

SNO-FOO AWARD



TO ERR IS HUMAN, TO FORGET IT WOULD BE DIVINE.

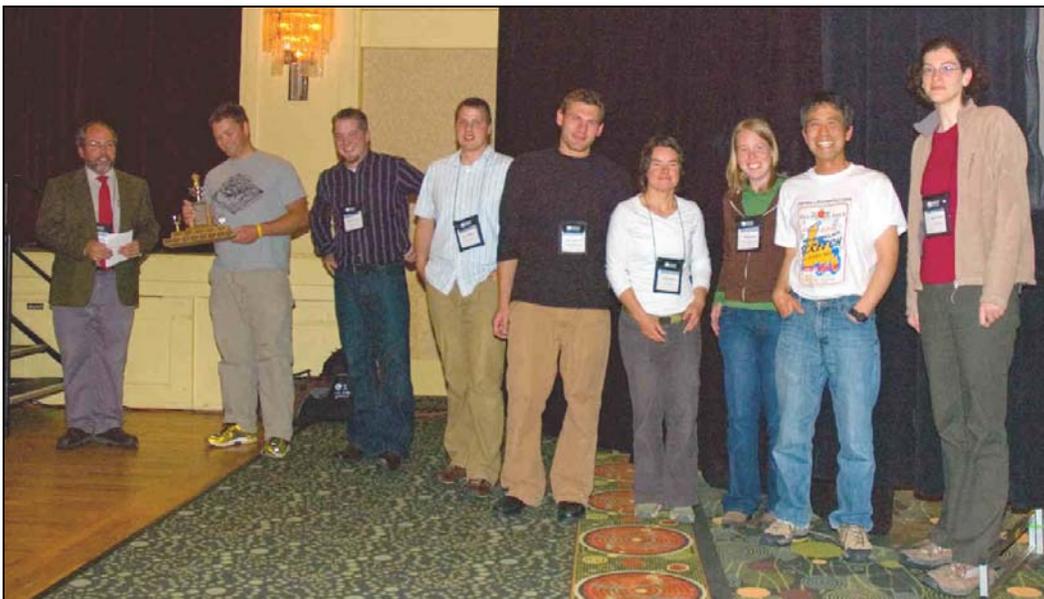
SNO-FOO 2007—Jimmy MacDonald (U. Saskatchewan), Bill Floyd (UBC), Chris DeBeer (U. Saskatchewan), Wendell Koenig (Alberta Environment), Jaime Hood (U. Calgary), Dankia Muir (U. Calgary), John Jackson (U. Calgary), Sarah Forte (U. Calgary), and Professor Masaki Hayashi (U. Calgary).

We all know that humans make errors, but it can be said that it takes a snow scientist to make a truly spectacular blunder. Perhaps the truest test of whether one is right for snow science is their “variance,” the difference between the heights of their science and the depths of their depravity. The tale that follows is one of phase change, storage, flow regime, combustion, alcohol, and peace officers and is sadly all too typical of 21st C snow science.

The snow scientists-in-training pictured below attended the most easterly of ESC in St. John’s Newfoundland, home to lobstermen, crabs, Screech and foggy nights. Being poor, or perhaps simply misguidedly frugal, they decided to have a lobster feast on the cheap. A deal with a lobsterman on a foggy quay sealed their fate. With lobsters secured, they retired to the fine Memorial University residences to consume their crustacean. But one ingredient was missing: melted butter for dipping! Being ingenious, they realized that alcohol was the solution to their phase change problem, and a quick trip to the corner rubbing alcohol shop (never far in resourceful St. John’s) provided the chemical they needed. A quick stitch of a tin can provided the stove, and melted butter was no farther away than the strike of a match on the dormitory floor. Unfortunately their hypothesized depressional storage tin was in fact a linear reservoir with a rate of outflow proportional to its head. Combustion had little effect on the rate of discharge, but discharge had a large effect on the rate of combustion. Calibration was not the solution here, as the flame spread along the floor along with panic and the sound of fire alarms. Some enjoyed the warmth, some melted the butter, some moved carpet and furniture, but all had to explain to the fire marshal and local constabulary the nature of this unlikely combustion. Their facile explanations accepted, the pyro-gourmets retired to their Newfie feast.

But they should beware. Where there is flame there is infamy and the Sno-Foo quickly found their feat.

The first group-award in the history of the Sno-Foo goes to Jimmy MacDonald (U. Saskatchewan), Bill Floyd (UBC), Chris DeBeer (U. Saskatchewan), Wendell Koenig (Alberta Environment), Jaime Hood (U. Calgary), Dankia Muir (U. Calgary), John Jackson (U. Calgary), Sarah Forte (U. Calgary) and wait, (!) not a student at all, the esteemed Professor Masaki Hayashi, Canada Research Chair at the University of Calgary (taking the pictures and providing moral mentorship and guidance in judgement). May you stay one step ahead of the authorities and match your depths with your heights in your pursuit of snow. You have taken up with dangerous company.



Respectfully submitted by John Pomeroy after two seconds of consideration.