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## Bottle floated for 50 years

A bottle thrown from a transatlantic steamer more than 50 years ago has been found by the crew of a fishing trawler off the coast of Newfoundland.

The green bottle, with a rubber stopper and covered with barnacles, contained a note which read:

"This was sent from the *SS Montrose* bound for Saint John, New Brunswick, which sailed from Glasgow Jan. 12, 1929. Signed Richard Kay, 42 North Fort Street, Leeds, Scotland."

A note on the other side of the piece of paper asked anyone finding the bottle to send it to Mrs. Kay at the same Leeds address.

Captain Marty Hannrahan of the trawler *Atlantic Lindsay*, which was fishing yellowtail flounder on the Newfoundland Grand Banks when the bottle was recovered, said he planned to make inquiries and would forward the bottle to Mrs. Kay, if she were still living.

It was not the first unusual haul from the ocean floor for Captain Hannrahan. Two years ago he pulled up a large part of a Second World War fighter aircraft.

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## Birth control by nasal spray

Birth control could be just a nasal spray away if research into a new contraceptive drug proves successful, says a Quebec university researcher.

Dr. Fernand Labrie, director of Laval University hospital's molecular endocrinology laboratory, says that research into the new contraceptive is continuing in about 20 North American centres and could result in a marketable product in about four or five years.

Dr. Labrie was speaking at a news conference during the recent annual conference of the Society for the Study of Reproduction held in Quebec City. The conference attracted 650 scientists from the United States and Canada.

Unlike the traditional birth control pill, which acts directly on the ovaries, the new product would affect part of the brain which activates the ovaries. Researchers hope the spray will have no side effects.

Dr. Labrie's research team is working on a spray which would be used once a month in the second half of a woman's cycle and would cause menstruation to

start one or two days earlier than normal.

The same product, used on men, results in a decrease in the formation of male sexual hormones and could therefore be used as a new approach to contraception in men.

Work in Sweden on a nasal-spray contraceptive involves daily spraying of the product, a procedure that researchers claim has been 100 percent effective in preliminary studies.

Research is continuing into about 20 new products to prevent conception, including a pill taken once a month and a product inserted under the skin.

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## Keeping workers happy

One of the fringe benefits of Mary LeBlanc's job keeps her in shape. It's a \$600-a-year membership in a fitness club, paid by her employer, Sandbury Building Corporation of Toronto.

When she is not travelling, the 34-year-old business executive runs, works out and has a whirlpool bath and sauna before driving to the office. "It really relaxes me," she said. "I feel super and I'm able to think better." It is the reason why her boss feels the membership expense is money well spent.

"We have to pay certain fringe benefits, and to me fitness is one of the best," said John Sandusky, company president and a member of the same fitness club. "You can meet the pressures of the day a little better."

Executive fringe benefits, also called "perks" — an abbreviation of perquisites — are found in many professions, and vary accordingly.

### Bank benefits

For example, employees at one major bank can borrow up to \$25,000 at interest rates as low as 6 per cent, although the rate varies according to the purpose and security of the loan.

After three years of employment, management personnel at the bank may borrow mortgage money at 20 percent less than the going rate. All employees get free chequing privileges and an interest rate on charge cards at half the public rate. They can also pay utility bills and buy traveller's cheques without paying a service charge.

Even workers at some breweries are given a limited amount of free beer. Workers at one tobacco company are given a free

pack of 20 cigarettes a day, plus all they can smoke — in the lounge, not on the work floor.

However, a Revenue Canada spokesman said employees must pay income tax on any gift from employers if the company writes it off as a business expense. But there are exceptions. Air, rail and bus transport companies have traditionally given employees free rides and these are not taxable benefits. The rationale is that free passes are given on a space-available basis only, so the carrier would not be making money on an empty seat anyway.

### Car discounts

There are other perks. Employees at a major auto manufacturer can get a discount on new cars and parts and can get deals on slightly used executive cars.

Some department stores give employees discounts ranging from 15 to 25 per cent off all goods sold in their stores.

A soft-drink firm offers unlimited soft drinks in paper cups at work.

Employees nibble the product at a chocolate factory, but it is not described as an official perk. However, workers can buy chocolates and bakery products in the employees' store at 20 per cent off.

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## Ancient campsite unearthed

Alberta government archaeologists, working on a site at Grande Cache Lake 400 kilometres northwest of Edmonton, have unearthed the remains of an Indian settlement they believe is 5,000 years old.

Research assistant Anna Richards said the team had discovered spearheads and arrowheads — called McKean points — which date the site at about 5,000 years old. Preliminary studies indicate that the site was not used as a permanent settlement, but perhaps as a major camp along ancient trails.

The findings indicate a thriving culture had used the site as an area for tool building, fishing and hunting. The McKean points were probably used for hunting moose, elk, deer and possibly wood buffalo.

Since no positive signs were unearthed indicating a permanent settlement, scientists have speculated that the area was merely a wayside stop for a culture which may have had links with people in southern Alberta and the interior of British Columbia.