

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 11 Issue 25
June 18, 2003

CONVOCATION SPECIAL



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Sandra Moore's grad photo album

The Grad's Perspective

Debbie Jabbour walks the red carpet

Address by the Graduate



Graduate Profiles

Students Congratulate the grads in Sounding Off

Plus: articles from the regular Voice writers...

Plus: Canadian FedWatch!, Flicks & Folios, and news, announcements and opportunities from your university and beyond.

THE VOICE - CONVOCAION SPECIAL

Jun 18, 2003

Volume 11, Issue 25

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We love to hear from you! Send your letters to voice@ausu.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter in the Voice.

Quote of the Week

Genius might be the ability to say a profound thing in a simple way.

-- Charles Bukowski

THE VOICE

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frequent contributions

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AUSU COMMITTEES SEEK MEMBERS



AUSU Committees are looking for student members who can volunteer just a few hours a month to answer email or attend teleconferences. Anyone who wants to become more involved with AUSU Student Council can gain great experience and insight through committee work.

The External Committee, chaired by Shirley Barg, needs representatives from Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Northern Canada. Contact Shirley at sbarg@ausu.org if you would like to get involved, and help improve services to AU students in your area.

The Academic Committee was dormant for awhile, but now it's back up and running under chair Tamra Ross Low. We will be working on ways to help assess student satisfaction with AU's academic services, and need student input into how we should collect data, and what questions we should be asking. A past project of the Academic Committee was the Course and Program surveys on the AUSU website. If you want to have some input into our next project, contact Tamra at trosslow@ausu.org for more information.

Attention Artists

AUSU is seeking artwork for the cover of the 2003/04 student planner.

A prize of \$250 is being offered, and your work will be seen by thousands of students.

Entries may include sketches, photos or paintings - be creative!

Deadline – July 15, 2003

Email entries to ausu@ausu.org



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CONVOCATION 2003

PHOTO SPECIAL - part 1

Text and Photos by Sandra Moore

Be sure to read The Voice next week for complete convocation coverage, and many more photos. This week, part 1 ...

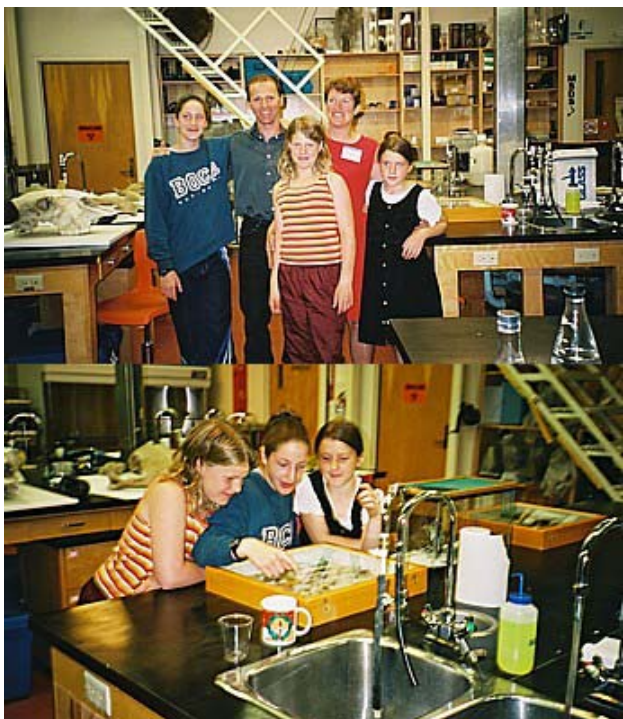
What's it like to graduate? As a member of the Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) I was invited to attend this year's convocation, Saturday, June 14th and I had the chance to finally put some faces to names and catch a glimpse, before it's my turn, of what it's like to graduate from AU. Attending convocation as an observer is an emotional experience. You can't help but well up a little as you watch people revel in their day of glory and watch some of them bite their lips and hold back tears as their name is called and their degree is placed in hand. Here's my take on the day.

Actually convocation started the night before. Friday evening the AU Alumni Association invited all "alumni" (those who graduated from graduate programs that day and those who would receive undergrad degrees the following day) to attend a meet-and-greet function in the Athabasca Best Western Hotel. When I arrived shortly after it started at 7 P.M., the small room was packed with students and their families. With all these students in one place, it was a perfect opportunity to "hound" students into giving me a short profile (these will be running in The Voice for weeks to come). Kerry Joyes, AU alumni organizer, supplied me with free drinks tickets to "persuade" students/alumni to share their AU experience. Even though I had to get up the next morning at 6:30, I stayed until shortly before 12, talking with fellow students, and getting to know a lot of amazing people and the families who have supported them through their AU education.

6:30 AM came quick! I had promised fellow councillor Nicholas Palamarchuk that I would be ready to go by 7:20 AM, but I hit the snooze button one time too many and couldn't bring myself to get out bed until 7:00, so after a quick shower and a call from Nicholas at 7:30 to see where the heck I was, we were on our way to the AUSU sponsored breakfast, which was very well-attended. Students were treated to pancakes (flipped and served by AUSU members, with AU President Dominique Abrioux and VP Judith Hughes), sausages (somehow Nicholas, who just had a stomach minimizing operation, [see last week's issue of the Voice], was put in charge of cooking sausages - a food he once adored. What cruelty!), fruit, coffee and juice.



Against the backdrop of AU's cement pond that mesmerizes with its triple fountains, Juno award winning Alberta-based family group The McDades impressed everyone with classical melodies and up-beat Celtic tunes. Once again I looked for the name tags with a blue strip, which indicated a soon-to-be AU graduate. Everyone I approached in the breakfast tent was more than willing to fill out a questionnaire and pose for a photo - some even wanted to include their spouses or children. People were amazed at the "grandeur" of the grounds, the massive size of the convocation tent, and many were perplexed at the university's size, considering that few students actually attend in person.



After breakfast I ventured out onto the massive grounds of AU looking for those wearing the blue, clip-on badge of honor. I sat down at a picnic table set up in front of the pond to have a student fill out a questionnaire sheet. This individual had come with her mother-in-law, who was obviously extremely proud of her daughter-in-law's achievement. Another graduate, about 50 years of age, was there with her mother who appeared to be around 80. This elderly lady projected such happiness to be able to see her daughter graduate as no one in their family ever had. As I listened to this woman go on and on about how proud she was of her daughter, I glanced over and saw that her daughter had a tear in her eye listening to her mother describe, to a total stranger, what a brilliant, motivated and brave daughter she had.

Family pride was evident everywhere, especially for Wanda Laurin's children Genevieve (13), Monique (11) and Jacqueline (9), whom I encountered in Dietmar Kennepohl's science laboratory. Dietmar was putting on scientific

demonstrations, oohing and aawing the graduates and their families with his Harry Potter, Hogwarts type of experiments. I asked the three Laurin girls, as they were transfixed by the assortment of bugs and butterflies Dietmar was displaying, what it was like having their mom attend AU. They replied that she never got to play with them, which Wanda assured me was not true - children sometimes remember the time you don't spend with them more than the time you do. The girls also said that they were very proud of their mom and that AU is "cool" but their mom was crazy for going back to school, because she already had a job as a teacher.

After speaking to the Laurin family, I spoke quickly with Dietmar about the science lab. From his department, students are sent physics, geology and chemistry kits to work on at home. Each year

1200 students attend labs during the summer on AU property. I even met a science graduate, Sandra MacIsaac (profiled in the Voice this week), the night before at the Alumni function. She is from Minnesota, but came up to Athabasca to complete her labs - a week of grueling 8 hour days of intense hands-on experimentation. I was curious to know where she stayed and Sandra informed me that a student could stay at the local hotel or the university could provide contacts with Athabasca residents who would put up visiting students in their homes. Sandra also mentioned that her friends and co-workers thought she was crazy to give up her summer vacation to do a week-long boot camp of science, just one of the many things an AU student gives up to achieve their goal.





Next, I headed down to the graduating area. An mini trade-fair of sorts was set up for the students including the selling of graduation rings, the handing out of alumni packages, sales of AU merchandise (hoodies, golf shirts and beanie babies with the AU logo and grad cap were their biggest sellers), degree frames for sale, and hood sales.

Hood sales? Are you thinking what the heck is a hood? Well a hood is what is placed over the graduates' shoulders by the Registrar just before they receive their degree on stage from AU's President. Each department has a different color:

Brown – Bachelor of Administration/Management

Green – Bachelor of Arts General Studies (arts & science or applied)

Gold/Yellow - Bachelor of Arts Science

Red - Bachelor of Professional Arts'

Burgundy - Bachelor of Commerce

Hot Pink - Bachelor of Arts

Blue Velvet – Honorary Degree Recipients

I bet all you male BA students are really regretting your choice of program now!

So, why would you buy a hood for \$50.00? Well you would buy one as a souvenir or if you plan on going on to teach at a university or college, because every time there is a graduation at where you go on to teach, you get to wear your academic hood.

At around 11:30, after enjoying the AUSU sponsored lunch of assorted salads, meats, cheeses, a big brown chunk of what I was later informed was pate, and an enormous table of decadent desserts prepared by the AU cafeteria staff, students began preparing for the 1 PM ceremony.

Saying goodbye to their family and friends, who then rushed to get a seat with a decent view in the convocation tent, graduates ventured into graduate-only territory – the robing room. As staff signed graduates in they were warned that once they enter the robing area there is no leaving it and there is no access to a washroom. Here they are fitted into generic black gowns and AU VP Alan Davis takes time to review each graduate's name so that there are no mispronunciations when their name is announced on stage. Students were then grouped into their area of study and marshalled by platform usher James D'Arcy up the long, barren corridor and out the library doors.





NEXT WEEK - THE CONVOCATION PHOTO SPECIAL CONTINUES...

Convocation 2003

Address by the Graduate

By Ramona DeRose

Ramona DeRose was chosen to give this year's Address by the Graduate. She has been kind enough to share her address with the Voice readers, and all those grads who were unable to attend this year's convocation.

Mr. Chairman
Mr. President
Elected Officials
Distinguished Guests
Members of the Platform Party
Graduates
Ladies and Gentlemen



Today we celebrate the achievements of the graduating class of 2003. This day is an achievement not only for the graduates, but also for the faculty and staff of Athabasca University, and for the friends and family who supported us, and who encouraged us to put our studies ahead of their needs.

For many of us, this is the first time we've connected with other students, other than in the dreaded exam rooms, and the first time we've met our tutors face-to-face. Distance learning can at times be an isolating experience. You are in a classroom of one, responsible for setting your own deadlines, and ever tempted by the proximity of distractions. We have had to be disciplined, and committed to our own learning. Our education has taken place not in a lecture hall, but on the telephone and over the Internet. At times, the distance learner feels like the only student to agonize over a particularly difficult concept, the only one overwhelmed with term papers, projects, and telephone quizzes. I am comforted to see just how many students have shared those experiences with me. I admit I traveled to convocation not only to receive my degree, but to confirm that Athabasca University actually exists!

As challenging as distance learning can be, without the programs offered by Athabasca, it is doubtful whether many of us would be receiving our parchments at all. The Open University Concept that Athabasca has pioneered makes education available to all, irrespective of distance or prior academic qualifications. Breaking down barriers of time and space, Athabasca allows students from around the world to fit education into their lives, and pace their studies according to their own timetables. I am so proud to be graduating from an institution that stands for accessible learning and equal educational opportunities for all students.

Distance learning is made possible through technology, but it is made enriching through the efforts of the people at the other end of the telephone line. The faculty and staff of Athabasca deserve our special recognition today. These fine instructors made the material come to life, without benefit of personal interaction, or the reward of watching a student grasp a new concept. They make themselves available year-round, and the first of the month is always the first day of classes for them, one student at a time. On behalf of the graduating class, I thank you for your diligence, your patience, your insights, and your commitment to our learning.

I must also recognize the sacrifices of the people who walked beside us on our journey. To those of you who allowed us to pursue our goals, who encouraged us to study, who helped us make the time in our busy lives to learn, thank you. Before I made the decision to return to school, I was relating to a friend all the reasons why I *shouldn't* pursue my degree. My best argument went something like "But I'll be forty years old by the time I'm finished!" My argument was defeated when my friend replied, "and how old will you be if you don't get your degree?" I registered the very next day.

Although the graduates are the ones being honored, we recognize that without our friends and family behind us and beside us, we would not be here today. Thank you for the sacrifices you have made so lovingly on our behalf. As my son remarked when I had written my last exam; "Hurray - we're finished!"

Our journeys were certainly made easier by the support we received. But let us also recognize that the students on this stage wholly committed themselves to learning, and to seeing the challenge through to the end. Although we are a diverse student body, separated by distance, we are connected by the desire to learn and to become more than what we were before.

I am reminded of a day last fall when, deeply immersed in the agonies of Economics 248, my little boy approached me. He stood for a moment, contemplating my pile of books, and the look of pure misery on my face. He said, "Mommy, why do you have to study?" Anticipating a plea for the playground, I replied, "because I have lots of work to do". He shook his head and said "No, Mommy. I mean, why do you want to do school? Mommies know everything." Now, I admit I had no desire to disabuse him of this notion. Here was the one person on the planet who actually thought I was all-knowing. In just a few years he would be convinced I knew nothing at all. But the innocence of his question demanded more than just a wise nod. "Well", I said, "you know how you keep trying to score a goal in soccer? You work so hard, and you practice, and even though you haven't scored yet, you keep trying? Why do you do that?" He thought for a moment, and said "because I wanna get better". I nodded. "Me too". Our desire to "get better", to be become more, know more, do more, has seen us through the challenges of our programs.

More than a hundred years ago, Robert Louis Stevenson said "to become what we are capable of becoming is the only end in life." And although we are celebrating the end of our days as undergraduates, we must recognize that the commitment to learning, and the desire to become what we are capable of becoming is our true achievement. For it is in the striving that we learn, and in the struggle for knowledge that we reveal our true potential.

To my fellow graduates: congratulations. May the courage and perseverance you've shown to get here today see you through the challenges ahead, and may you continue to achieve your dreams. May you become all you are capable of becoming.

Thank you.

Thank you to Ramona for allowing us to print her Address by the Graduate



AU Convocation 2003 took place this past weekend. Graduates from all over Canada - and beyond - made their way to Athabasca for the ceremonies, while others celebrated their achievement at home. This week, I asked AU students to send their congratulatory messages to our grads. Here is what you had to say:

Dear Voice,

I have been thinking about the graduates this week, and I would like to send them my heartiest congratulations. I have some idea of what it took to get there, and I can't wait until it is my turn. I will be thinking of them this Saturday, and I hope they all have a wonderful time.

Michele Wass

Congratulations to all graduates! I worked 11 years in total for my Bachelor of General Studies, so I know how much determination, sacrifice, and just plain hard work goes into getting a degree. You have achieved something which most people wouldn't even attempt, so enjoy your success! All the best to you!

Sue MacKenzie, BGS '88

I am truly jealous that you have worked so hard and achieved what I am still slogging through. This is your time to celebrate.

Don't forget us here at AU and remember to come back and say "hi" once in a while.

Congratulations!

**--Laura Seymour
Voice Columnist and BA student**

Way to go Grads!!! I can't wait till it is my turn to follow in your footsteps.

Fiona Ott

To all the recent graduates of Athabasca University
Congratulations on your achievement, and thank you for providing inspiration for the rest of us. It can be done!

Karl Low - AUSU

Congratulation Graduates!

I had the opportunity to attend convocation this year and you have all inspired me to keep going and finish my degree so I too can experience the all mighty high of standing up on that stage. The beams on your faces and the tears in your eyes made me feel so proud for all of you that attended. Some of you completed your

degrees in 4 years, some took 16 years, but each and every one of you stuck with it and you inspire the rest of us to hang in there.

I wish you all the best in your future endeavours and I hope that you all now enjoy being able to read books you actually want to read ;-)

AU PRIDE

Sandra Moore - AUSU

To all of this year's graduates [including those who will graduate in December and miss out on all the fanfare], I have never met most of you - in fact, I only know one of you - but your accomplishment has inspired me greatly. The dropout rates in distance ed are high, and it's easy to imagine that completing the 40 courses needed for the degree is an impossible task. You have shown us that it can be done, and this, more than anything, is what will take many of us through to the end. I wish you all the best in your futures, and I hope that your AU degree opens doors that you never thought possible.

Congratulations!

Tamra Ross Low - Editor

If you haven't congratulated the grads and still would like to, feel free to send your messages to The Voice. Also, send us your comments on Alberta's recent brush with Mad Cow. Do you feel we are doing enough to prevent it? Do you even know what it is, or have you been left in the dark?

AUSU STUDENT GIFT PACKS NOW AVAILABLE

AUSU students can now order their student gift packs, free courtesy of your students' union.



The packs are filled with AUSU logo items to help you study, relax, and learn more about AUSU.

Contact ausu@ausu.org to order your gift pack today!

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Graduation Special - The Class of 2003

by Debbie Jabbour

Author's note: This is the third of three articles that will detail three very special and very different graduation experiences. I have the privilege this year of participating in three graduations - my youngest daughter has graduated from high school, my second eldest daughter has graduated from university, and I graduated on June 14! Each of us will be celebrating a very unique kind of achievement, and each of us face very different futures.



On Friday, June 13, I attended Athabasca University's graduate ceremony as AUSU representative on Governing Council, followed on Saturday, June 14, by my own graduation. I had asked convocation organizers if this year AUSU could have a more visible role in the ceremony, so that students would be more aware of our presence and the hard work we do, and the university agreed. In previous years we would have to track down the honorary degree recipient after the ceremony and make the presentation outside, and graduate gifts were distributed back in the robing room. This year we were able to present our gift to the honorary degree recipient from on stage, and the gift to the graduates would also be handed out from the side of the stage during the ceremonies. For the first time, I sat in the front row,

stage right, as a member of the stage party. It was a very different feeling to look out at the crowd instead of being part of it. Watching the proud expressions of family members as they applauded their loved ones who were graduating reinforced for me how important this event was to everyone involved.

The heat on Friday was intense, and it was not long into the ceremony before all those on stage began to feel stifled and sweaty under our gowns. I admired the way Registrar Gilbert Perras, University President Dominique Abrioux, and Governing Council Chair Robert Fulton, managed to maintain their smiles throughout, congratulating students and going through the ceremony ritual without a hint of the discomfort they were feeling from the heat.

Presentation of the masters degrees is done the same way as the undergrad degrees, but there is a difference. Undergrads feel their accomplishment far more keenly, and their stories generally reflect a very hard struggle to achieve their degree, sometimes over a long period of time. They range in age all the way up to senior citizens, and many are single parents with small children. The achievement of a degree represents a significant accomplishment in their lives, and the level of excitement and emotion is therefore more intense. Those receiving masters degrees, on the other hand, tend to be already well-established professionals in their careers and the transition they are making is less pronounced. Often their employer is paying their tuition, and although they work very hard for their degrees, their struggle does not appear to have the same level of emotion and drama as the undergrads. One of the members of governing council, however, pointed out a notable exception. He commented that it seemed to him that male students cited the self-improvement and better career prospects that their masters degree would bring, whereas female students spoke of how a masters degree was an absolute essential for them to be able to move forward. This generated some interesting debate later that evening on the discrimination against women that still exists in the business world.

A touching moment came when the name of graduate Mervin Roy was announced and Dr. Davis added that Mervin had died only a few weeks before. Mervin had completed the requirements for his MDE prior to his death, and he had been planning on marrying (he met his fiancée through his online studies) after graduation. A fellow student who he had become very close with accepted the degree posthumously on his behalf, and it was hard to hold back the tears.

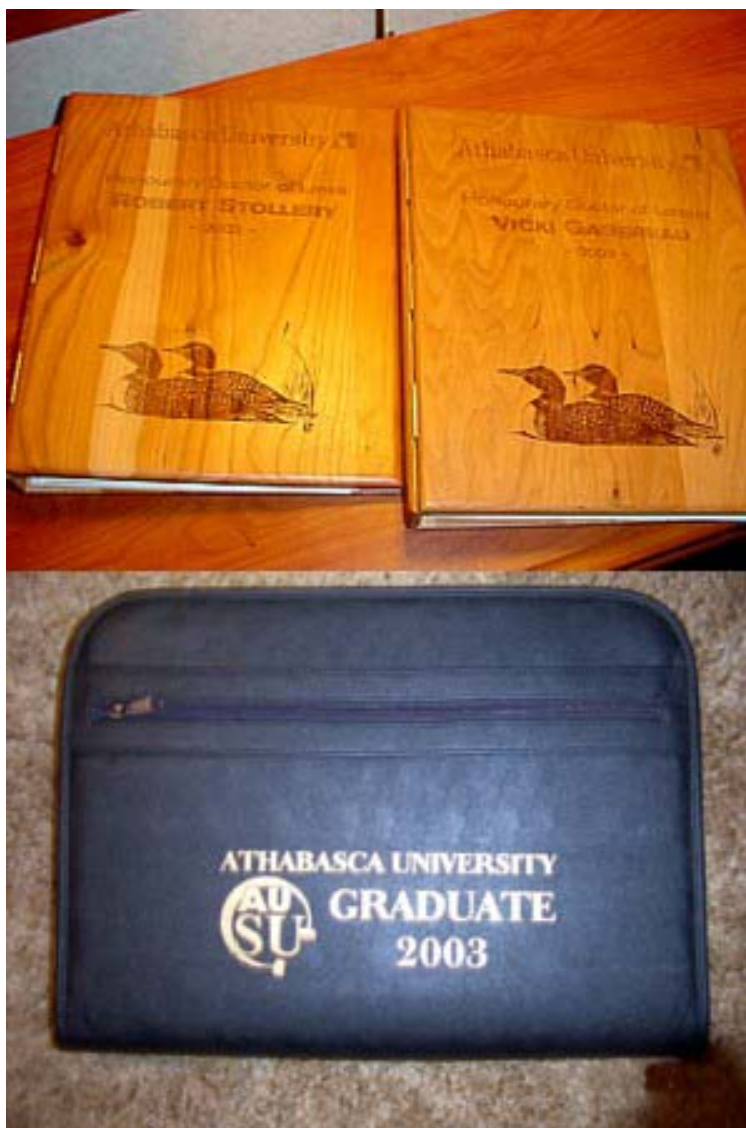
The address by graduate Bill Robinson, MAIS, from Prince Edward Island, was encouraging to graduates. Bill spoke of the shared experience of struggling to maintain family and life responsibilities while studying for a masters' degree, and concluded with a well-known traditional Irish blessing, "may the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be always at your back."

Then the honorary degree recipient, Robert Stollery, was introduced. Finally, a speech worthy of a graduation! Dr. Stollery began by speaking about the uniqueness of AU, and how it has quietly become the number one distance education provider in Canada. He then said he'd like to share a few words with the graduates, some thoughts for the troubled times we live in. He briefly mentioned the series of events that have profoundly affected our world during the last few years, and commented how people are deceived into thinking everything is bad by the media. He then added that as graduates, it was important for all to remember that we only hear about the 5% of businesses, companies, and organizations that are dishonest or harm others. The vast majority of organizations we never hear about - yet they are honest, value integrity and do good. He reminded graduates that this is the world graduates will be involved in, one where they will have an opportunity to improve things.

Dr. Stollery then went on to speak of his own philosophy on philanthropy. In the intro, AUGC Vice-Chair David Burnett commented that while Robert Stollery was head of PCL construction, he had spent some 10% of his time doing volunteer and charitable works, but now that he has retired, this has reversed to become 90% of his time. Dr. Stollery stated that around 30% of Canadians volunteer their time in some capacity to help others, or work with a volunteer group. This might seem a significant number, however Dr. Stollery disabused us of this notion. First he noted that 70% of Canadians don't volunteer - then added that even though Canadians tend to think of themselves as being somewhat "superior" to the U.S. when it comes to "good works," in reality Americans volunteer at much higher rates than we do.

He encouraged graduates to think about the effects they can have on the world and on others, not just through the degree they have just worked so hard to achieve, but by giving freely of their time. He concluded by adding that "success is not a destination, it's a journey."





[top] Photo Albums given by AUSU to honorary degree recipients; [bottom] AUSU gift to graduates

Robert Fulton thanked Dr. Stollery for his thought-provoking speech, and then stated that we were not yet done with him. He then introduced me and invited me to make the presentation on behalf of the students. I presented him with a lovely hand-crafted wood photo album upon which we had engraved the university logo, name, degree, and year. Dr. Stollery commented that it was very beautiful and thanked me and AUSU.

The ceremonies ended and the procession was led off the stage by the piper. The stage party and the academics led the way, then we all lined the red carpet to create an honour guard for the graduates and applaud their exit. It's a thrilling moment, and I wondered how it would feel the next day when it was my turn to walk the red carpet.

Saturday morning dawned sunny with some clouds, and as I headed over to the university at 7 AM to help set up the AUSU pancake breakfast, I kept an eye on the sky, worried about the possibility of rain. The breakfast went very well, with at least 250 people in attendance. The McDade's provided the entertainment once again this year, and at one point we even had President Dominique Abrioux flipping pancakes along with VP Academic Judith Hughes and VP Finance Pat Eagar!

There was plenty of organizing to do, and the morning went by quickly. We needed to arrange a system to give the graduation gifts on stage, and we wanted to ensure it went off well so that the university would be willing to allow us to continue

the practice in subsequent years. One of the reasons graduation runs so smoothly is that everything is detailed word for word in a printed protocol. Instruction booklets are handed out to each person participating, and everyone is briefed in advance, practicing if necessary. By the time lunch was served, we had everything in order. AUSU VP Shirley Barg and Carla, AUSU's Administrative Assistant, would hand out gifts by the side of the stage, a table next to them loaded with the portfolios that were this year's gift to graduates. One catch was that the table had unstable corners, so Shirley and Carla were given strict instructions to not empty all the boxes on one side – or risk a table collapse under the uneven weight! Fortunately all went well.

At noon I returned to the hotel to get ready for the afternoon ceremonies. My daughters had arrived early that morning and would be seated near the front. We had had many discussions about this moment, and I was sure that I would not be able to hold back the tears, especially if I dared look their way.

Through my work with Governing Council and various university committees, I've developed very close relationships with many AU administration and staff, and the previous evening had received multiple congratulations. They were all thrilled for me. A few of them teased me that they were going to heckle me as I

I crossed the stage, and VP Academic Alan Davis joked that he had some "very special" things he would be saying about me in my bio. Although grads are asked a list of questions about what kinds of things they would like to say in their bio (who they thank, memorable moments, what they are looking forward to), a university writer prepares the actual wording, so I did not know what to expect. Dr. Davis has an amazing talent for pronouncing all the names perfectly, and he injects a bit of humour into the bio reading to make the whole experience that much more warm and enjoyable. This would be his final AU convocation, since he is moving to Niagara College to take on the role of VP Academic there. I knew, of course, that he would not do anything to diminish the importance and seriousness of the ceremony, but the teasing helped alleviate the tension.

Graduands (graduands before receiving the diploma; graduates after) were required to be in the robing room by 12:30 P.M. Saturday. As soon as I entered, I was told that Alan Davis needed to see me. I stood in line to wait my turn as he briefed all the others and double checked the pronunciation of each person's name. When it was my turn, he took my hand to congratulate me, then spontaneously gave me a big hug. It seemed prophetic and set the tone for many more hugs to come!

Once robed, we were grouped according to degree, then Dr. Davis and stage manager Jim D'Arcy gave us detailed instructions on exactly where, when, and how, we were to walk and sit. Many of us were worried that we would not be able to manage kneeling gracefully in our gowns when we were presented, so a stool was provided so that we could practice. Names were double and triple-checked as we lined up and waited for the signal. Although conversation in the room was hushed, the tension and excitement was tangible, faces beaming with barely-suppressed elation. I knew what to expect from the rest of the procession, but I found myself feeling equally as giddy as my fellow graduands. With a final "we're off!", I heard the strains of the bagpipes and we proudly marched forward onto the red carpet.

As we left the building towards the graduation tent, walking under the canopy, to my left was the governing council procession I had been part of the previous day, and they all waved and called to me. I almost lost it when I turned to my right to see three of my daughters, cameras in hands, their smiling faces full of pride as they cheered, "yeah mom!" I blinked back the tears and continued walking, only to encounter my other daughter on my left, her eyes also welling up with tears. I took a deep breath and entered the graduation tent. What a moment! It was finally here.



AUSU Pancake Breakfast, [below] AU President Abrioux and VP Hughes man the griddle

We filed up the stairs as instructed and waited at our seats until the complete procession had entered. Following the graduands was governing council, then the academics. Bringing up the rear was the stage party, and once they were in place, the ceremony began with the singing of Oh Canada.

Robert Fulton opened the ceremonies with a welcoming address. He commented how the very first graduation ceremony in 1977 had consisted of only two graduates – and yet the university had managed to mix up their names and award them the wrong degrees! The audience roared, and the tone was set for the rest of the afternoon. AU's graduation ceremony is a very unique blend of formality, ceremony and ritual – balanced by a warm humanness, sense of humour, and individual recognition. These combine to make our graduation extremely special and unforgettable.



Since the BA's are awarded first, I was among the first dozen graduates. I was feeling very calm, almost dazed. Although I heard the words everyone was saying, they were not quite registering. As I came into position next in line, stage manager Jim D'Arcy (who also happens to work in the registrar's office) congratulated me, then sternly said, "so you know I won't be processing any more course extensions for you!" I was momentarily taken aback, then he smiled and added, "Does that feel good?" His words brought me back to reality, and I smiled and agreed with him that it felt VERY good not to be worrying about any more course extensions! The tension was gone and I suddenly felt thrilled to be there. I was about to graduate and the emotion overwhelmed me.

Then Dr. Davis called my name and it was my turn to kneel. Although I had eagerly awaited hearing what he would say in my bio, I hardly heard any of the words. I was concentrating on not crying, trying not to look at my daughters, trying to just savor every impression and forever remember the emotion and intensity of the moment. I know he said something about me being president of the students' union, my plans to get a PhD, and that I thanked my daughters for their support and love and for being willing to be my guinea pigs. At that point I looked over at them, and they were smiling, cheering, so excited and happy for me. Lou Abrioux (wife of AU president Dominique) was in front of them and I could see that she too was caught up in the emotion, tears sparkling in her eyes.



As Dr. Davis finished the bio and repeated my name for the second time, this was my signal to rise, walk over to the President and AUGC Chair, shake hands, and collect my diploma. Registrar Gilbert Perras removed his hand from my shoulder and shook my hand to offer his congratulations. When I reached Dominique, he held out his hand and my diploma. I took my diploma, and began to shake his hand, but all at once a surging wave of happiness filled me, and in an impromptu break with protocol, I suddenly found myself putting my arms around him and joyfully hugging him! I repeated this with AUGC Chair Robert Fulton. It's odd because I'm not normally a "huggy" sort of person – I just could not help myself! I had intended to turn

towards the front and acknowledge my daughters, but although my progress across the stage had felt like I was in slow motion, all at once I found myself at the end of the stage. I turned back to see them waving and smiling at me from their seats. I briefly smiled back...and then my moment was over as the next graduate was announced.

More hugs awaited at the side of the stage where Carla and Shirley were handing out gifts, and then I finally returned to my seat. Such a short walk, such a very few moments kneeling beside the registrar – but an experience that will remain within my heart and mind forever. Next to the birth of my daughters, it was the proudest, most thrilling moment of my life.

I sat, bemused, for much of the next while. I was trying to concentrate and take mental notes for my article, but I was having a hard time doing so. Finally I remembered that I had something in my hand, and I looked down at my diploma for the first time. Although I had managed to hold back the tears up until that moment, seeing my name on that piece of paper brought them to the forefront. All those all-night long study sessions, all the times I had neglected my family, the times when I was so tired and brain dead that I thought I could not possibly go on – here was my reward!

I finally managed to pull myself together, although I still don't recall much of the rest of the ceremony. I do remember Alan Davis reading a bio in which the graduate said she was looking forward to relaxing and watching the Vicki Gabereau show. Vicki was sitting in front of me and did a bit of a double-take at that. A little later another student's bio said the same thing, and everyone became somewhat suspicious – a suspicion that was confirmed later when Alan Davis said he had asked permission of the students to change their comment from "watching TV" to "watching Vicki Gabereau". But it added warmth and humour to the proceedings and drew Ms. Gabereau into the ceremony, providing an excellent lead-in to the presentation of her honorary degree.

The address by graduate was given by Ramona DeRose, B.Admin [**read Ramona's address in this issue of The Voice**]. Ramona was very excited and enthusiastic as she spoke about her experience, the patience her young son showed with her studies, and what the achievement meant to her. I could identify with her comments when she spoke of how she had hesitated to embark upon a university venture that she might not complete until she was forty years old. A friend asked her to consider where she would be at forty years old if she didn't do it. The same had occurred with me, and my friend had motivated me and removed my hesitations just as Ramona's friend did for her.



Debbie and AUSU's Shirley Barg



Then Vicki Gabereau was presented with

her doctorate, followed by her speech. She spoke of how difficult she had found school, and how unusual it was for someone like her to have become such a success in broadcasting. She said she had just been in the right place at the right time, and commented how different it was nowadays since all media jobs require a degree. This was not her first honorary degree, but she said it was her most treasured, since Athabasca is a favorite place of hers.

At the conclusion of her talk, Robert introduced me to present Dr. Gabereau with the gift on behalf of students (the same engraved photo-album given to Dr. Stollery). She opened it up and gleefully said, "I can put pictures here!" then turned and looked at me, noticing my hood and adding, "oh! She's one of us!" I smiled and shook her hand and acknowledged that, yes, indeed, I was one of the graduates. Her sincerity and thanks for the gift was very touching.

Then the ceremony was over and we prepared to leave the stage. We filed back down the red carpet to the sound of warm and sustained applause. None of us could stop smiling as we exited the tent to walk the red carpet under the canopy, surrounded by the "honour guard" of governing council members, university department heads and academics. I now knew what it felt like to take that walk, and felt thrilled and humbled as I realized the significance of the honour guard. They were paying us the highest accolade as they welcomed us – the new graduates and degree-holders – into their academic community.

"The educated differ from the uneducated as much as the living from the dead."
Aristotle.

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.



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.



By Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

Our lives are becoming more and more demanding. This is no different when it comes to health. The increase in the use of holistic and complementary treatments for a variety of medical conditions is an excellent example of how people are putting more faith into going natural and exploring the vast world of alternative medicine.

What are complementary and alternative medicine?

Although alternative and complementary medicine sound like same thing, in fact these are two different streams of medicine (<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/whatiscom/>).

Alternative medicine is an option that can replace conventional medicine. It is comprised of systems and products which emphasize treating diseases or illnesses by helping our body to heal without using strong drugs and thus the stress is more on removing the underlying causes of disease rather on than on directly treating symptoms. This is a very different approach from conventional medicine, which often relies on drugs to treat symptoms, which may suppress the body's natural immune response.

Complementary medicine, on the other hand, is used in conjunction with conventional medicine to facilitate the recovery process. For example, aromatherapy is used after surgery to reduce post surgical discomfort.

Here are some alternative and complementary treatments currently available in the market:
(http://holisticonline.com/Alt_Medicine/altmed_differences.htm)

Aromatherapy treats illness using scents. It primarily uses plants oils, including essential oils, to promote physical and mental (or psychological) well-being. When these oils are inhaled, they act on the olfactory nerves to produce a variety of effects. Aromatherapy is popular for inducing relaxation or alertness.

Ayurveda is an ancient alternative medical system which has been used primarily in the Indian subcontinent dating back 5000 years. The Ayurveda system used herbs, spices and other remedies for health with a strong emphasis on the connection between mind, body and spirit.

Chiropractic focuses on the relationship between bodily structure and function, and how good bodily structure helps in the restoration of our health. Having a good posture will reduce not only headaches but also cuts down on stress.

Dietary supplements: These supplement contain a "dietary ingredient or ingredients" which supposedly supplement the diet. They are available in a wide variety of vitamins, minerals and metabolites, and each are thought to play a role in preventing disease, especially if the diet is not sufficiently nutrient dense. For example, the use of calcium supplements can ensure that we get the daily recommended amount required for good bone density.

Homeopathic medicine: (<http://www.homeopathycanada.com/homeopathy/>)

This system is the most popular type of alternative medicine available today. It builds upon the fact that all diseases or symptoms show disharmony in the human body, so treatment should be focused on whole body rather than on a particular organ or system of the body.

In the process of homeopathic treatment, minute doses of medicinal substances which actually cause symptoms similar to the disease under treatment are given to stimulate the body's natural healing process and cure symptoms. Keep in mind, when those same drugs are given in larger doses they will produce the symptoms which are under treatment.

To illustrate, a patient with insomnia might be given a minute dose of substances that cause sleeplessness, to encourage the body to counter the sleeping problem. In traditional medicine, the opposite approach would be used, and the patient would be given drugs to induce sleep. This method, however, leads to side effects, increasing doses of drugs, and a suppression of the body's natural sleep response.

Massage therapy : uses the relation between muscles, connective tissues and blood flow. The key is directing blood flow away from the sore muscle during treatment but during the healing phase directing blood towards the muscle.

Therapeutic Touch : This therapy based on the a technique which uses the healing force of the therapist to treat the patient or the positive energy from therapist to lessen or boost the energy levels of the patient.

Who uses Alternative Medicine?

Adapted from Millar, W. (1997, May-June). Use of Alternative Health Care Practitioners by Canadians. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 88, No.3, 154-158. Abstract only.

"In 1994/95, an estimated 15% of Canadians aged 15 and over (3.3 million people) used some type of Alternative medicine," according to a National Population Health Survey. Here are the few statistics about the users of alternative health care:

Alternative health care use was more prevalent in women, as women have been found to be more vigilant in taking care of themselves.

It was more common among those aged 45-64 (both men and women) and among higher income brackets.

Alternative health care use is associated with the number of diagnosed chronic illnesses - for example, 26% of those who have 2 or more chronic diseases consulted alternative medicine practitioners as compared to 9% of those who have no chronic disease.

People use alternative medicine for different reasons. Some think that conventional medicine tends to be more expensive, while others have already gone through conventional medicine which failed to provide relief from their chronic problems. At that point, going alternative with the hope of getting rid of their pain and suffering is a logical choice. But, the major reason that people use alternative medicine is their belief in Side-effects-Free-potions which arises from the fact that they use herbs in daily life anyway, so if it has a promise of curing disease that would be a harmless choice.

Are these methods appropriate and effective?

Some treatments fall short: <http://www.healthylifestyles.com.bb/html/safeherbs.html>

Some conventional doctors reject the use of alternative medicine. Two Canadian doctors, James McCormack and Chris Stewart-Patterson, knocked the use of herbal remedies saying, "natural did not mean safe." They said it was a clever marketing gimmick.

Both doctors explained this fact by using the example of ginseng (a popular herbal remedy) which is believed to boost energy levels and sexual potency, but it also produces side effects, like nervousness, and it is dangerous to pregnant women.

They also attributed this to lack of quality control and lack of testing. Conventional treatments have been subjected to scientific research to determine whether they work for the diseases or medical conditions for which they are used. In cases of alternative medicine there is no evidence from scientific research.

Ignorance can cause misuse:

We have some evidence regarding the effectiveness of some alternative medicines, for instance aromatherapy is known and proven to relief post surgical discomfort. But for most natural remedies there are key questions yet to be answered. Here are some precautions or guidelines to follow when you embark on a search for an alternative practitioner:

First, ask for the references or word of mouth input from family or friends, or choose a licensed medical professional who practices some alternative techniques or who can refer you to reliable professionals who do.

Second, be cautious of miracle cures. If someone is claiming to cure cancer in no time with a miracle medicine, chances are you are falling for "too good to be true."

Third, use conventional medicine first, as it is already well researched. But, if you feel that its not meeting your particular need you can always try alternative medicine.

Conclusion

The best of both worlds

Conventional medicine is not the final word in effective treatment, but alternative medicine may not hold the miracle cure, either. We all have different physiologies and genetic makeups, which means that we require unique medicine or treatments that best suit our individual situations. The best way is to be open and make the right decision for you based upon well informed choices.





When I was two years old, and my brother one, our biological mom and dad made the decision to get divorced. I find myself constantly wondering what kind of misery they could have experienced to make a decision such as this. Since then, we've lived with our mom and stepdad and have been raised to the best of their abilities. Of course we've spent the occasional summer vacation with father and his wife but since they live half the province away it was never much of an influence.

I'm now twenty and live on my own, and my brother is 19 and lives on campus at a university about halfway between mom and dad. My brother finds it hard to show loyalty to a father who was never really there, one who didn't seem to even care. In a situation like this, should a child hold it against their parent that they made a choice that seems irresponsible in the grand scheme of things? I don't. I've learned to look past it and have now developed a sort of friendship with my dad and step mom, rather than a paternal dependence.

Some people feel that when a couple becomes pregnant, that both parents should commit themselves 100% to the welfare of that child; that the choice to have intercourse was subsequently made into a lifetime commitment. Making the choice to participate in an intimate relationship may not be a direct choice to become pregnant, but one must enter into all situations being fully aware of all possible consequences. Unless one is prepared to deal with those consequences shouldn't one refrain from committing that initial act?

On other side of the coin, there are couples that have intentionally made the decision to have intercourse with the goal of impregnation. Some of these couples are unable to do so and must seek other ways to receive a child/children, such as adoption. Theses types of families benefit from mothers who have given up their own chance at parenting. Don't we achieve equilibrium with the two possibilities? Or has this option been taken advantage of as an easy way out of responsibility? "Oh, we'll do it without protection just this once," since the actors know there are many ways to "get rid" of the baby.

Should "irresponsible" couples be forced into parenting when they neither want nor are prepared to? Should abortion or adoption be court appointed? To go one step further, should all couples have to apply for permission to have sexual intercourse? To have rules and regulations on when and with whom we are eligible to do so would be an infringement on the rights and freedoms people in this country have.

Freedom allows us to make these choices ourselves; free of interference from others. Freedom gives people the right to bring a child into an inapt environment. Freedom protects those who cannot protect themselves by allowing society to take children away from parents and situations that are deemed unfit.

In making these initial decisions to participate in the action, do we not then have the right to subsequently withdraw from the parenting situation? Or is it the right of the child to have their parent's influences? Is it truly beneficial to have a father in one's life that doesn't want or know how to be an effective father? Or would it be more beneficial to have a mother, adopted parents, or foster parents who have both the want and know-how to bring the child up to the best of their ability? It is better to be without maternal or paternal influence than to be with the possibility of neglect? In my case, I had multiple surrogate fathers from age 2 to age 9, when my mom finally married my stepfather, who has been that major influence in my life. When my father made the decision not to be a father, it opened up a world of opportunities for all those men who's ability to father children had expired, and for this I thank my dad. We should not look down on those who've made different choices that we ourselves have done, or what society deems as irresponsibility. We all make choices - not only are we free to do so, but we should be free from the discrimination and judgments of others based on those choices.

BRUCE MARTIN: A GREAT FRIEND

By Wayne E. Benedict



Bruce Martin in 205A Helitanker circa 1987

Every day I pass by a friend's place on my way down-town, but I rarely stop by to see him any more. There was a time when we would hang-around together constantly and I must say I miss those days. But life has a way of taking people down separate paths and so it happened with Bruce and me. We first met in May of 1984, having both hired on to the BC Ministry of Forests to work in its newly formed Northern Initial Fire Attack Crews (NIFAC) division in central BC. I don't remember being overly impressed with him at first, but with more than twenty individuals attempting to make first acquaintance, it was difficult to differentiate between personalities. However, I soon came to know him as one of the nicest and happiest people that I have known to this day. It wasn't long before I knew he would be one of the few people that I would call a true friend.

During those years we had some crazy and exciting times together. We fought forest fires from Montana to Alaska. In 1987 we trained together as two of twelve BC provincial 205A Helitanker spotters in Salmon Arm. After the summer fire season in 1986, Bruce talked me into riding ten-speed bicycles from Prince George to

Vancouver in celebration of Expo86. Having spent almost no time training for such a venture, we set out on the 800+ km journey and arrived four and a half days later. It took weeks for my swollen legs to return to normal and I still carry the stretch-marks on my buttocks as battle-scars of our trip.

Bruce played a lot of guitar back in those years. He encouraged others to bring their instrument to the NIFAC base and formed a small band. They sounded really good together and he had aspirations of becoming a rock star like so many musicians in their early twenties do. He showed me my first chords on his guitar and prodded me to buy my own. I soon did and it is leaning in the corner of my office right now; but I don't seem to have the time to play it as much as I once did. Bruce doesn't play his any more either.

At that age, we were always up for an adventure and we did our fair share of drinking and partying. Everyone was partying heavy back then, but we would often leave the crowd behind and take our bottles to the wilderness. We would go hiking in Mt. Robson Park and take along a case of beer. Once we even went gold-panning up the Goat River, packing all of our



Wayne and Bruce in the Fraser Canyon on their bicycle trip to Expo86



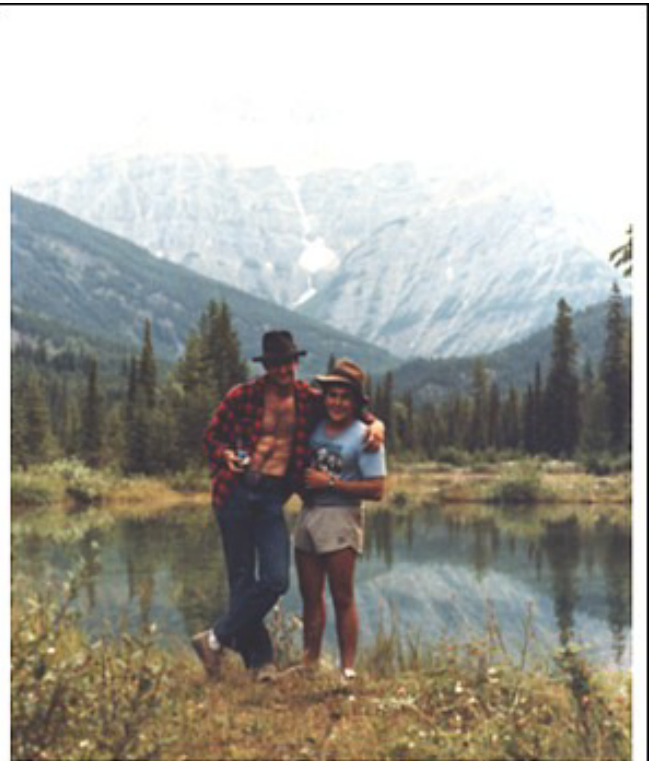
Bruce Martin and the NIFAC players

gear on our backs including bottles of Yukon Jack and Southern Comfort. I don't know what was more painful, the hiking or the hangover the next day.

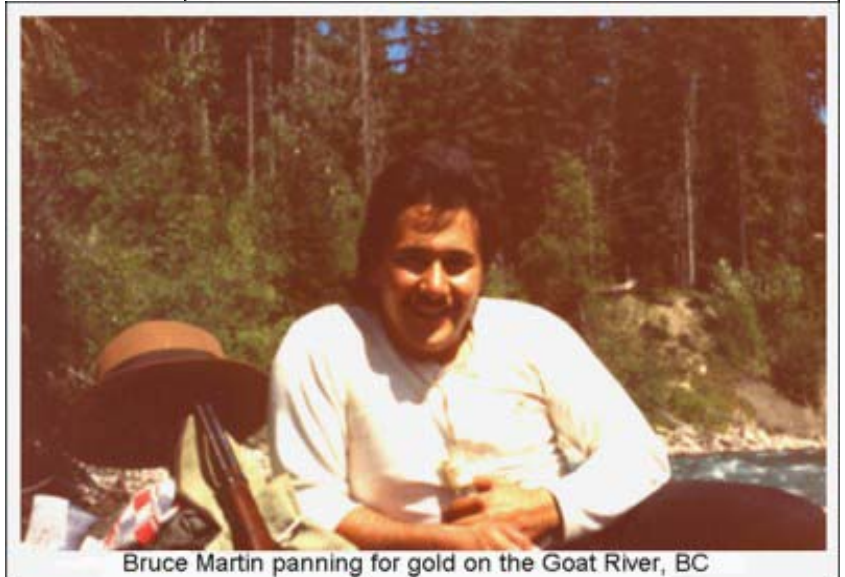
I remember our musing one day—the two of us in our early twenties and feeling typically invincible—about our being old men together sitting on a porch somewhere and reminiscing about our respective long lives. How many grandchildren would we have had, what occupations would we have worked in, how successful would we have been, etc.

How could we have known at that time that our lives would not run the parallel course that we expected them to? Today, instead of driving past his place as I usually do, I decided to stop in and see my old friend. I didn't visit long but the connection we have is as strong as it was in 1988, which was the last time I saw him alive. You see, Bruce's place is in a grave-yard now. He was killed in a single-vehicle accident while driving home intoxicated on April 14, 1988. I guess we weren't as bullet-proof as we thought we were.

Even today, fifteen years after his death, I am crying as I write these words. My tears fall for a life cut short at twenty-three years, for the experiences he has missed, for his family, and for my own immeasurable loss of his friendship. Needless to say, I don't drink and drive today, as most of us did back then. I hope that those of you that read this article will also think twice before driving after drinking—just don't do it. Your early departure would leave a bottomless pit in the hearts of your friends and family; take it from me.



Wayne Benedict and Bruce Martin at Mt. Robson



Bruce Martin panning for gold on the Goat River, BC

Wayne E. Benedict is a Locomotive Engineer at BC Rail and President of the National, Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers Union of Canada (CAW) Local 110. He is working toward his Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations at Athabasca University.

T-Shirts all in the wash?

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AU Profiles:

AU GRADUATE PROFILE: SANDRA A. MACISSAC

Here's what Sandra had to say on convocation day:

AGE: 38

LIVES IN: Rochester, Minnesota

TRAVEL TIME TO ATHABASCA: 5 hours by plane & car

PROGRAM COMPLETED: Bachelor of Science

YEARS IT TOOK TO COMPLETE: 6

FAVORITE COURSE: Molecular Cell Biology

LEAST FAVORITE COURSE: Historical Foundations Of Modern Science

FAVORITE TUTOR: Lisa Carter

HIGHEST FINAL GRADE: 96 – Computer Science

LOWEST FINAL GRADE: 83 – Historical Foundations Of Modern Science



Sandra is married to Dr. Tony MacIssac, whom she credits as being very supportive throughout the time it took it to complete this degree. Tony was involved with the military and they moved a few times while Sandra was working on her degree, which is why the flexibility that AU offered was so appealing to Sandra. Sandra is a dental hygienist who worked full time while obtaining her degree - at one point she even worked two jobs. She would advise students to make a study schedule and stick to it! She now plans to pursue an MPH (Masters of Public Health). Getting this degree has meant a great sense of satisfaction for fulfilling a goal she has had for a long time. AU convocation was an enjoyable experience for Sandra.

Congratulation Sandra MacIssac, BSC!

Look for more grad profiles in upcoming Voice issues. If you are an AU grad and you were not interviewed on convocation day, contact voice@ausu.org to be a part of AU profiles.

As always, we are seeking undergrads, tutors and staff for profiles as well.





The Planets is a group of eight classically trained musicians brought together through a Popstar style of competition in the United Kingdom late in 2001. Their first album, *Classical Graffiti* was released in February 2002 and debuted at number one on the classical charts, where it remained for three months.

The music itself is primarily light classical but fused with more modern types of music such as electric pop and flamenco. This fusion varies from track to track, which is one of the strengths and weaknesses in the album. It's a strength in that probably everybody will find at least one track on the album which they like, and a weakness in that few people will actually like the majority of the album.

Beyond this, some of the pieces have the feeling that the fusion was more forced than found. Classical purists will find that the electric guitar tends to interrupt more than complement, while pop aficionados will find themselves fast forwarding through a good portion of the tracks looking for the more modern sections. I had hoped that the fusion between the modern and the classical would be more seamless but in many tracks the songs are simply divided into sections of modern and classical with some light bridging rather than truly fused throughout the piece.

This is not to insult the band or the players at all who are all technically excellent (and as a side note, have a connection to Canada in that the cellist, Lac-Hong was born and raised in New Brunswick). The fault of this album lies with the composer/arranger of the pieces, Mike Batt. While his classical arrangements such as track 8, "Clair de Lune" are quite well done, his pop sensibilities seem to be frozen somewhere in the late 70s, and not in the best examples from that period either. The riffs vary from predictable to dull, and none have any type of hook that really pulls you into the music. While not a damning quality in a classical composer/arranger, it certainly hinders when trying to create a "classical crossover sensation".

On the bright side, the production quality is excellent, more on par with classical production techniques than those found in pop music. Listeners will certainly be able to hear the full range of these talented players' performances. Now what we need is to give them music that is truly worth performing.

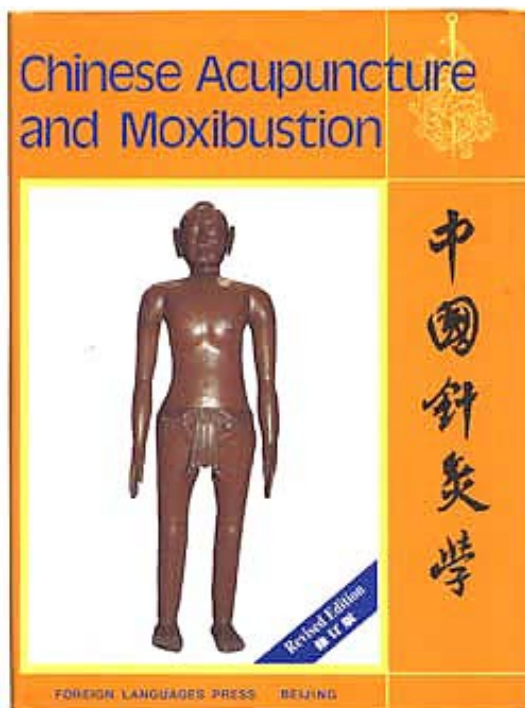
I expect this album to be a large seller to malls, shops, restaurants, and basically anywhere that requires inoffensive background music to be playing. The classical underpinnings will provide an air of sophistication while the other elements help to avoid the snobbish image that pure classical can conjure up in the idle consumer.

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.



CHINESE ACUPUNCTURE AND MOXIBUSTION Book Review

By Laura Seymour



Finding this book wasn't very easy, but I plan to scoot over to China some day to study acupuncture and this textbook was listed as required reading. Considering the SARS epidemic currently in the Orient, and my maxed out credit cards, don't expect any exotic reports from China too soon!

I bumped into this book on the Internet at <http://www.acu-market.com> when I was searching for acupuncture schools in China. It is interesting to look at all the nifty gadgets, herbs and books available at the site. I bought a few along with this book.

The site also sells the required paraphernalia for practicing the art of acupuncture, and believe me after reading this book I now believe this is an art!

The first chapter is a rundown of the history of this amazing science. Did you know the original acupuncture needles were made of stone?! I have to admit that sterilized stainless steel will get my attention much faster than jabbing me with stone! Did you know there are different types of acupuncture needles?

The history of acupuncture and Moxibustion is immense, but has been reduced to a full chapter. Since this book is written in English, by the English department at Beijing University International School, it is loaded with "proper" English.

All the Chinese names are converted to phonetic English equivalents, although the occasional Chinese character is used to show the student what they should know of rudimentary Mandarin characters. This is only for discussion purposes. That might actually change in class but by then maybe I will have added Mandarin to my "little bit of this language, little bit of that language" by the time I go to China.

Interesting information in this book begins with yin and yang and goes on to include the proper understanding of how to find acupuncture points. Often you will see the acupuncture point described as so many "cun" (pronounced tsuen) this way from one point or another. The complete understanding of cun is given and illustrated. I found the illustrations very helpful considering I'm not very visual and always have to stop to think about something that is visually described.

The book has chapters dedicated to introducing diagnostic methods, (including pulses, ear and patient history). But, I give you the proper warning – this is **not a do-it-yourself book**. **Don't use anything but the proper sterilized needles and PLEASE avoid winding up in hospital from stupid mistakes. Never practice on anyone else.**

Always use this text with a proper instructor, or as in-depth reading.

Well, enough of mother's scoldings. The text also has in-depth charts of the meridians and collaterals, blood and body fluids, zang-fu organs, acupuncture points, and etiology and pathogenesis. The text give you a good introduction to acupuncture and Moxibustion techniques, internal diseases and gynecological and other diseases, including pediatric ailments.

This isn't a Sunday read on the porch. This is intense study. Frankly I've been working at reading this book for a couple of solid months. Some points will take a good long while to sink in and multiple readings.

Practice with the correct needles begins with piercing paper and packages of cotton balls, and ends with piercing yourself (if you follow the directions given in the text.)

One thing this book has given me is a truly healthy respect for the difficulty of information that goes into understanding the human body and the healing techniques that go into this treatment method.

There are other books you can also read before or after reading this text but some are more in-depth and assume a level of information has already been absorbed or achieved by certification courses. Check out the ones I have added below which are great before reading this text.

Enjoy!

Further Reading:

Traditional Acupuncture: The Law of the Five Elements by Dianne M. Connelly, Ph.D. (This text is often quoted as a good first book to read—more general level of information).

Acupressure: Acupuncture Without Needles, by J.V. Cerney.

(A true classic and a very useful book –especially if you want to learn the basics without getting into trouble with needles!)

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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NEWS ACROSS THE NATION...

By Karl Low



The Numbers Game

Statistics Canada has recently released a report on University Financing across Canada. The report starts off with the happy news that, for the first time in 15 years, revenues from public sources increased faster than those from private sources. Could it be that the governments are finally starting to realize the benefits of having a well-educated populace?

On a little closer examination though, it turns out that this is not the case. Instead, we see that the reason public funding has outpaced private funding is because the money from investments dropped almost 40% with the stock-market downturn. What makes it even worse, is the report indicates that even though direct federal funding rose, "more than 90% of this funding was allocated to support sponsored research activities." Now, research is a good thing of course, but so is training future researchers. Why doesn't the federal government devote a larger portion of this funding into grants and scholarships at the national level?

Over the past decade, the revenue universities are receiving from student fees has more than doubled.

Over the past 15 years, total government funding of universities has actually dropped almost 5%. Yet the government continually proclaims how much it values education. It looks to me like post-secondary is valued about 5% less than it used to be.. plus inflation.

Of course, until students from all over the country speak out against this type of action, we should not expect anything else. After all, if we do not speak, they do not know that what they are doing is affecting our voting choices at the next election. When it boils down to it, we all know that it is only our votes that matter to the politicians. It's time we started telling them what the price of that vote is.

Lazy Research

Finally there is a study for the procrastinators among us. Through the Canadian Space Agency the federal government is participating in an international research effort to determine the effects of prolonged bed rest. The study is going to be used to determine what types of therapy work best to mitigate the loss of bone and muscle-mass while remaining confined to bed.

It makes a guy wonder what he can do to get in on this. Sadly, the answer is, he can't. The volunteers for this study consist of 25 women who will stay in bed for sixty to ninety days.

This is just a part of what that 90% of post-secondary funding directed to research is actually doing for us. While the research may have some use for people who are comatose or suffer from chronic pain or bone and joint affecting disorders such as osteoporosis and osteoarthritis, you still have to wonder if somebody was asleep at the wheel when this one got approved.

BC Irony

British Columbia is proposing what it calls "Tough New Drunk-Driving Laws." This is the province of Premier Gordon Campbell, who was not so long ago arrested for drunk-driving while in the United States. I guess Mr. Campbell wants it to be perfectly obvious to everyone that he's really not in favour of drunk driving.

And who knows, if the people do not read the proposal, they might even believe that. Once you read the proposal though, you see that what might be tough for Mr. Campbell seems pretty easy for the rest of us.

Proposed measures include a ninety-day suspension if you get two 24-hour roadside suspensions. So the first one is free, folks. They also include "adding a user-pay compulsory rehabilitation program for **serious** offenders" [emphasis added]. I wonder if the police would consider a Premier to be a serious offender? They also include "strengthening enforcement, by encouraging the strategic deployment of police officers where and when they can best enforce impaired-driving laws," or what the rest of us know as check-stops.

But hey, this is tough legislation folks.

The Premier says so.

And why would he lie?

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

THE 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

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

For scholarships available through the Athabasca University Student's Union, see the AUSU website at www.ausu.org



ONTARIO ABORIGINAL PARTNERSHIPS RECOGNITION SCHOLARSHIP

Value: n/s

DEADLINE: n/s

Administrator: National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

Notes: Awarded to students who are pursuing post-secondary studies that will prepare them for jobs in the fields of business, science and technology.

Contact Information:

National Aboriginal Achievement Awards Secretariat
70 Yorkville Avenue, Suite 33A
Toronto, Ontario M5R 1B9

Phone: (416) 926-0775

Fax: (416) 926-7554

Toll Free: (800) 329-9780

Web Site: <http://www.naaf.ca>

E-mail: naaa@naaf.ca

EDULINX EDUCATION AWARD (4)

Value: \$500

DEADLINE: October 31, 2003

Administrator: EDULINX

Notes: To enter, go to www.edulinx.ca/en/contest.html, proceed to the contest area and then correctly answer the survey questions (for help on what the answers are, see www.edulinx.ca) and complete the contest registration form.

Contact Information:

2 Robert Speck Parkway, Suite 1600
Mississauga, Ontario
Canada L4Z 1H8

Web Site: <http://www.edulinx.ca/en/contest.html>

An advertisement for the Smoker's Help Line. At the top, a red circle contains the text "Want to STOP smoking?". To the right of this is a lit cigarette. A trail of red dots leads from the cigarette down to a red telephone handset. Below the phone, the text "It's easier with HELP." is displayed. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text "Smoker's Help Line 1-866-33AADAC". In the bottom right corner, there are logos for "AADAC" and "alberta HEALTH FIRST".

CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*



- **ICDE World Conference** - 21st annual - June 1-5, 2003 - Hong Kong. **POSTPONED INDEFINATELY** Details: http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/hk2003/e_postpone.html
- **EDEN 2003 (European Distance Education Network)** - June 15 - 18, 2003 - Rhodes, Greece. Details: EDEN 2003
- **LIDC** - The Second Annual Summer Institute on eLearning in Higher Education - June 16- 20, 2003 - Vancouver, BC. Details: LIDC website.
- **FAC** - June 19 & 20, 2003 - Pomona, CA. Call for Proposals and Registration material are available at <http://www.iats.com>.
- **FLC Developers' Institute** - June 20 - 22, 2003 - Pomona, CA. Call for Proposals and Registration material are available at <http://www.iats.com>.
- **ED-MEDIA** - "World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications" - June 23 - 28, 2003 - Honolulu, Hawaii. Details: <http://www.aace.org/conf/edmedia/default.htm>
- **IASTED** - "International Conference on Computers and Advanced Technology" - June 30 - July 2, 2003 - Rhodes, Greece. Details: <http://www.iasted.org/conferences/2003/greece/cate.htm>
- **Distance Teaching & Learning Conference**: - 19th annual - "Working Smarter - Building on Success" - Aug. 13-15, 2003 - Madison, Wisconsin. Details: <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference>
- **AU Learning Services Conference** - October 3 & 4, 2003 - Edmonton, Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe. Details to follow.

OTHER CONFERENCES

- **CAPDHHE [Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education]** - To be held in Calgary, October 29 - November 1, 2003. <http://www.capdhhe.org/conference2/index.htm>
- **Teaching In A Digital Age** - the impact of new communication technologies on teaching and pedagogy. l'Université de Montréal. <http://profetic.org:16080/coll2003/> [French only]
- **China Conference 2003** - Edinburgh July 2003. China Conference Info welcomes people from the commercial and educational sector involved in E-Learning, Distance Learning, Training, HR, IT Training, Localisation, ICT or Knowledge Management, to this world first international event. China represents the biggest target market for these sectors ever and is still largely untapped.

Entering the Chinese market place is a complex move. This conference provides a forum on exchange of market information not only on product and service requirements, but on specialist market entrance requirements. If you are working in any of these sectors you should seriously consider entering this event in your diary. The conference will be patronised by professionals from, China, the USA, Europe and Australia and represents the largest collective gathering of these specialists centred around the Chinese market ever!

For more information:

<http://www.chinaconferenceinfo.com>

Summer Symposium on Health Ethics

Wednesday 6 August 2003
Stollery Executive Development Centre
Business Building, University of Alberta
11211 Saskatchewan Drive
Edmonton, Alberta

The John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre (JDHEC) invites you to attend a one-day symposium on health ethics. This course will offer a series of presentations by JDHEC Faculty that will challenge you to examine and explore the essential place of ethics in health care practice.

Sign Up for:

Full Day Symposium: \$100 + GST
Student/Limited Income \$ 50 + GST for students
Price Includes Lunch

Who should attend?

- Health care professionals
- Administrators
- Students in health sciences, law and humanities
- Ethics committee members

Speakers:

Worried, troubled or anxious? It may be moral distress: Wendy Austin, RN, PhD

An exploration of the distress arising when moral choices in healthcare practice are thwarted by constraints.

Ethics in the Trenches: Paul Byrne, MB, ChB, FRCPC

This session will focus on the practical aspects of clinical ethics consultation and education.

"So you want to do research..." : Glenn Griener, PhD

The main principles of research ethics and their application to projects from clinical trials to chart reviews.

Bodies Here, There, and Everywhere: Barbara Russell, PhD, MBA

Philosophers and ethicists debate how our bodies impact our individuality and humanity. This session will focus on insights and ideas from this debate that are relevant to providing care for people.

From a Glint in the Eye to Bringing Up Baby: Ethics and Reproduction: Laura Shanner, PhD

Explores the implications of family relationships in assisted reproduction and pregnancy management.

For more information:

Website www.ualberta.ca/bioethics
Email Dossetor.Centre@ualberta.ca
Phone 780-492-6676

Know of an educational conference that is not on this list? Contact voice@ausu.org with the details and we'll list it in Conference Connections.



CLASSIFIEDS:

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

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800.788.9041 ext. 3413

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