)
- 26 Self
- 27 Social dance of French origin
- 30 Representative
- 32 Shipping
- 33 Tub for liquids
- 34 Subjects
- 36 Talk incessantly
- 39 CA city
- 40 Catch in nylons
- 42 Valium, Klonopin, Rivotril, etc. (2 wds.)
- 48 Still
- 49 Three feet (abbr.)
- 50 On top of
- 52 Mr. _____ (tv horse)
- 53 Glitter
- 54 What you raise in poker
- 55 River (Spanish)
- 56 Broader
- 57 Pennsylvania (abbr.)
- 58 Hired help

A Canadian Student Guide to France



"THE" CHRIS BENETEAU
4B MECHANICAL

Do you expect meals to last three hours?

Pardon me?

Do you harbour dreams of representing your country at the Olympics in the illustrious sport of queuing?

I'm sorry, are you talking to me?

Do you wish more services were closed for periodic unannounced intervals?

Errr... that doesn't sound like a good thing.

Exactly.

Exactly?

That's exactly why you need my new handbook, "A Canadian Student Guide to France".

Are you some sort of crazy-person?

Irrelevant. Allow me to give you a sampling of just some of the many useful things you'll discover about life in France –

I really have to get to class actually – Including where to find delicious wine for less than three dollars.

You have my undivided attention. Let's proceed.

Chapter 1 : France for Dummies

I find the title of your first chapter rather insulting.

And I find your need to express yourself tiresome and unnecessary, so we'll call it even and move forward. For starters, there are two major languages spoken in France: French and Insultant. Amongst themselves, the French converse in an airy poetic song-like dialect. When

speaking with outsiders with noticeably different French accents, the language changes and takes on a terser tone and, while still technically French, can be distinguished by the frequency of words such as "imbécile" and "espèce de con".

What do those words mean?

Ask your mother. Insulting, another common language, is a halting form of English where the speaker feigns little knowledge of the language in an attempt to be as uncooperative as possible. Another little-known fact is that France operates on a separate clock than the rest of the world.

You're making that up.

Untrue. France actually operates on a sixteen hour clock. This results in French hours being longer than a regular, standard hour. To accommodate the international twenty-four hour clock, the entire country shuts down between 12pm and 2pm every day to allow the international clock to "catch-up" and the populace will stand in lines throughout the country to pass the extra time. So when you've waited in line two and a half hours to get a train ticket, you've actually only waited six minutes in French time, which isn't all that bad when you think about it.

I'm not sure that makes any sense whatsoever.

The math surrounding this time conversion is really quite complicated, but a common conversion is given by the first rule of France: things in France take approximately 1.789 times as long as they would anywhere else in the world. So now that you've waited in line and been derided by the locals, let's discuss the French administrative model.

Chapter 2 : Why Socialism Doesn't Work

The French economy is fuelled by two items: paperwork and labour strife. Government officials are selected at birth and separated from regular citizens. As children they are given a special upbringing and trained in the ways of confusion and misinformation.

Like superheroes?

Whatever simile satisfies your limited comprehension and allows me to continue. Regular citizens commonly undergo quests to secure necessary paperwork. The trained officials require this paperwork to stoke the fire that is the French economy, but are under strict orders to give no assistance on how to locate this elusive paperwork. Instructions on where to go in search of the numerous distinct and mandatory paperwork items required to gather ever more important and mandatory paperwork items are dispersed only by cloaked sorcerers that live on the top peaks of the Alps, accessible only by mountain goats.

Sorcerers? Accessible only by mountain goats? How did the sorcerers get there in the first place?

They rode the goats, obviously. These quests for paperwork are periodically interrupted by labour disputes designed to thwart any potential heroes. The strikes are random, common, and all-encompassing. If one element of France goes on strike the other elements will go on strike to support or protest the first striking element, or to protest the striking itself.

Do you actually expect anyone to pay for this guide of yours?

Chapter 6 : The Waiting Game

Wait, what happened to chapters three, four, and five?

That kind of linear thinking is exactly why you need my book, you uncultured North American colonial. Lucky for you, the French are understanding enough to share their cuisine with you. How would you like some breakfast?

It's four in the afternoon.

Of course you would. You will be having bread with jam, an espresso, and a glass of orange juice, and you will be paying ten dollars.

That's an outrage!

You don't have to tip...

Well that's not so bad I guess...

Which is why it will take twenty minutes to attract the waiter's attention from his newspaper to give you a menu and an additional hour to deliver this marvellous feast. What would you like for lunch?

I guess it's probably close to lunch time by now in your imaginary land. I'll have -

A baguette. An excellent choice.

Isn't a baguette just bread?

You can have some Brie on it if you like.

Can I have cheddar?

Not unless you want to be deported. Do you see how useful my book will be? I've just saved you from being deported. Now give me twenty dollars.

I don't think so. Your book doesn't seem very useful, and you promised to tell me where to find cheap wine.

Did I? That doesn't seem like something I would say.

You've just stolen five minutes from my life that I'll never have back. I hate you. That's what she said. Allons enfants de la Patrie! La jour de gloire est arrivée!...

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