What’s the future of cars on campus?

By Paul Mayne

While barrier-free access and environmental concerns have been raised, one of the bigger issues emerging from Western’s draft Master Plan may be parking.

In the first public consultation meeting Tuesday to address the draft plan – which sets out principles to guide Western in the location of new buildings and maintenance of green space - it didn’t take long for parking to make itself known.

With plans for new buildings and renovations throughout campus, to the tune of $230 million over the next several years, what to do with those new automobiles presents a quandary for the university.

“We really have a challenge here,” admits Associate Vice-President (Physical Plant and Capital Planning) Dave Riddell, of the current 5,959 parking spaces for permit holders. “We perhaps need to talk about demand reduction in terms of automobiles.”

He noted the University Students’ Council bus pass plan for students is a major plus in lessening vehicle traffic in and around campus, although a similar proposal for staff and faculty a few years ago “wasn’t well received.”

Issues such as not living on a bus route, too many transfers and overcrowding were raised as stumbling blocks.

“If we’re going to make the centre of campus student and pedestrian focused, we have to move parking to the periphery,” says Riddell. Such a decision would mean developments such as a shuttle service could become a reality.

The simple solution to some might be a parking garage, but Riddell says that would mean an increase in parking rates to pay for and operate such a structure. “Parking garages don’t carry themselves economically,” he says. “It would mean higher rates and I don’t think that would work.”

Riddell admits “it’s a challenge” making the university welcoming when it comes to parking, adding it affects everyone differently.

Only a handful of persons turned out for the first meeting. To make your opinion known regarding the Master Plan Consultation Draft, you are encouraged to read it by visiting Western’s homepage (uwo.ca) and clicking on ‘Draft Master Plan’ on the right hand side of the page.

Opinions, views and suggestions are welcome at masplan@uwo.ca until mid-December.

A second public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 21, at Althouse College, Room 1162, 7:30 p.m.

An updated plan will be made public early in 2007, with the final draft reaching Board of Governors in May.

Razing the roof

By Emma Wadland

By many measures, educational equality for Canada’s First Nations remains a distant hope. As of 2001, roughly half the country’s First Nations population had not achieved a high school diploma. Many had dropped out before Grade 10.

Still, First Nations people are the fastest-growing population in the country. They are also the youngest; roughly 17 per cent are between the ages of 15 and 24.

This comes from a June 2006 report by David Holmes, issued by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC).

The report suggests First Nations youth offer Canada a chance to revitalize its rapidly aging workforce. It asks what Canadian universities are doing to attract and retain First Nations students.

Once First Nations youth are aware of post-secondary possibilities, encouragement is paramount, says Vivian Peters.

Peters is the coordinator of First Nations Services, established at Western in 1992.

She says First Nations students can “drift away” and end up leaving university if they are not properly cared for. Some battle alienation on Canadian campuses, says Peters, because of “not feeling good about themselves in an environment that traditionally didn’t value them.”

Vice-Provost and Registrar Roma Harris says grasping this emotional concept is part of ensuring students’ success. “People who have come to our community that don’t feel truly part of it need to get back in touch with their home communities and then come back to us,” she says. “It’s a natural thing and it’s something we can accommodate.”

One of Peters’ main goals is to remind First Nations students “how unique and valuable they are in this world.” Strong academic support sends this message.

Peters has been championing the First Nations Science Transition Program. Now in its second year, the program ushers students into science-related fields. Peters would like to see Western become
Top 10 Bestsellers

1. The View From Castle Rock by Alice Munro
2. Labyrinth by Kate Moss
3. Heat: An Amateur's Adventures As Kitchen Slave, Line Cook, Pasta-Maker and Apprentice To A Dante-Quoting Butcher In Tuscany by Bill Buford
4. The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls
7. JPod by Douglas Coupland
8. Phantom by Terry Goodkind
9. Break No Bones by Kathy Reichs
10. Moral Disorder by Margaret Atwood

Compilation provided by The Book Store at Western.

Ash infestation ‘cloud coming this way’

By Jessica Dean

The emerald ash borer has made its way to London – and the spread of the insect to Western trees is inevitable.

The tree-destroying beetle was recently found in trees on a private lot near Springbank Drive and Wonderland Road – a short distance from Western’s campus.

Jim Galbraith, Western’s manager of grounds maintenance and waste management, said the beetle will likely infect Western’s ash trees. “It’s just a matter of time before it gets here. It’s like an imposing, impending cloud coming this way.”

There are 100 to 150 ash trees on campus, and all are at risk for infestation, said Galbraith. Most of the ash trees are on Perth Drive between Delaware Hall and University Hospital, and along the Alumni Circle, with others spread throughout the campus.

If just one of those ash trees were infested, the beetle could spread throughout the campus, devastating the trees, said Galbraith. “We could likely lose them within two or three years.”

Although Galbraith is aware of the emerald ash borer, he said there are no preventative measures available to stop the beetle, and no tests to see if an infestation has occurred.

It takes a minimum of one growing season to show signs of an infestation, as the tree begins to die from the top. “It’s a wait-and-see – it’s not a great approach to the problem, but that’s all you can do. It’s unfortunate, and we feel helpless,” said Galbraith.

Pesticides to control the emerald ash borer are being developed in the United States, but are getting mixed reviews, he said.

If a pesticide was found to be effective and approved for use in Canada, the grounds maintenance department would spray Western’s ash trees, said Galbraith.

“We would jump on board to save our trees...That’s not cosmetic, that’s a really good purpose.”

London’s pesticide ban, which will take effect in 2008, will allow for spraying against insect outbreaks.

Extreme homepage makeover

By Douglas Keddy

A lot has changed in research over the four years since Research Western last revamped its presence on the Internet. Now one of the university’s most-visited websites has undergone a facelift to reflect those changes.

The new site eases access to information, tools and services essential to building successful research programs and the research enterprise as a whole at Western.

“It was time,” says Ted Hewitt, Western’s Vice-President (Research & International Relations.)

“We are in a highly competitive research climate in this country and it is imperative that we give our researchers every possible advantage to develop their research programs.”

By including an ever-expanding collection of researcher profiles and news stories, the site also does a better job of telling the story of research at Western without sacrificing the ability to navigate the site.

The objective was to align with the look and feel of the university’s overall re-launch last year, while remaining true to Research Western’s developing graphic identity. Tech Transfer, a unit within Research Western, also recently redesigned their site to better differentiate between the needs of industry and those of faculty, staff and students.

Better organization for materials related to internal grant processes and the creation of a more user-based lay-out of information were also serious considerations.

“One of the keys,” says Shannon Woodhouse, who led the redesign, “is that we have created a ‘Where to Start’ section which will help direct people unfamiliar with services available through Research Western.”

Check out the new site at www.uwo.ca/research.

Piled Higher & Deeper

a grad student comic strip

Don’t be late!
Check the Events Calendar.
Visit Quick Links on Western’s homepage.
FALL PREVIEW DAY

Campus auditions for next year’s students

By Bob Klanac

November 18 may not seem an especially auspicious date on many calendars, but it is one of the most important on the Western campus.

On Saturday, 6,000 or more secondary school students from this province, out west, east and the U.S. will visit Western to determine up close and personal if “Canada’s most beautiful campus” is going to be their home next fall.

For Lori Gribbon, Manager, Undergraduate Admissions & Liaison Services it’s a crucial day in the student recruitment process.

“This campus visit is the most important thing when choosing a university,” says Gribbon.

“They get a real feel not only for the place but the people they are going to be interacting with, and that has a big impact on their decision. If we’re friendly and interested, they get the idea that since we’re happy here, they would be too.”

The day will feature multiple opportunities for in-depth exploration of every faculty on campus. Rather than centralize information in a common area, the day-long program by design draws the potential Western students into the very halls and rooms that will be their academic homes.

“It gives the prospective student their first student experience,” says Gribbon. “This is the preview to the student experience that we say is the best.”

“You look around at the kids and ask yourself if you can see yourself hanging out with those people.”

Katie Bayley, High school student registered for Preview Day

“Part of that experience is contact with the faculty as well,” Gribbon says that faculty members on site for the day are a key part of the entire day’s experience in that they can discuss their department’s programs in detail with prospective students.

“That’s why the faculty participating in this is so crucial to its success.”

Although the students invariably come with parents in tow, Gribbon understands that they aren’t along just for company. Increasingly, parents also need to be convinced of Western’s suitability for their children.

“They are critical to this,” says Gribbon. “Because they are highly influential and if they don’t like what they see at a campus, they will dissuade their Johnny or Susan from going to that university.

“We get just as many questions from parents as we get from the actual students, if not more.”

One of the students making her way around the Western campus on November 18 is Katie Bayley. The Midhurst, Ont. high school student says she will be looking at the facilities but also at the people.

“You look around at the kids and ask yourself if you can see yourself hanging out with those people”, says Bayley. “Are the people there focused on learning and getting an education? Because you’re going to be going there for four years. I want to get educated and have a good time at a university.”

Kyle Foot of Calgary also sees his Western visit as a tangible necessity.

“You hear about universities and their reputations but actually seeing it and hearing the seminars and getting the feel for the place really helps,” he says.

Aside from academic life, the other important focus of Fall Preview Day is the residence system.

“Residence generates a lot of interest,” says Gribbon. “We work very closely with the residences so the visitors can see what we offer, from the common rooms, individual rooms, and all of the facilities in terms of lifestyle, safety and security for Mom and Dad.”

What gives Gribbon and her organizing team a boost of confidence is the recent Globe and Mail Campus Survey which gave Western top marks. As the survey was based entirely on student experiences, it was especially meaningful for those whose mandate is the oft-stated ‘best student experience’.

“What we are doing is going in the right direction,” says Gribbon.

“The Globe survey is very important to us in getting our message out. It shows that there must be something about their experience here that is different. They’re validating what we’ve been hearing.”
VIEWPOINT

Creation, evolution and the search for common ground

Steve Duncan is a Huron University College student and former journalist who writes a monthly column.

By Steve Duncan

Have you ever felt that you are being lied to about the truth of a particular subject or situation?

As a child, I always felt this way when I could hear or see my parents argue about something, but was told everything was fine. I can also remember asking a question one time about a waste removal. “If we keep throwing out garbage, won’t we run out of room on the planet one day?”

Questions like this usually got me shuttled to the back yard with a soda pop and my baseball glove. During my formidable years in high school, two particular subjects left me with this exact feeling: evolution and capitalism.

I never bought the explanation that evolution (more specifically Darwinism) could explain the origins of the universe and all of life. While I could understand the concept of natural selection and the survival of species through the adaptation of their environment, the whole idea that everything “evolved” from a primordial soup seemed like pure science fiction to me. I had no issue with God creating a universe, and “changing and adapting” as it went along.

I also distinctly remember struggling with the concept of capitalism and how it worked. I was the type who idealistically believed in living communally, while the promotion of the individual and the separation of the state from economics and religion was the trumpeting call of capitalism.

In theory, I understood. I mean, who doesn’t want more individual freedom, more individual rights, and more individual wealth? I distinctly remember what I thought the underlying message was: “individuals should be left to decide what is right and wrong.”

Andrew Bernstein, author of the Capitalist Manifesto, would seem to agree. In an article for the Ayn Rand Institute, Bernstein suggests “religion and capitalism are incompatible since capitalism promotes reason, individualism, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, while religionists promote sacrifice, the public good, and collectivism.” He believes religion cannot be the basis of freedom and capitalism because of its inherently authoritarian nature.

Capitalism, though “recognizes the autonomy of the individual citizen and the inalienability of his individual rights.” In his view, the founding fathers of America understood this by “grounding America’s freedom in reason and individualism” by upholding an individuals right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. They did not regard citizens as obedient servants, but “as sovereign persons, left to follow the conclusions of their reasoning mind.”

So how do these two topics intertwine? Because of the apparent importance of one subject to the other.

If what Bernstein is suggesting is true, it appears that capitalism as a social system needs people to believe in individualism. A society that believes the idea of sacrifice, common property, the redistribution of wealth, opposition to international trade, and condemnation toward corporate greed would uproot the very foundation of capitalism.

What better way to get society to adhere to the dogmatism of capitalism than to indoctrinate the youth? According to the American Psychological Association, it is estimated that $12 billion per year is spent on advertisements geared toward the youth market. Getting the young interested and involved in consumerism will ensure the survival of capitalism.

Is it so far-fetched then to believe that the indoctrination of evolution to our children is vital to the success of capitalism as well? If science can prove the existence of the universe was a result of random natural selection and not by divine intervention, then we have no need for God. If there is no need for God, then the autonomy of the individual is all we have left. Trouble is, Christianity, Judaism, and the Islamic faith make up a great deal of population that believes “something” started this whole thing we call the universe.

Can creation and evolution exist together? In the eyes of many “creationists” I would say yes, but at the detriment to the foundation of capitalism.

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THE WAY WE WERE: 1950

After 60 years of wishing and planning the university finally acquired a permanent athletic building with the opening of Thames Hall in 1949. Perhaps the stellar feature of the new facility was the large swimming pool and a gallery for spectators built through the generosity of Major-General A. C. Spencer and his sister Josephine Niblett Spencer. (Pictured) The Spencer pool was named in honour of their parents and was officially opened by Premier Leslie Frost on March 7, 1950.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TAKING A BOW

I am the mother of a recent graduate in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. I just wanted to say thank you for teaching my son so well that he can have such a great career in his chosen field.

An article in the Globe and Mail newspaper was written about him recently and it tells all of Canada just how great this university is, as it produces such great professionals.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Avigail Bradley

FONDLY REMEMBERED

Regarding the article about Dr. Thomas Wood in your Convocation issue. I am a Western grad - Meds 82. Dr. Wood was one of my teachers. Although it was a long time ago, I distinctly and positively remember him as an excellent clinician, teacher and person. May he rest in peace.

Jim Shalom Israel
We have a moral imperative to act

Margaret Chan is a graduate of Brescia University College and Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. Last week she was elected to lead the World Health Organization. This is an edited transcript of her acceptance speech.

BY MARGARET CHAN

What matters most to me is people. And two specific groups of people in particular. I want us to be judged by the impact we have on the health of the people of Africa, and the health of women.

In both regions, all countries, all people are equally important. This is a health organization for the whole globe. But our attention on the people in greatest need.

The people of Africa carry an enormous and disproportionate burden of ill health and premature death. The health of the people of Africa must therefore be the key indicator of the performance of WHO.

The health of women must be the other key indicator – and I do not mean just maternal health. Women do much more than give birth. Unfortunately, their activities in households and communities, coupled with their low status, make them especially vulnerable to health problems – from indoor air pollution and multiple infectious diseases to violence.

People matter most. I believe that is why the WHO Constitution begins with such a clear statement: “the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being”.

It is also why the Constitution emphasizes the links between health, happiness, harmonious relations and security.

Improvements in the health of the people of Africa and the health of women are key indicators of the performance of WHO. Our commitment to results is only relevant if we can demonstrate an impact in these populations.

The first two issues deal with fundamental needs: for health development and health security.

Poverty and insecurity are two of the greatest threats to “harmony” – as set out at the core of the WHO Constitution, but one we have not yet heard today. I would like to use it more.

The next two issues are strategic: capacity building – particularly strengthening health systems – and information and knowledge. This means getting the evidence right and setting the agenda for research and development.

The remaining two issues are operational: managing partnerships and improving WHO performance.

This is a simple way to look at a complex job: two fundamental health needs, two main strategies of action, and two operational approaches for achieving results in countries.

Health development forms the core of the Millennium Development Goals. I am passionately committed to the achievement of these goals. But let us not limit health development to the MDG targets for the health of women and children. Let us also turn our attention to epidemics of HIV, malaria and TB, for increasing access to essential drugs.

We must also address reproductive health, violence and injuries, and the growing burden that chronic diseases place on development – heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, mental illness and others.

We must accelerate initiatives in safer pregnancy, integrated management of childhood illness and immunization. We will enhance efforts to reach the target of universal access to HIV treatment, prevention and care. We will do better on new threats, such as control malaria, TB and neglected infectious diseases.

We will complete polio eradication. We will scale up efforts to control tuberculosis, including full implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Our support to implement the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health will be greater.

Health security brings benefits at both the global and community levels. New diseases are global threats to health, as we have seen with SARS and avian influenza. The health of the people of Africa is threatened by the impact of pandemic. We have strong new International Health Regulations coming into force next year. We already have in place strong and efficient mechanisms for global outbreak alert and response. These have been tested and proven effective, most recently by SARS and avian influenza.

Improving health development and health security means improving health systems. For outbreaks, the international community will not be prepared unless all countries have core surveillance and response capacities in place.

The world is not – all by itself – going to become a fair place as far as health is concerned. Progress in medicine races ahead, yet resources for public health grow more slowly.

I plan to promote integrated primary health care as a strategy for strengthening health systems. The reason is simple: It works. This is the only way to ensure fair, affordable, and sustainable access to essential care across a population.

During my tenure in Hong Kong, I introduced primary health care from the dinner to the grave. I focused on health promotion and disease prevention, with special emphasis on self-care and healthy lifestyles.

The world is not – all by itself – going to become a fair place as far as health is concerned, more so in medicine races ahead, yet resources for public health grow more slowly.

We should be hard about the importance of primary health care repeatedly during my visits to Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia. Many countries in Africa face the challenge of rebuilding social support systems.

As Director-General I will address, as a matter of urgency, the problem of our own evaluation of health staff. The problem is critical, but not insurmountable. On information and knowledge, it is critical to get the evidence right. This is something WHO has always done well, but can do even better.

I will integrate WHO’s research activities into more strategically designed health research agenda. I will strengthen the legitimacy, quality, and efficiency of our policy development processes. I want to establish a global health observatory to collect, collate and disseminate data on policy, practice, and progress.

When we have these evidence-based instruments, the fifth component, working cohesively, becomes much easier. Today, collaboration to achieve public health goals is no longer simply an asset. It is a critical necessity.

We will continue to engage strategically in partnerships for health, strengthening relationships with civil society and the private sector, and creating greater alignment between partners. I will work closely with our partners in the United Nations system to bring about reforms that enhance the effectiveness of the UN – especially at the country level.

Performance is the final component, and here we face the challenge of making WHO perform more efficiently and effectively, getting all levels of WHO to work more cohesively, and motivating staff.

This organization is among the most influential of any in the United Nations. Our health mandate is a huge responsibility, but it also brings us four unique assets. This is the source of our strength.

First, health is of universal concern. The issues we address are of interest to every person on earth. They interest every Member State – hence the need for a high-level agency responsible for health.

Every major newspaper, every big news site on the internet has a health section.

Whether we battle an outbreak or recommend a heart-healthy diet, announce a deadly new strain of TB, immunize children, or show a link between a chemical and cancer, this work connects the public and the press immensely. This makes our work matter and gives us universal relevance.

What matters to us, the development of our health information, is that we keep to our agenda. And what we have powerful methodologies for getting proof. We can catch a causative agent red-handed under a microscope, and nail the culprit down at the molecular level.

Innovative epidemiological tools allow us to link lifestyle factors to an increased risk of disease. We have the strength of the social sciences for addressing the many psycho-social and cultural determinants of disease. We can prove that an agent causes a disease, a drug works, a vaccine prevents it. We can know. We can prove.

This gives us our technical authority. We can be utterly convincing in our arguments, absolutely authoritative in our guidance.

The third, our work is based on a clear and common value system.

We share the strength of the ethical foundation of the health profession. This gives us a powerful, unique, and absolutely authoritative in our guidance.

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The third, our work is based on a clear and common value system.
EK3 wears purple heart on its sleeve

By Bob Klanac

When Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Chris Bentley made a graduate student funding announcement at London’s EK3 technologies a week ago, the location was not chosen by chance.

EK3 not only has a striking number of Western grads on staff but its unique research relationship with The University of Western Ontario’s Faculty of Engineering is proving to be a highly successful one.

EK3’s business relationship with Western belies a passion for the purple that goes beyond the professional to the personal.

“Twenty-five per cent of our staff have post-grad degrees from Western,” says EK3 co-founder Ken Stuart. “When we’re presenting to Fortune 500 companies in Canada, the U.S. and globally we always have slides about Western in our presentation and talk about how our roots are at Western.”

Stuart and co-founder Nick Prigoniero come by their Western fandom honestly. It was as Western engineering students in 1998 that he and two other friends decided they wanted to start a business.

“So we started something and we found out that we didn’t know everything about starting a business,” says Stuart. “So we went to the university for help. The office of Industry Liaison were very open and very supportive.”

“T wenty-five per cent of our staff have post-grad degrees from Western,” says EK3 co-founder Ken Stuart. “When we’re presenting to Fortune 500 companies in Canada, the U.S. and globally we always have slides about Western in our presentation and talk about how our roots are at Western.”

EK3 co-founder and Western alumnus Ken Stuart (fourth from left) stands with fellow Western alumnus and staff recruits (left to right) Steven Shi, Joseph Eze, George Zhang, Justin Rao, Paul Xu (hidden) and Weiping Luo.

They helped us incorporate the company and threw us a small amount of funding from the university.”

EK3 specializes in narrowcasting, marketing products by using programmable point-of-purchase video screens that allow a company to target audiences with specific product messages at specific times. One of EK3’s clients, the Tim Hortons chain, uses the technology for both in-store and drive-through sales. For example, the advertising message could be molded to the time of day or week or to reflect a special promotion.

What makes it likely the number of Western grads at EK3 will steadily increase is the partnership they set up this past spring. The partnership sees engineering students doing research at and for EK3, located in downtown London on York Street. EK3 has also donated screens which are used in the Engineering building to present faculty news and information.

Western Engineering’s Director of Software Engineering Hamada Ghenniwa calls it a win-win proposition.

“This is a great opportunity for our students to get that sense of reality in their work and embed it in our research,” he says. “They bring to us the market problem. We focus on a practical solution. That’s what engineering is all about, practical solutions.”

Ghenniwa adds that the synergy also allows both student and EK3 a chance to see if they’d like to continue the relationship after a student’s studies end.

“I think that it’s a model for this sort of arrangement. We think it works,” says Ghenniwa. “Hopefully we see more companies like this.”

Faculty set strike vote date

By Bob Klanac

University faculty members have voted to hold a strike vote.

The strike vote will be held on Tue., Nov. 21, 9:30 a.m. - 7 p.m. in the Social Science Centre Foyer (second floor) and on Wed., Nov. 22, 9-20 a.m. - 5 p.m. in the Middlesex College Foyer (first floor).

An advance poll will be held at the UWOFA office, Room 2120 in Elborn College on November 16, 17 and 20, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily.

At a general meeting Nov. 10, members unanimously endorsed a proposal for a strike vote. A report presented by UWOFARegenerative Mike Dawes noted that while negotiations have been productive in some areas, on major issues such as compensa

tion, workload and numbers of tenured professors, the parties remain far apart.

If the vote passes, the union would be in a position to call a strike for tenured returning to the membership for authorization.

The last contract for the more than 1,200 faculty members expired June 30.
Applied math rubs up against biology

By Becky Blue

Though his job description reads assistant professor in the applied math department at the University of Western Ontario, Mikko Karttunen’s everyday instruments are not as traditionally mathematical as might be expected.

In place of protractors and slide rules, Karttunen uses a laptop and the written word to express his ideas. And instead of deciphering proofs and equations, he strives to contribute knowledge to the fields of medicine, physiology, biology and physics.

“Computer simulation and theory are our tools,” he says in reference to his research.

Karttunen arrived at Western in January. Though he is studying many things, one big goal is to understand the basic physiological functioning of the cell membrane. He is trying to understand by what methods substances – both beneficial and harmful – enter and exit cells.

Though Karttunen’s work sounds like biology, there is a distinction between his research and that of a biologist. The major difference is that Karttunen’s experiments are run through intricate computer simulations, rather than on Petri dishes in a laboratory. He works with other researchers, often in the medical field, trying to find practical applications for his discoveries.

Karttunen says the opportunity to work with a wide range of other motivated researchers is one reason he chose to come to Western.

“It’s a big enough university, having lots of things going on,” he says. “It seemed like an appropriate fit for me. The spirit here says, “It seemed like an appropriate fit for me. The spirit here sounds like biology, there is a diversity here. It creates a nice atmosphere.”

The enthusiastic, productive environment matches Karttunen’s own strong work ethic. He says his work consumes most of his time – but he is so engaged in what he is doing that the long hours are not a drawback.

Colin Denniston, a friend and colleague in the math department, describes Karttunen as hard-working.

“You can’t produce 25 papers a year without working really hard,” he says. “And it’s not just focused on himself. He’s already helped us update the web page of the department. It looks a lot better than it did before.”

Karttunen has a talent for design, and aside from helping with the website, often designs the detailed computer simulations he uses in his work.

He also enjoys photography, having learned the craft working as a freelance photojournalist in his youth. In a crossover of work and play, Karttunen often uses original photos to illustrate and liven up the websites he maintains.

He also makes time for physical activity of all kinds and is an avid cyclist. “In Europe I often take a week every year and go biking around,” he says.

His next cycling trip to Europe will be a homecoming of sorts for Karttunen. The 38-year-old was born in Siilinjarvi, Finland, to father Erkki and mother Eeva. He also has a younger brother named Petteri back home. Karttunen’s 10-year-old son is also living there.

Mikko Karttunen works on the margins between applied math and biology.

Karttunen spent most of his growing-up years in Finland. Before launching into his academic career, he was side-tracked briefly by the country’s mandatory military service when he was 18 years old. He did not find it particularly stimulating.

“It was simply boring,” he says with a smile. “Most of the time you wait for something to happen.”

After leaving the military, Karttunen was not sure what he wanted to do. He considered journalism as well as history, but ultimately decided on another direction. Realizing that math and science were strong interests, he enrolled in a Finnish university and completed an M.Sc. in engineering physics. That decision set him on the path to Western, and a career he is finding compelling.

Karttunen hopes to maintain that interest and enthusiasm for his work for many more years. When considering what the next 10 or 15 years might hold, Karttunen says the most important thing is feeling satisfied with what he’s involved in. Down the line, he says, “I want to still be enjoying what I’m doing.”

The writer is a graduate student in Journalism.
Engineering pursues huge graduate studies growth

By Alan Johnston

Western Engineering’s plan to recruit more female faculty members has Cynthia Dunning Dunning joined the Mechani-


cal & Materials Engineering department as an assistant pro-

fessor in 2002 after receiving a Natural Sciences and Engineer-

ing Faculty of Western University. She teaches undergraduate

students ing under

engineering, and encouraging

Dunning. “I get excited talk
dents at all levels,” says

led to a second event last

engineering. Its success

Western’s Go ENG Girl event

ence,” and provide a mentorship

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club “to enliven the activities of

further from this program,

neering (WE) wants to benefit

Faculty Awards. Western Engi-

have won NSERC’s University

of the female faculty members

administrative leave, says many

M. Hesham El Naggar, Associ-

deans – Research and Exter-

ate Dean – Research and Exter-

of the current total of 90 profes-

sors are women.

M. Hesham El Naggar, Associate

Associate Dean – Research and Exter-

eral Relations and Acting Dean

in 2005, Dunning co-chaired

in 2005, Dunning co-chaired

Associate Dean – Research and

Dean Franco Berutti

In 2005, Dunning co-chaired

M. Hesham El Naggar, Associate

El Naggar, Associate Dean – Research and Exter-

eral Relations and Acting Dean

Dunning joined the Medicine

chemistry, or mechanical and

Chemical & Biochemical, Civil & Environmental, Electri-

and Mechanical & Materials.

In terms of Western’s draft

University. In response to a government

to expand graduate education,

El Naggar says. “If you

we hope that by the end of

the academic plan we will become

known not just for producing

engineers, but leaders of tomor-

– people who will

take on senior roles in

organizations.”

Prof. M. Hesham El Naggar

University. In response to a government

Looking ahead, WE sees its

strong faculty candidates recruited from “name

and Computer Science, work experience, participation

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graduate student enrolment has

graduate student enrolment has

WE also is meeting strategic

WE has made the strategic

WE is recognized as world class

in the departments of Civil & Environmental, Electrical & Computer Science, and Computer Science,

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Success ‘less about numbers’

Continued from page 1

a “centre of excellence for health sciences for Native students.”

Karl Hele, Director of First Nations Studies, approaches the Transition Program with caution. “It’s important not to stream people,” he says. At the same time, he acknowledges streaming is partly based on perceived need in First Nations communities. “If there is a shortage of doctors in Canada, there are none on the reserves,” he says.

First Nations students often choose law as a career path because they want to return to their communities, says Hele. “The government of Canada has to work on getting more aboriginals into programs other than law,” he adds. “History, geography, psychology, sociology. There are other career options.”

Harris says the First Nations Studies program is instrumental in attracting First Nations students to the university—regardless of what they study. “It makes the university more recognizable friendly,” she says. “I’d like to see Western become a site that people recognize as a destination of choice for a person of Aboriginal descent,” adds Harris.

But First Nations Studies at Western is still in its early days. Founded in 2003, its first students graduated earlier this year. Hele wants the program to increase its visibility. “But I’m not sure how,” he says. “It’s hard to make it visible unless there is more teaching in the program.”

The program is run by Hele, Regina Darnell, and several temporary faculty members. Western needs more First Nations faculty across the board, says Hele. The current number employed at the university is less than one per cent.

While the AUCC report says Western does not offer First Nations outreach programs, Hele says this is changing. A bridging program was offered at Chippewa of the Thames reserve last year, and there is interest to expand classes in environmental resources management to Oneida, Walpole Island, and Kettle and Stoney Point.

A recruitment officer has been added to First Nations Services this year with the hope of attracting more undergraduate enrollment, says Peters. She says the recruitment process can start as early as Grade 9. This is partly due to the particular significance of family ties in First Nations cultures, she explains.

“People have limitless success if they are where they’re supposed to be,” she explains. “You’re supposed to be here to do things the way the Creator intended you.”

The reporter is a graduate student in Journalism.

AUCC report

Redressing the Balance: Canadian University Programs in Support of Aboriginal Students by David Holmes, is available at: www.aucc.ca/pdf/english/reports/2006/programs_aboriginal_students_e.pdf

We ask to meet with their parents, we call their homes. We don’t cross a line, but we do ask questions. Families are very open,” she says.

To Peters, however, student recruitment is less about numbers and more about finding students who belong at Western. She is honest with those she thinks are not ready for university. But, she says, any inquiry from First Nations people about post-secondary education is a positive sign. “If they get to the point where they are asking about coming to Western, we really have to look at what that crack of light. We can’t afford to lose someone who makes an inquiry like that,” she says.

Peters is dedicated to her work with First Nations students. And she sets high goals for herself in the process. “I hope one day we will have 700 to 800 kids and I won’t be able to call everyone personally,” she says, “but right now, I can.”

The personal and academic guidance Peters offers students comes from a First Nations perspective of success—something she defines as “being on the right path.”

“People have limitless success if they are where they’re supposed to be,” she explains. “You’re supposed to be here to do things the way the Creator intended you.”

The reporter is a graduate student in Journalism.
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Your future never looked brighter.

USC eyes restructuring, off-campus eateries

BY BOB KLANAC

The University Students’ Council has released a draft version of their long-term strategic and tactical plan that proposes new corporate structures and off-campus facilities. Built to Lead: The University Students’ Council Long-Term Strategic & Tactical Plan, outlines plans for University Community Centre renovations, off-campus eateries, and an overall strategy to reducing student fees.

The report was emailed to every undergraduate student a few weeks ago and report co-author, USC Communications Officer Aron Yeomanson, has been pleased with the reaction to date.

“Currently the UCC is an amazing building and our prime source of revenues. But since we don’t own this building, it’s important for the USC to move some of its assets out of this building.”

Aron Yeomanson USC Communications Officer

Yeomanson echoes the report in describing how the USC evolved over the years from an almost entirely student-run hands-on structure until the 90s and a sharply defined corporate management style driven by the creation of the general manager position.

“Times are very different now,” he says, “And we need a structure that allows students to give vision, and work in partnership with the professionals we hire, not to hand over control.”

The report proposes a much more interactive relationship between staff and the board intended to result in more sharing of information and ideas. “We want to have the two sides of the USC, the corporate side and the student side, run better together, ensuring that the student mission is used as well as possible,” says Yeomanson. “We don’t want to go back to ‘91. We also don’t want to go back to having our fingers in every operation. We think we’re in a position to grow and have the USC better serve students.

“It has to be a system where the students are the why and management and staff are the how. We have to use our management and staff to be able to get us to where we want to go.”

Part of the rationale for the restructuring is a desire to reduce the corporation’s reliance on student fees to offer services.

“We want to have the lowest student fees-to-services ratio in the country,” says Yeomanson. There are also specific plans to establish off-campus restaurants and off-campus residences. Two restaurants are envisioned, one a breakfast and lunch casual eating outlet located close to the downtown core, the other a more upscale restaurant located in the north end of the city.

The specifics of the projects aside, Yeomanson explains that these are part of a broader operational strategy.

“Ts is representative of a desire to move outside the University Community Centre,” he says. “Currently the UCC is an amazing building and our prime source of revenues. But since we don’t own this building, it’s important for the USC to move some of its assets out of this building.”

Yeomanson also says that existing USC eateries, The Spoke and The Wave, will remain largely intact save for a renovation at the latter. The Wave was last renovated in the mid-90s, Yeomanson notes.

Currently, Yeomanson and the rest of his board are soliciting feedback from students, staff and community members. The revised draft plan gets first reading at the Nov. 22 council meeting, then will be put to a vote at the Dec. 6 meeting. Implementation of the plan will commence January, 2007.

Bob Klanc, Western News

The University Students’ Council hopes to streamline corporate structure, offer new services and reduce fees over time.

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Dr. Mary J. Wright

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If you received your voter information card from Elections Canada and the information is correct, you’re ready to vote. The card tells you where and when to vote. Take it with you — you’ll get through the voting process more quickly.

You can register and vote before election day if you wish. Advance voting will be held Friday, November 17, Saturday, November 18, and Monday, November 20, from noon to 8:00 p.m. Locations of advance polling stations appear on the back of your voter information card.

If you haven’t received this card, but think you are eligible to vote, call the office of the returning officer at 1-866-241-7804 to register and find out where your polling station is located.

You can also register and vote on election day at the polling station set up for your area of residence by providing an official document that includes your name, address and signature.

On election day, polling stations will be set up in or close to student residences for students who reside there.

Want to work?
An election officer can make between $143 and $220 (including travel) for a day.

For more information, please contact your local Elections Canada office at:

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London, Ontario
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TTY-free phone number: 1-866-241-7804

ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, VOTE.

Solomon seeks stricter ‘impaired’ limits

BY EMMA WADLAND

Drinking and driving causes the greatest number of criminal deaths in Canada each year. The statistics are startling, but to Law Professor Robert Solomon there is only one number that really matters, and that’s .05.

Federal law allows drivers a .08 blood-alcohol concentration (BAC). To Solomon, this makes Canada a “world follower” in drunken driving legislation. “Their laws are effectively separating drinking from driving. Our laws are protecting impaired drivers, discouraging the police, and endangering the public.”

Solomon wants Canada to join France and Germany, among others, in lowering the legal BAC to .05. Sweden’s sits at .02.

Solomon’s message is clear and simple: a lowered BAC saves lives — approximately 150 per year. And that’s not including the roughly 7,000 preventable injuries.

Since the 1980s, Solomon has been providing legal support to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Canada. He serves as the organization’s legal director.

Solomon was not the parent of a child killed by a drunk driver. Rather, he became attracted to MADD because he says it’s the right thing to do.

“I quickly realized that if I wanted to use my skills in a way that was actually going to make a real world difference,” he says, “then I had to focus on those drugs which pose the greatest risk of death.”

Alcohol is one of these drugs — especially for young people.

Research shows 20-25 year olds, who represent just 8.3 per cent of the population, account for more than 20 per cent of alcohol-related deaths.

Canadians can get away with a lot when it comes to drinking and driving, Solomon says. Quite often, drivers are not charged with an offence unless their BAC is up to .10, he adds.

“What that means is that someone like me, a 200-pound man, can consume six beers, in two hours, on an empty stomach, get behind the wheel of a car, and drive, and if stopped I wouldn’t even be charged with a criminal offence. It is not only amazing, it is very scary,” says Solomon.

A private members’ bill seeking .05 BAC legislation was introduced by B.C. MP Ron Cannan on Oct. 31. Solomon and his colleagues developed an original members’ bill. It is awaiting review.

Solomon says Canada’s lack of movement on the .05 issue is a symptom of allegiance to the alcohol lobby and hospitality industry. “We must understand that the perceived profits of the alcohol and hospitality industries are more important than traffic safety and the lives of innocent people on the roads,” he says, with evident sarcasm.

“Dean Martin made a career of coming on stage drunk and everyone joked and so those attitudes die hard,” he says. “The science is quite clear. The problem is generating the political will.”

Still, old attitudes could be changing.

On Nov. 10, Solomon joined members of MADD in Kitchener for Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s announcement of a crackdown on drug-impaired driving.

Solomon had 15 minutes in a room full of police officers, MADD staff and victims’ families to sell his recommendations to Harper. To Solomon’s surprise, Harper jotted notes.

“I was extremely impressed with his sincere expression of concern,” says Solomon. “I have a sense that he’s going to view this issue in terms of what is the right thing to do as opposed to only viewing it as a political issue.”

Solomon says people fail to grasp that drinking and driving is a criminal offence like any other. He says policy change could help people to better grasp this concept.

“If you want fewer dead people, change your policies. The rest is smoke and mirrors.”

The writer is a graduate student in Journalism.
Kiwi Connection

Western students will have the opportunity to become Kiwis next year thanks to a new partnership with Victoria University of Wellington New Zealand. Former Western Economics professor Neil Quigley, now in New Zealand, returned to London to sign an agreement with Western’s Ted Hewitt Vice-President (Research and International Relations) covering scientific, academic and cultural issues, with the objective of long-term educational collaboration. The exchange program will cover all faculties except Business, Law, Medicine and professional programs in the Faculty of Health Science. Up to four students can be part of the exchange next year.

Paul Mayne, Western News

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Paul Mayne, Western News

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How Western measures up

A regular feature on key Western performance and activity measures

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<td>Quality of Availability of Career Counselling</td>
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<td>Colleague Satisfaction (Emergency)</td>
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What is measured in the graphs?

Graduate Student Satisfaction - In February 2005 Western and six other members of the G10 administered the Graduate and Professional Student Survey to all graduate students, excluding the MBA program. This survey, designed and administered by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, assesses student satisfaction in all areas of the graduate student experience.

Why is it measured?

The Strategic Plan states that “To meet our targets for [graduate] growth, we will need to ensure that our programs are of high quality and have positive outcomes for students . . . .”

What does it mean?

Survey results indicate a very high level of satisfaction on the part of graduate students with most aspects of the Western experience. At the same time, they have expressed a need for improvement in the quality and availability of graduate-level course offerings.

Source: Graduate and Professional Student Survey as reported in Western’s 2006 Performance and Activity Indicators annual report

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November 16

McIntosh Gallery Exhibition – Joseph Hubbard: WMDs & ParaNoia fear and prejudice in the context of symbols of power and belief systems. For gallery hours of operation contact 519-661-3180. Runs till Dec. 10.

Microbiology & Immunology Seminar – M. Fauvette, Université Laval: “A global analysis of one-carbon donor metabolism and transport in the protozoan parasite Leishmania” DSU – Rm. 3008. 11:30 a.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music – Les Choristes überlebensgroß or “larger than life” to celebrate women. von Kuster Hall, 12:30 p.m.

Physics & Astronomy Colloquium – Greg A. Made, Royal Military College of Canada: “Invisible fingers in the creation of star-forming clouds and stellar activity.” Physics & Astronomy 123, 1:30 p.m.

Engaging Emerging Markets Conference – Hosted by Heather Hosca, Morning Anchor for CBC Newsworld. Brings together political, academic and business leaders to discuss and debate Canada’s evolving relationship with the world’s leading emerging economies: India, China and Brazil. Free and the public is encouraged to attend IOP to Gip Wong at gwowery@uwo.ca – Richard Ivey School of Business, Room IRA0. 2 – 4 p.m.

Visual Arts Speaker Series – Daniel Barrow, Performance/Video/Installation Artist, Winnipeg, MB. 4 p.m.

Physiology and Pharmacology Seminar – Stevenson Lecture. Gerald Karschney, Columbia University: “Transcriptional control of osteogenesis and its Therapeutic Implications” DSU 3008, 10 a.m.

CHIR – STP in Cancer Research & Technology Transfer and the Translational Breast Cancer Unit Seminar Series – Dr. Robert Bond, Clinician-Scientist, Ontario Cancer Institute and Princess Margaret Hospital, Departments of Radiation Oncology and Medical Biophysics, University of Toronto: “DNA Repair and Prospective Cancer: The Hypoxia Connection.” London Regional Cancer Program at LHSC, Victoria Hospital, Room A3-924 – all welcome. 5 - 6:00 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music – 12:30 Friday's of the Fall Season: – David Eggett, cellist, is the Eckhardt-Gramatté winner. von Kuster Hall, 12:30 p.m.

Philosophy Colloquium Series – Claude Panacloc, PhD, Université d'Ottawa in the Nominalism” Talbot College, Rm. 340 – 3:30 p.m.

Modern Languages and Literatures – Transatlantic Seminar Series presents Rafael Montañez Western. “De Macondo a McOndo y los literatos colombianos”. UC 207, 3:30 p.m.

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Men’s / Women’s Swimming – Toronto @ Western, 5:30 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music Opera Gala – inspiration by William Shakespeare – Music by Verdi, Gounod, Nicolai; Cole Porter and more. Tickets $10/$5 cash at the door. Talbot Theatre – 7:30 p.m.

Women’s Hockey – York @ Western, 4 p.m.

Women’s Volleyball – Laurier @ Western, 2 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music Opera Gala – inspiration by William Shakespeare – Music by Verdi; Gounod, Nicolai; Cole Porter and more. Tickets $10/$5 cash at the door. Talbot Theatre – 7:30 p.m.

Blood Donor Clinic, UCC lower level. 12 – 4 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music – Gwen Beamish & Friends celebrate Canada Music Week with Canadian composers. 12:30 p.m. von Kuster Hall.

Physiology and Pharmacology Seminar – David Brophyock, Ohio State University: “Connective Tissue Growth Factor in Liver Disease” DSU 3008, 4:30 p.m.

Modern Languages and Literatures – Film: Michael Haneke’s Code Inconnu (2000, 118 min) UC 142. 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Men’s Basketball – Toronto @ Western, 8 p.m.

Women’s Basketball – Toronto @ Western, 6 p.m.

Autumn Writes – 12:30 Friday’s of the Fall Season: – Paul Willis, Ralph Connor University. “The Upside of Down: Catastrophe, Creativity & the Renewal of Civilization.” Connor Hall, UC – 1:30 p.m.

Pre-Dinner Concert – 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Women’s Basketball – Ryerson @ Western, 6 p.m.

Women’s Basketball – Ryerson @ Western, 8 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music Opera Gala – inspiration by William Shakespeare – Music by Verdi, Gounod, Nicolai; Cole Porter and more. Tickets $5/$30 cash at the door. Talbot Theatre – 8 p.m.

Armstrong Awards – 1 p.m.

Women’s Basketball – Toronto @ Western, 8 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music Opera Gala – inspiration by William Shakespeare – Music by Verdi, Gounod, Nicolai; Cole Porter and more. Tickets $5/$30 cash at the door. Talbot Theatre – 8 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music Opera Gala – inspiration by William Shakespeare – Music by Verdi, Gounod, Nicolai; Cole Porter and more. Tickets $5/$30 cash at the door. Talbot Theatre – 8 p.m.

Men’s Basketball – Toronto @ Western, 2 p.m.

Men’s Volleyball – Laurier @ Western, 2 p.m.

Blood Donor Clinic, UCC lower level. 12 – 4 p.m.

McIntosh Gallery Exhibition – Joseph Hubbard: WMDs & ParaNoia fear and prejudice in the context of symbols of power and belief systems. Free discussion circle with Ali Mohajer. For gallery hours of operation contact 519-661-3180. 12:30 p.m.

Men’s / Women’s Track & Field – Purple & White Intrasquad @ Western

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures – Film: Ulrich Seidl’s Dog Days (2001, 121 min). UC 142. 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Master Plan – Comment on the content and direction of Western’s new Master Plan. Alumni House, Room 112. 7:30 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music – UWO Symphonic Band presents Remembering. Talbot Theatre, 12:30 p.m.

Modern Languages and Literatures presents “La Terzata” – Spanish Conversation Group. Anyone wishing to speak Spanish and meet people from different Spanish-speaking countries is welcome. UC 117, 3:30 p.m.

Dept. of Medicine – Clinical Pharmacology Grand Rounds. Stan Van Uum, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western. “Measurement of endogenous steroid hormones in hair.” UCSC, University Hospital Auditorium C. 4:00 p.m.

Don Wright Faculty of Music – UWO Symphonic Band / Wind Ensemble. A gala evening of instrumental music. Talbot Theatre, 8 p.m.

Gift of hands-on learning for First Nations

Richard Harris remembers as a young child receiving one particular Christmas present from his parents that would form the basis for his career calling.

“I remember getting this microscope from Simpson-Sears,” he says, noting it wasn’t the most hi-tech piece of machinery. “But I still loved it.”

Decades later, Harris, now a laboratory supervisor in Biology, and soon-to-be manager of Imaging, Information and Data System at the new Biotron facility, finds himself playing with more sophisticated tools of research.

Yet his affinity for the microscope has led Harris to ‘share the wealth’ through the donation of 200 microscopes to educators in Grand Council Treaty #3, which comprises over 25 First Nation communities in a broad area at the border of Ontario and Manitoba.

While the microscopes, built some 40 years ago, have been overtaken by the teaching needs at the university, Harris felt there had to be an outlet where they could be put to use. The microscopes will be used in 14 schools – 10 elementary and four secondary.

“They were a little-used resource here,” he says, noting while they were still worth more than $100 each, they had been sitting dormant in the countless storage lockers that adorn the hallways of the Biology department.

“They were becoming more a liability than an asset to us, but we’ve easily turned them into an asset for someone else. I wanted them to go somewhere where they could make an immediate impact.”

Harris knew with the extensive and ongoing renovations to the building, the microscopes would not be returning. So he put out feelers for a good home for them and was put in touch with Debbie Lipscombe, an education policy analyst with Grand Council Treaty #3.

She says the microscopes will be a great addition to the learning curriculum of the schools for years to come.

“It was a wonderful surprise when I heard from Richard,” says Lipscombe. “Teaching science is great but experimental learning, actually getting to do things hands-on, is always better than book learning.”

While the microscopes are an addition to some schools, for others it will be a first time adventure for young students.

“We have a one-room school house on a small island that has students from kindergarten to Grade 6, and it will be the first microscopes for them,” she says. “So you can imagine their excitement.”

With the help of students from the First Nations Service at Western, the microscopes were wrapped and packed – all 54 boxes – and shipped in August, with Voyageur Transportation providing free delivery.

While it would seem the gift would end there, it’s really only beginning. Along with friend and former elementary science teacher Hank Haliday, the two will be traveling to Grand Council Treaty #3 in one week where they’ll instruct the teachers and students on how to get the most from the microscopes.

“At first it was an administrative thing, and now it’s a personal mission,” says Harris. “I didn’t want to just deliver them and go away. I wanted to maintain contact and hopefully continue to do so over time.”

While Harris admits the idea to send the microscope may have been his, he is the first to confess it would have never gotten this far without help from so many others.

“There is no way it would have happened. It would have been impossible,” he says. “Thanks to all those who assisted me in any way.”

To read more about the Grand Council Treaty #3, visit www.treaty3.ca.