



## Daily Bulletin

### Thursday, February 12, 2009

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- **Employees advised of RRSP rules**

Editor:  
Chris Redmond  
Communications and  
Public Affairs  
bulletin@uwaterloo.ca



**The world today celebrates** the 200th birthday of [Charles Darwin](#), author of *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and the philosopher and scientist most associated with the development of the theory of [evolution](#) — the central principle of modern biology. To make the most of the day, the biology department "invites all members of the UW community to join us in a toast," between 4:00 and 7:00 today at the Bombshelter pub in the Student Life Centre. "We challenge you," a poster adds, "to wear a piece of clothing that celebrates biodiversity on our planet." • Darwinism will be the theme for this year's Pascal Lectures on Christianity and the University, [to be given](#) February 25 and 26 by Denis Alexander of the University of Cambridge.

### Like water? For chocolate? It's your day

Yes, it certainly did rain hard overnight — predominantly "driving rain" from a southerly direction, judging from data on the UW weather station [web site](#). "The GRCA has issued [a flood warning](#)," the site notes, "so everybody should keep away from streams and rivers the next few days. As well, **if your basement is prone to flooding**, this is probably a good time to look at it and make sure that everything that can't get wet is off the floor." I'm not aware of any little floods this morning in UW's network of tunnels and basements, apart from a few drips near the Modern Languages coffee shop, but if there's anything happening, I know readers will report it. Outdoors, meanwhile, the westbound lanes of University Avenue are closed from Seagram Drive (the campus main entrance) up to Westmount Road, with a lake covering much of the pavement. Heavy equipment was

moving into position at 8:00 this morning to work on the problem.

There's gonna be chocolate today in a lot of UW offices and residence rooms. It's delivery day for the 2009 round of "treat-a-grams" marketed by the Keystone Campaign — packages of rich-and-goey cupcakes with the trim in UW colours. A total of **1,770 three-**



**dollar treats were sold**, says Julia Wegenast of the Keystone staff, adding that 57 of the chocolate purchasers added voluntary donations to the tune of \$1,335. "As always," she says, "all proceeds from the treat-a-gram program will be designated to UW undergraduate and graduate scholarships and qualify for the university's matching gift opportunities." Krishna Mistry, acting manager of Keystone, adds "special thanks to everyone who participated in this year's treat-a-gram program. The 2009 program was an incredible success, and would not have been possible without the contributions of Food Services,

Parking Services, the Keystone Campaign Special Programs Working Group, the departmental treat reps, and all the assembly and delivery volunteers." The campaign will happen again just before Valentine's Day next year, but word is that chocolate cupcakes are out and "a new treat" will be introduced.

The arts faculty council gave its approval Monday afternoon, by a divided vote, to a proposed undergraduate program leading to a **Bachelor of Global Business and Digital Arts** degree. If things eventually fall into place, and if approval is given by other levels of governance at UW, it would be offered starting in 2010, with students taking the first two years of the program on the Waterloo campus and the third and fourth years at the projected Stratford campus. As recently as [December](#), the undergraduate program was on hold, with Stratford plans giving priority to a planned master's program in digital media, but "We have moved the program forward," dean of arts Ken Coates said yesterday, noting that actual implementation depends on such matters as financing for construction in Stratford. He added: "The Arts Council discussion was very valuable and informative. It was precisely the kind of healthy and important discussion we want for all programs."

"We have a great annual competition here in the Faculty of Environment," says a memo from Betty Bax of the Centre for Knowledge Integration. She explains: "Did you know the first Blue Box recycling program began here in Waterloo? Initially an idea introduced by Jack Rosen, a local businessman and waste management professional, the Blue Box program has been adopted across Canada and internationally. It's considered one of the most successful community-based environmental projects of the 20th century. To celebrate and recognize Jack Rosen's vision and commitment to environmental issues, an award has been created, sponsored by the Jack and Honey Rosen Charitable Foundation. The competition asks for ideas aimed at **solving environmental challenges and issues**. The winning entry is awarded \$2,500. This competition is held annually in February and March, and is open to all full-time undergraduate or graduate students in the Faculty of Environment. For the 2009 competition, students need to tell us, by February 27, that they are entering an innovative idea that could solve, mitigate or avoid an environmental problem. Posters outlining the idea are due March 6 and will be displayed from March 9 to 20 in the courtyard of the ENV building. Entries will be judged on innovativeness, simplicity, global application, ease of applicability and cost effectiveness. Winners will be announced by March 31." Details are [online](#).

Nominations are welcome until February 27 for this year's [Warren Ober Awards](#), recognizing "**outstanding teaching by graduate students**" in the faculty of arts. • Because of the Family Day long weekend, the UW bookstore and UW Shop in South Campus Hall will be closed **not only Monday but also Saturday** this week. • Here's a

reminder that most staff in **the human resources department** will be out of the office tomorrow, Friday, for a professional development event; a reception desk will remain open.

## Peek tonight at plans for solar house

*a release from the UW media relations office*

North House, an advanced solar-powered home being developed by students and faculty at UW and two other universities, will demonstrate Canada's commitment to sustainability and promote alternative energy sources, its organizers say.

[Team North](#), which involves students and faculty at Waterloo, Ryerson University and Simon Fraser University, along with industry partners, is one of only two Canadian entries selected to participate in the 2009 Solar Decathlon competition, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. The decathlon will be held October 9 to 18 on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., drawing 20 university teams with prototype solar homes from around the world. The teams will each build a full-scale house to compete in 10 categories measuring quality and performance.

Team North will develop North House — a marketable solar-powered home for people with active lifestyles. The team aims to combine green building, solar and interactive technologies in order to reduce energy demand, foster a conservation ethic and boost the quality of life for Canadians.

"North House will offer powerful solutions by using energy more efficiently and using energy from renewable sources," said Maun Demchenko, Team North's director of public relations. "North House will serve as a vehicle for teaching the public about solar technologies and how they can be used in new and existing housing. It will showcase new sustainable green construction building practices in Canada on a world stage."

North House, deploying the latest in energy-efficient technologies and materials, will demonstrate how design can reduce energy use while maintaining a high quality of life for its occupants. Such an integrated approach to construction draws on all building components and systems to create a more comfortable building, save energy and reduce environmental impact. The project will be shown off at an open house tonight from 7:00 to 10:00 at the UW Architecture building in Cambridge.

## Employees advised of RRSP rules

Most UW employees will be entitled to put "approximately \$3,025" into their Registered Retirement Savings Plans during 2009, says an annual memo from the human resources department about RRSP issues.

That figure applies to people who earned anywhere between \$44,900 and \$116,660 during 2008 and were members of the university pension plan during the year, says the memo, which is available [online](#).

"At this time of year," it notes, "many staff and faculty are contemplating a contribution to their private RRSP's. March 2, 2009 is the latest date a contribution can be made for the 2008 taxation year, based on earnings and the value of the pension benefit earned during 2007 (pension adjustment).

"The rules for calculating allowable tax-assisted retirement savings were established for the

1991 taxation year; however, in 2008 the maximum contribution was increased to \$20,000. The federal government provides a written record of your overall RRSP room in May or June of each year, along with your tax assessment.

"Generally speaking, for our type of pension plan, the government's determination of any one year's new RRSP room is 18% of the previous year's earned income (subject to the maximum RRSP limit) minus the previous year's pension adjustment (value of pension benefit accrued). The legislated formula for a pension adjustment is: (Pension benefit earned X 9) — \$600. However, situations such as part-time, part year in the plan, and total earnings greater than base earnings can affect the calculation.

"Your accumulated RRSP room (up to and including 2008) appeared on your 2007 tax assessment which should have been mailed to you by Canada Revenue Agency around May 2008.

"Employees earning between \$43,700 and \$111,000 in 2007 and participating in the UW pension plan for the full year of 2007 will be entitled to RRSP room for the 2008 taxation year of approximately \$2,960."

For 2009, it continues, that figure goes up to about \$3,025. "You can make your full RRSP contribution for 2009 at any time in 2009 . The government will report your 2009 RRSP room with your 2008 income tax assessment in May or June.

"The taxation system allows a \$2,000 lifetime over-contribution without penalty. While you are not allowed a tax deduction on over-contributions (unless they are applied against successive tax years), the interest income is accumulated on a tax-sheltered basis."

The memo includes a paragraph about "additional contributions" to the UW pension plan, which used to be a possibility, but "are no longer permitted. A [flexible pension plan](#) was introduced in 1998, but 2008 contributions to that plan had to be made in December 2008."

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### **Link of the day**

**[Born on the same day: Abraham Lincoln](#)**

### **When and where**

**Employer interviews** for spring co-op work term continue; rankings open February 27, 1 p.m.

**Class enrolment appointments** on [Quest](#) for spring 2009 courses, February 9-14; open enrolment begins February 16.

**UW Shop sidewalk sale** with deals on UW fashions, last day, 9:30 to 4:00, South Campus Hall concourse.

**Keith Geddes**, school of computer science, retirement reception 4:00 to 6:00, Davis Centre lounge.

**German film series:** "Aguirre: Wrath of God" (1973) 6:00 p.m., East Campus Hall room 1220.

**Federation of Students election** [polls close](#) 7 p.m.; results announced noon Friday, Student Life Centre.

**Graduating students** session at St. Jerome's University, discussion with college alumni about next steps, 7:00 p.m., Siegfried Hall.

**Warrior men's hockey** vs. Laurier, 7:30 p.m., Icefield.

**Bombshelter pub** and 100.3 Sound FM (CKMS) present the Ruby Coast and Knock Knock Ginger, interviews with Federation election candidates, \$6 advance, \$8 at door.

**Loving to Learn Day** sponsored by Centre for Teaching Excellence, Friday. (Deadline for "education quotation" contest, Thursday 7 p.m.) [Details.](#)

**Exceptional Teaching by a Student** awards for 2008: nomination deadline Friday. [Details.](#)

**Information systems and technology** professional development seminar: "New RT System" and "Internet Kiosks Revisited" Friday 9 a.m., IST seminar room.

**Valentine's Day** meals at the University Club: Friday, luncheon buffet 11:30 to 2:00, \$19.50; dinner 5:00 to 8:00, a la carte menu; reservations ext. 33801.

**Study in China** summer program information meeting Friday 12:00 noon, Renison University College cafeteria (also March 13).

**Knowledge Integration seminar:** Frances Westley, Social Innovation Generation, "Research for Social Entrepreneurship", Friday 2:30, Environment II room 2002.

**Centre for Business, Entrepreneurship and Technology** presents Rebecca Fannin, author of *Silicon Dragon: How China Is Winning the Tech Race*, Friday 3:00, CBET, 295 Hagey Boulevard, suite 240.

'**Pee-Wee's Big Adventure**' free showing sponsored by Render (UW art gallery) and Recycle Cycles, Friday 6:30 p.m., Commons Café, 43 Queen Street South, Kitchener.

**Fine Arts Film Society** Malaysian cinema series: "The Last Communist" (2006), Friday 7:00, East Campus Hall room 1220.

**Lawrence Hill**, author of *The Book of Negroes*, reads from his work Friday 7:30 p.m., Siegfried Hall, St. Jerome's University.

**Black History month** event: Afri-Can Connection "Celebration of African Culture and Music" Friday 8:00, Conrad Grebel UC. **Cancelled.**

**Warrior sports this weekend:** basketball (men and women at Windsor Saturday; men's hockey at Windsor Saturday; women's hockey at Queen's Saturday, at UOIT Sunday.

**Winter term reading week** February 16-20.

**Family Day** holiday Monday, February 16: UW offices and most services will be closed; libraries open 12:00 to 6:00.

**Blue Mountain ski trip** organized by International Student Connection, Tuesday tickets \$50 (transportation and lift ticket) at Federation of Students office.

**Math alumni in Seattle** reception Tuesday 6:00 p.m., **cancelled.**

**Last day** for 50 per cent tuition fee refund, February 20.

**UWdir** partially out of operation February 20-22; new identity management system, WatIAM, available as of February 23. [Details.](#)

**Garage sale** fund-raiser for drama student trip to Italy, February 25, 1:00 to 4:00, Theatre of the Arts. Drop off items for sale at Modern Languages loading dock February 6, 9, 11, 13, 23.

**The Engineering and Technology Labour Market Study:** John O'Grady, Prism Economics and Analysis, presents findings of study for Ontario Centre for Engineering and Public Policy, February 25, 3:30 p.m., Carl Pollock Hall room 2387.

'**Interactive Teaching and Learning Strategies**' three-day workshop sponsored by Centre for Teaching Excellence, March 3, 5 and 10. [Details.](#)

**Faculty of Arts public lecture:** Mary Simon, president of Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami, "Inuit and the Canadian Arctic: Sovereignty Begins at Home" March 3, 7:00, MacKirdy Hall, St. Paul's College. [Details.](#)

**Engineering Shadow Day** for Grade 11 and 12 students, March 4. [Details.](#)

**International Women's Day** dinner with speaker Yan Li (Confucius Institute, Renison UC), March 5, 5:00 for 6:00, University Club, tickets \$32 at Humanities box office.

**Second annual Staff Conference** April 6-7, "2 More Full Days Just for You", keynote speakers, workshops, "Your Passport to Health", agenda to be published in mid-February, registration opens March 4.

## Positions available

On [this week's list](#) from the human resources department:

- Administrative assistant, institutional analysis and planning, USG 5
- Faculty services coordinator, dean of arts, USG 7

[Yesterday's Daily Bulletin](#)

Communications and Public Affairs  
University of Waterloo  
200 University Avenue West  
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1  
+1 519 888 4567



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