

2010 may

a monthly publication of the
department of chemistry
university of alberta

chemNEWS

Building Updates

Domestic Hot Water Upgrade

Facilities and Operations will embark upon yet another upgrade to both Chemistry East and West Buildings using federal KIP funds. The intent is to separate the laboratory water source from the potable (consumable) water as currently, these two lines are tied together. As an added bonus, the water to the showers and eye wash stations will now be tempered and where possible, additional eye wash stations will be installed, as was reported to the Department last year.

The construction activity will occur from April 12 until August 20, 2010. The building's Facility Services Manager, Andy Riddle, has worked with the site supervisor to limit the required coring from between 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. (although it should be noted that coring is 95% completed).

If the construction activity related to this project is disruptive to your research, teaching activities or seminars/workshops, please contact either Jeannette (2 3254) or myself (2 3514) and we will contact the site supervisor who has confirmed that they will immediately cease their work so as to meet our needs.

Chemistry West Renewal Project

The decant moves associated with the Chemistry West Renewal Project were completed as of April 30 and the successful construction management team selected was Delnor, the same company who did the exhaust and the domestic water upgrades. As such, they have established rapport working with our Department and we will work together to relay and respond to issues surrounding noise and vibration.

Demolition is slated to start May 3, but a definitive schedule has not been determined as of yet. I will share that with the Department, once I receive a copy. Please note that for the summer months, Delnor will use W4-46 Chemistry Centre as a home base for their operations.

Sprinkler Upgrade

With the fire that occurred in W2-57 in March, Facilities and Operations has now prioritized another project in our Department which will be rolled out as monies and opportunity allow and that is to install sprinklers throughout our two buildings. They are in the design stages right now, but the intent is to install sprinklers to the following areas in 2010-11:

- North wing of 5th Floor Chemistry West
- W2-57
- E5-33 (now completed)
- And in lieu of fire shutters, those windows in Chemistry West that are adjacent to CCIS (required by code)

Important Dates & Events

- **May 9:** Mother's Day



- **May 10-14:** Social Environment Committee Contest: *Matching Baby Photos* – most matches gets the winner a \$50 gift card from Future Shop!
- **May 24:** Victoria Day (University Closed)
- **Departmental BBQ in May:** A date will be set later this month and will be determinant upon good weather – *whenever that may be!*

Photocopier Update

For those of you who regularly go in and out of the mail room, you will have seen our new photocopiers pushed to the side of the room and are likely wondering why that is the case. It turns out that the Department erroneously entered into a contract with Ricoh as Xerox is the preferred vendor on campus with whom *all* new photocopier contracts must be established.

As of today, I received word that all of the legal issues surrounding the "illegal" contract have been resolved and that the new copiers will be removed on Monday, May 10. We will need to wait for their lease to lapse (September 30, 2010) before new machines can be brought in from Xerox. In the meantime, there is a clause in the current lease that says that our machines must be in good working order throughout the term of the lease. As such, we should still expect, and receive, the same level of service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO....

Congratulations to all of the students in receipt of an **NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA)**! This award is provided to students interested in pursuing research work in the natural sciences and engineering. The NSERC USRA students working in the Department this summer include:

- Christopher Adamson – Dr. Clive
- Nicholas Battrom – Dr. Loppnow
- Rohan Bhogal – Dr. Gibbs-Davis
- Matthew Carter – Dr. Serpe
- Mike Dalla – Dr. Stryker
- Brian Faucher – Dr. Brown
- David Grewer – Dr. Buriak
- Steven Huynh – Dr. Buriak
- Brandon Johnston – Dr. Harynuk
- Qi-Yi Lei – Dr. Jaeger
- Michael Little – Dr. Vederas
- Michal Nicpon – Dr. Hall
- Alexandra Palech – Dr. Wasylishen
- Larissa Petriw – Dr. Vederas
- William Ramsey – Dr. Rivard
- Joey Sheff – Dr. Lowary
- Richard Shillington – Dr. McDermott
- Erika Steels – Dr. Vederas
- Kelsey Thimer – Dr. Rivard
- Kaitlyn Towle – Dr. Clive
- Hua Zou – Dr. Fenniri

Congratulations to the undergraduate students in receipt of the **AHFMR Summer Studentship**! This award offers students with exceptional academic records an opportunity to participate in medical or health research in Alberta during the summer months. Coincidentally, the students receiving the AHFMR award this year are also receiving the NSERC USRA. These students are:

- Christopher Adamson – Dr. Clive
- Larissa Petriw – Dr. Vederas
- Erika Steels – Dr. Vederas

Congratulations to the following graduate students on passing their respective exams:

- **B.J. Medos** (Dr. Tykwinski) passed his PhD candidacy exam April 8
- **Adrian Murray** (Dr. Tykwinski) passed his PhD candidacy exam April 9

- **Tony McKnight-Whitford** (Dr. Le) passed his PhD final exam April 12
- **Jack Lee** (Dr. Hall) passed his PhD candidacy exam April 15
- **Rory Chisholm** (Dr. McDermott) passed his PhD final exam April 20
- **Hongchao Zheng** (Dr. Hall) passed his PhD candidacy exam April 28

Dr. Michael Serpe has won a CNC-IUPAC Travel Award to attend **18th International Conference on Polymer Characterization; World Forum on Advanced Materials in Siegen, Germany**. The conference was held April 7-10 where he presented an oral presentation entitled "*Janul Poly(N-isopropylacrylamide) Microgels: Anisotropic Building Blocks for Advanced Materials*". Please see link <http://www.cnc-iupac.ca>

WELCOME TO....

A warm welcome to all of the students working in the Department this summer! Students employed under the **Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP)** are:

- Jade Lam – Dr. Gibbs-Davis
- Lauren Terefenko – Dr. Kiema

Undergraduate students employed under the **International Student Work Study Program (ISWSP)** include:

- Chia Shen Sow – Dr. Hanna
- Xi Wang – Dr. Brown

The remaining undergraduate students working in the Department this summer include:

- Marie Barnes – Dr. Brown
- Kale Edwards – Dr. Veinot
- Jordan Fordyce – Dr. Buriak
- Steve Hughes – Dr. Hall
- Laura Johnston – Dr. Campbell
- Landon Kymson – Dr. Vederas
- Devin Reaugh – Dr. Stryker
- Kyle Sabourin – Dr. Rivard
- Amber Shukaliak – Dr. Veinot
- Alex Spivak – Dr. West
- Alexandra Tang – Dr. Gibbs-Davis
- Zach Wiltshire – Dr. Petersen

Welcome to **Tate Hauger**, a new support staff addition to the research group of Dr. Jillian Buriak! Tate started work on May 1st as the group's Solar Cell Technician.

WEDDING WISHES....

Dr. James Harynuk and **Ms. Erin Collins** were married on May 1st in Ottawa, Ontario. We wish them both a marriage filled with all the right ingredients: a heap of love, a dash of humour, a touch of romance, and a spoonful of understanding!

Congratulations to you both on your wedding!



FAREWELL TO....

Mr. Todd Carter will be leaving his position as a Scientific Glass Blower on May 7th. Todd joined the Department on April 1, 2001 and has contributed his skill and expertise to the Chemistry Department's Glass Shop over the last ten years. Todd and his family are planning to move to Ontario. We wish him and his family all the best!

ANNOUNCEMENTS -- Continued

FAREWELL TO....



Mrs. Christine Otter will retire from her role as Administrative Assistant to Dr. Vederas, as well as support of the Visiting Speaker Lecture Series for the Organic Division at the end of May. Christine first came to the Department as a Temporary Staff Services placement during the period from April 1990 to June 1993. She returned to our Department as a full-time Administrative Assistant in July 1996 after a three (3) year stint in Biological Sciences. At the time of her appointment, Christine was assigned to the Organic and Physical Division, but by October 2001, she was exclusively assigned to Dr. Vederas to support his editorial role to *Organic Letters*, a peer-reviewed scientific journal published by the American Chemical Society, in addition to her administrative support of the division. In reviewing her personnel file, Christine is consistently cited by her faculty colleagues as being the most professional, efficient and accurate secretary they have ever been assigned during their time at the University and for that reason, her services were often sought by other units on campus. We are fortunate that Christine was dedicated and loyal to Chemistry and that she opted to finish out her career in our department. Some interesting facts about Christine: She is trilingual (English, German and French) and during her 14 years of continuous service in the Department, she has not had one sick day!



Joining Christine in retirement is her husband, **Dr. Albin Otter**. After the completion of his PhD at the University of Bern (Switzerland) in 1984, Albin came to the University of Alberta for a postdoctoral fellowship appointment from between 1984 to 1988 with **Dr. George Kotovych**. He stayed on as Dr. Kotovych's Research Associate between 1989 and 1993 as well as taught several sections of CHEM 10X as a Sessional Lecturer during the early 1990's. In 1993, he was hired by the Glycobiology Research Group as a NMR Spectroscopist until 1998, at which point, he became an FSO III when he was hired by the Department as a Biomolecular NMR Specialist. In September 2002, he assumed the role of NMR Laboratory Supervisor upon the retirement of the then supervisor, **Dr. Tom Nakashima**. Albin was promoted to FSO IV in 2004 and in 2005, was awarded the Faculty of Science Service Award. With 50+ publications, as well as innumerable presentations to his name, Albin has made very important contributions to the field of NMR, especially in the area of carbohydrate sciences and glycobiology.

It should be noted that the title of NMR Laboratory Supervisor simply does not amply describe what Albin really is to the Department, which is an NMR maven. Albin is responsible for the planning and management of the

department's multimillion dollar, state-of-the-art Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Facility and he works in conjunction with key faculty members, research associates, students and external users to conduct collaborative or independent research utilizing NMR. He and his NMR team measure approximately 2,500 research samples per year. For those researchers who have worked closely with Albin, they say the following, "Dr. Otter's performance in this position has been truly exceptional. He is one of those rare individuals who combine consummate technical skills with very effective leadership and management. In 30+ years of research, I have not encountered another person who matches Albin's NMR skills, enthusiasm, management capabilities, interpersonal skills and open personality." With statements such as those, it is very obvious that Albin will be sorely missed and his incumbent will have very big shoes to fill!

Quite literally, I wish them both "happy trails" as the Otters have purchased a small camper and intend on travelling extensively during the winter months. Given that both avidly enjoy various sports and outdoor activities, I'm sure that they will be busier than ever enjoying this next chapter of their lives together. It should be noted that the Otters have opted to quietly depart from the Department rather than being lauded at a large departmental event. If you wish to say your goodbyes to them, please drop by their respective areas before May 31st to do so - Christine's office is located in E5-33H and Albin can be found in E3-51A.



PROFILE: Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour

Written by Laura Pham

One would think that Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour should be a name afforded the same reverence and recognition as that of Edison, Copernicus, Einstein, and Newton. This is certainly what the staff and students of St. Jerome Science Academy thought. The Edmonton school has recently named one of their new laboratories after Dr. Armour in recognition of her 'worldly contributions in science'. In fact, their admiration extends beyond official recognition; the elementary students fondly refer to her as their "Science Mom" – a title Dr. Armour wears with the same pride and pleasure of any mother.

Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour was born in Scotland and educated at Edinburgh University. She worked as a chemist for five years before coming to the University of Alberta where, in 1970, she graduated with a Ph.D. in physical organic chemistry. From 1979-1989, she was the Chemistry Department's Supervisor of Undergraduate Organic Chemistry Laboratories. Then, from 1989-2005, she was the Assistant Chair of Undergraduate Student Affairs. "As adviser to the chemistry honours and specialization students, I greatly enjoyed coming to know the students and watching their progress (or occasionally, lack of it) through their program. A number of them, now in graduate school or following a career, still keep in touch. Visiting them while they were doing an internship and meeting their supervisors has left me with many happy memories and some great stories." From 1984-2005, Dr. Armour was Vice-Chair of a committee on Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science and Technology (WISEST) at the University of Alberta with a mandate to take action to increase the proportion of women in decision-making roles in the sciences and engineering. The WISEST workshops reach out to girls as young as 11 years. Dr. Armour says that while it is important to start at an early age to broaden the scope of choices girls will make, providing good role models is also key.



Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour

Dr. Armour has been recognized with numerous national and international awards for her research, teaching, and encouragement of youth into the sciences. Some of the awards include the McNeil Medal of the Royal Society of Canada, a 3M Teaching Fellowship, a Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case, and the Gordin Kaplan award. In 2004, she received the American Chemical Society's award for Encouraging Women into Careers in the Chemical Sciences and was also named an Edmontonian of the Century by the City of Edmonton. In 2005, she was awarded the Montreal Medal of the Chemical Institute of Canada for outstanding service to the profession, an Alberta Centennial Medal, and a Rotary Centennial Service Award for Professional Excellence. In 2006, Dr. Armour was made a member of the Order of Canada.

The Order of Canada was established in 1967 to recognize outstanding achievement and service in various fields of endeavour. It is considered the nation's highest honour for lifetime achievement. The motto for the Order of Canada is *desiderantes meliorem patriam* which translates to "they desire a better country." Dr. Armour

describes the Order of Canada as "extraordinary because it recognizes a wide range of individuals, not only scientists, who have made a difference." While Dr. Armour says that each award has been special in its own way, she adds "the award that is closest to my heart is the Order of Canada - but there are two which are very close runners up. They are the Montreal medal of the Chemical Institute of Canada and the American Chemical Society's Award for Encouraging Women into Careers in the Chemical Sciences. To be chosen for these awards by other chemists was very confirming for me."

More recently, the Beta Sigma Phi organization honoured Dr. Armour with an International Honorary membership. She will be in good company as Lois Hole and Mrs. Diefenbaker were other Canadian women afforded this honor. Dr. Armour has served as the social sponsor for the Edmonton and Area Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi for the past three years, and she will continue in this role for 2010-2011. Their previous social sponsor was Lois Hole. In addition to her duties with Beta Sigma Phi, Dr. Armour is also active within the United Church of Canada and is chair of the Board of St. Stephen's College at the University of Alberta.

Today, Dr. Armour keeps busy as the Associate Dean of Science (Diversity). As for retirement, Dr. Armour states, "I expected to retire when I left the Chemistry Department, and the Dean of Science jokes that he let me retire for eight hours. I am still doing the things I am very committed to - working to encourage our brightest young women to continue in the sciences, complete a Ph.D., to go on to a post doc and then to consider a career in academe (all of the transitions where more of them transfer out than the brightest young men); and to attract highly qualified women to apply for faculty positions in science at the University of Alberta. To support these efforts, we have established a Canadian Centre for Women in Science, Engineering Trades and

Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour -- Continued

Technology, the WinSETT Centre. As long as the Dean sees this work as necessary and important, and I have energy, motivation and enjoy what I am doing, I will continue! Hosting classes to do experiments in chemistry labs and going out to schools - especially St. Jerome Science Academy (I am their Science Mom) still gives me much pleasure. When I thought I was retiring from Chemistry, I agreed to chair the Board of St. Stephen's College on campus, and still fulfill that role, one which is both challenging and energizing and allows me to be a member of a dedicated, thoughtful and stimulating group of people. It is a privilege to continue to be involved in all of these activities."



The Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada with Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour in receipt of the Order of Canada award

What's this Furlough Levy on my Pay Stub?!

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Governors of the University of Alberta and the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) agreeing that University furlough days would be implemented for all support staff covered by the NASA Collective Agreement. It should be noted that the details cited below regarding the furlough levy will only apply if you fall under this agreement. Academic staff hired under the AA:SUA bargaining unit are subject to five (5) furlough days, but the approach to glean the furlough levy will be the same as with support staff.

As defined by the University, a Furlough Day is "a designated day which is a leave of absence without pay". These furlough days are an initiative that was developed and executed in response to a projected 2010-2011 budget gap of \$59 million.

Negotiated Furlough Details

The eight (8) furlough days, or days off without pay, are scheduled as follows:

- July 2, 2010
- November 12, 2010
- December 24, 2010
- December 28, 29, 30, & 31, 2010
- January 4, 2011

The University will not be tracking nor reconciling the furlough levy against furlough days taken or not taken.

The value of the furlough days (which is called the furlough levy) will be 2.98% spread over a twelve (12) month period starting April 1, 2010 and ending March 31, 2011. This levy will be applied to an employee's base salary after the negotiated 3.08% salary increase.

There are clearly defined instances of where the levy will not apply. Some of these exceptions include severance pay, retirement bonuses (only when taken as a lump sum payment), payout of vacation upon termination, and boot

allowances to name a few. In turn, there are also other components of an employee's compensation where the levy will apply. These instances include pay on any leave of absence, retirement bonuses (when taken as pre-retirement vacation), and responsibility pay.

Example Salary Calculation

Now, exactly how is the furlough levy calculated? Following is a sample calculation for a 35-hour work week employee currently earning \$3,535.35 per month (or Grade 7 Step 1 on the salary scale).

Base Salary *	\$3,535.35
Less: Furlough Levy	(105.35)
Salary Before All Deductions	\$3,430.00

* This base salary includes the negotiated 3.08% salary increase

An employee's mandatory deductions (Income Tax, CPP, and EI) will be calculated based on their salary after the furlough levy, while deductions for the PSPP pension plan will be calculated based on an employee's salary before the levy. Using the example above, this means that our employee would be contributing \$321.72 per month to their pension plan, calculated as follows:

Salary Before Levy	\$3,535.35
Salary After Levy	\$3,430.00
2010 Contribution Rate on pensionable salary up to YMPE*	9.1%

$$\$3,535.35 \times 9.1\% = \$312.72$$

* YMPE (Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings) = \$47,200

MORE INFORMATION

For a more detailed description of the Furlough Days for Support Staff, please refer to the "Furlough Days Memorandum of Settlement" which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.hrs.ualberta.ca/Agreements/Support/FurloughMOU.pdf>

Edmonton and Area Corporate Challenge – where work comes to play

May 28-June 12, 2010 – corporatechallenge.ab.ca

My mom and I will be joining the U of A Pedal Pushers in participating in the BIG BIKE for the heart and stroke foundation. I am hoping that some of you may want to join us on June 10. Please see the following website to register. When you register you may register as an individual or join our team (Captain - Gwen Bauer).

<https://secure.heartandstroke.ca/faf/search/searchTeamPart.asp?event=330421&lis=1&kntae330421=80B95C728A9749C0A88B05CC5B42EE8E&supld=217625112&team=3726127>> Traci Grams

Come join our very own Chemistry Corporate Challenge – captain of the horseshoe team, Anita Weiler, challenges you to a game of horseshoes.

"The horseshoe pits at Ellerslie Rec Centre 530 - 71 St are finally open for practice starting Tuesday, May 4th. Practice starts at 7 pm and the cost is \$2. If you haven't been there before the place is a bit tricky to find. The address is 530 - 71 St. You must be on 66 St to access the turn off and it's directly across from the school just north of Ellerslie Rd.

Here is a link to the game rules if you feel like doing some reading.

<http://www.corporatechallenge.ab.ca/DNN4/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=9LGsXxOfVdk%3d&tabid=110&mid=488> I will review everything with our team.

This year the schedule looks like we'll be playing all three of our games on Friday night June 11th. If we advance to the playoffs we will also need to be there on Saturday morning June 12th. If join the team you will have to make the commitment to be available to play on both days.

If you're interested in joining the team I hope to see you on Tuesday, May 11. Let me know if you have any questions."

Get to know your department



Matt Kingston

Hello! Friendly neighbourhood stores guy here. I enjoy long walks along the beach, parachuting into disaster zones with medical aid and rehabilitating underprivileged puppies. I do stand-up comedy Monday to Friday from 9am-5pm in room W1-28. Please tip your waitress, and try the steak! I play guitar, xbox, and heartstrings. My favorite places are Nova Scotia, Wales and Ireland. I was born in Georgetown, Ontario, and I've survived both a high-speed car crash as well as the U of A Science program.



Hayley Wan

I joined the Chemistry Dept Faculty in January 2009 as the Director of Undergraduate Organic Chemistry Laboratories.

I spend my days at work trying to convince undergraduates that Organic Chemistry is actually fun! Outside of work, I like to spend my time in the great outdoors. You can usually find me hiking, snowshoeing or skiing in the mountains! I also enjoy photography and spending time in my art studio painting landscapes and wildlife. Some days, you can find me on a squash court most likely flailing around or running into a wall! If you're interested in some good hiking locations in the mountains or joining in on one of my hiking adventures, you can find me in E1-34.

University of Alberta's Lunch & Learn program

Bring your lunch and join us for these informative sessions. Please register at www.learningshop.ualberta.ca

How to set boundaries and be assertive

Irene Spelliscy, Human Solutions **Wed. May 12, 2010 – CAB 273**

Estate Planning

Jayne Janzen – Office of the Public Trustee
Thursday, May 20, 2010 – CAB 269

Introductory Spin Class

Lisa Workman, Campus Recreation
Thursday, May 27, 2010 – The Revving Room (W-95A, lower level Van Vliet)

Thoughtful of U

...someone has done you a huge favor – want to express your thanks? Or someone has lost a loved one. This website says it all with a personalized e-card...

<http://www.virtualwellness.ualberta.ca/index.aspx?Page=21>

Employment Opportunities

Dalhousie University

Full time limited term instructor required for a three year position July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013. Duties include coordinating, teaching and maintaining the undergraduate organic laboratory program. Please contact Dr. Neil Burford, Department of Chemistry, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S. BeH 4J3 <http://chemistry.dal.ca>

Post doctoral position in Microfluidic chip development

There is an opening for a post doctoral researcher in the Photonics Group at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Toronto. The initial term is one year, with the possibility of extension subject to performance review. The project is scheduled to commence May 1, 2010. Applicant should have earned a PhD in engineering, chemistry or other related disciplines. Interested candidates should email a full CV and a statement of interest to Prof. Aitchison as soon as possible.
Prof. Stewart Aitchison
Dept. of ECE, University of Toronto
35 St. George Street
Toronto, ON M5S 1A4
e-mail: stewart.aitchison@utoronto.ca



Healthy Workplace Tips

Take your bike to work – you'll save on gas, help protect the environment as well as increase your fitness level.

First Annual Chemistry Spring Party Hosted by the CGSS

The Chemistry Graduate Students Society (CGSS) held their First Annual Spring Party on Saturday, May 1st. The party took place at the Twisted Fork State Diner & Lounge. It was a beautiful affair with plenty of food, drinks, and laughter to go around. It was also an opportunity for the CGSS to introduce the new members of their Executive Committee for the 2010/2011 year.

