Taylor to head new oceans corporate entity

The career of Dr. Martin Taylor, vice-president research at the University of Victoria for the last nine years, is about to undergo a sea change.

Taylor has been named founding president and CEO of a new corporate entity being created by UVic to operate and manage its investment in the VENUS and NEPTUNE Canada ocean observatories.

The three-year, renewable appointment begins on July 1, 2007, one day after Taylor steps down as vice-president research. His second term as vice-president was due to end in June 2008.

“Martin has made and will continue to make an outstanding contribution to the UVic research environment,” says UVic President David Turpin. “During his term as vice-president, the university’s research strategy has increased tremendously and external research funding has more than tripled.”

The new oceans entity, as yet unnamed, will be a not-for-profit corporation governed by a board of directors. The relationship between the corporate entity and the university will be detailed in a formal agreement to be approved by the UVic board of governors in early 2007.

The VENUS and NEPTUNE Canada observatories are both led by UVic. The Victoria Ocean Sciences Centre, headed by UVic biochemist Dr. Terry Pearson. He’s receiving $4 million over the next five years to develop a new technology for the identification of molecules critical to the early detection of breast cancer.

The university is a partner in one of five teams across North America recently awarded funding by the US National Cancer Institute to assess leading-edge proteomics technologies relevant to clinical cancer research and practice. The team received $11.4 million in total.

UVic is the only Canadian university involved. The other co-investigators are at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard University in Boston, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, and the Plasma Proteome Institute in Washington, DC.

“Working with researchers from these world-class institutions speaks volumes about the caliber of our proteomics expertise,” says UVic biochemist Dr. Terry Pearson. He’s administering the UVic portion of the grant, to be shared between his lab and the UVic–Genome BC Proteome Centre, headed by UVic biochemist Dr. Christoph Borchers.

Proteomics is the study of the structure and function of proteins, including the way they work and interact with each other inside cells. Technologies such as mass spectrometry are used to detect infinitesimal amounts of proteins in samples of blood or other biological substances.

The team will detect and measure each of 225 blood proteins with a suspected link to breast cancer—known as biomarkers—and use newly developed proteomics techniques to confirm or reject its association with the disease.

“A lot of people over the years have worked on biomarkers for breast cancer, but so far, very few of them work well as diagnostic indicators,” says Pearson. Validation of suspect biomarkers will help indicate where VITP pumps millions into the economy

The University of Victoria-owned Vancouver Island Technology Park (VITP) delivered a major boost to the local and provincial economy in 2005 by generating more than 2,000 jobs and $280 million in direct, indirect and induced revenue.

The good news was included in the first economic impact study of VITP, released on Dec. 1. The report predicts even more growth in the next two years, demonstrating the significance of the high-tech industry to the Vancouver Island economy.

“The technology park is a powerhouse of jobs and opportunities that has more than lived up to our expectations,” said UVic President David Turpin to an audience of business, academic and government leaders, including Gary Lunn, Minister of Natural Resources and Member of Parliament Saanich-Gulf Islands; Murray Coell, Minister of Advanced Education and Minister Responsible for Research and Technology; and Frank Leonard, Mayor of Saanich.

The 53-page report, covering fiscal year 2005, demonstrates that VITP contributed $279.9 million to the local and provincial economy through $160.2 million in direct sales and $25.3 million in municipal and provincial tax revenues. The rest came indirectly through spin-off business, employee and business visitor spending. (A further $18.8 million in federal tax revenues was not included in the $279.9 million total.)

During the same period, VITP companies directly employed 995 people and helped to create additional jobs in the construction industry and with other local companies supplying groceries, clothing, furniture and other goods for a total employment impact of 2,023 jobs.

“High-tech is a vital and sustainable industry,” said Coell. “The Vancouver Island Technology Park is creating jobs and attracting talented people to the Island and BC. These are well-paying, exciting, challenging jobs that provide opportunities for young people in their own province.”

“This study is clear evidence of the tremendous impact that the cutting-edge research and technology taking place in the heart of the Old Town district that Williams helped re-vitalize. UVic President David Turpin honoured that wish, announcing that the university will open a downtown gallery next summer to showcase the collector’s more than 1,000-piece collection.”

SEE VITP P.7

University to open downtown art gallery

When Victoria philanthropist and heritage developer Michael Williams died in 2000, he left virtually his entire estate, including an extensive art collection, to the University of Victoria. His will also expressed a wish that proceeds from that legacy be used to establish a downtown gallery.

Last month, in the heart of the Old Town district that Williams helped re-vitalize, UVic President David Turpin announced that the new gallery would be located at 630 Yates Street, one of the buildings that Williams left to the university.

“Michael wanted to share his passion for art with the people of the city he loved so much,” said Turpin to a crowd gathered on a civic green facing Market Square. “Over the past few years, we have been looking for the right opportunity to achieve Michael’s dream. I’m pleased to say that opportunity has arrived.”

The site for the new gallery, on the comer of Yates and Broad streets, is a structure built in 1950 for the Bank of Toronto. It is considered one of the city’s best examples of “early modern” architecture.

Turpin says the university has respected Williams’ wish that the gallery not bear his name. The new gallery program will be based around his collection of paintings, drawings and sculptures by some of the most renowned artists of the Pacific Northwest.

To view the Williams art collection online, visit www.maltwood.uvic.ca/mcw.

UVic researchers play $4 million role in breast cancer study

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Meet the spiny side of our family tree

That prickly sea urchin you see nestled in rocky crevices along our coastal reserves is more than you might think.

Thrice a year, scientists and engineers to

The study was reported in the Nov.

UVic scores well in
two national postsecondary rankings

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Taylor continued from p.1

Experimental Network Under the Sea (VENUS) and the world’s first interactive real-time portal into the ocean, with live instrument readings and archived data available via the Internet. The first leg was installed in Saanich Inlet earlier this year. A second leg will be installed in the Strait of Georgia in 2007.

NEPTUNE (North-East Pacific Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments) is a $250-million joint US-Canada venture to lay 3,500 km of powered fibre-optic cable and instruments off BC, Washington and Oregon. It will be the world’s first regional cabled ocean observatory. The Canadian segment, managed by NEPTUNE Canada, will consist of an 800-km loop of cable-linked seafloor laboratories in the deep ocean off BC. It will be installed in 2007-08.

As president and CEO of the new ocean entity, Taylor will be responsible for providing leadership and vision to the scientific and social goals of NEPTUNE and VENUS. It’s a role for which he is highly qualified, says Tinsley.

In his new role, Taylor will continue to work closely with the directors of the VENUS and NEPTUNE Canada projects. Drs. Verena Tinschke and Chris Barnes. Taylor came to UVic from Mc- Master University, where he chaired the Department of Geography and headed the Institute of Environ-

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The new technologies will be applicable to NEPTUNE Canada (the North-East Pacific Time-series Undersea Networked Experiments) project, also led by UVic.

The two grants were part of a national CFI funding announcement made earlier this week. The CFI is an independent corporation created by the federal government to strengthen the research capacity of Canadian universities and research institutions to carry our world-class research and technology development.

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The microscope will take two to three years to build, in partnership with the private sector. It will be used by a wide range of researchers across Canada and around the world to investigate new materials in areas as diverse as manufacturing, electronics, biotechnology, fuel cell technology, construction, and defense.

“This microscope will be a unique instrument that will put Canada at the forefront internationally in research focused at the nanoscale level,” says Herring.

The second CFI grant, totalling $392,848, goes to Colin Bradley, also in the mechanical engineering department, for the establishment of an ocean technologies test bed. The sea-

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Still time to give as United Way campaign wraps up

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

At press time, the total amount of donations collected was more than $204,740, which is more than 93 per cent toward the goal.

“We’re very pleased with this year’s campaign,” says UVic campus chair Dr. Penny Coldung.

“More people gave this year and donors gave more than in the past. Each donation gets a long way toward making a difference in the community of Greater Victoria.”

This year, 92 employees became new donors and 1,491 became “lead- ers,” which involves giving a donation of more than $500.

Colding notes that several em- ployee groups experienced a large jump in the number of donors. In particular, the number of donors in CUPE 951 increased by 50 per cent, in the Professional Employee Association by 40 per cent, and in the Faculty Association by 30 per cent.

Colding attributes the campaign’s success to a lively kick-off weekend, dedicated volunteers, one-on-one canvassing in each department, and a prize giveaway to a different donor every day.

While UVic’s campaign officially ended Dec. 1, the United Way of Greater Victoria will continue accepting donations after the deadline.

Yet another fundraiser is planned for this week when co-op education hosts a gingerbread house silent auction with proceeds going to the United Way.

For more information or a pledge form, visit unitedway.uvic.ca or contact Colding at 721-7157 or psocol@uvic.ca.

Flu shot... check!

by Melanie Groves

One of the season’s worst rainstorms didn’t stop 673 UVic employees from rolling up their sleeves and taking advantage of the one-day influenza immunization clinic on Nov. 15.

The emergency pandemic plan- ning exercise was one of the first of its kind in Canada, and attracted keen observers from several health and emergency services agencies, including the Provincial Emergency Program and Department of Na- tional Defence.

“The exercise was a great suc- cess,” says UVic emergency planner Daphne Donaldson. “After this clinic, the university is now in a much better position to respond during a real pandemic.”

Donaldson co-ordinated the exercise with a team of employees drawn from across campus, including the departments of Occupational Health, Safety and Environment, Nursing, Health Services, Campus Security, Athletics, and Communications. Community partners included the Vancouver Island Health Author- ity, the BC Ambulance Service and the municipalities of Saanich and Oak Bay.

Health Services employee Brie- rna Lamy noted that “it was really inspiring to work with people from such different areas on campus to pull together a successful exercise like this.”

More than 50 students and staff volunteered in a variety of roles to keep the clinic running smoothly. Nursing students not only staff ed the injection stations, but also cre- ated and administered a survey that will provide valuable demographic information about participants.

If you missed the one-day clinic, Health Services offers influenza im- munizations at a cost of $20. Call 721- 8492 for more information.

Dog evolution provides update to Darwin’s theory

by Suzanne Connell

Did the hormonal rhythms of cer- tain wolves contribute to their rela- tively fast evolution to domesticated dogs?

That’s the basis of a UVic research- er’s theory that would help explain how species form. “Th yroid hormones may play a significant role in evolution,” says anthropologist Dr. Susan Crockford who specializes in archaeozo- ology—the study of how humans and animals interact over time.

“While genes play a major role in evolution, they’re also influenced by thyroid hormones which control many species and general body func- tions, including behaviour.”

In her new book Rhythms of Life: Thyroid Hormone and the Origin of Species, Crofckford applies her theory to the evolution of the dog. Agree- ing with many researchers that dogs evolved from a wolf ancestor relatively quickly and without direct human interference, Crockford contends that certain wolves evolved into dogs because of their specific rhythm of thyroid hormone production.

These wolves had hormone pat- terns that made them more stress- tolerant and more likely to colonize in early human settlements. After several generations of interbreeding, the offspring of these stress-tolerant wolves acquired the physical and behavioural characteristics of dogs instead of wolves.

Crockford applies this model to many other speciation events, includ- ing the evolution of brown bears to polar bears and the series of specia- tion events that led to the creation of modern humans.

Crockford’s theory will be show- cased in a new PBS documentary called “Dogs that Changed the World,” scheduled to air as a two-part Nature special in spring 2007. For more information about Crockford’s book visit www.rhythmsoflife.ca.

Don Lowell (Facilities management) gets a shot in the arm from his daughter, nursing student Gillian.

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By Melanie Groves

The Ring December 2006

The Coolest

Milk 2 Go!

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Help shine the spotlight on your colleague's research

The university is seeking nominations for its 2007 Craigdarroch Research Awards. The annual awards—named after Craigdarroch Castle, home to the university’s predecessor institution, Victoria College—were established in 2003 to recognize excellence in research. Awards are presented in four categories: the Gold Medal for Career Achievement; the Silver Medal for Excellence in Research; the Award for Societal Contribution; and the Award for Research Communication. The deadline for nominations is Jan. 31. Winners will be announced at awards event this spring. For award and nomination details, visit www.uvic.ca/research/craigdarroch/.

Parking tickets reduced for food

Campus Security Services is once again helping out the Food Bank and giving campus parking visitors a break. Each outstanding campus parking ticket paid between now and Dec. 31 will be reduced by $5 if the payment is accompanied by a donation of a non-perishable food item for local food banks. Only one item per ticket is permitted. This is the sixth year the program has been offered. In 2005, half a dozen big boxes of food donations were collected for distribution. Parking fees can be paid at Campus Security Services from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. For more information call 721-6811.

Calendar takes you down the garden path

The Finney Gardens 2007 Calendar is on sale now, the perfect gift for the gardener on your shopping list. The sixth edition of the calendar brings you more of the colourful splendour of the campus gardens, from season to season. By purchasing the calendar with its month-by-month photographs, expert commentary and thoughtful quotes, you will be contributing to the future enhancement of the Finney Gardens. The calendar costs $19.95 and is available at the UVic Bookstore, Munro’s Books, Bolen Books and many other local retailers.

CUFAC/BC seeks award nominations

The Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFAC/BC) wants your nominations for its annual Academic of the Year and Career Achievement Awards. If you know someone who has been doing outstanding research or scholarly work that contributes to their community, nominate them today. To learn more about CUFAC/BC awards or to download nomination forms, visit www.cufacbc.ca/award. Nominations are due by Feb. 5.

Common household chemical may pose health risk

An antibacterial agent used in common household items such as soaps, toothpaste, processed food, and clothing represents a potential health risk to human hormone action, says a new study co-authored by a University of Victoria researcher.

The study, published recently in Appl. Environ. Microbiol., examines the effects of the antibacterial agent known as triclosan on the development, or metamorphosis, of tadpoles into frogs. The study showed that tadpoles exposed to levels of triclosan commonly found in the environment, frog metabolism, exerts a strong effect on thyroid hormones and their ability to direct the genes responsible for frog metamorphosis. This is the same concentration of triclosan found in 85% of waterways tested across the U.S. in another, recent study.

Triclosan is also being detected in human breast milk, notes Helbing. “These levels are in the general range of what we tested, so triclosan may be having an impact on babies during a vulnerable time when thyroid hormones are important in their development.”

“Thyroid hormones and the mechanisms by which they affect cells are highly conserved from frog to mammal,” says Dr. Carson Helbing, a UVic molecular biologist. “It’s highly likely that what affects frogs could affect mammals, even humans.”

Triclosan is used in a wide variety of products, including clothing, food, personal care products, and some plastics to make them more bacteria-resistant. It is present in municipal effluents, is persistent in the environment, and accumulates up the food chain.

The study found that as little as one-millionth of a gram per litre of triclosan interferes with thyroid hormones and their ability to direct the genes responsible for frog metamorphosis. This is the same concentration of triclosan found in 85% of waterways tested across the U.S. in another, recent study.

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Helbing hopes this study will spur further research into how low doses of triclosan might be affecting human and wildlife health. “Given that there’s already concern over the indiscriminate use of this product and the promotion of resistant bacteria, it would seem prudent to limit its use to those products where it’s really needed.”

REALLY BIG PURCHASING POWER.

When you’re purchasing for your department, you need to make the most of your money.

For three years, we’ve been official suppliers to UVic, helping departments stock up at budget-stretching prices. Need help? Talk to Mike, our super UVic Account Manager.
A new study conducted in seven Canadian cities revealed that prescription painkillers known as opioids are becoming Canada's leading street drug. The findings raise questions about the current focus of Canada's drug control policy and treatment programs.

"Our study suggests that heroin use has become an increasingly marginal form of drug use among illicit opioid users in Canada, especially outside Vancouver and Montreal," says Fischer. "Our study suggests that heroin use has become an increasingly marginal form of drug use among illicit opioid users in Canada, especially outside Vancouver and Montreal."
Breast cancer study continued from p.1

future diagnostic efforts should be concentrated.

Of the thousands of different proteins in our blood, some are abundant, others are very rare. “In many cases, we’re trying to find extremely low-abundance proteins coming from a cancer cell,” says Pearson. “The technology we use must be able to detect those molecules and identify them with ultra-sensitive mass spectrometry.”

The project will use an experimental proteomics technique patented by the Protein Proteome Institute and developed in collaboration with UVic over the last three years. It uses antibodies to “capture” fragments of the target protein from blood plasma, and mass spectrometry to confirm their identity and measure their concentrations.

Pearson is an internationally recognized expert on the use of antibodies and mass spectrometry for protein detection. Borchers is one of the world’s leading protein chemists and a pioneer in the use of mass spectrometry. The UVic-Genomics BC Proteomics Centre, located at the Vancouver Island Technology Park, is the longest-running protein service and research facility in Canada. It houses seven mass spectrometers— instruments so sensitive they can identify hundreds of molecules from a single human fingerprint and so specific they can distinguish between two molecules that differ by a single atom.

“We’ve already shown that our technology and equipment are sensitive and specific enough to detect breast cancer proteins from a single cell or as little as one-twentieth of a biopsied sample,” says Borchers. “This grant will make our centre one of the world’s leading laboratories in the development of clinical diagnoses for early disease detection.”

This project is looking at breast cancer proteins, but the same technology has potential for other cancers, infectious diseases and even organ failures, says Pearson. “It’s too early to tell when this work will translate into new diagnostic tests, but it’s an exciting start and the most significant new approach to disease diagnosis in decades.”

Smith named Trudeau Foundation mentor

Dr. Gordon Smith, executive director of UVic’s Centre for Global Studies and a professor of political science, in June was named a highly accomplished Canadians recently named Trudeau Foundation Mentors.

The Trudeau Foundation selects several talented Canadian’s mentors each year to work closely with outstanding doctoral candidates in the social sciences and humanities fields who have been awarded Trudeau Scholarships.

“Working with young scholars is one of the most rewarding aspects of my career,” says Smith. “The idea is not that you replace a thesis advisor but that you provide a different kind of advice looking 5-10 years out.”

Smith has already started meeting with a PhD student at Columbia University. He recommends mentoring candidates at UVic to apply for Trudeau Scholarships, which provide $35,000 plus $15,000 for travel for each scholar.

The mentorship and scholarship program is one part of the foundation’s aim to create a neutral forum to address crucial societal issues and to foster a dialogue between scholars and policy-makers in the arts, community, business, government, the professions, and the voluntary sector.

Smith has served as an advisor to UVic. Smith chairs the board of governors of Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC), one of the world’s leading institutions in the generation and application of new knowledge to meet the challenges of international development.

Vikes enjoy successful season

By Pete Lewis

With classes ending for the December break, the Vikes varsity teams are also winding down the first half of their seasons.

Success has been the theme so far. The men’s golf team kicked things off by winning their third Canadian University/College Championship in the past four years back in June.

Five-year studio-athlete Todd Halpen finished second overall in the event.

On the water, the men’s and women’s rowing teams participated in the Canadian University Rowing Championships in St. Catharines, Ontario. The men’s boats took second place, with the women’s side finishing third.

The 10-time CIS champion women’s field hockey team had a chance to make it 11, playing in the championship final at UBC in early November. After going 1-0-2 against the host T-Birds through the regular season, they fell short in their final of advicing losing 5-4, still earning the CIS silver medal.

The following weekend, UVic hosted the top women’s source teams in the country for the CIS Soccer Championship. A tough 1-0 loss in the quarterfinal play-off knocked the Vikes out of medal contention.

Meanwhile, in Quebec City, the men’s and women’s cross-country teams ran in sub-zero weather at their CIS Championship. Geoff Martinson’s eighth-place finish helped the Vikes pick up the runner-up medal, while the women’s team finished 10th.

In the pool, the Vikes are ramping up for their season. Mackenzie Downing has already hit her stride, picking up three golds in the 50-, 100- and 200-metre butterfly events at the Bell Grand Prix. Also, Matt Pariselli was awarded the Victor Davis Memorial Award for up-and-coming swimmers.

On the hardwood, the men’s team was 10-0 in league play leading into its final game before the break, but lost a close match 78-73 to undefeated arch-rivals, the UBC Thunderbirds. The women’s team has battled injuries in the first half, but sits 7-4 at the break.

Topping off the first half of the season was the men’s rugby team. The Vikes used a last-second play against the Castaway-Wanderers to earn a 25-23 win and the Vancouver Island Rugby Union Island Championship.

For all your Vikes information, visit www.govikesgo.com.
A family connection remembered

by Beth Haystorm

During the last 100 years, Canadians have patented more than a million inventions for which trial additions of their work on the BC Statistics employment impact model. The students’ work was supervised by Anthony Gorenstein, a UVic business professor and director of the faculty’s graduate programs.

VITP, located on 35 acres in Saanich, is a facility to accelerate the transfer of technology from research labs to the marketplace. It represents the greatest concentration of high-tech companies and workers on Vancouver Island.

Several of the 28 current VITP tenants—a cluster of fuel cell, new media, wireless, life sciences, biotech, ocean technology and information communications technology companies—got their start at UVic. UVic’s graduates or employ UVic co-op students.

The economic impact study is available for download at www.vitp.ca.

Funding continues IDC expansion

When VITP announced the results of its first economic impact study on Dec. 1 Federal Minister of Natural Resources and Saanich-Gulf Islands MP Gary Lunn was among those on hand to praise the technology park for its employment creation and revenue generation.

Lunn noted that VITP plays a vital role in supporting more efficient transfer of new technology from university labs to the marketplace. UVic’s Innovation and Development Corporation (IDC) provided several current VITP companies with assistance in commercializing their research.

IDC expanded its services earlier this year to four other Vancouver Island institutions, thanks to $1 million in federal funding for the Vancouver Island Technology Transfer Centre. Lunn announced a further $186,500 in funding through Western Economic Diversification Canada to continue the program, through which IDC offers technology transfer and commercialization services to Camosun College, Royal Roads University, Malaspina University-College and North Island College.

Three generations of the Finnerty family gathered at Finnerty Gardens this fall to unveil a plaque in memory of their pioneering ancestors who farmed the land that is now the University of Victoria.

The Finnertys were among the earliest settlers and farmers in the Mount Tolmie area in the 1860s and ’70s. In the 1890s, Mike and Mary Ann Finnerty, along with John and Hanna Finnerty, ran a successful orchard and dairy farm on land that is now the UVic campus. Two apple trees from the family orchard still stand in the quad just south of the Commerce Building.

The Finnerty name is ever-present at UVic. Finnerty Road is the northern entrance to the campus, fronted by Finnerty’s Coffee bar. Finnerty Gardens is a beautiful oasis on the south end of the campus.

David Pollock (BE’70), great-grandson of John and Hanna Finnerty, established the Annie Finnerty Bursary in the Faculty of Education and is a friend of the Finnerty Gardens. Many descendants of this pioneer family are UVic alumni.

Budding Einsteins and closet McCoys wanted

by Beth Haystorm

The contest, sponsored by Telus, offers $20,000 worth of prizes in various categories, including best invention, best software concept, best sports concept and best high school invention. In addition to the judges’ picks, contestants may also opt to be eligible for a “people’s choice award.”

Anything goes, well almost anything. IDC contest rules clearly state: “No time machines—unless they’re working models.” Clearly they would have to be the real McCoy.

“Lunn,” says Brent Sterng, business development manager of IDC, whose mandate is to help student and faculty inventors with the process of taking viable ideas to the marketplace.

“We’re really looking forward to seeing the ideas come in, and who knows, we may just help patent some of them after the contest.”

For contest details see www.idc.invention.com.

When is the next Ring?

Calendar items should be sent by 4 p.m. on the copy deadline date shown below entered into the online calendar (www.uvic.ca/events). For information call 721-7636.

Thursday, December 7
Sessions in Spirituality 9 a.m.
Seven Cuss Walk the Labyrinth.

Thursday, December 7
Music 11:30 a.m.
Fridaysmusic.
School of music students in a program for various instruments.
MacLaurin B135, 721-7904.

Friday, January 5
Music 12:30 p.m.
Fridaysmusic.
School of music students in a program for various instruments.
MacLaurin B135, 721-7904.

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VITP economic impact

transfer activity at VITP is having on communities on Vancouver Island and beyond,” says Tarpin. “The anticipation of continued economic growth in the future supports the case for a significant expansion of the VITP economic impact study.”

UVic’s Innovation and Development Corporation (IDC) would like to hear of new inventions, and in doing so, we have been able to generate a community within VITP that is both knowledge-rich and innovative.”

“The success of the Vancouver Island Technology Park is directly correlated with our ability to attract great companies, but even more importantly, their people,” says Dale Gam, VITP vice-president. “Our investment lies in the bright individuals of these companies, and in doing so, we have been able to generate a community within VITP that is both knowledge-rich and innovative.”

The economic impact study was prepared by UVic students Marian de Montey and Amanda Wright for a collection of works highlighting Mexican and BC landscapes. Malwood Art Museum and Gallery.

A family connection remembered

by Beth Haystorm

During the last 100 years, Canadians have patented more than a million inventions for which trial additions of daily life as basketball, standard time, snow-blowers, garbage bags and instant mashed potatoes.

Among them, the famous Elijah McCoy invented and sold 57 different devices, earning himself the phrase “the real McCoy.”

Now it’s your turn. Whether you have invented the world’s best mousetrap or a way of putting Matthew McConaughey-style dimples on your boyfriend’s chin, UVic’s Innovation and Development Corporation (IDC) would like to hear from you.

Sedgewick C149, fax 721-8955, e-mail ucom@uvic.ca) or UVic Communications (Sedgewick C149, fax 721-8955, e-mail ucom@uvic.ca) or UVic Communications (Sedgewick C149, fax 721-8955, e-mail ucom@uvic.ca) or UVic Communications (Sedgewick C149, fax 721-8955, e-mail ucom@uvic.ca). When is the next Ring?

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Dr. Richard Ring, Professor Emeritus in biology, is the 2006 winner of the Gold Medal for Outstanding Achievement from the Entomological Society of Canada. The award recognizes his broad legacy to entomology in Canada, particularly in his work on the physiology and ecology of Arctic insects and biodiversity in old-growth temperate rainforests, and extensive involvement in graduate education and scientific leadership. Over 38 years, Ring has taught more than 16,000 biology and entomology students, originally developed all the department's entomology courses, and was the driving force behind biology's co-op program. He's a past president of the Entomological Society of Canada and is currently serving (for the third time) as president of the Entomological Society of BC.

Dr. David Sinton (mechanical engineering) has won the Douglas R. Carbon Medal for Research Excellence from CMC Microsystems. The award, which consists of a medal and $5,000 cash prize, recognizes excellence in the application of microsystems or related technologies in Canada. Sinton's area of expertise is microfluidics—the study and application of fluid flow and heat transfer phenomena in microstructures. CMC Microsystems is a federally incorporated, non-profit corporation that offers products and services in microelectronics, microfluidics, photonics/optoelectronics and embedded software.

It’s back to the future for Eric Jordan, who is returning to UVic to become executive-in-residence in the Faculty of Business. Jordan graduated from UVic in 1999 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. Along with fellow student David Manning, he went on to found PureEdge Software, which provided a secure system to transfer legal documents electronically. Jordan was president and CEO of the incorporated, non-profit corporation that offers products and services in microelectronics, microfluidics, photonics/optoelectronics and embedded software.

Linguistics chair Dr. Leslie Saxon has been appointed the 2007 president of the Society of the Indigenous languages of the Americas. The society was founded in 1981 as the international scholarly organization representing American Indian linguistics. Its roughly 900 members are interested in the scientific study of the languages of the native peoples of North, Central and South America. The linguistics department is a partner in UVic’s certificate program in Aboriginal language revitalization. Faculty research includes working with Maya and Vancouver Island Aboriginal language preservation and revitalization.

Christine Welsh (women’s studies) recently accepted Amnesty International Film Festival Gold Audience Award for her National Film Board documentary “Finding Dawn.” The Metis filmmaker documents the experience of Canadian Native women from Vancouver’s downtown east side, northern BC and Welsh’s home province of Saskatchewan. “I made the film to try to put a human face to the epidemic of missing and murdered Native women across Canada, to make the connection between the ‘missing women’ and the pervasive violence that Native women experience in this country on a daily basis, and to show that stopping that violence is everyone’s responsibility,” she says.

Christine Welsh

by Valerie Shore

Taxes on reduced-alcohol beer, wines and spirits should be lowered to encourage healthier consumer choices, says a new study by the Centre for Addictions Research (CARBC) at the University of Victoria.

The study, funded by Health Canada, examines the country’s alcohol tax system and recommends a number of ways to protect the health and safety of Canadians through “discriminating and purposeful” reform of liquor taxation and pricing policies.

It notes that the proven link between alcohol consumption and risk of injury and chronic disease, there are currently no tax incentives in place for Canadians to choose lower alcohol beer, cider, wine-based or spirit-based products. “A 3.5 per cent beer is taxed the same amount as a 7 per cent beer,” says UVic psychologist and CARBC director Dr. Tim Stockwell, who co-authored the report with research associates Juli Leng and Jodi Sturge. “In fact, the rates of taxation per standard drink are substantially higher on lower alcohol varieties than on high-strength beverages.”

In other words, weaker drinks attract higher rates of taxation than strong drinks. “This is directly counter to what is considered healthy public policy involving alcohol,” says Stockwell.

In addition, the market for lower-alcohol products—those between 2.5 and 4 per cent alcohol by volume—is significantly under-developed in Canada. “It’s no surprise that beers below 4 per cent alcohol constitute only 0.15 per cent of beer sales in BC,” says Stockwell. “Find it’s almost impossible to find lower-alcohol beers on the province’s liquor store shelves.”

Contrast that with Australia, where taxes are reduced on lower-strength beers. Ten per cent of that country’s beer sales are between 2.5 and 3.5 per cent alcohol, and there are almost 40 varieties to choose from. Alcohol-related deaths in Australia are declining, whereas the rates of consumption and alcohol-related injuries and health problems are rising in Canada. An estimated 5,000 Canadians die prematurely every year from alcohol abuse.

The study also notes that most liquor taxes across Canada aren’t linked to the cost of living. “This allows taxation rates to rise over time and contribute to lower prices, which leads, potentially, to higher consumption,” says Stockwell.

The study makes a number of recommendations to reform the alcohol tax structure, including: apply tax to alcohol content, not retail price or volume of beverage; introduce tax incentives for lower alcohol content beverages; create special levies on higher strength products; link taxes to inflation to prevent declines in real alcohol prices over time; and earmark some tax revenues for alcohol treatment and prevention services.

CARBC is a research centre of the University of Victoria in partnership with UBC, UNBC, SFU and Thompson Rivers University. The study report, “Alcohol Pricing and Public Health in Canada” is available online at http://carbc.uvic.ca/Publica- tions.htm.

Stockwell is a member of a national alcohol strategy working group co-chairs by Health Canada, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, and the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission. It includes representatives from federal and provincial governments, non-governmental organizations, researchers, addictions agencies and the alcohol beverage and hospitality industries.

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