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QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"No man will succeed unless he is ready to face and overcome difficulties and prepared to assume responsibilities."

--William Boetcker



A Bug In Your Ear...

AU Wins International Award

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*

Once again Athabasca University can claim leadership status in the area of distance education. AU was one of only three recipients of an **Award of Excellence for Institutional Achievement** presented by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). AU was the only North American recipient of the award - the others were BBC World Service in London, England and Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University in India. The Excellence in Distance Education Awards were conferred last week in Durban, South Africa at the Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning.

The institutional awards "recognize significant achievements in the innovative and effective

application of appropriate learning technologies to reach students who might otherwise not have participated in the learning or training experience."

The citation for AU's award stated: "Since it (Athabasca University) was established in 1970, it has been at the forefront of the development of distance education in Canada. It has made technology its niche and, as new technologies become available, this open university has successfully integrated them to create flexible and more accessible programs and services for its learners.

"... It has worked tirelessly to promote the cause and ideals of distance education around the world."

President Dominique Abrioux accepted the award on behalf of the university, and was also personally recognized for his contribution to distance education with the presentation of an **Honorary Fellow of COL Award**.

Noting that he began and has sustained his career at one academic institution, the citation for his award stated: "Having joined that university as a lecturer in 1979, he has served in a number of academic and senior administrative positions rising to become the President in 1995, a post that he continues to occupy with distinction. Dr. Abrioux was a pioneer in the development of distance education courses in French, one of Canada's two official languages.

"His pioneering and innovative spirit was further demonstrated by his conception and launch in 2000 of the Canadian Virtual University, an organization over which he continues to preside as founding President. A partnership of 12 universities across Canada, the virtual university is committed to delivering university-level distance learning programs capable of being completed from anywhere in the world.

"*Time* magazine, in its November 12, 2001 issue, singled out Dominique and Athabasca University for leadership in "wired education." This recognition speaks volumes about the international credibility earned for Athabasca University under Dominique's guiding hand.

"Under his leadership, Athabasca University's student enrolments have doubled including resident individual learners from 65 countries."

The Commonwealth of Learning is an intergovernmental organization created by Commonwealth heads of government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources, and technologies. Headquartered in Vancouver, COL is the only official Commonwealth agency located outside Britain and is the world's only intergovernmental organization solely concerned with the promotion and development of distance education and open learning. It was established in 1988 and has a membership of 54 countries.

Check out the COL [website](#) for further information.



Mad Cow: What's Mad Is That We Are Not Doing More To Stop It.

By Tamra Ross Low

Some years ago I read about a horrible disease named Kuru. It was listed in The Guinness Book of World Records as the most rare disease in the world. A little investigation, however, showed that Kuru was not all that rare.

Called 'laughing sickness', Kuru is a brain wasting disease that is transmitted by curious means – you get it from eating the brain tissue of other infected humans. Most of us have little reason to worry.

This is a good thing because Kuru is a terrible disease. The epidemic peaked in the 1960's, killing over 1,100 people in the South Fore region of New Guinea. The tribes of this area practiced mortuary cannibalism – they ate their dead, and certain portions of the anatomy were ritually prepared for consumption in religious ceremonies. The brain tissue, in particular, was prized for this purpose. Kuru was thought to be a genetic disease, so there was no fear of eating those who died from it. In fact, Kuru victims were particularly prized for consumption, due to the quick death and the thick layer of fat left on the bodies [Prion Diseases; McGrath].

It is no wonder that for decades scientists did not attribute the transmission of the disease to the cannibalistic practices of the natives. Kuru has an incubation period of two to 23 years, and kills in about 3 months. During this time, the victim progresses through three stages of degeneration:

“The ambulant stage includes unsteadiness of stance, gait, voice, hands, and eyes; deterioration of speech; tremor; shivering; in-coordination in lower extremities that moves slowly upward; and slurred speech.

In the sedentary stage, the patient can no longer walk without support, suffers more severe tremors and ataxia (loss of coordination of the muscles), shock-like muscle jerks, emotional lability, outbursts of laughter, depression, and mental slowing.

In the terminal stage - which is marked by the patient's inability to sit up without support - there is more severe loss of muscle coordination, tremor, and slurring of speech; urinary and fecal incontinence; difficulty swallowing; and deep ulcerations appear.” [Paraphrased from McGrath]

These symptoms may sound familiar. This is because Kuru is what has been termed a Prion Disease – a medical curiosity where a disease is passed from one victim to another by a rogue protein (a prion) that has no DNA, RNA, or any other known route of transmission

[Access Excellence]. Another Prion disease is Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), a variant of which (vCJD) is the cause of Mad Cow [aka, bovine spongiform encephalopathy of BSE].

North American citizens are unlikely to even contract Kuru, but this is not so for CJD. There are other known Prion Diseases, including Scrapie in sheep, and Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) that has infected many deer and elk in North America. These diseases are often called spongiform encephalies, because they leave the brain tissue full of holes, and all are fatal. The new variant of BSE (mad Cow) kills in about 18 months, while the older one was fatal in 6 [Why Files].

Most North Americans don't worry much about Mad Cow. We are told that no cow on our continent has been found with the disease, and that the deer and elk form of the disease that is cropping up here is not transmittable to humans. However, there mad cows in Britain for years, which were routinely fed to humans because the government was assured that the disease could not cross the species boundary. The first few cases of cross-species transmission were ignored, as CJD is known to occur spontaneously in a very small percentage of the population.

In reality, eating these cows was spreading mad cow in the very same way that the spread of Kuru began. Many New Guinea tribes practiced mortuary cannibalism, but the disease seemed to only effect a few. It is believed that one person may have acquired the disease through a natural genetic mutation, and that the practice of consuming the brain tissue is what started it spreading throughout the tribal group. In a similar fashion it is believed that cows first contracted Mad Cow through ingesting feed that was supplemented with meat from sheep infected with Scrapie, which was known to exist in sheep for over 200 years [Access Excellence]. Still, the North American governments insist that we do not have to be afraid of contracting any form of Prion disease from infected deer or elk.

To support this theory, the government points out that no one has gotten sick from eating sick deer. This is true, however, this may not mean anything at all. You see, Mad Cow is now thought to have an incubation period of as long as 30 years [Mercola]. There is evidence that when the diseases cross the species boundary, they are slow moving at first, and then progress more quickly through subsequent generations as the protein adapts to the new species.

"Aiken, for example, passed a mink [Prion Disease] ... through hamsters, and found that the agent acted faster in successive generations. The first hamsters [infected] generally outlived the disease, which took hundreds of days to incubate. When brain material from those hamsters was injected into other hamsters, the disease struck faster. By the third generation, there was a 'tremendous shortening -- it has adapted to the new species.'" (Why Files)

This means that those who have ingested the meat of animals carrying the prions in North America may not show any symptoms for years, but that progression will speed up significantly over time just as it has in Britain. This also means that the 80 deaths attributed to Mad Cow so far in Britain are just the tip of the iceberg. In fact, many scientists are projecting that once all of

those already infected succumb to the disease, that the death toll will be somewhere between 10,000 and 100,000 [Mercola; Why Files].

This week, a Saskatchewan man was the first Canadian victim of Mad Cow. He is said to have contracted the disease during a stay in Great Britain in the late eighties, but there is no evidence to support this theory. Still, Antonio Giulivi, director of Health Canada's Acquired Infections branch believes that we will likely have more Canadian cases from people who travelled to Britain during that time [Canadian Press, 2002].

Giulivi, however, also tries to reassure people with the ridiculous palliative statement: "The risk of coming down with this disease is much lower than a person smoking and getting cancer."

Given that an estimated 66,200 [Stats Canada] Canadians will die of cancer this year, and that 30% of these are attributed to smoking, then about 19,860 people will die from smoking related cancer this year – and this only takes into account mortality – many more smokers will get cancer and survive. Dr. Giulivi's reassurance, then, is laughable. Perhaps if he were more certain, he'd say that we had a greater chance of being hit by lightning, or something equally unlikely.

Despite all this, most people in North America have chosen to remain unconcerned, like Nadine Vosper of West Vancouver who visits relatives in Britain and eats British meat. She brushes off the concern, stating: "If you worry about every little thing you can't live [Canadian Press]." Perhaps, but is this a little thing? Oddly, many people on both sides of the ocean have taken an almost defiant approach to the scare, declaring that they have eaten beef all of their lives, and will never stop. What, exactly, are these people trying to defy? Death itself? Certainly not that infectious little prion, for it cares little for stoicism.

It is alarming, then, that we are doing so little to prevent the disease. Britain is still killing cattle for the dinner table, despite knowing that the disease is undetectable in the cows in the early stages, and that it cannot be killed by any process that can kill bacterium or viruses. Certainly, if a brand of hair dye or cold medicine were found to be responsible for this many deaths, it would be pulled off the shelves, but there has been no ban on beef because they are afraid of angering consumers. Unfortunately, this may be the only way to stop the disease.

When the tribes of New Guinea stopped cannibalizing their dead (a practice that had great historical and religious significance), Kuru became a part of medical history. Mad Cow may have disappeared if beef production had been stopped for a few years to clean up the herds, but because these steps were not taken the disease is spreading to more animals and all of our meat is threatened. It seems that most people would rather take that risk than to live without steaks and hamburgers for a while.

It may be a self-defeating risk, because if the disease cannot be stopped we may never be able to eat beef again and other meats may follow. The American government has attempted to curb the disease by making it illegal to feed cattle feed products that contains cow parts, but they were slow in doing so, and they have not been very effective in enforcing the ban. Just last year

“a blunder in a Texas feed mill showed that regulations on feed are not foolproof. Despite quick corrective action, regulators and industry officials, to say nothing of food safety activists, were upset that the mill supplied a Texas feedlot with feed containing parts of slaughtered cattle -- the exact recipe that distributed mad cow across the United Kingdom more than 10 years ago [Why Files].”

This is especially alarming in light of a British Report [The BSE Inquiry] which “indicated that a chunk of prion-laced meat as small as a peppercorn could infect a cow -- and that thousands of British cows were infected simply because cow feed was contaminated by pig feed while being handled in grain mills [Why Files].” Nevertheless, many are confident that current protection measures are adequate; although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention budget for detecting the onset of BSE is only \$100,000 [Why Files]. There is already some evidence that the deer and elk variant of Chronic Wasting Disease may be able to infect humans just as easily as the cattle variant [Raymond, et al.], but no bans on hunting are in place. They must be mad...

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Tamra lives in Calgary with her husband and two cats. A fulltime AU student, she splits her free time between her duties as an AUSU councillor, writing her first novel, and editing written work by other students and friends.



From My Perspective: Protests By Debbie Jabbour

Standing on the street with a protest sign is a new experience for me. The closest I've come is during high school when I participated in a sit-in to protest administration rules against wearing shorts to class in summer. We were sent back to class and the no-shorts rule remained. Although at the time we didn't think we were successful, students nowadays have much more freedom in dress choice, so our protest may have played a role in changing things.

Generally I'm a pretty tolerant person. Although I have strong opinions on many issues, I usually do not act on my activist tendencies in a physical way, preferring to use pen and paper as my tools of protest. This past weekend, however, I found myself walking around with a crowd of neighbours holding a sign and waving at passing cars – protesting the opening of a Source Adult Video store at the end of my street. Not only does this store rent adult videos, it sells sex toys, gifts, clothing and magazines. It is also open 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

My concern has nothing to do with passing moral judgement on the store itself. I consider pornography degrading to women, but I try to have a tolerant, non-judgemental attitude towards behaviours other adults choose to engage in. If consenting adults want to participate in the making or viewing of pornography, I consider it a matter of personal choice. I don't think that people who rent adult videos are all perverts either. I'm protesting this store because I think it is in an inappropriate location, one that affects myself and family on a personal level.

I live in an older established neighbourhood, with mature trees lining the streets. The end of the street meets a thoroughfare that links to a major freeway, and that street is zoned commercial.

Across the street is a small strip mall with a Shoppers Drug Mart, a Second Cup and an A & W. We have a couple small pubs in the area, convenience stores and two small liquor stores, but any major retail or commercial activities are several blocks away.

Although most of the neighbourhood consists of older homes, with many seniors and established families, it is changing. Increasingly young families are moving in, and the area is becoming revitalized by the presence of young children and teenagers. This is occurring in many older parts of Edmonton. This revitalization means homes are being torn down or renovated, and the city has recognized the need to protect the character of older neighbourhoods by placing certain development restrictions through a special inner-city zoning bylaw called “mature neighbourhood overlay.” Under this bylaw, certain new developments in older neighbourhoods are rigorously screened, and may require adjustments to height or size. More importantly, consultation with neighbours must be undertaken to ensure support. However, in the case of the video store – no consultation occurred. The first I knew of it was a few weeks ago when my daughters came home quite upset, telling me the old Boston Pizza now had a Source Adult Video store sign on top.

The bus stop is right in front of the store, and they have to cross the parking lot on their way home. They were very distressed by this. In their viewpoint they will be coming home from school every day, or at night from work or an outing with friends, and will have to walk past, and be ogled by, horny men coming to the store to rent pornography. They asked if I was going to do anything about it. I suggested that people renting adult movies are not necessarily potential rapists, but I could understand how uncomfortable this was making them. So when a neighbour dropped off a flyer suggesting we organize a protest, I was more than happy to join in.

NEXT WEEK: TAKING ACTION

Debbie is a native Edmontonian, a single parent with four daughters. She has worked as a professional musician for most of her life, and has enjoyed a rich variety of life experiences - with many more to come! Debbie is working towards an eventual doctorate in psychology, and currently serves as the president of the Athabasca University Students' Union.



FED WATCH!

By Karl Low

FOIP follies

The University of Calgary has been found to be in breach of an employee's privacy. In the [case details](#) an employee had called the university's campus security with respect to an incident regarding an employee, the employee's spouse, and other staff and the employee's supervisor. The employee and spouse were removed from the premises. Some time later, the supervisor asked for the campus security's report on the incident and received it from campus security. Apparently the report contained the former employee's name and home address. The report also contained the information about the former employee's spouse including name, birth date, home address, colour and make of vehicle, and licence plate number.

The former employee was quite concerned about this information getting into the hands of the former supervisor. Given that the campus cops had to be called, I can only assume that there was some sort of fairly heated disagreement going on. In fact, in the complaint, the employee stated "... The University has shown no regard for my safety. ..."

In investigating the case, the privacy commissioner determined that yes, the release of this information was against the Freedom of Information and Privacy act, and should not have been done. To compensate the university is required to establish policies to ensure this does not happen again.

I am not exactly sure how this is going to be any compensation to the person whose information was already released. While there is little that can actually be done for the employee concerned, I would expect that a formal, written apology be required.

On the other hand, FOIP can also be a serious hassle. Athabasca University, for instance, is restricted from releasing student e-mail addresses to AUSU. This means that though AUSU has our names and postal addresses, and even though the majority of AUSU's communication is done electronically, they have no access to our e-mail addresses unless we specifically provide it to them or tell AU that it can be provided to the AUSU.

As a result, many students are unaware that the AUSU or The Voice even exists.

The Minister of National Defence Needs You!

The Canadian Department of Defence has announced that they are holding online consultations with Canadians to determine plans for the [Department of Defence](#). Interested Canadians are encouraged to go to [this site](#) and answer the ten questions provided to help the government determine the future role of Canada's Defence forces.

Sadly, the questions do not show much in the way of original thinking from the Defence Department, and are mostly directed to providing support to the idea that the Defence Department needs more money. These questions can even be quite leading, like the third question, which reads, "Do you believe that the Canadian Forces have enough personnel for operations at home and abroad? Should we try to maintain (or even increase) the number of Canadian Forces personnel, even if this means decreasing funding for sophisticated new equipment?" Notice that the option of reducing the number of personnel is not even considered, and the suggestion is that even maintaining the current number means decreasing funding for new equipment.

Still, as regular Canadians, there is rarely an open opportunity to easily add your thoughts to the direction of the Defence Department. We should take advantage of this one while it lasts.

Crime Pays in New Brunswick

The New Brunswick government just [received](#) a cheque for approximately \$30,000.00 from the RCMP. It seems a Mr. Byers of Moncton was fraudulently selling Play Station 2 machines over the Internet, machines that he did not have. Following an investigation and seizure of cash and assets, over \$400,000 was recovered. Most of this went to victim restitution, but \$30,000 of it was left over. (Most likely from some unfortunate people who are still waiting for their Play Station consoles that the RCMP was unable to find)

The strange part is that instead of using the leftover money to help defray the cost of the RCMP investigation - a cost that is paid by all taxpayers - the money instead went to the Province of New Brunswick, where the crime was committed. While I am happy for those in New Brunswick who have now benefited from this crime, I just wish that Mr. Byers had committed his crime here in Alberta instead.

A native Calgarian, Karl is perpetually nearing the completion of his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Information Studies. He also works for the Computer Sciences Virtual Helpdesk for Athabasca University and plans to eventually go on to tutor and obtain his Master's Degree.



The Implications of Occupational Repetitive Strain Injury

PART I

By Wayne E. Benedict

In order to evaluate the future industrial relations implications of repetitive strain injuries (RSI) it is useful to outline the vast scope of injuries that are encompassed by the designation. RSI (also known as cumulative trauma disorder (CTD), overuse injury (OI), occupational overuse syndrome (OOS), musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs), myofascial pain

syndrome, or ergonomics-related disorders) include a staggering number of maladies that can affect workers as well as the general public. The following will outline only upper body RSIs because they are most often the subject of debate amongst interested occupational health and safety (OH&S) parties—employers, lawmakers, indemnity insurance providers, workers' compensation providers, occupational health providers, unions, worker advocates & individual workers. The reader should know that at least as many lower body RSIs can, and do, exist. Upper body RSIs include but are not limited to: impingement syndrome of the shoulder; bicipital tendinitis; humeral epicondylitis; posterior impingement syndrome of the elbow; medical tension/lateral compression syndrome; peritendonitis crepitans of the abductor and extensor pollicis tendons of the radial styloid (De Quervain's Disease); tenosynovitis; synovitis; intersection syndrome; flexor carpi ulnaris tendinitis; flexor carpi radialis tendinitis; dorsal radiocarpal impingement syndrome; trigger finger; spondylolysis; spondylolysthesis; myofibrositis; bursitis; stress fractures; ganglion cysts; double crush syndrome; Raynaud's phenomenon; myalgia and myofascial syndromes; vibration white-finger; strains & sprains; certain forms of arthritis; perimyotendonitis; nerve entrapment syndromes (NES). NES include a plethora of individual pathologies: thoracic outlet syndrome; axillary nerve entrapment; suprascapular nerve entrapment; musculocutaneous nerve entrapment; cervical radiculopathy; radial nerve entrapment; radial tunnel (canal) syndrome; Wartenberg's disease; ulnar nerve entrapment; ulnar tunnel syndrome; ulnar neuritis; cubital tunnel syndrome; hypothenar hammer syndrome; myositis; median nerve entrapment; anterior interosseous syndrome (Kiloh-Nevin Syndrome); posterior interosseous syndrome; pronator teres syndrome; carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS); digital nerve entrapment syndrome (see Armstrong *et al*, 1982, p. 103; Armstrong & Langolf, 1983, pp. 777-778; Kome, 1998, pp. 3-5; Parker & Imbus, 1992, pp. 71-92; Pećina & Bojanić, 1993, pp. 31-85, 273-305, & 309-317; Raniere, 1989, p. 222).

Much of the fore mentioned list of ailments might just as well be written in an extraterrestrial language as far as the average layman (worker) is concerned. General medical practitioners are given little (if any) training on the identification and diagnosis of most work-

related RSIs—specifically, linking the pathology to the patient’s work and providing objective evidence of pathology. My own wife, who holds a B.Sc in Nursing, was unfamiliar with the terms “cumulative trauma disorder” and “overuse injury”, although she was vaguely aware of the term “repetitive strain injury” but not of what it entailed; the same is true in the case of several of her RN friends. Even amongst those who specialize in occupational health, there exist ongoing debates as to the causal mechanics of RSI; its prevention; treatments; the determination of what percentage of injury is due to the workplace and what is due to other non-work-related lifestyle choices (such as sports, hobbies, etc.); and the ethical and legal implications of RSI policy decisions. Because they are “cumulative” in nature, RSIs share the unfortunate characteristic of lacking a specific causal incident as are seen in cases of *acute* injury (Parker & Imbus (1992, P. 7). This fact complicates medical diagnoses because even the patient is usually unaware of any single specific initiating event which precipitated his or her symptoms. Further, the injured worker’s ease and ability to collect compensation is fettered because most WCB claim denials are based on the lack of a specific causal incident and/or a lack of continuity of complaint. Many employers will dispute a worker’s claim for compensation in every case where there is no specific causal incident and no objective (as opposed to subjective) evidence of pathology. Kome (1998, pp. 94-95) claims that contemporary employers “tend to dispute claims automatically and force the worker to prove that the disorder is work related”, a situation that flies in the face of the so-called “no fault insurance” concept upon which workers’ compensation schemes were originally based. A lack of objective evidence of injury is present in many RSI related claims and many workers go without financial compensation after having been legitimately injured by their work.

NEXT WEEK: Part Two of The Implications of Occupational Repetitive Strain Injury

Resources

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What I Did On My Summer Vacation:

The Cruise Itself Part Two

By Laura Seymour

“Up to the Lido deck,” I snapped. “Gotta eat! So hungry!” I said in mock starvation. We

were told before ever arriving that lunch was at one o’clock on the Lido deck. Damn! These people know proper business and efficiency. I was positively wet over this company’s practices!

On the Lido, there was a cranked air conditioning unit directly in front of the deck door. Odd placement! Come off the deck and freeze! Lunch didn’t seem to be anywhere around ...suggestion ...a sign pointing out the buffet area at the back of the deck. We sweltered in the sun, barely noticing the pool and waterslide.

Soon we found the buffet and chowed down. It wasn’t extravagant – potato salad, fruit, hot dogs etc. Larry figured the menu out, “The kids! Would they eat Pate de Foies Gras?”

“I’m not sure – what is it?” I rebutted.

We lolled in the sun the next day and found ourselves incinerated in less than a half an hour. I was lost – I had slathered us in SPF – *how* did we burn so quickly? An hour to burn in Calgary is ten minutes in the Caribbean...take heed! So, we lost out on sunbathing for the rest of the cruise. We had to find something else to do, other than scratch at the burn!

We arrived at The Cayman Islands -- a place of pirate history, myth and exotic Caribbean stories. I anxiously grabbed the camera and ran out on deck, to be left in shock. This is the country with the biggest income per capita in the world?! It looked pretty bland and after Larry was lifted onto a vigorously bobbing tender boat we ambled around on the island for a short while. There are a lot of fancy jewellers and many big banks, but the streets are banged up and they can’t seem stick to a decision of whether to cut away curbs or not. There were knee height sidewalks I couldn’t negotiate! After going in and out of the one step buildings for a while we bought a souvenir spoon for my mother-in-law, a postcard, and



a box of fudge. Larry picked up four cheap, Cuban cigars at the dock and we headed back to the ship.

That tender bobbed like a cork in a bathtub going back and I snapped a pic to show you how large the ship was once I was sure Larry would be dumped overboard!

Art. Don't get us started...we went to the art auction thinking it would be some free fun. We didn't realize they were also dangerous! There is something frightening about knowing you can own an original Salvador Dali, a Rembrandt or a Picasso! It makes you realize what an investment they can be. AHEM! So after watching "the show" we bought "the most collectable painter on the planet" – Peter Max. We had to buy a cheap one! Egad! This guy is hot! Max has announced he's retiring in three years...and that's when his prices will go waaayyy up! Either that or on death...sheesh! What a way to be appreciated!

So we now joke that we *really did* Max out our credit card!

We lost twenty bucks at the casino – after I hit pay out after pay out on the slot machines! Egad! Why don't we *ever* learn the casino always wins!

Fellow travelers said the snorkelling on Cayman was amazing. They saw Stingrays and had a great time. Meanwhile, we found the dining room food was more adult than the buffet selection.



We set sail, spending the day at sea. Dolphins occasionally jumped alongside the ship.

Mexico looked like a postcard, but when I walked out on deck for more photos I was blasted by the heat. Later we were informed this was an average day – it's hottest in April! We paid a driver with a car a hundred dollars to take us to Tulum -- a Mayan ruin. Getting to the park is easy. Then there's a "train" ride to the entrance and the price to get into the park – about a buck fifty U.S. each. Interestingly, the park entrance people will take U.S. cash, but the gate

attendant wants pesos! The Mexican people were polite and helpful, nothing like those dumb movies we see with lazy natives.

Yanking Larry up the steps to the ancient site was a huge feat by our Mexican helper, Carlos. He hauled Larry up the steps and into the site while I stood amazed at his strength and the scenery. My back thanked him but I was *not* used to this help. Over the other side of the ruins is a stunning, not to be missed view. A sea of green/turquoise water and palm trees! We only left because of the heat. Carlos seemed crushed when we said we were finished the tour! I think they count on more choices after your purchase.

We saw a few abandoned trucks on the side of the road and some half done construction, but most of the scenery was pristine. We left with regret. There was so much history to see!

We found our major beef of the ship was cigarette smoke – everywhere. This is a ship with many children, pregnant women and grandparents. None of us chose to smoke –so why no designated smoking area? Or a non-smoking area. This struck me as odd, considering Carnival built the *Paradise*, the only cruise ship built for non-smokers. If you are caught on the *Paradise* with tobacco it is immediately impounded - you are fined - you are thrown off at the first port! They are serious about smoke. But I wanted to see some kind of respect for the non-smokers on their other ships. Unfortunately, Larry and I came back with upper respiratory distress. In future, we will be very interested to see the *Paradise*'s itinerary.



The ship's décor is a bit too “techie”-- it looks out of date. Okay, Princess Cruises won that round, as did they the accessibility of their ship. Carnival had the worst snap down seat in the cabin's bathroom. It cut Larry's bottom severely and it worried me enough to tell a purser it should have future replacement.

Would we go back? Yes, to another ship. We feel that Carnival delivers it's promises and takes care of you. There are a few bugs we'd like dealt with and we've been told the newer ships are much better for the disabled. Perhaps with a few more complaints about the smoke we'll have a perfect cruise...if that's possible!

See you sailing, but in the meantime...gotta payoff the credit cards!

[Photos provided by Laura Seymour]

Laura Seymour first published herself, at age 8. She has since gone on to publish a cookbook for the medical condition of Candida. She is working toward her B.A. (Psyc).



A Writer's Musings

By Diane L. Myslawchuk

As a writer, you become acutely aware of every little nuance in the English language. You can spot an error at 500 paces and certain things start to annoy you. Periodically, you notice a change in the English language. You're not sure who made the change or why, but you either accept it or add it to your growing list of annoyances. Here are a few of the latest changes that have more than a few writers with their pens in a knot.

Last Name Only

Writers are now expected to refer to people by their last name only, after originally referring to them by their first and last names. Instead of writing 'Mr. Smith', we now have to write 'Smith'. Referring to people by their last name has always seemed disrespectful to me and I know I would be insulted if some referred to me as "Myslawchuk". The only time people are referred to by their last names, I thought, were recruits in the army by their drill sergeants. That's probably from where the disrespect originates.

Down to One Space

It's probably just a conspiracy, not that I'm going insane, but I think the publishers and software companies got together one day, probably at Starbucks, and decided to ditch one of the two spaces used in between sentences. I heard that using one space is easier for doing layouts in Quark or PageMaker. And I notice that when I leave two spaces between sentences when typing an e-mail, they magically turn into one space after either saving or sending the e-mail. So now that things have been made easier for the publishers and the software makers by squishing everything together, can anyone actually read printed material that is squished together? What happened to all those studies that told us which font and pitch people found most comfortable reading, including the two spaces between sentences? As a person who is still considered young and has healthy eyes, I find it difficult to read with one less space between sentences. How do older people or people who do not have healthy eyes read the new print?

No More Mr. Hyphen

So everything my teacher taught me in grade 3 was for not? Do you know how long it takes a teacher to teach an 8-year-old child (most of whom have Mexican jumping beans in their pants, like I did!) to know where to put the hyphen in a word? And now, poof, they're gone, just like that? 'Semiprecious' is not a word but 'semi-precious' is. When the hyphen has been removed from a word that is supposed to have a hyphen, it ruins the reading experience by stopping the reader dead in their tracks. The brain tries to pronounce the word without the hyphen, until it realizes the hyphen is just missing, and then the brain re-pronounces the word and picks up

reading where it left off. When I read material that contains several words that I know should be hyphenated and they are not, it frustrates me to the point where I stop reading the material. Considering most people don't read material in its entirety anymore (they prefer to scan the page for the information they are looking for, a bad habit they picked up from surfing the Internet), you would think publishers would avoid doing things to the English language that would make a reader stop reading.

As a writer, I like to think I have an open mind and I'm all in favour of the evolution of our language. But I don't believe these changes are evolutionary. If changes are to be made to the English language, it would be nice to know what they are, the reason for the change, and a chance to disagree with the change. It would also make editing less of a challenge as well!

Diane is a full-time, freelance writer. She specializes in writing technical articles for the oil and gas industry, but also writes feature length magazine articles of all genres, including Calgary-based magazines. She is working towards a Bachelor of General Studies degree.



Northern Saskatchewan: A Fun and Affordable Holiday Destination

By Nola Newitt

After eight hours of driving through the drought stricken farmland of eastern Alberta, then the slightly more lush hills of the more northern reaches of the province, we arrived at Meadow Lake Provincial Park. Situated just across the Saskatchewan border east of Cold Lake, Meadow Lake Provincial Park encompasses 1600 square kilometers of boreal forest and more than 25 lakes. It promises to be a nature lover's paradise with abundant wildlife and the adventure's dream with many recreational opportunities.

We had booked a cabin at Northern Cross Resort on Lac Des Iles. It has no bathroom and only cold water but at \$52.00 a night we consider it a bargain. (We paid twice as much for a cabin just like it in B.C. two years ago.) We used our first full day to explore as much of the park as we could – mainly to scout out good fishing spots. We stop first at Vivian Lake. It's a relatively

small lake but we find it rather difficult fishing from the shore, as there are many weeds. However, we take the time to enjoy the hiking trail that goes around the entire lake. Further down the road, we stop briefly at the Interpretive Centre at Greig Lake. Both my boys (ages 9 and 11) and I found this interesting and fun. Some of the displays consist of interactive games that quiz your knowledge on things such as aboriginal peoples' uses of native plants and characteristics of local wildlife. My husband and oldest son were still anxious to get some fishing in so we headed off to the Kimball Lake campground. From there, we found the trail to Little Raspberry Lake – a lake accessible only by foot. While my husband and older son fish, my youngest son and I decide to hike around the entire lake and meet back at the Kimball Lake campground in an hour and a half.

The first part of our hike is enjoyable as Little Raspberry lives up to its name; there are lots of raspberry plants along the trail bearing the delicious fruit. We also had a chance to indulge in some wild blueberries, which also happened to be in season. Realizing we were in bear country, we tried to make as much noise as we could. Still, we were a little nervous and the moment we heard rustling in the bush we both jumped, only to discover we'd frightened the living daylights out of a deer who was a mere ten to fifteen feet away from us! Our biggest scare though, came later when we had made it about three quarters around the lake and we thought the trail would head back to the campground. The map we had, turned out to be good for nothing but starting fires. The trail didn't seem to head back towards Kimball Lake; instead it seemed meander deeper into the forest in the opposite direction! Just when I began to have visions of being lost for days, we came to a fork in the trail. One branch was labelled with an arrow simply indicating that it was a hiking trail and the other was not labelled at all. Ignoring everything I'd been taught about staying only on marked trails, I followed my instinct and decided to take the unmarked trail. It just *seemed* to be going in the right direction and I also thought I could faintly hear voices coming from that vicinity. I think it was then that I decided that if we ever got out of this pickle, I'd invest in a compass before I ever go hiking in the woods again. To our utmost relief, we spotted a camper through the trees after about five minutes of walking. *We'd made it to the campground.*

Cool, rainy weather interfered with enjoying the beach at Northern Cross Resort, which boasts having the second largest beach in Meadow Lake Provincial Park. Despite this, it was an enjoyable holiday. Both my husband and son caught fish in the lakes and streams that are teaming with northern pike, walleye and perch. We enjoyed another hike (this time without getting lost) to a lookout tower that offered a spectacular view of the surrounding mixed wood forest canopy. On our last day we traveled to nearby Goodsoil where we took in mini-golf and the local museum. Although we weren't treated to the sight of a black bear, we did see a few white tailed deer, a couple of red foxes and many pelicans, loons and squirrels. Elk, moose and coyotes also inhabit the region.

There's more to do in Meadow Lake Provincial Park than hiking and fishing. There are a few riding stables (one was located at Vivian Lake) which offer horseback excursions through the backcountry. Canoes and paddleboats can be rented at some of the campgrounds. Many adventure tour operators offer canoeing and rafting packages on the Cold and Waterhen Rivers. There are golf courses in the nearby towns of Goodsoil, Cold Lake and Meadow Lake. With so much to offer, we'll likely head to Northern Saskatchewan for a vacation again.

Helpful tips if you go...

- ◆ BOOK EARLY. I booked our cabin in early March and couldn't get a fully modern unit (with bathroom and hot water), as they were all booked up. By this point many of the resorts were completely reserved for the whole summer! I therefore recommend reservations be made in early January...maybe even December.
- ◆ If you plan on hiking, remember you are in bear country therefore a bell or any other type of noisemaker is a MUST. Also be prepared for poorly marked and seldom used trails. We're used to hiking in K-Country where you're constantly meeting other hikers. We didn't encounter another soul on any of the trails we hiked on this trip, so if you go hiking alone make sure you let someone know where you're going as help may be a long time coming if you happen to need it.
- ◆ If you plan on fishing and you don't have a boat, you might want to consider renting one as the best fishing spots are far from shore. Most of the bigger lakeside resort and campgrounds have fishing boat rentals. It cost us \$27.00 for 2 ½ hours at Northern Cross Resort. Remember, too, that you'll require a Saskatchewan fishing license. (Children 16 and under can fish for free.)
- ◆ Meadow Lake Provincial Park is home to fifty species of mammals and over 175 species of birds. The forest consists of a variety of different trees and other flora. If you're a nature enthusiast, a field guide may prove to be indispensable.

Useful websites:

www.ncresort.com - Northern Cross Resort. Cabins and campsites available. Ideal for families with very young children as there is a "Little Tikes" play park and a large beach.

www.sasktourism.com - the entire province has vacation appeal. From world-class spas in Moose Jaw and Manitou Beach to house boating on Lac La Ronge or Tobin Lake, Saskatchewan has something for everyone.

Nola lives in the village of Rockyford, Alberta with her husband and two sons. She's studying toward her Bachelor of Administration with a concentration in Management. Between raising a family and her studies, she also juggles two part-time jobs. She can be reached at lnnewitt@telusplanet.net for comments or questions.



The Harried Student ponders attraction

By Audrey Karperien

I was trying to code a few lines of a program that mathematically analyzes brain cells. I was stuck but my tutor, my mentor and guru of all things mathematical and cranial, was away at a conference until Wednesday. I'd been trying to get my mind around a concept called "strange attractors", that was at the heart of the whole brain cell analyzing algorithm. What is a strange attractor, you ask? For that matter, what's a not strange attractor? Well, I don't freakin' know.

Some people say strange attractors are important in fractal math and not only biology but also issues of gravity and dark matter and the formation of the universe. But I was thinking it was what my writing was going through. Every time I tried to start the last bit, I would circle around but never find the right code.

It was bad. On the third day, at the first tiny splashes rebounding from the keyboard, I thought, buck up little monkey, you can do it. When I noticed the laptop shaking through every sob, though, I thought it better to stare out the window and wait for Wednesday.

But then, with the help of the shirtless men outside my window, what strange attraction is and is not started coming clear. Not that I gawked. I don't. And I'm not shallow. I'm vastly deep and very sensitive. The guys just happened to be out there. And then this man, doing 40 with style, came jogging by. I could not help but think boys versus men. I disinterestedly gazed through the tanned, 22-year-old, concrete-pouring, funky-haired, bad-boy, broadly grinning construction guys, but was drawn, snap, hard by the passing frame of the not so tanned, way more than 22-year-old, jogging, two-thirds-graying-one-third-missing haired, some-bad-boy's-dad, probably-grumpy man. As I remembered my twenties there was something familiar yet changed about the scenario, but I was good with it. This was an attraction, and it was not strange. I had that going for me.

Renewed by this brief encounter with my hormones, I went back to the laptop and typed. The program would not compile, so I peered down at my code: `IF age == mine THEN man = hunk ELSE WHILE (age < mine), man = NOT(man).`

I further pondered strange attractions in the deeper matters of the heart and ovaries. I realized it's always been the way I felt today. When I was in grade 6, grade 6 boys were cool; when I was in high school, boys in grade 6 were immature geeks. Age has a normal attractor that brings the grade 6 girls and boys together, and keeps the grade 12 girls away from the grade 6

boys. And it is always centred on your own age. So I coded that great insight in, but the program still didn't work.

I thought, well, maybe it is conditional. That is, most people, ovaried and not, I've ever talked to about this attraction thing agree, but I do know one ovary-less person who has it different. He was normal for the first while. When he was in grade 12, girls in grade 9 were too immature for him. When he was 21, girls who were 16 were silly kids. Yet as he got older, space and time changed in ways Einstein never confessed. He reached 30, and girls of an age he was previously too old for became not too young, became suitable sex Objects. How? Unconfirmed. My theory is he has a strange attractor. I tried to put that in the code, but again was out of luck. Perhaps when I get my program working I will ask him for some brain cells to analyze, at which point I will get back to you. But for now, all I can say is that something stopped then reversed time in him but not the rest of the population, and it is something I have yet to figure out.

I thought for a while that it may be gender related, that maybe his testosterone stopped working. But I didn't even try coding that because I have a female friend who was also normal in her youth yet now thinks males of an age that fell out of her favourable zone in her mid twenties are again just right for her.

She has no sons; and my male friend has no children at all. So, I tossed around the idea that having kids prevents the brain from deteriorating its normal attractor/growing a strange attractor.

I also came up against the Hollywood phenomenon. Hollywood harbours the same rift in the time space continuum, this strange attractor, and may be the primary cause of it. This may reflect that a physiologically different lot who didn't make it through their mid-life crises peoples the place, although this is not confirmed.

Hollywood is also responsible for strange repulsion. I experience that; I have been out to see only 2 movies in the last decade. Hollywood would probably attract me to a theatre if they did get real, though. A lot of my friends, male and female, experience the same phenomenon. They intend to go in, but find themselves pulling up and circling every time they try to enter the door of a movie theatre. Why? The previews we've seen are all so goofed up, especially about male/female matters, that the movies they are flogging are strangely repellent. You know, old guy has adventures that include winning love and sexual favours of kid younger than his real life biological daughter, the end. This is passable unless you have a personality or at least a brain and wonder where it would go from there: Step mom and stepdaughter are now college mates? What happens at grad time? Or try this one: two divorced dads or moms bring each other's daughters or sons out for a romantic dinner party of four. Gag me. And curiously, it is never Oedipus getting his way; it's always Olderguy. What should we do? Buy it? Shut up and go anyway? Take Graval?

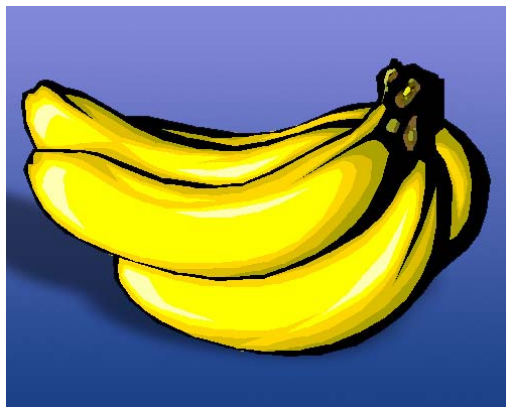
I have a sensitive stomach. I could never handle it in life any better than I am willing to endure it in pretend. When I was 20, the 38-year-old grandpas who bugged me with their googly eyes and touchy touch games made me want to gag. Of course, I was always polite, ridiculously, toadily polite, but inside it was vomit, hork, gag, go away you thick-skinned, huge-pored, hairy, balding

ogre man. My daddy from your graduating class will beat you up if you don't stop looking at me like that, you strange attractor.

Fortunately, now I'm 38, am myself thicker-skinned, huger-pored, yes, hairier, and gladly, not balding, AND I don't have a strange attractor. I dig the thick-skinned, huge-pored, hairy, balding, 38-year-old grandpas. Look at those words. That is what I like. There you go. Eat that Hollywood.

Of course, I don't utter those adjectives when I ponder males my age and their attractiveness. I have never approached my husband with the line "wow, honey, your pores are SOOO big, do me". It's more that younger males look unripened in comparison. And it's not all physical. There is this part about the likelihood that males my age are as experienced as I am. For instance, whereas Constructionguy is younger than my microwave, Olderguy can give a detailed dissertation on the rise of microwaves through the 80s and top it off with a discussion of his varicose veins. These are important to me.

So, let me recap my point here. Like I said, I'm not shallow. I don't gawk. I don't go to movies. All because I am eternally attracted to men my age. That is, I have no strange attractors, but I do have a microwave. In the end, the most important point of all this is that I've just spend way too much time writing an article about strange attraction and I still can't get the freakin' program to work.



The Banana Morality

By b.e. hydromako

Last week we discussed the complimentary nature of self-interest and autonomy, and the tangled web which unites the two in a co-existing necessity. This week, we will continue along the trip through the Banana Morality where we begin to make some progress in our understanding of what it is to have a sense of self.

In its most narrow sense, the "self" is that which is not the other. Some of the first impressions that a baby receives of the world is that there are things that are immediately attached to its being (arms, legs, etc.) and many things that do not appear to be connected to it in such a readily intimate manner (cribs, bottles, mothers, etc.). Now some of these things likely come to be seen in the light of bananas: things like the mother and the bottle come to be recognized (even if such recognition is pre-linguistic) as valuable to fulfilling requirements of

sustenance and maintaining continued existence. Moreover, these same attitudes reflect, rather nicely, similar attitudes in our primate ancestors: self-interest and autonomy are being gained by an individual through his or her recognition of those things that contribute to this same individual's well being. Granted, the autonomy of a human baby is slight, if any, but the recognition of the importance of life sustaining/maintaining objects must tie into that same individual's sense of direction with respect to his or her autonomy in later life. In other words, those things that are morally valuable arise as a function of not only the EP structures we've inherited, but also as a function of our formative years as human infants. However, these same formative years, if not recognized for what they are (which is indoctrination into a world divided by necessity—that is, self and other must be distinct in order for there to be any being at all!) will then turn into a hindrance. If we continue to think of the self as only that which concerns the boundaries of our bodies, then surely we will be unable to blossom into a fully rational, fully autonomous being. Let's explore the why of this.

If we look to the life work of both Jesus of Nazareth and that of Confucius, then we find two simple formulations of a moral doctrine, one being pro-active (like the yang) and the other being passive (like the yin). Jesus says, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," and Confucius says, "Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you." Jesus would have us always doing things and Confucius would have us always not doing things. Together these two doctrines provide a simple and yet comprehensive formulation of morality that is free from deficiencies that arise from morality which is dependent upon any fixed set of social customs (and note that these formulations make no reference to any religious ideologies). The individual that walks the middle road between these is the individual that needs only ask themselves "what would I want or what wouldn't I want" in order to make decisions concerning the welfare of others. We see that how something wears a cloak of moral value is a function of self-interest and self-consciousness. However, we need to have an expanded sense of self if we are to *really* walk this middle road. Which is to say, we have to come to see the self and the other as a feed back/forward loop where there is no distinction between the self and the other above the artificial sense that we learned as infants. Put differently, without reference to one and other there is no such thing as a self nor an other: the reality of both entities lies in the interim between their interaction—a self is merely an other to a different self. To see this in less mysterious ways we might take a moment to reflect upon our own being. We need only ask ourselves what we are if we strip away any and all relations we have with any and all others. In a manner similar, but by no means identical, to Descartes meditations, if we remove all relations of our being to the things in the world, then all we have left is nothing, which is, of course, the potential for anything and everything. This is to say that we can recognize that the self, like Carl Jung has told us, is absolutely empty and in its emptiness the self contains any and all things. We are the world.

Let's recap where this train ride has taken us, or perhaps better, let us now play the role of investigators examining the scene of the train wreck that has been this article. We wanted to ask ourselves how it is that something is morally valuable. We discovered that at least some of those things that are morally valuable become so due to our attitudes towards things in the world in so far as these worldly things contribute to sustaining our well being. Thus, a thing might be morally valuable if it contributes or enhances to the maintenance of our well-being. But this is not the whole of the answer, nor does it even guarantee that moral value is generated merely because something contributes to an individual's well being. Further, we recognized that our

notions regarding our well-being hinge on some sense of self-interest and this self-interest is a function *and* product of our autonomy: the two, as we saw, appear as intimately connected. From there it was a Disney tour through self-consciousness (short, sweet, and without substance) which hinted that the self is empty: selfhood is nothing more than a potential for everything and that selfhood which is bound by the body, while required as infants and primates, must be shed if we are to make any progress at getting at our attitudes towards things that we deem morally valuable. To put this last differently and frame it within the context of our metaphor, those things that are morally valuable are those things that are the yellow parts of us—not green and not brown, but the lusciousness of a ripe banana. In a different sense still, a thing is morally valuable just in case it is binding on us in a categorically hypothetical and hypothetically categorical sense; that is, there appears to be no rigid criteria by which to decide if something is morally valuable, but only a criteria which will become revealed in tandem with a recognition of a vastly extended sense of self. Interested?

Postscript:

It might help the reader to recognize that an Eastern reading of the notions of “self-interest,” “autonomy,” and “well being” will assist in assessing the charred wreckage of our train. That is, Buddhist notions of emptiness and non-attachment are intended to be imbedded in these sorts of words. To crassly—and so incorrectly—summarize: a thing is morally valuable just in case it promotes a sense of an empty self—if something commands our desires and we become attached to that thing, then there is no moral value to be found. We could perhaps call this the *bodhisattva* approach to morality.

b.e. hydomako is not sure whether his parents were human, and sometimes feels that the sun and the moon are his father and mother respectively (or vice-versa). He doesn't have a belly button, and the operation to remove the alien implants is forthcoming. Sometimes he thinks that the world is a projection of some malfunctioning machine.



AU Achieves Candidacy

**Contributed By
AU's *The Insider***

AU further expanded its reputation for excellence by achieving candidacy status with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The Philadelphia-based MSCHE was established in 1919 and is "a voluntary, non-governmental, peer-based membership association dedicated to educational excellence and improvement through peer evaluation and accreditation."

The commission "supports its members in their quest for excellence and provides assurance to the general public that accredited member institutions meet its standards."

At its session at the end of June, the MSCHE granted Athabasca University **Candidate for Accreditation Status**. This means that following a rigorous process AU has achieved recognition and is progressing toward accreditation. It has "provided evidence of sound planning, seems to have the resources to implement the plans, and appears to have the potential for obtaining its goals within a reasonably time," according to a letter from the commission's chair.

Dominique Abrioux notes that achieving this status is "an essential condition for the university's expansion into the United States, which will in time allow recognition of AU as North America's premier institution of open and distance education."



NDP leadership hopeful breaks the mould

Ducasse wants to show voters what he's made of - The federal New Democratic Party leadership hopeful's campaign trail led him to the University of New Brunswick, where he spoke out against student debt.

By Kora Stapelfeldt, Brunswickan

(CUP)Pierre Ducasse wants to give the NDP a much-needed facelift.

The federal New Democratic Party leadership hopeful's campaign trail led him to the University of New Brunswick, where he spoke out against student debt.

"When you start out in life with a \$40,000 debt, that's not only difficult for the individual, but socially it's unacceptable," he said.

Ducasse was the second declared candidate in the race to succeed Alexa McDonough. Also running are Toronto city councillor Jack Layton, Saskatchewan MP Lorne Nystrom, Winnipeg MP Bill Blaikie, and Vancouver activist Bev Meslo.

Now 29, Ducasse is the youngest candidate in the race and he hopes people will take him seriously.

"Some people have tried to paint me into corners, " said Ducasse. "I am trying to fight that perception. To win in politics, you have to be the one setting the political agenda."

Ducasse describes the NDP's need for renewal with the metaphor of a bowl of Jell-O, explaining that "things move a lot in the [NDP], but they always tend to come back to their original shape."

"People are actually giving me boxes of Jell-O now, " Ducasse joked as he produced a box from his bag. "Of course, I was a little offended when it was Jell-O Light."

Ducasse has been a card-carrying member of the NDP since he was 17 years old and held an associate presidential position in the New Democratic Youth of Canada from 1990 to 1992. Before joining the leadership race, he was associate president for the federal NDP.

He is also involved in a network of local community organizations known as the National Network of Community Development Corporations of Quebec.

Ducasse is amused by the current Liberal leadership struggle.

"Some people see Paul Martin as someone who could renew the Liberal party, when in fact it would be the same policy as before," said Ducasse.

"I don't think Martin would do things much differently than Chrétien has. Even if [Martin] tries to show that he has a social conscience, it's really just a smoke screen."



Beyond the Headlines

Contributed By The Community Networks Group

The Society of Friends of Nepal

The Society of Friends of Nepal (SOFON) exists to:

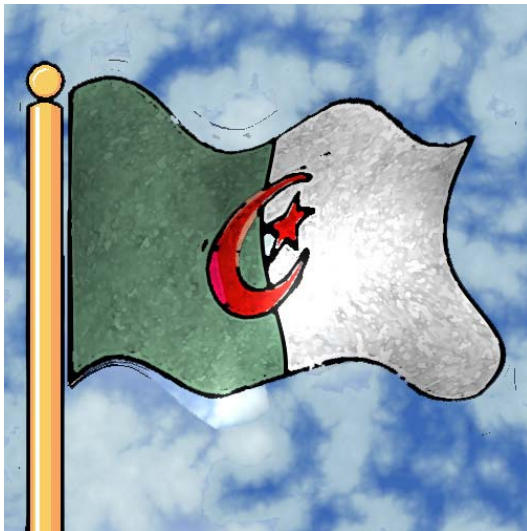
- Promote education and relief of poverty of the underprivileged communities through training in career skills;
- To increase awareness and appreciation of the problems of underprivileged communities, especially in the global south by organizing educational programs;
- To administer and operate overseas development programs and projects for the purpose of craft skill development within the underprivileged women community of Nepal.

The Society of Friends of Nepal (SOFON) carries out a craft skills development program in Nepal to provide upgraded and modernized training in various craft skills to underprivileged communities of women and youth in Nepal. For more information about our programs or about SOFON, contact us at:

The Society of Friends of Nepal

34 Broadview Crescent, St. Albert, AB T8N 0B2

Tel: (780) 459-6781 / Fax: (780) 459-6781



Algerian Refugees Caught in the Middle of Trade Agreement

End of moratorium may place 1,000 in danger... Thousands of Algerians in Canada could unwittingly become collateral in a billion dollar trade agreement between the two countries say critics of a new immigration policy.

By Sobia Virk, The Link

(CUP)Thousands of Algerians in Canada could unwittingly become collateral in a billion dollar trade agreement between the two countries say critics of a new immigration policy.

"The situation in Algeria was horrible," said Nassim Aoudia. He is one of up to 1,000 Algerian Montrealers facing deportation since Canada's Minister of Immigration, Denis Coderre, lifted the moratorium on extradition of Algerians who fled a bloody civil war.

Over the last decade, 100,000 Algerians have been killed and 4,000 have "disappeared" in the fighting between the military-backed government and Islamic extremist groups.

Gitanjali Lena, an independent advocate and former member of the Canadian Council for Refugees, suggests profit prompted the minister's decision. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's visit to Algeria have \$1 billion in trade implications.

"Algerians [in Canada] are not convinced that Algeria is safe for them," said Lena. "However, if Canada wants to trade with Algeria, it has to send Algerians back to normalize trade relations."

Lena blames flaws in Canada's refugee determination procedures for the fact that so many Algerians remain "non-status" immigrants, claiming that recent legislation has made fair assessments nearly impossible. The two-person board has been reduced to one and an applicant has only one chance to make a claim.

"One person decides your fate," said Lena. "You cannot make an appeal on the merits of the case, only on technicalities." She added that the Refugees Appeal division recently pushed through parliament is not being implemented.

"Since Algerians are francophones, they've integrated very deeply in Quebec society. To deport them now is uprooting," said Lena.

Coderre defends the case review policy. "There is no risk to citizens of Algeria who are removed after a full review of their case," said Coderre.

"In the last year alone, more than 80 civilians were unlawfully killed by security forces [in Algeria] and dozens more tortured or held for varying periods of time in secret detention," said a February report from Amnesty International. "Some 200 people continue to die every month as a result of the continuing decade-long armed conflict ... Many of those are civilians, including women and children, killed in targeted and indiscriminate attacks by armed groups."

Despite assurances from the minister, Canadian citizens have been warned that Algeria is unsafe for visitors by another branch of the government. An April travel report from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade says travellers should be cautious when travelling to the North African country.



Free Health Benefits for Children in Low-income Families

From information provided by Alberta Human Resources and Employment

July 2002

The Alberta Child Health Benefit (ACHB) provides children in low-income families with free:

- Dental care
- Prescription drugs
- Eyewear
- Emergency ambulance services
- Essential diabetic supplies

More families are now eligible for coverage through the ACHB because of increased income eligibility levels, which took effect July 1, 2002. These income levels are associated with the number of children in the family:

- 1 child for family net income of \$ 22,397
- 2 children, \$ 24,397
- 3 children, \$ 26,397
- 4 children, \$ 28,397
- more than 4 children, add \$ 2,000 for each additional child

Enrolment in the ACHB is free. Eligibility for the program is based on the family's net income from their previous year's Income Tax Notice of Assessment (line 236). Once their applications are approved, qualifying families receive ACHB benefit cards that allow them to access approved services and products directly from service providers at no cost.

To get an application form:

1-877-4MY-KIDS

1-877-469-5437

www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb



COMMENTARY AND FEEDBACK! LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks to all of you who have been providing us with such great feedback on The Voice. Please continue providing your opinions, comments and support; any submissions can be sent to tmoore@ausu.org

Accepted letters to the editor have not been edited, nor do they necessarily reflect the opinions of The Voice staff, AUSU, or Athabasca University.

Tammy Moore

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

I have recently received several 'Letters To The Editor' in regards to the missing archive files. I thank you for your patience during this time of transition regarding our webpage, and I would like to assure all of you that the Archives will be updated and included shortly after our new site becomes available.

Thank-you for your support and concern,

Tammy Moore, Editor



ENLIGHTENING INFORMATION!

WRITE FOR THE VOICE!

Contact Tammy Moore at tmoore@ausu.org for details on writing for The Voice, providing a sample selection of writing and preferred genre.



COUNCIL NEWS

By Debbie Jabbour, AUSU President

The last few months have been very busy for Council members. The new group of 9 councillors met for the first time on March 16, and a variety of projects have been ongoing since then. Some of the highlights of the last few months:

- New Council spent two days attending a board development workshop in April. It was an opportunity for the new members to get acquainted, begin building working relationships and to start planning for future AUSU projects
- At the April meeting, Council reviewed the honorarium structure. It was felt that previous honoraria rates were low and did not provide fair or adequate compensation for the expected workload. This was hampering productivity and participation, and creating hardship for Council members. Council decided to increase honoraria to bring them closer in line to what other comparable organizations receive for their work.
- Council members attended the International Conference on Distance Education and the International Symposium on Educational Conferencing. Several members of Council presented papers at these sessions that dealt with student issues and ways the student union can work to resolve these.
- Council took an active role in Convocation 2002. We provided a graduation gift of a small engraved clock to each graduate, and sponsored a pancake breakfast, lunch and tea (with AU). AUSU's participation was greatly appreciated by the university and by the graduates and their families.

- AUSU worked with the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) to prepare presentations to key government officials regarding tuition concerns in meetings held during June and July.
 - Council has been actively working on redevelopment of the website, including a new look for the Voice and a new logo.
-



Notice to AU graduate students and those considering entering graduate studies at AU:

Athabasca University Students' Union is in the process of establishing an AU Graduate Students' Association.

Here's a sampling of benefits of belonging to a Graduate Students' Association:

- **Graduate student representation on University Committees**
- **University and government advocacy and lobbying**
- **Affiliation with provincial and national graduate students' organizations**
- **Assistance with university/student dispute resolution**
- **Information source**
- **Networking**

For more information contact:

Shirley Barg, Vice-President

Athabasca University Students' Union

Email: sbarg@ausu.org or call 1-800-9041 ext. 3413

Edmonton local number: 497-7000

Calgary local number: 298-2905

Conference Connections

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*

- **American Political Science Association** - 98th annual meeting - Aug. 28-Sept.1, 2002 - Boston, Massachusetts. Details: <http://www.apsanet.org/>
Mark your calendar for the Association's Centennial meeting - Aug. 28-31, 2003 - Philadelphia, PA.
- **Public Sector Management Development** - 17th annual conference - Sept. 12-14, 2002 - Erlangen, Germany - "Where Public and Private Meet - Challenges for Management Development." Details: <http://www.efmd.be>

- **National Policy Research** - October 23-25, 2002 - Ottawa - "Future Trends: Risk." Details: http://policyresearch.gc.ca/page.asp?pagenm=conf_wel
- **AU Learning Services** - Oct. 25-26, 2002 - Annual conference to be held at Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe in Edmonton. More information to follow.
- **Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation** - Sept. 25-28, 2002 - Edmonton, AB - "Canada: A Global Model for a Multicultural State." Details: <http://www.cmef.ca>
- **European Conference on E-Government** - 2nd annual - October 1-2, 2002 - St. Catherine's College, Oxford University. Details: <http://www.mcil.co.uk/2g-eceg2002-home.htm>
- **Society of Research in African Cultures** - Nov. 7-9, 2002 - Montclair State University, New Jersey - "Internalist vs. Externalist Interpretations of African History and Culture." If you propose to give a paper, abstracts must be received by August 30, 2002. Send to [Dr. Daniel Mengara](#), Executive Director, SORAC.
- **CASE District VIII** - March 8-11, 2003 - Coeur d'Alene, Idaho - "Connect in Coeur d'Alene." Details: <http://www.connectincda.com>
- **ICDE World Conference** - 21st annual - June 1-5, 2003 - Hong Kong. Deadline for abstract submission is Aug. 1, 2002. Details: <http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/HK2003>
- **CADE** - June 7-11, 2003 - St. John's NF
- **International Studies Association and the Central and East European International Studies Association (ISA/CEEISA)** - June 26-28, 2003 - "The Global Tensions and Their Challenges to Governance of the International Community" conference at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary.
 - Call for proposals: http://www.isanet.org/budapest/call_for_papers.html
 - Individual proposals: <http://66.206.16.10/PaperSubmit2BP.htm>
 - Panel proposals: <http://66.206.16.10/PanelSubmitBP.htm>

All proposals are due no later than September 1, 2002.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Friends of Medicare require a full time Coordinator. Please visit the FOM website at www.keepmedicarepublic.ca for details.

Deadline for applications is August 16, 2002.

Please send resume to:

Christine Burdett, Chair, Friends of Medicare

c/o 10212 - 112 Street, Edmonton, AB

T5K 1M4

About Friends of Medicare (FOM)

The Friends of Medicare is non-profit, volunteer association that aims to promote and protect public health care in Alberta. Our organization was founded in the early 1980s in response to government plans to introduce "extra billing" for Medicare-insured health services. Since that time, *Friends of Medicare* has turned its attention to issues like chronic under-funding, staff shortages and privatization in Alberta's health care system. Several thousand individual Albertans are currently members of the *Friends of Medicare* - each paying a small annual fee to help cover the costs of our website and newsletter. *Friends of Medicare* also receives support from a number of community, church and labour groups that share our concerns about public health care. Decisions about policy and campaigns are made by the *Friends of Medicare's* provincial executive board whose members are chosen at an annual general membership meeting.

www.keepmedicarepublic.ca

Alberta Roots Music Society Presents: Courtesy of Community Networks Group

The Drum Brothers

Sunday, August 25, 2002 @ Bonnie Doon Hall, 9240 - 93 Street

Doors open at 6:00 PM

Music 7:00 PM and goes until 10:00 PM

Tickets are \$12.00 advance / \$15.00 at the door. INFOLINE: 942-2087

Who the heck are the Drum Brothers?

The Drum Brothers have been performing since 1994 when they gave their debut performance at Missoula's inaugural First Night celebration. They have performed around the Northwest and

in Canada, and have been featured Artists at the World Rhythm Festival in Seattle. The group includes band members Matthew Marsolek, Nathan Zavalney, Michael Marsolek, and Lawrence Duncan playing a variety of world instruments including: West African jembe and dunun drums, udu and frame drums, didgeridoo, choroi and transverse flutes, nanga and gangoqui bells, and acoustic guitar.

In addition to the group's live performances, Drum Brothers are prolific educators, leading classes, residencies, and workshops in drum making, rhythm, and world music around the Northwest. Drum Brothers first album, Power of Rhythm, was released in 1997.

For tickets and info., please call: (780) 942-2087. Tickets are also available at:

Blackbyrd Myoozik 10442 82 Ave.	@ 439-1273
Cleas Bookshop 11217 Jasper Ave.	@ 453-2663
Myhre's Music 8735 118 Ave.	@ 477-1586
Sound Connection 10838 124 St.	@ 425-8721
Tix on the SQ. 3 sir Winston Churchill SQ.	@ 420-1757

Visit: www.drumbrothers.com

The KAIROS REGIONAL GATHERING 2002

Pleasantview Bible Camp, Lloydminster, Alberta (Canada)

Contributed By The Community Networks Group

October 4-6, 2002

We invite you to join us at a regional KAIROS meeting in the fall of 2002. We are bringing people together who share common values and vision for strengthening regional ecumenical justice networks. The meetings will include opportunities for networking with others from a different church or faith community, people who share your passion for justice on an issue as well as opportunities to find resources and support from KAIROS at the regional and local level for your ongoing work. There will also be opportunities to discuss justice and network building commitments you might make together as a region. And as always, worship, community and renewal!

For more information about this regional gathering, please contact:

Infoline: Lana Schramm: lanas@telusplanet.net
Phone (780) 766-3058

About KAIROS...

KAIROS is a national partnership of eleven Canadian churches and church-related organizations dedicated to offering a faithful decisive response to God's call for respect of the Earth and Justice for its peoples. KAIROS gives national leadership in the Church and community on a host of justice issues from refugees to Aboriginal land rights to human rights, from climate change to international debt to Canadian health care. We do this work together as churches with partners in the Global South, Aboriginal communities and local activist groups.

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
129 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto, ON M4V 1N5
Tel: (416) 463-5312 / Fax: (416) 463-5569
Visit our web site @ www.kairoscanada.org

Youth Entrepreneur focused organization introduces Media Center on website

What: The Canadian Youth Business Foundation (CYBF) has introduced the addition of a media center to their organization's website. Members of the media are able to collect necessary information in a one-stop style. Everything from client success stories and recent press releases to national events and FAQ's are available.

When: This service is available immediately! The information contained in the media center will be updated to reflect new and exciting developments within the organization and with partners.

Where: The media center can be accessed by logging onto www.cybf.ca and clicking on the media center icon on the main page.

Why: This service is designed to provide timely and efficient information pertaining to the CYBF and the clients it serves.

Contact: For more information please contact Jaime Hurlbut, Marketing Specialist with the CYBF at 416.408.2923 ext 2301 or toll free 1.866.646.2922 ext 2301

The Canadian Youth Business Foundation (CYBF) is the only national organization in Canada that enables young entrepreneurs to pursue their aspirations of building successful enterprises by providing business assistance not otherwise accessible to them.

Founded in 1996 by the CIBC, the Royal Bank, and the Canadian Youth Foundation, the CYBF was initially created in response to high youth unemployment and underemployment. It has

evolved into a leading organization that encourages and supports Canada's high entrepreneurial activity and aspirations.

Modelled after The Prince's Youth Business Trust, a foundation that since 1986 has helped some 35,000 young entrepreneurs in the U.K., the Canadian Youth Business Foundation enhanced the model significantly - making it unique and distinct from any other program in the world.

Announcing [The Sustainable Times Webzine...](#)

"Jobs vs. the Environment?" Get with the Times! That cliché has been recycled as more and more businesses, individuals and communities find ways to create jobs *and* protect the environment. That's right people, welcome to [Sustainable Times webzine](http://www.sustainabletimes.ca), (<http://www.sustainabletimes.ca>) the internet site about solutions.

We tell real world stories of struggle and success, and explore practical alternatives to the way we now do business. Featuring original [articles](#) from Canada and the [Third World](#), the Sustainable Times webzine is for those seeking down-to-earth answers to our most pressing problems.

The Times is about what's right, not just what's wrong. The Sustainable Times webzine edition is published by [CUSO](#), a Canadian international development agency that works for sustainable development in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. You can 'Write the Times' at:

1657 Barrington Street, Suite #508
Halifax, Nova Scotia (Canada) B3J 2A1

Tel: (902) 423-6852 / Fax: (902) 423-9736 E-mail: Times@chebucto.ns.ca

[The Barcelona Forum 2004](#)

Contributed By The Community Networks Group

The first **Universal Forum of Cultures** is a new international event which will bring thousands of people to **Barcelona** from all over the world in 2004. The Forum's principal aim is to contribute to a renewal of thought and attitudes, providing a new platform for moving towards a new coexistence without conflict and in a world fit for living in.

The first Universal Forum of Cultures will take place in 2004 in **Barcelona**. It opens on the 9th

of May, Europe Day, and closes on the 26th of September, coinciding with the local festivities of La Mercè, the city's patron saint. The Forum will last 141 days!

The [Barcelona Forum 2004](#) is co-organized by the Barcelona City Council, the Catalan autonomous Government and the Spanish Government, with UNESCO as the main partner. The Agenda for this major gathering is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the working principles of the United Nations.

In agreement with Unesco, the **Barcelona Forum 2004** is structured around three core themes: **cultural diversity, sustainable development and conditions for peace**. Join us at the Barcelona Forum 2004 as move forward towards a world that is sustainable and more humane.

Breaking Bread... For Women In Afghanistan Contributed By The Community Networks Group

Breaking Bread... For Women in Afghanistan is a volunteer fundraising project to support much needed education projects for Afghan women and girls. You can participate in this unique cross-Canada fundraising initiative by **Hosting a Pot Luck Dinner** with nine of your friends.

As Host you are asked to invite your friends to your home, request that they bring a dish to share for dinner and ask each participant to donate \$75 towards education in Afghanistan. Each Pot Luck Dinner will raise \$750 (tax receipts available) and will pay the salary of a teacher for one year in Afghanistan.

Do some good... Become a host for "Breaking Bread" -- enjoy the company of your friends, some excellent food and share the opportunities to participate in facilitating REAL CHANGE for Afghan women and girls...

For more information on **How to Host the Pot Luck Dinner**, please call: 1-416-366-2516 or e-mail: info@breakingbreadforwomen.com (or) visit: <http://www.breakingbreadforwomen.com>

Employment Opportunities Rooftops Canada / Abri International

Contributed By The Community Networks Group

1) Overseas Job Posting: Senior Technical Advisor Cooperative

Social Housing, 2 years, full time, Johannesburg, South Africa

Starting Sept/Oct. 2002

Deadline for applications: August 16, 2002.

Rooftops Canada /Abri International requires a Senior Technical Advisor work with the Social Housing Foundation to build skills in the emerging South African co-operative and social housing sector. The Advisor will help ensure that training materials and programs are developed in all areas of housing development and management.

The Advisor will also work with several pilot co-op/social housing projects emphasizing special needs housing. The Advisor will initially be based with in Johannesburg with travel to other parts of the country. The Advisor may later be based in another city to work with specific housing projects and organizations.

Candidates should have in-depth relevant experience in the Canadian co-op/social housing sector including: the design and implementation of training programs for co-op/social housing development and management, and special needs housing. This is a two-year contract position based starting October 1, 2002 or earlier. Salary/benefits will depend on experience and CIDA norms. Interested candidates should submit their resumes and a covering letter before August 16, 2002 preferably by e-mail to:

Barry Pinsky, Rooftops Canada, 2 Berkeley Street, Suite 207, Toronto, ON M5A 4J5.

Phone: 416/366-1445 ext 243 Fax: 416/366-3876

E-mail: barry@rooftops.ca

Please visit our web site: www.rooftops.ca

2) Overseas Job Posting: Technical Advisor Social Housing

Terms: 3 months, Johannesburg, South Africa

Starting Sept/Oct 2002

Deadline for applications: August 16, 2002.

Rooftops Canada /Abri International requires a Technical Advisor to work with the Gauteng Province Department of Housing in Johannesburg. The Advisor will guide the development of the business and operational plans for a new social housing institution that will own and manage 6000 housing units. This will include 2500 existing social housing units and several large new

developments. All of the housing will be in the Greater Alexandra Area, which is the target of a presidential reconstruction and urban renewal project.

Candidates should have in-depth senior level experience in the Canadian social and/or co-op housing sectors including: conceptualising, developing and managing large social housing institutions; and, familiarity with all aspects of housing development, management and finance. This is a three-month short-term contract position based in Johannesburg starting as soon as possible in Sept/Oct 2002. Candidates should be open to one or two follow up missions of about three weeks during 2003. Fees/benefits will depend on experience and CIDA norms. Interested candidates should submit their resumes and a covering letter before August 16, 2002 preferably by e-mail to:

Barry Pinsky, Rooftops Canada, 2 Berkeley Street, Suite 207, Toronto, ON M5A 4J5.

Phone: 416/366-1445 ext 243 Fax: 416/366-3876

E-mail: barry@rooftops.ca

Please visit our web site: www.rooftops.ca

ART EXHIBITIONS

Call for Submissions

Mujeres - Women: A journey of the Senses

Curatorial Statement - Vision

To share with Edmontonians the artistic - craft work that is being produced by **Canadian women of Latin American ancestry** living in Edmonton.

Exhibit Statement

This arts & crafts exhibit planned for the Spring of 2003 aims to build bridges of understanding between communities and its artists / artisans and will challenge stereotypes of traditional women's roles within Latino - Canadian culture and women in general.

The intention of this exhibit is to share with Edmontonians the creative endeavours of Canadian women of Latin American ancestry. The exhibit will be open to the public at large and members of the Latin American communities. Products will be available for sale directly from the artists / artisan.

Thematically, 'Mujeres - Women: A journey of the senses' will emphasize the commonalities between artists / artisans and the public at large and will foster a dialogue between artists - artisans, the public, and the Latino-Canadian community, particularly among women & youth.

Call for Submissions

We are inviting Canadian women of Latin American ancestry living in Edmonton to submit their best fine art work and/or top quality crafts to partake in this arts & crafts exhibit. Submission can include: video, poetry, stories, photography, sculpture, calligraphy, printmaking, textiles, metals, glasswork, clays and leathers. Submissions will be selected by a Steering Committee using a broad criterion, based on quality, presentation, creativity, complexity, visual appeal, and variety, uniqueness and utilitarian worth.

Entry Fee & Deadline

A non-refundable entry fee of \$55.00 is levy for all applicants. This entry fee helps cover in part the cost of producing this event. Applicants will be notified by mail one month following closing deadline, which is **October 01, 2002**.

Venue & Engagement

No venue has been selected but it's anticipated that a high profile facility will be chosen to highlight these works. The arts & crafts exhibit will include an opening (Friday) evening with a keynote speaker on its main theme, some light entertainment and a full day (Saturday) for show & sales.

For further information & to request an application form, please call:

Paz Walton, Artistic Director @ 479-6435

Leo Campos A., Executive Producer @ 474-6058 / Cell: 995-6819

Contributed and produced by:

The Community Networks Group (c)

when
People
need an ally ...

Your donation
of reusable
clothing helps
support the
Association's
efforts



CANADIAN
DIABETES
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION
CANADIENNE
DU DIABÈTE

www.diabetes.ca

What We Do

Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) is a non-profit, charitable organization with over 150 branches across Canada. CDA volunteers and staff work directly with people with diabetes and their families at the grass roots level. The CDA Collections Program collects clothing and reusable household items as an entrepreneurial fundraising venture. The funds raised from this program assist in promoting diabetes research, education, service and advocacy.

What We Accept

We gladly accept donations of:

- Clothing
- Linens
- Toys
- Small Appliances
- Jewellery
- Shoes
- Luggage
- Sporting Goods

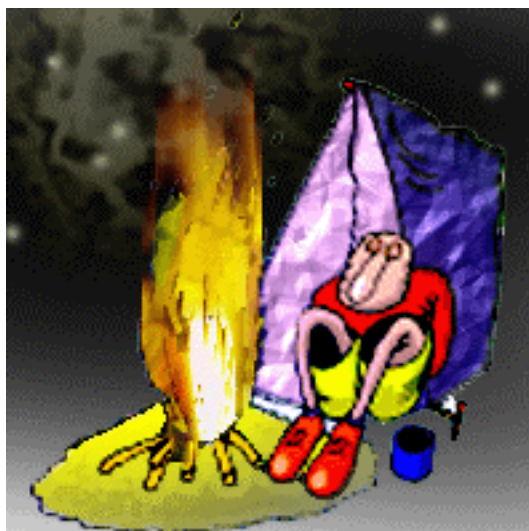
Canadian Diabetes
Association

403.509.0070

403.509-0072 (fax)

1.866.811.0070 (outside of
Calgary)

[Email Us!](#)



Global Village Backpackers Banff

Our hostel opened June 1, 2001 right in downtown Banff. Formerly the Woodland Village Inn, we are a unique hostel as all our rooms have ensuite bathroom facilities. We have a hot tub, sauna, internet access, kitchen facilities, pool table, tour desk, TV room, bike rentals, laundry facilities, lounge and a large outdoor courtyard patio.

A majority of our rooms are spacious 4-8 bed dorms. We also have, what we call, semi-private rooms. Each has a double bed in a loft above a 4 bed dorm. You share the washroom facilities with the dorm.

Room rates

October 1, 2001 - April 14, 2001

Dorm Beds	\$25.00	\$22.00
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Semi-private	\$55.00	\$51.00
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Weekly rate in a dorm room	\$129.50 (non-refundable)
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All prices include taxes and linen. Discounts are available to travelers carrying YHA, ISIC, VIP or GO cards.

2001/2002 Ski packages

3 Nights/2 days - only \$169

3 Nights shared accommodation

2 days ski passes (Lake Louise/Sunshine Village/Mount Norquay)

Transport to/from ski hills

Free pancake breakfast daily.

6 Nights/5 days - only \$369

6 Nights shared accommodation

5 days ski passes (Lake Louise/Sunshine Village/Mount Norquay)

Transport to/from ski hills

Free pancake breakfast daily.

We require credit card details to guarantee reservations.

We welcome group bookings. Please call the hostel directly for details.

Cheers

The Staff at the Global Village Backpackers Banff

449 Banff Avenue BOX 398

Banff AB Canada T1L 1A5

1-403-762-5521 Toll-free in North America 1-888-844-7875 fax 1-403-762-0385



Are you an Artist? AUSU supports the arts!

AUSU is interested in purchasing original works of art from students for use in promotional purposes. These promotions may include: gifts from AUSU to graduates at convocation, tokens of appreciation for volunteers, special presentations, etc.

The works of art must:

- be created by an AU Student
- be within a value range \$0-\$500.
- be accessible or easily transportable to Alberta

If you are an artist of any kind who creates a product you feel we would be able to use for such a purpose, please contact djabbour@ausu.org. Supply a brief description of the art object, a picture if you have it, and its market value.



WRITE FOR THE VOICE!

Contact Tammy Moore at tmoore@ausu.org for details on writing for The Voice, providing a sample selection of writing and preferred genre.



‘Learning is Learning’:

Challenge for Credit Option Exists for AU Students

Many students may not be aware that AU recognizes prior learning and encourages students to use the challenge for credit process if they feel they have knowledge or expertise in a particular subject area.

The process is not easy, but it is not insurmountable, and it can save the cost and time of taking a course if prior knowledge exists.

“We want to raise students’ awareness about the option and let them know that they don’t need to re-learn material or spend money on a course they don’t really need to take,” said Joan Fraser, director of the Centre for Learning Accreditation.

“Learning is learning and a student shouldn’t be penalized if that learning was not done within the confines of bricks and mortar,” she said, adding that those students with significant life or work force experience are typically those who pursue the challenge option.

Challenge for Credit is handled by the Registrar’s Office. Students are encouraged to check the course description to see if a challenge is permitted for the course they are interested in. If so, then the student must investigate a number of things prior to deciding whether to proceed.

First, and most important, the student should discuss the matter with the course coordinator. The coordinator will be able to give a better idea of the depth of the materials covered in the course, and the student’s chance for success should he/she opt to challenge.

The AU calendar outlines the challenge steps, notably completing the Challenge for Credit Application and accessing the course materials, which further allows the student to review the materials and determine if the challenge is viable. There is a non-refundable challenge for credit fee (check the web site for the current fee), but it should be noted that no withdrawal is allowed once the application has been completed.

“It (the challenge for credit) is something that’s there for you – use it,” Fraser said.

Anyone with questions about the process is encouraged to call Joan Fraser at (780) 675-6481 or check AU’s website at www.athabascau.ca.