

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

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THE VOICE MAGAZINE

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Of Rights and Rites

As the old saying goes, life imitates art. But the line between the two can be hazier than a Monet, as a debate over a Maori artifact proves.

The item in question is a human head; specifically, the mummified, tattooed head of a Maori warrior that has been part of a French museum's collection since 1875. It is a symbol of the grim traffic in body parts that 19th century European colonizers were fond of.

Recently, the Museum of Natural History in Normandy, along with Rouen's mayor, Pierre Albertini, decided that the head should be repatriated to New Zealand. As Catherine Morin-Desailly, Rouen's deputy mayor for culture, reasoned, "This object reflects the barbaric trafficking in body parts, the belief that another race was inferior to ours. It belongs to the heritage of humanity, not in storage somewhere in a museum."

But the French Ministry of Culture disagreed, and stepped in to block the handover. In their view, the head is a work of art, and as such is "inalienable." Their fear is that the return of the head will set a precedent that could lead to the loss of other museum artifacts, such as the Egyptian mummies in the Louvre.

The return of the head could, indeed, open the door to a flood of requests. Everything from bones to mummified remains to body parts could disappear from France's museums. In some cases, the items would be returned to indigenous groups for burial. (Although France has yet to comply with any such requests, more than two dozen other institutions have. In one recent case, Chicago's Field Museum of natural history returned a Maori head and other bones.)

The debate could go on for years as to whether they are, indeed, works of art. Ultimately, the question is "Should they be returned?" And the answer is yes.

Those who insist that the head and its ilk should be catalogued and studied have a good point. Viewing these artifacts through a scientific lens provides an invaluable wealth of information—not only about historical events and practices, but also potential discoveries that may help humanity today. And as technology evolves, scientists are able to glean new information from items that were thought to have yielded all the information they could.

But there's a larger issue at play, one that all the scientific discoveries in the world can't resolve. It is the issue of humanity's failure to accord mutual respect to traditions—and people—of all cultures. It's as much a problem today as it was when those early European colonizers treated the body parts of Maori fathers, husbands, and brothers as nothing more than souvenirs. It's evident in the way that different ethnic groups wage war on each other across the globe, or the way religious intolerance leaves blood-spattered streets in the wake of bombings.

Egyptian mummies, for instance, are more than simply curiosities. They are people whose families (or subjects) placed them with great ceremony in their final resting place, and intended them to stay there.

This isn't to say that scientific and historical discoveries should be ignored. Study them, share the knowledge gained, but, when dealing with the remains of people from a known civilization, return them to be treated with the respect that any of us deserves—the dignity of a burial in keeping with the customs of our society.

Because demonstrating respect for the deceased, and therefore the living, of all cultures will go a lot further as an example to future generations than any museum display ever could.



NATURE NOTES:

from the backyard to the biosphere

By Zoe Dalton

LEK and TEK: Invaluable Local Conservation Expertise—and the Ethical Complexities of Knowledge Sharing

When thinking about the act of conservation, many of us tend to picture professionals (maybe biologists, ecologists, physical geographers) out in the field collecting data, processing samples, and crunching numbers in their labs, plugging info into computer simulation models, and coming up with the most up-to-date, scientific solutions to the environmental problems they've discovered.

However, conservation as it happens on the ground often involves a far broader range of people than only those we think of as professionals. Both at the initial problem identification stage and throughout the various problem resolution stages, local community members often play key roles in conservation.

This is particularly true in my field—ecological restoration, focused on the repair of damaged and degraded ecosystems. Local community members often do a lot of the hard labour involved in carrying out restoration projects—the site preparation, the invasive-species removal, the planting, the ongoing maintenance . . .

But more than that, locals—particularly those who have lived in one place for a long time—are increasingly coming to be seen as intellectual resources for conservation activities such as restoration. These people are often intimately familiar with their local ecosystems and are coming to be recognized as holding the type of long-term, detailed ecological knowledge on which environmental understandings, and thus successful restoration initiatives, need to be built.

There are two distinct, but related, types of local knowledge now seen as important in enhancing environmental management and restoration understandings. The first is referred to as LEK, or local ecological knowledge; the second is referred to as TEK, or traditional ecological knowledge.

LEK is discussed as the local knowledge held by long-resident non-indigenous people such as inshore fishermen and farmers. These people often hold detailed knowledge about the historical structure and functioning of local landscapes, and are often very familiar with the activities and events that led to the degradation of their local ecosystems. The existence (and illumination) of such knowledge is attracting the attention of an increasing number of scientists.

However, while interest in LEK is growing, the attention being paid to this area of knowledge is far outweighed by scientists' interest in obtaining traditional ecological knowledge (TEK)—the environmental understandings of indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples have typically resided in their traditional homelands for hundreds if not thousands of years, have utilized a broad range of natural resources, and have managed landscapes through such practices as burning, clearing, tilling, pruning/coppicing, weeding, planting and transplanting.

As such, indigenous peoples have come to be viewed as a significant resource for insights into environmental management and sustainability. TEK already forms a core part of many environmental management regimes, including environmental assessment and species at risk work, and interest in incorporating TEK into ecological restoration is growing.

But seeking and sharing knowledge is not an unproblematic endeavour. Both indigenous and non-indigenous communities are expressing a desire to have their knowledge, understandings, and perceptions of the local environment taken into account in environmental management activities such as restoration. However, there is significant resistance to the portrayal of local communities as sources of data to be used by outside environmental management professionals for what many see as outside management interests.

Non-indigenous local communities are becoming increasingly vocal regarding their desire to influence first-hand what happens to shared and/or public space, and are actively resisting the expert scientist's sole decision-making powers via political pressure, media, and other means.

Indigenous communities are similarly involved in resisting the data repository role assigned to them by non-indigenous environmental managers. Indigenous authors and activists stress that TEK is not simply "information" that can be extracted and plugged into a Western understanding of environmental management.

TEK is discussed rather as a way of life, a code of ethics and instructions on how to respectfully relate to other kin and members of Creation. TEK is therefore seen as inseparable from the people who hold it, the land from which it arose and in which it is contextualized, and can and should not be extracted, distilled, and compartmentalized to fit and serve a Western world view.

Both indigenous and non-indigenous local communities are key to the restoration of degraded natural areas. Without their involvement and support, good, ethical, sustainable environmental management and restoration initiatives are simply not possible. Both communities have vested interests in ensuring that local ecosystems are as productive as possible, and in ensuring that local community members have a say in how recovery of ecosystem health is achieved.

Restorationists and other environmental managers who are interested in seeking the involvement of local communities—indigenous or non-indigenous—will need to enhance their understanding of the shortcomings of current visions of local community involvement if knowledge sharing is to occur in a manner that satisfies the understandings and ethical expectations of the local communities from whom environmental insights are being sought.

AUSU THIS MONTH



Response to AUSU's open letter from Joy Romero, Chair, AU Governing Council

Athabasca University

Office of the Governing Council

October 31, 2007

Dear AU Students:

I am very pleased to learn, through your elected AUSU representatives, that you share our excitement and satisfaction at the recent Government of Alberta allocation of \$30 million in capital funding for the new Academic and Research Centre on our Athabasca campus. This level of government support does indeed, as your student leaders say, clearly demonstrate the province's strong commitment to post-secondary education and to AU students in particular.

In response to your question about how AU will use these funds to enhance student services, it is first important to emphasize that, as dedicated capital funding, this \$30 million grant is specifically earmarked to cover construction costs of the new building in Athabasca. None of the money may be diverted to operational uses. That said, however, acquisition of our new building will allow us to enhance student services in many ways.

As you may know, AU academic and support staff members have for some time now been suffering from a critical shortage of work space. Our main campus was designed to house a staff serving the academic and support needs of a 10,000 member student body. Last year, in contrast, 37,000 students enrolled at AU. In the past five years alone, our staff complement has grown by more than seven per cent annually, and finding adequate office space, meeting space, research space, etc. has grown increasingly difficult. Many staff members have been forced to work in environments that are not suited to their professional needs, and such compromises have impacts on operating efficiencies and, inevitably, if not addressed on the quality of service provided to students.

The new Academic and Research Centre will greatly strengthen Athabasca University's leadership role in addressing distance education challenges and opportunities. In addition to providing badly needed space and services for the academic and research centres of the university, including work space for 210 additional staff members, it will enhance and support increased collaboration between researchers and academics giving impetus to research into teaching practices, innovations and implementation strategies associated with e-learning. It will also house the university's new Technology Enhanced Learning Research Institute—an Institute dedicated to using technology in learning. All of these improvements are destined to have a direct positive impact on the quality and quantity of the university's academic and research programs.

In addition, in 2010, when academic and research staff move into the new building, the space they now occupy in the existing main Athabasca campus building will be renovated to house student support staff. The altered building will be transformed into the Athabasca University Learning Centre and, in addition to expanded student service facilities, will house a significant teaching laboratory.

These are indeed exciting times for AU and for current and prospective AU students. These and other proposed capital projects as well as the planned introduction, over the next several years, of a number of new academic programs, the creation of several new research institutes, including the Technology Enhanced

Learning Research Institute mentioned above, the adoption or creation of innovative educational technology in support of distance learners and the planned expansion of our student financial supports are positioning AU to both broaden its outreach and expand its services to students. Over the coming few years, AU students will benefit from a broader range of academic choices and enhanced opportunities to participate in research, and they will be supported by a broader (and deeper) range of non-academic services.

Thank you for your letter and your interest in the changes affecting your university. At AU, the focus is on you, the student, and all developments, whether they involve bricks and mortar, technological innovation or academic research, are calculated to enhance the opportunities that we can provide to you.

Sincerely,

Joy Romero, P.Eng., MBA PM

Chair

Athabasca University Governing Council

cc: Frits Pannekoek

An open letter to Joy Romero, Chair of AU Governing Council

Dear Ms. Romero:

On behalf of the students of Athabasca University, we are excited and encouraged by what Dr. Frits Pannekoek has called the “second greatest milestone” in the history of Athabasca University. The approval of \$30 million toward AU’s new administrative and research center, as announced today by Minister of Advanced Education and Technology Doug Horner, is a tremendous step toward ensuring that AU will remain one of Canada’s finest educational institutions.

This funding demonstrates Alberta’s strong commitment to Alberta’s students, and the students of Athabasca University. Athabasca University also demonstrates this commitment through its focus on increasing affordability, accessibility, and quality of education for our members. Recent limits imposed on annual tuition increases are an important first step toward ensuring affordability. Today’s funding announcement will further address accessibility issues for AU students.

In early 2007, AUSU presented the government and AUGC with a document detailing our Vision for a Skilled Alberta. It is clear that our concerns have been heard and that steps are being taken to ensure that students’ views are incorporated into revisions to our education system and university services. We are encouraged that we have reached this milestone to improve the main campus of our university and ensure that AU has sufficient staff to address growing student needs.

We now look forward to learning how AUGC and Athabasca University will use these funds to enhance the quality of AU’s offerings and we request a communication from AUGC to our members explaining how this new funding will enhance student services.

We continue to look forward to reaching future milestones that will ensure that AU can address the urgent need for enhanced learning and virtual communication technologies, more courses and programs, and research opportunities for students.

AUSU



Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

DVD: *For Your Consideration*

Release date: February 20, 2007

Director: Christopher Guest. Written by Christopher Guest and Eugene Levy

Starring Catherine O'Hara, Ed Begley Jr., Bob Balaban, Michael McKean, Eugene Levy, Harry Shearer, John Michael Higgins,

Christopher Guest, Parker Posey, Rachael Harris, Jennifer Coolidge, Chris Moynihan, Fred Willard, Jane Lynch

The movie opens with a scene from the 1938 film *Jezebel*, in which Bette Davis plays a southern belle bucking the southern social system to her own detriment. *Jezebel* is being raptly viewed by a put-to-pasture actor aptly named Marilyn Hack (astutely portrayed by Catherine O'Hara), who is preparing to go to a shoot for the movie *Home for Purim*.

Jezebel showcases the most degrading black stereotypes while voicing a feeble condemnation of slavery, inadvertently revealing Hollywood's artifice and moral cowardice. *For Your Consideration*, on the other hand, shows up Hollywood's artifice and moral cowardice quite deliberately.

The actors' lines are what really carry this message. As an example, while instructing a young actress (who, by the way, is obviously far more talented than Marilyn herself), Marilyn offers this sage utterance, delivered with a cosmetically stretched smile that renders the final clause all the more hilarious: "Oh I *wish* that I could jump-cut you babies right now to the happy place that I'm in! I have learned that if I can expunge everything within, I am left comfortable in my own skin."

Comfort with one's self, whatever that means, and how much of it one is willing to sacrifice, is a recurring motif. A pair of studio executives meets with the movie's producer and writers to ask them to tone down the movie's "Jewish-ness," with the result that the movie's title is changed to *Home for Thanksgiving*. The execs are goys claiming not to care about race while demanding that the movie reflect the cultural practices of their own ethnic group.

One of the things that get cut from the film within the film is "The Purim Song," written by Guest himself and housing the disguised exhortation to speak out bravely on behalf of your people even at the risk of death. (Would Esther and Mordecai have consented to change this to a Thanksgiving movie? I think not, although they may have quailed a little.)

The Purim exhortation is spectacularly rejected by all, which is what makes this Guest's first truly dark comedy in a repertoire of satirical films, which includes the inimitable *This is Spinal Tap* and *A Mighty Wind*.

For Your Consideration ingeniously uses anti-Semitism as a key to the more general social pathology afflicting Hollywood and with which Hollywood is eager to infect the world. Guest pokes fun at pretenders in this movie, as always, but the roots go deeper this time. He must be familiar with the following tidbit of American entertainment history:

In 1940, Joseph P. Kennedy went to Hollywood to address its mostly Jewish studio chiefs . . . Kennedy told his lunch audience to "stop making anti-Nazi pictures or using

the film medium to promote or show sympathy to the cause of the 'democracies' versus the 'dictators.'" He told the executives that the Jews were already being blamed for the war. His bullying was effective: the studio chiefs, uneasy about their ethnic heritage and therefore susceptible to the call of assimilation, were frightened into compliance by his message, until America entered the war a year later.

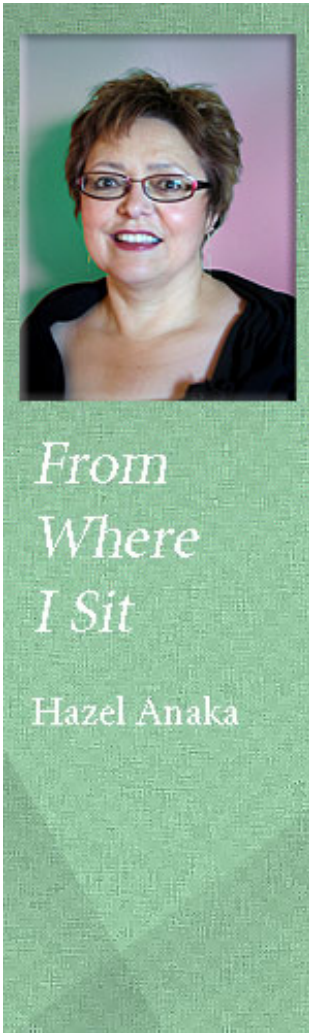
~Jeffrey Goldberg in *The New Republic Online*

Anti-Semitism, monstrous as it is (and all the more so when wearing the face of middle class intellectual civility), is only one horn on the bigger monster the movie is presenting, i.e., the abandonment of the true self in a narcissistic search for an artificial self which will be lovingly reflected back to you in the eyes of a stupefied but admiring public.

And the devil take what the critics have to say. "There's no sense to listening to what anyone has to say about you," Marilyn Hack blurts out in a TV interview. "[Because] suddenly I'm looking into a mirror, and *God* I don't want that!"

Visual and verbal allusions to fakery abound (a note to shallow males: more and bigger breast implants appear as the story unfolds); even in the directors' commentary Guest and Levy make a tongue-in-cheek attempt to convince us that their bay-window abdomens and balding pates were provided by the costume department.

The Bard could use some help scouting out new material. If you discover any books, compact disks, or movies which came out in the last twelve months and which you think fit the Bard's criteria, please drop a line to bard@voicemagazine.org. If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.



Wintry Blessing

Both the calendar and the thermometer tell us that winter is fast approaching. The days are shorter, the nights are cooler. The Sears Christmas catalogue has been out for months. The Costco tire sale is on.

Mandarin oranges are in the stores. Sloughs and dugouts have a skim coat of frost some mornings. Josh Classen, CTV meteorologist, offers weather trivia and hints at snow. As Albertans we know the routine. Oh, we may dodge the bullet for a few more days or even weeks, but inevitably winter will come. Whether it comes with a vengeance or slowly sneaks up on us is anyone's guess.

As someone who's been caught, in the past, with her flower pots out I tried to capitalize on some of the sunny afternoons we've enjoyed recently to get things put away. The job was marginally easier this fall because I only planted half the number of pots I usually do: a deliberate attempt to save effort and money on bedding plants. Except for some spectacular Stargazer lilies, the flower beds were rather ordinary this year. Because it's a more mature garden, shrubs, trees, and perennials take over and need to be contained. That didn't happen this year.

The harsh reality is that because of the prolonged recovery from shoulder surgery I didn't have the strength or energy (or frankly the desire) to even keep up with the routine maintenance a large flower garden requires. Consequently, areas that needed thinning out didn't get it. Canada thistle and quack grass that should've been zapped with Roundup lived another day.

Deadheading, pruning, dividing and even watering all suffered. An old flower bed that should have been totally revamped ended being nothing more than a wasteland of volunteer perennials and quack grass. The entire south-exposure bed

was to be cut back and mulched in a final last gasp surrender to the blazing sun and incredible dryness.

In spring after the thaw, Roy and I walked around the entire farm yard, an area of about five acres. We had big plans for cleaning up. We intended to fill the gravel truck with some of the scrap metal and other debris that accumulates over the life of a 60-year-old farm site. We planned some new construction. We dreamed of completing some long-held project ideas.

So, where did the summer go? It was not a proud moment to look around the yard last week and realize that nothing had happened. My health issues persist. Since February I've been going to doctors, having procedures done, waiting for specialists, hearing test results. Through it all, I've felt a lack of energy, ambition, desire, interest. And this fall cleanup is just another half-assed attempt at making my life easier come spring 2008.

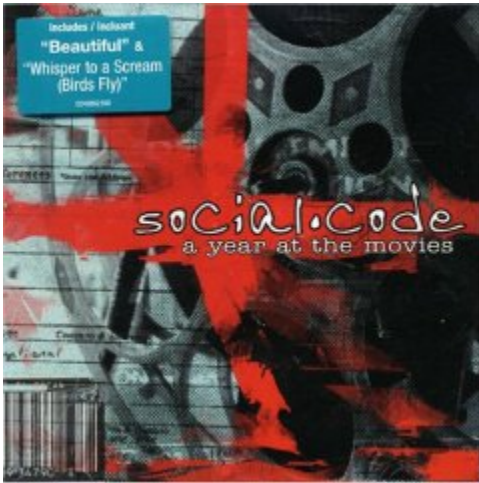
I keep waiting for the old creativity, desire, and energy to return. I'm writing off this year and hoping for a better start next year. Covering up all the unfinished projects with snow just may be a blessing, from where I sit.

The Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan

by
Wanda
Waterman
St. Louis



Social Code - *A Year at the Movies*



Release date: 2005

Label: Interscope

Tracks: 12

Rating: 8

Social Code is a band from St. Albert, Alberta, and they're one of the reasons I continue to look into and constantly praise our local music. They've taken a bit of punk inspiration, an ability to write enjoyable rock ballads, and turned this into a record that is at times closely related to Billy Talent or Nickelback for the intensity of many tracks, yet simultaneously reminiscent of pop bands like Good Charlotte during other songs.

Originally called Fifth Element, this four-piece band renamed itself for the appearance of new drummer Ben Shillabeer and the release of its major-label debut record, *A Year at the Movies*.

This album, and certainly this band, can be a little confusing because of its range of influences; where the songs "Miss You" or "Beautiful" might lead you to believe they are a lighter band, "Cats and Dogs" or "I Was Wrong" send you directly in the opposite direction, leaving no expectation completely fulfilled.

Perhaps the ambiguity of the music can best be showcased by the list of different bands Social Code has performed with: Bif Naked, Good Charlotte, Three Days Grace, and Fall Out Boy.

I don't think the band is at fault for its unconformity, however. It isn't as if the record skips from one focus to another and in doing so fails to gain momentum and subsequent fans; on the contrary, it is the ability of Social Code to pull off lighter songs with a slightly pop sound simultaneously with edgier songs that properly frame the sandpaper voice of front man Travis Nesbitt that has attracted an admirable audience throughout Canada.

The strength of this record comes directly from the talent of the musicians themselves and their ability to come together to create songs that really show off some great vocals, guitar, bass, and drums. The star tracks on the album are "Whisper to a Scream" and "I Was Wrong," but thankfully they aren't the only songs that pop out and look for attention. This is not the kind of record you buy for one song, and if you have done so, you're missing out!

Getting to know *A Year at the Movies* in its entirety is likely to foster an affinity with the band that leads you not only to keep the disc in your CD changer but to go out and pick up their new release, *Social Code*.



At Home: Saskatchewan residents hit the streets to support their political candidates before voting

Leaders of the Saskatchewan Party, the New Democratic Party, and the Liberal Party were not the only ones getting a bit rowdy during their recent debate; supporters of all major political parties were out rallying on the streets, chanting with signs in what is certainly one of the most proactive voter displays Canada has seen so far during these recent elections.

Saskatchewan is always a hotbed of voter activity given the popularity of so many different parties; this is the province in which the NDP has had great success through the years.

However, growing support of the Saskatchewan Party and the constant pressure of an otherwise strong Liberal Party means that every election is a fight to the very end.

Ken Rasmussen of the [CBC](#) describes Saskatchewan as a province with “two and a half” parties because its politics seem to perennially bounce between the right-wing

Saskatchewan Party and the left-wing NDP, with the largely overlooked Liberals acting as something of a buffer.

The current NDP administration has been in place since the election of Roy Romanow in 1991, and since that time the NDP have worked particularly hard to successfully keep that position of provincial power under current leader Lorne Calvert. This is the party with the most notable voter activity in the days leading up to the provincial election. However, the rising popularity of the Saskatchewan Party has NDPers on their toes.

In the [2003 election](#) the NDP received 44.68% of the total provincial votes and won 30 seats; the Saskatchewan Party was immediately behind them with 39.35% of the overall votes and 28 seats.

Given the relative youth of the SP and the rise in popularity since the Party's inception in 1999, the NDP have got some work to do to preserve their position and it really does the heart good to see that residents are willing to get out there and drum up support for their respective parties, whatever the end result.

In Foreign News: Research concludes that carrying excess body fat makes you more likely to develop cancer

Obesity has been cited as a defining factor in many illnesses and diseases. However, now researchers are claiming that carrying even the slightest bit of excess body fat raises your risk of developing cancer.

Both the American Institute for Cancer Research and the World Cancer Research Fund have confirmed that aside from other recognized cancer risk factors such as the consumption of red meat, processed meats, and alcohol, new findings suggest that carrying any amount of excess body fat will contribute to the cancer risk of any individual.

Specifically, excess body fat has been [linked to](#) cancers in the esophagus, pancreas, colon, kidney, and endometrium, as well as breast tissue in women who are post-menopausal. The worst foods pinpointed by

the cancer experts are any pork product and prepared lunch meats, as well as processed foods that are high in fat and sugar and low in fibre, such as french fries, hamburgers, pastries, and most other fast foods. Worryingly, researchers told the CBC that every 48 grams of pork product or processed meats consumed per day can heighten your risk of colorectal cancer by 21%.

The recommendation from the experts on avoiding these types of cancers is going to sound pretty average—five servings of vegetables and fruits per day, weight loss, and exercise. However, that's exactly what is being suggested following these study results.

As always, cancer risk cannot be completely eliminated, but it is the sincere belief of researchers involved in this project that individuals who are as "lean as possible" will have significantly less chance of developing several types of cancer.

[CLICK ON THIS - Body Being](#)

[Lonita Fraser](#)

We do an incredible amount of things to our bodies, or at them, or with them, or put into them. Sometimes those things are humorous and harmless, sometimes they aren't. Sometimes they are pragmatic and necessary; and sometimes they're just cultural motivations based on religion or prowess or aesthetics. The body is our permanent home and best canvas.

Cultural Tattooing and Body Modifications

I've got only one word to say about some of the things on that page; and that word is OUCH! Not safe for children or the easily offended.

Do My Stuff

I've always thought that providing a service whereby you'd do the odd jobs that others either didn't want to do, or couldn't, would be a great little business. It seems that the web-oriented have beaten me to the click.

LivingXL

Items of all sorts specifically suited for the plus-sized individual.

Foreign Fingers

Offensive gestures to suit your travel destinations. Not safe for children or the easily offended.

The Human Marvels

Dedicated to that special group of people we once labelled as freaks.

Faces in Places

Nothing at all to do with the human body, unless you count finding it in places it isn't.

Street Anatomy

This site houses Vanessa Ruiz's portfolio of medical illustrative designs, which includes the most incredible collection of anatomy-related tattoo photographs.

Seven Amazing Holes

Okay, so this has nothing at all to do with the human body really, unless you count human bodies having made the holes. I added this link simply because it's damned amazing.

EDUCATION NEWS



Transit, affordable housing top priorities for Edmonton student alliance

Business is booming in Edmonton, but for many students there's a downside to the good times. The influx of workers means a crunch in affordable housing, and post-secondary students are among the first to feel the squeeze.

For the Edmonton Alliance of Students (EAS), the city's recent municipal elections provided a perfect forum to address the housing shortage, and to draw attention to other pressing issues, such as student transportation.

Formed in August, the EAS is a student advocacy organization representing over 100,000 Edmonton post-secondary students. Their mandate is to tackle issues, such as housing and transportation, at the municipal level. The EAS was launched by the University of Alberta, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), and Grant MacEwan College.

"As Edmonton grows, the impact on the quality of student life is becoming more and more apparent and it is critical that students across the city form a unified voice to ensure that student interests are represented to city leaders," said U of A Students' Union President Michael Janz in a [recent release](#).

The EAS have set their sights on newly elected councillors in wards 4 and 5, and plan to work with them to find solutions to both city-wide and student-centred issues.

As new Ward 4 councillor Ben Henderson noted, "We've got a real housing problem in the city right now, and it's taking everything off of the market that's actually in the affordable range for everybody on a low income, and that includes students."

Transportation remains a key issue as well, in spite of the implementation of the Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass) at the U of A and MacEwan.

"The U-Pass is a big step forward for public transit in Edmonton, but the system could still use improvement to better meet students' transportation needs," said MacEwan Students' Association President Justin Benko. "The municipalities also need to make sure that service levels are sufficient to meet rising demand related to U-Pass implementation."

AUSU Executive Director Tamra Ross says that the students' union is concerned about housing and transit issue as there are a few thousand AUSU members in Edmonton affected by these issues.

"We have offered our support to the EAS and wish them success with the project. The U-Pass program has not proven advantageous to our students, but we would like to see some enhanced options for students to purchase discounted bus passes directly from the transit authority."

In an [interview](#) following the elections, Justin Benko was positive about the results, noting they will offer new opportunities for the EAS to work with councillors and advocate for students.

"I think the EAS will be pretty strong with our advocacy towards this new council. I'm pretty sure that we'll be able to get some things done."

classifieds

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact voice@ausu.org for more information.

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