

THE

# VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 16 Issue 44

November 14, 2008

## Twenty-Seven Candles

Making a wish

## Thriving Ivory

Angels on the moon

## AU Profiles

Sara Windross



*Plus:*

*Porkpie Hat, On the Hill,*

*Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan, and much more...*

# CONTENTS

## WELCOME TO THE VOICE PDF

*The Voice* interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom-right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

## Features

AU Profiles: Sara Windross .....	3
On the Hill .....	5

## Articles

Careers: Chiropractor .....	6
In Conversation With: Thriving Ivory .....	8
The Learning Curve: Twenty-seven Candles .....	10
<i>The Voice</i> Writing Contest is Here! .....	11

## Columns

Porkpie Hat .....	14
The Mindful Bard .....	15
From Where I Sit .....	17
Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan .....	18
AUSU This Month .....	19

## News and Events

Around AU: AU Store .....	4
Did You Know?: Holiday Exam Requests .....	13
International News Desk .....	21
Education News .....	22
Click of the Wrist .....	23

## From the Readers

Letters to the Editor .....	2
-----------------------------	---

**The Voice  
Magazine**

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

1213, 10011 109th  
Street NW  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 3S8

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org)

**Publisher**

AU Students' Union

**Editor-In-Chief**

Tamra Ross

**Managing Editor**

Sandra Livingston

**Regular Contributors**

Hazel Anaka  
Christina M. Frey  
Mandy Gardner  
Barbara Godin  
Behdin Nowrouzi  
Wanda Waterman St.  
Louis

*The Voice* is published  
every Friday in HTML  
and PDF format

To subscribe for weekly  
email reminders as  
each issue is posted,  
see the 'subscribe' link  
on *The Voice* front  
page

*The Voice* does not  
share its subscriber list  
with anyone

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

© 2008 by *The Voice*

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



# AU Profiles:

## AU Profiles: Sara Windross

### Christina M. Frey

Athabasca University students come to the “classroom” with different life situations and different challenges. First-year Bachelor of Arts in Humanities student Sara Windross’s particular challenge is studying while dealing with cerebral palsy. But despite any difficulties her condition has sent her way, she’s focused, organized, and thrilled that distance education with Athabasca University has allowed her to rediscover the joy of learning.

Cerebral palsy is a physical condition affecting the muscles and joints. For Sara, classified as having spastic cerebral palsy, certain muscles and joints have become rigid and cannot relax. This means that, for example, Sara is not able to type with both hands, and needs a wheelchair to get around.

However, she doesn’t feel that her cerebral palsy is affecting her educational experience significantly; in her mind, it’s no different than any other personal or family issues students might face. “I don’t see CP as a disability, it’s just a challenge,” she says.

Physical limitations do require her to move at a slower pace. “I type with one hand,” she says. Putting together an assignment may take a few weeks, but Sara is steadily working through the program, taking one course each term.

Currently, she has been studying with AU for more than two years and is nine credits into the program. Since she hopes to work as an editor someday, she’s planning to change her major to English to gain the background she’ll need for that career.

Sara has found a good resource in AU’s Access to Students with Disabilities office (ASD), which works with eligible students to streamline their education process. “ASD has made it very easy,” Sara says. For example, she can go through ASD to request a free course extension. “I never worry about getting behind in my course load,” she explains.

Sara discovered AU when she began looking at education options. Distance learning was an easy choice; Sara was familiar with independent study after having been homeschooled for several years. Better still, the delivery method was well-suited to her needs.

“I always wanted to go to university,” she says, but the local university wasn’t a possibility due to accessibility concerns. “[It] is on a hill, so that presents challenges for me,” says Sara, who uses a motorized wheelchair.

***. . . cerebral palsy is just another challenge on the road of life. It’s certainly not going to get in the way of her learning.***

AU and distance study were a good solution, and so far, it's worked well for Sara. "I'm a very dedicated student," she says. "I don't have a nine-to-five office job . . . [but] I take my course work just as seriously as one takes a job."

To stay focused, she approaches things very methodically, dividing courses into subsections to compartmentalize the work. "I like doing that so I don't feel overwhelmed," she says. Sara also knows the importance of having a dedicated space: she does her classwork in a private room, which minimizes distractions.

One challenge she finds easy to deal with is procrastination. Keeping her sights on a long-term plan helps. "When I want to procrastinate I think about how much I really want to earn a degree and the feeling disappears," Sara says.

For Sara, the strongest motivator is the fact that she's now able to enjoy studying again. When she attended public school as a child, her interest in learning declined when she fell behind.

"The grades were moving too quickly, [and] I couldn't keep up with the work," Sara says. "[It] led me to resent learning."

As an AU student, she's now able to control the pace of her studies, giving her the chance to appreciate and enjoy school for its own sake. "AU has helped me rediscover my love for learning," Sara says. She's enthusiastic about her studies and hasn't ruled out graduate school in the future—"if I still enjoy school!" she says.

To Sara, cerebral palsy is just another challenge on the road of life. It's certainly not going to get in the way of her learning.

## AROUND AU



### AU Store

Want to show off your AU pride? Looking for a Christmas gift for that special AU student? Simple: just go to the [AU store](#) and check out all the latest gear.

There are some great AU branded items available, including women's fleece zip jackets in colours from green to orange to purple and more.

You'll also find men's fleece zip jackets, unisex pullover hoodies, men's and women's jackets, and a variety of golf shirts and other clothing.

There are some great little stocking stuffers too, and the always popular stainless steel travel mug.

To order items from the AU store, call 1-800-788-9041, extension 7285, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (be sure to have your credit card number and expiry date).

All items are shipped via Canada Post, but you can save the shipping charges by picking up your order at the main AU campus in Athabasca, at the Edmonton Learning Centre, or at the Calgary Learning Centre.



## ON THE HILL

Sandra Livingston



## Survey Says

North Americans love progress, and the catchphrase “continuous improvement” has crept into every part of life. Industry spends countless hours creating charts to track how much better their performance is getting, and even hospitals and schools form committees to talk about it.

It’s behind every new and “improved” version of the cars, makeup, and gadgets we buy. It might be good now, but we want it better, and we expect companies to put a lot of time and effort into—well, continuously improving.

So why in the world would anyone complain about applying that same concept to one of the fundamentals of our country—the voting system? Elections Canada is spending \$1.3 million on making sure they’re getting things right, and the critics are already lining up.

Elections Canada plans to use opinion polls and other surveys to “gauge satisfaction with its performance in the October federal election.” Around \$900,000 will be spent on surveying voters, returning officers, candidates, journalists, and polling station staff.

And following an election that had the lowest voter turnout in history, Elections Canada is also going to talk to social groups where turnout was especially low, including youth and special-needs voters. The remaining \$400,000 will go to the Canadian Election Study, a “massive university-based survey of elections and referenda that has been taking place since 1965.”

It makes sense: if you want to make the system better, ask everyone involved what they think. New Brunswick MP Yvon Godin, however, claims there’s a cheaper route. “If they want to do surveys without costing them anything, there’s 308 MPs they can consult,” he told reporters.

Great idea, if you want 308 of the winners to speak for 23.4 million eligible voters—a skewed sample group by any measure.

Winnipeg New Democrat MP Pat Martin has another money-saving idea. “They’re throwing good money after bad,” he said. “I could save them a lot of money, just reinstate enumeration and scrap the new identity rules.” Sounds good, except that the last enumeration (in 1997) cost taxpayers \$71.4 million, a substantial share of the total \$200.6 million spent on the general election.

No one wants their government to waste money, but in a multi-billion dollar annual budget, \$1.3 million seems like a reasonable amount to spend on evaluating our electoral process. Every aspect of it—from the way it’s advertised to ID rules—influences whether we choose to go to the polls, and those election results dictate who sets the country’s policies. Critical stuff, and the debacle of the 2000 US election shows just how badly things can go wrong when such an important part of the system fails.

Reviewing Elections Canada’s performance may not solve every problem in our system, but if we expect continuous improvement in the products we buy, it’s the least we can expect from our democracy.

## CAREERS

Behdin Nowrouzi



### Consider a Career as a Chiropractor

#### What is a chiropractor?

In Canada, chiropractic is one of the largest health care professions. Practitioners utilize a manual approach to health care that allows for patient assessment, diagnosis, and treatment.

Specifically, chiropractors assess patients for disorders related to the central and peripheral nervous systems, pelvis, joints of the upper and lower limbs, and spinal cord.

Like other health professionals, chiropractors also take a social and physical history of their patients and are able to provide a diagnosis for the patient's presenting condition(s) and implement a thorough treatment plan.

In addition, chiropractors are trained to "recommend therapeutic exercise, to utilize other non-invasive therapies, as well as to provide nutritional, dietary, and lifestyle counselling."

Approximately 6,000 chiropractors practice across the country and four and a half million Canadians use the services of a chiropractor each year.

#### Education and training

Chiropractic is a regulated health profession recognized by jurisdictions in all Canadian provinces. There are two accredited chiropractic educational facilities in Canada: the chiropractic program at the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR) and the chiropractic program at the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC) in Toronto. Each year, approximately 200 graduates matriculate from these schools. In addition, there are 16 schools in the United States.

In addition to courses and academic preparation, chiropractic education requires clinical, hands-on training and experience under the supervision of licensed practitioners. This experience includes taking patient histories, diagnosis, treatment, and familiarization with the referral protocols.

The multi-disciplinary faculties at both Canadian schools offer a wide range of clinical opportunities and engage students with other experts in the fields of health sciences, medicine, psychology, and chiropractic.

#### Admission requirements

According to the Canadian Chiropractic Association, approximately 90 per cent of students entering chiropractic school in Canada have completed a baccalaureate or graduate degree. There are no course

requirements for admission at the CMCC; however, students are encouraged to take courses in biology, psychology, anatomy, physical education, and chemistry.

At CMCC, the minimum academic requirement for admission is a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 on a 4.00 grade point average scale from at least three full years (15 full-year courses or 90 credit hours) of undergraduate university study in Canada.

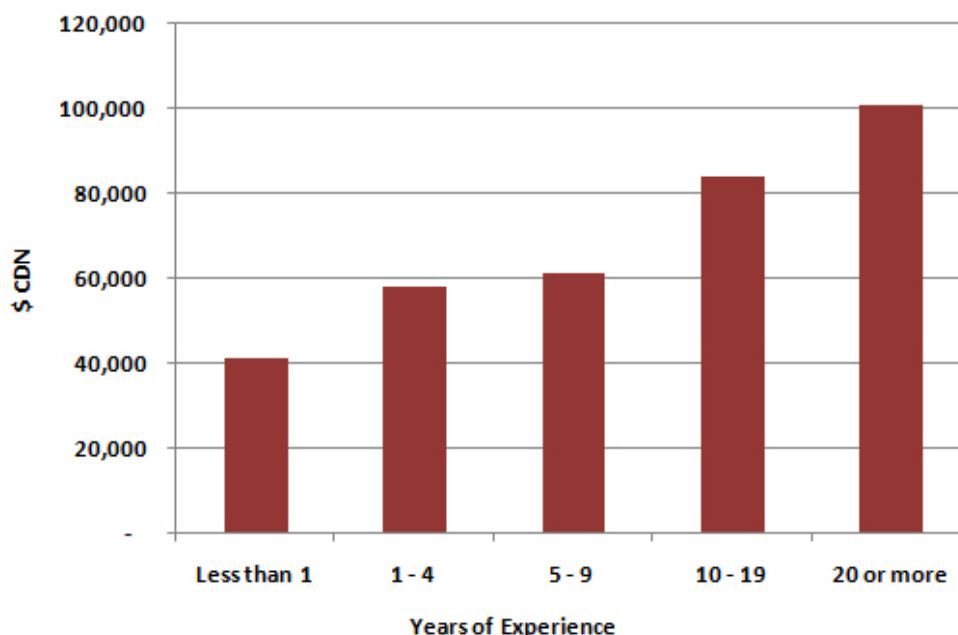
### Where do chiropractors work?

Chiropractors may work in primary care dealing with patients that have low back pain. Furthermore, they may work with patients that have other medical conditions and chiropractic care may complement or support medical treatment by placing emphasis on the musculoskeletal aspects associated with the condition.

Some chiropractors work in a palliative setting, providing relief to patients with chronic conditions. By focusing on and attempting to treat the physical elements of chronic ailments, the aim of chiropractic may be to improve the general well-being of the patient.

### Salaries and demographic information

#### Median salary per annum (2008)



Source: Adapted from [Payscale](#)

For more information regarding naturopathic medicine, please visit the [Canadian Chiropractic Association](#) website.



## IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis



## Thriving Ivory

*Thriving Ivory is a California rock band whose 2006 demo CD quickly amassed an enthusiastic fan base.*

*The band's music is passionate, sensitive, well crafted, and monumental, and perfectly suited to the innovative vocal style of lead singer Clayton Stroope. Their self-titled debut album with Wind-up Records is based on the original demo. The band is now touring Canada.*

*The following are notes from a conversation with the band's drummer, Paul Niedermier.*

## That Ivory Sound

It's really rewarding to have fans connect with the music. We get emails and MySpace messages every day from people who are really connecting with "Angels on the Moon." Every email is completely different; everybody has a different idea of what that song means. One guy wrote to us saying he thought it was about the New York Yankees. Someone else wrote in who'd lost their mother to cancer and had been touched by that song. I don't even write the lyrics but it's rewarding for me to be a part of it.

Sometimes when we've done a bunch of shows the next one can seem like just another show to us, but then people start singing every single word to a song and you can tell they're really moved. That never gets old.

## Life History

Scott has been playing piano since he was a little kid. Clayton never really had any vocal training but he sang growing up in school. I had a couple of drum lessons here and there and the guitarists had lessons here and there but nothing super serious.



I was born and raised in San José, California. That definitely influenced my musical development. I went to a lot of shows. I played in a punk band when I was in high school. I did the whole jazz band thing. It helped me learn to play in front of a crowd and be comfortable on a stage. I got an early start with that, around the age of 14.

I graduated high school in 2002 in San José and went down to Santa Barbara to go to school and the rest of the guys were already down there because they were a couple of years older than me.

The first day I moved into the dorm I saw a flyer saying Thriving Ivory wanted a drummer. They listed U2 as an influence. I was a big fan of U2 so I thought I'd give it a shot. It wasn't the kind of music I usually listened to but it was a challenge I was up for. Over time I really learned to love the music.

### **Basement Tapes**

We released our first demo in the summer of 2006. We went to all our parents and borrowed money from them. Most of it was recorded in Drew's basement, with a really good producer named Chris Manning from the Bay area (he used to be in the band Jellyfish). That was the album that got us signed to Wind-up Records. Most of what's on this new album is what we recorded on our own.

In fact, with "Angels on the Moon," which we recorded again once we signed on with Wind-up, the basement version turned out to be better than the new version, which we'd spent a ton of money on.

### **Not All Labels Created Equal**

Wind-up's been really awesome to us. They kind of let us steer the ship and they're just there for support. If we have questions we can always go to them. We hear these horror stories from other bands on other labels that completely change their music. I think that we're one of the few bands that can sit back and honestly say we're happy with the record we have out now.

### **The Songs**

Scott comes up with most of the lyrics but he'll bounce some off of Clayton. Scott will come to the band with the skeleton of a song. Then we add our own parts. Sometimes we nail it right there and that's where it sticks but sometimes changes keep getting added to it for a couple of months.

### **Do Your Part**

We're all pretty much on the same track with our political views but we try not to impose our ideas onto anyone else because we don't want people to vote for someone just because we did.

Having said that, we do encourage our fans to take enough of an interest in current events to do their part. It doesn't take long to read up on the candidates' policies. Every vote really does matter. Before the election we put up a short message on MySpace encouraging people to get out and vote.

I'm really, really happy with what happened this election. After Bush's first four years I couldn't imagine another four years but then it happened. If we'd had another four years of the same kind of thing it would have been a catastrophe. We're all thrilled about it. And as far as the propositions that went through, I'm happy with but some I'm not so happy with.

People need to realize that the choices we're making today are going to affect our kids' lives and their kids' lives and so on. It's not so much about how lowering or raising taxes is going to affect you instantly; it's about how it's going to affect the entire country and its future.

***You dance like a queen***

***In spite of all the things you  
never wanted***

***When you're left out in the cold***

***You dance like a queen***

***Your silhouette is still my  
reflection***

***You speak to me in riddles . . .***

***From "Secret Life," lyrics by  
Scott Jason***

## THE LEARNING CURVE

Sara Windross



### Twenty-Seven Candles

It's that time of year again. The time when I reflect upon my life; the good memories and the bad, if only for a short while. If you assume I'm referring to Christmas, your assumption is incorrect (but, I admit, it's a safe one because Christmas is just around the corner).

No, I'm talking about birthdays; the only day of the year that allows you to be selfish without a reason.

This year, I turn 27. When many people's birthday approaches, the old saying, "Another year older and deeper in debt" may run through their minds.

I've been an AU student for two years now but it didn't take long to discover a new saying: "Another year older and still one credit short."

This accurately expresses how I feel about being an undergrad when my birthday arrives and it also runs through my mind when I wonder how much longer it will take to earn my degree.

Throughout my childhood years, I never gave the idea of getting older much thought, and it never occurred to me on my birthday. I just enjoyed the cake, the gifts, and the company of my family and friends. I lived in the moment.

Now, I still live in the moment; I enjoy the same things but I have a clear understanding of time. Each year we get older and though we want to stop it we know it's impossible. All we can do is try to accept it.

Everyone accepts getting older in their own way, though some people are more successful at doing this than others. For example, they may decide they'd rather focus on the things they can change rather than on the things they can't.

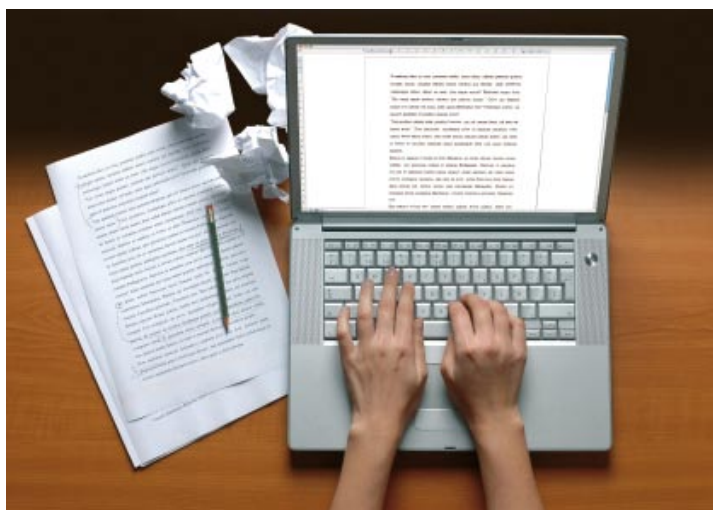
I'm one of those people. For me, nothing specific led to this acceptance; it happened naturally. Like a young boy who is interested in his baby toys yet doesn't think about them anymore in the moment he discovers he likes his toddler clothes.

I'm able to relish my life's memories as they occur, though this was a difficult task to accomplish when I was a teenager. I longed for everything to stay the same and I thought, if I made this wish on my birthday cake each year, it would come true.

Today, I realize that accepting change is the key to believing that getting older is just a part of life.

I still make a wish when I blow out the candles on my birthday cake. I think we all like to make a wish because, in that moment, age doesn't really matter.

## THE 2008 VOICE MAGAZINE WRITING CONTEST!



Write for *The Voice* and win money for your education!

*The Voice* is launching its 2008 writing contest, with categories for both fiction and non-fiction.

We've got over \$1,000 in prizes to give away: one winner in each category will receive a scholarship of one Athabasca University undergraduate course.

Please read the contest rules and regulations and submission guidelines carefully to ensure you are not disqualified.

It's free to enter, but the length limits are firm and all entries that go beyond these limits will be disqualified. Good luck!

### Categories

#### Non-Fiction:

In 1,500 words or less, write about any issue affecting freedom of speech. You may write about issues in the press, in politics, or on a personal scale. You may focus on current issues of free speech, or take a historical approach. Feel free to use research or statistics in your article (with proper citations), or write a creative opinion piece.

#### Fiction:

This category is open to your imagination! Write a 1,500 word or less fiction submission in any genre or format. Short stories, poetry, a scene from a play, even a comic. Be creative!

### Rules and Regulations

- The *Voice* writing contest is open to anyone 16 years of age or older, with the following exceptions: AU, AUSU, and *Voice* staff and AUSU councillors are not eligible to enter the contest.
- Winning entries will be published in *The Voice*. *The Voice* reserves the right to print non-winning entries at a rate of remuneration in accordance with current *Voice* freelance submission rates. *The Voice* may use portions of non-winning non-fiction entries in a composite about perspectives on free speech. No remuneration will be provided for such use.
- All decisions regarding this contest and the selection of winners remain with the judging panel and are final.
- Entries will be judged by a panel to be selected by the *Voice* editors, and this panel may include: AU students, AU tutors, and/or AUSU councillors. The panel will include at least 3 members.
- *The Voice* editors will collect articles and oversee the judging, but will not be judges.



- Entries must be original works that have not been printed or published elsewhere (including online), and must not be course assignment papers or derivatives of.
- Entries must not contain any information that would make the identity of the author evident to judges. To ensure fairness, all entries will be forwarded to the judging panel with a reference number attached, but no personally identifying information. *The Voice* editors will keep the identity of the authors private until the contest closes. *The Voice* editors will keep a record of the authors of submissions, and will be the sole owner of this list.
- Entries will not be edited for grammar, spelling, or content, although *The Voice* editors may black out any personally identifying information contained within the submission. Otherwise, entries will be forwarded to the judging panel as is, with the exception that all entries will be converted to use the same file format, margins, font size, and font style to ensure that all entries are equally readable.
- The deadline for submissions in both categories will be December 31, 2008. The winners will be announced by February 28, 2009. *The Voice* reserves the right to extend either deadline if necessary.
- One grand prize winner will be selected in both the fiction and non-fiction categories. If no entries are received in one of the categories, the prize money will be returned to the *Voice* scholarship budget. Prizes will be awarded in the form of a certificate for one free Athabasca University undergraduate course. Prize certificates have no cash value.
- *The Voice* reserves the right to add additional, secondary prizes.
- *The Voice* is not responsible for lost emails. *The Voice* editors will confirm receipt of all entries by email. Please follow up if you do not receive a reply in two business days.
- All entrants agree to allow their name and city of residence to be printed, along with their submission, should it be selected as a winning entry. No further remuneration—beyond the contest prize—will be paid to the contest winner when their entry is printed.
- Winners will be asked to sign a standard Release and Indemnity form; each prize winner agrees to release the sponsor and its agents from any liability in connection with the prizes awarded in this contest.
- Any entrant found to be tampering with the contest results, or attempting to influence any of the judging members, or using any forums or other public communications media to advise others of which entry is theirs will be disqualified; or if *The Voice* editors determine, at their sole discretion, that any other form of tampering has been attempted, that entrant will be disqualified.
- No preference will be given to regular *Voice* writers. Entries will not identify the writer as a regular *Voice* contributor when sent to the judging panel.
- Where applicable, this contest is subject to all federal, provincial, and municipal laws. Contest void where prohibited.

***The deadline for submissions  
in both categories will be  
December 31, 2008. The  
winners will be announced by  
February 28, 2009. The Voice  
reserves the right to extend  
either deadline if necessary.***

### Submission Guidelines

- Your submission must be an electronic file attached to an email and submitted to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org). Submissions sent as the body of an email will not be accepted. Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) if you require instructions on how to attach a file to an email.
- Submissions should be in Microsoft Word format [.doc or .docx], rich text format [.rtf] or plain text format [.txt].

- If you use footnotes or endnotes, type them in at the end of the document, rather than using the endnote feature of your word processor.
- If you use a word processor other than Word or work on a Mac computer, you can save a file in one of these alternate formats using the 'save as' function and selecting the desired format on the save menu. Contact *The Voice* editors if you require assistance in formatting your submission. Users of older Macs may have to send entries in HTML format.
- Each entrant may submit one entry in each of the two categories.
- All entries must be under 1,500 words due to judging time constraints. Length will be determined by the word count feature in Microsoft Word. Your references and citations section will not be included in the word count.
- References should be formatted consistently according to a standardized publishing style guide, such as the American Psychological Association (APA) or the MLA press style.
- Entries should not include unnecessary formatting such as drop caps, graphics (unless the graphic is integral to the work), or unusual fonts. Entries must be text; scans of handwritten or typed documents will not be accepted.
- The email should include the following information: Your full name, AU student ID number (if applicable), email address, telephone number, mailing address, the title of your entry, and whether you are submitting to the fiction or non-fiction category.
- Make sure non-fiction entries are based on the topic question detailed above. Fiction entries can be on any topic you like. Do not include your contact information within your article but be sure to include a title.

Entries will be judged on the following criteria:

- Non-Fiction entries will be judged on originality, creativity, accuracy, and how well your support your assertions with data or argument. You will also be judged on the presentation of your article, including professionalism, proper spelling, grammar and syntax, and readability. You may write in journalistic style or essay format.
- Fiction entries will be judged on creativity, entertainment value, and the originality of your writing style.
- Regardless of the genre you choose, you will be judged on the effectiveness of your piece and your technical writing skills.

Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) if you have any questions.

## DID YOU KNOW?



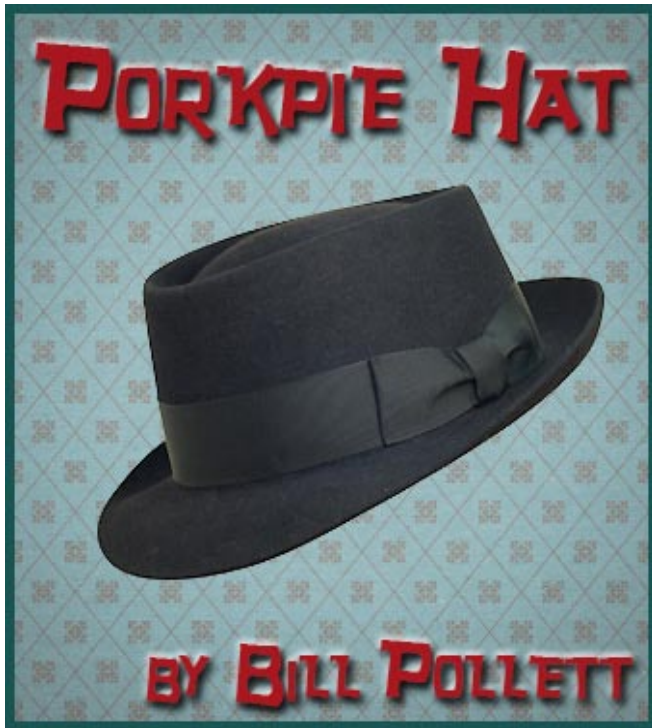
### Holiday Exam Requests

Planning on writing an AU exam as the holiday season approaches? If so, there are a couple of important things to keep in mind.

If your course contract ends on December 31, you'll be allowed some extra time to schedule your exam. As the AU calendar explains: "All examinations for courses with a contract end date of December 31 must be completed no later than January 15 of the following year." Remember, though, that all your other coursework, including assignments and quizzes, must be completed on or before the December 31 course contract end date.

As well, the university will be closed from 3:00 p.m. December 24 until January 2. For all the details, check out the [AU calendar](#) online.





## Of Smoking

It's been more than 11 years now since I ground out my last cigarette beneath the heel of my boot, but I still miss smoking.

A vile habit it may be, but to me the act of smoking was always a series of small, profound pleasures: the carefully observed ceremony of drawing the smooth white cylinder from the cardboard packet, then tapping it against an available surface; the selection of a single wooden match from the box; the sharp tang of igniting sulphur; a warm jet of aromatic smoke hitting the back of the throat, then being expelled through the nose to hang, spectral in the air.

I know how awful tobacco is. I have seen the X-ray illustrations and photographs on health clinic walls. I know the way it turns healthy, fleshy, pink lungs into dark, malignant lumps that resemble mummified cat turds. I know that side-stream smoke shortens the lives

of blues musicians and cocktail waitresses. Still, I miss it.

More than anything, I miss the social aspect of smoking. Sharing a cigarette with someone is an odd, shared ritual, a stepping out of the normal stream of time and activity.

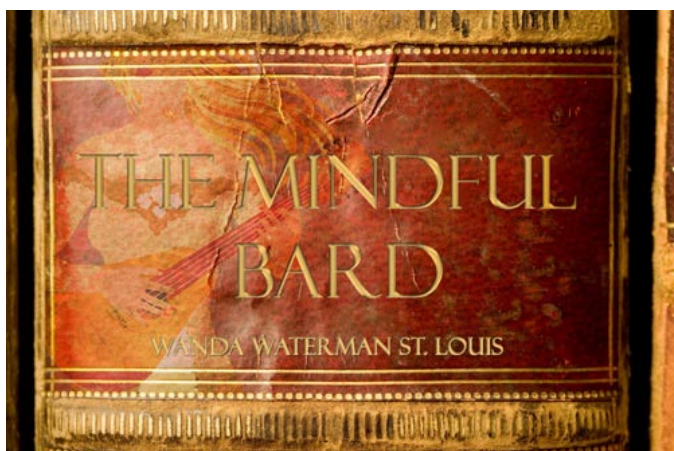
Soldiers on night watch smoke cigarettes to pass the long hours before dawn, being careful to hide the match's flare with a cupped hand in case of snipers or enemy aircraft. A prisoner in a hidden basement room is offered a cigarette from a package held by the sinister official sitting across the table; a short respite before the interrogation begins. Survivors of traumatic events—floods, hurricanes, train derailments—sit on the roofs of houses or a short distance from the wreckage, not talking, just listening to the sound of approaching sirens.

One of the first cigarettes I ever smoked came from a packet that a girl named Pam Duggan had stolen from her mother's purse. We skipped health class and followed a muddy trail down to the river behind the school. Hidden from sight by cancerous growths of blackberry bushes, and the pilings of a long-rotten bridge, we lit up Export A's and sat side by side on the weedy bank, my left thigh pressing against her right, watching a greasy moving highway of black water and floating garbage pass us by. I will always associate the chemical dizziness and faint nausea of that early cigarette with the first stirrings of adolescent love.

My wife quit smoking as soon as she suspected the pregnancy. I was a bit weaker, a bit slower, but still a good six months in advance of the birth of our daughter. We did not want her to have smokers as parents. It seemed to us that smoking and parenting make a poor match, like yoga and single malt scotch.

There is a part of me, though, that thinks I will take it up again someday. Perhaps it will be when my daughter is in her 30s. Then, she will be far too old and sensible to be influenced by my sad vices, and I will be too old to worry about getting cancer of the tongue or throat or lungs.

I don't think I will smoke plain old cigarettes, though. I'm thinking a briar wood pipe, or tiny black cheroots, for maximum eccentricity quotient. I'll carry them in a shiny silver and ebony cigarette case, and offer them to strangers, fellow survivors, as we stand on the periphery of strange and wondrous events.



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

**CD:** Jeff Healey, *Mess of Blues*

**Release date:** 2008

**Label:** Stony Plain Records

**A Rocking, Crowd-pleasing Farewell Note from Canada's Blues Bard**

*"I have always defined 'success' . . . as the ability to make a comfortable living while doing something you*

*love to do, if not what you love to do the most."*

Jeff Healey

There is such infectious joy and gusto in these songs that it's hard to believe that Jeff Healey was dying while he recorded them.

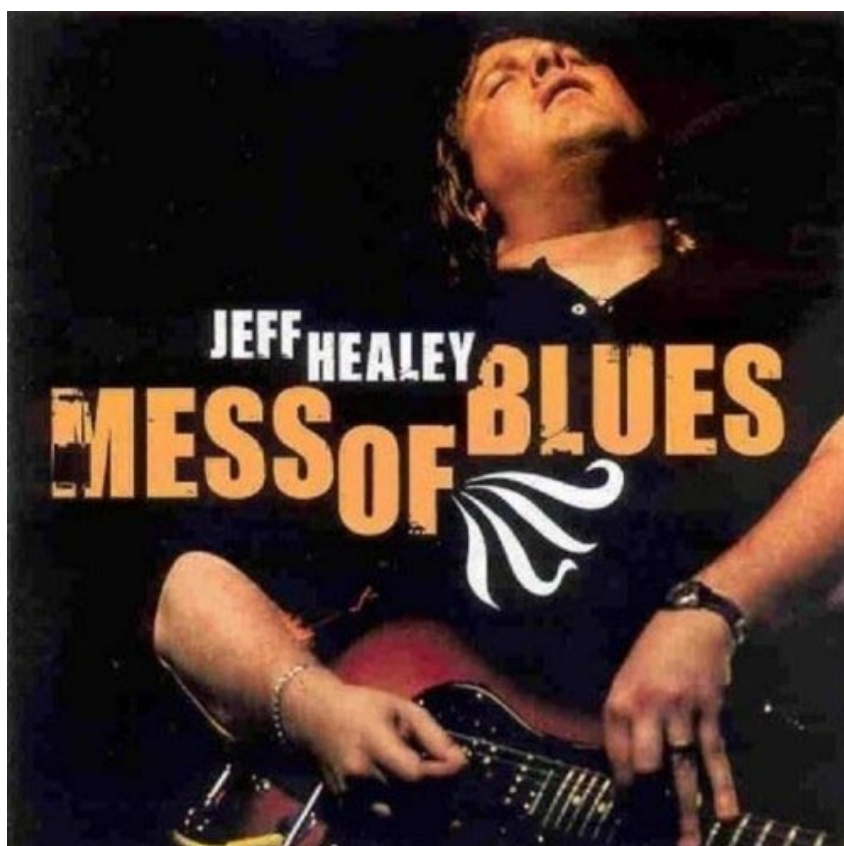
Apparently Jeff's imminent demise was never a given, at least not from the perspectives of those who worked with him during his last days.

According to Holger Petersen, president of Stony Plain Recording, "Jeff had come through so many health problems and he continued to play and perform and record and be active. So we thought he was fighting the good fight and winning."

Jeff always managed to hook up with great musicians and didn't seem to feel he had to hog the spotlight. And he wasn't averse to dragging loitering amateurs into service.

"The final studio session was in Toronto," says Petersen. "The band had already done the track for 'It's Only Money' and Jeff said, 'Hey, Holger, why don't you sing along to this.' I'm not a singer, but it was just like a shout, a call-and-response thing. So I sang.

"That was his last session for the album and Jeff played great, but he wasn't really up to singing so he got Alec his bass player to sing lead on "Jambalaya" and Dave his keyboard player to sing lead on "It's Only Money"."



The songs were chosen from audience favourites, the songs that inspired the hoots and cheers or that got the bodies up swaying or bopping.

Jeff Healey presents us not only with an incredible discography of rock, blues, and jazz played vibrantly and meticulously; he also portrays a brilliant life well lived, a life spent revelling in everything he loved and stalwartly refusing to play the hand life had dealt him.

***There's nothing here,  
despite Jeff's  
aforementioned  
tiredness, which  
would suggest Healey  
was even close to  
throwing in the towel.***

People without physical disabilities, especially the nice ones who don't believe they ever discriminate against anyone, often fail to understand the power of the little messages that plague the days of people with challenges, the messages that tell them that strictly by virtue of their disabilities they are substandard human specimens, unfit for the fulfillment of any of the dreams to which "real" (meaning disability-free) people aspire.

These messages, which sooner or later become internalized, can have a more immobilizing effect than any difficulties presented by the disability itself.

The person with challenges who ploughs through the prejudice to lead an exceptional life is to be lauded as a hero of the spirit. Jeff Healey's aspiration to succeed by making a living doing what he loved can now be seen as the victory it was—an overcoming not of disability but of the chauvinism of the able.

The sound somehow manages to be consistently clean and precise but reckless at the same time.

There's nothing here, despite Jeff's aforementioned tiredness, which would suggest Healey was even close to throwing in the towel. The projects he was looking forward to completing, or seeing completed, are a case in point.

"The last few times we got together we talked about bringing camera men down to his basement, where he had something like 22,000 78s, and just film him giving a little tour of his record collection. We tried several times to set that up and unfortunately it never happened."

But Healey's story is far from over.

"His big love," says Petersen, "was the Jazz Wizards, the jazz band he toured with. We've got one final CD in the can—it's a jazz record of Jeff's and it was done with some members of the Jazz Wizards. That will be out in the spring."

Looking forward to it, Jeff. And thanks for all the great riffs.

*Mess of Blues* manifests four of The Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth a listen: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it demonstrates an attainment of the true self; 3) it makes me want to be a better artist; and 4) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour.





*From  
Where  
I Sit*  
Hazel Anaka

## Sad but True

As adult children, sooner or later each of us confronts the issue of elder care. Any older married person who doesn't predecease their spouse will likely have to face the same heartbreaking issues.

For most people the choice of how and where loved ones will be cared for boils down to one of two options. Many will choose to care for their spouse or parent at home for as long as possible. This option comes with a huge cost, particularly for the female caregiver—wife, daughter, sister. These women often suspend or quit their “real lives” for the duration of the illness.

Only after soul-searching and a realistic appraisal of the hard facts of the situation does the family relent and begin the admission process. No one I know makes this decision without guilt and heartache, no matter the inevitability of it.

Others will seek out the best care they can afford as soon as it becomes apparent it's needed. They too will feel guilt at not having done more. They too will try hard to find the best care available.

Right now a friend is grappling with the decline of her father after more than one stroke. This admittedly difficult man—a tyrant to his children—is in a privately run long-term care facility in small-town Alberta. This facility has allowed not one, not two, but unbelievably *five* falls out of bed since the stroke and has been a source of frustration, disbelief, and sadness to his family.

In fact, the post-stroke treatment was a debacle. Everyone knows that if the patient gets a shot of medication within about four hours of the event, lasting damage is prevented or mitigated. In this case the doctor was not called, the patient was not transported to hospital; in fact, absolutely nothing happened until a day or so later.

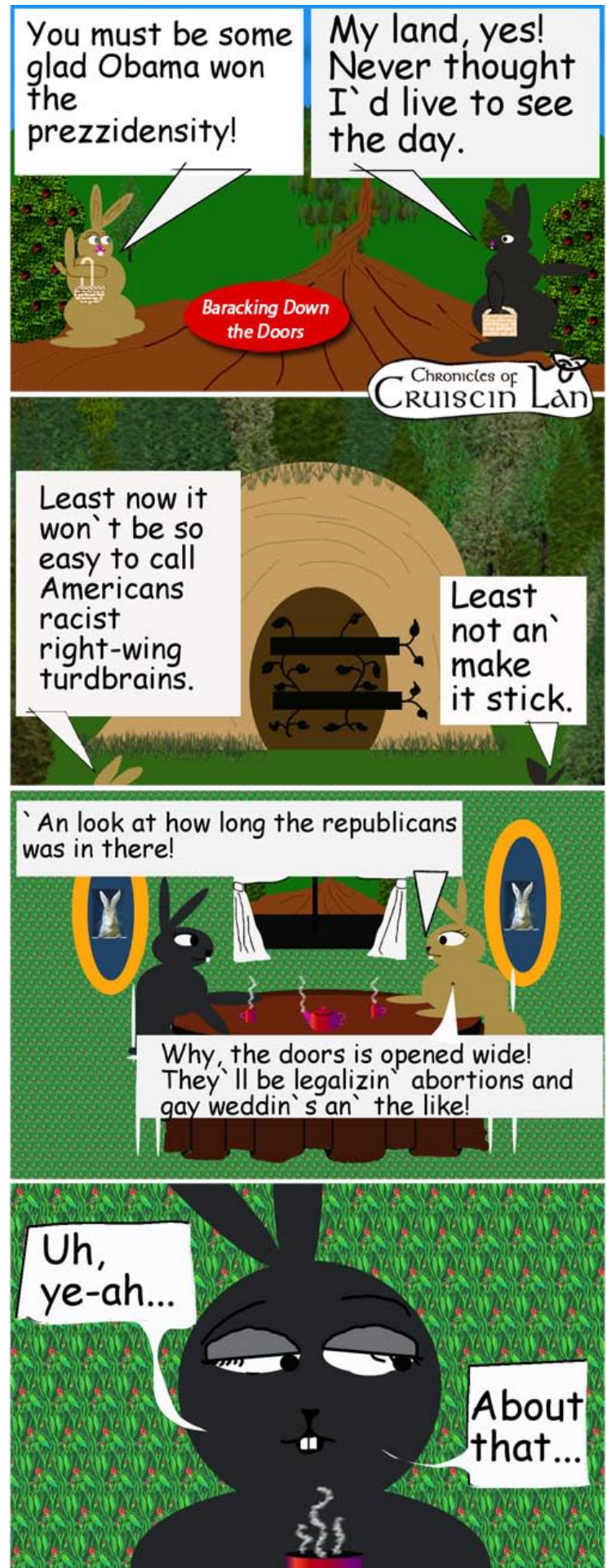
And things continue to deteriorate. There is the heart-wrenching loss of dignity, power, and sense of self that often accompanies serious illness and the downward spiral to death. The patient becomes unrecognizable to the family. There is the loss of function and mental acuity, the mood swings, the anger and helplessness of the patient. It can and does make one weep for the loss. Tell me, in a prosperous province like Alberta should children have to feed, toilet, and turn their parent?

Should a family have to be there 24/7 to ensure prompt care and prevent abuse? Should families have to appear on the six o'clock news to cast the spotlight on elder care in this province after another tragic, preventable death?

There are no easy answers. The ethics of stopping (or not starting) treatment in cases with no hope of improvement is a topic far bigger and more complex than this space allows. We all understand the inevitability of death, the limitations of treatment, and the economic realities of staff shortages but heaven help us if we can't assure some modicum of dignity for the most vulnerable among us.

As sure as the sun rises our day will come—first as a loved one and finally as the patient. There is no escape from this issue. It's sad but true, from where I sit.

by  
Wanda  
Waterman  
St. Louis



## AUSU This Month



### 2009 AUSU Handbook/Planners

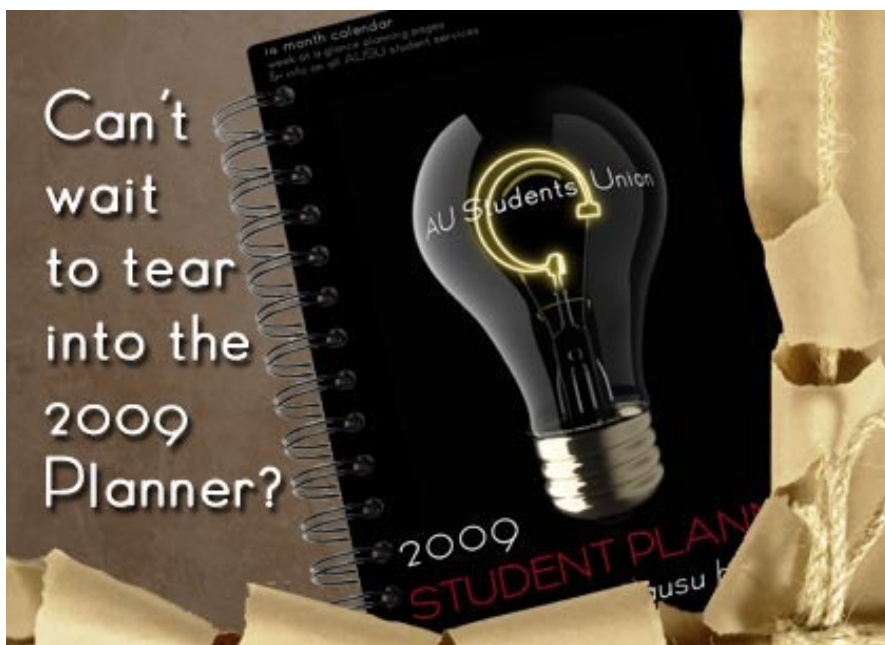
The 2009 AUSU planner pre-order form is up! You'll find the order form on the AUSU [home page](#), but please note, the planner will only be sent out when it arrives in our office in December.

Anyone who pre-orders will be in the first batch of planners mailed out. If you order early, you should have your new planner by the time the January pages run out in the old one—and hopefully well before that!

As always, we'll be excited to know what you think of the planner, and especially want to hear of any improvements you think could be made.

### Merchandise Still for Sale

We still have some locks and memory keys available for sale. Both of these were designed with ease of mailing in mind, which means they're small enough to be easily stored pretty much anywhere. The wristband USB key is a unique way to carry around your assignments, online materials, and even emails while you're on the go. With a 1 gigabyte capacity, it can even handle a good chunk of your music collection, and the design means you no longer have to worry about losing it. *The Voice* memory key has less capacity (512 MB) but the dark, flip-top design is classy enough to accompany you anywhere.



### Chat with a Councillor

Have a beef? Want to know where your \$8 per course goes or who's trying to make it work for you? Check out the AUSU chat times on our front page. Every Councillor has agreed to spend an hour each week making themselves available to you for your questions, concerns, or just to shoot the breeze while you take a break from your studying. It's not only a great way for you to learn more about what AUSU can do for you, but for us to learn what you want from AUSU. We hope to see you there!

### AUSU Lock Loan Program

Still running, and still popular, the lock loan program can allow you to rest easy knowing your valuables are safe if you're taking an exam at the Calgary or Edmonton campus. The locks can be set to any combination, and are loaned to people without any deposit, but we ask that you please remember to reset them to 0-0-0 before returning them so that we can continue this program.

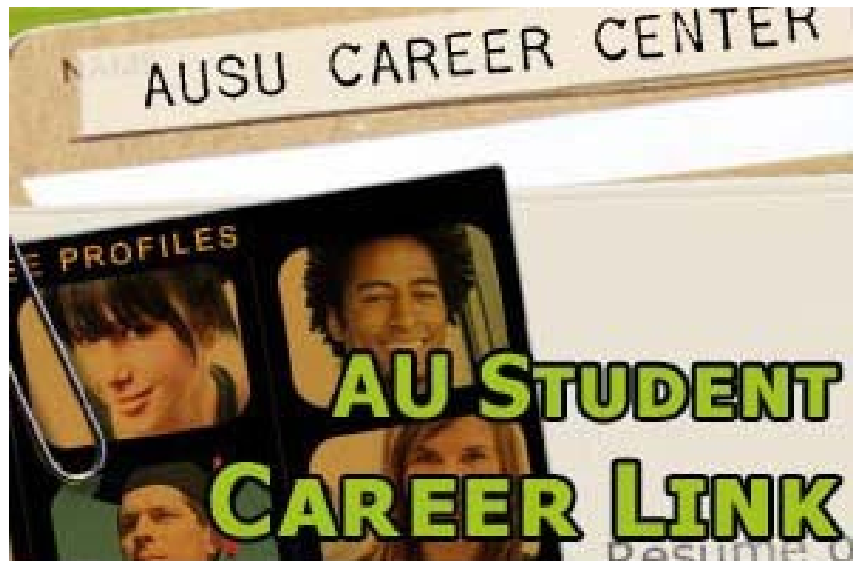


## Employment Site is here!

Many of you will already have seen the link to our new employment site on the front page, and while there are not a lot of employers in evidence yet, it's a great opportunity to get your resume, skills, and talents in there. The Personnel Department is busily working on finding employers who could use your unique abilities as a distance education student. Be sure yours are available to get the early opportunities!

## Appointments

AUSU VP External, Barb Rielly, has stepped down from her position as chair of the AUSU Awards Committee, and new Councillor Bethany Porter has taken on the role. Council wishes Bethany good luck in this position, which can involve making some hard decisions.



Increasing AUSU's representation within AU, VP Finance and Administration, Sarah Kertcher, has been appointed to AU's integrated learning centre steering committee. This committee will examine the possibility of integrating all AU sites in the Edmonton Area into one building. Sarah will ensure that the committee keeps concerns of our members with respect to ease of access and exam conditions as well as AUSU's own special needs for storage and physical office space well in mind.

The MyAU steering committee sees two new AUSU representatives, President Karl Low, and VP External Barb Rielly, joining to provide their input on how MyAU could be better structured to meet your needs. If there's something that's been bugging you about the MyAU system, now is a great time to call or email our office and let them know. We'll be sure to bring your concerns forward.

## SmartDraw Program Continues

If you haven't yet, you might want to download a copy of SmartDraw. AUSU has purchased a licence agreement to supply the award-winning SmartDraw software to all AUSU members (current undergraduate students). To access this deal and find out more, visit the front page of our website.

SmartDraw allows you to create a wide range of graphics for your assignments and submit them electronically in a Word file. You can also place your graphics in Excel or PowerPoint files, or export them as TIF, GIF, or JPEG files to make a web graphic or even a logo. Just a few of the graphics you can make include Venn diagrams, genetics charts, graphs, organizational and flow charts, and Gantt charts.

For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email. Remember, though, that you should always check with your tutor to find out if there is a specific format he or she prefers. Your tutor does not have to have SmartDraw to view these graphics, however. Installations under this program are good for one year. The package includes both the Standard and Health Care editions of SmartDraw.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



### At Home: Seniors a “drugged-out generation”

Street drugs may be a problem, but legal drugs also represent a crisis in North America—especially for seniors.

Women over the age of 65 are among the number one drug users in our society (not including patients in long-term care), and 12 per cent of them are on a prescription cocktail of at least 10 different medications.

As the *Toronto Star* reports, the situation is creating a raft of problems. As many as 15 per cent of seniors admitted to hospital are suffering from drug side effects, “clogging emergency departments, blocking hospital beds and sicker than they have any reason to be.”

Nearly a quarter of seniors in the general population are taking at least five drugs; by comparison, the average senior in long-term care is taking six to eight medications. This can lead to a range of negative reactions, including dizziness and confusion.

“You’d fall down, too, if you were on so many drugs,” says Dr. William Dalziel, a prominent Ottawa geriatrician.

These symptoms can lead to even more health problems, including depression. One cause of over-medication is that seniors are often sent to numerous specialists for chronic ailments, with no single doctor having access to their full medication history. One notable exception is Baycrest, Toronto’s health sciences centre focused on geriatric care, which has an innovative computerized prescription entry system.

### In Foreign News: Odourprinting becomes latest identification tool

In the increasingly high-tech world of identification, scientists have added another tool to the arsenal: odourprinting. Research has shown that all humans have a unique fragrance, “similar to a fingerprint or DNA sample,” that can be used to accurately identify them.

In a *Telegraph* report, Jae Kwak, lead author of the study at Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia, said that the finding suggested “odourprinting could soon have a practical use . . . it opens the possibility that devices can be developed to detect individual odourprints in humans.”

Chemical analyses of urine were used, along with “sensor” mice. The sensor animals were trained to choose between pairs of other mice based on scent. The test animals had been fed different diets, leading to another interesting conclusion: odourprints can’t be masked by diet.

Although the test mice were fed diets containing strong-smelling foods, the sensor mice were still able to identify them by their “underlying genetically-determined aroma.”

One theory about odourprints is that they may have evolved as a way of marking territories or as part of the process of choosing a mate.

## EDUCATION NEWS

Kirsten Goruk



### Psychologist pens emotional crisis guide for students

EDMONTON (CUP) - University students face a daunting amount of pressure and stress, which can stem from school, work, and relationships.

With that in mind, a University of Alberta psychologist created a guide to help students cope with emotional crisis.

Kim Maertz has been working at the U of A's University Health Centre Student Counselling Services for 10 years, and he says creating the guide was necessary to

make sure his office is able to aid students who seek help.

"Over the last several years, we've had a lot of students who are experiencing various forms of crisis, and because we unfortunately don't have nearly enough staff, we've got to find a way to try to meet the needs without seeing clients only for individual counselling," he said.

According to Maertz, the university should have 19 psychologists to accommodate its student population, but his office has five. This discrepancy is what pushed Maertz to write the guide, and in the process, get the necessary information out to students.

Using his years of experience with Student Counselling Services and a PhD in counselling psychology, Maertz was able to provide another resource for students on campus.

"I think that [my experience] has put me in a position where I know what information to draw on and have accumulated some just from working with clients over the 10 years. [I wanted to] put it out there so that it's in an easy, succinct, readable form for students who are facing all kinds of emotional crises," he said.

The guide itself is divided into three sections: ways to identify whether you are a student in crisis, general strategies to deal with crisis, and resources to deal with those situations or suicidal thoughts.

Distribution to students will take place through residences, faculties, and the Student Counselling Services office.

"We see a lot of clients, and as a result, when they come in on what we call initial consultations, and we're unable to accommodate them, we'll send them away with a guide," Maertz said.

Maertz says the amount of students seeking help for coping with depression isn't surprising, and he attributes part of the problem to stress related to finances.

"Students are probably working more jobs today than they've ever worked in the past. Previously, I think a lot of students had funding from parents, and today, a lot of students are doing it on their own," he said.

"If you're working one, two, sometimes we have students with three jobs and they're taking full-time classes—how could you not end up stressed out?" Maertz added.

In working with the university's clients, Maertz feels there are three major issues facing students: depression, stress, and relationships.

He says school isn't the only aspect of a student's life that can be difficult, which is why he hopes students will take advantage of the free help the guide provides.

"The degree of stress today on the university campus is quite enormous. Students don't just end up today dealing with classes, but they're dealing with a wide variety of other stresses."

## **CLICK OF THE WRIST - Home Sweet Home**

This week, US president-elect Barack Obama took a tour of his new home, the White House. Most of us may never get a glimpse inside our countries' halls of power, so here's the next best thing: a virtual tour online.

### **The White House**

This 360-degree tour of the White House takes you into the Blue Room, the Oval Office, the Map Room, and more. Just don't get too comfortable in the State Dining Room—you probably won't be asked to stay for dinner.

### **Number 10**

The Americans might quibble with this site's claim that Number 10 Downing Street, home to Great Britain's prime minister, is "the most famous front door in the world." The site does have a cool interactive feature, though: you can click on numbered items inside Number 10 to find out a little more about the history behind them.

### **Rideau Hall**

Not quite as flashy as the Brits' site, this virtual tour of the official residence of Canada's governor general still boasts some great visuals and interesting tidbits. And the designers have done a great job converting the tennis court into the Tent Room.

### **Kantei**

The Kantei is the official residence of the prime minister of Japan, and this site offers great videos as well as a photographic tour.

### **Horodetsky House**

Horodetsky House in Ukraine, built in 1903, has been President Victor Yushchenko's official residence since 2005. It's one thing to read about the "mermaids, dolphins and frogs on the roof, sinking ships and hunting trophies on the exterior walls," but click on the slideshow link and you'll be amazed at the detail.

# CLASSIFIEDS

---

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) for more information.

## THE VOICE

---

1213, 10011 109th Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5J 3S8 -- Ph: 800.788.9041 ext. 2905 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

**Publisher** Athabasca University Students' Union  
**Editor-In-Chief** Tamra Ross  
**Managing Editor** Sandra Livingston

**Regular Columnists** Hazel Anaka, Christina M. Frey, Mandy Gardner, Barbara Godin, Behdin Nowrouzi, Wanda Waterman St. Louis

---

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

---

*The Voice* is published every Friday in html and pdf format

Contact *The Voice* at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org)

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, see the 'subscribe' link on *The Voice* front page. *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list.  
Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its contributions