Shakespeare reaches new heights online

“There’s magic in the web of it.”

—Othello Act II, Scene IV

by Beth Hayson

Shakespeare enthusiasts have a new, powerfully enhanced version of Internet Shakespeare Editions (ISE) at their fingertips—a University of Victoria-based website offering unprecedented access to the plays and a Renaissance library of the life and times of their favourite bard.

The existing ISE website—established as a non-profit organization with the help of UVic’s Innovation and Development Corporation and the McPherson Library—is one of the university’s most popular sites. It receives more than a million hits a month from browsers all over the world.

Last month, UVic English professor emeritus Michael Best and ISE creative director Roberta Livingstone launched a new, enhanced version of the site. It features a virtual “library” of Renaissance resources with improved navigation and two new research tools: a database of “Shakespeare in performance,” featuring materials from theatre archives all over North America; and the “Illuminated Text,” a multimedia function that allows students and scholars to research an archive and resources for each play, including the texts as they were originally published.

“This website gives people an authentic experience of the past through the Internet and is setting a new standard for website publishing,” says Mamie Swanson, head of UVic libraries and a strong supporter of making academic resources available online. “Through this website, UVic is helping to educate thousands of students around the globe, most of whom have never attended a single class at this university.”

The new website was unveiled at UVic’s Maltwood Gallery when Glynis Leyshon, artistic director of the Vancouver Playhouse Company, pulled a virtual “curtain” to expose the new homepage. Afterwards, Best and the website team demonstrated some of the state-of-the-art features of the site, which can be found at ise.uvic.ca/index.html.

The Internet Shakespeare Editions is a non-profit organization based at UVic and supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, UVic, the Innovation Development Corporation and the McPherson Library.

All the resources and tools on the Internet Shakespeare Editions website are provided free of cost. Each play is edited by a leading scholar or team of scholars from around the world.

UVic marine biologist Dr. Verena Tunnicliffe stands on coils of power and fibre optic cable destined for VENUS, the world’s most advanced submersible observatory. The first stage of the UVic-led project is being installed in Saanich Inlet this month. See the full story on page 5.

Celebrate the season at annual reception

UVic President Dr. David Turpin invites the university community to celebrate the festive season at a holiday reception on Wednesday, Dec. 14 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the University Centre cafeteria.

The reception will include presentation of the President’s Distinguished Service Awards, which recognize employees for their outstanding contributions to the university’s learning and working environment.

This year, the awards committee received 15 nominations for the Award for Distinguished Service (honouring up to three individuals or groups of employees) and two for the Team Award for Innovation, which recognizes a team or group for innovations that improve an educational, administrative, or organizational process. Recipients receive a plaque and $5,000 for professional development ($6,000 maximum limit in the case of team awards).

The presentation ceremony begins at 4:15 p.m. and light refreshments will be served.

The governments of Canada and British Columbia have announced their intention to support the establishment of a national chair on aboriginal economic development at the University of Victoria.

The first chair of its kind in Canada, it will be supported by $2 million in federal and $1 million in provincial funding.

Housed in UVic’s business and law faculties, this new chair will serve as a national focus of expertise for the advancement of aboriginal business and economic development, and generate collaboration on measures that can increase the participation of aboriginal people in the regional, national and international economies.

“B.C. has taken a leadership role in working to overcome the injustices of the past treatment of Canada’s aboriginal people, and advancing new economic opportunities for aboriginal communities is critical to achieving that goal,” says Premier Gordon Campbell. “This new chair at UVic is an example of the innovative partnerships we can form at all levels of government and society to achieve our shared goals for closing the social and economic gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians.”

“Canada needs a way to generate new ideas, and to bring together the results of many institutions and organizations that are doing excellent work in the area of aboriginal business and economic development,” says Dr. Keith Martin, MP for Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca in announcing the chair on behalf of Federal Minister of Industry David Emerson. “If we are to find lasting solutions, we must work together as partners to move forward with measures like this one.”
VIKES TAKE TWO MORE NATIONAL TITLES

Whether it was on Edmonton’s Foote Field or Victoria’s Elk Lake, the University of Victoria Vikes were in championship form last month, winning two more national titles to add to the university’s already impressive list of honour.

The UVic women’s soccer team won their first national title last month, blanking the University of Ottawa 2-0 in the CIS championship final on Nov. 13. The team, which had earned silver and bronze medals in their previous two appearances at the national Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) championships, earned a berth in the gold medal game with a 2-1 win over the UBC Thunderbirds.

Vikes defender Carey Gustafson was named tournament MVP and earned a place on the All-Canadian second team. Striker Amelie Mercier was named Canada West all-stars, along with teammates Geoff Martinson, Adrienne Attorp and Christina Finner and Will Moore were selected chosen coach of the year and the second team all-star striker lanee was named rookie-of-the-year in leading UVic in back-to-back Canada West playoff s, but Cole McFarlane was nominated coach of the year and the second team all-star striker lanee was named rookie-of-the-year in 2004.

Florida Armstrong earned a bachelor of science and master of science in civil engineering from the University of Toronto.

Cosmology study suggests Einstein didn’t after all

An international study involving several University of Victoria researchers is creating quite a buzz in the world of cosmology.

The first results from the Super- nova Legacy Survey, co-led by UVic astrophysicist Dr. Chris Pritchard, suggest that dark energy—the mysterious force believed to be driving the expansion of the universe—is not just like famed physicist Albert Einstein said it did more than 80 years ago.

When Einstein was working on his theory of general relativity he added a “cosmological constant” into his equations to explain the presumed static nature of the universe. When the universe was later discovered to be expanding, Einstein retracted the cosmological constant, calling it his “biggest blunder.”

Based on its ongoing study of exploding stars, known as supernovae, the survey team has concluded that Einstein was far off the mark. The team is now suggesting the expansion of the universe is actually within 10 per cent of Einstein’s cosmological constant.

“The existence of dark energy is the single most amazing result from the last 50 years of cosmology,” says Pritchard. “We have the theory that is consistent with the nature of this dark energy of any group in the world, and these measurements are going to get better and better as we accumulate more supernova observations over the next few years.”

The Supernova Legacy Survey is an international collaboration involving about 40 researchers that seeks to discover far supernovae and measure their spectral light to determine distance. This analysis allows the team to make the first precise measurements of the nature of dark energy.

The five-year survey began in 2003 and is the largest observational project of its kind. So far, the team has measured the distance to 71 supernovae that exploded between two and eight billion years ago.

To search for these distant points of light, the team uses a 340-mil lion pixel digital camera known as MegaCam that is attached to the Canada France Hawaii Telescope atop Mauna Kea, Hawaii. To record the spectrum of each faint supernova identified by MegaCam, the team uses some of the largest telescopes on Earth.

Their first results, to be published in the journal Astronomy and Astro-physics, let the most conservative theory of dark energy be that space has an inherent and constant energy density.

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In November, UVic hosted the CIS women’s rugby championship, and the second All-Canadian team. The trico was also named Canada West all-stars, along with teammates Geoff Martinson, Adrienne Attorp and Christina Hoistman.

Vikes women’s field hockey midfielder Alli Lee was named the 2005 Canadian Interuniversity Sport women’s field hockey player of the year, winning the Liz Hoff man Award, her second major CIS major award in as many seasons. The second-year biochemistry/microbiology student was also named.

The announcement is recognition of the university’s commitment to and expertise in innovative programs and services that support Aboriginal students and aboriginal communities, adds Borrows.

Aboriginal chair continued from p.1

... that will have long-term positive impacts for aboriginal people and Canada. ...”

While the chair’s specific activities and how it will be developed, they’ll include: providing a venue for independent and collaborative research in aboriginal economic development; and publishing and sharing knowledge and best practices from which aboriginal economic development experts can benefit.

“Having a chair provides a venue for independent, collaborative research and consolidation of knowledge on aboriginal economic development; and publishing and sharing knowledge and best practices from which aboriginal economic development experts can benefit.”

A national search will be conducted to identify a qualified individual to fill the position. UVic will also establish a forum for aboriginal organizations, business, and others involved in aboriginal economic development to provide advice on the design and implementation of the chair’s activities, research agenda and education programs.

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the universe. About a quarter is invisible with makes up a scant five per cent of Th e matter we humans are familiar universe is a very strange place indeed. A force field that is causing the universe to per cent is “dark energy,” a mysterious trillion calculations later, out popped AS IT SHOULD? Yes, it is—all around us and on a computer screen near you

Ask University of Victoria astrophysicist Julio Navarro what he did during his recent research sabbatical and he’ll fill your head with terms like dark matter, galaxy clusters and black holes.

Of, and he might mention how he helped create the universe. A virtual universe, that is. Navarro is a member of the Virgo consortium, an international team of astrophysicists who earlier this year developed the largest computer simulation ever of the structure and growth of the universe. Known as the “Millennium Run,” the simulation charts how the cosmos may have evolved since the Big Bang 13.7 billion years ago.

The consortium fed current information on the composition of the universe and the basic laws of physics to one of the largest supercomputers in Europe. One month and 500,000 trillion calculations later, out popped a universe that looks very much like our own.

According to current theory, the universe is a very strange place indeed. The matter we humans are familiar with makes up a scant five per cent of the universe. About a quarter is invisible “cold dark matter,” which can only be observed by its gravitational effects on surrounding objects. The remaining 70 per cent is “dark energy,” a mysterious force field that is causing the universe to expand at an ever-increasing pace.

“The amazing thing about the Millennium Run is that it shows for the first time that you can cook up a universe like the one we observe with very simple ingredients, even though we don’t exactly understand the true nature of those ingredients,” says Navarro, who helped conceive and design the simulation. For example, if we don’t include dark energy, we produce a universe that looks quite different from ours. “This tells us our theories are on the right track.”

Simulations such as the Millennium Run are crucial for understanding what the universe is made of, where its structure came from, and how it evolved into the galaxies we see today. When combined with observational studies, simulations provide astronomers with powerful tools for probing the mysteries of the universe.

“Our simulation can guide future observational surveys,” says Navarro. For example, it can indicate where and when the earliest black holes would have appeared, so we can tell astronomers where to point their instruments. Furthermore, we now have a duplicate universe that we can experiment with, instead of passively observing it.

The simulation also raises new questions about the Milky Way galaxy, home to our own solar system. This is why Navarro, a world leader in the study of galaxy structure and dynamics, is working with dark matter scientists on a new project—the Millennium Run—to simulate a single galaxy such as the Milky Way. The simulation will use one of the world’s most powerful academic supercomputers, located in the Netherlands.

“This simulation will enable us to predict with great accuracy the speed, density and direction of the flow of dark matter particles that will wash Earth—and our own bodies—at any particular time,” says Navarro. “This information is invaluable for detecting these subatomic particles, which presumably make up the bulk of the mass of the Milky Way.”

Navarro’s research is funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the B.C. Knowledge Development Fund, the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, and Uvic.

The Big Bang is the primordial explosion that most astronomers think gave rise to the universe as we see it today. The age of the universe is calculated by projecting the motion of galaxies backwards through time. To see movies and graphics from the Millennium Run simulations, go to www.mpa-garching.mpg.de/ Millennium Run press/

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Seating is Limited!

Seating is limited!
EXPLORERS OF THE DEEP

Innovative marine technology developed by UVic engineers will help us all become ocean explorers

by Shannon McCallum

University of Victoria mechanical engineer Colin Bradley has been on the oceans for longer than you think. His team is building specialized equipment for use in oceanographic studies. The team’s main focus is the design of equipment for underwater cabled observatories—two of which are being built virtually on his doorstep.

UVic is the lead institution in the VENUS (Victoria Experiments Network Under the Sea) project and the Canadian leader of the NEPTUNE (North-East Pacific Oceanographic Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments) project. Both involve cabled observatories being installed off the B.C. coast.

The VENUS and NEPTUNE observatories will consist of a network of instruments on the ocean floor. These instruments, connected to shore by cable, will continuously relay measurements, images and sounds in real time to land-based computers, providing researchers with unprecedented amounts of data. The cables will also deliver power and commands to instruments, lights, and remotely operated vehicles.

The deep ocean is an inhospitable place for research. With ocean temperatures just above freezing, crushing pressures and barely a smattering of sunlight, oceanographers depend on engineers like Bradley to build instruments and equipment robust enough to function in these harsh environments.

In one of their latest projects, Bradley and his team have designed an autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV). Research assistant Jeff Kennedy developed the mechanical design and control systems, and graduate student Emmett Gamroth provided the software and electronic components.

These free-swimming, battery-powered vehicles can be customized to carry a variety of oceanographic sensors and instruments. “Underwater vehicles have the potential to be the kind of science that will be conducted with cabled observatories,” says Bradley.

For his next project, Bradley will work with researchers at UVic University to transmit video images from the VENUS site back to the surface. Bradley’s research is funded by CANARIE and the B.C. Innovation Council.

Do you have technology anxiety?

Teaching with technology can present breakthrough moments, but broken-down equipment or fear of failure often prevents instructors from harnessing the power of technology to enhance their teaching style.

The latest in the learning and teaching centre’s instructional Critical Incidents DVD series tackles technology anxiety with "Issues That Bite: Teaching and Instructional Technology."
The DVD, the sixth in the series, contains 10 dramaticizations of situations that can, and do, occur when using technology to teach.

The 10 teaching moments set up learning and teaching incidents that involve instructional technology and the accompanying guide book offers signs for a facilitator using the DVD as an instructional tool to generate discussion about the incidents.

"The DVD is not just for university professors. It’s also useful for any trainer or instructor using high tech equipment," says Yolanda Olivotto, the center's program co-ordinator.

"Issues That Bite" dramatizations include preparing students to use technology, handling equipment failure, and preparing classroom presentations. The DVD and the guidebook cost $25.

Over 600 institutions and organizations have purchased the previous productions in the series which were originally produced on tape. They’re now available on a compilation DVD for $75 (previous purchasers can take advantage of the reduced rate). UVic faculty, staff and students can access this resource for free through the learning and teaching center resource room.

For more information about the DVDs and tapes visit the learning and teaching centre website at web.uvic.ca/terc/index/index.htm. The ability to order the DVDs and tapes online will be part of a new website, expected to be launched in the near future.

The DVD is available for free to the first 50 orders. After that, the tape version will be available for $20.

L-R, Bradley, Kennedy and Gamroth with their underwater vehicle.
VENUS makes a splash
UVic unveils world’s most advanced seafloor observatory

A project led by the University of Victoria in Victoria is about to make oceanographic history. **VENUS**, the world’s most advanced interactive cabled seafloor observatory, is being installed this month in the waters of Saanich Inlet north of Victoria.

The Victoria Experimental Network Under the Sea project pioneers a new approach to observing and studying the oceans. Through the Internet, VENUS’s underwater network of fibre optic cables and instruments will continuously feed measurements, sounds and images from the ocean depths to laboratories, classrooms, science centres and homes around the world.

But VENUS does more than observe. It is interactive, meaning that ocean scientists are no longer bound by the limitations of ship schedules, bad weather, or delayed access to their data. VENUS scientists can operate their instruments and download data online, day or night, in real time.

“Installation of VENUS is a scientific milestone for UVic, for Canada and indeed for the world,” said UVic President Dr. David Turpin at a Nov. 16 reception to showcase VENUS technology. “The event was held aboard the West Venture, a marine cable installation and repair ship docked at Ogden Point.

"VENUS lets us all enter the ocean whenever we wish and opens up a whole new era of ocean exploration,” said Turpin. "It builds on UVic’s recognized strengths in ocean sciences and we’re very proud of the hard work, strong partnerships and innovative thinking that have brought us to this exciting threshold."

VENUS will support two cable arrays. The Saanich Inlet array will extend 4 km into Patricia Bay, and reach depths of 100 meters. It comes ashore at the Institute of Ocean Sciences in North Saanich. Another 40-km array will be installed in late 2006 in the Strait of Georgia near Nanaimo.

Operating 24 hours a day, VENUS will support studies on: long-term ocean change; rules, currents and ocean mixing; fish and marine mammal movements; acoustics; seafloor communities; ocean and seaﬂoor ecology; water quality; seismic activity; seaﬂoor communications and slope dynamics; and plankton behaviour.

Over its 20-year lifespan, VENUS will grow as new instruments develop, new extensions are added, and new questions arise about the ocean. The VENUS scientific community will drive this growth.

VENUS users will include researchers, resource managers and policy-makers, ocean technologists, students, educators, and anyone curious about a world that is largely hidden from view. "We want to get everyone into the ocean and break down the barriers to a world that most people can’t see," says Dr. Verena Tunnelliffe, a UVic oceanographer and project director of VENUS. "If we’re going to make wise decisions as stewards of the ocean, then we all have to see it and to care what happens to it."

Tunnelliffe, who is the Canada Research Chair in Deep Ocean Research, has spent more than 20 years studying the world’s oceans and is a leading authority on deep sea life. She heads the 10-person VENUS team that has spent the last five years planning for the moment the cables are lowered onto the seafloor of Saanich Inlet this month.

"This has never been done before," she says. "We’re the first to create the end-to-end observatory concept. As a scientist you can now interact with the ocean. You can ask it questions, and you’ll get a response.

"From their computers anywhere in the world, VENUS scientists can tell instruments to change measurements or instantly respond to unusual events, such as a storm, an earthquake, or a passing school of fish."

"A scientist in Ottawa can connect a current meter and see real-time data," explains Tunnelliffe. "An engineer in Ireland can change settings on a remotely operated vehicle connected to the array. Or a student in Saskatoon can download acoustic files of whale calls."

The VENUS Project is a testbed for the ocean technology industry and features ocean technological designs developed in B.C. Over its 20-year lifespan, VENUS will generate jobs in information technology, engineering, and research and support services.

The broad goals of VENUS researchers are: full-time monitoring of oceanographic conditions; documentation of ocean change; studying how species adapt in natural and altered conditions; capturing rare and significant oceanographic events; assessing ocean dynamics and stability; and developing new techniques for ocean study.

VENUS is a sister project to NEPTUNE Canada, a seafloor observatory that will install 800 km of cable and instruments off the outer coast of British Columbia, starting in 2007. NEPTUNE Canada is also led by UVic.

Together VENUS and NEPTUNE Canada are building a common data management and archive system to reside at UVic. This archive of continuous, long-term ocean data will be a legacy for future ocean researchers.

Enter the ocean online at www.venus.uvic.ca
Live data from Saanich Inlet is expected to be available in mid-January.

VENUS at a glance

There are five components to VENUS: an array of scientific instruments connected by power and fibre optic cable to a central node; power and fibre optic cable linking the node to shore; a shore station relaying power and two-way communication to the instruments; a data management, archive and distribution centre; and a network operations centre at UVic.

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United Way campaign enters final stretch

At this year’s United Way campaign draws to a close, donations continue to add up and push the total closer to the goal of $220,000.

As of press time, the trial amount of donations collected was more than $180,000, which is more than 80 per cent toward the goal.

“The campaign is going well,” says UVic campus campaign chair Dr. Ron Skelton. “Thousands of people in the Victoria area will benefit from the generosity of our donors, who have each given about 15 per cent more than last year. One group that deserves special mention is the retirees, who contribute through UVic despite being mostly off campus.”

Support from students has been stronger than ever before, adds Skelton, with nearly $10,000 coming in from student societies and online donations.

The Hearts and Hands Craft Fair and raffle baskets full of crafts raised about $1,360. Student Stefan Atalick won the online draw and received over $150 worth of cash cards and gift certificates for campus businesses.

“Through participating in local initiatives like the Quercus project (a Garry Oak meadow restoration project), students are educating local people about the field of restoration while at the same time helping to bring back an endangered ecosystem. This kind of program is a win-win situation.”

The Quercus project can be seen at the Henderson Road entrance to campus, where students and volunteers are working on 74 plots to determine the best growing conditions for native grasses and flowers. Signs describing the details of the project are available on-site and the students are sharing information with local conservation groups.

The CRD also recognized UVic’s water re-use initiative by granting it the Drinking Water Stewardship EcoStar Award. This project, coordinated by facilities management, involves redirecting treated wastewater from the outdoor aquatic facility into toilets and urinals located in the Medical Sciences Building—for a saving of more than two million litres of water every year.

Facilities management plans to introduce this water conservation technology to seven other buildings on campus, helping to save money and the environment.

UVic lauded for environmental excellence

At last month’s annual EcoStar Awards, the Capital Regional District recognized UVic for its excellence in environmental education and water stewardship.

The restoration of natural systems program received the Environmental Education EcoStar Award for its projects aimed at increasing public awareness of the importance of natural systems.

“Receiving this award goes a long way to validate our achievements and confirms that the program is making a real difference for the local community,” says Dr. Val Schaefer, program director.

“That the final day to buy tickets for the iPod mini raffle is Dec. 4, with the draw taking place the next day. The deadline for the other prize draws is Dec. 12. The grand prize for students is an Acer Travelmate laptop from the UVic computer store. New pledgers have a chance to win a Malahat Park Retreat and a $50 Smile Card from Thrifty Foods, and retirees can win a Discovery Coast Pass from BC Ferries.”

For more information and details on all prizes, visit unitedway.uvic.ca. All draws take place Dec. 14.
We have Calendar highlights. There’s also verse written by writing department, a book of and looks at conditions from attention by Dr. Small  Songs and 13 Silences, Dr. Taiaiake. The artifacts examined how drug companies, by Dr. William Carroll. In Wasting: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom, Dr. Taiaiake alidine (indigenous studies) traces the journey of indigenous peoples who have found ways to move beyond colonial identities. There’s also The Lost Millennium: History Timelines Under Siege, written by Dr. Florian Dracu (mathematics and statistics). The book traces the intriguing possibility that our calendar is off by 1,000 years. The Earth’s Blanket: Traditional Teachings for Sustainable Living, by Dr. Nancy Turner, looks at the ecological knowledge and spiritual connection to the natural world that is fundamental to indigenous cultures. For more book ideas, check out the “Books That Matter” catalogue, available in the bookstore. It includes a section featuring works by UVic authors.

Homegrown authors offer stocking-full of holiday reading

Thursday, December 1

Visual Arts Students Open Studios 10 a.m. Fourth-year honours visual arts students open studios. See completed works, as well as those in progress. Visual Arts Arts & Art. 380-9937

Public Administration Seminar 4 p.m. Rethinking the Red Zone in Victoria. Warren Magnusson, UVic, and Serena Kataoka, PhD candidate, UVic. Heckman 112. 721-8066

Friday, December 2

National Day for Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women 11:30 a.m. Members of the UVic community and the public are invited to attend this annual memorial ceremony. Ziggurat near the MacLaurin Bldg. 721-6459

Music 12:30 p.m. Fridays. Music of students in a program for various instruments. MacLaurin B130. 721-7904

Sunday, December 4

Music 2:30 p.m. Tuba Christmas Reprise. Featuring guest soloist Paul Beauchaine, Victoria Symphony. MacLaurin B130. 721-7904

Wednesday, December 7

Graduate Student Centre Brown Bag Lunch Series 11 a.m. Help. I Married an Old Stud. UVic Family Centre. 472-4474


Friday, December 9

Music 7:30 p.m. “Oh Happy Day” A Christmas Concert by the UVic Lieder Singers. MacLaurin B130. Tickets 851/121 721-7330

Sunday, December 18

Music 2:30 p.m. Greater Victoria Youth Orchestra. Yariv Aloni, conductor with guest PRIMA Youth Choir. University Centre Auditorium. Tickets 819/157 671-8480

Winter 2005–06 Registered Office

Calendar items should be sent by 4 p.m. on the copy deadline date shown below to UVic Communications (Sedgewick C149) for T21 4102, e-mail ucom@uvic.ca or entered onto the online calendar (www.uvic.ca/events). For more information call 721-7536.

Publication Date Copy Deadline

Friday, Jan. 6 .......... Monday, Dec. 19

Thursday Feb. 2 .......... Wednesday, Jan. 25

Thursday March 2 .......... Wednesday, Feb. 22

Wednesday April 6 .......... Wednesday, Mar. 29

MKB

Dear Ms. Cameron,

Thank you for your e-mail.

Please find attached a copy of the December 2005 issue of The Ring.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Cameron, General Sales Manager

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LIFE ANNUITIES

Monthly Income Based on $100,000

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Total payout at age 100

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Total 10 year payout

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Total 10 year payout

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Age</th>
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Minimum Payout* $238 $278 $333 $397 $654 $729 $864 $1,229

*Based on current C&B at 4.1%. Sizes and interest depending on investment returns.

Income over 15 years ...... $743 Total 15 year payout ...... $133,802

Income over 10 years .... $1,016 Total 10 year payout ...... $121,906

Income over 5 years .... $1,944 Total 5 year payout ...... $97,669

Income over 10 years .... $1,174 Total 15 year payout ...... $133,802

Minimum Payout* $238 $278 $333 $397 $654 $729 $864 $1,229

*Based on current C&B at 4.1%. Sizes and interest depending on investment returns.

The Ring December 2005 Page 7
by Jessica Gillies

Students know it’s not always easy keeping distracted students in a large class engaged in lectures. But what if there was a way to encourage student participation, give feedback to instructors, and enrich the learning experience all at once?

In the near future, there just may be.

Personal response systems—also known as classroom performance systems or “clickers”—are making their way onto the University of Victoria campus. The clickers look like TV remote controls and allow students to immediately and anonymously respond to questions asked by a professor.

“The technology has been around since the 1980s,” says Mary Sanseverino, a computer science instructor and associate director of information technology development at the learning and teaching centre. “But since the advent of wireless standards, it’s getting cheaper and more manageable.”

Student responses are sent from the clickers to a receiver that connects to the instructor’s computer, allowing access to student answers. Students are heading a group of instructors—including Drs. Penny Coddington (chemistry), Sara Ellison (physics), and Rosalind Canessa (geography)—in a study on the effectiveness of clickers in large first-year classes.

There are many possible applications for the clickers. Professors could use them to find out how well students understand the material at the end of a class. “I hate leaving a class and thinking, ‘How many students understood this?’” says Sanseverino.

With clickers, students can make their opinions heard—silently. The clicker can be registered so the professor can keep track of responses, but the students will never know how their peers are individually responding.

This anonymity has other advantages, especially for students who are reluctant to speak up in class for fear of being wrong. “It’s always the same few students who answer questions,” says Sanseverino. “This is an opportunity for everyone to contribute.”

The clicker also has implications for participation marks. Says Dr. Gori Van Gym, director of the learning and teaching centre:

“A lot of professors try to give some marks for class participation, and it’s almost impossible to do well, particularly in large classes. With the clickers, the instructor can look at how the students responded after the class and give feedback to the students individually. It’s another way of communicating with students.”

Currently, the clicker technology is being used in only a few classrooms across campus—Dr. Herbert Schutte’s first-year economics class, and Dr. Yin Lam’s first-year anthropology class. Drs. Lester Francis Pelton and Tim Pelton, both in curriculum and instruction, are using modified personal digital assistants (PDAs) as clickers that allow students to answer a wider variety of questions, such as mapping the slope of a line.

Clickers can range in price from $5 to $50 US, says Sanseverino, although there can be other costs to the student, such as registration. “These costs vary by company.”

Sanseverino stresses the importance of an early, unified decision on which type of clicker to recommend. The instructors doing the study will report their recommendations to the vice president academic.

“If we don’t take the bull by the horns in January, I think the technology will all be over the map by September. Students will balk if they have to buy free clickers for free different classes. If they could use one clicker for all their classes, and students and professors can see the benefits, I think people will work with the technology.”

New classroom technology just a click away

By Jessica Gillies

Looking for a way to help worthy causes this holiday season? UVic offers a variety of ways for you to do just that.

Consider buying your Christmas tree from the Vikes during their annual tree sale in Centennial Stadium. Starting Dec. 3, the Vikes will be selling B.C.-grown trees Monday to Friday from 12 to 7 p.m. and weekends from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The proceeds will benefit Vikes athletics programs, and the sale runs until Dec. 19. For more information, contact Brent Fougner at 721-8408.

The holiday season can be especially hard on students with families. Donations of non-perishable food items or gifts (wrapped or unwrapped) are appreciated by staff at the UVic Family Centre. They’ll make sure the donations go to families in need.

The centre is also looking for donations of a small deep-freeze, good-quality pots and pans, a food processor, diapers (of all sizes) and wipes, a large area rug, and child-safe side and coffee tables.

The Family Centre is located at 53208-2375 Lam Circle (off Finnerty Rd.) in the Lam Family Student Housing Complex. For more information visit web.uvic.ca/amf. Call 721-6062 or e-mail familycentre@uvic.ca.

Christmas music sounds better on a tuba, and this year fans of the big brass instrument will have two opportunities to catch a TubaChristmas concert. The event, which features musicians from UVic’s public schools, community bands and the military, is now in its 27th year in Victoria.

The TubaChristmas ensemble will perform carols in Market Square downtown on Dec. 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Donations at the event will go toward the Times-Colonist Christmas Fund, which supports families in need.

On Dec. 4 at 2:30 p.m., take in the TubaChristmas reprise recital in UVic’s Phillip T. Young Recital Hall. This performance will feature tuba and euphonium students from the school of music, as well as guest soloist and UVic’s alumn Paul Beauchesne, principal tubist with the Victoria Symphony.

Your donations at this event will benefit tuba and euphonium projects within the school of music. The event is co-ordinated by Eugene Dowling, a senior instructor in the school of music. For more information, contact Jill Michalski at 721-7904 or jill.michalski@uvic.ca.

At campus security, you can help the needy while giving yourself a break. If you pay outstanding parking tickets anytime before Dec. 23, bring a can of food with you and have your fine reduced by $5.

Only one food item counts per ticket, so if you have multiple outstanding tickets you can bring in a can of food for each one to save $5 on each. But if you bring in multiple cans to count toward the same ticket, you’ll be out of luck. Last year, free or six big boxes of food were donated to local food banks.