

Volume 11 Issue 05  
January 29, 2003

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# the VOICE

Quote of the Week:

"I like children.  
Properly cooked."

- W. C. Fields  
(1880 - 1946)

# THE VOICE

January 29, 2003

Volume 11, Issue 05

## Welcome To The New Format Voice PDF

*The Voice* now has an interactive table of contents. Click on a story title or author name and you will be taken to that article. Click on the bottom-right corner of any page to return to the contents page. Some ads and graphics are also links that will take you to the relevant website.

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## **From My Perspective: The Popstar Experience, Part one**

**By Debbie Jabbour**

For those who read last week's notice, you are aware that one of my daughters, Amaya, is a finalist on the third season of "Popstars: The One" that began airing several weeks ago. Last Thursday she made her cross-Canada TV debut when Popstars featured auditions in Edmonton and Newfoundland. During the coming weeks I'll be sharing with readers what the experience has been like for her and our family.

Our adventure began last July, although in some ways it started when Amaya was five years old and won her first musical theatre award for her rendition of Little Mermaid's "Part of Your World." Music has always been a central part of our lives, and all of my daughters have enjoyed many onstage performance opportunities over the years. With Amaya, however, music is more than just a passion – music defines who she is.

Amaya has always been an independent, unique personality who "follows her own drummer." During a difficult period of adolescent rebellion, however, she got involved in a very destructive relationship that inflicted serious damage on her self esteem, a situation that took her completely away from her family and her music for several years. Fortunately she managed to escape that situation and during the past year has been working hard to get back on track and find her music again with the love and support of her family.

In June, 2002, we started hearing the Power 92 ads - "Popstars 3 – The One" auditions were coming to Edmonton during the Klondike Days festival. Open auditions were to be held over two days, with the first 250 registrants each day being granted a spot. Of the 500, some 50 would be chosen for a call-back, with a further opportunity to be selected as one of the 5 city finalists to go to Toronto for a week-long boot camp. This process was to be repeated in nine cities across Canada, for a total of 45 Canadian semi-finalists.

As a professional musician who has been around the business all my life, I do not have much use for the manufactured, synthetic pop star. Most "real musicians" tend to agree, preferring the musician who achieves success through hard work, drive and talent. Yet the popularity of the manufactured pop star is undeniable – Britney Spears, Spice Girls, Backstreet Boys – the list is endless. The "create a star" reality series is also widely popular, with shows like American Idol setting ratings records. Canada has been much less successful at creating these types of groups, however, and both previous

Popstars groups - Popstars One “Sugar Jones” and Popstars Two, “Velvet Empire,” disappeared from the charts shortly after their first single.

Since I’m ever alert for opportunities to help Amaya get back to her music, I suggested that she might want to consider auditioning for Popstars: The One. She discarded my suggestion, citing reasons like, “I’m not a Popstar type,” or “no one takes Popstars seriously,” and “the last Popstars groups never went anywhere.” I agreed with all her reasons, but pointed out that this time they were seeking a single artist, which allowed an individual more freedom to make what they wanted of the opportunity. I reminded her that Alanis Morissette had been a Popstar when she was younger, yet she had taken advantage of it to eventually become a superstar performing her own highly unique brand of music. Amaya respects Alanis as a serious talent, and in fact had met her a few months previously when her older sister won a contest and took her along.

She agreed that I had a point but remained unconvinced. Over the next few weeks we all got involved in the debate, and the question around the house became, “should she audition?” Everyone finally reached the conclusion that it was too good an opportunity to miss...everyone, that is, except Amaya. We continued to offer encouragement and support as the day drew near.

On Saturday, July 20, the first day of auditions, Amaya made excuses to not go, continuing to bring up the argument that she “didn’t want to be a ‘Popstar.’” Two of her sisters went and watched a portion of the first 250 contestants and came home inspired. One of them stated that she was going to audition herself the next day. At this point Amaya reluctantly agreed that perhaps she would consider it after all.

Auditioners were required to sing 30 seconds of a song, chosen from a list of ten. The list of songs was really awful, nothing that allowed a singer any opportunity to showcase their talent, and nothing that was particularly suited to a strong female voice. Among the choices were Avril Lavigne’s “Complicated;” Shakira’s “Whenever;” Red Hot Chili Peppers “Under the Bridge;” Nickelback’s “How You Remind Me;” and several rap songs. None of these particularly appealed to either of the girls, but finally Amaya decided on “Under the Bridge” and her sister on “How You Remind Me.”

Sunday morning Amaya was still hesitant and unmotivated. She got ready very slowly, complained that she didn’t know the lyrics and generally dawdled around. Rather than arriving before the gates opened as planned, we arrived late and immediately got separated from Amaya and her friend. Line-ups to get into the fair grounds snaked around the block, and I was sure we’d never make it in time to be part of the first 250 to arrive at the Power92 booth. The sun was blazing down and by noon it was already well above 30 degrees. After almost an hour in line we managed to enter the grounds and pushed our way through the crowd to the Power92 booth. Amaya had reached it first and was already registered, number 56. Her sister registered too, and then we tried to find a shady spot where we could wait several hours until the auditions started. Amid the roar and hubbub of the midway rides, all around us paced nervous wannabe divas; girls in outfits ranging from sequins to sleaze, guys with spiky hair and attitudes, and friends and parents offering advice.

I looked at Amaya and sighed. Although her sister had dressed up elegantly and taken special care with her appearance, Amaya’s curly red hair was dishevelled and she was wearing baggy pants with boxer underwear hanging out – she certainly wasn’t going for the well-dressed look!

Finally the competition started. They brought the eager hopefuls on stage five at a time, and each did their 30 seconds. Some were obviously very talented. Some were embarrassingly awful, but we

applauded every effort. We tried to figure out what the judges were looking for, but were left puzzled when many very talented singers were not called back. It was difficult to even determine if there was a particular look they were after, since many with clear “star quality” were passed over, while others who were mediocre at best were selected.

At last it was Amaya’s turn. She did a decent performance, but certainly not her best, and I was not feeling particularly hopeful. To our surprise and delight, she received a call back! She cheekily slapped her number on her forehead & went to have her picture taken. A little while later, however, we had our first taste of disappointment when her sister auditioned. In spite of the fact that she gave an excellent performance, she was not called back. We puzzled over it, but given the erratic judging we had seen, could not begin to guess why it had occurred. However, we’ve been around competitions for enough years to know that a single audition is no indicator of ability or talent. We were thrilled for Amaya, but were realistic too – you are only as good as your next performance.

Several days later we received a call to advise us that callbacks would be held at the Citadel Theatre starting at 8 AM – on Amaya’s 19<sup>th</sup> birthday!

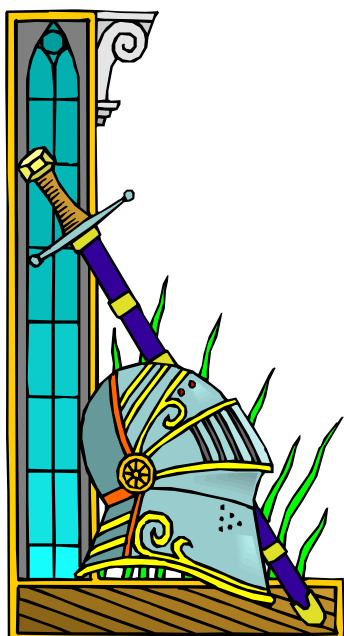
Pictures, bios, episode summaries, and other information are available on the Popstars website at [www.popstars.ca](http://www.popstars.ca)

## **NEXT WEEK!: The call backs.**

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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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## **Evercrack** **By Lonita Fraser**

Approximately 430,000 people world-wide are estimated to participate in it, with tens of thousands of them doing it every day for at least three to four hours at a time. It's become so important to advance at it, that people are willing to pay large sums of money to do so. It has become such a problem that marriages and businesses are suffering because of it. One mother even blames her son's suicide on it. It has become an addiction. It is not a drug or a sport. It's an online computer game known as [EverQuest](#), and it's, “the number one addictive on-line game in the industry’s history and is growing in popularity” ([OLG-Anon](#)). Since the days of [Dungeons & Dragons](#) (another fantasy role-playing game), games of this type have been blamed for encouraging and aggravating obsessive behaviour.

You may think that because EverQuest is a game, that it's harmless, but MMORPG (massively multiplayer online role-playing game) addiction is just that, an addiction - and any addiction is dangerous. An addiction, as defined by the [Kaiser Foundation](#), is, "a primary and chronic disorder with genetic, biopsychosocial, spiritual, and environmental factors that influence its manifestation and development. Addiction is characterised by loss of control, preoccupation with disabling substances or behaviours, and continued use or involvement despite negative consequences." Addiction to using the Internet, just like any other addiction, can have wide-ranging effects that can include problems with health, family, relationships, work, school, finances, spirituality, sex, legal problems, and the potential for accidents.

Most of us automatically think of drugs, alcohol, and even gambling when someone brings up the topic of addiction. Yet the "new drug" of the Internet - as well as its attendant activities such as RPG's (role-playing games, where players take on fictional roles much like the characters in a book) - is becoming just as great a potential for danger as substance abuse and gambling have proved to be. This problem of addiction is also not confined to the young. I only have to talk to my friend S.T. (a 41 year-old from Australia who does not wish her name revealed) to see how much of a problem the Internet has become, particularly EverQuest. Her husband has been playing the game so obsessively, that they barely speak to each other anymore, and he has not worked a steady job in over a year. She has even turned to an online support group known as [EverQuest Widows](#), people who are, as their website states, "here to support each other, and to discuss the trials and tribulations of living in Real Life while our partner is immersed in EverQuest." Just recently, ST gave her husband the ultimatum: the game or me. Another friend, Tom (a 24 year-old from the United States) says that, "[the games] can be dangerous. A complete world where someone can live in, in nearly every aspect imaginable. I've experienced all-out addiction, as well as feelings of escapism, where only the game could soothe me, and burn-out from being there too much." Fans and detractors alike, even refer to EverQuest as "EverCrack" - a term that illustrates its addictive nature.

It is important to understand how these games, and the Internet itself, can become so addictive. In a persistent online world, a real society exists. Not just a group of people coming together to play a game or talk, but citizens living in the same world together, often times building social networks that include governments and economies. There is social interaction, through chat (talking) and cybersex (text-based sexual encounters where - most often - the entire encounter is typed out in words). Tom mentions that, "there are people I know in that game ([Asheron's Call](#), another MMORPG) far better than I ever even knew my next door neighbours and co-workers." Increasingly intricate GUI's (graphical user interfaces), utilising the latest computer technology, serve to make the visual aspects of an online world as real-looking and inviting as the technology currently allows.

The games are open-ended; there is no ultimate goal, you can neither win nor lose them. The designers of the games, knowing that their profits come from keeping players as long as possible, ensure there are always new stimuli, new ways to appear, to advance, even if there is no ultimate end to that advancement. Still, people strive to achieve everything they possibly can in those games. Why? Because it's there, because there isn't a time limit; and, adding to the sense of permanence within a game, is the ability for a gamer to own a house (for example), allowing them to have a piece of the gaming world they can call their own.

The problem doesn't end there; it has begun to spill over into the RL (an Internet users' rather disdainful abbreviation for "real life") economy, with items of nothing more than a few kilobytes of data selling for hundreds, and even thousands, of dollars. The cost of a game has now expanded past



simply purchasing a CD-ROM and monthly access to a gaming site. Moreover, unlike when you read a book and input your own scenery, sights, voices, sounds, smells, etc., from your own imagination, MMORPG's do all the work for you. The world is ready-made; you do not have to build it. Charles, a 27 year-old software professional from Australia, says, "Some people who play them [the games] do actually perform creative role-playing. RPG's in themselves are good tools for the imagination. However, I doubt much of that goes on compared to clicking on buttons to get the skills up. And when you're only sort of semi-role-playing, it turns into everyone being so superficial that you never really talk to anyone for real, just this lame facade."

Most well known addictions can be linked directly to their harmful effects. Drugs damage the body and impair judgement. Addiction to gambling causes financial hardship. Addiction to Internet gaming is often trivialised because its effects are more gradual and harder to see. The immersion in a world that is not real, populated by people who you may never meet, and who may be nothing like they portray themselves online leads to an atrophying of the addict's ability to function in the real world. This starts a vicious cycle in which the addict sinks further into the game in order to escape a world they do not feel comfortable in any more. Soon enough, the addiction takes on many of the secondary effects often associated with "harder" addictions, such as reduced job performance, family break-up, and in extreme cases, serious depression and suicide.

The software industry has a ratings system for games (and other products) (ESRB, 2002) that is merely age-oriented and based, for example, on how violent or sexual the game content is – or even the game's potential to trigger epileptic seizure (Amaloo, About.com, 1997). There are no warnings about addiction or potential hazards of addiction, like those that appear on every package of cigarettes; or, more appropriately, like the law in Australia that requires all establishments hosting gambling machines to display information about gambling addiction services and self-exclusion opportunities (Department of Gaming and Racing, 2002).

It may be alarmist to go so far as restricting games based on what may only be a small percentage of the game-playing population, yet the problems associated with Internet and gaming addiction *are* there, and they *are* real. With increased numbers of people acquiring Internet access, home computers, and gaming systems each year, it is not unreasonable to assume that those problems will spread.

Bray, Hiawatha. "Hello, world." The Boston Globe 16 Dec. 2002: C1. Rpt. in Boston Globe Online.

Miller, Stanley A. "Death of a Game Addict: Ill Hudson man took own life after long hours on Web." Milwaukee Journal Sentinel 31 March 2002. Rpt. in JS Online. <http://www.jsonline.com/news/state/mar02/31536.asp>

Shachtman, Noah. "EverQuest: the Latest Addiction." Wired News. 19 July 1999. (<http://www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,20984,00.html>)

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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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## **The Romanow Report: Saskatchewan values.**

**by Rosalee Longmoore and Teresa  
Neuman**

*Originally published in Briarpatch Magazine, February 2003. Reprinted with permission.*

Roy Romanow, head of the Commission on the Future of Medicare, tabled his long awaited report, Building on Values, The Future of Health Care in Canada, on November 28, 2002. The report offers 47 recommendations that could reform the present Medicare system, including modernizing the Canada Health Act and creating a Canadian Health Covenant to reflect a new vision of Medicare.

The people of Saskatchewan have been leaders in implementing the vision of publicly funded Medicare. The City of Swift Current laid the foundation for Medicare in the 1940's with the first public health insurance program, making health services available for all its residents regardless of their ability to pay. Provincial hospital insurance, introduced in 1947, and the first provincial public health care system, introduced in 1962, preceded the first national Medicare program with shared funding from the federal government. Although opposed by physicians and insurance companies, this plan realized Tommy Douglas' dream of full access to physicians and hospitals for all Canadians.

Saskatchewan residents now watch and wait to see how the Prime Minister will implement the report and how health care in the province will be affected.

### **Sustainability**

Romanow argues that the Medicare system has served Canadians well and is as sustainable as Canadians want it to be. He found that there is no evidence to support shifting the burden of funding from government to the individual. Romanow notes that as long as the system is prepared to change to meet needs and expectations, Canadians appear willing to pay more for health care. Effective governance is required to balance services, needs and resources.

### **Primary Care**

Romanow states that the health care system must be transformed so that it focuses on primary care. Romanow believes that Canadians should have access to an integrated continuum of care no matter where they live, 24 hours a day, and recommends a Primary Health Transfer to move primary care out of the project phase. Believing that the health system is focused on sickness rather than prevention, Romanow recommends that programs be developed to encourage Canadians to stop smoking, lose weight, and live healthier lifestyles.

## **Aboriginal**

Romanow would see funding for Aboriginal health programs consolidated and used to support the creation of Aboriginal Health Partnerships to organize health services for Aboriginal peoples and promote Aboriginal health. This funding would further improve access for Aboriginal peoples to all levels of health services, recruit new Aboriginal health providers and increase training for non-Aboriginal health providers. Further, direct input into the AHP should come from the Aboriginal peoples themselves, to ensure that their needs and the needs of the community are being met.

## **Expanded Home Care services**

Medical treatments are becoming more complicated. Patients are being released from hospital sooner, leaving part of the care to happen at home. Families act as unpaid caregivers assuming up to 80 percent of care, and individuals assume the costs of treatments and supplies. Romanow recommends that a new Home Care Transfer be used to ensure that all Canadians have access to essential Home Care services including home mental health case management, post-acute home care and palliative home care. He urges the development of programs organized under the umbrella of the Employment Insurance program and Health Canada to support informal caregivers.

## **Pharmacare**

Prescription drugs have become an important part of treatment as the burden of care shifts from facility to home. 300 million prescriptions are filled in Canada annually, or approximately ten prescriptions for each man, woman and child. Canadians spend an average of \$1,210 per year on prescription drugs, with an average cost of \$32.92 per prescription. In 2001, Saskatchewan residents filled 7,979,826 prescriptions alone!

Romanow recommends the integration of prescription drugs within Medicare and the creation of a Catastrophic Drug Transfer to eliminate the disparities in drug coverage between the provinces. He further recommends that a national drug formulary be established to equalize the costs of drugs between the provinces and ensure that Canadians have access to the same drugs no matter where they live in Canada.

## **Health Human Resources**

The recommendations put forward by Romanow in his report may not happen if health human resources issues are not addressed urgently. Romanow acknowledges that quality of working life, in particular for nurses, is a serious concern and recommends that funding for training and retention be taken from the various proposed transfer funds including the Home Care transfer. Further, Romanow suggests that better efforts be made to collect data and report regularly on retention, recruitment and remuneration of health care providers.

## **Privatization**

Early in his dialogue with Canadians, Romanow invited those interested in privatization and de-listing health services to present evidence showing how these approaches might improve and strengthen the health care system. He found the proposed solutions did not support better or cheaper care or improved access. Further, the solutions are contrary to the spirit of Medicare and the principles of the Canadian Health Act. Romanow concluded that it would be foolish to jeopardize a world-class health system. Canadians, he concluded, want the health system remodeled, not demolished.

## What does it mean to Saskatchewan?

Romanow recommends expanding home care and primary care services, but without targeted funding to train and hire staff, it may not be possible to implement these recommendations.

The nursing shortage in Saskatchewan will likely worsen without specific funding to target the recruitment and retention of nurses. Funding for nursing seats and instructors in Saskatchewan and across Canada should be available so that more nurses can practice, achieving the best patient outcomes.

Saskatchewan residents may not see much change in Home Care services, but if programs are developed to assist informal care providers, some stress may be eliminated.

## Not a done deal

The people of Saskatchewan should not assume that because Romanow's report is in the hands of government, that implementation would immediately follow. The threat of privatization remains. Hidden areas of the health care picture like laundry, cleaning and food preparation services are already subject to privatization. In spite of evidence to the contrary, there are still those Canadians who believe that they should be allowed to jump to the front of the health care queue, based solely on the ability to pay. Canadians told the Commission that they do not want publicly accessed, publicly funded health care to disappear. The people of Saskatchewan are proud to be the first province to enact publicly funded, publicly accesses health care. Medicare is a legacy that Saskatchewan doesn't want to lose.

*Rosalee Longmoore is the President of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses.*

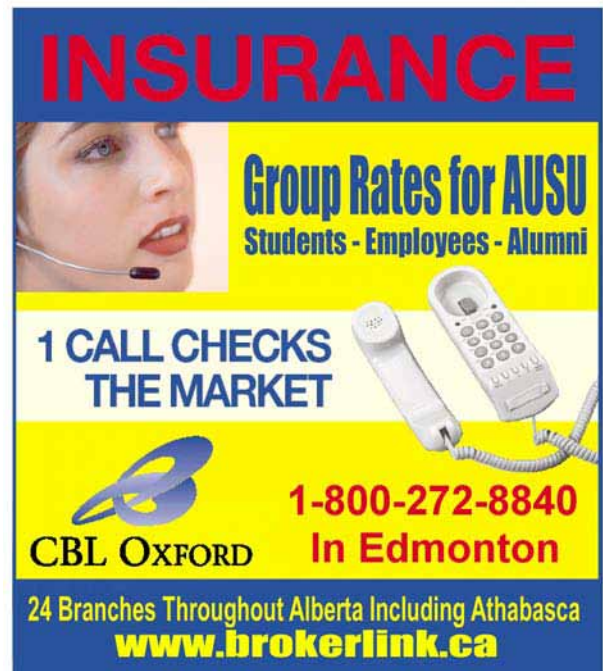
*Teresa Neuman is a member of the Board of Directors for Briarpatch Magazine.*

Information from: the Romanow Report: Building on Values: The Future of Health Care in Canada, the Canadian Institute for Health Information, the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, and the Canadian Health Coalition.

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*Teresa is enrolled in the Bachelor of Professional Arts Program -Communications Studies program at Athabasca University and is enjoying returning to school after 18 years. Teresa enjoys writing, union activism and gardening. Teresa lives and works in Regina, Saskatchewan, with her partner Kevin and son Adam.*

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# Library 101

*Contributed by AU's The Insider*

*Continuing the series of Things You Should Know About the Library, librarian Elaine Magusin shares additional Frequently Asked Questions:*



**Q: I'm a new staff member at the university and would like to know how long the loan periods are on library materials. Are there overdue fines?**

A: Loan periods for staff are different than those for students and external borrowers. Most library materials are signed out to staff until March 17, 2003, no matter when you sign them out. If the book was signed out on March 13, 2003 you would technically have the item for four days. However, we automatically renew all materials borrowed by

staff until the following March. Periodicals can be signed out to staff for a period of one week. Periodicals do not circulate to students.

If an item has been recalled you are required to return the item to us within a period of two weeks.

**Q: I've been looking for a book listed in my course study guide and AU Library doesn't have it. I live in Calgary and was wondering if there was a way for me to find out if the U of C has it?**

A: Yes. We have compiled a list of library catalogues from across Canada on our website. You can choose to search these catalogues using the same interface that AUCAT uses, or you can search them using their own interface. You can find these catalogues here: <http://library.athabascau.ca/otherlib/others.htm>

## **What's new:**

AU Library is investigating the potential of the newly founded Virtual Reference Canada program. This initiative, founded by the National Library of Canada, is a free bilingual network of libraries and research institutions across Canada and provides access to the staff expertise of these institutions.

The program works by matching metatags in member profiles to the metatags in the incoming question and routes the question to the institution with the resources to answer it. Questions are expected of a nature in which a response can be provided as opposed to document delivery.

**If anyone has a question they think could be answered using this service please contact the library (ext. 6254).**



## **Canadian Fed Watch!** ***News Across The Nation...***

*January 29, 2003*

**By Karl Low**

### **One Who Gets It..**

Federal Finance Minister John Manley was recently at a public meeting seeking comments into the development of the new federal budget. While there he had some [harsh words to say](#) about provinces that are under-funding their universities. He looked at Ireland, which until recently had a very depressed economy. However, their economy has turned around and a burgeoning high-tech industry is forming, no doubt due in part to the government's plan to provide free university tuition to any who desire it.

By giving itself a skilled and educated workforce, Ireland became ripe for high-tech investors to come in; investment which allowed for corporate taxes to be lowered, thus encouraging more investment, and starting Ireland on a spiral to prosperity.

"I advocate everybody getting access, who's qualified, to post-secondary education. I think it's of crucial importance to the future of Canada," said Manley according to the Edmonton Journal. It only makes sense; Statistics Canada has shown repeatedly that there is a definite correlation between a well-educated populace and a populace that is productive, healthy, and happy.

Unfortunately, Manley feels that his hands are tied by the system of Federal Transfers that now takes place. The Federal Government used to provide separate transfers to the provinces for education, health, and welfare, but in 1995 combined them all into one lump sum that it then proceeded to slash - transfers which are just now starting to gain ground on the 1995 levels. Also, Manley has also stated that the top priority for the federal government in this upcoming budget will be health-care. So even though he understands the importance of education, he still does not seem to fully understand the benefit.

The best way to aid our health-care system is to help people not get sick in the first place. As long as the population continues to grow, anything else is really only a temporary measure. One of the best ways to help people not get sick is to make sure they have a good education, not only about their health and lifestyle, but also about life in general so that they can get a good job and afford the quality of lifestyle that helps people to stay healthy. In short, make sure they can get a post-secondary education.

All of our federal and provincial governments talk about how they need to reform the health-care system. However none of them seem to be farsighted enough to realize that the health-care system is only treating the symptom. The problem is really that too many people are getting sick. Isn't it about time we started treating that instead?

## **..And One Who Doesn't.**

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein held his [10th annual address](#) to Albertans earlier this week, and in it we see the other side of the coin. In his Address, he mentioned Health Care, the Kyoto Agreement, Agriculture, and Infrastructure. His comments on education were restricted to saying that the government is waiting for the report of the Alberta Learning Commission. Unfortunately for post-secondary education, the Learning Commission's [mandate](#) is to conduct a comprehensive review of Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system, and does not extend at all to post-secondary education.

In short, Premier Klein apparently feels that post-secondary education is not even worth mentioning – assuming that it entered his thoughts at all.

Perhaps it would be embarrassing to admit how poorly funded our universities truly are. Perhaps he does not want to acknowledge that while Alberta Student Finance has conceded that \$11,000 per year may be necessary to fund a person's post-secondary education, the lifetime amount available for a 4-year undergraduate degree program is \$40,000. Since \$11,000 per year multiplied by 4 years comes to somewhat more than \$40,000, perhaps he would find it hard to tell Albertans that students in their fourth and most intensive year may be forced to complete it while finding a way to raise an extra \$3000. Or perhaps he just does not want to admit to Albertans how the [\\$40,000 total limit](#) available to students will not even cover the cost of tuition and books for an undergraduate arts degree.

No, if we are to judge by what Premier Klein said in his address, making sure Albertans are well educated is less important than making sure that those in the oil and gas industry are not in any way inconvenienced by the Kyoto Climate Accord. Making sure our own children will be able to take post-secondary education is less important than ensuring that farmers purchase crop insurance so that the province does not have to provide relief if a damaged climate prevents crops from growing. Having post-secondary educated citizens who tend to start their own businesses is less important than promoting long term deals with private companies to handle Alberta's infrastructure problems – deals that are likely to be quite lucrative for those companies that can afford to do the work.

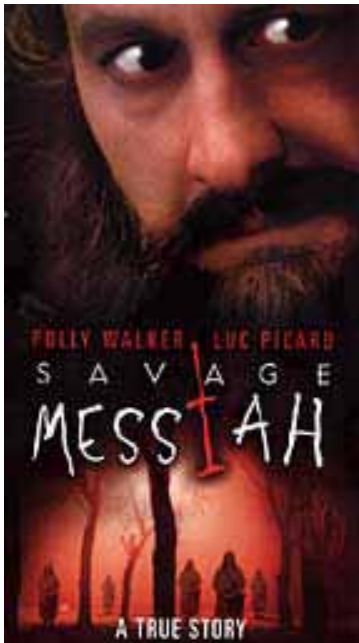
Premier Klein's theme for this address was "Good enough is not good enough." For post-secondary education however, it seems that nothing at all is just fine.

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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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## An Encounter With A Mass Murderer Part 1

by Tamra Ross Low

*They called him Moïse: French for Moses.*

He looked the part, with his long, straggled, gray and ginger beard, piercing blue eyes, and shamanic poise.

No one really knew what he was up to in my Aunt Marie's old home – or was it Aunt Maude's? I always forget. Marie and Maude – my great aunts, actually – were identical twins, who survived to the age of 100.

The house across the street and down a little from my Uncle Paul's belonged to one of them, but I cannot recall which. In her later years, she had to give it up, and people began to rent it.

It was a lovely country home: I recall it having a broad verandah [they call them 'sun porches' in the East] and caramel-colored shutters over creamy clapboards. It was situated on the main street of the little Gaspé, Quebec town called [New Carlisle](#). My mother was born and raised in that town, and I have dozens of relatives there still.

Colorful Quebec separatist Rene Levesque was born in New Carlisle, and for many years – until Moïse became one of the most notorious men in Canadian history - this was its greatest claim to fame. Of more colloquial repute, the have also amassed a lovely array of fire hydrants painted to look like [cartoon characters](#).

I do not recall the exact year that Moïse came to New Carlisle, but I was very young – perhaps 9 years old, which would make it 1978. My family was in Gaspé for the month of July – a trip we made every second summer. As always, we stayed in the house where my mother was born, and where her twin brother still lives.

Across the street, and about two houses down, was the house of my great aunt Marie (or was it Maude?). When we arrived, I remember my uncle telling my mother that a group of hippies, led by a religious fanatic who called himself Moses – Moïse - had rented the home for the summer and it was going to trash. There were more than 15 adults living in that house, and several children as well. The yard was messy and filled with brush, but I seem to remember them having a nice garden out back.

Mom and Dad had heard of Moïse. Most people in Quebec had. He was somewhat notorious, but at that time no one knew exactly what he had been up to. They knew only that he was leader of a commune, that he wore his hair and beard, and sometimes a cloak, to look like his namesake, and he spouted prophesies about god and death and the end of the world.



I, naturally, was fascinated with the new people, and I spent many long hours in the front porch watching the goings on across the street. No one knew then that Moïse would go on to become Canada's most brutal serial killer, and a man whose sadistic and perverse tortures would earn him a place as one of the cruelest men in the history of the world.

Everyone thought that Moïse was crazy, but they weren't sure if he was dangerous. Just in case, I was warned to never go near the house, or talk to any of the strange hippies who lived there. I was timid enough to heed my mother's warnings, but my curiosity knew no bounds. Hour upon hour I watched that house, and once in a while I ventured out to the front yard of the house next door for an even better vantage point. So much went on, it was like having my own little movie theatre out front.

Everyone seemed happy. They wore cutoffs and colorful shirts, and every day most of the household was outside and working. They gardened, and worked on vehicles. They chopped wood and built things. I did not see much of the children, but they were there too, in the back of the house farther from the highway, and everything seemed ok. The women outnumbered the men by about two to one, and helped out with much of the work that went on outside. I don't know if Gabrielle Lavalles was one of those women, but she might have been. No one knew who she was, of course, until about ten years later when Moïse hacked off her arm with a meat cleaver and cauterized it with a piece of hot scrap metal.

I remember that the commune worked very long hours on a little shack right at the front of the property, bordering the highway. It was like a little vegetable stand, with a table like structure surrounded by a low hut. On the top was a large, plywood sign. I was fascinated with that sign, because the women were painting huge, colourful figures upon it. I don't recall it having words, but I think there was a big blue whale or fish on it, with a cartoon like grin. I remember the colours quite vividly.

No one in my family was artistic, and I was enthralled with this group, who all seemed to me to be so blessed with creativity. I secretly hoped that they would use the booth to open a little souvenir stand, so that I could talk my mother into taking me over to see it. I pictured these people making the most extravagant crafts, like the fabulous wooden boats that many of the fishermen would make and sell on the side of the road for only a few dollars.

I don't know what they ever did with that booth. For days I watched it being built and painted, but finally we went home to Calgary, and the stand was either unused, or used at times when I was not around. I burned with curiosity. Some time earlier the commune, in another location, started an 'organization' called The Ant Hill Kids: Arts and Crafts, through which they raised money selling fruits and craft items. I suspect that their booth in Gaspé was something similar.

I saw so much that summer – a glimpse into the everyday lives of a commune, but now that I know what I know – what we all know about Moïse – I shudder as I think of what might have gone on beyond those walls. It was not long after this time that Moïse maimed a young boy by hacking off his penis in an attempt to correct a urination problem. Moïse – whose real name is Roch Theriault – committed every imaginable depravity against his wives, children, and followers – and we'll never know how much went on in that house.

It is important to note that at this time we just thought he was a hippie and doomsday prophet. People thought perhaps the house was host to orgies, drug parties, wife swapping, and other acts performed by those who shun society's rules, but that's all.

I cannot explain, then, why my one brief encounter with the Savage Messiah made such an impression on me, and still does.

I have yet to see the [movie](#)... **Next week – a glimpse into the madman's eyes...**

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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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**JANUARY 29, 2003**

**Dear Sandra,**

**At the beginning of the year, I made a New Year's Resolution list. I was horrified to come across it yesterday in one of my notebooks because I haven't even started to work on any of my resolutions yet. How do I motivate myself to stick with these resolutions?**

**Unmotivated in Sherwood Park, AB**

Dear Unmotivated,

It always amazes me that people seem to think that the onset of a new year is the time when they need to lump together everything in their lives that they want to change or improve and they lead themselves to think that they can fix their lives in the upcoming year. New Year's resolutions are always done with the best of intentions, but they are rarely ever followed through with. I remember reading a story in a magazine a while ago from a gym owner who said that his gym is always packed for the first few weeks in January, but by the end of February most of those new people are gone.

Instead of thinking about what you want to accomplish this year, think back onto what you accomplished last year. Did you finish a year of school, lose ten pounds, make an effort to spend more time with your children, get a new job, learn to cook Greek food, etc...? Keep this list going throughout the new year and add to it, then instead of making New Year's resolutions on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 you can go back and read this list and be amazed at what you have accomplished. You may not bring about world peace or lose 20 lbs., but you will have accomplished some things.

If you still want to keep your New Year's resolutions don't just write them down vaguely by saying I want to lose 20 lbs. Write the goal down and have a strategic plan to follow. For example, I want to lose 20 lbs. this year, to achieve this I will exercise at least three times a week by taking the dog for an hour long walk, I will drink 8 glasses of water a day and I will not snack after supper. I'm being vague in my description here, but I'm sure you get the point. Keep a page in your notebook (or on your computer) with your goal listed at the top and everything you've done to try to accomplish this goal. There are two types of goals; product goals and process goals. Product goals are ones that have a definite end point, such as losing 20lbs by June. Process goals are ones that are indefinite, such as leading a healthy lifestyle. Keeping track of your goals can be more rewarding than actually achieving the goal because you can see where you started from and how you've progressed along the way.

Happy New Year

***Sandra***

***Please send all of your questions, no matter what the topic, to [smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org) and I'll do my best to answer them!***

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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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**WRITE FOR THE VOICE!**

Contact The Voice editor at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) for details on writing for The Voice. Provide a sample selection of writing and preferred genre.



## FROM MY SOAPBOX

### The High Cost of Defense

by Derek Broughton

Am I the only person who is getting tired of hearing how Canada has relinquished our defense of our own borders and should be thankful that the Americans are willing to do it for us? The most recent statement I have heard to this effect was from

Tom D'Aquino, president of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (and how exactly, did *that* organization arise? Someone said, "D\*\*\*, the courts won't let us keep the women and lower races out of our gentleman's clubs, what are we going to do?" The result was a merit-based club, where the membership criteria restricted all the same people but without once mentioning gender or race).

Just what is it that America is defending us *from*? In the 50s and 60s it was supposed to be communism. Yet, at no time did the USSR ever threaten to attack us. Why, really, did the US build the DEW line on Canadian soil? Not to protect us - any warning it gave us would be neither distant nor early - but to ensure that any war fought between the two superpowers would be on and over Canadian territory, not American. Thank you Uncle Sam!

What are we threatened by now? Terrorism that is not directed specifically at us, but at America and it's allies. America does not *defend* us - our alliance actually puts us at risk! I don't mean to advocate pulling out of NATO or other alliances to increase our safety. I happen to agree that stopping terrorism (or the Soviet brand of "Communism") is a good thing. I merely point out that we are not the deadbeat spongers of American welfare that the hawks would claim. If we had done nothing else than allow America use of our land and airspace during the cold war they would still owe us an eternal debt of gratitude, but we go further. Whenever Uncle Sam calls, we step up. We don't bring much in the way of numbers or funds, but we're always there. We were there in Korea. We were there in the Gulf War - because it was right to defend Kuwait, which is more than can be said of America's reasons. We were there when they invaded Afghanistan. Where were they when we needed them in 1939?

In an interview with CBC Radio's "*As It Happens*", D'Aquino said that we needed to lower our borders with America. He said that we needed to establish rules that would let us have a single commerce system. When Mary Lou Finley pointed out that we have NAFTA and we still have a problem with softwood lumber he said that that was "just one example" and that we have a great deal of trade that works well under NAFTA. I agree. Unfortunately, America operates under American rules. They don't care about international treaties. As long as NAFTA works for Americans they will abide by it. As soon as something comes up that operates against American self-interest, they will discard it. Remember the Anti-ballistic missile treaty? For decades, we were told it was preventing nuclear war. Now, powerful military interests in the US think they can make a lot of money providing missile defense shields and America tears it up. Strange, that when North Korea sees no benefit in continuing to observe international treaties everybody cries for enforcement. The US has a long history of supporting and arming terrorists - Osama bin Laden for one - yet they must stop Iraq from doing the

same (not that they've ever shown us how Iraq was supporting terrorism). North Korea must be stopped from supporting terrorists but the US, in a clear act of piracy, seized arms they thought were going to a legitimate struggle against occupation in Palestine, but gave them back when it was discovered they were going to Yemen (a notably stable regime!).

We don't need to lower our borders with America - we need to raise them. It's time we realized that, much as we rely on our trade with the US and share many common concerns, we are not American and don't share all of our values with them. We can afford to maintain our distinctness, and if it costs us some trade, so be it. We are the peacekeepers and negotiators, not schoolyard bullies.



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# AU Profiles:



**STUDENT: JACQUELINE POIER**

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Name: **Jacqueline Poier**

What province and city/town do you live in?

**Didsbury, Alberta**

Do you have a family/ kids/ pets?

**Single mom, 2 girls, 3 & 5; 1 dog (black lab, very big) 3 cats and 2 fish**

What are your hobbies / interests/ activities/ etc.

**Skiing and reading. Criminology fascinates me, specifically serial killers from a purely psychological aspect. Since becoming full time at AU I have no activities anymore.**

**I love to read and teach my kids, although I admit I'm not really into Barbie. My biggest hobby or stress reliever is fixing cars or trucks. I am quite an efficient mechanic for a female.**

Can you tell us about the AU Courses you are taking at the moment, or a favourite course?

**I am enrolled in the Bachelor of Management program, which I just started. I chose AU for a lot of reasons, but mostly the very open interaction on the Web site, the ease of choosing a course and program, the fact that I almost always get an instant response. I am currently taking Admin. 232, which is somewhat interesting. My Psyc 395 is very easy and interesting, given it has been an interest of mine for many years, although I am stressed out about writing a research paper.**

**I was an accountant for 12 years prior to having children, and when I divorced I realized I needed to do something with my life. I was originally thinking of moving home to Edmonton to go to the U of A, but after a great deal of research decided that AU was my BEST choice for so many reasons. It allows me the flexibility to still be a full time single mom; I stay home with them, which is very important, and I am a full time student. Although it is difficult to balance both, (I get up at 4:30 a.m. every day) it is worth it. My ACCT 250 was supposed to challenge me and my COMP 200 scares me, so I haven't started it yet.**

How long have you been a student? (And where)

**Since January this year and I attend Calgary branch when needed.**

What do you think of your courses/ the AU experience/ distance education?

**I think that AU has the unfortunate stigma of being a correspondence school. However it is so NOT. Distance education has a great deal of benefits that contemporary students don't have. I am so happy that I chose AU, and am encouraging my friends to take courses. The tutor-student relationship is awesome, and like I said before, I always get helpful, immediate responses to my questions. You can't get that at the U of A or U of C.**

**I am not a Student ID number, I feel like a member of a family.**

Do you work? What do you do?

**I used to be employed outside the home, now I am employed inside the home since my children have been born. It is unfortunate that I had to get divorced to finally be "paid" for my work, however. If you have never done it, don't criticise it. I DO WORK.**

How is AU helping you toward your goals?

**Absolutely, my goals of self-sufficiency in a career that I have always wanted. In fact, the program outlines at AU helped me finally get off the fence and MAKE some concrete goals. This program is exactly what I want, and I don't know if I would get that at another university.**

What are your future goals?

**Get through the next three years, to the best of my ability, and to recruit more of my friends to do this.**



## **B.C. universities take different approaches toward softening the blow of rising tuition.**

*School's spending beyond their means says UBC official*  
*Published: Mon-13-Jan-2003*

By Kevin Groves, British Columbia Bureau

VANCOUVER (CUP) -- At least one B.C. university made its leaders open to debate about tuition earlier this month as plans continue to add another 30 per cent increase onto B.C.'s post-secondary students this semester.

In a recent public forum, Brian Sullivan, the University of British Columbia's (UBC) Vice-President Students, said that while the school's 23 per cent increase last year allowed the university to make some improvements, in areas such as course availability, class size, classrooms, and technical support, additional increases are still needed.

"These [increases] are not just about raising tuition up to the national average, but about looking at maintaining our quality of education and improving what we have," Sullivan said to the 13 students who attended the forum in the activity room of an on-campus residence.

UBC has called for a \$798 increase in basic undergraduate tuition, bringing the grand total to \$3,459 for a 30-credit course load. Tuition increases in other faculties, such as Commerce, Engineering, and Pharmaceutical Sciences, will be higher.

Sullivan added that the current tuition proposal is not set in stone and can be changed based on student feedback.

But other sources interviewed were less optimistic that the tuition consultation process will yield any useful changes.

"It seems like a façade," said UBC student Jineane Babish, who attended the forum. "Having our input is important but I'd like to see our opinion applied in policy."

Sullivan also admitted during the forum that UBC made an accounting mistake last year and over-budgeted by \$5 million when it was preparing its tuition proposal.

That means UBC will need to budget another \$5 million in tuition revenue this year to offset university spending from last year.

"Basically [UBC] spent \$5 million beyond its means last year," Sullivan said.

He added that UBC plans to consult with students on where this year's extra \$5 million in tuition revenue should be spent after the current tuition proposal is ratified.

That ratification process will occur after UBC's tuition proposal is presented to its Board of Governors on Jan. 27.



But the board's finance committee will review the student consultation process four days earlier and may consider holding a special meeting in February to discuss tuition increases, should additional consultations be deemed necessary.

If UBC's tuition proposal is approved, the new fee schedule, which is projected to generate \$28 million in additional revenue for the university, will take effect in May 2003.

Sullivan admitted the increases are painful, but said they are likely to get smaller in subsequent years.

"Right now we're in the second year of a three-year process of sizable increases," he said. "After that I'm expecting modest, if any, tuition increases."

Meanwhile, other B.C. colleges and universities have taken different approaches toward consulting with students about tuition.

At the University of Victoria (UVic), about 75 students staged a silent protest last week by binding their hands with rope and wearing gags made of stickers objecting to a 30 per cent tuition hike. The protest was staged to symbolize a lack of student input on tuition at UVic, said student society chair Michelle Kinney.

At the same time, UVic's Board of Governors endorsed a budget that will increase average tuition fees by about \$840.

That decision brings the cost of basic undergraduate tuition to about \$3,635 at UVic.

At Okanagan University College, North Campus student union president Aaron Ekman said his constituents are still reeling from last year's tuition increases, and may decide to take action in the next few months.

"We're a bit more conservative up here, so I doubt any protest will be similar to what we saw down on the coast, but there are a lot of people here who are getting fed up," Ekman said. "A protest could come from us, or it may come from students doing it on their own."

## Addicted to the Palm

By Laura Seymour



*“Jack on Queen. Thirty times eighteen. I can beat the formula, I swear I can!”*

These aren't mixed up comments I've overheard on the street. They're my words as I'm playing with Santa's gift to me. I got a PDA for HOHOHO time. For all you non-techies out there, that's a Palm Pilot.

I'm sad to say, that this isn't the best possible gift for me. Let me explain why.

I got clued-in in November that Larry had some extravagant ideas for Christmas this year. I really have no other possibility since Larry is in a wheelchair and not everything in our house is on the first shelf of every closet. This is especially true of rarely used items like the seasonal packaging or wrapping paper we have. I hate buying wrapping paper, using it once and chucking it out. So, I admit, I'm that horrible person your mother was when you grew up: “Now, Amy, unwrap it carefully -- we can use the paper again!”

Did you have to fight with Christmas paper slathered in Scotch tape? I certainly did. Mother not only wanted the package well wrapped and impossible to guess the contents of, but also protected from accidental ripping. That way I wouldn't know what it was. Apparently this ripping would take place by the Abominable Snowman... because that's the only being that would be able to get into that much Scotch-taped packaging!

So this year, Larry and I were opening gifts he “bought in auctions, found dirt cheap on the Internet” or thought we needed badly. He loaded up the Christmas bag so deep I was getting weak kneed. I admit I was getting worried that I'd look bad...or would that read “cheap”?

I was feeling frustrated about what to get him – like usual. I found silly goodies I thought he might like, as well as one or two good ones. And then the fateful day arrived. Sheesh! No wonder it's such a stressful holiday and suicides go soaring. I felt panic-stricken that my gifts couldn't compare to his! Well, I know it's not a competition, but that's what was rolling around in me and I have to be honest. I found myself slipping in unscheduled trips to Chinook Mall! That in itself is a nightmare just before the holiday. The people! Oh Lord!! Where do they come from? Surely they import them from out of town! The cars on the road! Holy Yule Logs!! They have to be sitting at the car dealers the rest of the year! Don't they?? I bought gifts in there as if a box of someone's designer chocolate, at four times the price, was a great gift. I KNEW they would wind up sitting squarely on my thighs, but I bought them anyway.

I really was lost this year. Usually he asks me what I want for Christmas and that's exactly what I get. This year he got imaginative. I liked it.

And then the day arrived. We snuggled in next to the fireplace and started to open up the presents.

Out came the Palm. I'd like to say I like it –it's terrific, but I'm the one that files away the receipts for warranties and I saw the price! ACK! Oh my...

I kept thinking that maybe we could pay a good-sized bill with what he spent on it. I am a cheap Scottish girl and my mother's warning that "we can use the paper again" was ringing in my ears, so I played with it. I found the plastic poker doohickey (stylus) very annoying at first. If I was on the text pad it liked to select the number or letter next to where I was aiming. I found my patience wearing. I then got some tips from the hubby –a.k.a. Computer Guy. He set me on the right path for the most part, but for some reason he steps away and the !#\$@ thing doesn't listen to me anymore. I swear Larry speaks fluent Computer!

Larry found a shopping list program on the Internet and we bought and installed it proudly. I found myself happily recording what stores I bought items at, as well as making a mental note to record what aisle the items were in! Ohhh it will be SO handy! Soap... bacon...toilet paper...

Then I found the Spider Solitaire. Oh dear. My favourite time waster is now in a smaller format. Where are my glasses? Okay, do we own a microscope? I then found a free-ware package software set, which has different games. Then the real problems kicked in. "Hello, my name is Laura and I'm a free-ware solitaire addict." How many meetings will it take until I can walk past a computer store without tearing in?

I played. And I played some more. What? Is it dinnertime already? The movie? Huh? What happened? Seriously. This game is annoying. I KNOW I can win! And my Christmas dinner and those extra chocolates are still sitting on my thighs.

ENOUGH!

I finally screwed up my courage and handed the Palm to the hubby. "Please get rid of it."

"The Palm?!" my worried husband cried.

"NO!! The games!! I go over to add in a shopping item and then I'm stuck. I can't put the @!\$#^ thing down! I sit on the couch all day and play games. I have a house to clean. I have an exam to study for." I sobbed, crawled over on my knees and begged him to free me from my hideous addiction! Okay... I didn't. But you get the idea. I am game-less now. It's the only way.

But now I've discovered one other little problem...shoppers HATE me poking at the thing in the grocery store as I buy food for the week. Cancel this one...add that item to the list. Aisle thirty-seven. They huff and puff and they want to blow my Palm down! I'm getting the idea that a scrap of paper might be a safer idea...sigh! Here, dear...play with YOUR Palm Pilot. I have to go make a shopping list...on paper.

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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 Candida. She is working toward her B.A. (Psyc).*

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## Scholarship News

### SYNCRUDE/AU ABORIGINAL SCHOLARSHIP

Value: \$2500

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 31, 2003**

**Administrator:** Athabasca University

**Donor:** Syncrude Canada Ltd.

**# Available:** Up to three (3)

**Announcement date:** Late fall

- Applicants must be Alberta residents of Aboriginal ancestry: Indian, Inuit, or Métis.
- Preference to students entering first year of full-time studies; students in other years may also apply.
- This award may not be won by the same person more than once.
- Late applications may be considered if there are still rewards available after the deadline.

#### Open to students in the following degree programs:

B.A. (major in information systems); B. Admin (Major, or Post Diploma major in Management, Industrial Relations, or Organization); B. Commerce; B. Nursing (Post R.N.); B.S, or B.Sc(Post Diploma); B.Sc in Computing and Information Systems; B.Sc in Computing and Information Systems (Post Diploma); B.A. (major in Information Systems); B.Adm (major in Management, Industrial Relations, or Organization).

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Student Awards Office, Office of the Registrar

Athabasca University, 1 University Drive, Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3

Phone: 1-(780) 675-6249 Fax: 1-(780) 675-6174 Toll Free: 1-(800) 788-9041

**Web Site:** <http://www.athabascau.ca/html/depts/registry/studawrd.htm#sast>

**Email Address:** [auinfo@athabascau.ca](mailto:auinfo@athabascau.ca)

### SATURN COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Value: \$2,500.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 29, 2003**

**Administrator:** Saturn Canada

#### Scholarship Criteria:

Language: English; French

Activities: Arts; Athletics; School or Community Service; Work/Research Experience

#### Notes:

The awards recognize and honour the outstanding efforts of six female students attending any university, college or CEGEP in Canada for having made a significant accomplishment in one or more of the following areas: academic, business, arts, athletics, philanthropy or community. Please see the Web site for application details.

#### Contact Information:

Saturn Customer Communication Centre

1908 Colonel Sam Drive, Oshawa, ON, L1H 8P7

Phone: 1-888-4SATURN

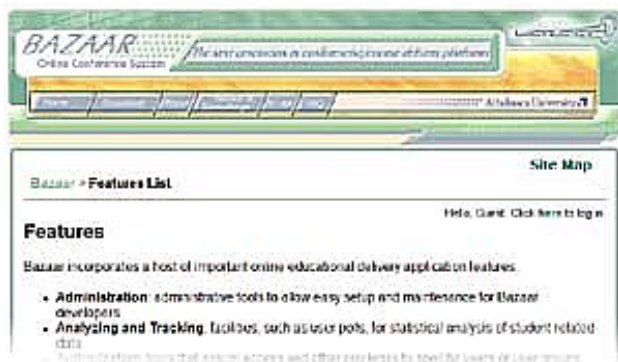
Fax: 1-866-752-5363

Toll Free: 1-800-263-3777

Web Site: <http://www.saturncanada.com>

Application Address: <http://www.saturncanada.com/ssi/english/vehicles/saturn/community/scholarship.html>

## BRIEFS FROM AU'S *THE INSIDER*



### COVERAGE FOR AU'S BAZAAR

AU's Bazaar receives major coverage in the latest issue of [The Technology Source](#), thanks to an article by DEPTH (Distance Education Projects and Technological Help) team members.

The teaser to tantalize readers says: "Good-quality online course management systems are not hard to find, but they can be hard to pay for. In response to the need for tools that are both

cost-efficient and sophisticated, Athabasca University has developed the Bazaar Online Conference System.

Susan Hesemeier, Mawuli Kuivi, and Mike Sosteric describe the capabilities of this open source learning management system."

See <http://ts.mivu.org/default.asp?show=article&id=1037>

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### COUNSELLING SERVICES RESOURCES PAGE IMPROVES ACCESS TO STUDY AIDS

At Athabasca University we've numerous study-related resources, many created by AU staff, some collected by AU staff from other sources. Regrettably, many students seem to find these by chance if at all. Counselling Services has brought the resources together, so AU students in all disciplines can benefit, and linked it from several AU sites. If you know of a resource that might fit here, please send it to [julian@athabascau.ca](mailto:julian@athabascau.ca) for consideration.

Also, we've linked the [new site](#) from several AU sites; if you would like it linked from your site, please send that information along too.

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### ALBERTA AUTHOR HAS AU TIES

The author of the recently published *Scoundrels and Scallywags: Characters from Alberta's Past* (Fifth House, Calgary) has been a musician, a music and theatre critic for The Calgary Herald, and an AU English student of modern British drama. Brian Brennan's latest addition to the popular history of Alberta tells the stories of "nutcases, eccentrics, rogues and rascals" such as Wild Bill Peyto, Dorothy Joudrie, and Guy Weadick, the Calgary Stampede organizer who was fired for excessive drinking. This is Brian's third book of biographical sketches: the first two are entitled *Building a Province* and *Alberta Originals*.



# PRIZE FOR CREATIVE NON-FICTION 2003

## ABOUT THE PRIZE

This Magazine's Prize for Creative Non-Fiction honours the brightest new voices in Canadian letters. Send us your work, and join This Magazine's long tradition of publishing outstanding literary and creative non-fiction. We're looking for personal and journalistic pieces with a strong voice, attention to narrative, experimental styles and, of course, compelling subject matter.

Creative non-fiction is a hybrid of literature and journalism. It uses the essay form, standard rhetorical patterns, and focuses on ideas and researched facts. Literary elements include: a literary voice, story/narration, characterization, descriptions of place, scenes, settings, a personally engaged author and polished language.

Entries should present holistic pictures of their subject, using concrete examples and narration to support a thesis. They must be based on exhaustive research and present subject matter grounded in real-world facts, and offer insight into important social, cultural and/or political issues.

Past winners include David Surjik for "A seedling for Samantha," a moving memoir of mental illness; Chris Tenove for "The Weight of Evidence," an exploration of the legacy of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia (the piece also received an honourable mention at the National Magazine Awards); and Joeline C. Heathcote for "Boys in Pieces," a powerful, poetic account of an attack on her brother.

### WHO QUALIFIES?

Your first publishing credit (outside of a school or university publication or self-published chapbook or zine) must have been within the last 10 years. Of course, unpublished writers are welcome too.

### SEND ENTRIES TO

This Magazine Prize for Creative Non-Fiction  
401 Richmond St. W., Suite 396,  
Toronto ON M5V 3A8.

## RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Entries must be postmarked by March 1, 2003.
2. There is no entry fee.
3. You may send in multiple entries.

4. Entries must be submitted by post or messenger. Fax and email submissions will be discarded unread.
5. All entries must be original and unpublished.
6. Entries must be no longer than 3,000 words.
7. Entrant's first professional publishing credit (outside student media and self-published chapbooks or zines) must have been within the last 10 years.
8. Previous winners of the contest are not eligible.
9. The prize is \$250, plus publication in the May/June 2003 issue of *This Magazine*.
10. Judging will be blind. Entrant's name **MUST NOT** appear on the manuscript itself. Include your full name, address, telephone number and email address on a separate sheet.
11. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for notification of results.
12. Manuscripts will not be returned. **DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS.**

### ENTRANTS ARE ADVISED TO:

- \* Read back issues of *This Magazine*. Previous winners of this contest are included in our May/June 2001 and 2002 issues. General writers' guidelines are available at <http://www.thismagazine.ca/>. Entries should be on a subject suitable for the magazine.
- \* Research thoroughly and provide accurate data. Combine primary research (interviews, trips to the place, personal experience) and secondary (library) research. Cite sources so readers know how you gathered the information. Give background to educate readers, and information to help them understand the subject better. **DO NOT** invent or change facts or events.
- \* Cultivate relationships with subjects over a period of time to create trust, absorb information, note change, and know individuals in order to describe their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes correctly.
- \* Organize the story in a logical, but interesting way (i.e. chronological, spacial, dramatic, general to specific)
- \* Use interesting language: revealing metaphors, compelling imagery, vivid details, germane quotations. Aim for a clear style with rhythm, colour, and a dramatic pace.

- \* Analyze, interpret, explain, synthesize the information, to convey the story's importance to readers.

### ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MARCH 1, 2003

Winners will be contacted by phone. Entrants who provide a SASE will receive contest results by mail.



## JOBS-4-TEACHERS

Jobs-4-teachers is a free employment service that is offering jobs to graduates who are interested in experiencing a new culture, traveling overseas and teaching English as a second language in South Korea. No previous teaching experience is necessary. The only thing necessary is a degree in any field, a passport and the desire to try something new. We are offering

1. FREE return airfare
2. FREE apartment
3. Full working visa
4. CA\$2,340 per month minimum (US\$1,500)
5. One year contract with the option of staying longer
6. One month's bonus upon completion of contract
7. 50% health insurance paid by employer

Jobs-4-Teachers is a fabulous employment opportunity for newly graduated students. Over the coming months we anticipate a strong demand for teachers, particularly those from Canada.

**For more information, contact:**

[info@jobs-4-teachers.com](mailto:info@jobs-4-teachers.com)

<http://www.jobs-4-teachers.com/>.



## INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES WITH REALM MAGAZINE

### ONLINE INTERNSHIP WITH NATIONAL MAGAZINE



**Position:** volunteer editorial intern

**Location:** various – job is fully online

**Duration:** TBD

REALM is a national Canadian magazine about life and work in your twenties and creating work you want. Located on every college and university campus across the country, REALM provides young Canadians with the tools they need to turn their passions into a career they'll love!

REALM Re·Verb is an online community of youth from across Canada who contribute to REALM in a variety of capacities. As a member of the REALM Re·Verb Editorial Team, you are a representative of REALM in your community, keeping REALM on top

of the trends and attitudes affecting Canadian youth!

**Duties may include but are not limited to:**



- Advise REALM editors on issues of interest to or affecting youth
- Contribute story ideas and profile leads
- Contribute ideas on contests, formats or features for REALM
- Review quarterly editorial line-ups and provide feedback, ideas and leads for articles
- Contribute to **Trend Watch**, an exclusive Re-Verb section in REALM which highlights what's hip, what's happening and what's passé on campuses, in clubs, and in cities and towns across the country
- Review article drafts and provide feedback
- Provide design ideas
- Provide feedback and recommendations on questions of advertising and editorial policy for the magazines and webzines
- Review the magazine after it is published and provide critiques, feedback and ideas for improvement
- Represent REALM editors in your community - this may mean speaking to the media, and attending career fairs or entrepreneurship conferences (optional)

For more information on the position or to apply, please visit <http://realm.net> or contact Nikki Whaites at [nikki@realm.net](mailto:nikki@realm.net). Please do not send resumes.

**Position:** volunteer marketing intern

**Location:** various – job is fully online

**Duration:** TBD

**Duties may include but are not limited to:**

- Advise REALM marketing staff on issues of interest to or affecting youth
- Advise on marketing policy
- Contribute ideas on contests, advertising in REALM
- Aid in various marketing initiatives
- Help with distribution opportunities in your community or on campus
- Help develop unique marketing initiatives
- Provide design ideas
- Consult on issues relating to REALM's web site
- Review the magazine after it is published and provide critiques, feedback and ideas for improvement
- Represent REALM in your community - this may mean speaking to the media, and attending career fairs or entrepreneurship conferences (optional)

For more information on the position or to apply, please visit <http://realm.net> or contact Nikki Whaites at [nikki@realm.net](mailto:nikki@realm.net). Please do not send resumes





**Notice to AU graduate students and those considering entering grad 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 [[sbarg@ausu.org](mailto:sbarg@ausu.org)] Vice-President, Athabasca University Students' Union  
Call 1-800-9041 ext. 3413



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## **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>
- **CU Expo** – Community University Institute for Social Research – “Partnerships, Policy & Progress” – May 8-10, 2003, Saskatoon, SK. Details: <http://www.usask.ca/cuisr/cuexpo>
- **AMTEC (Association of Media & Technology in Education in Canada)** - "E-convergence: Education, Media & Technology" - May 25-28, 2003, Montreal, Quebec. Call For Papers deadline is Dec. 15, 2002. Details: <http://www.amtec.ca>
- **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>



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## **NFB Film Club Edmonton**

[www.nfb.ca](http://www.nfb.ca)

Upcoming **free** screening of Canadian documentaries - feature films co-sponsored with the Edmonton Public Library & CBC Radio One

Showing @ the Milner Library Theatre downtown, 7 Churchill SQ. Time: 7-9 p.m.

### **February 04: The Journey of Lesra Martin ...**

Directed by Cheryl Foggo / Produced by Selwyn Jacob

Lesra Martin was poor, illiterate and struggling in Brooklyn, NY, when a chance encounter with a group of Canadians shattered his world. Raised in the chaos of the inner city and given a fresh start in Canada, Lesra become a hero when he helped bring justice to wrongfully imprisoned American boxer Rubin "Hurricane" Carter. Finding the courage to charge his own life, Lesra is now a lawyer and motivational speaker. This film brings together intimate interviews with Lesra, his family and friends. From his home in BC to a poignant return to the streets of his childhood, Lesra reflects on the event that altered his life.



## **NGO Youth Camp - Greece Voluntary Action for Youth's Ages 18-32**

<http://www.youthcamp.gr/>

The NGO YouthCamp - Voluntary Action for Youth is an independent, voluntary youth organization that is aiming to play a major role in the area of international voluntarism in Greece and Cyprus.

### **Aims**

- a) The protection, conservation and development of natural and social environment.
- b) The promotion of voluntarism as an alternative way of democratic participation in all areas of social activity.
- c) The development of cultural relations among youth with different national backgrounds.

### **Activities**

- a) Organize and administrate short term voluntary projects (workcamps) in Greece and Cyprus, during summer time!
- b) Take part in NGO networks of humanitarian, environmental and social orientation.
- c) Develop action for the promotion of voluntarism's movement.
- d) Implement projects-actions in cooperation with the public sector, European Union and International Organizations

### **International Workcamps**

*An international workcamp is a voluntary project of young participants, from all over the world, and in collaboration with local authorities.*

### **What type of workcamp?**

The workcamps are focusing on environmental, social, cultural, archeological and constructive issues.

### **Who can participate?**

Everybody can participate in international workcamps. The conditions of participation are, at least:

- a) To be between 18-32 years old
- b) To have basic knowledge of English

### **When it takes place?**

Workcamps are available at the beginning of June till the middle of September. The usual duration is 2-3 weeks depending on the local community's needs.

### **Which Language ?**

English is the communication language of all workcamps.

### **Accommodation**

The accommodation is FREE. It is going to be at local school or community center. Living conditions provide all facilities to volunteers.

### **Meals**

The meals are FREE. Volunteers are provided by all supplies to cook. In some workcamps volunteers are going to take their meals in a local tavern or restaurant.

### **Fee of Participation**

The participation fee is 100 Euro per workcamp and covers part of our administration cost (Our funds are limited). Travel arrangements & payments are covered by the volunteer.

### **Contact**

#### **YouthCamp – Voluntary Action for Youth**

Athinas 13,  
Agia Varvara, Athens,  
Postal Code 123 51  
Greece

**Tel:** 0030-210-5610728

**Fax:** 0030-210-5621093

**E-mail:** [info@youthcamp.gr](mailto:info@youthcamp.gr)  
[kpikramenos@hotmail.com](mailto:kpikramenos@hotmail.com)

## **ART OF LIVING PROJECT: U of A Professor Seeks Submissions for AIDS book project.**

*Press release of  
Dr. Diana Davidson  
University of Alberta*

As people continue to be infected and affected by HIV, and the hope of an effective vaccine recedes longer and longer into the future, education and activism remain our best hopes in battling AIDS. Writing enables people to form arguments; provide testimony; break silences; trace histories; expose inequities and injustices; and imagine new ways of relating to, loving, and desiring each other. Writing helps us to see HIV/AIDS in new ways and encourage us to carry out the work of existing and future activists.

In association with "The Art of Living Committee" at HIV Edmonton, I am editing an anthology of creative writing (fiction and non-fiction) about HIV/AIDS by Albertans. Submissions can take any form -- poetry, short story, biography, creative nonfiction, drama -- as long as they are no more than 20 pages (approximately). The flexible (negotiable) deadline for submissions is Monday, February 19th, 2003.

As an editor, I am responsible for collecting submissions and assessing materials. I currently write and teach in the Department of English at the University of Alberta. I have multiple academic publications accepted for scholarly journals and anthologies, and have a book manuscript on AIDS literature under consideration at Manchester University Press. While employed as a counselor at the South Peace AIDS Council (in Grande Prairie, Alberta) I edited a self-published booklet entitled Blue Streaks: A Collection of Poetry About HIV/AIDS By Residents of Northern Alberta (1997). Blue Streaks gave marginal voices a vehicle for expression and created a community awareness of the disease and I anticipate the same success will be achieved with the new Art of Living project.

The Art of Living: Albertans Write HIV/AIDS will contribute to the small, growing, and socially essential field of AIDS narratives and criticism. I hope you will consider being a key player in making this vision a reality.

Submissions and inquiries can be directed to Dr. Diana Davidson at [diana.davidson@ualberta.ca](mailto:diana.davidson@ualberta.ca) and 3-5 Humanities Centre, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2E5.

Dr. Diana Davidson's U of A Web site:  
<http://www.ualberta.ca/~dmd3/>

# Community Networks Group



## Theatre Network ~ live at the Roxy Presents

Ghost River Theatre's **AN EYE FOR AN EYE**  
An Oil & Gas, Piss & Vinegar Cabaret ...

Feb. 4-16, 2003, in Edmonton

**Previews:** February 4 and 5

Opening Night: Feb. 6 / 2for1 Tuesday: Feb. 11

**10708 - 124 St., Edmonton**

**INFOLINE: 453 2440**

**website: [www.attheroxy.com](http://www.attheroxy.com)**

What happens when you mix oil and fire? What happens when you mix Corporate Oil with the fire of religious zeal? Wiebo Ludwig learned the answer to that when he tried it out. A theatre company in Calgary decided to explore the resulting explosion, adding their own fuel to the fire. Now it's coming to Edmonton.

**"An Eye For An Eye blinds with its brilliance." - Edmonton Journal**  
**Winner of the 2001 Betty Mitchell Award For Outstanding Musical Production**

It started with a simple notion: To create a musical cabaret about the conflict between rural Albertans and the activities of the oil and gas industry; specifically, the effect of sour gas wells and their hazards on rural Albertans. During an eight-day residency at the Banff Centre, the company plunged into some serious research about the Wiebo Ludwig case. They researched newspaper clippings, the internet, spoke to farmers in the Prince Albert area, and watched the video Home Sour Home, made by the Ludwigs to illustrate their plight.

Each actor went away to write from the point of view of their character and came back to argue for that point of view. They did group improvisations, with the show's Stage Manager transcribing as fast as she could, and from those improvs, began to develop the scenes that worked best. It became a story that represents every point of view, and by doing that, it has challenged everyone's perceptions.

**COMING SOON in 2003 @ The Roxy ...**

**STOP KISS** Feb. 27-Mar 8 Kill Your Television Productions

Two twenty-something women meet and form a fast friendship that leads to an unexpected attraction.

**HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH** Apr 1-Apr 20

An absolutely fabulous glam rock musical. Hedwig Schmidt is a German rock and roll goddess who also happens to be the victim of a gruesomely botched sex-change operation. [www.hedwiginedmonton.com](http://www.hedwiginedmonton.com)

**DALE LADOUCEUR & THE BROKE ENSEMBLE** CD RELEASE PARTY May 10th CD Release Party. *An indefinable blend of Jazz/Folk/Rock. Opening Acts: Craig Shafer and Babe Lloyd. Evening will include a silent auction.*

**SYNCRUDE NEXT GENERATION ARTS FESTIVAL** June 5-15

A multidisciplinary festival that features the work of emerging professional artists.

*Courtesy of the Community Networks Group*





**NORTHERN ALBERTA ALLIANCE ON RACE RELATIONS (NAARR)**

Tel: **425-4644**

e-mail: <mailto:naarr@interbaun.com>

web: <http://www.naarr.org/>

The Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations (NAARR) is holding a series of **Focus Groups for Parents on Racial Equity** in the public and catholic school systems. Please come and help us identify the issues of how racism operates within our schools and potential remedies. The following sessions are open to the public:

**Jan 28, 2003**

2:30 - 4:30, Millwoods Welcome Centre for Immigrants; #335, Tower II, Millbourne Market Mall

**Jan 31, 2003**

5 - 7 pm, NorthEast Community Health Centre, 14007 - 50 Street

**Feb 01, 2003**

2 - 4 pm (FRANCOPHONE SESSION)  
Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (old Cromdale School) 11240-79 Street

**Feb 04, 2003**

5 - 7 pm, Grant MacEwan College, 10700 - 104 Ave, Room 7-21

**Feb 05, 2003**

7 - 9 pm, Amity House, 9213 - 146 Avenue

For further details, please contact:

Charlene Hay at **425-4644**

e-mail: [naarr@interbaun.com](mailto:naarr@interbaun.com)

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

**DR. DRAGANA BREBERIN ON: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MONEY**

February 26, 2003 / Infoline: **448-2707** e-mail:

[breberin@pontech.org](mailto:breberin@pontech.org)

@ The Varscona Hotel, 8208 - 106 Street, Edmonton, AB (Canada)

People speak of money as though they understand it: what it does for them and how best to use it. But is that really the case? Is your financial status controlling you or serving you? What are you trying to accomplish with money? What is the best way to achieve your desired results?

Whatever your circumstances, you will find it beneficial to discuss what money can and cannot do for you, where you got your ideas about money and how you use your attitudes about money to guide your handling of money matters. Participants will have an opportunity to share their feelings and experiences about money and to examine alternative attitudes towards it in a constructive, thoughtful environment.

**About Dr. Dragana ...**

Dr. Dragana Breberin is a clinical physiologist with an extensive, interdisciplinary education & over twenty-five years of experience in helping a diverse range of people to become the best they can be. In her experience, peoples' perception of money is often mismatched with the true possibilities available to them with it. Money is an artificial construct therefore our attitudes towards it determine our experience with it. We have far more control and opportunity with our financial status than most people realise.

**AGENDA:** Dinner - Social: 5:30-6:30 p.m. / Seminar: 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Formal Question Period: 8:00-8:30 p.m. / Informal Question Period: 8:30-9:00 p.m.

@ The Varscona Hotel, 8208 - 106 Street

Parking is available in the adjoining parkade.

REGISTRATION FEE: \$95.00 + GST

Registration - fees must be received prior to **February 12, 2003**.

For more information: Dr. Dragana @ **448-2707** / e-

mail: <mailto:breberin@pontech.org>



## ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM YOUR UNIVERSITY

### NEW COUNSELLING RESOURCE: HOW TO WRITE A TERM PAPER

Julia Nielsen of AU's Counselling Services Unit [CSU] has created a fantastic resource to help students prepare term papers, available at:

<http://www.athabascau.ca/html/services/counselling/writing/>.

The interactive slideshow website takes students step by step through the process of planning, researching, writing, editing and documenting a term paper. Also included are links to sites describing the most popular citation formats and other writing help resources.

The site itself is beautiful, easy to use, and very quick to load.

Whether you are new to writing term papers, or you have some practice already, the advice contained on this site can help you improve your essay writing style, and avoid many of the simple mistakes students often lose marks for. The format of the site also makes using it quite fun!

This resource is the latest of several, excellent CSU web projects, which include the new Math and English assessments [See *News From your University* in this issue.]. All of these interactive web sites require a Flash plug-in for your browser, and links are provided at the menu pages so that you can easily download it. The Flash player is a one time download, and allows you to use many other websites as well.

Other study related resources of the CSU can be found at:

<http://www.athabascau.ca/html/services/advise/conserv.html>.





## AU'S E-JOURNAL ON DISTANCE EDUCATION GETS A NEW LOOK

Contributed by AU's *The Insider*



*Paula Smith, managing editor of The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning (IRRODL), provides an update:*

Every healthy child encounters growth spurts. And Athabasca University's e-journal

*The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* is no different. Sporting a new design that strategically complements AU's new web presence, *IRRODL*'s new web site also boasts of abstract translations in Spanish, French and Chinese. New features also include full search engine capabilities, as well as a new series called *Technical Notes*, showcasing the work of evaluators as well as AU's Master of Distance Education students. CDE's Jon Baggaley is the series editor for *Technical Notes*.

## 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



## **COMMENTARY AND FEEDBACK! LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

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

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### **Letter from Sandra Moore**

**Originally published in the Medicine Hat News, January 13, 2003**

When it comes to post secondary education in Alberta, we are fortunate to have four universities in our province for our children to choose from. Unfortunately tuition in Alberta is rapidly rising, and by the time your children reach the post secondary education level, if location won't prevent them from attending university in our province, cost will.

Why is tuition rising so rapidly? Funding from the federal government towards post-secondary education and training has been cut by 7 million dollars since 1993<sup>1</sup>. The federal government's attempt to rectify the situation and address the concerns of the roadblocks, the biggest one being finances, to post secondary education was the introduction of the Canada Millennium Scholarship in 1998. This scholarship is not even a dent in the gigantic can of students desperate for financial aid, in fact of the 750,000 students in need of financial assistance yearly, fewer than 8% will be eligible to receive this scholarship<sup>2</sup>. The scholarship is also not available to first year students who without it may not know how they are going to fund that expensive first year of school. The Canada Millennium Scholarship Board is not comprised of understanding, knowledgeable board members but rather executives from the corporate world.

The Provincial Government of Alberta is just as much to blame. Tuition in Alberta over the past decade has risen over 200% making an Albertan post secondary education only a dream for the poor prairie farmers child. If Alberta would raise their university funding levels to the national average, universities in the province would be able to roll back tuition rates to ensure accessibility.

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Federation of Students Fact Sheet 2000

<sup>2</sup> CFS Fact Sheet 2000

What about the universities themselves? They contribute just as much to the need for increased tuition out of student's pockets as the governments do. Universities are not regulated by governments on how they spend their money. The two main universities in Alberta, the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta, are in a building frenzy in attempts to make their campuses the most desirable in the country. The central administration costs at these universities far outweigh the education costs. Last year, the VP-Finance of the University of Alberta required a \$600 doorknob and the president of this same university required several trips to China to secure one deal, in addition to receiving a \$59,000 raise.

Alberta's Learning Minister Lyle Oberg does not see our universities slowly turning into an elitist system - where the possibility of a post secondary education will only be determined by the size of a student's parents wallet - as a serious issue. Even today, middle class families are starting to feel the pinch. For the children of these families to apply for student loans, parents are expected to contribute a percentage of their income towards their child's education. Farmers' children are denied student loans because of the worth of their parents combines or tractors, even though this is equipment is used to produce their product. We can't expect families to take out second mortgages or farmers to sell off much needed equipment in order to send their children off to get educated. A grade 12 education is no longer sufficient to secure a good paying, permanent position in today's workforce.

The rising cost of tuition in Alberta's universities affects all of us, even if we don't have children. Students who leave university thousands of dollars in debt are going to look for jobs in the bigger cities where the pay will be higher so they can pay off their loans quicker. There will end up being an even greater shortage of doctors, teachers, engineers, social workers, etc... in Alberta's rural areas if we don't do something to keep students' educational debt low.

If you want your children to obtain a post secondary education at an affordable cost, act now! Write your MLA and let him know that you want the issue of affordability of post secondary education to be brought to the attention of government. Also send a copy of your letter to me and I will forward it to the Council of Alberta University Students who will be presenting all the letters they receive to the Alberta Government in their attempts to freeze the rising cost of tuition. The CAUS website at [www.tuitioncause.com](http://www.tuitioncause.com) is filled with others ways you can help and other interesting facts. Our children are our future and if we expect to have rural doctors and nurses available to us in our old age in the communities we love, we must act to let the government know that we will not tolerate this issue being swept aside.

Sandra Moore  
Athabasca University Student's Union  
Redcliff, AB T0J 2P0  
[smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org)





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

*News from the January 19, 2003 council meeting*

AUSU Council met on the evening of January 19th for a regularly scheduled council meeting. The main item of business for the evening was AUSU finance, and the annual audit for the 2002 financial year was reviewed and discussed.

Following this, tentative plans were set for the next Annual General Meeting of AUSU, which will take place in the spring of 2003. The date of this meeting will be announced once plans have been finalized.

Also on the agenda this week was the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee of AUSU. We didn't have one, but now we do! The new committee will focus on AUSU's future, and will establish long term goals for projects, finances, and student programs. AUSU Secretary-Treasurer Gurpreet Dulai will chair.

In order to help introduce new users to the chat function on the AUSU website, times will be scheduled when councillors will be present. We will try to schedule morning, afternoon, and evening times each week, and the scheduled times will be posted on the AUSU home page and on the AUSU calendar [on the right-hand information bar of the home page]. Drop in and say hello, or ask a question or two!

If you want to get even more involved with AUSU, consider volunteering. We have a really big project in the works that we hope will dramatically improve student-student relations, and we will need a lot of help getting it going. Write Sandra Moore [<mailto:smoore@ausu.org>] if you are interested in becoming an AUSU volunteer.

You can also contact Sandra if you are interested in starting up an AUSU club. The time has never been better. This year the Athabasca University Psychology Students' Society [AUPSS] has grown enormously, and two new clubs are in the works. If you have a special interest or simply want to form a students club for people who live in your area, let Sandra know.

We realize that some students might be reluctant to start up clubs in their local area for fear that they are the only student in their locale. If this is the case, let us know. You may be very surprised at how many other AU students live in your small town.

AUSU council had a great year, during which we saw many of our planned projects come to fruition. The most exciting so far have been the launch of the new websites for The Voice, and AUSU. Council members Debbie Jabbour, Gurpreet Dulai, Shirley Barg, Sandra Moore, Tamra Ross Low, Nicholas Palamarchuk, Mac McInnes and Karie-Anne Getta have plans for a number of new student services, and are looking forward to an even better 2003. Darren Kereluk is no longer a councillor with AUSU.

We wish all AU students, faculty and staff a happy and healthy new year.  
AUSU



## **CLASSIFIEDS:**

**PUBLISHED IN THE VOICE**  
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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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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.