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The Squid's Ink

Notes From the Editors

By now you should just be finishing up all that leftover turkey. Speaking of turkeys, lots of people came out for the annual Turkey Bowl football game earlier this month. Jason Lenes did a fantastic job organizing this event. The final score was 3-2, with the biologists and physicists taking their rightful place as champions!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Bob Jolley, Tracy Christner, and the rest of the SuperStars committee for their generosity. They donated the leftover t-shirts to the USF co-ed softball team. The shirts say "Championship Team '98", so you softball players have a lot to live up to!

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Lisa Earnest and Fred Stengard for defending earlier this month. Fred definitely wins the prize for the longest thesis title ever. It's so long that we can't even print it!

Congratulations to Strawn and Craig Toler for the birth of their daughter Kylie Claire. Kylie was born on Friday the 13th - that must be her lucky day!

Also, congratulations to Sunny Jiang and Fernando Gilbes, the first ever Sackett Prize winners.

Finally, congratulations to us! As you might know, this newsletter has a long history of being resurrected and then fading away. It has also gone through several name changes. In the past 10 years, the most issues published in one

year was 10. We are a close second with 8 issues this year; that's one issue a month since May. Remember, we can't do this without your help, so keep those submissions and suggestions coming!

Course Announcement

By Tony Greco

The department has just ordered a brand new state of the art Hitachi scanning electron microscope (SEM) for high resolution surface photography. It is a PC based digital SEM that can photograph hydrated specimens. Installation is set for early January '99. Learn to use this invaluable instrument for your research in the SEM course, OCG 6551C, Ref 17719 this spring!

Exam Time, Part 1

In honor of the upcoming dreaded finals week, we would like to offer this list of things to do during an exam when you know you are going to fail the class anyway:

1. 15 minutes into the exam, stand up, rip the exam into very small pieces, throw them into the air and yell out "Merry Christmas." If you're really daring, ask for another copy of the exam and say you lost the first one. Repeat this process every 15 minutes.
2. If the exam is in essay form, answer with numbers and symbols. Or, do the exam in another language. If you don't know one, make one up.
3. Find a new, interesting way to refuse to answer every question. For example: I refuse to answer this question on the grounds that it conflicts with my religious beliefs.

Upcoming Events

**Dec 2, noon, MSL conf. room
Wacky Wednesday Wunchtime**

AGU special. If you are not going to AGU next week, Rebecca Beavers and Jyotika Virmani will bring AGU to you. Come and listen to them practice their talks. Bring your lunch.

Dec 7, Finals week begins; Pearl Harbor Day

**Dec 8, DEP circle
Blood Drive**

The last one for this year. Get a free t-shirt and save a life!

Dec 9, No WWW - FINALS WEEK
If you have an exam, your Wednesday will be wacky enough!

Dec 11, MSAC Holiday Party
To celebrate the holidays and the end of finals, MSAC will be holding its annual party in the lounge.

Dec 12, Poinsettia Day

Dec 13, Geminids meteor shower peaks early this morning

Dec 14, first day of Hanukkah

**Dec 16, noon, MSL conf. room
Wacky Wednesday Wunchtime**
Lizz Singh, our resident travel guide will be flying us to Iceland, land of beautiful women and unusual museums. Bring your lunch.

Dec 19, Islamic month of Ramadan begins

Dec 21, Winter Solstice

Dec 23 & 30, No WWW - Happy holidays!

Dec 25, Christmas Day

Dec 26, Kwanzaa; Boxing Day (Canada)

Dec 31, New Year's Eve

Holiday Toy Drive

By Heather Penta

The annual holiday toy drive has begun. We are collecting toys for children being raised by their grandparents. This is a part of the St. Petersburg Free Clinic's Elder Care program. The grandparents have limited incomes and often have a hard time making ends meet. Your gifts might be the only ones these children receive.

Please take a nametag from the Christmas tree in the lounge and bring a wrapped and labeled gift to the MSL lobby by Friday, December 11th. If you do not have time to purchase a gift, monetary contributions are welcome. Please give them to Heather Penta, Lisa Merman or Heidi Crevison. We'll do the shopping for you!

Virtual Ink

By Meredith Anderson Haines (filling in for regular column author Johan Schijf)

I would like to tell you about a website that helps you do a rate comparison on long distance phone carriers. I'm now paying 25cents/min for calls to New Zealand, whereas only 6 months ago 52cents/min was the best deal I had found.

"A Bell Tolls" (<http://www2.ucsc.edu/people/stmc/abell>) will help you review your current long distance rate plan. They can find interstate rates as low as 5cents/min, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for large volume customers. There is even a deal for 7.3 cents/min during the week and 5.2 cents/min on weekends that includes 150 hours of internet access as well! You can review the rates based upon the time period that is most important to you.

You can also see the latest international direct dial rates - the page lists the best rate for 240 different countries.

Clicking on each country pulls up the entire rate database for all plans to that country. If you make international calls you can save unbelievable amounts of money by choosing a plan suited to your calling patterns.

They can't tell you which plan would be best for you, but they claim to be the only site on the web dedicated to impartial long distance rate comparisons to help you figure it out for yourself! They also offer cost saving ideas such as a top 10 list of ways to save money on your long distance bill.

MSAC Notes

By Rachel Merkt

The annual Holiday Party will be held on Friday December 11th. Heidi Crevison is spearheading the efforts on this event, but that does not mean she is handling them single-handedly!!! She will begin beating the bushes for volunteers to help shop, wrap, decorate, and set-up. Please make an effort to contribute to the annual gala!

Speaking of volunteers, the floor in the lounge will be polished on Friday December 4th. We'll need volunteers to help move the furniture out of the way

The annual chili cookoff is coming up on January 8th, so start flipping through your recipe books! This is always a lot of fun.

REMINDER: return any receipts for MSAC events to Lisa Merman's mailbox within three days of the event

USF has designated the 1998-99 school year "The Year of the Book". This is a celebration of the literary expertise of those in the university community with a yearlong series of events. For more information, and for a schedule of events, check out the website at www.usf.edu/news.

Helpful Hints

By Sean "Martha Stewart" Singh

*Don't discard the tough ends of broccoli stalks - use them for making soups.

*Measuring honey with a spoon is easy but getting it all off the spoon is another matter--so first rub the spoon with margarine.

*To get cookie dough to drop off a spoon without sticking, first dip the spoon in milk.

*Extra pie dough? Cover it with some parmesan and gruyere cheese and you'll make a delicious appetizer.

Foreign Relations

Ramadan: The month of Ramadan begins the day after the crescent moon is sighted. Therefore, this Islamic holiday can vary around the world by one day. This year it begins in the US on December 19th.

Boxing Day: There are 2 sources of the name for this Canadian holiday. In Victorian era, the day after Christmas was the day the servants removed the boxes the presents came in and put them in the "Box Room." Some houses in England (such as Jyotika's) still have "Box Rooms."

The second explanation has to do with sports. Gambling and violent sports were illegal on Christmas Day. The day after was called Boxing Day because that was a major sport that people could gamble on.

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Science Demystified

Biodiversity comes in 3 flavors:

Genetic diversity is diversity within a species. Different individuals do have small differences in their genetic makeup. Genetic diversity is healthy because it makes a species more adaptable to environmental change.

Species diversity is the variety of species in a community (including the biggest community, the whole earth).

Ecological diversity is the variety of forests, lakes, deserts, grasslands, streams, and other biological communities.

Exam Time, Part 2

In a Chemical Oceanography class, the professor wanted the students to finish within a certain time period. After the professor called time, one student kept on working. The professor repeated that time was up and the student kept working. When the student was done, he gave the professor his exam. The professor said, "I refuse to take this exam because you have exceeded the time limit. You will fail." The student draws himself up, indignant, and says, "Do you know who I am?" The professor, ready for action, says, "No." The student giggles, says, "Good," shoves his paper in the middle of the stack in his professors' hand, and runs out the door.

A true story??? You be the judge!

For Trekkies Only

In place of our regular "Movie Mania" column, we offer this bit to celebrate the December 11th release of the next Star Trek movie "Star Trek: Insurrection."

Reasons why Captain Kirk is better than Captain Picard:

- *Kirk has sex more than once a season.
- *Kirk's bridge is not beige.
- *Picard allows cats on board, while Kirk beams away even really cute things like Tribbles.
- *Kirk says "shoot first and wait for retaliation."
- *Kirk doesn't let the doctor tell him what to do.
- *One word: Hair.

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the text box shading to improve the print quality. Can that be done?

A: Yes. To change the shading or color of a text box, select it and double click its borders to open the Format Text Box dialog box. Click the Colors and Lines tab and then choose the new color from the Color drop-down list in the Fill section.

Q: What's the best way to print this newsletter?

A: Print page 2 on the back of page 1. Fold in half and mail with or without an envelope. For best results, use a medium to heavyweight paper. If you're mailing without an envelope, seal with a label.

Q: I would like to use my own clip

Q: I would like to change some of