

LOCAL

Mac conference teaches best ways to learn

Symposium showcases research on memory and attention

EMMA REILLY  
The Hamilton Spectator

Joe Kim knows why university lectures are always scheduled three times a week.

“Because it’s always been that way,” said the associate professor in psychology, neuroscience and behaviour at McMaster. “It’s tradition.”

The roots of the three-lecture week date back to medieval times, when books were rare and professors would dictate texts verbatim to their students.

Today, that tradition stands — despite the fact that there’s no evidence proving that schedule helps students learn.

“Why are we still using this dated method? It’s really gotten people to think about the basic structure of university and how we should be teaching,” he said.

Kim is the co-organizer of a conference at McMaster this week that highlights new research in learning, memory and attention.

The conference, now in its third year, focuses on how to take that research out of the lab and apply it

to the classroom.

“Cognitive psychologists have been studying memory and attention for 150 years. But when people ask, ‘So what have you done to change education?’ The answer is, ‘nothing,’” said Kim.

The conference draws researchers, high school teachers, students, educational consultants and a range of professionals from academia and education.

Among the presenters was Jennifer McCabe, associate professor at Goucher College in Baltimore. Her research focused on mnemon-

ic devices — techniques people can use to help them improve their ability to remember something.

The research shows that students learn better when they use key words to help them remember. (For example, the hippocampus — the area of the brain controlling memory — can be broken down into the memorable image of a hippo walking through campus).

Students fare even better when they make up those mnemonics themselves, McCabe said.

“Memory skill is made, not born,” she said. “With some effort, it really is possible to improve your memory.”

Daniel Smilek, associate profes-

sor of cognitive neuroscience at the University of Waterloo, presented his research on mind-wandering.

He found that students who watched a video of a lecture, rather than attending it in person, reported that their mind wandering increased as the lecture went on.

However, students who attended lectures in person found they could keep their minds on the task, even for extended periods.

The findings contradict previous beliefs that mind wandering is inevitable over time.

ereilly@thespec.com  
905-526-2452 | @EmmaatTheSpec

Man in critical after being struck by van

THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

A man is in critical condition after being struck by a van Thursday night.

Hamilton police said the pedestrian, who is in his 50s, stepped into the roadway at Main Street East near Wentworth Street South just before 10 p.m. He walked into the path of a van driving south along Wentworth. The driver of the van stopped after the collision and waited for emergency crews.

Police said the victim is in critical, but stable condition in hospital. The force’s forensics unit went to the scene to collect evidence.

Witnesses who haven’t already been interviewed are asked to call police on 905-546-4925.

Teen charged in knifepoint robbery

THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

Hamilton police have charged a 17-year-old in connection with a knifepoint robbery.

The alleged street robbery took place around West 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Mohawk Road West around 8:46 p.m. Wednesday and involved one victim, police said.

Officers located the suspect, who they believe fled on foot, in the area of West 5<sup>th</sup> Street and the Lincoln Alexander Parkway overpass, police said. He was allegedly found in possession of stolen property.

The Hamilton teenager is charged with two counts of robbery and one count of possession of stolen property.

‘Conflicts with God’ made me kill senior, Café says in video

Accused killer told police he hears voices in his head

KEN PETERS  
The Hamilton Spectator

ST. CATHARINES — Loujack Café said the voices in his head led him to stab to death George Burnett on Labour Day Weekend 2011.

In a Jan. 27, 2012 confession with Burnett lead investigator, Hamilton Det. Sgt. Blake Easto, the accused said the daily voices he hears in his head tell him it’s God speaking to him.

“I hear voices and they challenge me. I hear them every day and they make fun of me, you know. That’s pretty much the, the, beginning of it.

“And yes, I did kill, I did murder George Washington Burnett. Yeah, that’s not a lie. I’ll confess it to you,” Café said in the videotaped confession shown to the jury in his first-degree murder trial Friday.

Café said he had heard voices since getting into a prison fight with an inmate two years prior to the interview.

Frustrated by the voices of God in his head, Café said he chose to punish God by killing Burnett, “because he said he was a man of God, right, he was a church man and all that.”

Later, Café suggests “... when it came to George Washington Burnett, I took it upon myself because I knew he was a holy man and he was showing himself as a holy man to God and because he was a

man of God and God has ... I’ve been having conflicts with God; it caused, it caused me to, to do what I did.”

Café is on trial for the murder of Burnett, 82. The regular church-going Burnett was found stabbed more than 40 times in his Stirton Street home. Café, 27, was living behind the victim’s home in an Arthur Avenue North rooming house at the time.

The Crown suggests Burnett was slain sometime in the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 4, 2011.

Café said he stole into Burnett’s backdoor, which had been left slightly open to allow a breeze to enter. He said he saw Burnett was asleep in his first-floor converted bedroom.

He said he took two knives from the kitchen drawers.

“I quietly snuck up and the first attack I did was to his neck with the left and to his belly with the right and then to his neck with the left and to his belly with the right. And then I continued with the right to his belly ...

“And then I had my cellphone on me and I took a picture to mock God and I, and I told myself I was going to, to, to do it in front of people’s faces. And that’s the truth of the matter.”

Photos of Burnett’s head and another shot of Café’s bloody running shoe soles helped lead police to Café as a possible suspect and his Jan. 27, 2012 arrest.

Café said he wore plastic gloves and left via the front door. He said he disposed of the clothes and shoes in a downtown dumpster before walking back to his apartment.

During the interview, Café writes an apology letter to Burnett’s family, admitting to the gruesome crime “as I was out of my mind.”

Café said at one point when Burnett awoke and tried to get up, he hit him in the head with a rock in a bag he had brought with him to knock him back onto the bed and continue the attack.

At one point, Det. Steve Hrab takes over the interview.

“You wanted to hurt him,” Hrab asks.

“Because he was a man of God and God was causing me a trouble,” Café said. Later, Café adds, “I wanted to pay God back ... for all the garbage that, I mean, that I’ve been receiving.”

Café said he believes the attack took less than 10 minutes to complete.

“It was very quick, very quick. I didn’t go in there to assault him; I went in there with the mind to, you know, finish him. And that’s the truth. And that’s all I wanted to get off my chest, you know.”

The trial, before Ontario Superior Court Justice James Ramsay, enters its fourth week Monday.

kpeters@thespec.com  
905-526-3388

Watch Loujack Café’s police video at [thespec.com](http://thespec.com)

**ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS OF UNION GAS LIMITED**

**Union Gas Limited has applied for approval to change its gas commodity, storage and transportation rates effective January 1, 2016.**

**Learn more. Have your say.**

Union Gas Limited has applied to change its rates to better reflect how it supplies natural gas to its customers. The proposed changes include the following:

- A change in the reference price used to set rates on a quarterly basis for a majority of its customers; and
- A change to how it allocates costs to the different types of customers that it serves.

An average residential customer would see the following annual bill impact, but these impacts would only start in 2018:

Residential Customer – Service Area	Approximate Bill Impact
Southern Ontario (Windsor to Hamilton) Northern Delivery Area (North Bay to Kapuskasing) All Other Delivery Areas	Decrease of \$20 Increase of \$26
	Decrease of \$1.50 – \$51.50

Other customers in Union Gas Limited's service area, including businesses, will also be affected.

**THE ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD IS HOLDING A PUBLIC HEARING**

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) will hold a public hearing to consider the application filed by Union Gas.

We will question Union Gas on the case. We will also hear arguments from individuals and from groups that represent the customers of Union Gas. At the end of this hearing, the OEB will decide whether to approve the changes that Union Gas has requested in this application.

The OEB is an independent and impartial public agency. We make decisions that serve the public interest. Our goal is to promote a financially viable and efficient energy sector that provides you with reliable energy services at a reasonable cost.

**BE INFORMED AND HAVE YOUR SAY**

You have the right to information regarding this application and to be involved in the process.

- You can review the application filed by Union Gas on the OEB's website now.
- You can file a letter with your comments, which will be considered during the hearing.
- You can become an active participant (called an intervenor). Apply by **August 25, 2015** or the hearing will go ahead without you and you will not receive any further notice of the proceeding.
- At the end of the process, you can review the OEB's decision and its reasons on our website.

**LEARN MORE**

Our file number for this case is **EB-2015-0181**. To learn more about this hearing, find instructions on how to file letters or become an intervenor, or to access any document related to this case, please select the file number **EB-2015-0181** from the list on the OEB website: [www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/notice](http://www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/notice). You can also phone our Consumer Relations Centre at 1-877-632-2727 with any questions.


**ORAL VS. WRITTEN HEARINGS**

There are two types of OEB hearings – oral and written. The OEB will determine at a later date whether to proceed by way of a written or oral hearing. If you think an oral hearing is needed, you can write to the OEB to explain why by **August 25, 2015**.

**PRIVACY**

If you write a letter of comment, your name and the content of your letter will be put on the public record and the OEB website. However, your personal telephone number, home address and e-mail address will be removed. If you are a business, all your information will remain public. If you apply to become an intervenor, all information will be public.

This hearing will be held under section 36 of the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, S.O. 1998 c.15 (Schedule B).



Ontario  
Ontario Energy Board / Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario

RBG working with Hydro One on turning Cootes parking lot into turtle nesting area

CRAIG CAMPBELL

Working with land owner Hydro One, the Royal Botanical Gardens has created a management plan that will turn an informal Cootes Paradise parking lot into a meadow and turtle nesting area.

There is no plan to reopen public access through Hydro One’s Olympic Drive property to the Desjardins Canal, long an unofficial trail.

“The authorized water access for Cootes Paradise is Princess Point,” said Tys Theysmeyer, RBG director of lands. He said access through the private property became “totally abused” with illegal

dumping, overnight tractor trailer trucks and vehicles ruining grass.

“Much of the gravel will be removed and the area turned into a meadow. Some of the gravel will be used to build turtle nesting sites.”

Theysmeyer told Dundas Community Council Hydro One has had problems with endangered and threatened turtle species nesting in their truck parking area. The company and RBG are working together to provide alternate spots for turtles to safely nest.

Although the area has been a popular location for people to access a trail along the Desjardins Canal, and also launch canoes into the waterway, it’s never been offi-

cially recognized for those purposes and is private property owned by Hydro One.

Hydro One spokesperson Alicia Sayers said the company closed access in order to minimize impacts on the environment.

“One of the primary reasons for this was due to nesting turtles in the area. Hydro One worked with the RBG to install turtle nesting beds and we have also modified our maintenance practices in the area, particularly, our grass-cutting schedules” — also installing fencing to keep turtles in their natural landscape.

Hamilton Community News

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