

welcome to issue 19

Welcome to *ChemNet News* for April. I hope those of you who have applied have got your university offers and are ready to start the hard work to achieve the grades you need. We've got more information from *Sense about Science* for you this month as well as *ChemNet News* and your copy of *Chemistry World*.

Plans for *Meet the Universities* are going well. Remember it's on 5th July and is THE event to go to if you are considering university entry for 2009. The event will be in central London and we've got more details in the events section.

There's still time to enter the *Bill Bryson science communication prize*. If you fancy a break from revision, or just want to write about something that interests you and have a go at winning a cash prize of up to £500, then why not enter? Find details here: <http://www.rsc.org/Education/BillBryson/index.asp>

The theme is science and sport and the closing date is 31st May 2008.

R. Bowles

Robert Bowles – Editor



This month

Meet the Universities

Don't miss out!

CAREERS SPOT

Meet the Universities is a great way to learn more about life at university. Whether you're interested in biochemistry, forensics, analytical chemistry, organic chemistry, physical chemistry, chemical engineering or just plain old chemistry, this event will offer you a chance to get the low down on the courses and what it's like to go to the university. Many universities also put on their own events and open days. I'm sure some of you have already been to open

days and taster sessions, it's a pretty important thing to do before you decide on your university choices for your UCAS form. Bristol University are having a mammoth two-day taster session in July right after MTU. More information can be found at: <http://www.tinyurl.com/3a6hkn> If you are thinking of doing a chemistry degree, or just want to find out more about it, the Bristol event will be well worth going to. A visit and attendance will look great on your UCAS personal statement for 2009.

Website of the month



As I mentioned the *Bill Bryson science communication prize* at the start which rewards those writing about science, I thought I'd highlight the website this month

for those of you who like your science and chemistry in book form. Yes, scientists can and do write novels, essays or plays and sometimes they even appear in them! This month I am highlighting a site which celebrates *LabLit*, the portrayal of science and scientists in novels and other forms of writing. There are some good stories and articles from scientists, including chemists and loads of science fiction with real science: <http://www.lablit.com>

chemnet events

Keep Saturday July 5th free. *Meet the Universities 2008* will be bigger and better than last year. It's being held in the Royal Horticultural Halls in central London, have you planned your trip yet? Registration is now available online at: <http://www.rsc.org/chemnet/mtu> It's free for *ChemNet* members and teachers. If you are considering a place at university to study any of the chemical sciences this is THE event to go to, with around 20 universities brought together in one place for you to question on any aspect of their courses or life at university.

There are still spaces for *ChemNet* members for a chemistry taster day at Imperial College, London on 24th June. There'll be a chance to do an experiment in the morning. This will be followed by a talk by the admissions tutor, handy if you are applying to Imperial, or pretty much anywhere else to do chemistry. We'll finish off the day with a lecture, and a tour of the University with a chance to talk to undergrad and postgrad students about what life is like at one of the countries top science universities.

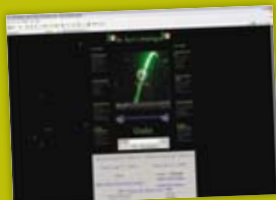
Book your place by emailing chemnet@rsc.org

TEXT US
ON 07825
186 304

chemistry on the web



This month, a couple of sites with video clips on them showing cool chemistry experiments. First off is this one with a top 10 <http://www.blog.wired.com/wiredscience/2008/03/top-10-amazing.html>



This one is not the chemistry of Kent (either the county or the superhero alter-ego) in fact it is run by 'Mr Kent' who knows lots about chemistry. It looks a bit amateur and not much effort has been spent on the design, but that's not necessarily a bad thing, the chemistry content is all spot on!

There's some great video clips of all things chemical here too. <http://www.kentchemistry.com/>

Chemistry in the news



Airports could soon be using *TEDDIs* for security. Have you been on holiday or taken a flight lately and lost the will to live while waiting in a queue to get through security? *TEDDI* can help. Materials scientists in Manchester and Nottingham are currently working on fast 3D, colour x-ray scanners using a process called "*tomographic energy dispersive diffraction imaging*". Yes, it still uses x-rays, but instead of 2D grey images, *TEDDI* can produce 3D colour images which reflect the density of different metals and other materials. Currently the colour images shown on security scanners are added as false colour, which simply replaces shades of grey, rather than providing additional information to the security staff. The new scanners could be used to identify cocaine or semtex hidden in suitcases.

<http://www.tinyurl.com/ynmdum>

Life on Mars HD189733b?

In the future when our luggage is carried by a roboporter (<http://www.tinyurl.com/215doe>) and we board our space plane to holiday on a different planet and put our luggage through *TEDDI* scanners as we head off into the unknown, we may end up on planet like HD 189733b, where chemists have just identified the presence of methane. (<http://www.tinyurl.com/34nil9>) This is significant as it is the first time that a carbon containing molecule has been identified on a planet outside the solar system. It's only 63 million light years away. Of course, the temperature on the surface is 9000 degrees celsius, so you'll need some heavy-duty sunscreen! It's unclear if the methane is produced by 'alien' cows but it is a significant discovery as we search for other planets capable of supporting human life. Arthur C Clarke, the famous science-fiction writer, who died last month, was sure that the future of humanity lay in the stars. If it does, it will be chemists who help us to get there.

If you want to register to use the discussion board email chemnet@rsc.org

“To book a place on a ChemNet event email: chemnet@rsc.org or call 01223 432340”

free stuff!

The winner of the Guardian university guide last month is *Hassan KJ Al Halwachi* from Sherborne School. Here's his entry: *"I'll definitely study a chemistry-based subject, but I still need the guide as a base to reduce the university choices in my mind or substitute them. Next year, I might be orbiting in Surrey, Plymouth, Durham, or even France. I wonder how I would react if I won?"* Well done Hassan! The guide is on it's way to you. How will you react? Well I hope!

This month we have two *MolyMod chemistry kits* to give away. *MolyMod* produce excellent molecular modelling kits, take a look at their website: <http://www.molymod.com>.

To win the *MolyMod* kit, just answer this question: *Which acid is it that makes ants so acidic?*

Email your answers to chemnet@rsc.org or call 01223 432340 by 19th April.

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Would you like to see your article in the next issue? If it's good enough we'll print it! Submit your article to chemnet@rsc.org

CHEMISTRY FACTS

Ants are very acidic.....so are tea leaves. If you ever get lost in the woods, don't eat too many ants, or you will suffer from acid indigestion!



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