



DOWN TO EARTH



Newsletter of the Department of Earth Sciences, Western University

Friday, November 30, 2012

Down to Earth resumes publishing

In response to requests, the Down to Earth newsletter has resumed publishing fortnightly during the school year, and on an as-needed basis during the winter and summer breaks. All news stories should be sent to Kevin Jordan for inclusion in the DTE newsletter.

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Department partially closed Nov. 30 for annual retreat

The Department of Earth Sciences will be having its annual retreat on Friday, November 30, 2012. Marie Schell, Kevin Jordan, and all faculty will be unavailable for the day. Katherine Johnston and Margaret Moulton will be in office as usual.

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RIP Leslie Gyorok

Former departmental staff member Laszlo "Leslie" Gyorok passed away on Nov. 18. He was 90.

Les fled Hungary with his wife in the early 60's when the communists took over. He first lived in St. Thomas and worked in an automobile factory. But he could not live with the gutter language of the production line. In 1966, Les came to the Department of Geology prepared to do any job.

The department had just moved from the top floor of the Physics building into the new Biology & Geology Building. "Les, would you mount that bulletin board on the wall near the elevator?" It was installed by the next day. Then he started helping in the first year lab. Then he was taking the course, and then more courses, and over time he completed a bachelor's degree. Eventually he was appointed senior demonstrator. He was the best!!!

Les retired in 1987; occasionally he visited the department, and was always smiling and cheerful. The last time I saw Les he gave me a ride in his new Buick!

-C.G. Winder

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Christmas Charity

Once again, it is time for the Department of Earth Sciences to start its annual drive to raise goods for our Christmas Family.

As you may know, many families in the City of London are in need of basic food, clothing, extra things such as gifts for children, or even a Christmas meal. This year's family is a single mum with two boys. We would like to provide our new family with some clothing items, as well as a gift each and a proper Christmas dinner. It would be very much appreciated if all items could be ready by December 17th for a pickup the next day.

All members of the Department are asked to contribute to our effort, in whichever means is suitable to them. To this end, there is a container in Margaret's office for local grocery store gift

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certificates or food items, and locked away in a drawer is also an envelope for any cash donations or gift certificates.

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Any gift or donation would be greatly appreciated and will make such a huge difference in the lives of this family.

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Canadian Space Summit

This past week, planetary scientists, researchers, industry partners and government officials met at Western University for the 2012 Canadian Space Summit (CSS 2012).

Helmed under the banner **Bridging Communities: Unifying the Canadian Space Sector** and organized by Western's Centre for Planetary Science and Exploration (CPSX), CSS 2012 provided more than 100 delegates from the Canadian and international space community with a multi-faceted forum to present recent scientific advances, exchange information on new technologies, develop new ideas and discuss opportunities for international collaboration.

At the conclusion of CSS 2012, which included a mix of plenary sessions, invited talks, poster sessions, and panel discussions, was the annual Planetary Science Distinguished Public Lecture presented by Dr. **Harrison "Jack" Schmitt**. A retired NASA astronaut and former U.S. senator, Schmitt was the 12th and last of the Apollo astronauts to arrive and set foot on the Moon, as Apollo 17 commander Eugene Cernan exited the Apollo Lunar Module first.

Schmitt's talk, "To the Moon with Apollo 17", was delivered to a rapt audience of students, faculty, community members and local media.