

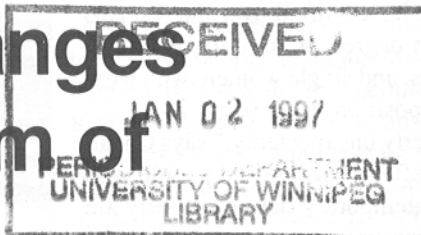
in edition

 The UNIVERSITY of WINNIPEG

DEC. 12, 1996

VOL. 14 NO. 8

Climate Changes Inspire Storm of Research



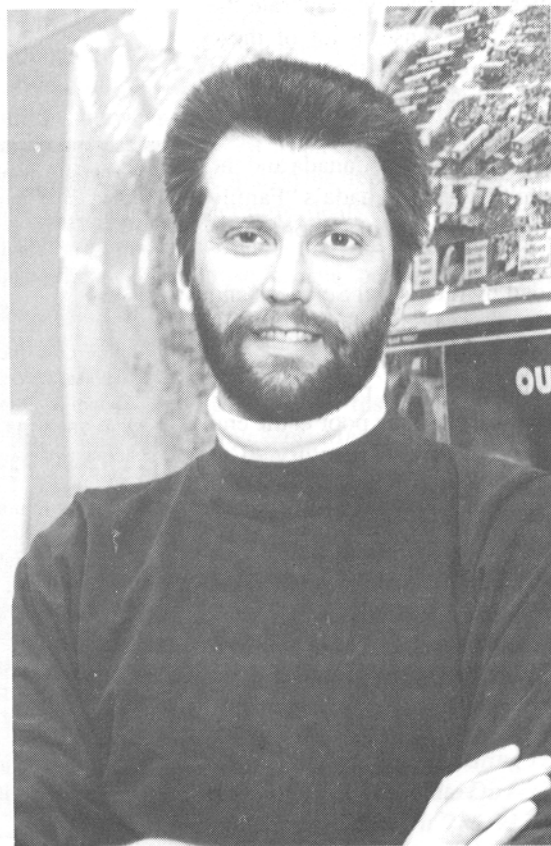
Geography Professor Danny Blair has made a career out of talking about the weather. Currently, he is juggling four research projects associated with climate variability and change.

Blair has high hopes for a project that he is pursuing with Bill Buhay, a research associate with the Geography Department. The pair plan to create a long-term climate history for the Winnipeg area by looking at the isotopic composition of precipitation. "It's going to blossom into a huge international project," predicts Blair.

Blair and Buhay are analyzing the relationship between the isotopic composition of precipitation in Winnipeg and atmospheric patterns that produced the precipitation. The resulting model will then be used to assess large-scale atmospheric conditions of the past few thousand years, using isotopic data collected from ancient groundwater or lake-bed sediments. "The more we know about the climate of the past, the more we know about climate in the present and the future," explains Blair.

Currently, Hudson's Bay Company reports, dating back to the 1700s, supplement official weather data for Winnipeg, which only dates back to 1872. "We expect our project to produce a new database to do climate reconstruction," he says.

Blair's summer project, an assessment of short-term



RESEARCH ISSUE

Danny Blair: "The more we know about the climate of the past, the more we know about climate in the present and the future."

see CLIMATE, page 6

Book Explores New Patterns of Poverty

Sociology Professor David Cheal's latest book, *New Poverty: Families in Postmodern Society* (Greenwood Press, 1996), examines modern families and the risks of being poor in a postmodern age when technological growth doesn't necessarily lead to growth in employment.

According to Cheal, the title of the book tends to garner the response: "There's always been poor people, so what's new about poverty?"

He explains that the patterns of poverty have shifted over the last two decades. Previously, poverty had a certain degree of stability, affecting mainly the working classes, racial minorities, and single women, who were poor due to their low wages and marginal position in society.

"Now there are people who fall into poverty unexpectedly," says Cheal. These people include women and children after a divorce and people who lose their jobs through downsizing. The contemporary risks of poverty are associated with marriage and unemployment.

In the past, politicians and policy makers were confident that they could solve the problem of poverty. Economic growth, labour unions, and the goal of full employment would alleviate working class poverty, while eliminating barriers to employment would free minority groups and women from poverty.

"There's a falling level of confidence that we can solve poverty as a problem," says Cheal, adding that many solutions to the new patterns of poverty are considered politically unacceptable because "the thrust of government policy is away from social spending."

Government cuts to social programs have heightened the risk of falling into poverty. "We used to think these programs were safe," notes Cheal. "In a post-modern society, we're faced with the insecurity of social security."

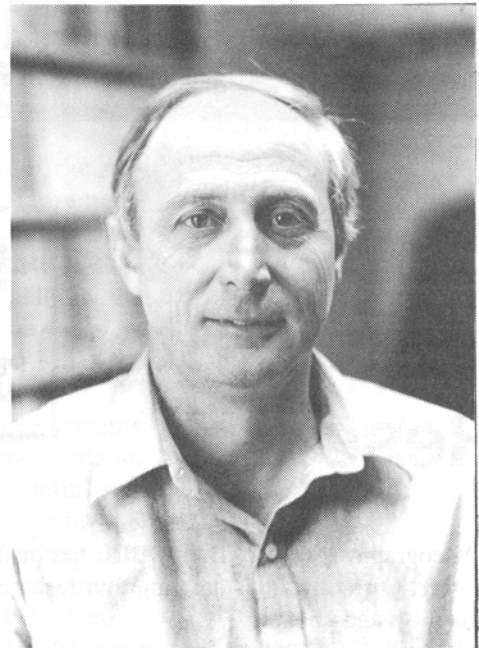
The book is concerned with the connection between poverty and families. "A lot of recent thinking on families has tended to celebrate the increased diversity of families," he says. "In one sense, a lot of these changes (to the family) are positive. The negative side is the poverty of single-parent families."

In addition to translating the experience of poverty into sociological theory, the book provides a comparative study of poverty in Canada and the United States, drawing on Canadian data from Statistics Canada's "Family Expenditure Survey" and American data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' "Consumer Expenditure Survey."

Funding for Cheal's research was provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Canadian Policy Research Network, and The University of Winnipeg.

The book ends with a depressing conclusion: while poverty of the elderly has fallen dramatically, children are still likely to be poor at the end of the 20th century, just as they were at the end of the 19th century. "I'm not so certain that will change," says Cheal. "Poverty of children has not been as visible or understood as the poverty of other groups."

Cheal notes that the risk of poverty is greater at the beginning of life than at the end. "This raises the question of intergenerational inequity," he says. "Every generation and age group should have equal chances in life." He recently received notification of a grant from Statistics Canada to research intergenerational equity, and will participate in the StatsCan conference on this issue in the new year.



David Cheal says the pattern of poverty has shifted over the past two decades, and that people now fall into poverty unexpectedly.

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Editor: Lois Cherney
Associate Director
(Alumni & Communications)
(204) 786-9134
cherney@wesley.uwinnipeg.ca

Managing Editor:
Leslie Vryenhoek
Coordinator, Publications and Promotion
(204) 786-9172
vryenhoek@wesley.uwinnipeg.ca

Comments, suggestions and submissions are welcome. (All material is subject to editing.) The deadline for the next issue is Dec. 19.)

in edition is printed on recycled paper. After you have finished with this issue, please pass it on to a friend.

Alumni at Work

Post-doctoral Fellow Researches Native History

Laura Peers, a 1987 graduate of The University of Winnipeg's Joint Master's Program in History, is back on campus. This time she is in her first year of a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) post-doctoral fellowship with the History Department.

Peers, a historian and anthropologist specializing in Native studies, received the Governor General's Gold Medal for the highest academic standing in her program when she graduated from McMaster University with a PhD in anthropology last month.

Her research examined the representation of Native histories at six living history sites around the Great Lakes region, including Lower Fort Garry. These sites are reconstructed fur trade posts and mission sites that all incorporated Native history in their presentations in the past decade.

These sites offer tremendous possibilities for communicating important research and messages about Native cultures and histories to the hundreds of thousands of people who visit them annually. However, as Peers notes, they tend to show virtually the same objects and communicate the same messages about Native people, despite the fact that they cover two centuries, a wide geographic area, and several different Native cultures.

Peers also observed interactions between visitors and the costumed Native interpreters at these sites, and noticed that while the public is "absolutely fascinated" by these parts of the sites, they don't know much about Native people, and tend to see them through "stereotyped goggles." Visitors frequently break into war whoops when they come into the camps, for instance, or make racist remarks to the interpreters.

"You're out there doing improv theatre eight hours a day," she notes. "It's really tough work."

As a result of her research, Peers has been working with site administrators and interpreters to address these problems and make interpretative programs more accurate and informative for visitors.

In returning to The University of Winnipeg, Peers has also returned to research she began during her Master's degree. That research was published, in revised form, as *The Ojibwa of Western Canada, 1780-1870* by

the University of Manitoba Press in 1994.

In the course of that work, she found it intriguing that the Ojibwa in Red River were very resistant to the missionaries, while a nearby settlement of Cree, at what is now St. Peter's, embraced Christianity. "You had very traditional Native people and very Christian Native people, and I just wondered how they interacted with other people in the Red River Settlement," she explains.

Since most of the previous Red River material focuses on the Métis and Europeans in the settlement, Peers is seeing a whole different side of the community. "It turns out that it was very common to have Native people tenting on your land if you had a farm," she says. This wasn't immediately obvious because census figures didn't include people who lived in tents.

Court documents, missionary records, diaries, Lower Fort Garry account books, and church records of baptisms and marriages help her to trace Natives connected with the community.

Peers sees the roots of modern racism in the social hierarchy emerging from these sources. Europeans, English speaking "half-breeds," and French speaking Métis occupied the three upper rungs, while both Christian and traditional Native people were on the lower rungs.

At least, she observes, this was how the people on the upper rungs saw it. "Most of the literature deals with the top three rungs," explains Peers. "It's been obsessed with those people because they generated the records."

Peers hopes to write a history of Native people in the Red River Settlement after doing further research at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, at the National Archives, and in England.

In February, 1997, Peers will give a free public lecture on her doctoral research as part of a series on northern and Native history sponsored by the History Department and the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies.

Yes, there is life after graduation. If you know of a graduate from the past 10 years who is engaged in interesting research, call Lois Chorney, Associate Director (Alumni & Communications), at 786-9134.

New Book Showcases Graduates of University

Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History (Broadview Press), a collection of original essays edited by History Professor Jennifer Brown and Elizabeth Vibert, explores some major issues in interpreting the Native North American past through documentary sources. It also showcases the University's Joint Master's Program in History.

In editing the collection, Brown and Vibert consciously sought out new talent. "We wanted to reach out not just to senior scholars, but to younger ones doing work in the field," explains Brown. "It just happened that a certain number had gone through our Joint Master's Program." She adds that Winnipeg is a centre for research into Native history.

The book features essays by four graduates of the program, Renée Fossett, Laura Peers, Frieda Klippenstein, and Erica Smith, and a current student in the program, John Fierst.

Fossett and Peers, who recently completed their doctorates, are now research fellows at the University; Smith is finishing up her doctorate at Carleton University; and Klippenstein is employed with Parks Canada.

Estimating Software Costs is a Fuzzy Business

People usually associate the word fuzzy with dice, not computers. However, Business Computing Professor Sheela Ramanna is exploring the application of fuzzy measures to software cost estimation.

Computers tend to be wedded to logic, defining everything as simply true or false, black or white. Yet this isn't an accurate representation of reality. Fuzzy logic, a concept developed in the '60s, defines the various shades of grey in between black and white.

"When people talk, they are not talking in very precise terms," notes Ramanna, adding that fuzzy logic is a way of taking imprecise language and representing it on a computer. This concept has proved a useful tool in her latest research project.

Ramanna, whose background is in software engineering, was dissatisfied with the standard methods of software cost estimation so she decided to search for a better way with the help of her husband and research partner, J.F. Peters, a professor at the University of Manitoba. "An essential part of project management is to estimate the cost of producing software," she explains. "It's an area where there hasn't been too much new development."

There are two well-known techniques for estimating the cost of software. One is based on the size of the software product. It calculates the cost based on the number of lines of code needed to develop a certain type of software. The other assesses the functionality of the software through the complexity of its design and its function.

Both models identify 14 subjective criteria, or "attributes," relating to the production of a software package. They assign a numeric weight to each attribute, and then average them. However, this doesn't leave room for measuring the influ-



Unsatisfied with the standard methods of estimating the cost of developing software, Sheela Ramanna has developed a new model.

ence of these attributes on each other, or take into consideration newer technologies, which may increase or decrease production costs.

"What we have done is propose a slightly modified model," says Ramanna. They chose to go with the functionality model because a cost based on the design can be estimated early in the life cycle of a project. In addition to increasing the list of attributes, they examined fuzzy integrals made up of pairs of attributes in order to judge their cumulative effect on one another.

Their new model appears to improve on the other models by taking into consideration the combined effect of new technologies and degrees of preference.

"All this is highly subjective," she adds. "It's as good as the person who's estimating. If you are able to

provide them with tools that more accurately mirror their preference, you have a better shot at coming up with an accurate estimate."

Over the past year, Ramanna has applied the new model to cost estimates for software packages developed by students in her "Systems Development Project" course, with encouraging results. "We want to apply this to bigger, more realistic projects in the real world," she says. Ramanna and Peters are in the process of approaching local companies that have developed software, in hopes of applying the model to completed projects.

This past September, Ramanna and Peters presented a paper on their new model at the 5th International Conference on Fuzzy Systems held in New Orleans.

Language Partners Needed

Interested in meeting a student from Mexico, Brazil, Taiwan, Korea, Japan or other far-off places? Join the Language Partner Program at Continuing Education. The program, intended to assist students studying English as a Second Language, requires a commitment of only an hour every week.

"Talking in an informal setting with a partner gives the students a chance to practice the kind of conversational English people really speak," explains Robyn Tully, who

coordinates the program for Continuing Education. "It also exposes the student to more of the culture, which is important."

The program runs throughout each term, but Tully says volunteers need only commit initially to about six weeks. The option to continue with a partner is always open.

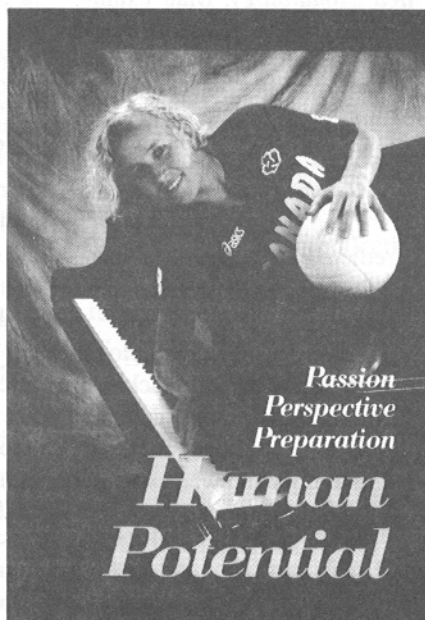
For information or to add your name to the volunteer list, call Robyn Tully at 982-1162.

University Chock Full of Best-selling Authors

When negotiating a publishing contract, it might be a good idea to stress your relationship to The University of Winnipeg these days. It's not a guarantee of great sales, true—but authors at our university have enjoyed significant success recently.

According to the *Winnipeg Free Press*, whose best-seller list is based on sales at McNally Robinson Booksellers, authors with ties to The University of Winnipeg consistently dominated the list of top 10 trade paperbacks in November.

Human Potential: Passion, Perspective and Preparation topped the list in the week following its Nov. 6 launch. Co-authored by Physical Activity and Sport Studies Professor **Cal Botterill**, along with Tom Patrick and Michelle Sawatsky, the sport psychol-



Cal Botterill's new book has been on the best-seller list since its release.

ogy publication maintained a top 10 position throughout the month.

Political Scientist **Jim Silver's** long-awaited examination of the fight to save—and the eventual demise—of the Winnipeg Jets NHL franchise also scored big. *Thin Ice* made the bestseller list immediately after its release, and has hovered near the top ever since.

In addition, award-winning alumna author **Margaret Sweatman** made the list with the release of her new novel, *Sam & Angie*, in November.

And Chancellor **Carol Shields'** Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Stone Diaries* continued to be a best-seller—but it wasn't Shields' only appearance on the list in November. Her 1987 novel *Swann: A Mystery* experienced a resurgence of popularity, no doubt fostered by the release of the movie based on that award-winning book.

Geography Students Help Out with Space Agency Study

Twenty University of Winnipeg students, most from the Geography Department, recently joined a team of researchers from the University of Sherbrooke and the Canada Centre for Remote Sensing in studying soil conditions around Altona. The project utilized RadarSat, a Canadian satellite launched last December.

"It was a project funded by the Canadian Space Agency to examine the various aspects of radar remote sensing of Canadian agricultural soil," explains Hugh Gwyn, a geography professor from the University of Sherbrooke in Quebec. The project will compare satellite data to field data, and then develop maps illustrating soil moisture, residue, and tillage.

The satellite passed over the Altona area at 6:15 p.m. on five days in October to gather data for satellite maps of 20 farmers' fields. "As the satellite was passing, what we needed was a team of skilled workers in the field to sample the soil and take observations," explains Gwyn.

Geography Professor Danny Blair, who met Gwyn at a meeting last summer, recruited students to help out with the project. "We've all been impressed with the student participation," he says. "They seem especially willing to help out with this real-world, state-of-the-art research project."

Mike Lisowski, a student in the geography honours program, volunteered for all five days. "You actually got to

do some hands-on work instead of just being told about it," he says. "You get a greater appreciation when you see a soil map on the wall because you know what kind of work went into it."

Geraldine David, a fourth-year student completing a double major in biology and environmental studies, welcomed the opportunity to gain some practical experience. She also enjoyed meeting the graduate students from the University of Sherbrooke. "It was my first experience meeting people from Quebec," she adds.

The only negative part of the experience, she says, was trekking through muddy fields on the last day: "It was like walking on high heels—that's how thick the mud was."

Gwyn was impressed with the help he received from the University of Winnipeg students, whom he describes as "really heads-up." "It was obvious they knew what they were up to," he says. "Without the people power, we couldn't do what we did. The responsiveness was just terrific."

Gwyn hopes to continue the connection to The University of Winnipeg by collaborating with Geography Professor Geoff Scott on a joint Winnipeg-Sherbrooke project dealing with soils and vegetation.

Climate

continued from page 1

climate variability in southern Manitoba, was recently accepted for publication by the journal, *Theoretical and Applied Climatology*. Blair examined temperature data for Winnipeg and then assessed temperature variability in light of the expectation that global warming will make the climate less variable.

He found that over the past 120 years, day-to-day temperatures have become less variable, especially in the winter months. There also seems to have been a sudden shift in the climate around 1910, which may occur again in the future.

"A significant global warming has been predicted for years, but it may happen suddenly," says Blair. "We may not be prepared for that new climate."

He is also working on a project with Scott Forbes from the Biology Department. It relates weather variability to the survival of blackbird broods in Manitoba and Oklahoma. Blackbird chicks are most likely to survive when the weather is warm and sunny because it is easy for their parents to find insects to feed them. If the weather is cold and wet, as in the summer of 1993, blackbirds cannot get out as often to find food for their chicks.

The pair plan to broaden their research in this area to include an examination of the potential effect of climate change on wetlands, a prime bird habitat.

Blair is also about to embark on a study in association with Manitoba Public Insurance's reinsurance company, which weathered a deluge of claims after the July 16 hailstorm. "They want to get a feel for how often this could happen," he says, adding that insurance companies are nervous about weather around the globe.

Blair enjoys the interdisciplinary nature of his research into climate. "There's always something to connect it to," he explains. "It's one thing to study climate and weather. It's more important to apply that information to the real world."

HOLIDAY GIFTS

in the Spirit of Giving

When you give the following, your gift does more than thrill the recipient—it helps fund our University's valuable programs and services.

Degree Frames:

These impressive 12" by 15" frames are custom-built to fit a degree parchment. Inside the black frame, red matting with The University of Winnipeg's seal embossed in gold creates a striking effect. Perfect for any graduate—past, present or future. Proceeds help fund scholarships and the work of the Alumni Association.

Pick-up: \$40/Delivery: \$46 (includes PST, GST, postage & handling)

Library Books:

Your tax-deductible donation of \$25 or more can plate a book in the University library in the name of someone special. You may choose the book's general subject area. A commemorative bookplate bearing your recipient's name will be placed in the volume, and a copy will be sent to the recipient. Perfect for the holidays, or to mark any significant milestone.

For information or to purchase the above gifts, please call 786-9711 or come to Room 4W16, 4th floor of Wesley Hall

United Way Campaign Wraps Up

The 1996 United Way campaign has concluded on campus, and donations total about \$47,500. That represents roughly 86.9 per cent of the \$55,000 goal set at the campaign's onset.

According to campaign co-chair Gates Salmon, that percentage is not surprising. "We did have an ambitious target," Salmon admits, "and we feel the campaign has been a success."

The credit, he says, belongs to the entire campus community. "We appreciate the support the faculty and staff have shown through their pledges, and their enthusiasm and participation in the special events. And a special thank you should go to everyone who donated baking for the bake sale."

Salmon and co-chair Rais Khan also want to acknowledge the tremendous administrative support received from Jeri Breckman. Breckman was responsible for, among other things, updating the information in Wesley's elevator.

Salmon says that while almost all the contributions have been counted, he's still optimistic that University community members who haven't had the opportunity to donate will do so before the holidays. Those donations can be sent to Human Resources.

Seminar on Negotiating Brings Together Members of Diverse Groups

Members of The University of Winnipeg Faculty Association (UWFA), the Association of Employees Supporting Education Services (AESES), the Board of Regents and the administration sat down together on Dec. 2 to participate in a seminar on negotiating.

The gathering heard presentations by two seasoned experts on the topic: Paul Moist, President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 500, and Harvey Seter, who studied negotiating and alternative forms of dispute resolution at Harvard University and now offers private consulting services in dispute resolution.

The seminar was part of an on-going communications process on campus that aims to build bridges between the various constituencies. In her "State of the University Address" last March, President Marsha Hanen remarked on the need for improved communication across campus. She reiterated that sentiment in her June address, and, in subsequent discussions, asked union representatives to participate in specific endeavours like the negotiating seminar.

According to Hanen, seminar participants discussed the current thinking on negotiating and considered the methodology behind using an "interest-based" approach to negotiating rather than the old-style, "position-based" approach. However, Hanen says the focus of the gathering wasn't bargaining but communicating.

"I look at this in terms of a conversation," she explained. "We weren't talking about how to negotiate but about the communication that occurs in the periods between negotiating agreements."

Hanen says that although the presenters offered distinctly different perspectives, they eventually arrived at the same point: that the world has changed and there is a need to enhance relationships and find ways of identifying common ground.

In an interview following the seminar, Seter explained his essential message: "We're in a new era. The world and some of the realities in it are radically different in the mid-90s than they were even just 10 years ago. In that context, it seems timely for everyone to at least explore different approaches, one of them being the use of interest-based negotiations in reaching collective agreements."

He says the concept of "interest-based" negotiations, while not new, has become more entrenched and accepted in the past few years. "There is a whole literature now, not only on the theory but on the advantages. Interest-based negotiating can help maintain better working relations. It can lead to more creative and more informed solutions and outcomes that people feel better about and that operatively work better." In short, he says, the evidence suggests that the approach works.

While he acknowledges that this approach is not a panacea, and that there may be times when it is perhaps not appropriate, he strongly believes people should be encouraged to look at the process. "People ought to explore these things without giving up any of their rights." He explains that the approach can be pursued "with very little 'cost' to anyone," and then can be utilized or abandoned.

And, he believes, interest-based negotiations should be explored jointly by those on either side of the bargaining table. He notes that unlike traditional negotiating strategies, which must be kept hidden to maximize their power, interest-based negotiating works best as a shared knowledge.

Hanen says the ideas presented don't constitute radical departures in thinking; rather, they represent a move away from more adversarial styles of bargaining and into a more goal-oriented process. "It's a shift in emphasis that arises from the need to be more collegial and cooperative," she explains. "The more we can jointly approach problem-solving and the more we can focus on common interests, the better we will be able to weather difficulties."

Moist, who asserts that collective bargaining can work in the 90s, also stressed the importance of communication. He brought his wealth of experience in negotiating difficult agreements in trying times to the seminar, and shared examples of solutions to communications problems that he had encountered in his work. "It's more important to communicate in difficult economic times," he says. "Communication doesn't resolve financial difficulties, but it makes it much easier to approach and deal with those economic issues."

*Anyone interested in learning about interest-based negotiating might wish to begin their investigation by reading **Getting to Yes** by Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Patton (Penguin Books, second edition, 1991). This book is available in our University Bookstore.*

Language Courses

Registrations are now being accepted for the Continuing Education Winter Session 1997 Language Program. All courses are offered at a variety of levels ranging from beginner to advanced.

Courses in the following will start Jan. 13:

Japanese	Mandarin Chinese
German	Russian
Italian	Spanish
Conversational French	

English as a Second Language classes begin Jan. 20.

For further information, please call 982-6633.

COMING EVENTS

"Coming Events" is compiled by University Relations. Planning a campus event? Please let us know and we'll help you publicize it. Send written information to Lois Cherney, University Relations, 10 working days in advance of the event. Basic details are required: what, when, where, sponsor, price of admission (if any) and the name of a contact person.

SAT., DEC. 14

• **Virtuosi Concerts presents Robert Silverman, piano, David Stewart, violin, and Bryan Epperson, cello** at 8 p.m. in the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Co-presented by the University and CBC Stereo. Tickets are \$19, \$17 for seniors/students and \$12 for children. Call the Virtuosi Hotline at 786-9000.

SAT., DEC. 21 - WED., JAN. 1

• **University closed** for the holidays.

SUN., DEC. 22 THROUGH SUN., JAN. 5

• **Duckworth Centre closed.**

SAT., DEC. 28 - MON., DEC. 30

• **30th Annual MTS Mobility Wesmen Classic**—Burn off those holiday pounds cheering the Wesmen men's

basketball team on to glory as they take on eight other teams in Canada's biggest basketball tournament. A \$15 tournament pass gets you into all 25 games at the Duckworth Centre. Passes are available at the facility desk, or call 786-9349.

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WED., JAN. 1 - FRI., JAN. 3

• **The Wesmen women's basketball team** hosts the first competition of the new year. The Wesmen take on Dalhousie and Regina in this mini-tournament. Game times are 1 p.m., New Year's Day, and noon on Thurs., and Fri. in the Duckworth Centre.

THURS., JAN. 2

• **University re-opens.**

MON., JAN. 6

• **Lectures begin** in 1997 Winter Term. This is the final date to pay fees without being charged a late payment penalty.

• **Duckworth Centre** resumes normal services.

SAT., JAN. 11

• **Virtuosi Concerts invites you to Neapolitan Night**—Celebrate and support this exceptional concert series, and have some fun. The evening includes Authentic Italian pasta dinner, a wine bar, door prizes, silent auction and entertainment featuring singers, dancers and instrumentalists. It all happens from 6-10 p.m. in Riddell Hall. Tickets are \$16 each, \$30 for a pair, and \$6 for children 12 and under. Call 786-9000 to order your tickets.

WED., JAN. 15 AND THURS., JAN 16

• **The Duckworth Challenge** pits all four Wesmen teams against the University of Manitoba Bisons in this annual battle. On Wed., the volleyball teams meet at the University of Manitoba. On Thurs., the basketball teams go head-to-head in Duckworth Centre. Game times are 6:15 p.m. (women) and 8 p.m. (men). Both the Alumni Association and the Students' Association will offer prizes at Thursday's event.

THURS., JAN. 16

• **Gallery 1C03 Opening**—"Philosophical Works: Sculpture by Blair Marten" opens from 4-6 p.m. in the campus gallery. Marten's sculpture is informed by conceptualism, feminism, minimalism and philosophy, and much of it examines social issues. His work currently involves altering the physical status of found objects. The show runs through Sat., Feb. 8. Gallery hours are Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.- 4 p.m., and 1-4 p.m. on Sat.

Keep Your Season's Greetings Secure

With the holiday season upon us, most of us are looking forward to a much-deserved break. But before you dash off to enjoy the festivities, don't forget to shut down equipment and lock up valuables, ensure windows are closed (a drop in the temperature or a shift in the wind can wreak havoc through an open window), and change your voice mail message if necessary.

Lynn Jones, assistant to the vice-president (finance and administration), says the University's voice mail will carry an overriding message to notify callers of the University's closure between Dec. 20 and Jan. 2. However, if you are taking an extended holiday, you'll want to record a message detailing the period of your absence.

But watch how you word it, Jones cautions. While a voice mail message should clearly indicate the days you'll be away from the office, it shouldn't tip a caller off to a vacant home. Never say, "I'll be out of town for three weeks." Instead, state that you are off campus or away from the University, and give the date you expect to return. As Jones explains, "It doesn't take a genius to track down where you live if they know your house is empty."



Have a
safe and
happy
holiday!