

Dal gets grant

by Pat Trillo

In 1991, IBM established an environmental research program with the initiative of stimulating research and helping to innovate methods used in solving some of the world's more problematic dilemmas. The computer technology needed to undertake such an endeavour was awarded at first to ten universities and research institutions within the United States.

In July of 1994, four more grants were given out, this time to institutions outside the U.S. The Australian Institute of Marine Science, the University of Chile won along with the University of Liège. Dalhousie won a grant worth \$560,000 when IBM Canada accepted a proposal from Dal researchers.

Heading the project at Dalhousie are Keith Thompson, an associate professor in Oceanography and Statistics, Jinyu Sheng, a research associate, and Steven Matheson, a systems administrator.

They will be using the grant,

which includes RISC system/6000 workstations, peripheral equipment and funding to pay graduates involved in the program, to develop new models for predicting coastal circulation along the continental shelf. This is useful in tracking fish stocks, movements of icebergs and oil spills, as well as determining locations of persons lost at sea.

The new equipment can do for researchers in a day what before would have taken a week. The more data that is collected about the present state of the coastal region, the more they can learn about how it looked in the past decades.

Although a good public relations move for IBM, they must receive strong accolades for doing more for the environment than most companies who boast to "think green." IBM donated this equipment at a time when, as Keith Thompson put it, "they were losing money hand over fist."

The program at Dal is still in its early stages and is expected to take three years for the final results.

POINTLESS PONDERABLES

Last week's answer:

The winner this week, who sent in her answer a scant few hours after the paper hit the stands, is Jane Shkolnik, who suggested that the 17 apples be turned into applesauce in order to equally feed 16 people. Congratulations, Jane.

Many other suggestions came in, like throwing one apple overboard... you're starving — why would you throw food overboard?

Another popular, but wrong answer was to give each person one apple and then let each person take one bite from the remaining one. Well, apples come in different sizes, as do bites.

The only way to truly be equal is the applesauce method. For everyone else out there, the Pointless Ponderables are turning into a real race, with the answers coming in on the day the paper goes out — so if you want to win, you've got to think fast!

This week's question:

Here's the situation: A black dog is in the middle of a deserted country road, with no collar, and nobody walking it. There are no streetlights (this being a deserted country road). A car is rushing towards the dog, its headlights burned out. Yet the car still manages to swerve and avoid the dog. How could the driver have seen it?

Solutions should be dropped off to the Gazette at room 312 in the Student Union Building or can be e-mailed to gazette@ac.dal.ca. The first person to get the correct answer gets their name published in the paper, so hurry now!

"It's better to be a
one-eyed, three-legged
mangy cur than a
spoon-fed lap dog."

You are your own dog.



Red Dog Beer.



Unleashed in Nova Scotia
at local beer prices.

Water important, valuable

by Barbara Müller

Water — the streams, the lakes, the oceans, the rain... Scientifically, water is special because it is present, unlike any other element, at a gas, liquid and solid phase naturally on Earth. This is a unique feature to our planet — also called 'Oceanus.' Water covers 71% of the Earth's surface.

So what?

Life is dependent on water... life originates from water. Plants need water to live, and animals (yes, that includes us) need water to live. Yet the water from ponds, rivers and seas evaporates to make clouds. Plants release droplets, we sweat, clouds are produced. It rains. We drink.

Everyone knows the hydro-cycle. But have you ever thought of it this way: We are all connected.

Not only do we all thrive on water (the base of our existence), but we are drinking the evaporation of a sequoia tree in British Columbia or the sweat from a race horse in Montreal. This just shows our inter-connectedness to one another, the complex web, where if one is sick, all are sick.

Natives who live as "one" with nature call this planet "Mother Earth," for all life comes from her womb. They call the water her blood. Without blood, we cannot live. Without water we cannot live.

And yet, we pollute our water with no second thought. We throw out our unwanted waste anywhere (and often, it ends up in the water). We also dump contaminants in our rivers, and we don't worry about gas going directly into the water from our motor boats.

There are forty sewer outfall pipes along the harbor. The pipes dump object like condoms and tampon applicators, grease, bacteria and viruses; and algae-encouraging nutrients (such as phosphates).

Whenever our blood is poisoned, our body is sick. When our water is poisoned, our Earth is sick. Please help heal the planet.



PHOTO: BARBARA MÜLLER