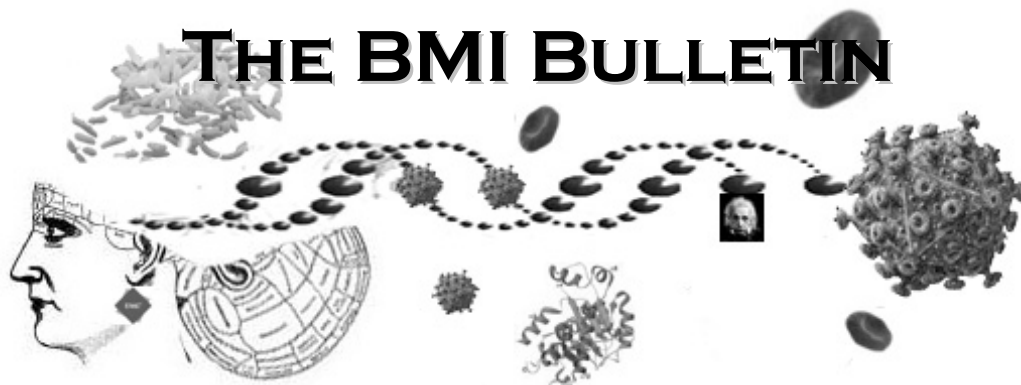


THE BMI BULLETIN



E-MAIL BMIGSA@GMAIL.COM <http://intermed.med.uottawa.ca/Associations/BMIGSA> 13-6-2008 ISSUE N°67

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FOCUS

FOCUS ON: WILLIAM JOHN SPENCER – A BMI DAD (PG 2)

IDENTIFY THAT PHOTO CONTEST (PG 8-9)

EVENTS

BMI BBQ – COMING SOON – WATCH YOUR INBOX



Editor
Leslie Mitchell, VP Finance

Well, having endured the heat wave earlier this week, I guess we can officially welcome summer!

And with summer comes the arrival of undergraduate summer students in our labs! (Well, admittedly the undergrads

have already been working for over a month now, so the time to welcome them has pretty much passed.)

However, on the note of summer students, I'm happy to learn that the BMI undergraduate students are getting organized this year and are putting together a '**BMI Summer Student Seminar Series**'! This weekly, lunch time seminar series is being organized by an undergraduate in the Brown lab – Shelly Luu. She is currently collecting names and email addresses of all BMI summer students, and plans to have an organizational meeting for all those interested in the next week or so. Her master plan is that each summer student will present a short seminar about his or her research project. To entice students to participate, Shelly has secured funding from the department to award prizes at the end of the summer to the top presenters (as

voted by graduate students). This is a fantastic idea and I applaud Shelly for organizing it! To contact Shelly with the names and email addresses of summer students in your lab, send her an email at ShellyLuu@hotmail.com.

As for the BMIGSA, we have many great events planned for the summer. We'll host several barbecues here at RGN, organize a baseball game, perhaps set up a beach volleyball event. We run these events with one goal in mind – having fun. Do you have other ideas that you'd like to see happen this summer? Just let us know and we'll try and make it happen – BMIGSA@gmail.com

Finally, I'd like to point out a completely new and exciting feature in this issue of the bulletin – a contest! On page 8 and 9 you will find a layout of pictures taken at "close range" – can you figure out what's in each of the photos? Well, take a close look (or perhaps step back a bit and squint your eyes?), record your guesses and email them to us at BMIGSA@gmail.com. The entry with the most correct guesses will win a Tim Horton's gift certificate! Thanks to Evelin Loit for contributing the photos.

Cheers, Leslie

FOCUS ON: WILLIAM JOHN SPENCER — A BMI DAD

By Andrea Lau

To commemorate the upcoming day marked by offspring across North America, where we show one of our parents just how much we appreciate him, I sought to find the perfect interviewee for this issue of the bulletin. I was looking for someone who describes himself with the following word uttered by adults and babies alike: Dad. My search ended just down the hall with the gregarious William John Spencer, a post-doc in the BMI department and a father of two rambunctious kids. Read on to discover how “Big Will” has learned to balance his research and family responsibilities over the years, and appears to be emerging relatively unscathed.



Your name is quite...stately.

I was named after my father, who was named after his grandfather. Interestingly, my family is from England where traditionally the father's first name becomes the middle name of his son. Obviously, we broke this tradition in my family.

So I guess you are William John Spencer the third! Did you name your kids in the same way?

Actually, we reverted back to the traditional English ways, so my son uses my first name as his middle name: Thomas William Spencer. My grandmother was not pleased because she wanted a fourth William John Spencer.

Were you born in England?

No, I was born in Summerside, Prince Edward Island, where I lived for 4 years before moving to Winnipeg, Manitoba. My father was in the Air Force and was transferred frequently as he was promoted. After 7 years in Winnipeg, we moved to Cold Lake, Alberta where we stayed for 9 years. From there, we moved to Calgary and after 4 years, we ended up in Ottawa!

You have certainly moved around a lot! Where did you do your undergrad?

I enrolled in the Biology and Biotechnology at Carleton University, where I had the most awesome time. I stayed in Ottawa with my family.

When did you first become interested in science?

In high school, I wanted to study computer science because I wanted to make video games. However, I had an excellent biology teacher who eventually inspired me to pursue science. At Carleton, I was a summer student after second year in the lab of John Vierula, a biology professor who worked with fungal genetics. I did my honours project with him, which is really where I learned the fundamentals of molecular biology. I really loved it.

And where did you pursue graduate studies?

I went to McGill for my Masters, where I did cancer research. I then worked for 3 years at a start-up biotech company (Atlantic Biopharmaceuticals), which was associated with a professor at McGill.

What made you decide to return to graduate school?

I got an interview at Merck Frosst and I was one of their top candidates.

However, this interview experience opened my eyes to the fact that without additional training I would limit myself professionally in the long term. So, I went back to McGill to do my PhD in 2001. My supervisor told me that if I ran his name for the next few months, I could stay on to do my PhD. This is what I did, and 5 years later, I graduated.



When did you meet your wife and have your kids?

I met my wife in 1994 in Ottawa at the Wine and Food festival through mutual friends. We got married in 1999 in Montreal and our son was born that year. We have a daughter, who was born a few months after I started my PhD.

How was it to do a PhD with two kids to take care of?

It was definitely challenging. I was pulled between responsibilities for my family and for finishing my PhD. Fortunately, I had a very supportive boss who understood and that I had to balance these responsibilities.

How was your experience in graduate school? Were you quite involved in extracurricular activities despite your other responsibilities?

It was awesome and I was definitely involved. I co-founded the Microbiology and Immunology Graduate Student Association (MIGSA) and I was a counselor in the Post-Graduate Student's Society (PGSS). During my time at the PGSS, we were able to ban smoking at the Thompson House, a graduate student bar. We met lots of resistance, but in the end, we prevailed! In addition to these associations, I was a teaching assistant during 8 different semesters. I really enjoyed teaching because I got to interact with students, spark their imaginations, and help them get fired up about basic science.

What did you do after graduate school?

After obtaining my PhD in 2006, I spent a year looking for a non-postdoc job (patents, technology transfers, the business side of science). During this time, I realized that I was more geared towards the labcoat worn in the laboratory rather than a suit and tie in the business world. I was interested in fundamental research, as it is more open-ended and flexible. In industry, you have to meet certain milestones and if you are unable to, the funding could be cut and your project could be closed.

How did you end up at the University of Ottawa?

I contacted Dr. Illimar Altosaar (who happened to know the chairman of my department at McGill, because he was his first PhD student). Illimar asked me to write a 2-page proposal on a particular project in the lab. I did, and he accepted me into his lab. One of the best aspects of Illimar's lab is the freedom that we have to pursue projects on a wide variety of themes in the lab. That is exactly what I was looking for in a post-doc.

What is your project?

I am looking at CD14, a receptor for lipopolysaccharides on gram-negative bacteria that is involved in innate immunity. CD14 is found in breast milk and we want to dissect out the reasons for this. My goal is to purify CD14 from breast milk and transgenically express it in rice. Currently though, I am on the computer all the time, writing 200 page grant proposals!

What are your future plans?

I could either go into academia as an assistant professor, or go into government research.

What are your hobbies?

I love cycling, and Ottawa is the perfect city for this. I also love drumming. I am part of the RCMP Regimental Pipe Band where we wear kilts as part of our uniform. I was part of a rockband at McGill with a few other PhD students.

What kind of activities do you do with your family?

My wife works at the Museum of Science and Technology as a museologist, so we have free access to all the museums in Ottawa. We do the usual family dinners, movies, you know. It's easier to balance my time now that I am no longer a graduate student.

Thanks for your time, Will!

CULTURE CORNER

By Evelin Loit

So this is it – it is summer! It is time to catch up with lab work and it is also time to rest, enjoy the sunshine and have fun. Don't forget to take your vacation – you can take up to three weeks per year to have a break.



Some things to do:

Indoors:

Fringe festival June 19th - June 29th

<http://www.ottawafringe.com>

Based on last year, I would recommend going and seeing **Shadows in Bloom** by Gemma Wilcox, **Circumference** by Amy Salloway, **Jem Rolls: how i stopped worrying and learned to love the mall** by Jem Rolls and **American Squatter** by Barry Smith. There are many, many more! Go and check it out!

Be the Change - Friday, June 20 @ 7 p.m.

Bell Theatre, Minto Centre, Carleton University

Entry by donation (\$10 suggested)

An inspiring documentary about people living lightly — and loving it. Check out the trailer at:

<http://www.livinglightly.ca/the-film-trailer-for-be-the-change/>

Outdoors:

Orienteering

A few weeks ago I tried orienteering – for the first time in Canada. And it was lots of fun. If you like forests/parks and you like to run (but with a reason), then check out Ottawa Orienteering Club events:

http://www.ottawaoc.ca/local_events.shtml

Until the end of June there are orienteering events every Tuesday.

Biking

Ottawa is wonderful for biking. There are so many great paths, and even Gatineau park is not far. If you don't have a bike, then there is such thing like **Bike Sharing**. Did you know you can rent a bicycle from the University of Ottawa? For free? Check this out:

<http://www.protection.uottawa.ca/en/bike-share.html>

And stay tuned for events organized by BMIGSA. There will be softball game coming up, as well as volleyball games.

FOCUS ON BMI RESEARCH

Romero J, Lee H. Asymmetric bidirectional replication at the human DBF4 origin. *Nat Struct Mol Biol.* 2008 Jun 8

Denis M, Landry YD, Zha X. ATP-binding Cassette A1-mediated Lipidation of Apolipoprotein A-I Occurs at the Plasma Membrane and Not in the Endocytic Compartments. *J Biol Chem.* 2008 Jun 6

Negari S, Sulpher J, Pacello F, Ingrey K, Battistoni A, Lee BC. A role for Haemophilus ducreyi Cu,ZnSOD in resistance to heme toxicity. *Biometals.* 2008 Jun

Woulfe J. Nuclear bodies in neurodegenerative disease. *Biochim Biophys Acta.* 2008 May 18

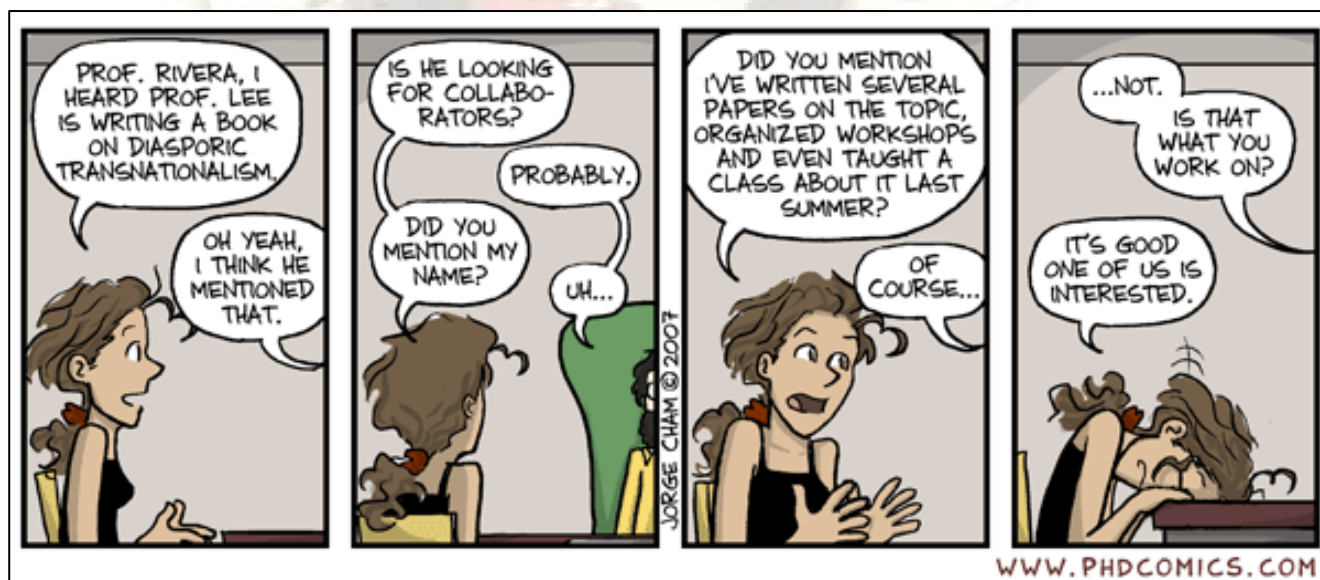
Chen Z. and Freedman M.S. CD16+ (gammadelta) Tcells mediate antibody dependent cellular cytotoxicity: Potential mechanism in the pathogenesis of multiple sclerosis, *Clin. Immunol.*

Hibbert, S.C. Whitman, E.R. O'Brien. Smooth muscle cells healing atherosclerotic plaque disruptions are of local, not blood, origin in apolipoprotein E knockout mice. *Letter to the Editor; Circulation* 2008;117:e317

X. Ma, B. Hibbert, D. White, R. Seymour, S.C. Whitman, E.R. O'Brien. Contribution of recipient-derived vascular progenitor cells in allograft neointima formation and the response to stent implantation (Public Library of Science, March 26, 2008; <http://www.plosone.org/doi/pone.0001894>).

K. Rayner, Y.-X. Chen, M. McNulty, T. Simard, X. Zhao, J. de Bellerocche, D.J. Wells, E.R. O'Brien. Extracellular Release of the Atheroprotective Heat Shock Protein 27 is Mediated by Estrogen and Competitively Inhibits acLDL Binding to Scavenger Receptor-A. *Circulation Research* 2008: in press.

K. Rayner, Y.-X. Chen, B. Hibbert, D. White, H. Miller, E.H. Postel, E.R. O'Brien. Role of NM23-H2 in estrogen signaling and cell migration. *J Steroid Biochemistry & Molecular Biology* 2008 108:72-81.



Was your paper missed? Let us know so we can include it in the next issue! Contact us BMIGSA@gmail.com

For more information, or to get involved in the fall, please contact Dr. Martin Holcik e-mail: martin@mgcheo.med.uottawa.ca

SEMINARS & CLUBS

BMI DEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS

Chris Brown, (Student Research Seminar)
"Enhancement of Vesiculovirus Oncolysis by Expression of Exotic Envelope Proteins" June 19, 2008 RGN Room 2005, Time: 3:30

CMM DEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS

Dr. Anne-Claude Gingras, University of Toronto
"Proteomic analysis identifies a novel phospho-regulatory module targeting angioma-related genes" June 17, 2008, RGN Room 2022, Time: 11:30 a.m.

DISTINGUISHED OHRI SEMINAR SERIES

Dr. Qiuying Yang "Reproductive epidemiology ABC" June 13th, 2008, Sprott Seminar Room, Time: 12:00 p.m.

Dr. Theodore Perkins, McGill University "Quantitative Gene Expression Analysis: From Single Gene to Whole Genome" June 13th, 2008, Room 5225 Sprott Center, Time: 1:00 p.m.

The RNA Club

The RNA Club is a gathering of researchers with common interest in various aspects of RNA biology, (i.e. splicing, translation, RNA binding proteins, RNA viruses etc). The Club meets every second week to present and discuss latest data from participating laboratories in a "work-in-progress" format. The goal of the RNA Club is to bring together researchers with common interest, to allow graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to interact and talk about their projects with their peers, and to identify and foster collaborations among different research groups within the University of Ottawa.

GRADUATE STUDENT INFO

Scholarship winners needed

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS) is looking for graduate students who have received an admission scholarship and wish to take part in an innovative web-based project pertaining to scholarships. Student participation would involve video testimonials. To participate, you must be:

- a Master's or PhD Student
- recipient of an Admission Scholarship
- available on June 17 or 18 during the day (for 60 min)
- comfortable in front of a camera (or in public)

Participants will be compensated for their efforts.

If interested, please contact François Thibeault at: fthibeau@uOttawa.ca or at 613-562-5800 ext. 1266.

GSAÉD office hours at RGN

To better serve students from the Health Sciences campus, GSAÉD executives are currently holding office hours at Roger Guindon Hall every Thursday afternoon, in the Faculty of Medicine graduate office, RGN 2135.

**OTHER
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

New President of U of Ottawa

As of July 15th, 2008, Allen Rock will officially become University of Ottawa's 29th President and Vice-Chancellor. Born and raised in Ottawa, he is a three-time graduate of the University of Ottawa. He attended the old University of Ottawa high school and went on to obtain a B.A. and LLB. Mr. Rock was also a prominent student politician and was elected President of the Student Federation in 1969. More recently, the fluently bilingual Mr. Rock has served as a lawyer, lecturer, federal cabinet minister, senior politician and diplomat. Mr. Rock takes over from outgoing president Gilles Patry. For more details, please see: http://www.media.uottawa.ca/mediaroom/news-details_1491.html

JOB POSTINGS

CIHR/NSERC-funded postdoctoral fellow and Ph.D. graduate student positions (one each) are available in the laboratory of Dr. Nongnuj Tanphaichitr to study molecular mechanisms of how (sulfo)glycolipids including: 1) sulfogalactosylglycerolipid (SGG, also known as seminolipid), 2) sulfogalactosylceramide (SGC, also known as sulfatide), and 3) galactosylceramide (GC) participate in cell-cell/extracellular matrix interactions. We are interested in the interaction processes that involve sperm SGG in the binding to the egg extracellular matrix (the zona pellucida-ZP), and in capturing epididymal fluid proteins such as arylsulfatase A (another ZP binding protein, as part of sperm maturation) and antimicrobial peptides (as provision of innate immunity to the gametes). In addition, we want to investigate the roles of SGC and GC, present on the vaginal epithelial cell surface, in viral passage through the vaginal mucosa. The successful candidate will use cutting-edge lipidomics and proteomics analyses, molecular biology and cell imaging approaches in the studies. The postdoctoral candidate must have a Ph.D. degree in basic science with a broad background in biological sciences, critical thinking ability in experimental design and interpretation and good communication skills at both written and oral levels. The graduate student candidate must have a B.Sc. or M.Sc. degree in basic science. Experience in glycolipid/lipid work is considered a great asset.

Send CV to Dr. Nongnuj Tanphaichitr, Ottawa Health Research Institute (OHRI), Civic Campus, 725 Parkdale Ave., Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4E9, CANADA. Email: ntanphaichitr@ohri.ca. www.ohri.ca/profiles/tanpha.asp

CIHR On-line job postings:

<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/9229.html>

ACCELERATE

ONTARIO

ONTARIO'S GRADUATE
INTERNSHIP RESEARCH
PROGRAM

Are you interested in applying
your research to real-life issues?

<p>How it works</p> <p>Graduate student interns spend about 50% of their time over 4 months on site with a partner, researching an issue of interest to all parties.</p> <p>The balance of the intern's time is spent back at their home university, further advancing the research under the guidance of a faculty supervisor.</p> <p>The partner's contribution of \$7,500 for the 4 month internship is matched by MITACS, resulting in a \$15,000 research grant to the intern's supervising professor.</p> <p>The intern receives a minimum of \$10,000 for the 4-month period.</p>	<p>What the program offers to Ontario universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Opportunities for new research collaborations with partner organizations ⇒ Funding for graduate students and postdocs ⇒ Applicability to research in all university disciplines ⇒ A novel training experience and enhanced career opportunities for grad students and postdocs ⇒ Access to business development resources to facilitate new research opportunities
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APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED!
To apply or for more information, visit www.acceleratecanada.ca or contact Alison Lee at ailee@mitacs.ca.

www.acceleratecanada.ca

Our partners in Ontario include:

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Job:

A *Two-year postdoctoral fellow* position at the University of Ottawa is available for a joint project with National Research Council Canada (NRC) and Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Responsibilities:

- Cells on chips: cell handling and analysis within microfluidic channels.

Requirements:

- Technical qualifications:
 - An earned PhD in biochemistry, biology, biochemical engineering or related fields
 - Good grasp of chemistry would be an asset

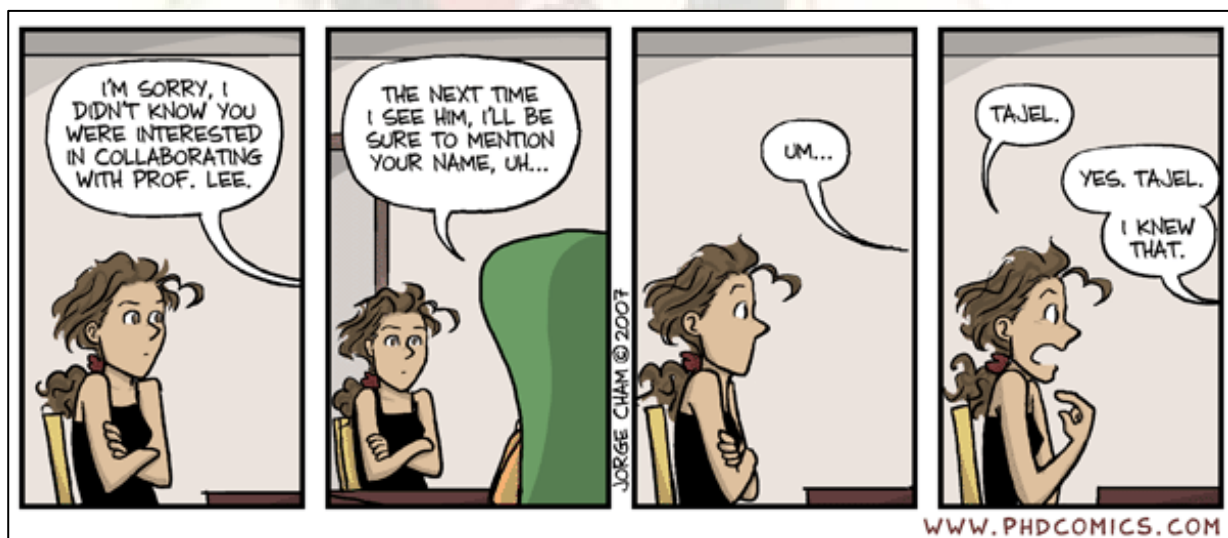
Personal qualifications:

- Professionally ambitious
 - Industrious
 - Good personality
- Other qualification/skills:
 - Quick learner and starter
 - Hands-on, creative, and good communication skills

Application:

The position is available in June 2008 till the position is filled. Interested individuals should forward their CVs with names and contact information of three references to:

Prof. Xudong Cao, Ph.D.
Department of Chemical & Biological Engineering
University of Ottawa
Tel: 613-562-5800 ext 2097
xcao@eng.uottawa.ca



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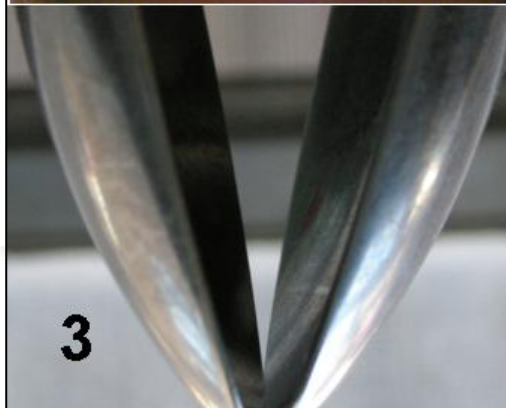
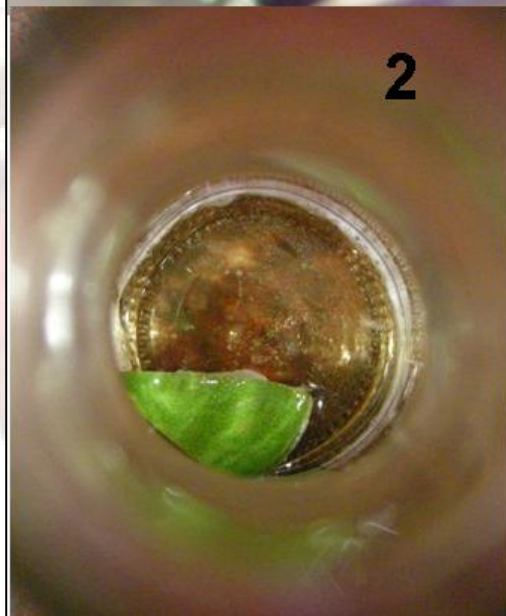
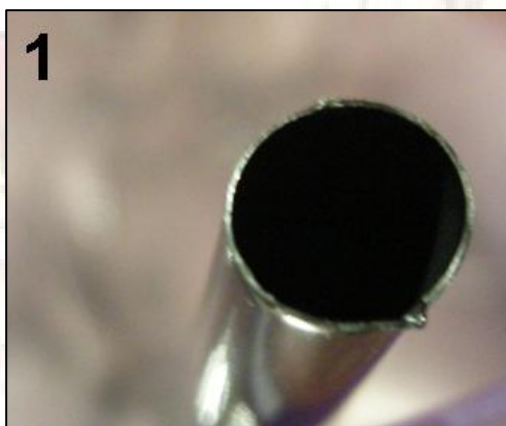
Do you need a break from experiments? Are you tired of reading papers?

We'll take a minute and let your mind wander – can you figure out what's featured in these nine pictures?

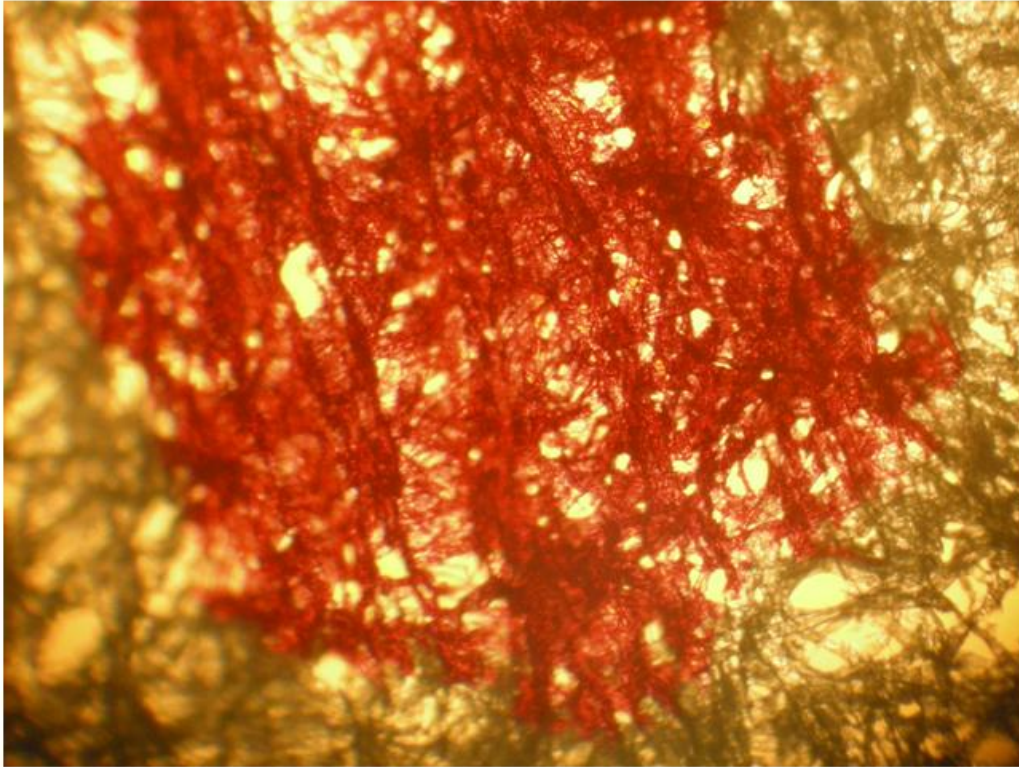
Give it your best shot, as there are prizes to be won – Tim Horton's gift certificates will be presented to the top guessers!!!

Enter by Friday June 20th at 4pm by emailing your guesses to BMIGSA@gmail.com

GOOD LUCK!!!



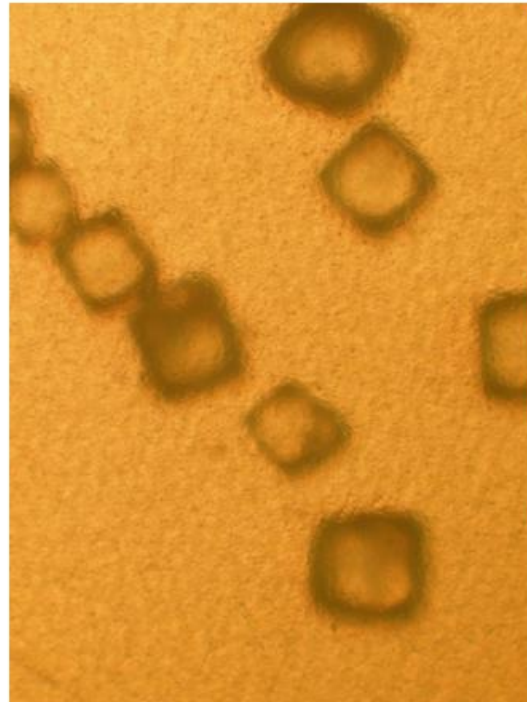
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