



McGill

C e n t r e f o r

Intelligent Machines

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Newsletter

What is that Thing?

Thank you to the anonymous plant donor for brightening up the CIM Lounge with his unusual contribution. Everyone using the Lounge has commented very favourably on this exotic plant. The two most popular comments are: "What is it called?" and "What/who does it eat??"



McGill Holidays

McGill University is closed for the Easter/Passover holidays this Friday, April 5 and Monday, April 8. Enjoy the long weekend!

McGill in the dark

Wednesday, March 20th was the first day of Spring, although it actually felt and looked more like a blustery, cold February day. The Faculty of Engineering (including CIM) was hosting an important delegation of 20 visitors from the National Research Council. Demos had been organized, presentations scheduled and the labs were full of students anxiously working on their end of semester submissions. Then at 11:15, as Prof. Angeles started his presentation, the lights went out, the systems crashed, the elevators stopped, and the fire doors shut! All the McGill campus was in the dark, even at 2020 University (and when you're on the 21st floor without an elevator, lunch is a long way down!) Once again, we were reminded of how much our lives depend on that commodity called "electricity".

The NRC visit was reorganized at the spur of the moment. Thank you to all the demo people for their cooperation and especially to the CIM Faculty who quickly reorganized their schedules to give talks when we were unable to impress the visitors with demos. Despite the blocked fire door, the yells from students caught in the elevators and the subdued lighting in the Seminar Room, the visitors obtained all the pertinent facts and information on the research at CIM.

Around 12:45 our patience was rewarded with the return of the lights and the elevators; although the visitors were advised to take the stairs due to the uncertainty of the situation. The cause of the blackout was due to an unfortunate accident on the construction site of the new engineering building: someone failed to identify a major Hydro cable and cut through it ... ! At exactly the same time though, there was a gas leak at the corner of Peel and Sherbrooke Streets, leaving part of downtown Montreal in the dark as well.

So, on the first day of Spring at CIM, life was much quieter for everyone; except, of course, for the Systems Staff, Jan and Mouse, who had more than their hands full just trying to get the systems working again. Thanks guys!!

One last thought: in the midst of this total blackout, one professor, oblivious to everything and thoroughly absorbed in the urgency of his work, was seen at his desk sending faxes from his PowerBook. Ah, the wonders of technology!

Submitted by Kathleen VanderNoot



Update on future power shutdowns

Please take note that on Wednesday, April 3 the System will be shut down from 7 PM until 8 AM the next morning.



Also, there will be no power in either the McConnell Eng., Macdonald Eng., Frank Dawson Adams, Macdonald Harrington, and the Macdonald Stewart Library between 10:00 PM and 1:00 AM on April 3-4.

There will also be an extended shutdown of the systems on July 5 and 6. More details will be available at a later date.

MARS Registration

It is now possible for currently registered graduate students, who will be continuing their programs in 1996-97, to register via MARS.

MARS registration for returning students takes place from Tuesday March 19 to Wednesday July 24. Late registration via MARS is possible from Wednesday September 4 to Sunday September 15. The late registration penalty for full-time students is \$100; for part-time and additional session students, the penalty is \$40.

Please register for next year as soon as possible, while it is still on your mind. Remember that it is possible to register for a term without adding courses: simply follow steps 1 through 6A on your MARS worksheet. You can always add your courses during the Add/Drop period in September.

Students wanting more details should contact the Graduate Studies Secretary of their department/school.

Submitted by Barbara Whiston, Graduate Students Secretary, Mechanical Engineering

NEWS AND EVENTS

Hats off to ...

☞ Congratulations to Professor Evangelos Papadopoulos and his wife, Evie, who became the proud parents of a little boy, named George Papadopoulos, like his grandfather. He was born on Thursday, March 28 at 1:31 PM at the Royal Victoria Hospital, weighing 3.070 kg. Evangelos noted, "He arrived a bit (3 weeks) early and so my mother-in-law missed the occasion. The result is that I am stuck at home, directing a chorus of two... Evie (mother) still recovering. Father(me) - probably - never will!" Best wishes to the family!



☞ Our French visitor Luc Joly & his wife will be returning to France with more than just memories. Their little Canadian baby girl, Alice was born March 18 at 5 AM. Luc says that the biggest shock is realizing that she is theirs for keeps; that they will actually be able to bring her home with them from the hospital! Toutes nos félicitations, Luc.

☞ Congratulations to Altaz Bhanji who proposed to his high school sweetheart, Salima, this past Valentines Day. They are planning to be married on September 1, in Toronto. Best wishes, Altaz.

CIM picnic anyone?

It's been months since our last big CIM get together. Anyone interested in organizing a spring fling? Ahmed Helmy has suggested a CIM picnic in the Yamaska Park in the Eastern Townships. It offers canoeing, Barbecues, games, ... If you are interested, would like more info, or would like to offer other ideas, please contact him at <ahmed@cim>. Projected date: a weekend in mid May.

Articles & ideas are welcome. Please send them by e-mail to the editor, Janet Burghardt (e-mail: jmb@cim.mcgill.ca). Deadline for publication is the 5th of every month.

Fly the friendly skies

An award should go to the United Airlines gate agent in Denver for being smart and funny, and making her point, when confronted with a passenger who probably deserved to fly as cargo.

During the final days at Denver's old Stapleton airport, a crowded United flight was canceled.

A single agent was rebooking a long line of inconvenienced travelers. Suddenly an angry passenger pushed his way to the desk. He slapped his ticket down on the counter and said, "I HAVE to be on this flight and it has to be FIRST CLASS."

The agent replied, "I'm sorry sir. I'll be happy to try to help you, but I've got to help these folks first, and I'm sure we'll be able to work something out."

The passenger was unimpressed. He asked loudly, so that the passengers behind him could hear, "Do you have any idea *who* I am?"

Without hesitating, the gate agent smiled and grabbed her public address microphone. "May I have your attention please?" she began, her voice bellowing throughout the terminal. "We have a passenger here at the gate WHO DOES NOT KNOW WHO HE IS. If anyone can help him find his identity, please come to the gate."

With the folks behind him in line laughing hysterically, the man glared at the United agent, gritted his teeth and swore, "(Expletive) you."

Without flinching, she smiled and said, "I'm sorry, sir, but you'll have to stand in line for that, too."

The man retreated as the people in the terminal applauded loudly. Although the flight was canceled and people were late, they were no longer angry at United.

Submitted by Paul Mackenzie

