Poetry meets product

BY DALE BARBOUR
The Bulletin

The proof is in the product.
And for second-year environmental design students those products include everything from tables, to chairs to silverware holders. The students showcased their studio work at the Container Show on April 14, presenting the results of a six-week long studio that had focused on producing a household object.

It was the act of creating something that made the studio particularly special.

“It’s interesting because we had the option of doing any design for a household object. So the possibilities were endless,” environmental design student Jassa Sidhu said.

The challenge was picking just one product.

“We were supposed to show different iterations of designs. So at the start we picked three different designs and worked it down to one. This was the one I thought would work best,” Sidhu said, pointing towards a product that can sit vertically to act as a nighstand or lay horizontally to act as a coffee table.

Marie Carey, who eventually built a silverware holder that owes as much to aesthetics as it does to practicality, went through the same creative hand wringing.

“It was a lot about process work, sketching and sketching wracking your brain and trying to come up with something new. You’re trying to invent something. I spent a lot of time going in circles with different designs and you kind of just have to stick with your gut,” Carey said.

“We wanted the students to be able to take everything that they learned throughout the year and compile it into one project,” studio instructor Kim Wiese said. Wiese, along with fellow instructor Geoff Garcia, developed the studio project.

“We wanted them to take their project and get it made. So by taking it to a fabricator they learned all of the difficulties that come with that,” Wiese said.

See SHOW/P. 2

Diet matters

Eating beans and peas every day is not only good for you; it can help fight cardiovascular disease.

A new clinical study by researchers at the Canadian Centre for Agri-Food Research in Health and Medicine (CCARM) shows that daily consumption of pulses – beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas – leads to major improvements in blood vessel function in individuals with peripheral arterial disease (PAD), a condition in which blood flow to the limbs is reduced. Study findings were presented this week at the Experimental Biology conference in New Orleans.

Over 10 million people in North America suffer from PAD and many more are undiagnosed. PAD is a form of atherosclerosis, a progressive disease that leads to narrowing and hardening of the blood vessels in the legs. PAD causes pain, cramping or numbness when walking and, in severe cases, can lead to amputation. The clinical study showed that eating half a cup of pulses a day for eight weeks resulted in significant improvements in arterial function such as increased blood flow and decreased arterial stiffness.

“Eating pulses brings back that arterial flexibility and may actually reverse the disease process,” explains CCARM team leader Peter Zahradka, who conducted the study with human nutritionist Carla Taylor and vascular surgeon Randy Guzman. All three are researchers at St Boniface Hospital and professors at the U of M. “We were astonished when we saw the results – the improvement in vessel function through diet was much greater than our best expectations.”

Regular pulse consumption also reduced the body mass index of study participants and significantly reduced circulating total and LDL cholesterol levels. Study findings also showed that regular pulse consumption increased the dietary intake of fibre, folate, Vitamin C, iron, zinc, potassium and protein.

“The study tells us that by making a few simple changes in your diet, you can improve your health significantly, potentially reducing the need for expensive pharmaceuticals,” says Taylor. “Pulses are a true functional food – they may offer significant protection against cardiovascular disease, are readily available and the amount can be easily integrated into an everyday diet.”
In The News

University of Manitoba members are always making news – demonstrating the university’s impact on the community. Here’s a look at the stories and headlines that show how U of M faculty and staff impact the world around them.

Cultural shift excludes Bible
April 10, 2009
Globe and Mail

The Bible is losing its significance as a cultural touchstone with younger people, notes a recent Globe and Mail feature that includes comments from University of Manitoba English professor Dennis Cooley, who has been referencing the Bible in his classroom for over 30 years.

Bad economy = more zombies
April 17, 2009
Victoria Times Colonist

An article examining the correlation between the economy and the appearance of zombies in movies includes comments from David Annandale who teaches film and literature at the University of Manitoba. “With all the anxiety surrounding what’s going on economically, people are realizing how easily they could become one of the destitute, the unfortunate. They’re one paycheque away from becoming a zombie,” muses Annandale.

Students win eco award
April 14, 2009
Canadian Architect

Canadian Architect noted the achievement of three University of Manitoba master’s students in city planning who received a cheque for $25,000 from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for a proposal they wrote on urban sustainability. Students Chris Baker, Kaeley Wiseman, and Richard Mahle were one of four Canadian university teams to win TD’s $100,000 Go Green Challenge.

EpiPen accidents
April 13, 2009
 Reuters

The media took notice of a recent study, led by researcher Dr. F. Estelle Simons, pediatrics/immunology, showing that accidental injections of epinephrine using autoinjectors appears to be a growing problem.

Headline News

Where else has the U of M been making news? Here’s a look at just a few of our headlines over the past few weeks.

• Jazz fundraiser hopes to raise $6,000, Winnipeg Free Press, April 13, 2009, notes the efforts of Rayannah Kroeker, a 19-year-old second-year student in the University of Manitoba music faculty’s jazz studies program, and organizer of an upcoming fundraiser.

• “Battle erupts over B.C. funding for eye treatment,” Globe and Mail, April 13, 2009, includes comments from Arthur Schaffer, director of the University of Manitoba’s Centre for Professional and Applied Ethics.

Show blends utility and art

From Page 1

“If their projects weren’t properly articulated then they would have some problems with their fabricators,” Wiese said. And some did run into challenges.

“Some of them had to pay their fabricators twice to complete the project because they didn’t get the drawings right the first time,” Garcia said.

“That was tough,” Carey agreed. “I definitely had to change my design a little bit to what acrylic is capable of doing.” She also did some of the hands-on work herself in an effort to capture the artistic curls and curves that he project demanded. In the end all the effort was worth it.

“It’s amazing. I don’t think I’ve ever been so happy with something I’ve produced. Everyone is giving me positive feedback,” Carey said. In fact there was a lot of positive feedback being heard at the show.

“We had the opportunity to work with Winnipeg designer Craig Smith – he’s one of the best industrial designers in Canada – and he was very interested in the marketing angle. He walked me through a series of projects that he said were entirely marketable,” environmental design program chair Eduard Epp said.

That sort of quality is important to the students, who are building their portfolios. But it’s also important to the program in which some ways was also making its debut at the Container Show.

“Over the last two years the environmental design program has undergone an extensive reform process. We’ve tried to create a more integrated curriculum so that more of the course content has a bearing on the studio work,” Epp said. The new program better integrates University 1 as the program’s first year and allows students to pick a stream, be it architecture, interior design or landscape environments after their second year: previously they waited until after their third year to make that call.

The studio projects take students through four different areas – body, city, building and object – in an effort to introduce the students to the breadth of the design options.

Looking at the results of their final studio for the year, Epp said they’re clearly getting the message.

“In many cases they’re quite beautiful, there is something poetic, and purposeful and utilitarian about all of these projects that makes them quite satisfying. As the final project of the year it puts people in good spirits,” Epp said.

The faculty is still cutting its teeth on the new program, but Epp said it’s entirely possible they could market the student products in the future.

“In some schools there’s a limited product run on some of the projects to raise money for the school and that’s very exciting,” Epp said. The faculty could also look at putting the products up for auction, providing both an opportunity to bid on some unique creations but also, as importantly, putting them into a broader public venue where people have a chance to see them.

YEAR END EXHIBITION

The Faculty of Architecture will host its Year End Student Exhibition on April 24 displaying the work of undergraduate environmental design students as well as the architecture, city planning, interior design, and landscape architecture graduate students. The reception will run from 5 p.m. to 12 a.m. in the John A. Russell building. The exhibit will also be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 27 to 28.

Environmental design students Jarrod Chrichton checks out Amanda Hamilton’s unique seat at the Container Show.
Partnership can recruit students

But details in International College of Manitoba agreement raise concerns

BY DALE BARBOUR
The Bulletin

Nobody disputes the goal: expand the number of international students who come to the University of Manitoba. But there’s some debate over how we should get there.

The university’s partnership with the International College of Manitoba was the focus of an open house on April 6. The partnership agreement was signed in 2007. As Richard Lobdell, vice provost (programs), noted at the beginning of the meeting the goal of working with ICM was to help the university reach its goal of drawing ten per cent of its students from international sources and to ensure that those international students who do come to the University of Manitoba succeed once they arrive. Currently Lobdell said 40 to 50 per cent of the international students struggle in their first year. International College of Manitoba’s claims that just ten per cent of their first year students who do come to the University of Manitoba succeed once they arrive. Currently the program is expected to draw about 150 students to the University of Manitoba per year. However, that number is only an estimate given that the Simon Fraser based chapter of Navitas has seen substantially more student success in its program.

Under the program, students get their first 30 university credits at the International College of Manitoba and then apply for admission to the University of Manitoba.

The courses taught at the International College of Manitoba are drawn from the U of M’s curriculum, but the instructors are hired by ICM. It’s that close, and yet separate relationship, that has created friction among program faculty members and which was the focus of discussion at the open house.

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Changes create more dynamic funding system

This week, from preliminary results of information provided by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the University of Manitoba is pleased to highlight two researchers whose research excellence has been specifically recognized as a result of enhancements to the peer review process for the Discovery Grant Program (DGP). The 2009 Discovery Grants competition implemented important changes to the review process in response to recommendations from two rigorous external reviews that reported to NSERC in 2007. These changes have created a much more dynamic funding system, with more opportunity for researchers with superior accomplishments and contributions to receive substantial increases.

Two University of Manitoba researchers benefiting from the program changes are: David Barber, environment and geography, Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of the Environment, Earth and Resources; and Annemieke Farenhorst, soil sciences, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences. The new peer review process resulted in Barber’s research support increasing by 70 per cent and Farenhorst will see a 30 per cent increase to her support. Under the previous peer review process any funding increases would not have been as substantial.

“The University of Manitoba applauds NSERC for quickly adopting the Discovery Grant Program,” says Digger Jayas, acting vice-president (research). “Through this, the excellence of research conducted by Drs. Barber and Farenhorst received added recognition.”

The external reviews concluded that the Discovery Grants Program is an excellent, unique program and specifically noted that this was an opinion strongly supported by the international members of the review committees.

The reviews also strongly endorsed the three criteria that NSERC uses to evaluate applications: the excellence of the researcher, the merit of the proposal and the applicant’s contributions to the training of highly qualified people. Following extensive consultation with the research community, the recommendations from these reviews were endorsed by council and its major advisory bodies.

Asper School honours Richardson & Sons

On April 18, the fourth annual Manitoba Business Adventurers’ Banquet of the Asper School of Business honored two dynamic entities in Canada’s and Manitoba’s history: Canada’s 100th anniversary in aviation and the creation of Western Canada Airways in the 1920s by James Armstrong Richardson.

The entire banquet was themed after the roaring twenties – right down to the keynote speakers – with an actor appearing in costume as renowned Canadian bush pilot and adventurer Punch Dickins to speak from the perspective of Manitoba adventurers. The evening reverted back to 1929 to celebrate Manitoba’s early aviation pioneers and bring together today’s Manitoba adventurers.

Less than two decades after Canada’s first flight of the Silver Dart in 1909 amidst the roaring twenties, Manitoba’s James Armstrong Richardson formed Western Canada Airways to provide air service to remote mining operations in Canada’s North. Hiring adventurer pilots, the likes of Punch Dickins and E.J. Stevenson, the company expanded quickly, carrying more passengers and express in 1928 than any other air transportation company on the continent.

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History professor Mark Gabbert said the close ties between ICM and the U of M amount to a joint academic program, but one that Senate, the academic wing of the university’s governance system, was not asked to approve.

Gabbert’s question was simple: “When the partnership is renewed will it be a properly discussed by Senate and approved or not for renewal through the regular committee process?”

President David Barnard hosted an open house on April 6 to discuss the university’s partnership with the International College of Manitoba.

But there’s some debate over how we should get there.

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President David Barnard said that discussion will come when the current agreement expires. In the meantime, he was looking for suggestions on how best to work with the existing contract the university has with ICM.

Those suggestions ran the gamut from scrapping the contract to seeking changes to it.

In the end the open house will likely be one step in many in the relationship between ICM and the University of Manitoba. Ultimately, the programs strength relies on the U of M partnered programs it can offer students and those programs are directly impacted by the degree to which faculty members at the university are willing to participate.

Faculty of Arts dean emeritus Robert O’Kell suggested faculty members are prepared to work with ICM with revisions.

“We’re willing to participate if the terms of participation make sense from an academic point of view,” O’Kell said.

U11 director Christine Blais said the ICM program offers an opportunity to provide supports to incoming international students and give them a better success rate as they enter the university.

“We should be evaluating this program so that we have hands on knowledge to tell us how it’s working,” Blais said.
Summer construction projects are set to begin on the Fort Garry campus. The summer will see the opening of the university’s new Welcome Centre and the construction of a new High Performance Computing Facility. But it’s infrastructure work that will have the most impact on the campus. Sewage line upgrades will require the eastern end of Dafoe Road to be closed in May and June and will shut down Chancellors Circle and Gillson Street in July and August. The total price tag for the sewage line upgrades will come to $2.75 million.

### Dafoe Road closure, May 4 to early July
Dafoe Road will be closed from Gillson Street to the Agriculture Canada Research Station from May 4 to early July to enable upgrades to the sewer system. During the closure, the university’s transit mall will be relocated to Maclean Crescent. East-bound traffic on Dafoe Road can head south at the Agriculture Building (Service Street 3S) to avoid the construction area.

### Curry Place Walkway, summer
Work will take place on the Curry Place Walkway through the summer. The project will stretch from the Frank Kennedy Building to the John A. Russell Building. When complete, the pedestrian corridor will stretch from University Centre to University Crescent.

### Education Building foundation, Early May to September
Remedial work on the foundation of the Education Building will take place throughout the summer.

### Welcome Centre, opens late June
The University of Manitoba’s new front door will be open for business in late June. The building will provide visitors with information and host security services and parking and shuttle services.

### Administration Building/N-parking lot access, early July to mid-August
Gillson Street and N-parking lot will be closed to parking and all traffic from early July to mid-August to enable upgrades to the university’s sewer system. The project will focus on the western and northern sides of Chancellors Circle. Pedestrians will still be able to access the Administration Building.

### 150 Innovation Drive, underway
The new home for RTDS Technologies Inc./Transgrid Solutions Inc. offices is going up in Smartpark. In a unique twist, the building is being constructed over a retention pond.

### Curriculum Place Walkway, summer
Work will take place on the Curriculum Place Walkway through the summer. The project will stretch from the Frank Kennedy Building to the John A. Russell Building. When complete, the pedestrian corridor will stretch from University Centre to University Crescent.

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Summer construction projects are set to begin on Dafoe Road and shut down Chancellors Circle.

High Performance Computing Facility
Work on the university’s new $2.1 million High Performance Computing facility is underway between Butler Building and Machray Hall. The project is expected to wrap up in October.

Machray Hall curtain wall, April to Sept. 1
Upgrades to the north curtain wall of Machray Hall kicked off this week and will be ongoing until September.

Machray Hall access, May 15 to Sept. 1
Infrastructure upgrades to the university’s sewer system will impact access to Machray Hall and the Duff Roblin Building. Construction will run from the north-west corner of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library, past the Human Ecology Building and to the front of Machray Hall.

Duff Roblin Building fire recovery, ongoing
Work continues on the Duff Roblin Building in the wake of a March 28 fire that caused severe damage to the fourth and fifth floors of the building and extensive smoke and water damage to the rest of the building. As part of the recovery effort, laboratory space will need to be rebuilt and upgraded. The upgrades will also include a full sprinkler system throughout the building, an upgrade which was not standard when the building was constructed in 1970. For updates on the Duff Roblin recovery project please see umanitoba.ca.

Service Road 3S will act as a south-bound route while Dafoe Road is closed east of Gillson Street, May 4 to early July

Transit Mall moved to Maclean Crescent, May 4 to early July

Chancellors Circle and Gillson Street closed to traffic, early July to mid-August
Events Listing
University of Manitoba

- The Bulletin publishes events involving the university community.
- E-mail events to harbourd@ms.umanitoba.ca or fax 474 7631.
- The deadline for the May 7 Bulletin is April 30 at 4:30 p.m.

Bannatyne Campus
- ST. BONIFACE GENERAL HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Medications are typically targeted at university staff and professionals directly involved in the medical field.

THURSDAY, APRIL 23

Pediatric Research Rounds, Neurofibromatosis 1: Looking Beyond the Tumours by The Third Era of Cytogenetics from Moscow, by Igor Tetradinov, professor, department of medical genetics, University of British Columbia, B.C. Children Hospital, Vancouver, British Columbia, 500 John Buhler Research Centre, 12 p.m., Thursday, April 23.

Immunology, Antihypertensive and immunomodulatory properties of a novel peptide hydrolysate by Rotimi Aluko, department of human nutritional sciences, Faculty of Human Ecology, Immunology Library 604/605 Basic Medical Sciences Building, 12 p.m., Thursday, April 25.

Manitoba Institute of Cell Biology. Incorporation of Imaging Endpoints in Cancer Drug Discovery by Andrew Lijen Kung, director of preclinical imaging, assistant professor of pediatrics, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, Massachusetts, CancerCare Manitoba, 302 Tier Building, 8:30 a.m., Friday, April 24.

Clinical Health Psychology, De-escalation Techniques for Aggressive Behaviour by Isabelle Jarrin, registered psychiatric nurse, Mental Health Educator at Health Sciences Centre, B-basic Medical Sciences Building, 8 a.m., Thursday, April 23.

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

Internal Medicine Grand Rounds: Proteomics and Systems Biology, Innate Defense Regulators - a new paradigm in selective immunomodulation by Neelofeer Mooskheri, assistant professor, Frederic Gaspard Theatre (Theatre A) Basic Medical Sciences Building, 8 a.m., Tuesday, April 28.

FRIDAY, MAY 1

Pharmacology, Emerging Resistance of Influenza A Viruses to Antiviral Drugs by Fred Aoki, professor, med micro/ internal medicine/pharmacology & therapeutics, University of Manitoba, Pharmacology Library A229, Chown Building, video-link to Sam Cohen Auditorium Saint Boniface Research Centre, 9 a.m., Friday, May 1.

FRIDAY, MAY 1

Psychology PhD Oral Examination, Perception Illusions in the Auditory Domain by Launa Leboez, 160 Dafoe Building, 10 a.m., Friday, April 24.

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

Nursing Research Seminar Series, Social Assistive Technology with Older Adults in Long Term Care: A Research-In-Progress Presentation on a the Use of a Robotic Seal by Elaine Moroch, Kerstin Rogers and Lorna Guse, 370 Helen Glass Centre, 12, Thursday, April 28.

FRIDAY, MAY 1

Psychology PhD Oral Examination. An Examination of the Effects of CAPSI as a Learning System in Developing Knowledge and Critical Thinking in Two Blended Learning Courses by Louis Svenningsen, 302 Tier Building, 8:30 a.m., Friday, May 1.

Fort Garry Campus

FRIDAY, MAY 8

Winnipeg Institute for Theoretical Physics Colloquium, Redesigning Electroweak Theory. Does the Higgs Particle Exist? by Dr. J. W. Moffat, Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics and department of physics, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, 350 Allen Building, 3:30 p.m., Friday, May 8.

A full listing of employment opportunities at the University of Manitoba can be found at umanitoba.ca. The University of Manitoba encourages applications from Aboriginal, women and men, including members of visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. Please include the position number when applying for openings at the university.

FACULTY OF ARTS

Department of Economics
Position: Department Head
Start date: January 1
Application deadline: August 15, 2009
Position number: C6666 and 06727
For information: Dr. Janice Bistock, chair, economics headship search advisory committee, dean’s office, Faculty of Arts, University of Manitoba, 310 Fletcher Argue Building, Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2N2.

FACULTY OF MEDICINE

Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences
Position: Section head of obstetrics and gynecology
Salary: Commensurate with qualifications and experience
Application deadline: July 1, 2009
Position number: 09602
For information: Dr. Margaret Morris, department head, department of obstetrics, gynecology & reproductive sciences, University of Manitoba, Women’s Hospital, WR120- 735 Notre Dame Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3E 0B6, fax 787-2809, e-mail: mmorris@hsc.mb.ca.

Department of Pediatrics and Child Health
Position: Assistant professor/gastroenterologist for the section of pediatric gastroenterology
Start date: Sept. 1, 2009
Salary: Commensurate with experience and qualifications
Application deadline: June 30, 2009
Position number: 09017
For information: Cheryl Rockman-Greenberg, professor and head, department of pediatrics and child health, Children’s Hospital, C208-840 Sherbrook St., Winnipeg, MB, R3A 1S1, phone 787-2441, fax 787-4807, e-mail: cgreenberg@exchange.hsc.mb.ca.

MARCEL A. DESAUTELS FACULTY OF MUSIC

Position: Assistant professor in jazz (piano)
Start date: July 1, 2009
Salary: Commensurate with experience and qualifications
Application deadline: May 23, 2009
Position number: 09725
For information: Joan Linklater, associate dean, chair, jazz piano search committee, Marcel A. Desautels Faculty of Music, 210 Dafoe Rd., Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2N2, e-mail: wsevers@cc.umanitoba.ca, fax 474-7546.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA LIBRARIES

Position: Head, technical services
Start date: Sept. 1, 2009
Salary: Commensurate with qualifications and experience
Application deadline: May 22, 2009
Position number: AV865
For information: Ms Karen Adams, director of libraries, The University of Manitoba Libraries, Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2N2.

William R. Newman Library (Agriculture)

Position: Section head
Start date: Sept. 1, 2009
Salary: Commensurate with qualifications and experience
Application deadline: May 22, 2009
Position number: 09693
For information: Ms Karen Adams, director of libraries, The University of Manitoba Libraries, Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2N2.

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Fort Garry Campus

FRIDAY, MAY 8

English: Book Launch, Media, Memory, and the First World War by David Williams, English, McNally-Robinson Booksellers, Grant Park, 8 p.m., Monday, May 4.

MAY 8

Academic Job Opportunities
Why should a university tweet?

Social media has a role to play in the world of higher learning

Try looking someone in the eye and telling them with a straight face that you’re going to tweet about the University of Manitoba’s latest research announcement and you’ll understand a bit of what my job is like.

Twitter, Youtube, Facebook, Google, blogs, wikis? Sometimes, bringing social media to a medical-doctoral university feels like bringing Dr. Seuss to the opera.

But here’s the good news; that feeling is occurring less and less as more and more people are overcoming their uncertainty of social media’s place in higher education and instead exploring its benefits.

There is a great realization that with social media, as with Dr. Seuss, there is something valuable beyond the whimsical. It’s more than just nonsense rhymes collecting ‘friends’ on Facebook and ‘tweeting’ 140-character messages to one another in an effort to address what has apparently become life’s most pressing issue: ‘What are you doing now?’

At its essence social media is a powerful communications tool that, though unwieldy to use, is cheap to employ and quick to bear. With little more than an internet connection, we’ve introduced nearly 400,000 people to the Faculty of Nursing’s new birthing simulator, and over 5,000 people to Michael Falkin, a human sciences professor with a knack for rap music.

That’s the power of YouTube. And we’re not alone in using it. A quick check on the popular video sharing site and you’ll see that every university and college under the sun is creating videos for online consumption. In fact, many of the big names – Yale, Stanford, UC Berkeley – are focusing on academic content, so lectures and courses can be viewed by anyone for free.

Of course, the public affairs social media strategy involves much more than creating videos. In the last year, the department has created or helped create a Facebook page, a YouTube channel and videos, a News Blog, a Media Room, student blogs and videos, a news podcast with iTunes integration, RSS feeds, a Twitter account and much more.

Many of these initiatives are focused on getting our stories to the media and complements our traditional publicity methods of faxing, emailing, and using another popular device that streams live audio, the telephone.

But what about value? Does having tens of thousands of people watching university-related YouTube videos translate to any tangible real-world numbers, like boosting student recruitment? Does a Facebook page have any intrinsic worth? If a University invests in the forest, does anybody hear?

This is the issue that social media skeptics tend to hover around. ‘Yes, yes, but what does it all mean?’ they ask.

Well for us here in communications, social media is simply a no-brainer. We can no more ignore this new set of communications tools than a commuter can ignore the opening of a new lane of traffic.

And here’s the less talked about asset of social media: it also happens to be a great listening tool. Conversations about the University of Manitoba are going on right now on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and many other popular social networking platforms by prospective and current students, alumni, staff, and the general community. To not listen, to not converse, to not be engaged, is not an option.

So, where to begin? Well, if you’re on campus and you’ve been thinking about jumping into the social media game and need a bit of guidance, you can start by contacting me at michael_marshall@umanitoba.ca.

Dr. Seuss and I await.

Annual storytelling festival returns in May

The fourth annual Winnipeg International Storytelling Festival: Storytelling on the Path to Peace runs May 16-19 throughout Winnipeg.

The goal of the festival is to promote the use of storytelling for peacebuilding and community-building, to promote student voice as a critical skill for global citizenship and for protecting human rights, and to nurture the art of storytelling in Winnipeg. The festival is free to the public.

More than 40 storytellers from across Canada and other parts of the world are featured. This is the largest festival of its kind in Canada, and the only annual storytelling festival in the world dedicated to storytelling and peacebuilding.

Funding for cellulose and cellular research

The University of Manitoba has been awarded $492,330 in new funding by the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) to support two major research programs looking at biofuel production and telecommunications.

The investments being announced (April 7) at the University of Manitoba will further enhance our country’s reputation as a destination of choice for outstanding researchers,” said Elliot Phillipson, president and CEO of the CFI. “They will make our universities even more competitive when it comes to attracting the best and brightest researchers from around the world.”

The programs are highly competitive, and the success of these scientists underlines the fact that University of Manitoba researchers are among Canada’s best,” added Digriv Jayas, acting vice-president (research). “These two projects have the potential to produce very real benefits in terms of biofuel production and telecommunications. I am very pleased that CFI has selected them for this significant funding support.”

The University of Manitoba researchers receiving new funding include: David Wilson, and Namir Cekh, with their biosystems engineering, will receive $400,000 in funding to support a laboratory that will improve efficiencies of ethanol and hydrogen synthesis from agriculture and forestry “waste,” material remaining after harvesting.

This lab will develop a renewable cellulose-based fermentation system for biofuel production, thus uncoupling food supply and world food prices from local biofuel production systems.

Hydrogen produced renewably from cellulose residue would displace fossil fuel consumption and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This lab will provide a unique opportunity to research alternative fuels in Canada.

Jun Cai, electrical and computer engineering, will receive $92,300 to establish a laboratory that can emulate such things as limited radio spectrum and time-variant channel conditions. So by focusing on things like traffic and channeling modeling, and radio resource management design, among other aspects, Cai’s lab will achieve the development of wireless communication networks that provide seamless roaming, flexible and scalable network configuration, high-rate multimedia service with guaranteed quality, and efficient radio spectrum usage.

For more information and a schedule of events, please see umanitoba.ca/storytelling.

The Winnipeg International Storytelling Festival: Storytelling on the Path to Peace, as part of the global initiative Storytelling for Peace and Renewing Community (SPARC) was a 2009 semi-finalist for the MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship. SPARC aims to promote innovative story-based approaches for peacemaking and community-building. SPARC seeks to address the problem of violence in our world and promote skills among individuals to resolve conflicts and build community.

For more information on the MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship, please visit www.macjannetprize.org.
In Brief

Got something to say?

The deadline to submit comments on a policy document to the Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics has been extended to June 30, 2009. The organization – which has members from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) – is revising the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. It is part of their ongoing effort to ensure the document keeps pace with research and societal changes. Starting in December of 2008, the interagency panel went across the country, meeting with over 800 people in 17 cities. They are requesting feedback on the draft they prepared as a result of this cross-country tour. The Panel will release a revised version of the document in October 2009, making it again available for comments for 45 days, after which they will prepare a final report in February of 2010, this draft will go to the three research councils for their consideration.

To file your comments or order a copy of the latest draft, contact Secretariat@ethics.gc.ca or the Interagency Secretariat on Research Ethics. 350 Alberta St., Ottawa, ON, K1A 1T5 or send a fax to 613-996-7117.

Upcoming

MCNHR - Research Seminar Series

Social Assistive Technology with Older Adults in Long-Term Care

By: Dr. Elaine Mordoch, Dr.Kerstin Roger and Dr. Lorna Guse

Tuesday, April 28, 2009

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Room 370 Helen Glass Centre for Nursing

Creative Works Grants Program

Deadline to apply is May 1, 2009

To provide support for high-quality creative works at the University of Manitoba.

For further information visit:
http://umanitoba.ca/research/orc/internalfunding_deadlines_forms.html

Bringing Research to LIFE

Studying radical housewives

BY SEAN MOORE

It was milk that set them off. In early November of 1937, a housewife named Bertha Lamb from the Beaches area of Toronto went with some friends to city hall to warn the Board of Control that something needed to be done about the price of milk and that she was going to call a public meeting about the matter. The price had recently jumped one cent, equivalent to 15 cents today, but it occurred at a time when one-third of people’s earnings went to buying necessities – a ratio we use today to help define poverty. It occurred at a time when the federal government campaigned for people to drink more milk, up to a quart a day. It occurred at a time when cookbooks had milk replacing meat in some recipes. And it occurred and at a time when the Milk Board controlled the price of the stuff and producers were earning record profits.

And others wanted the price of milk to meet consumer needs rather than producer needs. So on November 8, the meeting was held in Toronto’s Labor Temple with 800 people stuffing its insides and hundreds more swarming outside. It got front page news and the Toronto Telegram published the death threat Lamb received hours before the meeting. She refused police protection, and the meeting adjourned without any deaths. The Housewives Consumers Association, or HCA, was taking shape.

There was quite a bit of drama around the organization of this meeting. Julie Guard, labour studies, said, “But it was enormously popular. What was really striking about it for me was the people. Although there were lefties in it including women from the Communist Party, it certainly wasn’t seen as a left organization.”

Guard studies social movements and is currently writing a book with the working title Consumers Against Capital. What the HCA showed is the importance of consumer demand in the economy, and how much it matters. It could have an impact on who’s in power, and if they do, they average only six years. These women lasted about 11 years.

They were lucky in a sense that it was a popular issue. People really could get their heads around milk. It has a symbolic identity as well as material meaning so it was just a really good issue they got started off on, which is part of why it worked, but they were creative too.

Indeed, they were great at getting press coverage. In Ottawa they went to Parliament Hill armed with rolling pins, baby carriages, and lapel pins that looked like butter rolling pins, which they gave to politicians.

Newspapers gave the group much space and Guard’s collection gives a retrospective glimpse of their fight’s evolution: “800 Women in Labour Temple Agree 10 Cents a Quart Enough”, “Housewives Launch Boycott On Milk To Force Three Cent Cut”, “School Club Joins in Milk Protest”, “Urgent Study of Milk Price”, “Expect 8,000 Wives to Boycott Butter”, “Housewives Force Lower Meat Prices”. Their popularity grew and mayors, faith-based groups, social workers and provincial politicians supported them. They had support in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, Windsor and Winnipeg. Peggy Laurence, now known as Margaret Laurence, wrote for Winnipeg Housewives news, their newsletter. And they kept such a visible presence protesting the prices of goods that the T Eaton Company kept a file on them in their Head Office.

In 1946 the group got their children to picket the increased price of chocolate bars, which jumped three cents overnight to eight cents. CBC Radio played coverage of it across the country.

It was around this candy-bar time that the Cold War began. The hunt for “reds” was on and it became socially and politically unattractive to belong to a group like the HCA, which was stained redly by its opponents and the media, Guard said. So the HCA began to die like a toy with low batteries.

In one of their last bouts, Rae Luckock, one-time president of HCA and one of the first women voted into legislature (she should have been the first since the swearing-in follows alphabetical order but she let Agnes McPhail go first and now history better remembers the latter) went to Ottawa. It was 1947 and she wanted to deliver a 709,000-signature petition to Mackenzie King’s government but RCMP barred her from entering the buildings. “It was extremely politically inconvenient for the government to have a bunch of these women come to see them dressed in their nice frocks and hats, taking the train to Ottawa to embarrass the government. So the government would say, ‘Well, these people are just a bunch of reds.’ And the woman returned, ‘well, your economic policy doesn’t seem to be working for ordinary people. What are you going to do about it?’

What came, eventually, was the Ontario Royal Commission on Milk, which, Guard noticed, asked the same questions the HCA had long been raising. At the hearings, many consumers submitted reports to the Royal Commission, the HCA among them, but if you go to a grocery store today you will not see remnants of the HCA impact.

“I don’t think it affects our lives today. There is no direct impact. But as a historian I think it’s important to look back as our history reminds us that things change because people make things change,” Guard said.

“And at this moment in history we have basically all the notions of how the markets work, and the regularities and systemic nature of capitalism are being shaken up. We have a little bit of a moment here. This is the kind of moment they were looking at in the 1930s. People were really annoyed in the 30s and they knew who was at fault. It’s a bit like now.”