

Volume 11 Issue 07
February 12, 2003

www.ausu.org

the VOICE

Quote of the Week:

“Be still when you have nothing to say; when genuine passion moves you, say what you've got to say, and say it hot.”

-- D. H. Lawrence

THE VOICE

February 12, 2003

Volume 11, Issue 07

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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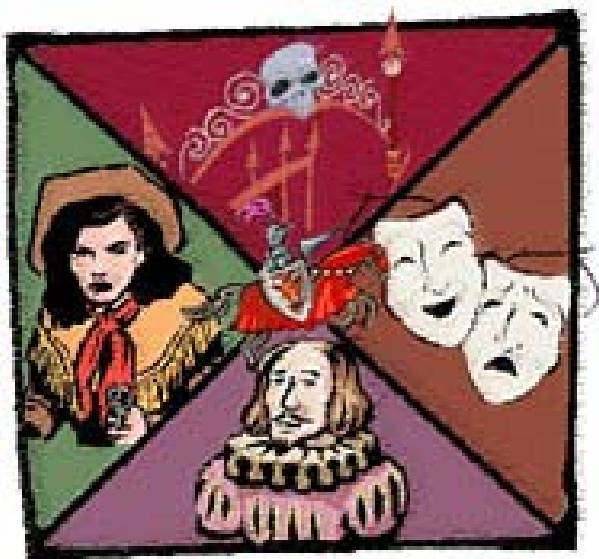
FROM THE READERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CLASSIFIEDS!

THE VOICE

FICTION



The Voice wants your fiction.

We are accepting creative writing in
all genres for a Voice fiction feature.

Send us your stories, poems, and
other short fiction.

Send submissions to voice@ausu.org

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM AUSU

FEBRUARY 12, 2003



We are pleased to announce that a new editor for the Voice has been hired, effective immediately. Tamra Ross Low was the successful applicant. Tamra is an Athabasca University student enrolled in a BA Psychology/Women's Studies, and has been a Voice writer for almost two years, writing a weekly column that addresses a variety of issues of interest to students. Tamra also served on AUSU Council from March of 2002 to January 2003, and has a broad spectrum of experience and knowledge regarding the various activities AUSU is involved in on behalf of students.

In her previous role on Council, Tamra assisted with maintenance of the website and uploading of the Voice, spearheaded the publication of the first newsletter, and generally acted in the capacity of communications coordinator; skills which will serve her well as new editor of the Voice. Tamra impressed us with her clear vision of how the Voice can best serve the needs of students in our unique distance environment, and we look forward to the Voice moving into a new phase of development under her capable guidance. Welcome Tamra!

**Debbie Jabbour, President
AUSU**

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CAUS: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/caus/alpha/>
Tuition Cause: <http://tc.su.ualberta.ca/>



We love to hear from you!

Please continue providing your opinions, comments and ideas; any submissions can be sent to voice@ausu.org.

Please indicate if we may publish your letter.

Dear editor:

In previous weeks, world famous editor, Tammy Moore, was formally bidden farewell by the Voice's writers. Except me. I was in transit from Heathrow to the friendly Mojave desert. As editor, Tammy has done much to make the Voice heard, has given it volume and clarity. She has also done much for me. I surprised myself when I realized I felt I know her despite that I've never met her; she is a professional and competent editor but also a friend I hope to never lose. I want to wish her well in her new endeavours. So, I wish to now stand with my fellow writers, in my own time warped way, in saying the Voice is hoarser without you, but fill your boots, Tam. Have a blast in your new life!

Audrey Karperien

Thanks, Audrey. Better late than never!

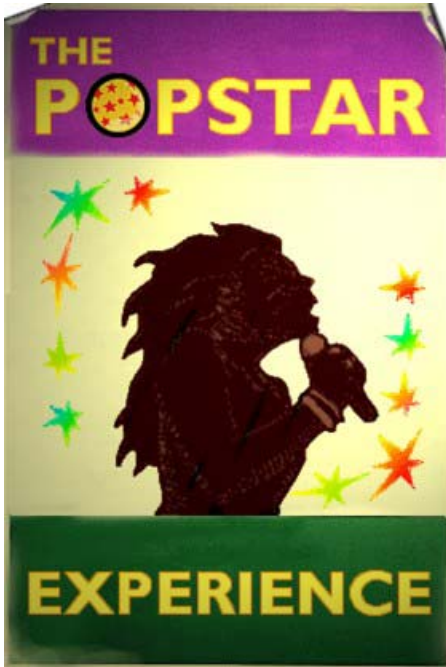


WRITE FOR THE VOICE!

Contact The Voice editor at voice@ausu.org for details on writing for The Voice. Provide a sample selection of writing and preferred genre.

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE THE POPSTAR EXPERIENCE: PART THREE

By Debbie Jabbour



Part 3 in a continuing series about the Canadian Television talent competition, Popstars: The One.

For part one of this series, see: The Voice, January 29, 2003 [11-04]

In the weeks following the successful callback, we focused on the upcoming Toronto experience. Along with the other contestants, Amaya had signed a strict confidentiality agreement. The terms dictated that, with the exception of family and close friends, she could not tell anyone that she was going. Details were slow in coming... we were given to understand that she would go to Toronto for the week of September 16th, then if successful through the series of bootcamp cuts, she would remain there for the remainder of the show's filming.

This left us really up in the air, not able to plan around the month of September/October. The first casualty of this uncertainty was Amaya's job in a mall retail store. When they went to do up her schedule for the next six weeks, she was forced to tell them she might not be available, but was unable to give specifics, so she was laid off. I had also purchased tickets for a Tool concert on October 6 for Amaya (see From My Perspective, Voice, October 9, 2002). If she ended up staying in Toronto she would miss the concert -- but I told her not to worry -- one day Tool would be her opening act!

Finally, Lone Eagle Entertainment clarified that she would only be in Toronto for the week and if she made it through the cuts to the final twelve, would be flown back at a later date to finish filming. This at least gave us a bit more of an idea of what was ahead. Amaya and I talked at length about what it would be like in bootcamp. I reminded her that cameras would be on her at all times, and that her every move would be under the microscope, subject to scrutiny not just from the judges but by other finalists. We discussed the possibility of back-stabbing from other contestants, something she was fully prepared for. Her attitude was that this was an experience, something she could enjoy fully and learn from, regardless of the outcome. Although we were confident that she had the talent and ability to go the whole distance, she made it very clear that she did not want to be a "popstar." I was worried that her ambivalence might cause her to sabotage herself, but she reassured me that she planned on giving it her all and making the most of the opportunity.

Oddly enough Elvis came into our discussions (perhaps because one of the Edmonton contestants was dubbed the Hawaiian Elvis?). We talked about how Elvis was so overweight and mired in drug use, yet managed to stage a phenomenal comeback concert in 1968 by following a rigid training schedule. This inspired Amaya and she decided to start working out daily and pay attention to her diet so that she would be at her absolute best.

Several weeks before departure, I received a call from the producers with her flight information. She was to be at the airport September 14 to catch a 6 AM Air Canada flight. They advised that Amaya should bring a variety of clothing and be prepared to impress the judges – since this would be her week to shine. I had visions of the original baggy pants/boxer underwear outfit she had worn at the open auditions and decided to take her shopping!

We spent far more money than I could afford, but I wanted her to feel confident in her appearance. We traipsed the mall for days making sure she had everything she needed, and the whole venture turned into a wonderful mother-daughter bonding experience, something I would not normally have time for with my hectic schedule.



The reluctant Popstar leaves for bootcamp

Finally it was Friday, September 13th. We planned to leave at 3 AM to be at the airport in time. Amaya does not have a great track record when it comes to flying, and has missed flights on several occasions, so I tried to reinforce to her the importance of being ready on time. Friends and family came by to wish her luck, and I was busy hemming pants and helping organize things. At around 10 PM she decided to go with her sister and a friend to visit the Karaoke bar down the street. Although she was putting on a casual and nonchalant front about the whole affair, underneath she was really excited and restless and just couldn't hang around the house waiting to leave. I knew she wanted to spend some time with her friends to ground herself and build up confidence, so I didn't argue - I just reminded her to come home early so she wouldn't miss her flight. She promised to only be gone a few hours, assuring me that she would finish packing when she returned. At around midnight I decided that I should get a few hours sleep so I would be alert to drive to the airport.

At 2:45 AM my daughter came in and woke me up in a panic. Apparently the celebratory atmosphere at the Karaoke bar had distracted Amaya and she was simply refusing to come home, since all her friends were wishing her well, buying her drinks, and begging her to sing "just one more song." I got up in a hurry, and my daughter returned to the bar. This time she was successful in persuading Amaya to leave and they arrived at the door several minutes later. But Amaya was in no shape to pack. I ran to pick up my other daughter, and between the four of us we urgently threw garments and personal items into the suitcase. In my rush, I grabbed a pile of clean laundry from the laundry room and stuffed it into a bag. The following morning I would learn that this laundry belonged to my youngest daughter – who was quite upset that I had sent it to Toronto with Amaya!

All the way to the airport a tipsy Amaya alternated between being silly/loud/obnoxious and serious/weepy/maudlin. I realized then just how scared she was. In spite of her great show of confidence, inside she was obviously very apprehensive. At the airport we got her checked in, then bought her some water, coffee and food, in an attempt to calm her a bit. In our great rush, she had forgotten batteries for her Walkman, and although we searched the airport in vain, no batteries were available for purchase at 5 AM. She became inordinately upset until the security guard offered to lend her his batteries. She kept thanking him, happy that she'd be able to listen to music on the plane. Unfortunately what she didn't realize was his loan was only for the purpose of proving to security that the Walkman worked – and he asked for them back once she had passed through the gate!

By the time 6 AM arrived, we were exhausted, worried that her erratic, inebriated excitement might get her kicked off the plane. Her sisters and I breathed a sigh of relief as she finally hugged us goodbye and stepped through the security gate. Upon arrival at home, I checked the phone messages in case she had missed the flight

somehow, then went to the Internet to confirm that the flight had departed. It wasn't until almost 8 AM that I finally relaxed and stopped worrying long enough to go to sleep.

All afternoon we waited for her call. Finally at around 4 PM the phone rang. She had arrived safely and was in Toronto, at the Delta Chelsea. Her roommate was Jocelyn, a young finalist from Calgary, who Amaya said was "very nice." The Popstars people had met her at the airport, and had given her cash to pay for meals for the day, but nothing would start until the following evening (Sunday), when the rest of the 45 finalists from across Canada arrived. Since she had the evening to herself, she was going to visit a friend in Toronto, and promised to call us the following day.

Next week: Bootcamp begins

Pictures, bios, episode summaries, and other information are available on the Popstars website at www.popstars.ca.

Edmonton Journal interview, January 30, 2003:

<http://www.canada.com/search/story.aspx?id=867107db-d80f-431f-891f-2828d8e2247e>

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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ERGONOMICS

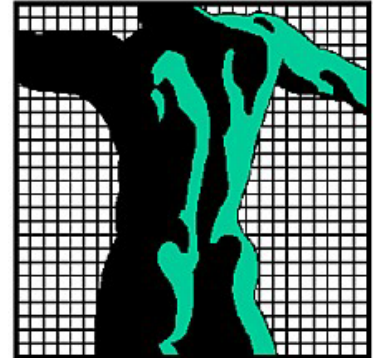
WORK AND STUDY SAFE

by Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

What is Ergonomy

Ergonomics is the application of scientific information concerning human physiology to the design of objects, systems and environments for human use. Ergonomics applies to everything that involves people. Work systems, sports and leisure, health and safety should all embody ergonomic principles if they are well designed. Well applied ergonomic principles ensure that humans can work safely without the risk of injury.

The term Ergonomy is derived from the two Greek words: *Ergon*, meaning work and *nomoi*, meaning natural laws.



Why use Ergonomy

As early as 18th century, health personnel observed that workers whose jobs required them to maintain certain body positions for lengthy periods of time developed musculoskeletal problems. In the 20th century researchers have established the connection between certain job tasks and repetitive stress injuries, or RSIs.

How to incorporate Ergonomy

Ergonomy uses elements not only from physiological aspects of life but also from anatomy, psychology and design. Ergonomic products are proved to be environmentally friendly, comfortable, safe and efficient to use. With the help of the following basic ergonomic principles we are able to define postures which are less static and reduce the pressures acting on the body:

1. Work activities must allow people to adopt healthy and safe postures;
2. Muscular force should be exerted by the largest and strongest muscle group(s) available;
3. Work should be performed with the joints at about mid-point of their range of movement especially to the head, trunk and upper limbs.

(adapted from: <http://ergonomics.org/>)

Below are a number of ways in which you can apply ergonomic principles to your own work or study area:

HOW TO SET UP A COMPUTER WORK STATION

Adjusting your chair

1. Adjust the height of your seat so that your elbows are at the level of the keyboard (90 degrees).
2. Make sure that wrists are straight (180 degrees) and at the same level as the elbows.
3. Make sure that the angle of your knees is 90 degrees and that your feet are resting completely on the ground.

Adjusting the backrest:

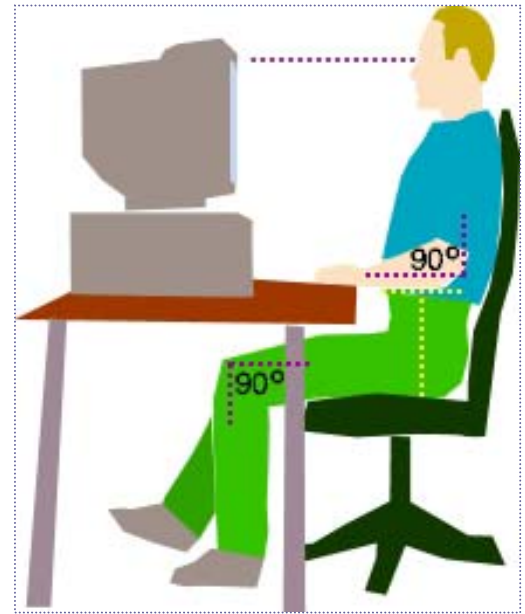
4. Adjust the angle of the backrest so that your back is as straight as possible (90-110 degrees).
5. Adjust the height of the back rest so that your back is supported from the lower part up to the shoulder blades.

HOW TO ADJUST YOUR COMPUTER SCREEN

1. The top of your glass screen should be at the same level as your eyes.
2. If you wear bifocal lenses, lower the screen.
3. The screen should be about one arm's length away.
4. Reduce the angle on your screen in order to avoid reflections.

HOW TO ADJUST YOUR COMPUTER KEYBOARD

1. The keyboard should be located between you and the screen.
2. The distance from the keyboard should be such that your elbows remain near your body.
3. Lower the supports at the back of the keyboard to reduce its angle.
4. The use of a retractable keyboard support should not interfere with the space left for the legs and should not cause the keyboard to be too low.



WHERE TO PLACE YOUR MOUSE

1. The mouse can be on the left or the right of the keyboard, depending on the user.
2. Remember that mouse buttons can be reprogrammed for left-handed people.
3. Set the mouse as close as possible to the keyboard.

Poor ergonomics can lead to undue stress on the body, which may lead to repetitive strain injuries. The first sign of these injuries is stiffness and discomfort in the affected body parts. Following is a list of common complaints associated with poor ergonomics, and some suggestions for reducing the discomfort.

Physical Health Issues Related to Poor Ergonomics

Diagnostic table of discomfort related to work stations.

NECK STRAIN

Possible causes

Possible Adjustments

Head inclined forward or backward	• Adjust the height of the screen
If bifocal lenses are being used	• Lower the screen
Screen placed diagonally to you	• Position the screen in front of you

STRAINED WRISTS

Possible causes

Possible adjustments

Wrists kept in extended position	• Adjust the height of the chair
Extreme lateral movements to the wrist	• Move the mouse around by using forearm rather than by excessive movements of the wrist
Numbness in wrists	• Avoid any compression zones for the wrist (eg: sharp corners)

BACK STRAIN

Possible causes

Possible Adjustments

Back is curved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjust the height of the back rest• Move the screen closer
Back is turned often	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Position the keyboard and screen opposite you.• Move the most often used office accessories closer to you.• Free up some space under the work table.

Ergo products and Accessories

In a continuing quest to make computing more comfortable and healthy, companies have come up with an incredible variety of unexpected products and accessories. From wrist rests to glare screens, from footrests to foot-operated mice, from one-handed keyboards to ergonomic chairs.

Studies And Results

Over the last five years a study on the relationship between ergonomic office environments and productivity has been underway. The sample group includes managerial, technical, and clerical workers from a broad cross-section of North American industry. In the sample group approximately 4 per cent of managerial workers and approximately 60 per cent of clerical workers have direct work-station access to a computer terminal. The total study population is approximately 4,000 persons.

Benefits

In the survey, workers using computer equipment, specifically video display equipment, more than one hour per day reported twice as many complaints of neck and shoulder discomfort as coworkers who did not use this equipment.

The workers also had higher rates of absenteeism, reported less job satisfaction and, at entry-level positions, had a higher turnover rate (approaching 30 per cent a year) than their co-workers.

A major incentive to purchase ergonomic equipment and to design ergonomic environments is the improved performance and well-being of office workers.

Office automation (OA) has been associated with increased absenteeism, reports of muscular discomfort, eyestrain, and reductions in job satisfaction.

However, through the use of ergonomic principles, people report a decrease in the risks of RSI's (Repetitive stress injuries).

Information for the preceding article has been adapted from the following websites:

<http://ergo.human.cornell.edu/>

<http://ergonomics.org/>

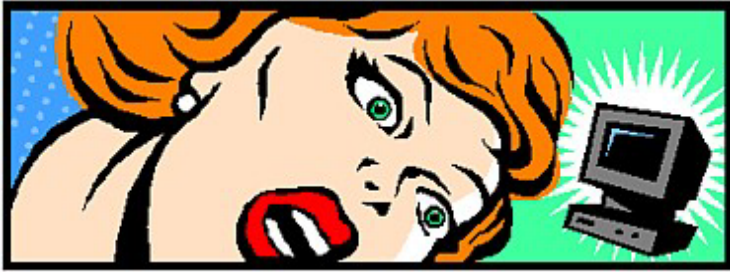
http://www.safetyoffice.uwaterloo.ca/hspm/documents/office_ergo/ergo/vdt.html

<http://www.healthycomputing.com/health/conditions/>

<http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/customtools>

THE HARRIED STUDENT BUYS A COMPUTER

By Audrey Karperien



Only by grace am I writing this now, for sadly, my new computer died this morning. Again.

I bought it last week. Every harried distance ed student needs a computer. We rely on them to get our papers out on time, to contact our tutors...we depend on them. The one I'd been using was taken away by its rightful owner, so I needed one of my

own. And I chose with care. I picked a sleek, black, state of the art powerhouse. I chose the fastest, the most capable, the one with the biggest RAM of all. It could crunch data like a Cray. Sexy and lean, it seemed intellectual but sophisticated, just right for the pedestal in the corner of my study.

I knew it had power like a teenage Anakin Skywalker, but I named it Bill, nonetheless. It was unstoppable, but with XP password protection I knew I could command it, that it would always be there for me and only me, all its parts perpetually at attention, awaiting my command, on or off at the touch of a button, always ready to take me at the speed of light to wherever I wanted to be, willing to wait with me, guide me, perform for me. It could even correct my grammar in a way I never found irritating. What more could a woman want? I was in love with Bill.

Alas my joy was fleeting. Things got ugly fast. I actually had cause to be suspicious from the beginning, but was blinded by the newness, the potential, the intrigue, and tried not to see what was before me. Bill's stubborn arrogance was evident in the first boot. He refused to start when I commanded. I pressed his button, yet nothing happened. I pressed. I waited. I wiggled cords. I pressed. I waited. I waited. I waited. I sat down. I got up. I swore. I pressed. I waited. I cried and got the Styrofoam and packing boxes out of the garage. And then I heard it, a gentle beep of greeting, as Bill, on his own time, started up.

Sure Bill seemed to be working out after that, but the signs never disappeared. I remained blind to them, but they were there all along, whenever I asked for something tricky. Multitasking, RAM-intensive, stuff, you know, things that dig to the very soul and require real trust. At first Bill would just give up, beep mournfully and turn himself off when I really needed him. He got to the point where he would hibernate whenever things got difficult, but that didn't improve. In fact, I'd say things got worse because it wasn't long before he started choking, turning blue in the screen. If I was smothering him, I really didn't notice, I surely didn't mean to. But now, in retrospect, I think that when he took my work, sequestered it in read-only files I had no permission to change, and converted these to 0 kilobyte temporary files, he was only reaching out, desperately, in his own proud way telling me to keep my distance. Was there more to it? I cannot say. Perhaps he sensed my fear and dislike of his root directory; perhaps he sensed my poorly disguised MicroSoftophobia. Whatever it was went deep. On account of it, Bill died multiple deaths. Mind you, he was resurrected many times like a half-functioning zombie, going in and out with buzzing and urgent beeping, sometimes drama, always much aplomb, and finally, a purple screen.

Don't get the wrong idea. I could not watch the object of my affection so afflicted and not reach out. I tried in so many ways. Bill got a thorough virus check, for instance. And I reformatted his hard drive, although psychotherapy was not the answer and things were back to bad in no time. Through it all, I never let the pain go on needlessly. I pulled the plug whenever Bill slipped into endless cycles of starting and restarting. I even attempted guided-emergency surgery. The technician on the phone talked me through a load of stuff, the most challenging of which was simultaneously pressing two release buttons to get Bill to open up. I re-seated all his

cards because the diagnostics suggested maybe Bill had a dose of bad RAM. But all my efforts at rehabilitation and then resuscitation failed.

When Bill died seemingly for the last time this morning and not even my most valiant efforts brought him back to life, the technician uttered that it was hopeless. Bill's motherboard was fried, his video card bent, his RAM unserviceable. The tech gave me a number to call to set up an appointment for someone to come to my house and clean up the carnage, replace Bill with a more peaceful, cooperative model, something more suited to my needs, something that I could command and that would not try to command me. I agreed to the exchange, but shame overtook me as I hung up the phone. What was I made of? Could I not grow to accept Bill's capricious character, remain bemused by his spunk and stubbornness, his cheek and unreliability? Was it right to cast off his power and capability so discourteously, like so much plastic and wire? Had I really tried in this relationship?

Mourning my loss, questioning my integrity, I put the case back together, closed it, and pushed the box back into place on its pedestal. Confused, saddened, frustrated, I crumpled the note with the service number on it. Then I thought of my deadlines, the papers I had due, and knew at once that although I loved him as much as I hated him, I had to do what I had to do. I reached for the crumpled paper. Then I heard it: a single, contented beep. And I saw on the screen a familiar XP logo....no video card error, no memory error, no urgent beeping, just happy (smug?) Bill coming to life on his own time.

Audrey is a distance ed maven and part-time writer living in the United Kingdom. She is finishing her last year of an honours Master of Health Science degree, in preparation for a distance ed PhD in how to get a distance ed PhD. A mother of four, she sporadically sleeps, is in love with fractal math, and has found peace where neuroscience and Java programming meet.



Are you an artist?

AUSU supports the arts!

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

The works of art must:

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

If you are an artist of any kind who creates a product you feel we would be able to use for such a purpose, contact: Debbie Jabbour [djabbour@ausu.org].

Supply a description of the object, a picture if you have it, and its market value.

Voice Writer honoured... NEWS FROM *THE INSIDER*

Distinguished Alumni Award

Audrey-Lynn Karperien is the recipient of the 2002 Distinguished Alumni Award. She graduated in 1998 with a Bachelor of General Studies with great distinction and although her numerous scholarships and appearances on the honour's list would suggest otherwise, Audrey didn't devote all her energies to her studies.

She has been an active community volunteer, she was a regular contributor to AUSU's *The Voice*, and during the past six years she and her military husband and their four children have moved four times (once overseas, and as of December 2002, to the middle of the Mojave Desert). Audrey has co-authored a paper on cancer and nutrition, she assisted in the conduct of a Manitoba-wide physicians survey, and she collaborated on a poster that was presented at an international nutrition conference. She is presently undertaking a Master's program in Neuroscience from the Charles Sturt University in Australia.

Audrey has words of praise for Athabasca University: "I know that without the excellent staff and needed flexibility at AU, I would not have finished the degree, probably would not have finished more than a course of two. In fact, I'd say that if not for AU, my life would be drastically bleak right now."



"... I worked so hard, put so much into my studies, and each time life dealt yet another incredible, amazing, unbelievable blow, AU took me through it and I was able to go on. I think the staff at AU are brilliant at academia and life, and I continue to tell everyone I can draw into education-related conversations all about AU and what distance ed has to offer."

The Distinguished Alumni Award is presented annually to an Athabasca University graduate who is selected based on evidence of outstanding contributions in any field of human endeavour; extraordinary contributions to their community or to society; or a combination of achievements in the above areas.

Contributed by *The Insider*



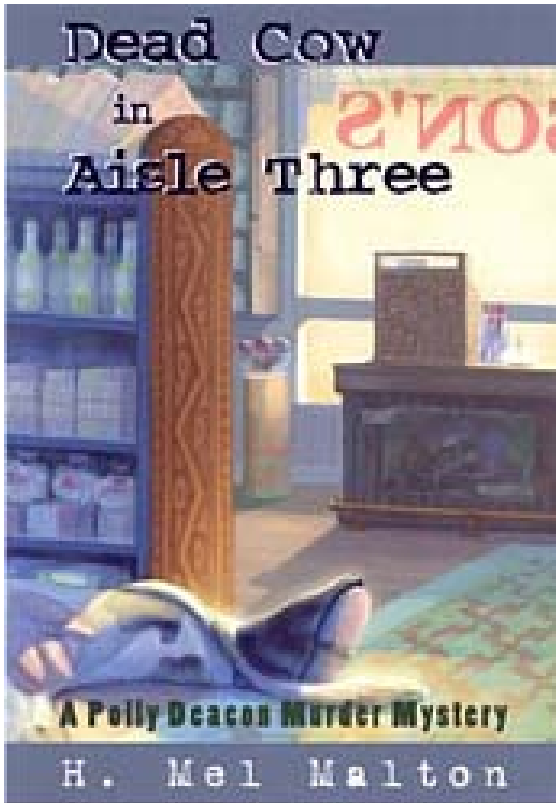
BOOK(s) REVIEW

THE WORKS OF H. MEL MALTON

by Laura Seymour

Next week the Voice will feature part one of an interview with H. Mel Malton...

Getting tired of waiting for the same authors to pen a new book? Want to find something fantastic and Canadian? How about one of the books of H. Mel Malton?



In a world dominated by J.K. Rowling, perhaps you're ready for the hilarious, offbeat descriptions of my new favorite author. No, she doesn't write sci-fi for children. Her three Polly Deacon mystery books have grabbed me by the heart and tickled me pink! I am an unadulterated fan, I admit. I swallow her books up in quick succession and they sit on my bookshelf in honor.

"Mel" is a writer who challenges description. Check out this passage from her third book:

"You interested in a nightcap?" Becker asked, fumbling for the light switch. What he actually said was more like "Yinneres dinna nicap?" (we were really sloshed), but I knew what he meant. I complied, but we had hardly had more than a sip of whatever it was he splashed into two glasses before we were tangled together on the Ikea sofa, making noises that would have made Bryan, had he been there, say "eeew, gross."

In all three of her books, *Down in The Dumps*, *Cue The Dead Guy*, and *Dead Cow in Aisle Three*, she has a turn of phrase that captures the reader's imagination and their funny bone.

In *Down in The Dumps* she introduces us to her heroine, Polly Deacon. Polly lives in Langtree and, of course, a dead official is found in the local dump. Polly is one of those people who figures out what happened by accident. She's not a Sherlock Holmes intentionally bent on finding the clues to crimes. She is for hire but mostly for puppet making, and she has a habit of milking goats!

In *Cue The Dead Guy* we find out who killed a member of a performance troupe Polly happens to be with. It makes for great description of life with a poor touring company.

In *Dead Cow In Aisle Three* we have to find out who killed a kid hired to be a new store's mascot. Was the murder intended for someone else? I won't tell you the killer ending – yes, pun intended – I want you to go out and order at least one of these books, perhaps as your new author for 2003?

I'm not sure how you react, but the titles of the books alone get me laughing. As a matter-of-fact, I'm sure I'm downright worrying to stewardesses and travelers alike when I'm on a long airline flight and merrily belly laughing my way through the hurky jerky flight.

The cover art is well done and I always enjoy showing the books to buddies.

The tiny biography at the back of the books says she was born in England and immigrated to Canada with her parents in the 1960s. Her photos are always kind of dark and “artsy”. What is it with authors and dark photos?

Polly Deacon, Malton’s main character, lives as a painfully poor puppet-maker in Ontario and has found a fine man friend who lets her live “temporarily” on his property. She hasn’t left yet.

Many crazy characters join Polly. Included in them is her on-again-off-again boyfriend. He’s a local cop, Mark Becker. The three books to date have left us laughing over their ridiculous relationship. I’m sure it’s far more realistic than many of us would like to admit! Becker is your ex, my ex, your brother... he’s, well, a Jerk with a capital ‘J’. Anyway, their antics always make us giggle.

Polly has some – errr habits we won’t discuss. She breaks the law and it doesn’t bode well with Mr. On-Again...

There are some problems being in this neck of the country. There are just too many murders, but thankfully the facts fall into Polly’s lap. Hmmm...didn’t Jessica Fletcher (*Murder, She Wrote*) have the same problem?

Mel’s characters are not for the timid. They crackle with youthfully slanted realness and anything but drab, humdrum “normality”. She takes us into her world of puppet making. She educates us. She shows us starvation... how many times has the character been cut off for not paying her Petro Canada bill?!

The third book took me along as usual but from the second I saw a pair of kids happen on the scene with a problem I knew there was trouble for Polly! Sure enough, Polly has finally left us hanging at the end of a book. Each of the other books has been politely wrapped up at the end. Now I’m climbing the walls waiting for book four! I *have* to find out how she’s going to get her poor dear Polly out of this pickle. Or is she?

If you want a fun author to read, I hope you pick up one or more of the books of H. Mel Malton and enjoy her writing as much as I do.

Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have to try to find out when her next book is coming out.

H. Mel’s first book was short-listed for the Arthur Ellis award for Best Crime Novel of 1998. She’s currently living in Huntsville, Ontario on a farm with her two dogs –Karma and Ego. I love that great wildlife outdoors reality she lives. I Wish I could go live on a farm and write successfully for a living.

Next week, the Voice features part one of a two-part interview with H. Mel Malton...

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).





Dear Sandra,

I am in a dilemma. I love two men. One is my ex-boyfriend, who desperately wants to come back to me; the other is my current boyfriend. Both are great men, but I feel more spiritually connected to my ex. I am unable to make a decision. Do you have any tips?

Confused in Weyburn

Dear Confused,

Choosing between two wonderful men to share your life with is heart wrenching. The guilt you are facing by breaking one of their hearts must be tearing you up inside, but you could stand the chance of losing both of them if you don't make a decision soon.

We all have idealized images of how love should be. Which man most closely fits your image of the perfect relationship?

My "tips" would be to go with your heart on this one. You say that you are more spiritually connected to your ex and that obviously indicates to me that he is your preference. Remind yourself of why you separated in the first place. Was it his choice or yours? Was your relationship good?

If only we could predict the outcome of our decisions to make sure the decision we made was the right one. Unfortunately life is full of difficult decisions and this is one you need to make on your own. You have not provided enough information about these men, besides the fact they are both great, for me to really direct you. I wish you all the best.

Sandra

**I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! TELL ME YOUR TROUBLES.
YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED.**

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

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: Why do I have to enter my username and password to get into the databases?

A: The journal databases are subscription-based products. The AU Library has purchased subscriptions to these databases for the use of the AU community. We require you to enter a username and password so that we can authenticate you in our system and make sure that we do not allow unlicensed access to the databases.

Q: What is the Digital Reading Room?

A: The Digital Reading Room (DRR) was designed as an electronic course reserves tool to facilitate student access to supplementary course materials and other learning resources available through the World Wide Web. These resources include journal articles located in some of the journal databases AU Library subscribes to, as well as websites and audio/video clips. In order to access the articles from our journal databases students are required to enter their username and student id, so that we can verify they are active students.

What's New in the Library?

AU Library has recently added ScienceDirect to our suite of journal databases. Science Direct is one of the world's largest providers of scientific, technical and medical (STM) literature. This database is a welcome addition to our current subscriptions as it provides access over 1700 journals from Elsevier Science covering all fields of science (including journal titles from Business, Psychology, Arts and Humanities, and Social Science). ScienceDirect is part of the CNSLP-licensed suite.

Record Broken!

A record was broken in the library in January. We sent out **1013** packages to students, surpassing the previous record set last January of 887! Congratulations and heart-felt thanks go out to all involved in the process of sending library materials out - Acquisitions and Cataloguing for getting the materials on the shelf, Public Services for filling all incoming requests, Ruth Bulmer and Lorraine Moth in the Library Mailroom for actually packaging up all the materials, and to the University Mailroom for dealing with an increased work load!

Contributed by *The Insider*

CANADIAN FED WATCH!

NEWS ACROSS THE NATION...

By Karl Low



New Brunswick for Education

Premier Bernard Lord has set the province of New Brunswick on a course for future prosperity. His State of the Province Address, delivered on Jan 30th, shows that he is a man who understands the value brought by an educated populace. Unlike certain other Premiers, Premier Lord's address revolved around education, both K-12 and post-secondary, and the plans his government has been making. These plans not only include making education accessible for everybody by increasing bursary amounts and university funding amounts significantly, but also include plans for keeping university graduates within the province of New Brunswick.

To do this, the Provincial Government is starting a program whereby companies that employ new graduates will have governmental assistance in paying their wages for the first two years. This not only encourages businesses to hire students earlier during their education, but also encourages more people to become post-secondary students, as they will be nearly guaranteed a position thereafter.

Probably the most insightful quote from Premier Lord is when he says in the address "... for me balancing the books is not an end unto itself, but a means to be able to invest in people, to invest in our communities. It is a means to build for the future." It is unfortunate that not every Premier seems to have this idea, that some are simply focused on removing as much as they can from the government books, and hoping that everything will turn out alright.

Premier Lord's address acknowledges where there are weaknesses in New Brunswick's education system, and what's more, makes positive plans to change these. Instead of antagonizing the Federal Government, New Brunswick works with them, and as a result is part of a 400 million dollar shared program to improve the infrastructure of the Province.

All in all, Premier Lord sets up a tall order for himself, his government, and the citizens of New Brunswick. If they can succeed in following through with it though, New Brunswick may well become the Province we all wish we were in.

Keep Busy this Summer

The Law Commission of Canada is looking for a summer student to help them update their web-site. If you can read French and English, this might be an opportunity to really make your resume shine.

You only have until the end of March to get your resume in, so don't spend a lot of time thinking about it.

Prince Edward Island to teach Japan how to speak English

ESL Finance, a company based in Prince Edward Island, has embarked on a plan to teach English to students in China and Japan over the internet. Focussing primarily on Japan because of one of the principal founders works in Japan, the company is supported by almost half a million dollars of public funding.

What seems strange to me is that while private companies are able to teach languages over the internet, our own distance education university still has basically no interactive content on the internet at all. I expected, when I enrolled at Athabasca University and was told how they were aggressively expanding their online offerings, that we would perhaps see internet video being used to teach courses, that lectures would be offered for download, and that there would be an excellent system set up whereby students could get in touch with one another to discuss aspects of their coursework. I was also surprised to see how little it seems Athabasca University uses video conferencing for their courses, meetings, and other events.

Maybe AU can take a look at ESL Finance and learn a trick or two. It certainly couldn't hurt.

Entrepreneurs take Heart

While many of us taking degree programmes at Athabasca University are doing it to further our current career, there are always a few who are not exactly sure what they'll be doing once they graduate.

To that end, it is nice to see that there is always room for entrepreneurs. For instance, Nova Scotia recently awarded scholarships of \$1000 to various businesses started by students, with the money split evenly amongst the founders.

The businesses they set up ranged from quite a few landscaping and ice-cream selling businesses to providing local advertising for other businesses, and running a "Haunted Pub Crawl" to various pubs in Halifax. So don't give up, you never know exactly what your interests might lead to.

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.

Missing out on all the deals?

www.ausu.org/services

Get an AU ID card, today!



AU Profiles:

STUDENT:

Lakshmanan Ravindran



What is your name?

Lakshmanan Ravindran (You can call me Ravi for short).

Where do you live?

Whitby, Ontario.

Do you have a family, kids or pets?

Family. Wife Madhu, kids Ishita (age 9) and Rahul (age 6).

Tell us a little about your hobbies, interests and favourite activities.

1. Cooking dishes from different cultures. I like collecting recipe books from different cultures and preparing dishes.

2. Learning about ancient history. I am fascinated with how us humans have evolved from the beginning of time and the fact that down the long road, someone will be

learning about our current times and consider us ancient!!!.

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

I have enrolled for the BSc. Computing and Information Systems program.

Currently taking my first course(Comp200) which I started on the 1st of Feb 2003.

How long have you been a student?

1 week.

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

Before joining the program at Athabasca University, I did a lot of research into the offerings from AU and I was impressed with the way distance education is being offered by the university. My initial experience, from the point of enrolling as a student, seeking a student loan to the point of receiving my first courseware has been wonderful. I am sure that AU will provide me with the rich academic experience that I am looking for.

Do you work? What do you do?

Yes I do work. I currently work as a Network Administrator with a plastics injection moulding company based at Whitby in Ontario. My company employs around 300 people. I am responsible for support of the company's 70 computers, LAN and WAN.

I also support 3 NT servers and 1 Novell server. I love my job as it provides me with the opportunity to meet and interact with so many people and learn from these experiences. Also the job is challenging when it comes to migrating and upgrading infrastructure.

How is AU helping you toward your goals?

The most immediate benefit of my course with AU is that I am able to pursue my undergraduate course whilst working. I cannot stop working as I need to support my family. My other goal is to complete my undergraduate degree (which I could not do when I was in India) and if all goes well pursue a masters degree from AU.

What are your future goals?

Learn! Learn! and Learn!. There is so much that the world has to offer. More so in my area of Computer networking where technology changes/ advancement are so frequent. Isn't it fascinating to learn about technologies like Wireless and Voice over IP and how the benefits of these could be passed down to the end user. I hope to pursue my Phd. in a relevant field when the time comes.



Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for other students?

As I mentioned above, Learn! Learn! and Learn!. My advice is that one should effectively use his or her time to learn as much as possible. Eventually this knowledge will benefit society.

Anything else we should know? Funny stories about the dog eating your laptop/ praise for AU, a friend or a tutor?

My family and myself immigrated to Canada from India in 2000. Prior to coming over to Canada, I was working as an IT manager for Motorola in India. My wife and children have adapted well to life in Canada particularly the weather. My daughter has a goldfish for a pet. She is very keen to have a Golden Retriever as a pet, which should happen soon. Before coming over to Canada, we had to leave our pet Dalmatian back in India which was very sad for us specially Ishita and Rahul. We did think of bringing him along with us, but we thought that settling in a new country had its challenges.

We enjoy travelling and seeing the beauty that is Canada. We have visited Ottawa, Niagara falls and Gatineau in Quebec. We hope to visit a province a year for holidays so that we have the opportunity to see as much of Canada. I am looking forward to my convocation at Athabasca in Alberta in 3 to 4 years time (though I am sure we will be visiting Alberta before that).

Thanks Ravi! It's great to hear from someone who is so new to the school. Best of luck.

COMPUTER BUYING FOR DUMMIES

HOW TO BUY LIKE A GEEK

Published: Wed-5-Feb-2003

By George Lister, The Argus



THUNDER BAY, ONT. (CUP)—At first glance this seems like an odd time of year to write about buying a computer since most people, not just students, do that in September. The first reason for doing it now is that there are usually other stories to tell when school kicks off, but more importantly this is a great time to shop if you want to save some money.

Computer shopping can almost always be broken down to a series of questions, so that's how this is going to be structured. Since we've all had enough exams, I'll be kind and give you the answers too.

QUESTION 1: MAC OR PC?

Yeah, this question is still out there folks, just in case you thought Apple was dead. With some impressive new machines that look even better than they work (which is really well), Apple has regained a lot of lost market share. Even so, I generally would not recommend buying a Mac unless you're heavily into video, sound or image editing. And, frankly, if you're into that you probably don't need to read this article.

Macs are great, hell I own one as well as a PC. If I had to pick just one computer to use for the rest of my life, I'd probably pick the Mac. That being said they are more expensive, somewhat slower, and it's a lot harder to find software for them. Sadly, for most people the PC is a better bet.

QUESTION 1B: WHAT ABOUT LINUX?

Linux is an open source (no copyright on the code) operating system. It is stable, it is free (or cheap), and it is often heralded as the only real threat to Microsoft out there. Unfortunately it remains useful only to geeks. The problem is that even with all the user friendly ways in which Linux has been modified, you need to know a fair bit about command lines and coding to truly make it worthwhile. Let me put it this way...I'm a computer geek, but I'm not a good enough of one to really be able to use Linux well.

QUESTION 2: AMD OR INTEL?

The short answer is that it doesn't really matter. AMD's Athlon and Duron processors are usually a bit cheaper than Intel's Pentium and Celeron ones and have similar, and sometimes better performance. Ultimately, they all work and there are good deals to be had no matter which you choose, so go by price and performance. If a computer has what you want at a price you're willing to pay, then don't worry too much about the processor. The only caveat here is that the Intel Celeron chip is the weakest out of the bunch so, since you can usually get one for cheaper anyhow, I'd go for a Duron based one instead.

QUESTION 3: HOW MUCH SHOULD I SPEND?

The flip answer to that question is: As much as you can afford. That phrase has almost become a cliché in the computer industry, but it's also valid since you usually end up spending more money to upgrade later than to buy everything you need right away.

Since having tons of money to spend on anything is rarely the case for most of us student types let me throw some rough numbers at you. These days you can pick up a decent computer for under \$1000. You have to be careful here though, since there's usually a catch. In some cases the machine doesn't come with a monitor, or it only has 128 MB of RAM (which just isn't enough these days), and almost never has a CD burner. Also sometimes the best sounding deals come from companies that have less than stellar quality and service records.

If you have a little more to spend, say about \$1300 or so, you can get a computer that's pretty much loaded with the good stuff. For \$1500 you can get a computer to be proud of in every respect, and \$2000 will buy you a computer that will have most geeks calling you 'daddy.'

Here's a quick checklist of what you should look for at a minimum in a new machine:

- 256 MB of RAM
- 40 GB hard drive
- 1.2 gigahertz processor
- 17" monitor
- CD burner (you know you're gonna want one)
- Windows XP
- AGP, non-integrated video card. Lots of cheap machines have what is called integrated video, as it's built right onto the motherboard of the machine. This is cheap and sometimes even decent for video, but you will NEVER be able to upgrade it and it isn't suitable for a lot of games.

QUESTION 4: SHOULD I BUY A USED COMPUTER?

There are lots of used computers available, especially in April and May when students head for home. Sometimes you can find a really good deal, but there are a lot of problems. If you buy a used machine bring somebody with you who knows computers inside and out to check it over because there's usually no warranty. Also, don't plan on playing a lot of video games if you buy a used machine since, typically, games need some pretty recent hardware to work.

You can also buy a used machine from some stores and chains, and there are good deals to be had. If you go this route you'll at least get a limited warranty but it will be more expensive than making a private purchase and the same warning about video games applies. It's also rare to find a used machine with a CD burner and adding one might just put the purchase price a lot higher than you want.

If all you're looking for a machine to surf the web, download music and to write essays on, then going used is a pretty good way to go. For less than \$500 you can get a machine that will do those things I just listed, albeit not much more. Here's what you should look for:

- 128 MB of RAM
- 6 GB hard drive
- 300 Mhz processor or better
- Ethernet card and/or modem (depending on how you connect to the net)
- Windows 98
- 15" monitor or better

QUESTION 5: SHOULD I BUY A LAPTOP?

Laptops are great. There's no question that it's a good thing to have at school and I use it to take all my notes for class. They're also nice for space-limited residence dwellers or anyone with limited desk space. However, laptops are more expensive than desktops, and more limited in their capabilities.

Laptops usually have less hard drive space, are slower, have less RAM, have fewer expansion options, and have less capable video systems. CD burners are quite common in laptops now, but do drive the price even higher. Also, anything you want to add to a laptop usually has to be added externally with cables.

Support and repair is another issue. Laptops are usually pretty hardy creatures but they do get banged around quite a bit. Add in the ever present possibility of a general computer failure of some kind and the odds of needing repair at some point are quite high. If your warranty has run out it can take hundreds of dollars and weeks of time (since it usually has to go back to the manufacturer) to get your machine back.

There's no denying that these are very useful machines for students though, so here's some prices and specs to think about. \$1500 or less should get you a machine that runs at 1.3 Ghz or so (usually a Celeron or Duron chip) with 256 MB of RAM, a DVD-ROM, and a 20 GB hard drive. Around \$2000 speeds the machine up to about 1.7 Ghz, increases the hard drive to 30 MB and might get you a DVD-ROM/CD burner combo. Over \$2000 will either get you more power and more features, or less of each but a smaller, shinier machine.

What I ended up doing as an alternative was buy a great big desktop system first. Then I found a really cheap used laptop and bought it just for taking to school for notes (about all it's good for). This doesn't save you any space but it saves you a lot of cash and gives you the best of both worlds.

QUESTION 6: WHERE SHOULD I BUY IT FROM?

You have, basically, two choices when it comes to buying a computer. You can either get a name brand machine from the manufacturer or from a big box store (like Future Shop), or you can buy a locally built machine from smaller retailers.

It's not as cut and dry as it seems. At first glance buying the name brand machine is a no-brainer, but there are problems there. Especially in their cheaper offerings, name brand machines often don't have name brand components inside. They often have cheaper hard drives, power supplies too weak for the demands placed on them, and integrated video (see question 3). On the other hand they're often cheaper, offer national service on a standard warranty, have more financing plans available, and offer toll free support.

A locally built machine requires the buyer to have a little more computer know-how than does a name brand one since you don't have the same toll free support option. On the other hand the parts are usually higher quality, repairs are done here in town so they take less time, and you get to specify exactly what you want to go into the computer.

Having worked at both big box stores and smaller local ones, I would suggest that you at least look at the local options. The prices are competitive and there's no question you get better service with faster turnaround. If having a warranty that extends beyond the borders of your town is important consider buying an extended warranty. These are available at all small stores and cover you nationwide.

QUESTION 6B: WHAT'S THAT ABOUT EXTENDED WARRANTIES?

Extended warranties are—in some ways—the greatest rip-off in the industry. If nothing ever goes wrong with your machine the retailer has just made a bunch of pure profit. If anything does go wrong however you will be really freaking happy to have one.

Since they usually add a few hundred dollars to the purchase price it isn't an easy decision. I tend to recommend them just because I know much I used to charge people to fix their computers. If you buy a cheap as hell machine from, say, Future Shop, definitely get the warranty. It's been my experience that those machines break a lot. If you buy a laptop, budget to buy the extended warranty there, too, since those repairs are the priciest in the business. Otherwise it's your call.

QUESTION 7: WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO BUY?

There are actually two best times to buy computers. The first is in September when everyone and their dog runs a back-to-school sale. You can find some great deals, especially on packages that include a printer and other

goodies. This is the time to shop around and don't let pushy salespeople or huge crowds force a decision upon you too quickly.

The other good time is pretty much right now. Most tech companies start bringing out their new models around March so retailers, often with Christmas stock still in inventory, have to clear out some space. These deals aren't as widely advertised but they are out there and, since the crowds aren't as bad, you'll probably get a little bit better service.

That's it folks, your crash course in computer shopping is done. The last few tips I'll give you are simple ones. First, do your homework. Know what you want to buy and what the price range is. Second, bring a computer knowledgeable person along with you when you go shopping. And, finally, don't be pressured by limited time sales or pushy salespeople, take your time.

With all that in mind go forth and buy yourself a really wicked new toy.

CANADIAN LABOUR A SHORT HISTORY [PART 8]

The Decline and Resurgence of Canada's Labour Movement 1920-1940 – The Auto Corporations of Canada

By Wayne E. Benedict



The two main auto corporations in Canada in the 1920s and 30s were Ford, enforcing its strict hard-line approach to management, and General Motors, which preferred a welfare capitalist approach to its labour relations. With the auto industry booming and a general shortage of workers in the late 1920s, autoworkers experienced a reduced likelihood of being arbitrarily let go but concurrently, their employers were exerting major concessionary demands on their wages.

Communists were not the only group attempting to woo the interests of the autoworkers, the historically craft oriented TLC was also attempting to organize in the auto sector. When the GM plant in Oshawa was struck in 1928, the TLC took a leading role in representing the strikers. It soon became clear that the TLC was not seriously interested in industrial unionism and, in response, the

Communists founded the Automobile Industrial Workers' Union (AIWU) in order to offer the autoworkers a militant class-struggle based industrial union as opposed to the aristocratic craft unionism of the TLC.

The Communists displayed a fanatical zeal in their beliefs and openly attempted to organize workers at shop gate meetings in the 1920s. However, "during the 1930s Communists learned how to operate more effectively in clandestinity" (Manley, 1992) by having members infiltrate a worksite as an employee, make acquaintances sympathetic to the Communist cause, form a union shop group, and organize workers from within a corporation. The first major breakthrough in organizing North American autoworkers was not attained by the Canadian Communists nor was it even in Canada. The United Auto Workers (UAW), having won a major strike

in Flint, Michigan in February 1937, stimulated its membership to balloon from 88,000 to 400,000 six months post-strike. In the same month as the Flint victory, Canadian autoworkers in Oshawa, Ontario were battling General Motors in a struggle that would become a turning point in the history of Canadian labour.

The Oshawa strike pitted the autoworkers not only against the powerful corporation of GM, but also against a rabidly anti-labour Premier Hepburn and his Ontario Liberals. Determined to keep the American based Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—a dissident body whose forerunner, the Committee for Industrial Organizations splintered from the craft union oriented AFL in November 1935—out of Canada, Hepburn interjected himself into the dispute and utilized all of his influence and power as premier to defeat the strikers and by extension, the CIO.

The role of the CIO in the Oshawa strike was marginal in any case, as it had supplied no tangible but only verbal support to the strikers. The strike was conducted, financed, and settled by the Canadian striking autoworkers. Somewhat undeservedly, when the prolonged strike was finally settled largely in the favour of the workers, the CIO was given much of the credit. Having shown workers that it had had the strength to stand up to giants of the auto industry as well as governments and emerge victorious, the doors were opened to the mass organization of industrial unions in Canada. Workers across the country were inspired to organize, “it was a landmark in Canadian labour history” (Abella, 1992).

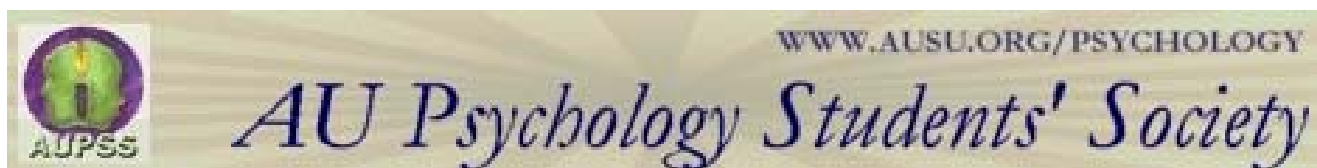
Canadian workers entered the 1920s demoralized, disorganized and disadvantaged but through their determination, outrage and hard work, they struggled on to emerge at the end of the 1930s as a reenergized and markedly more powerful—albeit subordinate—segment of Canadian society. Communists, socialists, craft unionists and others, while holding to different visions, all worked tirelessly in their own ways for the betterment of those segments of the working-class for which they advocated. In the process, capitalists and state leaders were awakened to the realization that the proletarian class had to be recognized and legitimized within Canadian society in order to construct industrial peace and protect production and profits. The developments within Canadian industrial society during the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century prefaced the industrial relations changes that would vastly alter labour’s position in Canada during and after the 1940s.

Next Week: Worker Gains and Changes in the Working Class and Labour Movement 1940-1975

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MVU TEACHES PEOPLE HOW TO BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSING

MSVA Press Release

October 3, 2002, Halifax - There's a new course at Mount Saint Vincent University that's taking a unique approach to addressing the problem of homelessness and the lack of affordable housing in Nova Scotia.

Developing Affordable Housing is a continuing education certificate course, sponsored by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The course starts on October 5, 2002 and continues for 12 Saturdays this fall and winter. The course is designed to train individuals or groups who are considering or currently developing affordable housing projects. Students will learn how to manage the planning, design, construction and operation of non-profit community housing.

"Every day there seems to be another story on the news about a tent city. We walk by homeless people on our streets all the time. We need to create good, affordable places for people to live. We need to fix this problem. It's not going to fix itself," says Dr. Deborah Norris, MSVU Professor of Family Studies and Gerontology. Dr. Norris worked with the Coalition for Community Action on Homelessness to design the new course. CMHC also acted as a resource in developing the course and providing educational materials.

Students include community activists, housing developers and people from social service agencies. There's even a homeless man registered to take the program.

[Read More](#)

UNB LAW COURSE LOOKS BEYOND HOLLYWOOD HYPE

University of New Brunswick Press Release

The world of law depicted in a television drama such as *Law and Order* would not be as intriguing if it dealt with binding arbitration and mortgage contracts.

Yet, viewers are drawn into the dramatics of such criminal law shows. That's what the hype is for.

It's also where University of New Brunswick law professor Steven Penney and his Law and Popular Culture course come in. Prof. Penney, whose primary area of research and teaching is criminal law, has added the representation of lawyers in film and television to his briefcase.

"You rarely see corporate litigation or contract drafting on the screen," said Prof. Penney. "That's the unsexy part of the law. It's not attractive fodder for Hollywood."

The study of law and popular culture is still fairly novel but is quickly gaining momentum, he says. UNB is one of the few universities in Canada offering a course in the subject.

[Read More](#)

THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN INTEGRATED NANOTOOLS

University of Alberta Press Release

The Faculty of Engineering at the University of Alberta proudly announces a collaboration with Sun Microsystems, Inc. (Nasdaq: SUNW) and the Government of Alberta to establish the Centre of Excellence in Integrated NanoTools. The creation of a Centre of Excellence in Integrated NanoTools will position Alberta as a world leader in the development of nanotechnology and provide researchers with a nanotechnology design infrastructure to develop microchips, microsystems, and nanodevices.

"Nanotechnology is a strategic field of research with tremendous interdisciplinary benefits," said Dr. David Lynch, Dean of Engineering. "The Centre of Excellence in Integrated NanoTools will support and integrate nanoresearchers in a variety of disciplines including information and communication technology, energy, and manufacturing."

[Read More](#)

SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

LAURENCE DECORE AWARDS FOR STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Value: \$500

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 01, 2003



Administrator: Alberta Scholarship Programs

Notes:

Applicant must be currently enrolled in a minimum of three full courses at a designated Alberta post-secondary institution. Based on involvement in either student government or student societies and clubs or organizations. Student must be nominated by the school. See the Web site for more details.

Contact Information:

Alberta Scholarship Program
9940 – 106 Street, 9th Floor, P.O. Box 28000, Station Main
Edmonton, AB T5J 4R4

Phone: (780) 427-8640
Fax: (780) 422-4516
Toll Free: n/s
Web Site: <http://www.alberta-learning.ab.ca/scholarships>
E-mail: heritage@gov.ab.ca
Application Address: <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/scholarships/forms.asp>

PETER ELZINGA FAMILY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Value: \$1000

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
JUNE 01, 2003

Administrator: The Peter Elzinga Family Foundation

Notes:

Awards are intended to assist anyone who has been away from formal education and wishes to further their education and/or any student who is continuing their education. Available for full or part-time study at any recognized institution. Must complete an application form.

Contact Information:

The Peter Elzinga Family Foundation
2500-10303 Jasper Ave NW
Edmonton, AB T5J3N6

E-mail: pelzinga@telusplanet.net

Notice to AU Graduate Students and Those Considering 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 grad students' association:

- Grad 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], Vice-President
Athabasca University Students' Union
Call: 1-800-788-9041 ext 3413



Conference Connections

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*

- **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>

- **CASE District VIII** - March 8-11, 2003 - Coeur d'Alene, Idaho - "Connect in Coeur d'Alene."

Details: <http://www.connectincda.com>



WRITE FOR THE VOICE!

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



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.

Community Networks Group



Action Against War on Iraq

Web: www.wage-peace.org

Info: peace@wage-peace.org

The next global day of action against the war on Iraq has been called for Saturday Feb. 15. In Edmonton, we will be meeting at 1:00 p.m. Churchill SQ. on Feb. 15 for a march through the downtown, and a rally back at the Square. If you want to get involved with the **Edmonton Coalition Against War and Racism** and help with postering, hand-billing, media liaison, marshalling, getting the word out, etc., please contact the Coalition at: peace@wage-peace.org

Participating groups & individuals are encouraged to bring signs & banners.

If you wish to endorse the march and the antiwar effort being organized by the Edmonton Coalition Against War and Racism, please visit: www.wage-peace.org

For further information, please contact:
e-mail: peace@wage-peace.org



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

What happens when you mix oil and fire? What happens when you mix Corporate Oil with the fire of religious zeal? Weibo 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

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

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** (c) Tel/Fax: (780) 474-6058 > Cell: (780) 995-6819

The Absolutely Yes! Co-op Presents: The Making of Warriors

A night of 3 stories about oppression, rights and courage ...
Feb. 6-16 @ The P.I.T.S Gallery: downstairs at 10154 103 St.
Tix: \$16 - Seating is very limited, call **420-1757** to reserve.

The Making of Warriors
A new play by **Sharon Pollock**
Directed by **Heather Inglis**

"You can either shoot me or throw me in jail for I will not testify nor be a false witness" "You co-operate and live. You don't co-operate and die."

A fatal confrontation breaks out at Wounded Knee on the Sioux reservation in South Dakota in 1973. **Anna Mae Pictou Aquash**, a Mi'kmaq, who is active in the American Indian Movement is there. Not long after, she is mysteriously killed. Some say it is the FBI. In South Carolina during the 1820's, **Sarah Moore Grimke** decides to speak out against the abuses of slavery and for the rights for women. Some try to silence her. **Eloise**, a woman not unlike us, recently recalls seeing a group of men by the side of the road one day when she is driving on a deserted highway, who are trying to hide something. She chooses to pass by, and look the other way.

The Making of Warriors, by two time Governor General Award winning playwright Sharon Pollock, weaves together fact, fiction, reporting, dramatization in a theatrical unfolding of the lives of these three women. Join us at the new and unconventional P.I.T.S. Art Gallery to become part of a theatrical experience created by some of Edmonton's best artists and performers and one of the country's most important storytellers.

"Women are bought and sold in slave markets to satisfy the lust of those who bear the names of Christians" "If you have any values higher than the possession of land, money, and prestige, I ask you to be outraged that your government values property more than human beings"

The Making of Warriors features Jon Baggaley, Julie Golosky, Sandy Paddick, Mike Unrau, Alison Wells, Sylvia Wong. **Set - Costumes** are designed by Brian Bast. **Videography - visuals** are created by Lindsay McIntyre. **Soundscapes** are designed by Dale Ladouceur and Crowtown Productions.

The Making of Warriors is **sponsored** by *The Alberta Foundation for the Arts, The Edmonton Arts council, Ground Zero Productions, Mothers Music, Scruffy Murphy's and Vue Weekly.*

February 6 16th, 2003 at 8pm. @ the P.I.T.S. Gallery, 10154 - 103rd St.
Matinee performances Sunday Feb. 9th /16th at 2pm. / (No performance Feb. 10th)
Call Tix On the SQ. **420-1757** to reserve your tix. **(recommended)** or at the door.

For more information, kindly contact: Heather Inglis @ 448-2517 / 420-6357

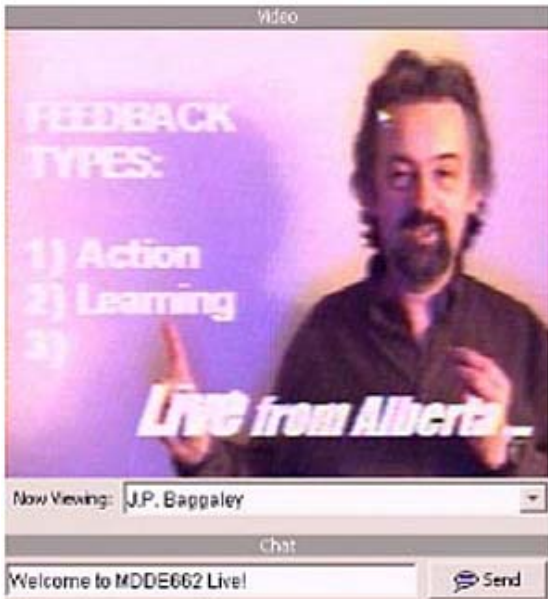
"We are part of all that we have met." Tennyson

Courtesy of: **The Community Networks Group** (c) Tel/Fax: (780) 474-6058 > Cell: (780) 995-6819



ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM YOUR UNIVERSITY

BRIEFS FROM AU'S *THE INSIDER*



From Alberta ... It's CDE Live!

The Centre for Distance Education continues to break new ground in its online teaching techniques. Here, Dr. Jon Baggaley climbs inside a PowerPoint presentation for a live presentation to his MDDE662 class. "The students contribute to the online seminars via live audio and video," says Jon.

MDE student Jim Klaas says, "This sharing makes you feel like an insider in the process as opposed to a name and email address."

Online media convergence was one of the topics Jon addressed during his recent six-month sabbatical. In a lecture tour of Canada, Britain, Norway, and Sweden, he visited eight universities, and attended the launch of the Oxford Internet Institute. He also took part in distance education conferences across Canada, and represented the national actors' union, ACTRA, at the Canadian Conference of the Arts.

"North American distance education is behind Europe in its uses of the educational media," says Jon. "The new MDE662 seminar course

illustrates a wide range of conferencing experiences, with live presentations by the international experts who are developing them."

MDE students also evaluate these online techniques, and their reviews of collaborative software packages (95 products so far) are published in IRRODL's Technical Reports series, and on the [CDE web site](#).

President to Receive Honorary Award

President Dominique Abrioux will once again be recognized internationally. The Senate of the Open University (UK) will confer upon him the honorary award of "Doctor of the University" in recognition of his work in areas of special educational concern to the University.

This award will be presented at a convocation ceremony in Versailles, France in September. This is the only Open University ceremony held outside of the UK, and it is attended both by UK and European graduands.

This latest recognition follows the "Honorary Fellow of COL Award" he received earlier this year from the Commonwealth of Learning for his contribution to distance education.

Dominique has also been asked to serve on the Board of Management of the Alberta Economic Development Authority (AEDA) as a member of the Labour Force Committee. He joins 60 volunteers from a variety of small and large business, local municipal development agencies, and academic and research institutions.

The AEDA is a partnership between the Government of Alberta and business that is unique in Canada. Established in 1994 and chaired by the premier, AEDA's mandate is to provide policy advice and direction on competitiveness and economic development. AEDA provides the private sector with an ongoing opportunity to help shape the future course of Alberta's economy.

Congratulations, Dominique!

For more information on AU President, Dr. Abrioux, see:
<http://www.athabasca.ca/presoff/staff/abrioux/abrioux2.htm>

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.athabasca.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.athabasca.ca/html/services/advice/conserv.html>.

THE VOICE FICTION

The Voice wants your fiction.

We are accepting creative writing in all genres for a Voice fiction feature.

Send us your stories, poems, and other short fiction.

Send submissions to voice@ausu.org



AUSU SPEAKS: January 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 [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:

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 should be submitted to the editor at voice@ausu.org with 'CLASSIFIED AD' listed in the subject title.

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

THE VOICE

c/o Athabasca University Students' Union
#306, 10030-107th Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4
800.788.9041 ext. 3413

Editor Tamra Ross Low

THE VOICE ONLINE: WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE

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To subscribe for weekly email reminders as each issue is posted, see the 'subscribe' link on *The Voice* front page
www.ausu.org/voice

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Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its frequent contributions

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