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# the VOICE

[www.ausu.org](http://www.ausu.org)

## Quote of The Week:

"It's a simple formula; do your best and somebody might like it."

--Dorothy Baker



## A Bug In Your Ear...

### HONOURARY DEGREES! – The Call for Nominations

#### Contributed By AU

Athabasca University Governing Council invites nominations for Honourary Degrees to be presented at Convocation ceremonies on June 13 and 14, 2003 in Athabasca, Alberta.

Candidates will have distinguished themselves in education, science, the arts, public service, or other areas, and have made significant life-long contributions to endeavours consistent with the mandate and purpose of Athabasca University.

A letter including the rationale for the nomination, résumé of the nominee, and any supporting documents must be received by Monday, December 2, 2002. The nominator must include his/her address and signature. All nominations should be marked "Personal and Confidential" and should be addressed to:

Carol Lund  
Office of the Governing Council  
Athabasca University  
1 University Drive  
Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3

For further information, contact Ms. Lund at the above address, by phone (780-675-6271), by fax (780-675-6450), or by email ([caroll@athabascau.ca](mailto:caroll@athabascau.ca)).

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**This Christmas, Give A Gift To  
The Earth:  
*David Suzuki's Nature  
Challenge Simplifies Making  
A Difference.***

**By Tamra Ross Low**

This November, Canadian environmentalist, author, and television host David Suzuki has challenged Canadians to start taking concrete action against pollution, waste, and environmental damage [see: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/WOL/Challenge/>].

The David Suzuki Foundation has named this initiative The Nature Challenge, and a number of prominent Canadians, including Hockey Night in Canada host Ron MacLean, National Ballet of

Canada's Karen Kain, comic Mary Walsh, and children's author Robert Munsch, are lending their support.

The challenge, according to the Suzuki Foundation, "offers simple ways for Canadians to take responsibility for themselves and their environment. The David Suzuki Foundation has researched the 10 most effective ways individuals can conserve nature and is challenging all Canadians to read the list, [and] agree to do at least three of the 10 over the coming year."

Suzuki's strategy is a wise one. Polls indicate that a large number of people believe that environmental protection is an important issue, and that changes in lifestyle must occur in order to achieve a cleaner environment, but many are confused about where to start. No wonder. Newspapers, magazines, and literature produced by environmental groups are filled with suggestions for how we can effect environmental improvement, but these suggestions sometimes conflict, and it can be difficult for the average consumer to isolate which strategies are the most effective and which will have only a minimal effect.

While it is true that the greatest benefits to the earth would come from people adopting massive lifestyle changes, it is unlikely that most people are ready to make this type of global shift in how they live. The result is that many people do nothing, for fear that if they tried they surely could not do enough.

The Suzuki Challenge simplifies the process of 'becoming green' by making practical and easy-to-follow suggestions that any family can easily understand and adopt. It is not the final solution to our environmental woes, but rather a reasonable first step that anyone can take, and that may pave the way toward greater changes in the future. These suggestions are not only good for the earth, but will also have you save money and improve your health.

The full program consists of 10 changes that families and individuals can make, but to make it even simpler, the Foundation suggests that you choose only the three that you feel most comfortable with. Support is available through the Foundation website [see: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/WOL/challenge/>], and participants are encouraged to sign-up for a monthly newsletter that will give tips on how to reach your goals. The 10 strategies that Dr. Suzuki and the Foundation feel will be most effective are:

### **1. Reduce home energy use by 10%.**

Canada has a higher per-capita consumption rate than any country in the world. 60% of this energy is used to heat our homes. 40% of heat is lost through cracks in walls, and around doors and windows, so it should be easy to save 10% by reducing heat loss in these areas.

### **2. Choose an energy-efficient home and appliances.**

Complying with R-2000 building standards reduces home energy use by a third, and energy efficient appliances can use up to 40% less energy, which for a large appliance like a fridge can make a significant difference in your monthly power bill.

### **3. Replace dangerous pesticides with alternatives.**

Alberta homes have been found to use three times more pesticides than agriculture, and six times more than city parks, but children and pets are exposed to residential lawns more frequently than

parks or farmland. These chemicals are unnecessary and are easily, and more cheaply, replaced with natural alternatives.

#### **4. Eat meat-free meals one day a week.**

Meat production uses massive quantities of fresh water, and Canadians eat more than “twice as much meat as the global average”. High meat consumption is also linked to higher mortality from heart disease. Reducing meat intake limits exposure to the chemicals and antibiotics used in livestock production. The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada has found that Canadian’s are eating meat in portions that are too large – one portion of meat should be about the size of a deck of cards [see:

<http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=33&ArticleID=540&Src=living&From=SubCategory>]. Mediterranean’s are shown to have a very low rate of heart disease, and their low meat diet is one reason why [see:

<http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=33&ArticleID=555&Src=living&From=SubCategory>]. Eating more Mediterranean dishes is one way to reduce meat intake.

#### **5. Buy locally grown and produced food.**

6 to 12 cents of every dollar we spend on food is spent on transportation. “It is estimated that the elements of a basic North American meal travel 2400 km (1500 miles) – a concept known as ‘food miles.’” This often unnecessary transport is a major cause of pollution due to fuel consumption. Canada has many farms that produce meat, fruit and vegetables within each province. Local food might look the same as the imported stuff, but it is usually fresher, contains fewer chemicals [as less preservation is required], and it costs less to ship. Organic food might seem to be the healthiest answer, but often this is shipped from outside the country. Ideally, buy food grown in your province.

#### **6. Choose a fuel-efficient vehicle.**

39% of greenhouse gasses produced in Canada come from vehicles. More people are buying SUVs and trucks, but often they do not need a vehicle this large. For more information, visit the Autosmart website [see: <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/autosmart/home.cfm>]

#### **7. Walk, bike, carpool or take transit.**

Walking or biking for short trips is cheaper, healthier and better for the environment. Research has shown that the air inside our cars is up to ten times more polluted than the air outside.

#### **8. Choose a home close to work or school.**

“It’s been estimated that the average person spends 32 hours a month driving and 27 hours a months paying for their car use.” Moving to a location that is close to work, school and where you shop can significantly reduce travel time and fuel costs. Staying within developed urban areas helps protect agricultural land and wildlife habitat, while living in outlying suburbs increases travel, fuel consumption, and land use.

#### **9. Support car-free alternatives.**

Better public transit will reduce traffic, land use, and pollution. More free land means more parks and recreation areas. Current public transit needs to be improved, but this will only happen if we voice our needs and make use of public transit at high traffic times – such as rush hour. “One busload of passengers takes 40 vehicles off the road, saves 70,000 litres of fuel and reduces

nine tonnes of air pollutants a year.” Smaller vehicles should be used when warranted. In Calgary, bus drivers resisted the use of smaller busses during low-traffic times due to a loss of wages, but to use large vehicles when they are not needed is wasteful.

#### **10. Learn more and share with family and friends.**

When environmentally positive options are not available –for example, if you do not have effective bus service to your area – let your community government know. Tell your friends and family that they have choices, and that they can help make changes occur by voicing their concerns and their needs.

*(Information on the above items is paraphrased from the Suzuki Foundation Nature Challenge media release, except where noted.*

*[SEE: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/files/WOL/ChallengeBackgrounder.pdf>])*

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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.*

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### **From My Perspective: Just an ordinary day in my neighbourhood**

**By Debbie Jabbour**

It was almost like a Simpson's Halloween special. In fact it happened a few days before Halloween...

***October 29, 1 PM:***

A U-Haul truck towing a flat bed trailer drove past my house. Perched on top of the trailer was a shiny white Co-op Taxi. I assumed someone was moving in down the street, and that they happened to own a taxi.

***October 29, 2 PM:***

The U-Haul truck towing the Co-op taxi drives past my house again. They circle the block and park at the south end of the street.

***October 29, 2:55 PM:***

I drive my daughter to work. We slow down as we pass the U-Haul truck and its unusual cargo. Two people are walking across the street, apparently having exited the U-Haul. One is wearing a large, furry cap and a heavy coat. Very odd, since the weather is only a few degrees below zero. My daughter comments, "Gee, what's with the weird-looking people?"

***October 29, 3:10 PM.***

I return home. The U-Haul is still parked, but no visible sign of activity.

***October 29, 8:55 PM.***

On my way to pick up my daughter from work later that evening, I notice the U-Haul and its cargo turning a corner several blocks away off the main street. Seems odd. Shouldn't they have moved in by now and parked the taxi?

***October 30, 9:00 AM.***

The U-Haul with the Co-op taxi on the flatbed has returned and is parked in its spot at the end of the street.

***October 30, 10:00 AM.***

The U-Haul drives slowly past my house. This time the Co-op Taxi's windows are all covered with white cloth of some kind. I wonder if someone has vandalized the windows during the night.

***October 30, 10:20 AM.***

The U-Haul is apparently circling the block, since I've noticed it drive by several times. I come to the conclusion that this is not an ordinary person moving into the neighbourhood.

***October 30, 12:30 PM.***

The U-Haul passes my house again, windows now uncovered and intact. By now we are rushing to the window every time, peeking out the curtains, speculating on what could be going on. I wonder if I should call the local media to report these mysterious activities.

***October 30, 12:32 PM.***

The U-Haul passes my house, but stops at the corner. My daughter and I paste our noses to the window, trying to see past the reflection of the sun in the window to peer inside the taxi. "There's someone inside!" she gasps! I squint and tilt my head.... and finally agree that there is definitely movement inside the taxi. We notice two shiny round orbs in the rear windows of the taxi. The U-Haul back door is raised, and it seems like there is movement somewhere deep in the interior as well. A few moments later the U-Haul drives on. Maybe some kind of surveillance is going on? Maybe we have spies living down the street? Maybe it has something to do with the Adult Video Store that recently opened up at the end of the street and the neighbourhood protest?

***October 30, 12:35 PM.***

Another daughter phones to chat, asks what I'm up to. A bit sheepishly I admit to her that I'm glued to the window watching a strange U-Haul/flatbed/Co-op Taxi thing circle my street. She says, "oh yeah, I saw that yesterday!" She went on to explain that the previous afternoon after leaving my house, as she drove past, a bunch of people were standing on the street next

to the U-Haul, dressed in clothing that looked like turn-of-the-century immigrant garb. They all smiled and waved vigorously at her as she passed by. Hmmm. Maybe they were smuggling aliens?

***October 30, 12:55 PM.***

The U-Haul has once again parked at the end of the street. I keep peering out the window, but nothing is happening. My computer is on, and I have an assignment due, with a deadline looming, but I can't tear myself away from the window.

***October 30, 1:30 PM.***

After extensive discussion, my daughter and I discard the surveillance theory, and the alien smuggling theory, and conclude that this must be some kind of a film crew. Although what they could be filming is beyond our best guess.

***October 30, 2:55 PM.***

I drive my daughter to work. The U-Haul is parked at the end of the street. As we slowly cruise by, we notice two people sitting in the back of the taxi, and someone in the front facing back. A few people are standing around outside the U-Haul.

***October 30, 3:05 PM.***

I return home. I drive past the U-Haul VERY slowly, paying very little attention to the road in front of me in my eagerness to devour every detail of the U-Haul, the flatbed and its contents. I was rewarded by the sight of an assortment of equipment, including a small camera sitting on the floor of the U-Haul. As I neared the driver's door, a man who looked very much like the "director type" walked past me. Yes! It was obviously a film crew. But what were they filming? I had watched a 'reality' TV show a few nights back that featured conversations with taxi drivers....maybe they were doing an episode?

***October 30, 3:15 PM.***

The U-Haul drives past again. I decide to take a picture the next time, and perch myself in my front entrance with my camera.

***October 30, 3:17 PM.***

I wait

***October 30, 3:20 PM***

I wait

***October 30, 3:25 PM***

Still waiting

***October 30, 3:31 PM***

I'm getting desperate for a picture. I open my front door and tiptoe out onto my step, barefoot in the snow...to peer down the street. The U-Haul is parked and not moving. I see people walking around.

***October 30, 3:38 PM.***

At last! My patience is rewarded and I get a single picture of the U-Haul as it rounds the corner. But it doesn't turn out exactly as I hoped, so I decide to stand at the door for a while to get more pictures.

***October 30, 3:55 PM.***

I've been waiting for almost 20 minutes, jumping out on the step every few minutes to look down the street, hoping to catch the U-Haul. My course assignment has been forgotten for hours now, but I keep telling myself that soon the U-Haul will pass by again (after all its been doing that for days now!).

***October 30, 4:05 PM.***

The phone rings. My daughter asks me what I'm up to. I'm embarrassed to admit that I'm still looking out the window, this time with camera in hand. I tell her that I have positive proof that it's a film crew of some type, and we speculate on what kind of production they are filming.

***October 30, 4:15 PM.***

I've been jumping out onto my snow-covered step for almost an hour, camera in hand, and my feet are getting numb. Suddenly the Co-op taxi whizzes by! I lean out the porch and realize that the flatbed on the back of the U-Haul is now empty!

***October 30, 4:30 PM.***

No sign of activity, no U-Haul driving by, and the taxi is long gone.

***October 30, 5:00 PM.***

I give up, put the camera away and finally return to my computer and my assignment. The U-Haul is still parked at the end of the street, bereft of its cargo.

***October 31, 9:00 AM.***

The U-Haul, flatbed and taxi have left the neighbourhood for good. What they were filming may forever remain a mystery.

***Epilogue.***

After this article was written, I sat down to watch the new episode of the Simpsons. Homer gets inebriated and is sent home in a taxi from Mo's bar, only to show up on TV the following day, caught by the hidden cameras on, "Conversations in a Taxicab." Perhaps my neighbourhood really has turned into a Simpson's Halloween special! Hopefully I won't soon be seeing myself on some reality TV show about nosy neighbours - peeking out my window and jumping out on my snow-covered step in my bare feet with my camera!

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Debbie is a native Edmontonian, and 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

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## Canadian Fed Watch!

### ***News Across The Nation... Manitoba Plans Ahead, University Pays Off, Kyoto Climate Change***

*November 13, 2002*

**By Karl Low**

## **Manitoba Plans Ahead**

The Provincial Government and the Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE) recently [sponsored](#) an accessibility forum on post-secondary education. This forum's purpose was to bring together educators, students, administrators, and other stakeholders to share ideas and discuss how post-secondary education could be made more accessible to all Manitobans.

The provincial Advanced Education and Training Minister explained, "Access to higher education is key to building a skilled, well-educated workforce and a stronger Manitoba economy. As the information age takes hold, education becomes increasingly important to our ability to compete in the rapidly growing knowledge-based economy."

Congratulations on there finally being someone that understands. Attracting and fostering research is certainly a good thing, but the provincial and federal government must look beyond the immediate future to one where the numbers of researchers and faculty members are in short supply. Failure to do this means they will soon be caught up in an increasingly expensive competition to draw in new researchers.

The only real way to combat this is to ensure that we have a large enough supply of researchers graduating to replace those who are lured away or retiring. The best method to accomplish that goal is to ensure that everyone, regardless of income or physical situation, has the ability to enter and complete post-secondary education. This is really the only way to ensure that the best and brightest minds of our population have the ability to reach their full potential.

## Universities Pay Off

Statistics Canada is [releasing a report](#) on the spin-off companies that come from Canadian universities and research hospitals. According to the preliminary results, as of March 2001, 673 spin-off companies had been created to commercialise research, with total revenues of 2.5 billion dollars and employing over 18,000 people in 2002.

This has both good and bad implications. The good effects on our economy are fairly obvious, and it is for this reason that most provincial and federal governments are concentrating so heavily on boosting research budgets - even if such a boost comes at the expense of money available to help new students enter and complete their programmes.

One of the bad implications is that a report like this generates an expectation that universities exist to produce research that can be commercialised. This means that pure research, or research into the liberal arts area will be increasingly disparaged as not being the purpose of universities. Yet it is such basic or "impractical" research that can often lead to new leaps forward in our understanding of the world and ourselves, and often forms the groundwork for later technological achievements.

So while we can be happy that this report might encourage even more funding to flow toward Universities, we should also be watchful for the negative consequences that it might cause.

## Climate Change Chat

The issue of climate change is becoming a hot button issue for government officials; with parties on both sides taking out advertisements on the Kyoto treaty, provinces calling for increased participation in the discussion, as well as many people being unsure just exactly what the issues are and what is being planned all make it a contentious issue.

It seems the federal government has realized that and is now [calling for your thoughts](#) on their climate change proposal. Take a moment to go through the site, read the plan, see what you like or don't like, and then tell them. You can be sure that there are various special interest groups, from oil companies to environmental activists already are. So rather than letting the plan become a choice of the extremes, real people like us need to have our opinions heard. The more of us that speak up, the more likely it is that the government's solution will be one that pleases most of us.

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*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.*

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## **The Dubious Privatization of BC Rail**

### ***The Liberal Stance***

**By Wayne Benedict**

During the run-up to the May 28, 1996 British Columbia general election, the two foremost contender parties—the incumbent BC New Democratic Party (NDP) and the BC Liberal Party (Liberals)—took divergent stands on their future plans regarding the province’s publicly-owned railway, BC Rail. “Liberal leader Gordon Campbell placed BC Rail front and centre as an election issue when he released his economic plan before a television audience... A key component of the plan [had] a new [Liberal] government privatizing BC Rail...to earn a one-time \$1-billion revenue windfall” (Lewis, 1996). When faced with northern opposition to the privatization from within his own party, Campbell stated: “The BC Rail sale is part of our policies, and the candidates are expected to support them. I’ll have to talk to [the dissenter(s)]” (Lewis, 1996). NDP leader Glen Clark, on the other hand, made it clear to BC voters that his party had no intention of divesting the province of its publicly-owned railway transportation network. The Liberals lost the 1996 election. Looking back on the campaign in early 1997, Campbell admitted to a “litany of errors that...cost his party the election” including “the alienation of voters in the north with a promise to privatize B.C. Rail” (Palmer, 1997).

Apparently, Mr. Campbell learned from the mistakes made during the 1996 election. In campaigning for the May 15, 2001 British Columbia general election “he disavowed some of the biggest mistakes from [the 1996] campaign—the promise to privatize BC Rail is the best example” (Palmer, May 2001). The official Liberal platform promised that “a BC Liberal Government will: not sell or privatize BC Rail” (Campbell & BC Liberals, n.d.). Having successfully anticipated the desires of the electorate and made campaign promises accordingly, the Liberals were elected in a record-breaking landslide victory, taking every seat in the BC legislature except 3. On July 15, 2001, British Columbia Transport Minister Judith Reid reaffirmed that: “We [the Liberals] have made our promise that we are not going to privatize or sell BC Rail... The passenger service is really important to the lives of people in northern communities” (Daniels, July, 2001). A year after the Liberals took power, the BC public had not changed its collective mind about the privatization issue and a McIntyre & Mustel poll released June 21, 2002 found that “British Columbians don’t want to privatize ICBC, B.C. Rail, BC Ferries or the B.C. Lottery Corp” (Beatty, 2002). However, as early as September 2001, rumours had abounded “that the Liberals might tinker with their promise not to privatize B.C. Hydro or BC Rail, both of which have assets valued in the billions of dollars” (Palmer, September 2001). Those rumours have proven factual and this essay will examine the issues surrounding the privatization of public assets, paying particular attention to the British Columbia crown corporation BC Rail.

*Next Week: We take a look at the issue from the side of the NDP political party.*

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## Husband or Shopping Cart?

By Laura Seymour

When the hubby and I go out shopping on the week-end I often take a couple of handmade bags and leave my utility cart (sometimes known as “the old lady buggy”) in the hall closet. My regular column readers will know that we don’t own a vehicle and we are often out on foot together...well Larry’s “on wheels”, but you know what I mean! Since I know we’re going to be stared at anyway because Larry’s in a wheelchair, they might as well stare at the guy being used as a shopping cart too!

Now first, let’s discuss this utility cart. I’m a proud owner of this cheap gizmo and I’m not going to tell anyone anything else. When my shoulders ache from carrying too many groceries or doing too many chores it’s wonderful to stick tote-able items in this sucker and pull it along behind me. I only have one real beef; I wish I could find a way to walk at my usual stride without clipping myself in the heel. Ouch! And it looks stupid to stumble on nothing. (Use comic David Brenner’s solution—go back and look thoughtfully at something on the ground, maybe warn someone as they go by “it”).

This buggy has had almost as many comments from people going by as my hand-made jackets did. One jacket was a complicated European pattern with gull wing sleeves all knit on one needle. I got so many comments and compliments! The other is my winter jacket and I took the time to put my company name on it at an embroidery store. Since my main focus at the time was video, I added a film thread and camera! For five years since I’ve had people on C-Trains and line-ups noticing that simple addition.

The cart gets comments of “where did you get that!? I’ve been trying to find one.” Well in my case it was in the house wares section of Wal-Mart. I’m now using the material section to pick some sturdy plastic to make a better liner. That crappy one I sent away for is made of material and has been chewed up in the wheels because the material slides around. I’m turning into a regular Martha Stewart here! (Hmmm...if she winds up in jail do you think I should take over her show? Nah! The husband jokes that Canadian catch phrase would be “It’s an Okay thing...”)

Now the discussion of the husband’s lap side of this... I am delighted to say that my husband is always game to help if he can. So few women have said that to me! Anyway, he comes shopping with me in good weather. Now that the winter temperatures and snow are approaching it becomes more difficult to haul him through the snow so it’s just easier to get a bit at a time or tackle the buggy.

Using Larry as a buggy is kind of odd and it wasn't my idea. He originally offered when we were dating. He explained that the girls in his class at NAIT used his lap as a handy purse holder in between classes! (Incidentally, if you know of a wheelchair-confined person this isn't a standard among those in chairs, so ask first please and thank you.) Anyway, it soon became a handy carrying area and I now plunk the grocery store basket on his lap and place items in as we roll round the aisles. I have to remember that he can't tell when things aren't going to stay or it all plops on the ground and I scurry chasing apples! He usually winds one arm around the push handle of his chair for his own balance and therefore can't insure the basket's balance issues.

I've handled luggage at the airport, groceries and moving twice with this husband's handy dandy lap and I think it's a lovely addition to my life. I have to confide that Larry and I have a little lovey-dovey thing where I constantly say, "I shall have to thank you for the use of your lap." Well, you get the idea what the thank you is! After all he doesn't have to offer his lap.

So it's nice of him to come with me and help my poor little shoulders and it's a romantic lead in.

Perhaps you can think of a way to get your (presumably able-bodied man) a little more involved...just a little "thank you" (ahem...wink) does help--after all we are "polite Canadians" aren't we?

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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).

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THE VOICE – November 13, 2002

Dear Sandra,

**I feel a little awkward writing to you, but I am hoping that you will be able to help with my problem. For the past few months I have noticed myself becoming more moody, tired, sad, and I have gained 15lbs. Is this my body's way of saying it does not like the sedentary student life in front of a computer?**

**Tired and Grumpy in Quebec**

Dear Tired,

It may not be school that is causing your problem. Many mental illnesses such as depression or even a physical ailment like a deficiency in Vitamin B12 may be causing your behaviour. On the other hand though, it is easy to become a little less enthusiastic about life if you are stuck inside an office or your kitchen all day studying without any outside human contact.

My first recommendation to you would be to go see a doctor, tell him your symptoms and maybe even get a full physical to rule out any deficiencies in vitamin levels, calcium, iron, etc... I need to get an injection of Vitamin B12 every week because my body does not absorb it. Before I had the shot, I was easily tired, slept a lot and I had a hard time concentrating - which doesn't help if you are a university student trying to read boring textbooks. You could also be exhibiting some of the numerous signs of depression: withdrawal, inactivity, inability to function, easily tire, low energy level, excessive sleep, insomnia, poor or increased appetite, irritability, poor ability to concentrate, low self-esteem, emotional, suicidal ideation, self-destructive thoughts, low libido, craving for carbohydrates, skin problems, a feeling that no one understands you and body aches and pains.

Biological factors contribute to the majority of cases of depression. Neurotransmitters transmit information from one central nervous system cell to another, when neural cells lose the ability to make the proper amount of a neurotransmitter, store it properly or bind it efficiently, depression or other mood disorders may occur. Three physiological conditions that affect neurotransmitter production and can inhibit chemical are:



1. Specific diseases -. Alzheimer's, epilepsy, MS.
2. Hormonal imbalances - It is estimated that 10-15% of all depressed patients have some form of thyroid malfunction.
3. Genetic factors - Depression and bi-polar diseases tends to run in the family, but it is not an absolute (Fanning & McKay, 2000 p. 592).

Drug therapy is available for serious cases, some people with very mild depression prefer to use herbal remedies like St. John's Wort or alter their diets to find foods that may trigger "depressive like symptoms" in their bodies or increase their activity levels.

***The most important thing is to consult with your doctor first!***

Maybe all you need is to start eating right and increase your energy level. Studying from home makes it really easy to turn into a junk food addict and lead a very sedentary life. Make sure that you have some outside contacts, join a bowling league, volunteer at a shelter, ANYTHING just make sure you get out of the house often and interact with other human beings. I would be very curious to hear back from you to hear how your situation turned out, your symptoms could be related to any number of physical or mental illnesses.

Sandra

Reference:

Fanning, Patrick & McKay, Matthew. 2000. Family Guide to Emotional Wellness. New Harbinger Publications; CA.

***Thanks to everyone for your letters and encouragement. Keep those letters coming, no question is unanswerable and confidentiality is assured.***

**Sandra**

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This column is for entertainment only. Sandra is not a professional counsellor, but is an AU student who would like to give personal advice about school and life to her peers. Please forward your questions to Sandra care of [smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org)

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## **Some Reasons Why People Are Homeless**

**By Diane L.M. Cook**

In a society as advanced as ours, you wouldn't expect to see such high numbers of homeless people. Studies show there are common contributing factors explaining why people are homeless, but I believe the real reason why most people are homeless cannot be attributed to these factors. A large number of people are homeless by successive bad choices, and society should take a preventive stance rather than just be blamed after the fact.

### **The Statistics Speak for Themselves**

Calgary's population in 1982 was 623,133 people and in 2002, it was 904,987 people. The math is this - Calgary's population has increased by 281,854 people in the last twenty years; in fact, over 100,000 people in the last six years alone. That's a lot of people! These figures represent more than just Calgarians having lots of babies, they represent a lot of people migrating to Calgary in search of a better life. Calgary has been in "boom mode" since about 1996, thanks primarily to the oil and gas industry which is doing pretty good for a change. Because of this, people all across Canada have been reading about how good it is in Calgary and they are flocking here in droves. The homeless problem in Calgary is accentuated by the fact that unless you have a petro-chemical degree or several years experience in the oil and gas industry, there isn't much here for those in search of a good job. It has been said that Alberta has the highest number of people with university degrees, which makes sense considering what our main industry is, but an unemployed fisherman from an Atlantic province is not going to find an executive position at Shell Canada in Calgary. These 'hopeful for the future' will probably wind up working a series of minimum wage jobs, living hand to mouth, and quite possibly wind up homeless. People need to be encouraged not to just pack up and move to another province without first doing some research. Simple research such as: What types of jobs are available? What type of education and experience is required for these jobs? How much do these jobs pay? Another no-brainer to be checked out first - how much is the average rent? The reality is people do more research when they buy a computer as opposed to moving to a new city. It's nice to throw caution to the wind sometimes and take a chance, but are people really this naïve? Wouldn't it make sense to have a job and a place to live lined up before you threw your duffle bag in the back of your car and drove 5,000 miles to a city you know nothing about?

### **Calgary is Getting Expensive**

Calgary has seen its rents climb to outrageously high levels in the past six years and is getting almost as expensive to live in as Vancouver and Toronto. Other than the Landlord & Tenant Act

stating that a landlord cannot raise rent more than two times in a one-year period in Alberta, there is no cap on how much each of the two increases can be. This loosely translates into - when Calgary does well, the rents go up but the wages don't. No politician or businessman in his right mind is going to agree to increase the minimum wage because government and business owners don't want to pay more for what they are already getting virtually for free. Don't forget, Alberta's premier doesn't believe in helping the weak so only the strong survive. In Alberta, the motto is "you snooze, you loose". If you can't afford to live on your \$5.90 an hour job in Calgary, then you should probably move to a city or town that you can afford. Medicine Hat and Lethbridge are fine cities and much less expensive to live in. Don't insist on starving to death in Calgary; there are other alternatives.

## **A Systemic Problem**

There is much debate about the systemic problem of homelessness and some would argue that it begins in childhood, in the home. There are many things parents can teach their children and how to survive is one of them. Remember the saying "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he eats for life"? It also goes to follow that if a person is considered a bad parent (loosely defined as anyone who does not meet the minimum standards of care for raising a child by providing adequate food, shelter, clothing, and care), a person who is either an alcoholic, a drug addict, or is working dead-end, minimum wage jobs, or has less than a grade 12 education, they probably aren't properly preparing their children for a strong position in the real world. It is not the responsibility of the school system for preparing children for the real world: it is the responsibility of the parents. If parents don't give their children a proper head start in the world, then these children's risk of becoming homeless greatly increases. On the flip side, there are those parents who are good parents, and they do all the right things for their child, but for some funny reason, the child insists on making life-altering, bad decisions in their life.

## **The Slippery Slope to Homelessness**

It is usually the same series of life-altering, bad decisions that eventually make a person homeless. The person has probably dropped out of high school, they may have had a child at a young age, and they are stuck in a low-paying, dead-end job. That this person is probably very depressed about their lot in life could mean the risk of turning to alcohol or drugs for some kind of relief; lower socio-economic status and substance abuse are a related fact (see: <http://www.stthomasu.ca/research/youth/risk.htm>). For a person living this type of lifestyle, long passages of time usually go by without any positive changes in their life and one day, the break up of a marriage, the loss of a job, or constant personal problems, wind up leaving the person homeless.

You might also wonder about those people who seemed to have everything and then they wound up homeless. These are people who had to have everything brand new, but they never had enough money to buy food. These are people who, even though they may have a good education and a good job, they are so grossly lacking in money management skills, and/or are so greedy, that they actually put themselves in the poor house. A classic example is the person lives way beyond their means and has a huge mortgage (or a second mortgage), one or two leased vehicles,

the best cable package, the latest cell phone, a top-of-the-line computer with bells and whistles they'll never use, and they always seemed dressed in the latest styles. Yes, you can live like this for a little while, but things will eventually catch up with you.

The biggest catalyst that puts most people on the street is the loss of their job. If you aren't eligible for EI benefits and you don't have at least three months worth of expenses saved, and you either don't have a spouse or a spouse who makes good money, or a rich benevolent relative, you could be running this risk. The statistics in Calgary for people who are about one paycheque away from being homeless are scary! In fact, there are a large number of people who have full-time, permanent jobs but they are still homeless. These people are referred to as the "working poor" because they are working dead-end, minimum wage jobs and they only make enough money to barely survive. This means these people can never save enough money for damage deposits for apartments and utility hook-ups, let alone pay a high rent on a monthly basis.

***Stay tuned next week when Diane discusses the three biggest pitfalls to becoming homeless and tips on how to avoid becoming homeless.***

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*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.*

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## Advertisement and Anxiety

By b.e. hydromako

*[Photo Credit: “Follow the Flock” is a spoof ad generated by the Adbusters Creative Resistance campaign - see: <http://adbusters.org/creativeresistance/spoofads/fashion/tommy/>]*

Every day an overwhelming deluge of advertisements bombards us. We are exposed to them on the sides of buses, on the inside of buses, on benches and bus shelters, in newspapers, in magazines, over the radio, on television, on billboards, on the sides of buildings, in shop windows, on signs set up on the street, as part of the paint job on some vehicles, in our email or on web pages—heck, we even see advertising on some of the clothes that we wear. We are embedded in an environment that is always out to inform of us of a product we need to have, or a service that we need to employ. In short, we are constantly and unabashedly baited to consume. Advertisements can be shameless in their attempts to bring us to beliefs about what we are, or perhaps better, what we could be if only...and in this, advertisements can inspire shame in the individual.

It is often the case that, if an advertisement is selling anything these days, then it is likely selling an image. Gone are the days were an advertisement would be a simple exposition regarding the product, and list its price. Contemporary ads typically lure people into believing that a product carries with it a lifestyle, a way of being in the world. Many people feel that even if this is the case, they are not affected by the images that ads are selling them. However, the irony is that many of these same people who claim that ads have nothing on them, that they are able to see through and ignore the images that they are being baited with, are in fact the same people who will be wearing Budweiser baseball caps, Nike clothing, or some other brand label bit of apparel. In fact, it is those who feel that they are immune or able to ignore advertising that are likely to be most susceptible to its insidious grip: when we learn to ignore that which is right in front of us is when what is right in front of us gains its most power. By thinking that we are immune to advertisements we set ourselves into the zombie-like mode when advertising has its greatest hold.

Think of all the jingles and images that occupy a typical consumer’s headspace. Think of how easy it is to recall Coca-Cola ad campaigns from years gone buy: “Have a Coke and a smile,” “...in perfect harmony, I’d like to buy the world a Coke...” “It’s the real thing,” etc. And it doesn’t merely begin and end with Coke. How much of any average Westerner’s mind is filled

with such refuse? And if only we could *refuse* this constant bombardment of images, signals, signs, symbols, and messages about what it is that gives our lives value, what things we need to have a meaningful and happy existence. But we cannot withhold our acceptance and reception of these messages: we are living in an environment that is saturated with such one-sided communications.

With all this imagery floating about in anyone's mind, is it any wonder that people become debilitated with increasing anxiety, and that we live with worry generated from an acute sense of unsatisfied desire? In every ad there is the subtle implication that there is something that the individual is lacking, that the individual has a need or desire that isn't being fulfilled—that individual is not quite whole, and thus, in a sense, not quite "right." Ads appear to instil in people the feeling that they are something less than...if they do not immediately get the product, buy the service, subscribe to the image that is being sold. In other words, an ad functions as a way to create in us a feeling of lack, open up a hole in our lives, create in us a void and emptiness where none existed before. In short, ads seem able to breed anxiety.

Thus, ads are neither harmless nor passive. Advertising can be seen as an active parasite that seeks to fulfill its goal by feeding the shadowy aspects of a human existence. In appealing to our wants and desires to belong, to feel fulfilled, to feel secure, to feel safe, to feel as a part of something more, advertising exploits and abuses, assaults and debases, degrades and devalues our lives.

Take, for example, an ad currently running on television which appears to assault and degrade children who wet their beds. The child in the ad is happy once he has the product because now the other kids can think of him as normal. The implication for any bed wetting child—and his or her parents—who views this ad is that a child who urinates while sleeping is abnormal, and that until he or she uses the product, there is reason to feel ashamed. How does this not increase anxiety in the child, and likely in his or her parents, who is probably already feeling distressed about an aspect of his or her human existence? And this is merely one of a plethora of examples that could be cited. Ads often attempt to instil a sense of shame in the individual if he or she is not using the product, is not buying the service. If the individual doesn't have the product/service then he or she is somehow subhuman, is living a life that is lacking, is in no way in a position to have a fulfilling and meaningful life. This is what some advertisements seek to inspire in their victims.

Is it any wonder, then, that we sometimes feel that we are living in a world on the edge of oblivion? Is it any wonder that we feel anxious and alienated from our fellow human beings? There is no doubt that some advertising promotes and contributes to such feelings of dissatisfaction, lack of fulfillment, a sense of depreciated worth. If we are constantly exposed to, and dwell within, images and messages that suggest that we are not whole, not satisfied, not normal, then there can be no doubt that these images and messages will be adopted into our self-images. Advertisements, by their very purpose and design, appear to be creating more anxiety in an already over anxious world.

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*b.e. hydomako is a grouchy old crank trapped in the body of a wet behind the ears goldfish in a tank that is full of too many piranhas (which is, well, any number of them really). The tank is also quite dirty, and getting more so everyday, but no one seems willing or able to clean the tank, or at least clean it in a way that is really effective. He would like to understand more about the relations that make up the existence of himself, the other fish, the tank, and what is beyond, but knows that this is a most difficult task—he is, after all, only a goldfish!*

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## Bowling for Columbine – A Movie Review

By Debbie Jabbour

I've read some intriguing reviews of this award-winning documentary, so when my daughter invited me to join her at the Garneau theatre on Sunday night, I decided to put aside my books and take a night off to attend the movies. I'm so glad I did! Bowling for Columbine is one of the most thoughtful and provocative movies I've ever seen.

In Bowling for Columbine, director Michael Moore takes a look at the "right to own a gun" mentality in the U.S.; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Constitutional right that allows every American to keep a loaded gun in their homes to protect themselves and their families. He does this in the

context of the incomprehensible events at Columbine on April 20, 1999, when two heavily armed teenagers entered a high school and embarked on a killing spree, taking the lives of 12 students and one teacher, and injuring dozens of others, before taking their own lives.

The odd title comes from the fact that Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris had apparently gone bowling in the morning, participating in a gym class that they enjoyed. After bowling class, they donned military gear, loaded their guns, and headed out to shoot up their school.

Moore uses a highly effective mix of humour, satire, and drama to make his point. As a long-time card carrying member of the NRA, Moore is in a good position to ask some difficult questions regarding the culture of violence in the U.S., and he does this in a deadpan style that leaves the audience alternating between laughter, incredulity, and horrified silence.

The documentary begins with a bemused Moore receiving a rifle as a bonus gift upon opening up a bank account in Michigan. From there Moore takes us on a journey, with interviews ranging from the Michigan militia to American Bandstand's Dick Clark; from teenagers who make homemade napalm to the producer of COPS; from two students injured at Columbine to K-Mart



executives; from Charles Manson to Charlton Heston. He enlists the help of South Park's Matt Stone; who was raised in Littleton, Colorado; in some highly effective animated sequences. At every step of the way Moore presents ironic contrasts, asking the question, "what is it about America, guns and violence?"

The interview with Marilyn Manson gives some thoughtful perspective. Manson was immediately demonized as a causal factor in the Columbine killings, since both boys were Manson fans. Yet on the day of the murders, Bill Clinton had proudly announced that the U.S. had made their largest military strike ever against Kosovo. But no one blamed Clinton's announcement as a motivator for Klebold and Harris - nor did they blame bowling!

The documentary gave us graphic images of various U.S. atrocities against other countries, while taking a painful look at the media-fueled atmosphere of fear Americans live in, and the fanatical loaded-gun culture Moore claims this leads to. There are some deeply touching moments that had the audience in absolute silence, save the sound of muffled sobbing...horrible media-covered murders of Vietnamese and Chilean citizens...the graphic school video of students hiding under their desks at Columbine...tapes of frantic phone calls from parents.

The heart wrenching 911 call made by a teacher in Flint, Michigan after a six year old boy brought a gun to school, killing six year old Kayla Rolland; set the scene for Moore to take a closer look at the roots of that particular tragedy. The tragic twist to that story is something that in itself leaves viewers with plenty to think about. Tamarla Owens, the single mother of the unfortunate 6-year-old murderer, was part of a Work for Welfare program (ironically administered by Lockheed Martin, major weapons manufacturer). She was forced to leave her children early in the morning, taking a bus for 80 miles to two jobs to pay off her welfare - one of them at Dick Clark's American Bandstand restaurant (who receives a tax incentive for hiring Work for Welfare clients). After being evicted from her home, in desperation Tamarla asked her brother to take her children in, and it was there her 6 year old son found the gun that he took to class. She did not see her son take the gun to class because she was already on the bus to work. Images of her weeping face were interspersed with George Bush demanding that Americans prioritize greater funding for the military to fight the unknown "evildoer".

Moore makes comparisons with Canada, where 7 million guns are registered to 10 million homes, yet we have a murder rate one twelfth that of the U.S. (11,217 at the time of the documentary filming). It is here that he takes some artistic excesses. Moore tries to portray Canada as a place where ghettos are nonexistent, and Toronto residents don't even lock their doors. We know this is stretching the truth, but Moore does ask a valid question. Why do Canadians not share the U.S. culture of violence in spite of having plenty of access to violent video games, Marilyn Manson, and firearms?

Probably the most well-publicized part of the documentary is when Moore knocks on NRA President Charlton Heston's door, and is granted an interview the following morning, based on shared NRA membership. Moore challenges Heston on the insensitivity of the decision to hold NRA meetings in both Littleton and Flint within weeks of the killings. Heston avoids the questions and walks off. Yet he remains dignified and is respectful in presenting his point of view, regardless of how flawed or erroneous that point of view may be.



The ironies are overwhelming in this documentary, and Moore draws provocative links ranging from the NRA and the KKK; to gun makers and Work for Welfare programs. The whole culture of fear that embraces U.S. citizens is questioned...and no answers are found. In the words of the Michigan militia, "it is an American responsibility to be armed - if you are not armed you are not responsible." Moore makes us think. He asks questions with no answers, questions that need asking, timely questions that need a response. You may think you've seen documentaries before, but Bowling for Columbine is not like anything you've seen before. Don't miss it.

<http://www.bowlingforcolumbine.com/home.php>  
[www.michaelmoore.com](http://www.michaelmoore.com)

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*Debbie is a native Edmontonian, and 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.*

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## Itemised

### By Lonita Fraser

I don't know about you, but I am not a fan of those conversations that start off with "So, tell me about yourself." There is something very crippling about that statement, something that stops the tongue and freezes your brain. I think it's because, though we may be used to categorising things, we are not used to conversations that are non-flowing, particularly when they are on a personal level. You have that statement, that demand, placed before you, and all you can think is, "I do not know what to say."

Many years ago, my friend Ken came up with a simple method of combating this problem: write a list. Not any old list, a list of personal statements written in a stream of consciousness style. Ken hates talking about himself, and dislikes that "So tell me about

yourself" demand, but The List gave him a simple method of overcoming the problem of being stopped in his conversational tracks when asked to relate personal factlets.

I make it sound very humourless and un-amusing, do I not? But that's not the case at all. Creating this type of stream of consciousness list can be a very serious thing, but it can also be an exercise in fun, a combination of both, and more besides.

You need very little to create this kind of list. The only tools required are a pen and some paper (I suggest a notebook rather than loose sheets of paper, for reasons I shall make more clear later on), or a word processing program. Since this is very much an exercise in stream of consciousness writing there are no rules, per se, no hard and fast steps to follow. However, there are a few guidelines to bear in mind before you begin and as you write.

Try to do this list without any distractions present. It is much easier to write, particularly when it's personal, when there's no worry of someone seeing over your shoulder, or of being interrupted by anything else. Distractions cannot only be embarrassing; they can also break your concentration, thus breaking the flow of what you're writing.

Write whatever comes into your head. No matter how silly, rude, disgusting, perverted, weird, odd, wacky, boring, strange, revolting, offensive, or otherwise it is, write it down. One idea will invariably lead to another (which is the point, after all), and another, until you find yourself with a list that might be hundreds of items in length. There are no wrong things to write. If you are stuck for a place to begin, start with your age, height, colour of your eyes, your job, your ethnicity, your favourite book. (A listing of personal list-making prompts can be found [here](#).) For example:

Lonita Fraser is 5' 4 1/2" tall.

Lonita Fraser does not know what that is in metric.

Lonita Fraser isn't all that sure she cares about finding out the conversion.

Lonita Fraser's favourite colour is purple. (On the website version of my list, the word purple is in purple text, and links to another page that talks about that colour's mystical properties, etc.)

Lonita Fraser owns a lot of things that are purple in colour.

Once a thought is safely down on paper or in your word processor, it cannot be deleted. Whatever comes into your head, and out of your pen, must stay. Since you are not required to show this list to anyone, there is no need to be embarrassed or worried about what you say. I know I have said you do not have to make your list public, but you can do so if you wish to. It can be a very liberating thing to know you've done so, warts and all.

Keep going. Keep writing until you can't think of anything else. Add to it when you think of something new. I began my list in late 1996 and still update it occasionally. Because this could be a long-term project, or at least one that you will sporadically augment, it's a good idea to use a notebook (if you choose the pen and paper method) so that you are not worried about keeping track of loose bits of paper. Treat yourself to a brand new notebook just for keeping your list.

When my friend Ken wrote his list, he began each line with his first and last name (as I did in the example above) as a reminder that each fact was a separate little nugget of information about himself. It is not necessary for you to do the same. I didn't when I wrote my first list in response to his. Besides, it gets very wearing on the writing muscles to write those extra letters repeatedly.

The List can be a lot more than a way to itemise personal factoids. For me, it also became a way to communicate thoughts and feelings that I could not manage to express in any other way. I have written whole letters in List. It is a good way to write said letters when you are too tired to write, or can't think, in a prose-like way. I have even kept a list specifically for the purposes of itemising what I saw as the more negative aspects of my self, or the things that I found hurtful. That said, despite the seeming random nature of The List, if you wish to put more method to the madness, go right ahead. For example, if you wanted only to write a list of things relating to your family, school or work, likes and dislikes, that's fine too. A friend of mine once created what he termed his "Love / Hate" list. He simply created a long list of things he liked, loved, disliked, and hated. He did not separate them into columns or group them in any manner but how they had first come to him.

Fun is not the only benefit of creating this type of list. Stream of consciousness writing can often lead a person to surprising discoveries about themselves, or new ways of expressing old things. It can also show you connections between things that you'd never noticed before, and it can also get the brain moving if your imagination has atrophied a little. A common problem with writing is often the question of "What do I write about?" The List can help shake loose some cobwebs, and not only give you something to write, but a list of things to write about. It is often easier to write things down in small chunks, rather than trying to express "the big picture" all at once. Writers of all types, from students to professionals, often refer to this as "brainstorming".

One specific use there could be for creating The List is as a basis for a website, or a single section of a larger site. When I first began creating websites, that's precisely what I did with my List. I posted it to the Internet, linked to other sites from some of the listed items, or created other pages of my own to elaborate on them. The friend I mentioned who wrote a "Love / Hate" list, also created a website for it. He kept his list unsorted, and simply arranged them in a two-column format on the page. All the text was white, and each instance of "love" and "like" was coloured red; each instance of "dislike" or "hate" was coloured blue.

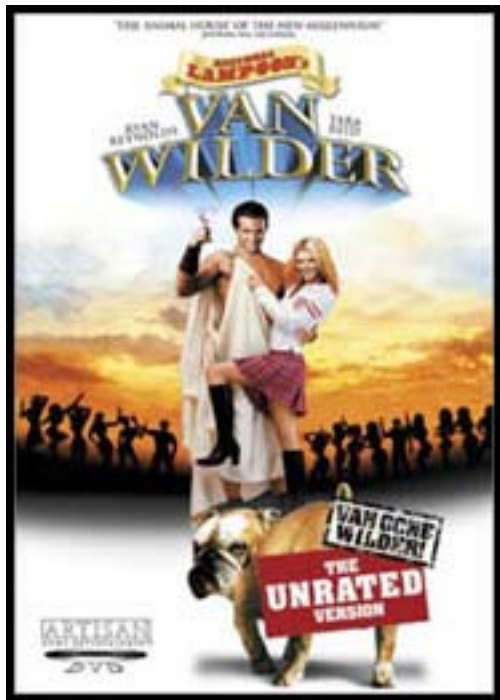
After much scribbling, The List you end up with is not only a method of brainstorming to prompt future writing. It is also not just a basis for another project (such as a website), and not only a fun and interesting exercise in personal discovery. It is also something you can pass on to others as an introduction. And, more importantly, the next time someone mentions how they dislike "so tell me about yourself" demands, you have something to talk about with them. You can explain The List.

My own List can be found at <http://www.lonita.net/journal/journal.cgi?entry=list> and some lists by others can be found at <http://www.lonita.net/lists/>

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Lonita has been an AU student since early 2002, and is studying towards a Bachelor of General Studies in Arts & Science. She enjoys writing, creating websites, drinks far too much tea, and lives in hopes of one day owning a plaid Cthulhu doll. The most exciting thing she's done so far in her lifetime is driven an F2000 racecar, and she's still trying to figure out how to top that experience. Her personal website can be found at <http://www.lonita.net> and what you can't find out about her through that, you can ask her via email: [lonita\\_anne@yahoo.ca](mailto:lonita_anne@yahoo.ca)

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## A Movie Review: National Lampoon's Van Wilder (2002) *A National Lampoon Movie With A Plot?*

**By Sandra Moore**

*Rated R (coarse language, nudity, drug content)*

After a stressful week of late night researching for a paper, I decided that what I needed most was just to lie in bed and watch one of those senseless *American Pie* style comedies that force me to laugh all the seriousness of schoolwork out of my body. So my husband and I headed off to the local video store in hopes of finding a movie that would do just that.

At the video store dramas and thrillers like *Insomnia* with Robin Williams and *Frailty* with Bill Paxton were difficult to pass over since these are the types of movies we usually watch, but we were determined to get a comedy. My only prerequisite was that the movie did not star my fellow Canadian Tom Green; his insane kind of comedy has me seriously worried about his mental health. It was pretty slim pickings for a Saturday night at 9 P.M., but we finally settled on *National Lampoon's Van Wilder*. Fond memories of other National Lampoon's movies that I have watched in the past led me to assume this movie would be just as funny as the one's starring Chevy Chase and his dysfunctional on-screen family from the 1980's or John Belushi's crazy antics in *Animal House* (1978).

This movie stars Ryan Reynolds of ABC's former comedy series *Two Guys, A Girl and a Pizza Place*, later shortened into *Two Guys and a Girl*, as Van Wilder the perpetual college student. For seven years Van has been the life of party and the wise all seeing student that all others looked to for inspiration and advice, yet Van still does not have a degree. Van seems content with the cushy no worries college life he has come to enjoy over the years. On the other hand, Van's wealthy workaholic father, Van Wilder Sr. played by Tim Matheson, is stunned to learn that he is still paying tuition for his son after all these years with no degree to show for it, so he

goes to the school and surprises his son in the midst of one of his famous party's and cuts the purse strings. This forces Van, with the help of his assistant (an exchange student from India who's loyalty to Van is used in exchange for Van's sexual expertise with the ladies in order to lose his virginity before he heads back home) and Van's dope smoking tag-along right hand man to come up with a way to raise enough money to cover his tuition for the rest of the year. This leads Van and his two buddies to become Party Liaisons, charging the underdog party-illiterate of the school to throw them wild parties complete with beautiful girls and all the "trimmings" of a college party.

Meanwhile Gwen Pearson, played by Tara Reid of *Josie and the Pussy Cats* fame, a writer from the student newspaper is given the assignment of interviewing Van. A difficult task considering that in Van's seven-year stint at the school he has refused all interviews. This does not dissuade the budding reporter to do all that she can to find out about this controversial but elusive student. Along the way Gwen begins to spend more and more time with Van, which infuriates her boyfriend, a pre-med student and head of the student government and the most prestigious fraternity on campus. Van's spontaneity and compassion for others draws Gwen closer to him and farther away from her egocentric boyfriend. The measures these two men go through to win Gwen's affections away from the other's is comical and at times down right disgusting - I don't think I will ever eat a cream puff again for as long as I live! When Gwen started interviewing Van she was convinced that he was just an immature, selfish jerk, but by the end of the movie she sees him as a compassionate, selfless helper of mankind and all in all a wonderful person who had just not reached his potential.

What really struck me about this movie was that it actually had somewhat of an interesting plot. I was really expecting a down right crude comedy comparable to National Lampoon's *Animal House* (1978) and instead I got a comedy that was funny and interesting. Keep in mind, though, before you go rushing out to rent this movie thinking that it is along the lines of *Chocolate* or *Pay It Forward* - this is still a National Lampoon's movie and at times it is crude and there is some nudity and coarse language. On the other hand, this movie is good if you want to watch something you don't care to critique after and if you want "re-live" your younger days. If you laughed at the American Pies movies, you'll love this one. Watch for Curtis Armstrong, Booger from *Revenge of the Nerds*, as the campus cop and a cameo from CHIP'S star Eric Estrada. Oh, and you probably shouldn't eat pastry during the viewing of this movie; you'll understand why after you watch it!



## **AU News From Academic Council**

### **Contributed by The Insider**

**Academic Council passed the following Action Items at its Nov. 6th meeting:**

- Step II & III approval of a Master of Nursing program (open for applications on April 1, 2003 with courses beginning Sept. 1, 2003)
- Regulation changes to the Master of Health Studies program (effective Sept. 1, 2003)
- Step II approval for the Environmental Studies program (includes a concentration within the BA and a University Certificate program)
- Credentials awarded to the graduands in the Advanced Graduate Diploma in Management

Approval given for the three new centres with the School of Business: Centre for Accounting and Taxation; Centre for Finance, Management, and the Economy; and Centre for Marketing and Organization

## **Learning Services Conference**

### **Contributed By The Insider**

The Learning Services Conference took place Oct. 25 and 26 in Edmonton. Lori Oddson, director of Collaboration and Learning Services, welcomed participants to the event. Together with Dominique Abrioux, Lori announced the awards to recognize long-time service to AU.

Recipients of the 5-year awards were Lois Browne, Linda Kerr, and Rebecca Heartt; 10-year: Jayne Gackenback, Elaine Schow, and Terry Taylor; 15-year: Oliver Franke and Helen Onderka; 20-year: Ghislaine Campbell, Ravi Kumar, Lorraine Laville, David Otto, and Margaret Keene; and 25-year: Carole Benner and Natalie Sharpe.

Dominique Abrioux presented the President's Award for Tutoring/Mentoring Excellence to Dr. Izak Paul (undergraduate area). This was the first time the award was presented, and Dominique noted that AU and its students are incredibly fortunate to have such a cadre of tutors. Three



criteria were used in selecting the recipients: sustained achievements, demonstrated impact, and evidence of innovation in the delivery of subject matter.

Since he began with AU in 1986 as a biology tutor, Izak has tutored more than 2000 students, many of whom have appreciated his efforts as their comments attest: "helpful and approachable," "a valuable resource," and "excellent support, feedback, and encouragement."

A second winner, Carol MacKinnon (graduate area) was also announced. She could not attend the conference but she will be recognized at a future event.



Dominique Abrioux presented the President's Award for Tutoring/Mentoring Excellence to Dr. Izak Paul.



Dominique Abrioux recognized 25 Year Service Award recipients Natalie Sharpe (left) and Carole Brenner.



VPA Alan Davis got in on the smiles and gift giving when he congratulated Helen Onderka for her 15 years of tutor service with AU.



A popular feature of the conference was the "Cracker Barrel" session where participants could exchange ideas on a number of thought-provoking topics. Here, Samantha Pattridge, Larbi Esmahi, and Don Kvill discuss how to increase linkages between research and the teaching function.



Counsellor Ken Dickson helped tutors learn more ways to ensure their students' success.





## **Beyond the Headlines - SPHERE Contributed By The Community Networks Group**

As many of you may recall, a while back we started a monthly series of bulletins with the intent to highlight the good work of Alberta-based NGO's (non-governmental organizations) working in international development and in partnership with the global South; Africa, Asia & Latin America. We have featured groups such as HumanServe International, Cause Canada, Rainbow of Hope for Children, RAFIKI Friends of

Rwanda Society, Friends of Nepal, Change for Children and Transgenus International.

On this issue of Beyond the Headlines, our focus is **Sphere: The Society for the Preservation of a Healthy Environment and Rehabilitation of the Earth** ... We hope this information is useful and their creative & courageous work inspires you.

### **About SPHERE**

The mandate of **SPHERE** is to liaise between professionals, industries and businesses internationally for environment friendly objectives; to educate and inform citizens about rules and procedures for preservation and improvement of our natural environment and the public health. **SPHERE** also leads, initiates and manages remedial projects in collaboration with other organizations.

**SPHERE:** acts as an information centre and forum about environment and health issues; performs and encourages research into environment and health issues; develops and promotes ideas and systems for sustainable development such as solar architecture, renewable energy, alternative fuels, technology and medicines; publishes, collects, and distributes information and ideas arranges workshops and conferences for discussion and exchange of ideas; develops curricula and courses for education in solar architecture, renewable energy, alternative fuels, technology and medicines.

For more information about **SPHERE**, please contact:

**SPHERE**, Box 67051 Northland Village, Calgary, AB 2L2  
Tel. (403) 239-8031 / Fax (403) 239-8031 (\*5) / E-mail: [rnbasu@iul.net](mailto:rnbasu@iul.net)



## **Canadian Food Security Policy Group Canada's position at WTO puts world's poor farmers and hungry at greater risk...**

### **Contributed By The Community Networks Group**

**OTTAWA.** Canada risks failing to meet the urgent needs of poor farmers at the WTO agricultural negotiations, according to a coalition of international development and human rights

organizations. "The government position as laid out today will disappoint the millions of small farmers in developing countries," said Stuart Clark, spokesperson for the Canadian Food Security Policy Group. Canadian government representatives at a Food and Trade roundtable refused to endorse most pro-development proposals currently on the table at the WTO talks.

The Canadian Food Security Policy Group called on Canada to back the "Development Box" proposal which would allow poor countries the flexibility they need to promote food security and rural development. It would also provide them with a specific defence against EU and US abuse of current trade rules.

"Abuse of the WTO agreement by the US and EU hurts Canadian farmers as well as those in developing countries," added Clark, who is a trade specialist at the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. "There is a logical confluence of interest in righting the imbalance in the current rules.

"The current agreement claims to provide "special and differential treatment" for developing countries, but it allows the US and EU to provide massive domestic support and export subsidies to their larger farmers, driving down world prices " with devastating consequences for the poor.

"Because poor countries have unilaterally lowered their tariffs," said Gauri Sreenivasan of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, "subsidized exports undercut the livelihoods of small farmers. Poor countries should not have to make further concessions to defend themselves against unfair trade practices.

"The agriculture talks will have a major impact on the two-thirds of the world's poor who live in rural areas and on world hunger. An estimated 36 million people died of hunger and hunger related illnesses last year. "Trade can help end world hunger," said Mark Fried of Oxfam Canada, "but only if unbalanced rules are righted. Canada should stand with developing countries in the effort to ban export subsidies, regulate export credits and food aid, and end food dumping.

"The WTO agriculture talks enter the final stages this month and are expected to conclude by March 2003. The Canadian Food Security Policy Group is a coalition of international development and human rights organizations seeking to promote trade rules that protect and enhance food security in developing countries.

*Members include the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), Canadian Foodgrains Bank Association, Inter Pares, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Oxfam Canada, Partners in Rural Development, Rights & Democracy, Union des producteurs agricoles-developpement international, and World Vision Canada.*

Contacts:

Katia Gianneschi, CCIC  
613-241-7007, ext. 311

Mark Fried, Oxfam Canada  
613-237-1698, ext. 231; 613-850-9723 (cell)



## **Free Health Benefits for Children in Low-income Families**

**From information provided by Alberta Human Resources and Employment**

**THE VOICE November 13, 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](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb)



## **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](mailto:sbarg@ausu.org) or call 1-800-9041 ext. 3413**

**Edmonton local number: 497-7000**

**Calgary local number: 298-2905**



## **AUSU SPEAKS: Fall Session Provided By AUSU**

AUSU met on the evening of September 16th for the last regular council meeting of the 2001/2002 fiscal year. Finances and our preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year were the main topics of discussion, and we laid the groundwork for some exciting new scholarships and student awards. Also under discussion was the possibility of selling AUSU promotional items in the future.

The most important topic of the evening was our upcoming AGM. For those who do not already know, the 2002 AGM will take place on September 28, 2002 at 1:00 PM MST, and all students are welcome. You may attend in person at the Edmonton AUSU offices, located at #306, 10030-107th Street, Edmonton, AB, or you may attend via teleconference from any location, worldwide. Call our office at 1-800-788-9041, extension 3413, or email [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) for more information. Please reserve your spot as soon as possible, so that we know how many attendees to plan for. We'd love to see you there.

Also on the table this week was a proposal for new scholarships and student awards, which was approved by all councillors. Information about these awards will be available on our website as soon as we hammer out the last of the fine details. The details will be posted on the AUSU Services page.

The fate of the AUSU Handbook/Planner is still up in the air. We want to be able to give students items that will be useful to them in their studies, but we need to be certain that the handbook is the best choice before we commit to having more printed. Student input so far has indicated that a smaller planner might be more useful, while other suggestions have included wall calendars, desk calendars, and other items. So far, however, we have had only a few responses to our survey, and we require more.

Please check out the [AUSU discussion forums](#) on our website and select the Handbook/Planner Survey topic to download the survey file or to comment in the open forum. Alternatively, you may mail your comments to [dkereluk@ausu.org](mailto:dkereluk@ausu.org). We'd like to know what might be useful to you, what items you have received from other students' unions that you have used and enjoyed, and if you have any opinions on the old format of the AUSU Handbook.

Speaking of student input, we are pleased to say that since the first issue of the AUSU newsletter started arriving in students' mailboxes, we have had many entries for the contest, and a significant increase in Voice readers and users of the AUSU forums. For all of you who just checked out AUSU for the first time this month - welcome!

Finally, back to business matters, AUSU council has approved the proposed preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and we are very pleased to announce that our expenditures for the 2001/2002 fiscal year will remain within budget for that period.



Many new projects have been initiated since the new council took over in March, and we're very excited about the coming year. Expect a summary of our work so far to appear in the Voice or on the AUSU website very soon.



## **NEWS FROM THE AGM**

### **Provided By AUSU Council**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of AUSU was held this past Saturday, September 28 at 1:00 P.M. Eleven students were in attendance, nine in person and two via teleconference. Quorum was satisfied and the meeting could proceed. In the President's welcome, Debbie Jabbour commented that the low attendance should not be taken as an indicator of apathy, but rather one that speaks to the reality of the lives of Athabasca University Students. Many may be interested in participating in student affairs, but few can manage to find the time to do so. Debbie also spoke of the uniqueness of AU students, and the importance of having a good relationship with the

university administration.

Judith Hughes, Athabasca University Vice President External and Student Affairs, brought a welcome from AU and seconded Debbie's words about the importance of collaboration and cooperation between the university and the students' union. Many changes are occurring within our university, and development of strong alumni is a first step towards strengthening the image of AU and finding alternate forms of fundraising to benefit the university. By working collaboratively, AU and AUSU can also have a more effective voice in lobbying the government for policy changes that recognize that AU is different and should not be considered under the same funding policies as other universities. Current policies do not recognize our technological infrastructure and open entrance policy, and the result is that AU must rely for the main part on tuition fees rather than government funding to maintain operations.

Activity reports were presented. It was recognized that most of the current group of Council members were not part of the 2000/2001 fiscal year, and did not have input into the financial statements presented. However, Council wanted members to know a bit more about us, and let everyone know what we've been up to recently and what is being planned for the future, so each Councillor submitted an activity report.

The financial statements were presented. Treasurer Gurpreet Dulai explained that an operational deficit had been incurred due to the reprint of the student diaries. Steps have been taken to ensure this type of problem won't re-occur, and during the 2001-2002 fiscal year, the deficit will be recovered. He also explained that increased convocation costs were a deliberate move intended to raise AUSU profile and provide greater graduation support during the most important event of the year. Overall AUSU began the 2001/2002 fiscal year in a financially healthy position.

Once those in attendance approved the financial statements, and an auditor appointed for the upcoming fiscal year, the floor was opened to general discussion and questions. Several Council members spoke about their experience of being on Council during this past year, and how positive and educational it has been. Darren Kereluk, who along with Gurpreet Dulai, are the only Council members who had any significant presence during 2000/2001; Derek spoke of how different the experience has been this past year from the one he had when on Council previously. Even though disagreements occasionally occur, this group has been able to resolve things without entering into the type of conflict that tore the previous Council apart. Others on Council agreed that the atmosphere among this group has been always positive. Even when there is disagreement on how to proceed, the attitude is to discuss it and move on - move forward whether or not there is 100% consensus on issues.

Debbie Jabbour brought the meeting to a conclusion by thanking everyone on Council, volunteers and staff for their participation in making this last year such an enjoyable venture. She noted that in future years, other Council groups may look back at what we do and wonder “what were they thinking?”, and that although we may make mistakes, we are all working with good intentions to improve the student experience for all AU students. The upcoming spring AGM will be a celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AUSU, and plans are already underway to make it a very special meeting.

The 2001 Annual Report is available to any AU student who wishes to obtain a copy, and we encourage you to do so. You can request one by calling 1-800-788-9041, extension 3413 (local to Edmonton 497-7000); or by email to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org). Please include your full name and AU student ID, as well as a mailing address. Indicate whether you prefer a hard copy mailout or a pdf copy by email (include your email address).

Thank you to everyone who showed an interest in the 2000/2001 AGM. We look forward to seeing you next spring for our tenth anniversary AGM!



## Conference Connections

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*

- **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.

## SCHOLARSHIP NEWS



# ESSAY CONTEST 2003

## The Elie Wiesel PRIZE IN ETHICS

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### SUGGESTED TOPICS:

Reflect on the most profound, moral dilemma you have ever encountered and analyze what it taught you about ethics.

How can human beings move beyond hate toward reconciliation?

Explore ethical responses to fanaticism, hate and violence.

What ethical issue concerns you most and what concrete proposals would you make to deal with it?

## DEADLINE: DECEMBER 2, 2002

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- **ELIGIBILITY:** Full-time undergraduate juniors and seniors during the fall 2002 semester.

**Students must complete an Entry Form along with their Faculty Sponsor.** Any interested professor may act as a Faculty Sponsor and endorse the quality and authenticity of the student's essay. In addition, students are asked to include a letter from their registrar verifying eligibility.

FIRST PRIZE: \$5000.00

SECOND PRIZE: \$2500.00

THIRD PRIZE: \$ 1500.00

HONOURABLE MENTIONS: \$ 500.00 EACH

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Entry forms, detailed guidelines and further information are available online at [www.eliewiesel.foundation.org](http://www.eliewiesel.foundation.org), or by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

The Elie Wiesel Prize in Ethics  
The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity  
529 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1802  
New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212.490.7777

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## **Kinsmen and Kinettes Bursary - Hal Rogers Endowment Fund**

**Value:** \$1000

### **Application Deadline: February 1**

#### **Description:**

- Canadian citizens or permanent residents
- Must be full-time students in the upcoming school year at a recognized post-secondary institution
- Selection is based on demonstrated high ideals and qualities of citizenship
- Recipients must not have previously received a bursary from the Hal Rogers Endowment Fund
- Applicants WILL NOT be eligible for consideration if the application form is mailed directly to the Kinsmen & Kinette Clubs of Canada without receiving prior endorsement from a Kinsmen, Kinette or Kin club

#### **Instructions:**

- Application forms must be submitted to a Kinsmen, Kinette, or Kin Club closest to the applicant's permanent residence
- For further information about application procedures, please contact the administrator listed below or visit [www.kinclubs.ca](http://www.kinclubs.ca)

#### **Contact Information:**

Kinsmen and Kinettes Bursary Program  
Kinsmen and Kinette Clubs of Canada  
1920 Hal Rogers Drive, P.O. Box KIN

Cambridge, Ontario  
Canada  
N3H 5C6  
Phone: 519-653-1920  
Phone 2: 1-800-742-5546 ext.215  
Fax: 1-800-742-5546  
**Web Site:** [www.carville.com/kinclubstest/href1.htm](http://www.carville.com/kinclubstest/href1.htm)  
**Email Address:** [bzak@kinclubs.ca](mailto:bzak@kinclubs.ca)

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## **Michael Luchkovich Scholarships for Career Development**

**Value:** Not specified

**Application Deadline: December 1, April 1 and August 1**

### **Description:**

- Residents of Alberta
- Present full-time employee pursuing further training
- Minimum full-time work history of 3 years
- Program of study may be up to six months of full-time study or up to one year of part-time study

A semester of study towards an undergraduate degree or diploma program will normally not be considered

### **Instructions:**

- Application deadlines are December 1, April 1 and August 1
- For further information please visit

### **Contact Information:**

Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund  
9940-106 Street, 9th Floor, Box 28000, Stn. Main,  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Canada  
T5J 4R4  
**Web Site:** [www.alberta-learning.ab.ca/scholarships/info.asp](http://www.alberta-learning.ab.ca/scholarships/info.asp)



## COMMENTARY AND FEEDBACK!

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Letter To The Editor:

#### People's Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE)

Human Rights are the greatest gift of contemporary thought to humanity. It is not only a vision for a better world, but also a tool for achieving it. Yet somehow, as we enter the new millennium, it is a term that has come to represent in the public mind not the hope of the future, but rather legal processes, charges and counter charges, and at times even, a certain empty rhetorical self-righteousness.

Since 1989, the People's Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE), an international NGO, instrumental in UN launching a Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, has been developing, enhancing and facilitating worldwide training in human rights education at all levels of society.

#### Human Rights Cities: A Historic Innovation

PDHRE, drawing on its rich experience and perception of needs and capacities, with the enthusiasm of local communities, is facilitating the development of Human Rights Cities around the world. Inhabitants, local authorities, community agencies and institutions, NGO's, non-profit human development societies, labour, professional associations, and neighbourhoods learn, reflect and act, joining to participate in the development plans of their city - guided by the commitments made and obligations undertaken by their governments having ratified numerous human rights Covenants and conventions **'to assure that all laws, policies, resources and relationships in the community, maintain the dignity and serve the well being of all women, men, youth and children in the city' ...**

Seven self-selected cities are presently implementing a Human Rights Cities Program. These are: Abra Indigenous Municipality (Philippines); Dinajur (Bangladesh); Graz (Austria); Kati (Mali); Nagpur (India); Rosario (Argentina); Thies (Senegal); and several more are in development in Ghana, Spain and Samoa.

**In Edmonton**, the John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights ([www.johnhumphreycentre.org](http://www.johnhumphreycentre.org)) has invited Ms Shulamith Koenig, Executive Director of PDHRE for a 3 days visit at the end of November (27,28,29), 2002 and she will be meeting with various community sectors and civic officials to explore the idea of working towards making Edmonton a **Human Rights City!**

Should you have an interest in this innovative initiative, daytime interviews can be arranged -- **kindly let us know in advance.**

Warmest regards,

Leo Campos A.

**Media & Community Outreach**

The John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights

Tel/Fax: (780) 474-6058

Cell: (780) 995-6819

PS. To learn more about the John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights, please visit:

[www.johnhumphreycentre.org](http://www.johnhumphreycentre.org)

## **LETTER TO THE EDITOR:**

Hello,

I was under the impression you may be interested in a new initiative that we are starting here on Parliament Hill. It concerns the website [www.ingenuitycanada.com](http://www.ingenuitycanada.com). I'll provide a little information about the website and the initiative, any other questions you have feel free to contact me personally. This initiative allows the common Canadian, who otherwise might continue to feel disconnected from Federal policy making, to get involved.

It allows individuals to post their ingenious or creative ideas to the website, and if these ideas are deemed legitimate they will be brought before the corresponding minister. As well, ministers will be asked for a prompt response and held accountable, as their response will be posted to the site. Finally, two of the best ideas will be rewarded a 10,000 internship on Parliament Hill (If the individual is over a certain age then they can send an intern in their place.) We would greatly appreciate your help in getting the message out, particularly in involving the students at your

university. We feel it is of the utmost importance to involve young Canadians, as they are undoubtedly a source for fresh ideas that will shape our future. Any help you could give us would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Mendel  
(613) 992-7771  
mendel747@hotmail.com

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**Dear Readers,**

**I have received a number of email asking for printable editions of the current Voice. The current issue is always included in the list of PDF Archives (link from the cover page) or they can be found on the internal pages under “Download PDF Version of The Voice” at the bottom of the right hand index list.**

**Thank-you for your readership and support!**

**Tammy Moore**

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**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](mailto:tmoore@ausu.org)**

**\*\*PLEASE REMEMBER ALL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION MUST BE MARKED “FOR PUBLICATION”.**

**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**

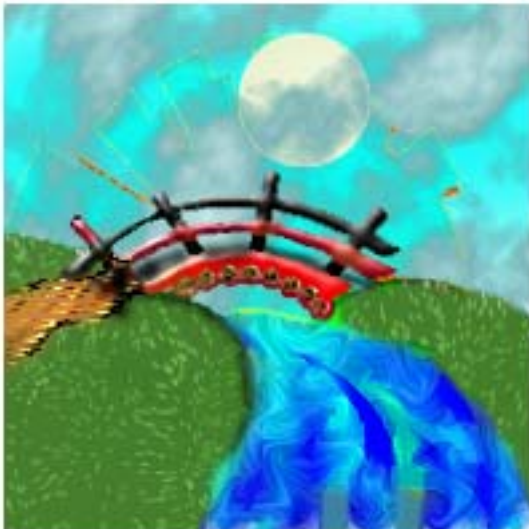


## **ENLIGHTENING INFORMATION!**

### **WRITE FOR THE VOICE!**

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

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## **Diverse Voices: Bridging Troubled Waters Annual Family Violence Conference**

November 28-29, 2002

Infoline: 437-8013 / Fax: 439-6819

- E-mail: [dorothy@icdr.com](mailto:dorothy@icdr.com)

At the Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre  
11050 - 90 Street, Edmonton, Alberta

Join outstanding speakers & colleagues to:

- Learn how to develop educational initiatives
- Explore how to reach people with varying needs
- Share success stories and best practices with colleagues working in different areas of social development & healthy communities

Expand your knowledge of family violence issues and programs.

Learn about & understand the services & tools available to deal with it ...

Some of our guest speakers include: Dr. Baukje Miedema, Sue & David Languedoc, Manjeet Kent, Judi Fairholm to name just a few ... This conference is hosted by a coalition of social & human development agencies working on family violence issues.

For conference program & registration, please visit: [www.icdr.ab.ca/conference](http://www.icdr.ab.ca/conference)  
or contact Intercultural & Community Development Resources Inc. at:



**Telephone: 437-8013 / Fax: 439-6819 / E-mail: [dorothy@icdr.com](mailto:dorothy@icdr.com)**

*Masters & Scribes Bookshoppe: specializing in crossing cultures & conference and meeting planners. Visit us @ 9938-81 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 1W6  
Tel: 780.437.8013, Fax: 780.439.6879 / website: [www.mastersandscribes.com](http://www.mastersandscribes.com)*

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## **"CRASH COURSE ALBERTA" TO AIR ON CBC NEWSWORLD NOVEMBER 12 & 16, 2002**

**Crash Course Alberta** a made-for-television documentary, sets out to explore the persistent undercurrent of sentiment that calls for Alberta to separate from the rest of Canada. It is a minority view but the voices are loud and prominent. They have a way of being heard. The current opposition to the Kyoto Accord by many influential Albertans recalls the protest against the National Energy Program of the mid-80s.

In **Crash Course Alberta**, Rosie Dransfeld, a new Canadian and a veteran documentary filmmaker from Germany, a country recently reunified, sets out to bargain with the most strident voices for Alberta separation. With her goes a small camera crew.

When asked about her motivation to undertake such a quest Ms. Dransfeld responds, "I endured the long-winded Canadian immigration procedures to become part of the best country in the world. But when I landed in Alberta, I found people speaking quite disparagingly about my newly adopted country. While it was confusing, it also inspired me to investigate and air the issues."

**Crash Course Alberta** is a chronicle of her encounters throughout Alberta with a university political science professor, a cattle auctioneer, a rancher, a farmer, an Alberta-based national newsmagazine publisher, an evangelical minister, a writer, an oil rig worker and the like.

Broadcast dates:

Tuesday, November 12 at 8PM Mountain Time (MT)

Saturday, November 16 at 8PM Mountain Time

Program: "Rough Cuts" on CBC Newsworld

Running time: 39:30

Writer/Director/Narrator: Rosie Dransfeld

Producer: Dale Phillips

**Produced by** Black Spring Pictures, Edmonton in association with CBC Newsworld and with the participation of the Canadian Television Fund, the Alberta Film Development Program, CanWest Western Independent Producers Fund and CAVCO.

*The award winning documentary "Shadows of War," on the search for evidence of war crimes in former Yugoslavia on behalf of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague -- undertaken by nine Canadian Forensic investigators, also produced by Black Spring Pictures of Edmonton, will air on CBC Newsworld's "Passionate Eye" on November 11, 2002 at 8pm, MT.*

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## **CHANGES TO THE UNDERGRAD GRADING POLICY AT AU!**

This is to advise you of an important change in the undergraduate Grading Policy at Athabasca University.

Athabasca University has approved a new Alpha/4.0 grading scale for undergraduate studies effective January 1, 2003. The grades that students achieve will be stated, on transcripts and in student records, as alpha grades on a scale from A to F. Grade averages will be expressed as Grade Point Averages using the 4.0 grading scale.

These changes in grading scale are part of a province-wide initiative in Alberta.

Undergraduate courses that began before January 2003 will be graded using the percentage grading scale.

For a complete statement of this Athabasca University policy please go to:

<http://www.athabascau.ca/policy/registry/gradingpolicy2002.htm>

**If you have questions please contact me.**

**Bruce Dawson**  
**Assistant Registrar, Registration Services**  
**Athabasca University**  
**1 University Drive**  
**Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3**  
**Phone 780-675-6147, Fax 780-675-6174**

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## **Canada World Youth ...**

### ***An opportunity for Aboriginal youth in international development education!***

The Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program will take place from Jan. through April 2003. A team of eight Aboriginal youth from Alberta will spend this time together in the rural community of Amatlan, near Cuernavaca, Mexico.

They will live with host families and volunteer in a variety of work placements. This unique program will focus on developing transferable employment and leadership skills, and learning about social and community development issues. Canada World Youth (CWY) is a national non-profit organization offering international programs for youth since 1971. CWY provides youth with a non-formal educational experience that encourages community action and involvement.

These programs promote intercultural understanding, increased awareness of development issues, a sense of commitment to community involvement and the development of personal and professional skills. This program may be for you if you are interested in:

**Discovering** the people and culture of a rural Mexican community  
**Living and working** with other Aboriginal youth from Alberta and Mexico  
**Acquiring** practical work experience and transferable job skills  
**Becoming a leader** in your own community  
**Sharing your culture**, values and perspectives in a safe team environment  
**Developing an awareness of** social justice / community development issues  
**Education** based on learning through doing rather than classroom instruction.

#### **To be eligible, you must be:**

First Nations AND a Metropolitan Edmonton resident --- OR --- Metis AND a non-settlement Alberta resident --- **You must also be:**

Between 20 and 25 years old  
Out of school & unemployed (but not eligible for EI income benefits)  
In good health  
Motivated and committed to learning and skills development  
Able to live and work away from home for the duration of the program

**Applications must be received as soon as possible, so that travel arrangements and all pre-program preparations can be completed.**

There will be a Pre-Program Orientation in mid- Nov., 2002  
The program will run from Jan. 6 through Apr. 17, 2003

If you **know of young people** who would qualify (pls. pass this on) if you fit the criteria and this appeals to you contact:

MetisNation of Alberta Association  
Attn: Kim Muller, Youth Coordinator  
Tel: 455-2200 / e-mail: [kmueller@metis.org](mailto:kmueller@metis.org)

Or:

Oteenow Employment Centre  
Attn: Penny Laboucan  
Tel: 423-2340 / Fax: 421-4760  
e-mail: [plaboucan@oteenow.com](mailto:plaboucan@oteenow.com)

Or:

Canada World Youth  
#205, 10816A - 82 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6J 4J4  
Phone 1-877-929-6884 toll free or 432-1877 local  
e-mail: [cball@cwj-jcm.org](mailto:cball@cwj-jcm.org) / [www.cwj-jcm.org](http://www.cwj-jcm.org)

This program receives funding from the **MetisNation of Alberta**, **Oteenow Employment & Training Society**, and the **Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)**.

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**From: Action on Smoking & Health (ASH)**

**Re: Support a Smoking Ban in Restaurants, Bars and Lounges**

Edmonton City Council is now considering amendments to the smoking bylaw to ban smoking in public places, including restaurants, bars and lounges.

Last year, City Council amended the existing bylaw to protect children from second hand smoke by banning smoking in public places

where children are allowed, such as restaurants. Unfortunately the amendment that passed was not clear, and many restaurants took advantage by trying to have one part of their restaurant a smoking section for adults, and the other for families and non-smokers - without any separation between the two areas! Smoke drift remains a problem. Children are not being protected, and the Councillors are now revising the bylaw to close the loopholes.

There is another group of people living in our community who need protection. These people include the many who work in "smoking" restaurants, as well as bars and lounges. These people often work in smoke filled rooms for as long as eight hours a day - some even longer! These workers deserve protection. No one should have to work in a place that puts their health at risk. Many of these people are our young people - old enough to be working in a place filled with smoke, but too old to be protected by a bylaw focused on protecting the health of children.

The recent landmark decision by WCB to award Heather Crowe, a non-smoking Ottawa waitress diagnosed with terminal lung cancer, compensation for her work-related illness is a wake-up call to take measures to protect hospitality workers from the hazards of second-hand smoke. **Please contact City Hall** and tell them that you support a smoking ban in restaurants, bars and lounges to protect the health of hospitality workers - and all citizens - from the hazards of second hand smoke.

Call: The Citizen's Action Centre at 496-8200  
Or: e-mail all City Councillors at [council2@edmonton.ca](mailto:council2@edmonton.ca)

E-mail your city councillor individually by using their first and last name (e.g. [jane.batty@edmonton.ca](mailto:jane.batty@edmonton.ca)) or call 496-8110 to speak to your councillor directly)

For further information contact:  
Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)  
[www.ash.ca](http://www.ash.ca)  
Tel: **407-6819**

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## Just Christmas 2002

Infoline: 474-6058 (or) 995-6819

*An early Announcement*

**Just Christmas** (from 'justice at Christmas') is an alternative global marketplace for quality fair trade crafts and other goods. Marketplace participants are not-for-profit organizations whose mandate is to foster global awareness and to support international development projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

This year the event takes place on Nov. 29-30 at the Prince of Wales Armouries, 10440 - 108 A Avenue, and will feature a special international fashion show highlighting the work of 10.000 Villages ... Please see details below.

**Just Christmas 2002** is a Global Craft Marketplace featuring fair trade crafts and other worldly goods, live entertainment, delicious finger foods and refreshments.

The Prince of Wales Armouries  
10440 - 108 A Avenue

Friday November 29  
6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Saturday November 30  
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Wheelchair Accessible. Admission is free but **donations are welcomed.**  
e-mail: leocamposa@aol.com

**Just Christmas 2002 is:** CEBES, Change for Children, Guatemala Support Group, Latin Crafts, Romero House, Sombrilla Refugee Society, 10.000 Villages, UNICEF, 10 Days for Global Justice, Amnesty International, HumanServe International, Awareness Programs, Changing Together, P.E.T. Project, Ghana Friendship Association, Filipino Canadian Women's Association, Peruvian Rett Syndrome Society, WUSC, Habitat for Humanity, CSS - Host Program, Canada-Tibet Committee, Guatemalan Canadian Society, Doctors Without Borders, Lingap Institute, Canadian Crossroads International ...

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## The Community Networks Group Event Calendar

- **The Parkland Institute's Annual Conference**  
'Trading in Violence / Building for Peace'

Nov. 15-17, 2002

INFOLINE: 492-8558

- **Nicaragua Night: A Change for Children's Event**  
Saturday, November 23  
Proceeds support CFC's Nicaraguan projects.  
INFOLINE: 448-1505
- **Just Christmas 2002!**  
A Global Crafts & Fair Trade Marketplace  
November 29 & 30  
INFOLINE: 474-6058



## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Contributed By The Community Networks Group

#### AWARENESS PROGRAMS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

#### Volunteers Needed and Invited to Help

Infoline: 924-3432

We are a volunteer, registered non-profit society which has been serving the work of Wanjiku Kironyo in Kenya for seventeen years. Wanjiku works in the slum communities with the women and street kids, handicapped children and youth groups. Our chairperson, Rosalind Shepherd, is leaving for Africa and we need someone to help us to hold the work together while she is gone. Our Board consists of ten people, who work on various aspects of the work. We need someone who has space for a small office, and the skills to be hub of the wheel for a meaningful and satisfying international project for AIDS orphans. If you are



a people-person who enjoys office work, has a little spare time and spare room, phone us at 924-3432, or e-mail us at [rozshep@oanet.com](mailto:rozshep@oanet.com).

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**ATTENTION: PLEASE INFORM  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF THIS  
UNIQUE VOLUNTEER  
OPPORTUNITY - Be part of the  
Global Picture with Canada World  
Youth**

**Contributed By The Community  
Networks Group**

How BIG is your world? How big would you like it to be? Next year you could be living, working and

learning in Bénin, Burkina Faso, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Kaliningrad, Poland, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Ukraine, Uruguay, or Vietnam! (Countries and exact dates are subject to change).

Discover other countries and other regions of Canada. Learn about social justice and development issues. Live and work with people from other cultures. Acquire practical work experience and other skills. Gain academic credit in some post-secondary courses.

The Youth Exchange programs are for 17 to 20 year olds and for up to seven months. You spend half of the program in Canada and half in the exchange country. During the program you live with a host family and take part in a volunteer work placement at a local community organization, farm or small business. These programs focus on social and community development issues.

Programs start summer 2003. Also, ask us about our customized programs (these programs have a special focus, and are up to age 29 in some cases), or our joint initiatives/school programs.

**How to reach us:**

CANADA WORLD YOUTH, Western Canada Regional Office  
#205 10816 A - 82 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2B3  
Tel: 432-1877 (or) 1-877-929-6884 -- e-mail: [west-ouest@cwjcm.org](mailto:west-ouest@cwjcm.org)

Want to apply? You can get more information by contacting our regional office or apply on-line at [www.cwy-jcm.org](http://www.cwy-jcm.org)

**Deadline for applications is December 6, 2002.**

### **About Canada World Youth**

Canada World Youth is a national, non-profit, non-governmental organization that has been coordinating international programs for youth since 1971. Our programs promote intercultural understanding, increased awareness of development issues, and personal and professional skills development. Canada World Youth receives funding support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Industry Canada, and thousands of individual, institutional and corporate donors from across the country.



### **The Barcelona Forum 2004**

**Contributed By The Community Networks Group**

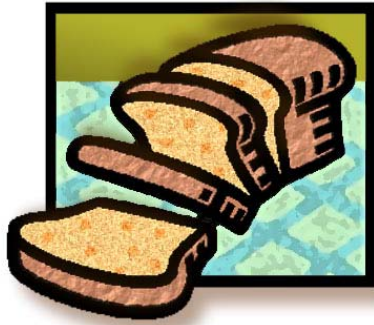
The first **Universal Forum of Cultures** is a new international event which will bring thousands of people to **Barcelona** from all over the world in 2004. The Forum's principal aim is to contribute to a renewal of thought and attitudes, providing a new platform for moving towards a new coexistence 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 **9<sup>th</sup> of May**, Europe Day, and closes on the **26<sup>th</sup> 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.

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## **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](mailto:info@breakingbreadforwomen.com) (or) visit: <http://www.breakingbreadforwomen.com>

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**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](http://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.

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## **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!](#)





## **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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.athabascau.ca).

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## **CLASSIFIEDS:**

**PUBLISHED IN THE VOICE November 13, 2002**

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### **CLASSIFIED SPACE:**

Students of AU may print classifieds in The Voice free of charge (maximum three per issue) as long as they are not representing a company or product.

Classified ads must follow the direct guidelines and ethics stated in the Voice Policy and should be submitted to the editor at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with 'CLASSIFIED AD' listed in the subject title.

The Editor reserves the right to refuse any classified information at her discretion. Thank-you.

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## **FOR SALE**

Ghetto blaster: CD player, duo tape deck, AF/FM radio, removable AC plug, or battery power (needs 6 C). \$ 70.00  
Call (403) 201- 4299 between 9 am - 9 pm only.

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