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YOUNG ISLAND SCIENTIST

Newsletter of the
 Society for the Advancement of Young Scientists

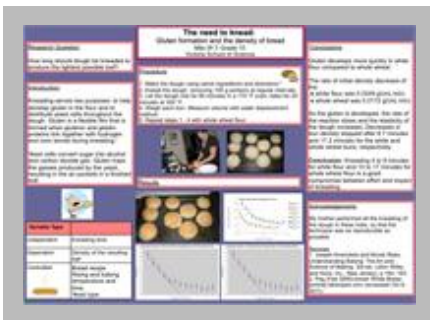
18 MARCH 2012

2012 SCIENCE FAIR: Sunday April 15 – Monday April 16

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Developing a Science Fair Project



The Need to Knead - Part 4 By Wendy Topic

As the Science Fair approaches, Milo constructs a poster board highlighting his key questions, results, and conclusions. This will reinforce his story as he explains to the judges and public "The Need to Knead".

The President's Lab Bench



Next month, the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair will celebrate its 50th birthday! Our fair is one of the original 12 that sent students to Ottawa for the first Canada-Wide Science Fair in 1962. This year we will send our top Grade 7-12 students to Prince Edward Island along with 100 other regions across Canada.

As part of our 50th anniversary, we have collected stories and testimonials from VIRSF alumni. Here are some responses from our first decade:

Pete Lawrie, 1965: My science fair experience influenced my decision to obtain a B.Sc. from UVic. The requirements to pick, complete, collaborate, organize and display a science fair project were building blocks for my entire career.

Brian Money, 1965: Presenting and explaining my exhibit helped develop my confidence and built good written and oral communication skills - valuable tools which I used in my professional career and continue to use in my retirement years.

John Richardson, 1966, 1967: My science fair experience, in no small part, led to later career experiences. I really enjoyed the

See Milo's project display at web.uvic.ca/~virsf/DevelopingAScienceFairProject4.php.

That concludes Milo's journey from project idea, experiment, analysis, and presentation. We wish you the best with your project!

Wendy Topic is a science teacher at Glenlyon Norfolk School. Follow this regular VIRSF Newsletter feature as Wendy describes Milo's journey through the whole process of doing a Science Fair project.

Preparing for the Big Day with the Judges

By Lauren Hudson

In preparing for the VIRSF, my students are always nervous about speaking to the judges about their projects. Each year after the VIRSF I ask my students what was their favorite part of the Science Fair experience. The majority of the kids list talking to the judges about the projects as the highlight. This makes sense because, after all, the students are proud of their work and a great deal of time and effort went in to preparing for the fair. How can you overcome those nerves and make your project presentation a success? Try these tips:

Before fair day, ask yourself:

1. What inspired you to complete this project?
2. What was the purpose of each step in your procedure?
3. What did you discover? What are the new terms or concepts that you learned about?
4. What will you do with your knowledge now?
5. Are there any other projects or questions you'd like to work on now as a result of your project?
6. What's on your display board? Why?
7. What were your greatest successes? What was challenging?

On the day of the Fair, be sure to:

1. Introduce yourself by name, grade and school.
2. The judge will most likely have read your project report and will start by asking questions. Take a deep breath and make sure you understand the judges' questions. Always ask to have the question repeated if you don't

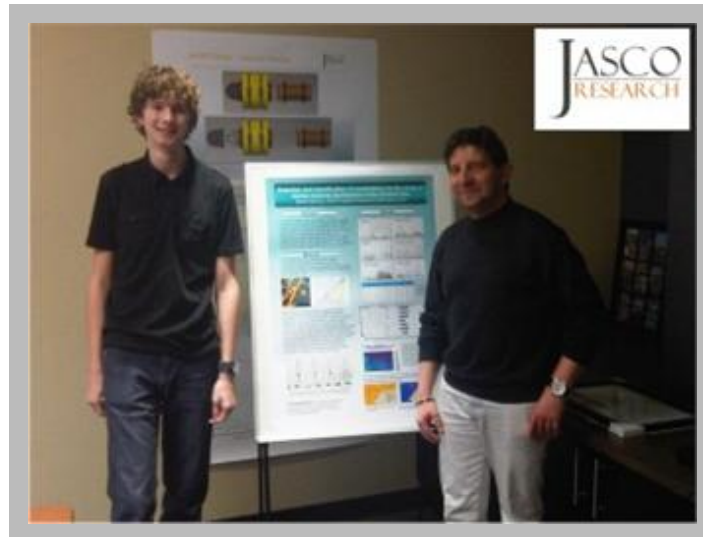
small part, led to later career experiences. I really enjoyed the Regional Science Fair, in those early years when it was in a room at the original Hudson's Bay store. The Science Fairs were instrumental in my life's path.

Robert Rowe, 1967, 1968: Science Fair instilled a life-long passion for science and discovery. It led me to UVic where I pursued a degree in cell biology and then on to creating several small companies in the high tech fields of science and engineering.

Thomas Niemann, 1969: My Science Fair experience helped me appreciate the importance of sharing my excitement about scientific discoveries and their potential for applications that benefit many people.

Wolfgang Carolsfeld, 1969: I applaud the ongoing Science Fair program, and hope it will keep operating for a long time to come. Happy 50th!

Sponsor Profile: JASCO Research



Roberto Racca, Chief Information Officer, Past-President

by Alex Chlysta

Can you tell me about JASCO?

JASCO (Joseph A. Scrimger Co., after the name of the founder) was founded in 1981 and was initially involved with government defense projects using underwater acoustics. We later began environmental projects modeling the propagation of sound from different sources. JASCO has a broad range of expertise and we design many of our own instruments. We work closely with environmental regulatory agencies and industries.

You have a Ph.D. in Electro-Optics and have had a very diverse career. How did you get started with JASCO?

I first started with JASCO as a consultant after completing my Masters degree. I also tried my hand in the area of medical physics working with artificial heart valves and bypass grafts. In

the question repeated if you don't understand.

3. This is your time to show off what you know! Make sure to tell them the details of your project that you thought about in preparation for your interview.
4. Thank the judges for their time.

You're all set! Good luck!

Lauren Hudson teaches science at St. Margaret's School

Sponsors



SAYS wants to extend a heartfelt thanks to these people, companies and organizations that support the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair (VIRSF). Their support allows us to hold the fair each year.

Would you like to support the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair? Get more information here:
<http://web.uvic.ca/~virsf/SupportSAYS.html>

Important Dates

Registration deadline for VIRSF
 Wednesday March 28, 2012
<http://web.uvic.ca/~virsf/>

Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair
 Sunday April 15 & Monday April 16, 2012

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projects starting with similar names. After six years, in the late 1990s Dr. Scrimger died very suddenly, around a time when the company shrank from 10 to 4 people because of market conditions. I became General Manager with the goal of helping keep the company alive. Today JASCO has grown to 50 people in Canada, the USA, Australia and the UK.

Tell me a little about your recent research on acoustic impact on marine life.

JASCO used to work purely in acoustics, collecting data on sound propagation. When we started internally interpreting our acoustic data to assess possible effects, our research was diverted to the environmental impact of sound waves. We have found that critical marine behaviour, such as foraging for food, can be negatively affected by human created sound. Although JASCO is a commercial company, we endeavour not to lose the quality of science. Our credibility depends on it.

What skills do you look for when you hire a new employee?

Imagination and the ability to look beyond the limits of an immediate problem are important. We look for multidisciplinary experience, and the ability to apply one's mind. Most of our employees have at least a Bachelor degree and several have their PhD.

Why do you think that it's important to sponsor science fair?

When I moved from Italy, I had never heard of a science fair. However, my younger sister won multiple awards at the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair, and I had the opportunity to chaperone the Vancouver Island team at the Canada-Wide Science Fair in Ottawa (1985). Through my sister, I became connected to the science fair, and have had the opportunity to judge on a few occasions. It's wonderful and I support it.

Alex Chysta is a grade 10 student at Claremont High School. Last year, he represented Vancouver Island at the Canada-Wide Science Fair with his project "Rover Robotics: A Better Approach to Rover Planetary Exploration?".

Rossi Marx, Our Fair Chair



Provincial:

Science Fair Foundation BC:

<http://www.sciencefairs.ca/students/>**National:**

Youth Science Canada:

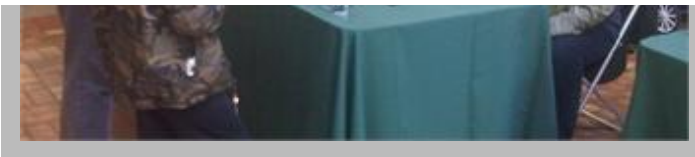
<http://www.youthscience.ca/get-started>**Contact Information****President: Randy Enkin**

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***A Day in the Life: Dr. Rossi Marx******Condensed from an article by Jean Macgregor, The Ring***

Dr. Rossi Marx is the senior laboratory instructor in the University of Victoria Department of Biology. She is passionate about fostering a learning environment for students. With an undergraduate degrees in mathematics and biology from Germany, an MSc in neurobiology from the University of Saskatchewan, and a PhD in neurobiology from UVic, Marx is no stranger to going the extra mile for the love of teaching and learning. “Throughout my career, I always had to fight to be allowed to get my education,” says Marx. “In high school, I was told by a teacher that girls did not need to know science, since they were going to get married. When I was in my first term of university, I was told by a relative that I couldn’t stay in university. But look at me now: I am a continent away, not only in science, but teaching it, and rather than discouraging, I try to encourage students. And it has been wonderfully rewarding.”

On top of her job at UVic, Marx is the chair of the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair, which is held at and supported by UVic. According to Marx, the need for people in the science and technology sector is increasing. “The kids who participate in the science fair are the people who are going to take care of all of us in our old age,” she says. “They are the people who are going to come up with the next CanadArm.”

“Above all, I am an instructor,” she says. “I try to give students the skills that they need for their professional lives. For me, the most important skill is critical thinking.” Sometimes, says Marx, critical thinking happens right before your eyes. “I swear I’ve seen the light bulb go on. And there’s nothing in the world like it. Imagine a student who comes in and she’s upset—she knows she’s not getting it. You ask leading questions and you build that

confidence—I have literally seen it: the eyes go out—there’s the light bulb—and pling! You see it. It makes you float for the remainder of the day, I swear.”

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SAYS – The Society for the Advancement of Young Scientists
Website: web.uvic.ca/~virsf/index.html