



# College Chemistry Canada

## New President's Message

It has been a few months since the last C3 Conference at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, BC. For some of us (including myself) that elusive thing called "memory" may have played some tricks on us since that time. Fortunately, my scribbly notes and the excellent photo-collection on the C3 Website rescued me (Thanks to photographers and colleagues Norm Reed, Bob Browne and Bill Blann). If you were not there, you did miss an excellent conference. So here are some of the highlights:

Plenary Speaker, Peter Mahaffy kicked off the Conference with an engaging talk entitled "Thinking Outside the Box about Learning Chemistry". Peter encouraged us to get our general Chemistry students to think "outside the box" by putting chemical concepts into contemporary context - uncover rather than cover content. Through two case-studies (Positively False based on Floyd Landis' book, Ice on Fire – methane clathrates) students are introduced to modern spectroscopy and molecular visualization early on. Peter showed how we can engage our students more deeply and develop their awareness of the three conceptual levels in Chemistry: symbolic, molecular, and macroscopic. The next day, the second plenary speaker, Eric Krogh, highlighted another great way to engage students:

situational learning through undergraduate participation in scholarly activities.

Friday afternoon, Steve McNeil gave a very stimulating presentation on a hierarchy of student engagement. I liked the idea of splitting the class into teams to argue in favour of a particular theory when confronted with a problem (e.g. why is the triple bond in acetylene not three times as strong as the single C-C bond in ethane? – Lewis/VSEPR versus Valence Bond Theory). Steve also has his students come up with Talking Points during the first class - e.g. Should we drink bottled water, how does soap work.

Majda's Djordjevik's presentation was one of my Saturday highlights. Her classroom demonstrations were intentional and very entertaining – balloon sausages to show electronic geometry, Sodium "Olympic Torch" – nice twist on standard sodium demo., removing tarnish from silver with Aluminum pan and baking soda. How I wished to be still a student so that I could be in Majda's class!

As a fellow chemical educator, I felt personally challenged by all the speakers but there is only so much room in a newsletter even if the article is from the new President. Well done, everyone! Whatever we do in the classroom it should be intentional so that hopefully our students will feel engaged. I have

already tried some new things in my small general chemistry classroom this term – some quite spontaneously - but that will be for a future issue. So I would like to encourage you to submit ideas for student engagement no matter how brief for the next newsletter. We are all quite a friendly bunch – no matter whether we have Ph.Ds or not, teach Highschool, College or University students or are retired.

Don't forget next year is the Year of Chemistry and get ready for an exciting conference in early June 2011 in Montreal hosted by Dawson College (followed by the CIC/CSC Conference also in Montreal). Check our website for updates as well as the new faces on the Executive and Board: <http://collegechemistrycanada.ca/>

Sincerely,

Marten Lettinga, B.Sc. (TWU),  
M.Sc. (U. of Waterloo), B.Ed.  
(U. of Toronto)



## College Chemistry Canada

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### Special points of interest:

- ☺ Briefly highlight your point of interest here.
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### Inside this issue:

37th C3 Conference Highlights	2
38th C3 Conference	3
New Periodic Table?	3
Editor's Note	4

# 37th C3 Conference Highlights Thompson Rivers College "Teaching and Research in our Changing Post-Secondary Landscape"

The 37th Annual C3 Conference was again a great success. Here are a few pictures of the highlights of the conference.

"We must remember that one determined person can make a significant difference, and that a small group of determined people can change the course of history." Sonia Johnson



Fun Run 2010



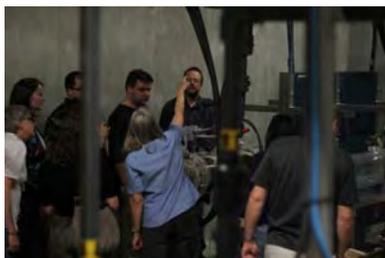
Majda's Balloon Sausage Demonstration



Group Photo of 37th Conference attendees



Chem Lab Tour at the College



Water Treatment Plant Tour



Bill at Dorian's Saturday night

Fun at the Banquet



# 38<sup>th</sup> C3 Conference:

## Dawson College,

### June 1-3, 2011

Come join us this summer in Montreal for the upcoming conference on *Teaching Chemistry in the Information Age*. The conference will be hosted at Dawson College, a beautiful campus in the heart of downtown, at a time when the city will also be hosting many other exciting festivals such as the Montreal Beer Festival, The Montreal Fireworks Festival, and several street sales. For those interested in attending both, the 94<sup>th</sup> Canadian Chemistry Conference and Exhibition (CSC 2011) is happening immediately after the C3 conference in Montreal (June 5-9).

Visit our website at: <http://collegechemistrycanada.ca/>



## A Bigger Periodic Table?

Pekka Pyykkö, a chemist from University of Helsinki has predicted, using a computational model, elements up to proton number 172. Pyykkö says that these new elements will exist under only extreme conditions and will be very unstable. Don't go and change the periodic table for your students just yet. The elements have yet to be synthesized and there is large debate among scientists if this will even be possible. But, who knows, the table has changed a lot since Mendeleev's table in 1869.

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For learning to take place with any kind of efficiency students must be motivated. To be motivated, they must become interested. And they become interested when they are actively working on projects which they can relate to their values and goals in life. - Gus Tuberville

## Editor's Note

Hello to all! A lot has changed since the last newsletter. I unfortunately did not get to see any of you this year at the conference. But since the last newsletter I have been busy teaching my newest student how to stand, eat by herself and currently walk! Being a mother has its challenges but is the most wonderful experience to date. I am looking forward to maybe attending next year's conference.

I will be returning to work at NAIT in February 2011 so please feel free to email me additions you would like to see in the winter newsletter. I can also be contacted currently at my personal email:

arlanamoskalyk@hotmail.com

I also got married in August of this year so my name is going to be changing but my email addresses will be staying the same.

I hope all of you are well and are well settled into the semester. Talk to you all soon.

Arlana  
Anderson

