

THE

VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 17 Issue 16

April 24, 2009

Double-Double

Drive-through decorum

Re-Green It

From pizza to Patagonia

Dear Barb

Toning up



Plus:

Porkpie Hat, From Where I Sit,

In Conversation With, and much more...

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**The Voice
Magazine**

www.voicemagazine.org

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

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email

voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Tamra Ross

Managing Editor

Sandra Livingston

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka

John Buhler

Christina M. Frey

Barbara Godin

Bill Pollett

Wanda Waterman St.

Louis

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and PDF format

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to voice@voicemagazine.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



THIS WORLD

Christina M. Frey

Greening Spring Cleaning, Part II

Part II: Recycle it!

Last week, we started cleaning out our garages and discovered that many of the items we no longer wanted could find a new home—other than at a landfill.

Unfortunately, certain things are impossible to place. But don't run for the garbage bins yet; first, check to see if you can recycle.

More and more items are becoming accepted at general recycling facilities, and new

avenues are opening up for previously “non-recyclable” stuff. You'd be amazed what you *don't* need to put out in the trash!

The Easy Stuff: Paper, Cardboard, and Metal

Paper - Most paper can now be recycled together: newspaper, magazines, direct mail, flyers. But don't stop at reading material! Brown paper bags are recyclable with mixed paper, and cardboard is also recyclable (although in many cases separately, depending on the local recycling centre's policy).

Cans - Both your aluminum (soft drink) cans and your steel (soup, beans, canned vegetables, etc.) cans are easily recycled and widely accepted at most centres. They are separate materials, though, and should be recycled separately unless your facility says otherwise.

Don't forget that aerosol cans—like shave gel containers—are also steel cans. But check with your facility first, as some won't accept them.

Aluminum foil - Inquire about whether you can include your used aluminum foil with the soda cans; different facilities have different policies.

Scrap metal - Scrap metal of all types may be welcomed by scrap metal dealers and recyclers, and they'll usually pay. See your local yellow pages for listings.

The Confusing Stuff: Plastics

Are plastics recyclable, or not? Generally, yes. Almost all are recyclable, but in differing degrees: some types are easily recycled, but for others the process is so complicated that very few facilities will accept them.

How to tell which is which? If you check the bottom of most plastic containers, you'll see a number, usually enclosed in a triangle. That number is the code for the process required to recycle that type of plastic, and is key to determining whether you can recycle the item locally.



#1 and #2 plastics - These plastics, which include water bottles (#1) and milk or juice jugs (#2) are the most widely accepted.

#3 plastics - Most of these may be more difficult to recycle, but plastic grocery bags, also a #3 plastic, are often collected at your local supermarket.

#4 plastics - Some supermarkets also accept #4 plastic bags, like trash bags.

#5 plastics - These plastics, which include yogurt containers, are very hard to place, but things are slowly changing. Massachusetts-based company Preserve Products accepts #5 plastics and recycles them into toothbrushes and other household items. Currently, there are limited drop-off spots, but they will also accept the items by mail. See the [Preserve Products](#) website for more information.

#6 plastics - These plastics, usually Styrofoam-based, are accepted by many facilities. First, call your local shipping stores; many will reuse your old packing peanuts. (Or, you can hang onto them and reuse them yourself the next time you need to ship a package!) Otherwise, see [EPS Packaging](#) to find a drop-off location near you, or for information on their mail-in program.

#7 plastics - This category contains miscellaneous plastics that don't fit in the preceding categories. Usually, it's difficult to find collection spots for #7's, although some, like DVDs, are recyclable (see [Computer and Electronics](#), below).

Want more information? Website [The Daily Green](#) describes the seven categories of plastics and explains what they can be recycled into.



The Modern Stuff: Batteries and “Technotrash”

Batteries - Good news: your rechargeable batteries are now recyclable! Many retailers, like Radio Shack, Best Buy, and Canadian Tire have drop-off containers.

Visit [Environment Health and Safety Online](#) to run a search based on your zip or postal code. If you're trying to dispose of a car battery, call your local auto repair shop, as many accept them.

Computer and Electronic Equipment - Have old computer equipment that's no longer working? It may be recyclable. First, check with the manufacturer, as many already have recycling programs in place.

For example, Epson Canada's program allows you to ship certain items to them free of charge, and they'll handle separating the parts and sending them on to recycling facilities. Visit the [Epson Recycle Program](#) for details. [Dell](#) has a similar program.

If you're buying a replacement computer or printer, check to see if the store has recycling incentives. For example, Staples.com is currently offering a rebate of \$50 off certain new printers when you bring in your old one to be recycled. See the [Staples](#) website for more information.

What about all the small computer accessories, such as cables, old diskettes, or hard drives? For a small fee, GreenDisk accepts these, and other items, including CDs or DVDs, videotapes, computer chips or boards,

PDA's, digital cameras, and more. Visit [GreenDisk](#) to find out how to recycle your "technotrash." Bonus: they'll wipe any content and send a certificate guaranteeing that your personal information has been removed.

Cell phones - At the rate North Americans go through cell phones, they deserve their own category! If you live near a Pizza Pizza store, you may be in luck: a current promotion, "Cells for Slices," offers a free slice of pizza for every cell phone you bring in. See the [Pizza Pizza](#) website for more information.

Alternatively, look for charitable organizations seeking cell phone donations, or look online. For example, non-profit organization [Cell Phones for Soldiers](#) (in Canada, www.cellphonesforsoldiers.ca) resells your donations and uses the proceeds to purchase calling cards for military personnel stationed overseas.

Have a cause of your own? Visit [Project KOPEG](#) for information on starting your own fundraiser.

The Weird Stuff: Things I Had No Idea Were Recyclable!

Motor oil - Do you change your own motor oil? You might be surprised to know that dirty oil is actually recyclable. Check [Earth 911](#) for instructions on how to collect the oil, and call around to find a collection centre; most car care centres or auto shops will take care of it.

Light bulbs - Compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) contain mercury and shouldn't be sent to the landfill, so recycling is a doubly wise choice. IKEA stores collect and recycle CFLs for free, as do many Home Depot stores. Or, check [Lamp Recycle](#) (US and Canada) or [Recycle a Bulb](#) (US only) to find alternative facilities near you.

Sneakers - Can you believe it? Sneakers can now be recycled! Nike's Reuse-A-Shoe program—with the catchy slogan "Worn Out. Play on."—will collect your old sneakers at specified drop-off locations (or you can mail them in) and recycle them into play surfaces.

See [Reuse a Shoe](#) for more information.

An alternative: donate them to One World Running, an initiative that provides used sneakers to Third World athletes.

If the shoes aren't in acceptable condition, they'll send them on to Nike to be recycled. See [One World Running](#) for details.

Clothing - There's hope for those outdated, unwanted clothes: many fabrics are recyclable. Although facilities accepting them are less common, many do exist. Ask your local Goodwill to put you in touch with a rag dealer (read: textile recycler), do a search within your local community listings, or check the [US Textile Recycling Directory](#) or [Canadian Textile Recycling Directory](#).

Don't forget to check with manufacturers as well: some, like Patagonia, have collection and recycling programs in place. See [Patagonia](#) for a list of items they're accepting and drop-off locations.



Tyvek envelopes - Unlike most mail, Tyvek envelopes—those plastic-coated mailers—can't be tossed into the mixed paper bin, but don't throw them in the trash yet. Visit [Recycle Tyvek](#) to find out more about a program allowing you to recycle Tyvek material for a small fee.

Phew! That's some serious recycling! And it's only a small sampling of the different programs available.

When in doubt, start clicking; the Internet is a great resource. To check what your local facilities will accept, visit [Earth 911](#) for US information or [Waste Reduction Week Canada](#) for links to Canadian province-specific recycling resources. You'll be amazed at what can be recycled!

As I researched this article series, I quickly realized that the majority of junk cluttering my garage didn't need to go to the landfill. Through a combination of reusing and recycling, I've been able to sell, give away, or recycle most if not all of what could have ended up in the trash. Even better, armed with this new knowledge, I'm now more careful about my day-to-day decisions. Earth Week's nearly over, but environmental consciousness is a lifelong legacy.

Now back to that garage!

CONVOCATION 2009



Calling All Soon-to-Be AU Grads!

Are you one of the proud AU students who will be graduating this June? If so, *Voice* readers want to hear from you!

One of the most popular features of our convocation coverage is the grad interviews—a chance for brand-new grads to share their thoughts on what it took (and how great it feels!) to reach their goal.

You can read some of last year's interviews [here](#).

If you'd like to have your photo and a brief interview included in one of our special convocation issues, just email voice@voicemagazine.org and we'll send you the details.

And if you're going to be graduating in person, here's your chance to be part of AUSU's exciting new video coverage of events! AUSU staff will be on hand with their video camera to capture the excitement of a grad's day. To get in on the action, just email voice@voicemagazine.org

ON THE HILL

Sandra Livingston



Our Own Backyard

“Canada is a world leader in the promotion and protection of women’s rights and gender equality.” So claims the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada website.

It’s no surprise, then, that Canadian officials expressed outrage at the Afghan government’s recent erosion of women’s rights, with a new law “that would make Afghan women financially and sexually subservient to their husbands.”

Yet as the battle waged by Canada’s military in Afghanistan begins to be spun more and more as a struggle for human rights—and women’s rights in particular—it’s interesting to note that, when it comes to our own backyard, Canada has a lot of work to do.

We’ve come a long way since 1909, when it was still legal in this country to forcibly abduct any woman over the age of 16 (except an heiress). But it took until 1971 before female civic employees in Manitoba were allowed to keep their jobs if they married, and for women in Quebec to have the right to serve on a jury. And it wasn’t until 1983 that the Attorney General ordered Ontario police to lay charges in domestic violence cases. Until then, men often faced no consequences for putting their fists to their female partners.

If those sound like quaint examples of discrimination from our (disturbingly recent) past, you may be in for a surprise.

Besides the right to free movement and personal safety, one of the most basic human dignities is the right to earn a living, to feed your family and put a roof over your head. In Canada, women are still fighting that battle every day—and facing government resistance to do it.

One example is as recent as October 24, 2004. In 1988, when the pay of women health care workers was found to be discriminatory, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador agreed “to remedy a long history of sex-based wage discrimination.” But before the payouts began, the NL government predicted a budget deficit and reneged on paying the lost wages. The result? The Supreme Court of Canada found that NL was discriminating against women twice over—but allowed it to so the province could balance its budget.

Today, women still make 72 cents on every dollar a man earns, but it’s not for a lack of skills or education. Nearly every university in Canada is now predominantly female, with a national average of almost three women to every two men on campus. Fifty-nine per cent of Canadian undergrads are women, with female grads leading the way in professional programs like med school, law school, and chartered accounting.

And with tough economic times, Ontario has seen an alarming display of blatant workplace discrimination, 50 years after the Human Rights Code was enacted to prevent it. As the *Toronto Star* reports, some employers aren’t shy about letting female employees know exactly why they’re being fired or laid off: because they’re pregnant.

It’s important that our leaders condemn the abuses against women in Afghanistan and elsewhere; the fight for human rights is one that cannot be abandoned in any corner of the world. As for Canada being “a world leader in the promotion and protection of women’s rights and gender equality”?

We’ve come a long way, baby—but we’ve still got one hell of a long way to go right here at home.

DRIVE-THROUGH DECORUM

Kimberley Sanders



Am I correct in thinking that in 2009 there is nothing *common* about courtesy?

Like most of you, I am a dedicated distance learner transitioning from part-time to full-time studies.

To make it happen, I left a full-time corporate career for a part-time café career. I assumed it would be a fairly easy transition; I did, after all, know people.

Or so I thought.

The first time my alarm went off at 3:45 a.m., I reluctantly rolled out of bed and fought the urge to crawl back in. Thankfully, it really does take only 21

days to build a habit, and for seven weeks now I've been contentedly (more or less) starting work at five in the morning.

I welcome the dark embrace of the morning, its stillness rife with birdsong. Maybe five a.m. inspired Rabindranath Tagore when he wrote, "Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark."

Anyway, back to the café. It's a pretty nice environment. Jazz music provides an ambient backcloth that dusts the periphery of my world. Up front, it's a fascinating world of personalities—from Zen to zealous, café patrons provide me with endless fodder for thought. Mostly, however, I marvel at how mean people are—particularly at the drive-through window.

I'm keeping statistics now, and although it is by no means scientific, I have noticed that the majority of "mean people" are women around my own age (40-plus). This, in itself, comes as a shock to me. I get the distinct feeling that these women assume most of us work in a café because we aren't well educated. For shame.

The Friday leading into the Easter weekend was anything but "Good." For six hours, café staff worked non-stop. Although we greet people with a hearty "Hello and welcome to . . ." it was after 11:00 a.m. before a single customer said "Good morning!" to us. I realize coffee addicts need their fix. What I don't get is how they can be so disrespectful to the people who feed their need.

Let's modestly assume that my colleague and I served over 75 coffees between nine and 10 a.m., and that many of them were specialty requests requiring milk steamed (at 142 degrees, if you please), extra shots of espresso, and the like. And let's also assume that we were not doing one order at a time, but three. For this to work, the process needs to run like a pendulum—perfect synchronicity between my colleague and me.

Well, guess what? Inasmuch as I love the idea of "perfect synchronicity" my colleagues and I are human and we do make mistakes. Whether you are a solicitor, a microbiologist, a non-profit ED, or a custom carpenter, I suspect you make the occasional mistake at work too. And maybe, just maybe, we filled the previous 74 orders *perfectly* before we did yours *wrong*.

Moreover, it is difficult to hear everything that is said to us at the drive-through order box; not only do we have loud café noises behind us, we hear the cars driving past you, we can't hear you when you don't look into the camera/box, we can't hear you over the music you are listening to, or, worse, you're still talking on your cellphone and expect us to differentiate between what you say to us and your important caller.

If you can't demonstrate common courtesy, civility, and the spirit of friendship at your local drive-through, what chance do we have of creating an internationally respectful 21st century world?

There are a thousand reasons why we don't always hear correctly, but does that give you the right to berate us for missing your "extra foam"? Does it give you the right to speak in a condescending manner or pitch a tantrum because we didn't hear "non-fat" and used 2 per cent milk instead?

Really, does messing up a simple coffee order *really* entitle you to belittle us?

In fact, my colleagues *are* dedicated to providing a superb coffee experience for you. The people I work with are kind, witty, and incredibly unique: many of them have another job; most of them are in university; all of them have community commitments. They are, in short, just like you!

During the few minutes you're at the window paying for your joe (that may have been made wrong the first time) I would invite you to think of the people who serve you as mirrors of yourself. And I challenge you to make a different choice in how you interact with them. Think about Craig Kielburger.

In their book, *Me to We: Finding Meaning in a Material World*, Craig and Marc Kielburger offer a blueprint for creating a better world: one action, one small step at a time.

So, in the spirit of human kindness, why not try a different approach: common courtesy.

The choice is yours. You can choose to let your "little-self" rule the moment, or you can let your "big-self" stand tall. If you can't demonstrate common courtesy, civility, and the spirit of friendship at your local drive-through, what chance do we have of creating an internationally respectful 21st century world?

So, whether you're getting a triple tall, extra-hot, extra-foamy, 142-degree caramel latte or a double-double and a cruller, whatever neighbourhood coffee shop you frequent, please do the hardworking staff a favour and show some kindness.

Take a breather from the self-absorbed "It's all about me!" approach to life, and take the proverbial high road (even if you are right). We're all part of the same community, each serving a different set of customers: your family, your friends, your neighbours—and you.

Since it's your coffee, it really *does* start with you!



IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis



The Paint Movement

The Paint Movement is an Ontario-based progressive indie rock band made up of vocalist/guitarist Kevin Kralik, drummer Glenn Candy, bassist/vocalist Jason Haberman, and saxophone and keyboard player Jason Loftman.

They've just released their first CD, Our Eurythmy, with Nevado Records.

The following are notes from a conversation between Wanda Waterman St. Louis and Jason Loftman.

Why We Sound Like This

Our sound matured through rigorous hours of layering our musical ideas, working each one out to our idea of perfection with as much detail as we could get, bouncing ideas between us to combine them into what we define as our style.

The vibe of a song for us is usually determined by the person bringing it to the band. The mood and the tone is up for discussion as each does his part to enhance the song in the direction we each think it's going. Influences are a big part in helping us associate the different vibes we want a song to have.

For us rehearsal usually starts off with whoever is ready first and playing anything that comes to mind, be it a song we've been working on or just a random idea. From there everyone else syncs up when ready, warming up and getting into the groove of things.

A lot of the time this results in random writing. Depending on what we're practicing for we either put together a set list and go through it to get a feeling of how the songs flow or we target different songs specifically, only going over what we think is necessary.

Getting a Song

The beginning of the process is always changing but usually ends the same way. One person or however many people coined the initial idea, be it a single riff or a full written piece, brings it to the group and then we play it out, following the songwriter as well as incorporating any of our own ideas that we believe would work for the song. We play it out until a structure is constructed.

Then, following the structure, we continue to play through the song time and time again, collaborating with different ideas we each feel would enhance the overall tone, shape, style, and vibe of the song. The writing process is never finished, even after a song is considered suitable for live shows. This helps keep the song progressing to the final vision that will be recorded.

What do you need in order to be creative?

My bandmates.

Creative Inspiration

For me the band Mars Volta has been a great influence, especially because of their integration of traditional orchestral/jazz instrumentation into a deep, vibrant rock feel. As a saxophone player it's great to see the multiple tiers that can be reached with interpretation of sound.



Background

I grew up in Mississauga, Ontario, from start till now. The playground is where I spent most of my days as a child. I went to the Royal Conservatory of Music for 12 years.

I played in multiple school bands and jazz bands and in school I took courses for saxophone and vocal practice for seven years. I was also a DJ for 89.5 CIUT for four months.

What's Next?

Quite a bit is on the horizon for the band. Working with Nevado Records is at the forefront of what's next. The big thing is going on tour in June.

Discussions have already been circulating of some side-project recordings band members want to do, and also finding more musicians to work with.



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Shaping Up

Dear Barb:

I am a 35-year-old mother, student, and part-time worker. I am so busy that I find I don't have any time for exercise. Do you know of anything I could do to get toned up quickly for summer? I also have to mention that I do have a history of back problems.

Krista

Thanks for your question, Krista. You have a very busy schedule, but I think you are realizing how important it is to take care of yourself. You can't be all things to all people without some aspect of your life suffering.

With your history of back problems in mind, one of the best exercises I know of for toning up quickly is Pilates. Pilates was developed by Joseph Pilates, who was a circus performer and boxer. While in an internment camp during WWI he developed exercises that eventually became what we now know as Pilates mat work.

Pilates strengthens your core, which helps with back problems and also encourages good posture. Pilates can be done as a mat workout using a big ball (as well as smaller balls, adding additional weight to your workout), or it can be done in a studio using a reformer machine.

A reformer machine uses varying levels of resistance to increase your workout, yet is gentle on your joints. A combination of both mat classes and reformer is most effective.

There are many web sites, books, and videos offering instructions on how to do Pilates. However, most instructors feel it is best to start out in a gym or fitness studio since positioning is very important.

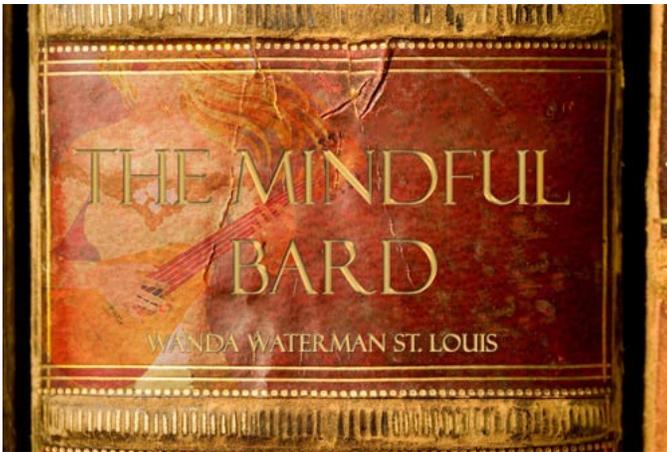
For instance, in order to do Pilates effectively you need to be able to maintain your abdominals in a position called "pelvic neutral." If you're just starting out, this position is best achieved through the help of an instructor. Once you have mastered pelvic neutral, and you feel confident that you know what you are doing, you can try to do Pilates on your own with the help of a video.

Remember, though, that doing any kind of exercise in a group may prove to be more successful as far as motivating you to continue (and many Pilates studios offer childcare at a reasonable cost).

Toning your body will definitely help you look good from the outside, but don't forget the inside. A cardiovascular workout is very important to your overall health, and walking, running, and cycling are all excellent cardio workouts that will help to burn calories and increase stamina. Leave the kids with your husband/partner and go for a brisk walk after dinner; it will do wonders for your sense of well-being.

Some other sources of information about Joseph Pilates and Pilates exercises are [The Pilates Association of Canada](#), [Pilates Fitness Journal](#), and www.pilates.about.com. Good luck, Krista.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



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

The Mindful Bard: Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

DVD: *My Winnipeg*

Theatrical Release: June 13, 2008

DVD Release: 2009

Produced by Everyday Pictures/Buffalo Gal Pictures

Starring Ann Savage, Louis Negin, Amy Stewart, Darcy Fehr, Brendan Cade, Lou Profeta, Fred Dunsmore

Conceived, directed, and narrated by Guy Maddin

The Great White Northern Garbage Dump of the Gods

Present at the medium's table that night were our city's most respected city fathers, including the incorruptible Mayor Cornish, and the madams—or shop stewards—of our illustrious brothel collectives, women respected for their political acumen and clout in the community.

from *My Winnipeg*

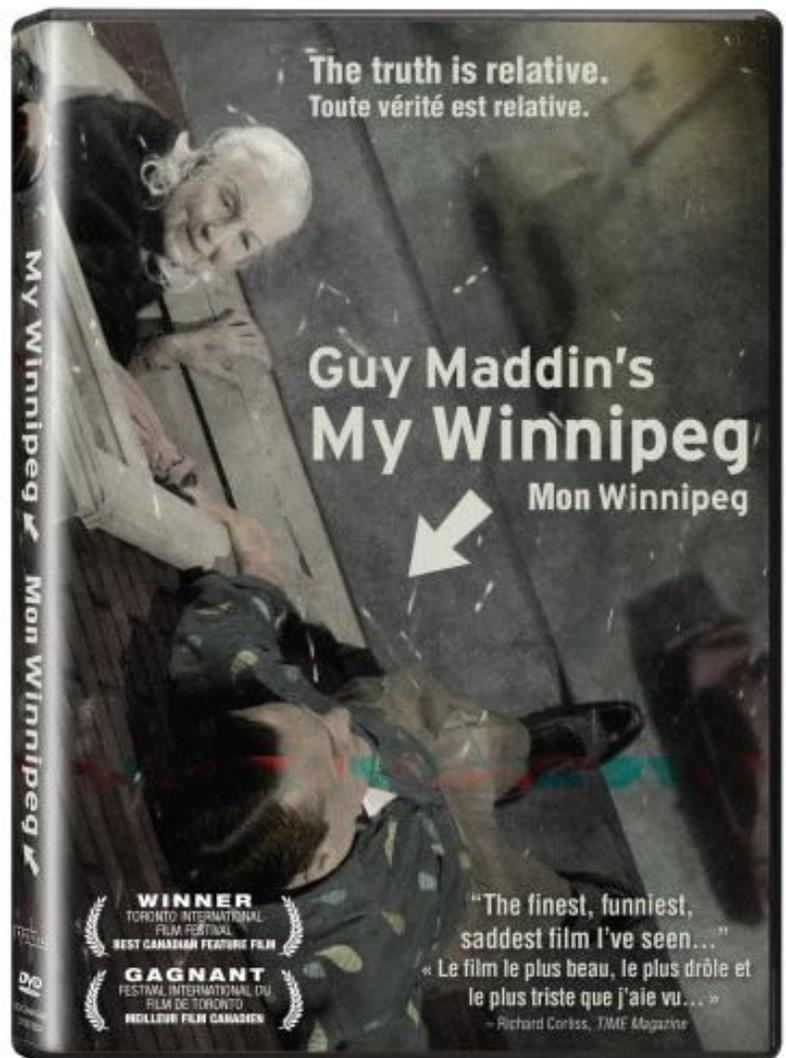
At the racing stables a squirrel sets off a spark in a power line and the paddock catches fire. The horses tear out in a panic and plunge into the river.

But it's very cold and the horses freeze solid in the midst of their wild thrashing, their heads preserved like furry sculptures jutting from the ice, necks twisted, eyes bulging, tongues lolling.

For weeks afterward groups of citizens trek out to see them, inspecting the heads, stroking them, sitting on them, and smiling happily as they have their pictures taken with them.

Are we supposed to believe this actually happened? Yes.

I know a certain delusional fellow who holds everyone mesmerized with his stories. Many



of his most incredible yarns have turned out to be perfectly true, whereas some of his more commonplace anecdotes have proven bogus. Watching *My Winnipeg* feels exactly like listening to this guy talk.

It also feels like a bout of amnesia I once had, during which family and friends had to watch me wandering around in a daze for hours reciting the anguished mantra, "I've been dreaming for *so long* . . ."

My Winnipeg is a jolting succession of strange memories and even stranger reflections on their meanings, an arresting portrait of an utterly helpless human being attempting to escape the sordid terror of his own psyche.

A testament to the cosmic richness of the creative imagination, this film takes a northern redneck city and makes of it a veritable Byzantium (or Sodom and Gomorrah?).

Maddin reveals the bizarre and the ridiculous, the sacred and the profane, without a trace of contempt, rather honouring, even *celebrating*, the base and absurd. Everything presented in this film is achingly beautiful, even the things that make you want to laugh, scream, or gag.

My Winnipeg is a jolting succession of strange memories and even stranger reflections on their meanings, an arresting portrait of an utterly helpless human being attempting to escape the sordid terror of his own psyche.

The narrator is making his escape by train at night, sitting with a group of friends around a bottle-strewn table. The crew cannot stay awake. As they all do the jelly-neck head-bob our hero occasionally wakes up, looks out the window, and makes some heartbroken observation about the city of his youth as it goes whizzing by in the gloom.

He's never alone in this train compartment, although he is always the only one awake. If you've ever attempted to make group art (music, dance, film, etc.) you may have experienced the same sensation—that the lot of you are stumbling half asleep through a strange but familiar landscape, the end being the creation of a coherent work.

Like Dante in *Purgatorio*, Maddin has to plumb the depths of depravity and practically crawl out Satan's ass crack in order to find any kind of salvation. Seeking true self he plumbs the subterranean self in order to escape it and finds in the end that escape is only to be found in the creation of this film.

My Winnipeg manifests eight of The Mindful Bard's criteria for movies well worth seeing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it confronts existing injustices; 3) it makes me want to be a better artist; 4) it gives me tools which help me be a better artist; 5) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; 6) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 7) it is about attainment of the true self; and 8) it stimulates my mind.

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. For a list of criteria, go [here](#). If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.



From
Where
I Sit
Hazel Anaka

Networking 101

As I began pondering what I would write about this week I received an email. That email just saved me from having to write about doing our income tax and you having to read about it.

Or maybe I would have written about a book I just finished reading. It's called *Creating Sacred Space with Feng Shui* by Karen Kingston. It focuses on what the author calls space clearing: a process of de-cluttering, cleansing, and consecrating our homes. Stay tuned for an upcoming column after I put the theory into practice. The impending community garage sale should help with the purging aspect.

Then again maybe I could confess I'm a terrible typist. I was teacher's pet in Typing 10 many moons ago so I got a very good mark without actually knowing my stuff. Huge mistake. Moral of the story: there is no free lunch.

A week or two ago I purchased *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* deluxe software in a last-ditch effort to boost my speed and accuracy and add to my skill set. Her encouraging words, tracking, practice sessions, and games are paying off I think, but I have a helluva way to go yet.

Instead of writing about those things, the email prompted me to write about meeting people and the fine art of networking. Last weekend I was enrolled in a class at a college in Edmonton. Upon completion of all eight sessions I will earn a Special Events Management certificate. I love the subject matter. This is a great way to add the theoretical to the practical, hands-on experience I already have.

I didn't know a soul in the class of 34 and many of them had taken several sessions together previously. The weekend centred around several group exercises, so the six people at our table were forced to work together.

It soon became apparent that we had a very pushy know-it-all in our group. Despite repeated attempts by at least five of us to provide input Lisa always prevailed. She bullied her answers onto the flip-chart paper. I wonder if this

smart girl noticed that by day two, no one but her was talking anymore. I know there are one or more Lisas in every crowd. That's real life. I also know my threshold for bullshit isn't what it once was.

The delightful bonus to the course content and handouts was meeting Bonny. We clicked. We seem to have things and attitudes and beliefs in common. I suggested we exchange business cards and silently promised myself I would make the first follow-up contact. She beat me to it. We have one more class together in a couple of weeks and I'm looking forward to seeing her again. I hope her enthusiasm and energy level rub off on me.

It was her email that reminded me it doesn't take much effort to stay in touch. I've let far too many of these fleeting moments of connection slip away and die because of lack of attention and follow-up. It's not happening again, from where I sit.

The Interviewer

It is the ninth decade of the twentieth century...

written and illustrated by Wanda Waterman St. Louis

Rockhead #20: *Conflicted Interests*



What could be so wrong with a newsletter?!

He finds the person who designed it, the brilliant Della Chute, a graduate student in anthropology.



Here's the sample copy I gave them.



Looks great to me.

Yeah. Well. I'll never get that time back.



I just wanted to help and Brad gave me no reason why he didn't want it.



I mean, WHY?!



Reuben can think of a reason...



Make sure your hat suits you!

Later that day...

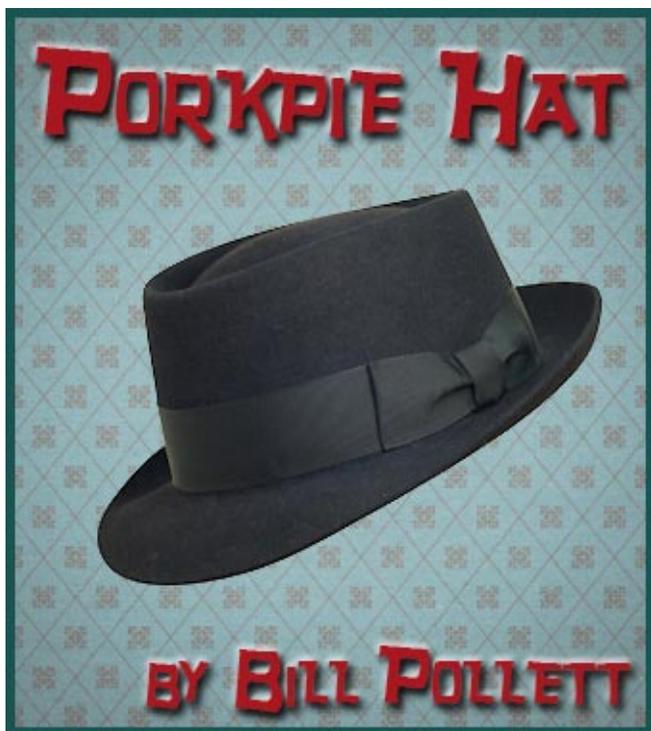
Told ya. But that's just the cake. The student union just launched a student union newsletter, designed by Brad...



...who, due to his own machinations, is being handsomely paid for it.



next: Reeling In



Jenkins's Final Performance Review

Actually, sir, it's Jenkins. Wharton sits in the cubicle beside me. Thank you, yes, I am settling in quite well. It's been 12 years now, so I'm getting fairly familiar with where everything is.

What's that, sir? What do I feel my strengths are as an employee? You're certainly taking this in a novel direction, aren't you?

My strengths . . . my strengths . . . I suppose you could say the ability to keep a straight face most of the time. That definitely comes in handy for motivational meetings and the like. And decent penmanship, of course. That has been frequently commented upon.

Things I would like to work on? Hmm. Well, I suppose if I had to narrow it down to just a handful of things, I would definitely put being a bit more honest near the

top of the list. Less pilfering of coffee and office supplies, fewer incidents of sabotaging the photocopier and phoning in bomb threats in order to get the morning off, that sort of thing.

Also, something that seems to get in my way a bit is an utter lack of interest in what I'm doing. Laziness, procrastination, cynicism, intelligence, high expectations—one could really go on and on, couldn't one? I suspect that all of these things are a barrier to my success with this corporation.

Oh, there's no shortage of things I would like to change. The real problem lies in finding the motivation to do it. Quite frankly, I don't think it's going to happen. I expect you've felt that way yourself, haven't you sir? I'll bet there was a time when you, too, had dreams and a sense of humour. But you were obviously able to overcome them, and reach your true potential.

Well, *that's* a good question. A real poser, as they say. Absolutely didn't see it coming. Truth be told, I hadn't really given it all that much thought, you see.

I suppose my long-term goals are to, you know, just keep slogging away in the accounts receivable department, whilst nursing unrealistic dreams of telling you to fuck off. The job itself is mind-numbingly tedious, of course, but it beats serving coffee or setting up a meth lab in the trunk of my car.

And there's a certain grim satisfaction in staggering through to the weekend, when I can plug in my electric guitar, or sleep with my girlfriend, or catch a foreign film, or find myself a patio where I can sip a lime margarita, and watch the birds all flying by.

AUSU THIS MONTH



Annual AGM Held

As you probably already know from the AGM Report put out by the *Voice*, AUSU held its annual general meeting on March 23, 2009.

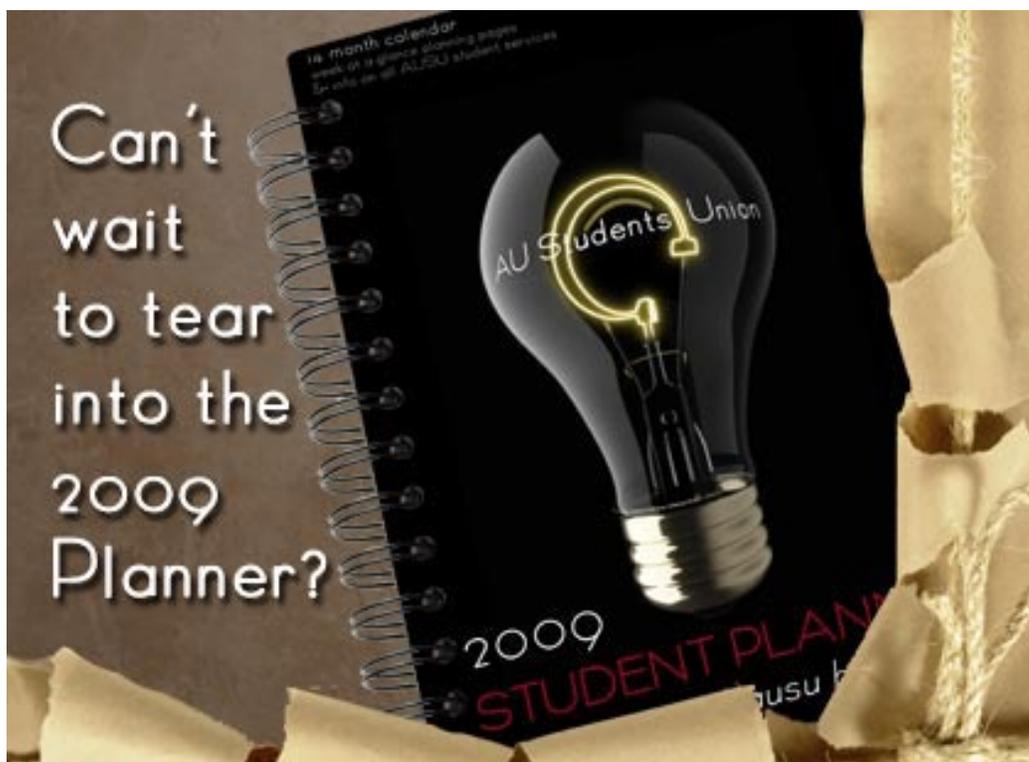
In that meeting a number of important revisions to the definitions of AUSU membership occurred, to make sure that the Councillors you elect are able to represent you during General Meetings and so that if you're a student in an AU collaborative undergrad program, you'll still be counted as an AUSU member even during a term that doesn't have any AUSU courses scheduled.

Also, our fees were changed from being \$8, \$16, or \$24 per course depending on the number of credits, to being a flat \$3 per credit, an increase of a dollar per course for most students. With this extra money, AUSU should be able to begin moving forward with a lot of desired programs that have been held up due to our staffing not being as big as our ambitions.

Also at the AGM, some good discussion was held with respect to email accounts, an issue we know a lot of you are concerned about, and we'll keep working with the university to see if a reasonable solution can be found among all of the priority issues AU needs to deal with.

Media Committee Started

Council has approved the terms of reference for the new media committee. This group, including your *Voice* editor, will be working hard to deliver new multimedia content to you on a regular basis. Our hope is to bring forward a more engaging, interactive AUSU, one that can help you get everything you want out of your education.



AU Fees Increasing

On March 27, the AUGC approved the new fees that will come into effect in September 2009. The bottom line is you'll be paying an additional \$29 per 3-credit course, including the increase to the AUSU fees. This includes an \$18 increase to base tuition and a \$10 increase to the Learning Resources fee. AUSU has noted

concerns with the university continuing to increase fees by the maximum allowable by Alberta legislation, but has agreed that lower quality service is not a viable alternative.

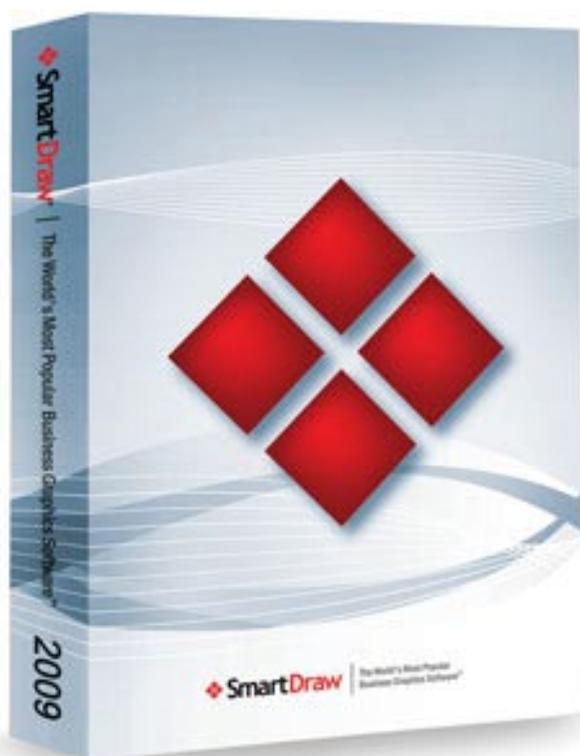
More concerning is the increase to the Learning Resources fee. AUSU will continue to press for details on how this fee relates to the prices the university has to pay for your textbooks and online materials.

au.world Closes

AUSU has noted the closing of the au.world publication with sadness, and has brought this to the governing council of AU. In its place, AU has begun a new magazine called *AU Open* which, rather than being strictly student focussed, contains a mix of stories for alumni, investors, and students. We have strong hopes that AU will increase the focus of this new magazine to be at least as relevant to current students as the old au.world was.

2009 AUSU Handbook/Planners

Members are snapping up our 2009 AUSU Handbook/Planner. Now in full colour, it has more course tracking pages, brief guides to the citation styles you'll need for your essays at AU, and of course, all the important AU dates and addresses that you need to know. You can order your own copy by going to <http://www.ausu.org/handbook/index.php>



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.

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.

In addition, we have recently purchased some steel water bottles. With all the concerns about BPA in clear plastic, the decision was made to go stainless steel. Cheaper and more environmentally friendly than purchasing plastic bottles of water, fill up your AUSU bottle to keep thirst away no matter where you're travelling.

AUSU Lock Loan Program

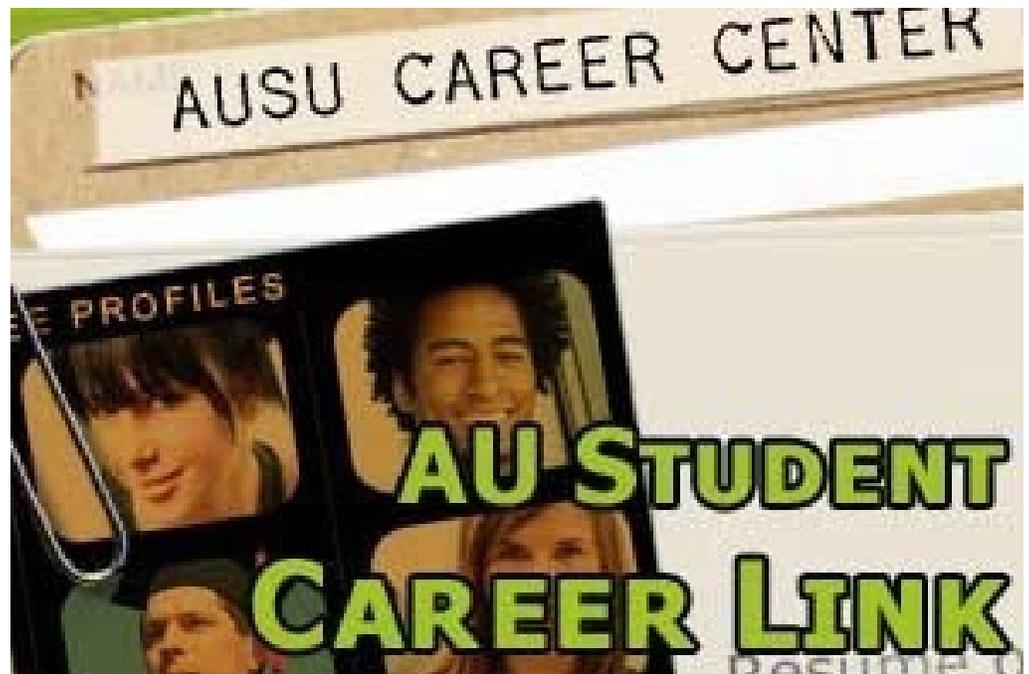
Still running, and still popular, the lock loan program can allow you to rest easy knowing your valuables are safe if you're taking an exam at the Calgary or Edmonton campus. The locks can be set to any combination, and are loaned to people without any deposit, but we ask that you please remember to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



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Alberta bars may be allowed to collect personal data

A proposed amendment to Alberta's Gaming and Liquor Act could allow nightclub owners to collect names, ages, and photos of patrons. Bill 42 is designed to crack down on problem patrons and keep organized crime out of the province's bars.

As the [CBC](#) reports, the legislation "would also give police power to kick gangsters out of bars."

If the bill is passed, bars and nightclubs will be given the right to collect personal information and share it with other establishments.

Clubs would be required to follow the privacy commissioner's guidelines, but sharing the information between bar owners is expected to prevent troublesome patrons from simply moving from bar to bar and creating the same problems.

The move is a welcome one, according to one Calgary nightclub owner. Paul Vickers, who runs several bars and lounges in the city, told reporters "The nightclub owners in all cities in Alberta really want that, and I believe it is a major deterrent

to keep out organized crime and problems like this."

Some nightclub owners were already scanning patrons' driver's licenses in 2008, although Alberta's privacy commissioner ordered at least one bar to halt the practice.

In Foreign News: Economic slump means Americans are staying put

Spring is usually the time when sold signs appear on lawns and moving vans are impossible to find, but Americans are staying put in record numbers. According to [The New York Times](#), the US Census Bureau reports that the number of Americans who changed residences from March 2007 to March 2008 hit the lowest rate since 1962.

Moving rates have been falling for the past four years and the 2007 - 2008 period saw a drop of 17.7 per cent. The American Moving and Storage Association expects the first quarter of 2009 to be even worse.

While the troubled economy may have contributed to Americans' inability to change residences (either to pursue employment or move up in the housing market), the lack of mobility itself is also cause for concern. With fewer people relocating, moving companies and related businesses are feeling the pinch.

The current overall mobility rates have set a post World War II record low, and inter-state moves fell the most, to "half the rate recorded at the beginning of this decade."

It isn't only domestic moves that are down: overseas immigration to the US has fallen to its lowest rate in more than a decade. Just over 1.1 million overseas foreigners arrived during the past year, the lowest number since 1995.

EDUCATION NEWS

Alyssa Friesen



Nursing students call for multilingual prescriptions

Students' research shows better health literacy could save lives, money

TORONTO (CUP) - When you receive a prescription drug, one of the first things you do is read the information and dosage instructions. But what about all the Canadians who don't read English?

A group of third-year nursing students at Ryerson are raising public awareness about health literacy.

For a class project, Marie Riddell, Alana Black, Stacy Vuu-Chau, Arnel Tirona, and Sarah Chung are advocating that the Ontario Ministry of Health should make pamphlets for prescription drugs available in different languages.

The students say health literacy could be improved if patients had access to pamphlets printed in their first language, and as a result patient medication errors would decrease.

"We would like to make the public aware of the high incidence of medication errors due to patients not understanding their medical regimen, which can directly jeopardize their health," said Marie Riddell.

Riddell says when a patient is diagnosed and prescribed a medication by the Canadian health care system, the pharmacy prints the instructions in English.

This is of concern, because such a large percentage of Canadians are unable to speak, read, or comprehend English.

In Toronto alone, there are about 150 different languages spoken on a daily basis, and according to a 2008 report by Statistics Canada, more than 70 per cent of immigrants have a first language other than English.

The students discovered that people with low English literacy levels are more likely to have higher rates of hospital admissions and use emergency service.

Medication errors, such as the wrong dosage at the wrong time, that result from miscommunication have led to unnecessary extra costs for the health care system.

"Currently, there is nothing being done about this issue. As citizens, we have the right to speak up for what should be done," said Riddell.

The issue came to the attention of the students over their past year of studies, as they focused on learning and working in community health nursing. They noticed that there were certain needs in the community that were not being met.

“We have conducted research on this matter and have come to realize the extent that language barriers can have on an individual’s health,” said Alana Black. “We first would like to have this matter heard by the public and ideally have the Ontario Ministry of Health address this issue.”

The students believe health literacy could be improved by allocating funding toward translators who could convert the drug information from English into different languages.

Pamphlets would be in circulation at large pharmacies such as Rexall, Shoppers Drug Mart, and Pharma Plus.

Through writing letters to the Ontario Ministry of Health and to editorial sections of Toronto newspapers, the students hope to generate support for their idea and get the citizens and health professionals of Toronto discussing the issue.

“If the public and health professionals know this technology exists, then what would stop the government from furthering this project?” said Black. “Ontario could be saving lives by avoiding potential harm to its citizens.”

CLICK OF THE WRIST – Book It

An interesting result of the economic downturn is the rise in popularity of reading. Book sales are reportedly up and people are flocking to their local libraries in droves. Here, in honour of that dependable standby, is a peek among the pages.

Detectives Hunt Overdue Library Books

Officials in Norfolk County, England, take their overdue library books seriously. So seriously that they hired private detectives to hunt people down who owe money on overdue books, CDs, and DVDs.

Medieval Help Desk

This Norwegian video is a great satire of the modern helpdesk, as a man tries to figure out the latest medieval technology: the book. “Open it? If it’s that simple I wouldn’t have called helpdesk, would I?”

Smallest Book in the World

There are millions of miles of library shelves in the world, but this owner of Chekhov’s *Chameleon* would only need a teeny, tiny corner for his book: it measures a mere .9 by .9 millimetres, “not much larger than a grain of salt.” The miniature volume is one of only 100 published, and contains 30 pages and three colour illustrations.

Largest Book in the World

If you don’t have a magnifying glass small enough to read *Chameleon*, don’t worry—you won’t need one to flip through *Bhutan: A Visual Odyssey Across the Kingdom*, a 60-kilogram, 122-page book certified by Guinness as the largest in the world.

Seinfeld Library Detective

The Norfolk County council might take their overdue library books seriously, but they’ve got nothing on *Seinfeld’s* Mr. Bookman.

CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact voice@voicemagazine.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

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Editor-In-Chief Tamra Ross
Managing Editor Sandra Livingston

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, John Buhler, Christina M. Frey, Barbara Godin,
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