

Physicists offer entertaining weekend

New Brunswick doesn't have anything to match Ontario's Science Centre, but for one activity-crammed weekend, that role will be filled by the UNB physics department.

Starting this afternoon and continuing for more than 24 hours, the physicists will be offering, free, a fascinating glimpse of how the world works.

An address by Jearl Walker at 7:30 tonight is the opener for the public. Dr. Walker is a professor of physics at the University of Cleveland. He has achieved international notoriety through his daredevil experiments to make physics come alive to non-physicists. His bed of nails (actually more like a nail-end-Jearl-Walker sandwich) is already at UNB. Dr. Walker will probably bring his molten lead, for hand dipping, and his concrete block, for hand chopping, with him.

Following Dr. Walker's lecture, visitors are invited to the official opening of the Physics Building, with York-Sunbury MP and minister of state (transport) Robert Howie presiding. It is expected to take place close to nine o'clock, at the main entrance across from the Old Arts Building. The ribbon cutting will be followed by a reception in Room 101, and informal tours of the facilities.

On Saturday the lecture will be more serious, as William Fyfe, chairman of University of Western Ontario's geology department, discusses nuclear waste disposal. This is a highly technical problem which Dr. Fyfe will make comprehensible to the layman.

Both Dr. Walker and Dr. Fyfe will speak in the auditorium of

MacLaggan hall, the nursing building (next door to the campus bank). Tickets are being distributed to both lectures, to save visitors being turned away at the door. Tickets are available at the UNB Student Union Building, Westminster Books, and the physics department.

From 2-5 p.m. on Saturday, it's pure fun in the Physics Building, as faculty and students open their labs for a public open house. Visitors will be able to whisper in one end of an acoustic lens and be heard across the room. The nifty thing about the lens is its construction from garbage bags and hula hoops.

For those who like their science a little more sophisticated, there will be a carbon dioxide laser, a visible speech analyzer, a spectrometer showing the "optical fingerprints" of gasses, and holograms, which are three-dimensional photographs.

There will be an opportunity to play with miniature hovercraft in a display titled "physics without friction". Visitors can hold a microphone to their hearts and see their heartbeat register on an oscilloscope. Also on display will be the "talking flame", an exhibit employing a Bunsen burner flame and a loudspeaker.

The weekend is even more ambitious than the public schedule appears, for the physics department is simultaneously hosting the three-day Atlantic Undergraduate Physics Conference. A series of lectures, research papers and tours are being co-ordinated by the UNB Student Physics Club.



Roy Koelbl (left) and Terry Sturterant (right) measure Prof. Colin Mailer's bald spot.

Paper bag returns to stores

When the New Brunswick housewife goes shopping these days for her fruit and potatoes chances are she will meet an old friend she hasn't seen lately—the paper bag.

In the last two years the plastic bag has made dramatic inroads in the supermarket trade traditionally served by the paper bag. But the severe oil price increases of the last year (plastic bags are produced from oil-products) now give a new competitive opportunity to paper.

J. Robert Howie, Minister of State for Transport, announced on behalf of Elmer MacKay, federal Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) that Domkraft Limited of Saint John

has accepted a DREE incentive offer of \$39,890.

He said the money will be used toward opening a new facility to make paper bags. Eight new jobs are expected to result.

Mr. Howie said the offer was based on 25 per cent of authorized

capital costs of \$d60,800 and 30 per cent of authorized wages and salaries of \$82,300.

The company's Ontario and Quebec plants are operating at capacity, and start-up of the Saint John plant will allow increased service to Maritime customers.

Roofers heaviest smokers

Which profession would you expect to find North America's heaviest smokers?

Well, according to a study at British Columbia's Fraser University, roofers are at the top of the list—followed closely by bartend-

ers, painters, construction workers and taxi drivers. In general, the study found, blue collar workers smoke more than white collar workers, and men still smoke slightly more than women. Among women, waitresses head the puffing parade, with librarians and teachers smoking the least.

Blacks, by the way, smoke more often than whites, but are less likely to be heavy chain smokers. (NEWSSCRIPT)

Computer 1,000 times faster

A new type of computer using light instead of electricity may be a thousand times faster than ordinary electronic models.

Researchers at Britain's Heriot-Watt University have developed a unique alloy of antimony and indium which can mimic the basic functions of transistors when struck by infrared light.

At the moment, the whole project is experimental, but physics professor Stanley Smith, who is coordinating the effort, says the new memory cells may eventually be able to respond to commands in just a few millionths of a second—far faster than any present memory device. (NEWS-CRIPT)

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