

**THE**

# **VOICE**

**MAGAZINE**

Volume 17 Issue 30  
August 7, 2009

## **The Waiting Game**

Will you come . . .

## **AU Profiles**

JoAnne Formanek  
Gustafson

## **Coraline**

Pale kings and princes



*Plus: Dear Barb, From Where I Sit,  
Sister Aurora, and much more...*

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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



## FICTION

Aless Piper

**Will you come, or will you not?**

My impatience and doubt take the form of a bastardized childhood rhyme. “Will you come, or will you not? You told me once, but I forgot,” plays through my mind on loop. Play, rewind, play, rewind, repeat.

I scan the grey landscape outside the café window for any vague trace of the familiar; a hand, a foot, hair—fiery like a lion’s mane.

I expect men and women to morph before my eyes, suddenly there you’ll be. The barista could be you at any moment. The lady over my right shoulder, the man to my left; anyone could be you, and no one.

In your absence I expect *Jack* transformations, or Benjamin Button. Telegrams, or soldiers heralding your death. (An impossibility I know, I just spoke to you yesterday, and you have not gone to war.) The world to stop spinning.

Janine Stoll sings over the sound system, a lady sits down with an iced green tea, life goes on, and still I wait. (I would wait a lifetime, but I cannot. My heart, silly fickle thing that it is, will not let you go, but I can get up at any moment and walk away.)

Few things should surprise me now, you’ve done so many I would not have expected of you, but everything does. My heart flips every time someone’s shadow falls across my page. It is so juvenile yet I am powerless against it.

Where do you draw the line? Where do you say enough is enough, I cannot wait any longer? And when, and if, your shadow darkens the doorway, will it bring me peace?

Or will I, like thousands of women before me, look at the clock, or my watch, or my phone, and be disgusted by how long it’s been, how many promises I broke to myself, how many unknown sisters tossed in their graves. I could be treated like a princess, or queen, or just a woman if I gave up on you. Giving up is so harsh though, so final, my lips refuse to speak the words “I am over you.” Rachel said to Ross’s phone on *Friends*, “I am over you,” but I cannot do that. I cannot, I will not, my romantic heart keeps hoping someday, one day, you will choose me. Love me. And I will not regret my words in the morning so long as I do not utter them.

I have read these words, my words, a hundred times now, hoping they have aged well in the minutes they took to write, hoping my phone sings Melissa Etheridge soon. I will wait 32 minutes more, and then . . .

And still, home now an hour since, you do not come, you do not call, you do not write. Are you dead? Am I dead to you? Days like today I am unsure which is worse. Have you forgotten me? Understandable, perhaps, forgivable even, but my heart will not relent this silly, foolish game. Will you come, or will you not?

## IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

## Wanda Waterman St. Louis

**dZ**

*Ten-year-old alt rock phenomenon dZ has recently written a few songs. She's also learned to play every instrument needed to record them. She's also recorded them. And—don't close the window!—she sounds great, rivalling many top alternative artists in vocal originality and energetic delivery. She's currently working toward her first EP.*

*Recently dZ took a moment to chat with Wanda Waterman St. Louis about her budding career.*

**When Did it Start?**

I started recording last year, but I've been playing guitar since I was four. Then a few years later I started playing drums. Then after that I taught myself how to play bass, and I've been playing all three ever since. I play a bit of keyboard, too.

**Writing "Really High Hopes"**

First I laid down the guitar, then the drums, and then the bass. Everything just comes to me. The lyrics were really hard because I don't have a lot of experience of life yet. Nobody helped me with the songwriting but my producer, Carl Jennings, he helps me with anything extra. He's great to work with. He always wants to get the job done but he also likes to take his time.

I don't get tired after working in the studio for hours; it actually energizes me.

**Ordinary People**

I'm still an ordinary kid—I just play music, which not a lot of kids do. I do everything a normal kid would do. I play a lot of sports. At recess time my friends and I will go out and play soccer.

We have a lot in common, like the same interests and stuff. They think it's really cool that they have a friend with a musical career, but I don't think they really understand it right now.



## What Feeds Your Creativity?

I'm creative because of the atmosphere around me and everybody I know. My friends and family are all stimulating, interesting people.

I've been listening to Top Johnny! a lot because I'm going to go see them soon. I also listen to Set Your Goals. They're a new band; they've just released a new album and it's really good. And I listen to Ann Boleyn. Paramore's my favourite band.

I read a lot. Sometimes I don't have time because I'm really busy with my music. I like scary books. I especially like the book *Skeleton Creek* by Patrick Carman. I like how he mixes text and videos on the Internet together to make it so real.

Sometimes I take a day off and watch movies. I like the movie *Up*. It's really touching and the thing I like is that it has a happy ending. Happy endings seem so much better than when everybody dies or something.

## The Future

I'm hoping to get an EP done by the end of this year. I've written five songs so far.

I started writing songs about two or three years ago and I couldn't do anything with them because I didn't have the software I needed on my computer. But then we met Carl Jennings and everything went from there.

I'd like to stay in the music business. If being a musician doesn't work out I'd like to be a producer or an engineer. I love recording stuff. It's really fun. I like giving people ideas, too.

## CLICK OF THE WRIST – Tree Houses

There's something irresistible about watching the world from a perch among the branches, and tree houses are as popular today as ever. Assuming your zoning bylaws don't cramp your style, these images prove that the sky's the limit.

[New Tree Houses of the World](#) - Pete Nelson, a leading tree house designer and builder, has travelled the globe in his quest for unique tree house designs. These images are part of the book that came out of that search, *New Treehouses of the World*.

[Amazing Tree House Designs](#) - These tree houses cover the spectrum from high-end designer models to the practicalities of tree living in the jungles of the Brazza River Basin in the Indonesian province of Papua. Local tribes there build homes as high as 100 feet in the air to escape the pests—and sometimes each other.

[Tree House Restaurant](#) - The Yellow Treehouse Restaurant in New Zealand, located 10 metres up a redwood tree, is about more than just dining in the boughs. The goal was to see if a project could be completed using only the services found in the Yellow Pages. You can see the results for yourself, complete with plenty of photos and videos.

[Tree House Hotel](#) - Why just visit a tree house for dinner when you can spend a week (or more) in one with all the comforts of home? This video takes you on a tour of the 10 tree houses available to guests at the Out 'n' About Treesort in Oregon. (The interview with the resort's owner is a good reminder that, with a little persistence, it's possible to make a living doing something you love.)

# AU Profiles:

## AU Profiles: JoAnne Formanek Gustafson

Christina M. Frey



"Many people are shifting gears in their mid-life years," says AU student JoAnne Formanek Gustafson. She should know! The Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) student, who's been taking courses from AU since 1988, explains how she unexpectedly "fell into" a completely new career field.

She also weighs the pros and cons of distance study over "traditional" classroom-based education, and explains why family support and clear goals are important to staying on track.

JoAnne's journey with AU began back in 1988, when she decided she wanted to upgrade her skills with a business administration diploma. "I started with business admin courses specifically relevant to my job at the time," she says. After studying for three years, she took a break from school, married, and had two children. But in 2000, she decided to re-enter the educational arena after being laid off from her job. The big question: what to study? "I wasn't sure exactly what I was going to do," she says.

She soon found out. "It was strictly accidental," JoAnne says. "After volunteering in my children's classes, I was surprised to

learn that I liked being in a class[room]!" A career in teaching had never occurred to her: "I was amazed to discover it," she says. She's now enrolled in AU's BGS program, and is hoping to eventually apply her courses to the Bachelor of Professional Arts program, with her long-term sights set on a teaching degree.

Because the BGS program has no residency requirement, JoAnne has been able to do a mix of both distance and classroom-based studying between 2006 and 2008, including a two-year educational assistant diploma program at a local college. In the end, however, she prefers distance study.

"Two years of classroom-based college helped me develop some really good scheduling skills," she says. "I benefited from the feedback you get from discussing face to face and 'seeing' your instructor." The rigid class schedule was more problematic: "It was difficult to work my job around this daytime program," she notes. "Now I work part-time, and can do the AU courses in the afternoons . . . and in the evenings."

"Distance is great in that it's so flexible," JoAnne adds. When she initially began taking classes from AU, her remote location made it the best option. Moreover, she points out, distance learning supports a different kind of student. "Many students are now older, [and] going into different fields [or] upgrading," she says. Online delivery has opened new worlds: "In my college program we had about 35 people graduate . . .

mostly distance [students]," she says. Although there was a campus, "there were distance students accessing . . . in 'real time'," she says. "In Ontario, that's huge because of the geographics of the province."

One advantage of studying while working has been the ability to apply new skills in the real world, where she works as an educational assistant in a third-grade class. "The students that an educational assistant works with can have a variety of needs, sometimes conditions like ADHD, learning disabilities, [and] behavioural disorders," JoAnne points out.

Her current psychology classes, where she's studying learning and learning disabilities, have been especially helpful, she says. For example, one class "focuses on strategies used to assist students with . . . these types of needs." There's also a behavioural component, she adds. "How do educators contribute to these problems, how do we analyze that, [and] how do we address it? The course talks about specific strategies, how to select one, [and] considerations in applying strategies."

What about strategies for juggling family, work, and studying? JoAnne's advice: ensure that everyone around you understands your goals. "I had to train my family to recognize that what I'm doing is important," she says. That comes with its own benefits as the kids get older. Although JoAnne admits it was difficult to study when her daughters were younger, now they are teenagers they all do homework together. "It's been great for them to see that being focused and valuing education can be a positive thing," she says.

It also shows the value of pursuing personal goals, step by step. What's JoAnne's next step? Hopefully a teaching degree, she says. This fall, she plans to begin Queen's University's part-time teacher education program, concurrent with continuing her AU studies. Although she will need to spend some time during the summer at Queen's—1,000 miles away in Kingston, Ontario—most of the program can be done locally. "They partner with three different First Nations organizations to offer this across the province," JoAnne says. "It helps to bring aboriginal professionals into teaching."

Taking two programs at once won't be easy. "The next two years will be tough," JoAnne admits. But she's enthusiastic about staying focused and attaining her goals. "Keep your eye on the prize!" she says. "Sometimes the path to get there is unexpected, but we sure learn along the way!"

***What about strategies for juggling family, work, and studying? JoAnne's advice: ensure that everyone around you understands your goals.***

## DID YOU KNOW?



### AU Starter Kit

If you're a new AU student (or are thinking of becoming one), a great resource to get you on the right track is the [AU Starter Kit](#).

The kit includes links to information on how to enrol in undergraduate courses, ways to access financial aid, and how to apply for graduate courses.

Studying at an AU partner institution, or just want to take courses but not register in a program? You'll find links to that info too, as well as help on changing from inactive to active status. And if you can't find the answers you're looking for, just head to the [Counselling Services](#) link for all the tools you'll need to build your educational future.



# Sister Aurora

There's a rainbow dancing in the sky tonight, and I think I'm gonna go outside . . .



A "superior girl"?  
As if there is such  
a thing in this world!  
Why do you think  
they wouldn't let  
you into cheerleading?



'Cause my skirt  
wasn't short  
enough. 'Cause  
I didn't sit on  
the coach's desk  
and tell him he  
smelled good.



Wrong! Because  
you're too good  
an athlete,  
that's why.



Yeah,  
well,  
Mum didn't  
want me in  
cheerleading  
anyway.  
Too  
many  
dumb  
sluts.



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Boyfriend Can Lead with Positive Example

Dear Barb:

*Six months ago I met a wonderful girl. We get along great together and are in love. Our only problem is her family. I guess I should say it's my problem. I have not talked to my girlfriend about this. She always wants me to go to her parents' house and I just find it really difficult to spend any time with them. They are always negative and find fault with everyone, even people they don't know. It's like they can't see any good in anyone.*

*They constantly criticize my girlfriend and she doesn't react. It's funny but she isn't that way at all; in fact, she always sees the good in people. I want to say something to her parents but I don't want to cause problems. I feel so strongly about this that I really don't feel I can ignore it, but on the other hand I care deeply for Susan and don't want to cause problems between her and her family. Any suggestions on how I can handle this without ruining my relationship?*

Jeff

Hi, Jeff. You are fortunate that you seem to have found someone you truly care about and have a good relationship with. Therefore you are right in not wanting to do anything to jeopardize that.

Everyone has good qualities and I would suggest you try to focus on these with your girlfriend's family. Her family must have some redeeming qualities; after all, they raised her. Perhaps when they say something critical you could change the subject. If they speak of the negative in a person or situation, gently point out the positive. Choose your words carefully so they don't feel you are attacking them, because then they may become defensive.

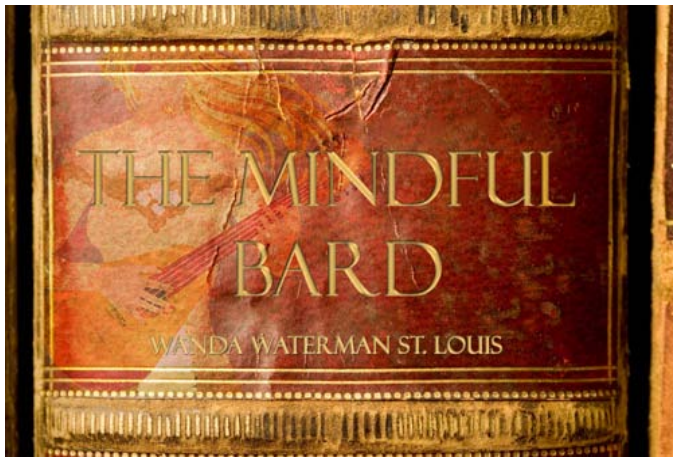
Your girlfriend may not react to the criticism because she is so used to it. As you show her another perspective she may not be as tolerant with her family's behaviour and as a result may feel confident enough to discuss her feelings with them. As well, her family may have simply fallen into a habit of being negative and critical and not even realize it.

Whatever you do, don't speak critically to your girlfriend about her family as this will put her on guard and will undoubtedly affect your relationship. Sometimes all it takes to change a situation is to point out another way of approaching it. Hopefully this will be the case in your situation.

This may sound simplistic, but don't you think it's worth a try?

Thanks, Jeff.

*Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto: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

DVD: *Coraline*

Theatrical Release: February 6, 2009

DVD Release: July 21, 2009

Starring: Dakota Fanning, Teri Hatcher, John Hodgman, Dawn French

Director and Screenwriter: Henry Selick

Producer: Bill Mechanic, Claire Jennings, Henry Selick    Composer: Bruno Coulais

Studio: Focus Features

“Find Our Eyes, Mistress, and Our Souls Will Be Free!”

*“I saw pale kings and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;  
They cried—‘La Belle Dame sans Merci  
Hath thee in thrall!’”*

from “La Belle Dame sans Merci” by John Keats

When I was Coraline’s age I had a Barbie doll named Wendy. Wendy’s life was considerably more charmed than was mine. Wendy’s mother was actually excited about ensuring that her daughter was the first girl in grade four to get a new skipping rope for spring. And not just any skipping rope, but a bright pink skipping rope with long multicoloured tassels on the handles.

Fortunately, I outgrew Barbies before Wendy’s mother could turn into a skeletal, soul-sucking banshee.

Coraline is past the age when it becomes developmentally necessary to abandon infantile egocentrism. But like all of us she hasn’t abandoned it completely; she wants to grow up but she still wants to feel like the centre of things. Being reminded by busy parents that she’s *not* the centre of things just whets



her appetite for an existence in which her very existence is celebrated and instant gratification is served with a smile.

The setting is a huge pink Victorian mansion, turned into apartments, in the middle of nowhere. (The incongruity is delicious.) The colour of the house suggests that the danger (or opportunity) in the story may be a peculiarly feminine one. One of the other apartments shelters two ageing actresses (one with massive Freudian breasts) who inadvertently serve as two of several spirit guides in Coraline's journey into true selfhood.

***It isn't easy to resist the  
Belle Dame's purr:  
"They say even the  
proudest spirit can be  
broken—with love!"  
The child who resists is  
a hero indeed.***

In Coraline's alternative world everyone has buttons for eyes. If she surrenders to the magic of this world she too must remove her real eyes (the windows of her soul) and sew on buttons.

The Belle Dame (Coraline's mother on the other side) is determined that everyone must replace normal emotional responses with displays of familial bliss. Those who submit then watch their souls dissolve.

If you've ever known a mother like this, you'll empathize with the poor children the Belle Dame has locked away (having eaten up their lives, as one of them relates). A mother who compels her children to be pleasant in the wake of abuse and trauma is investing in her children's future psychological infirmity. It isn't easy to resist the Belle Dame's purr: "They say even the proudest spirit can be broken—with love!" The child who resists is a hero indeed.

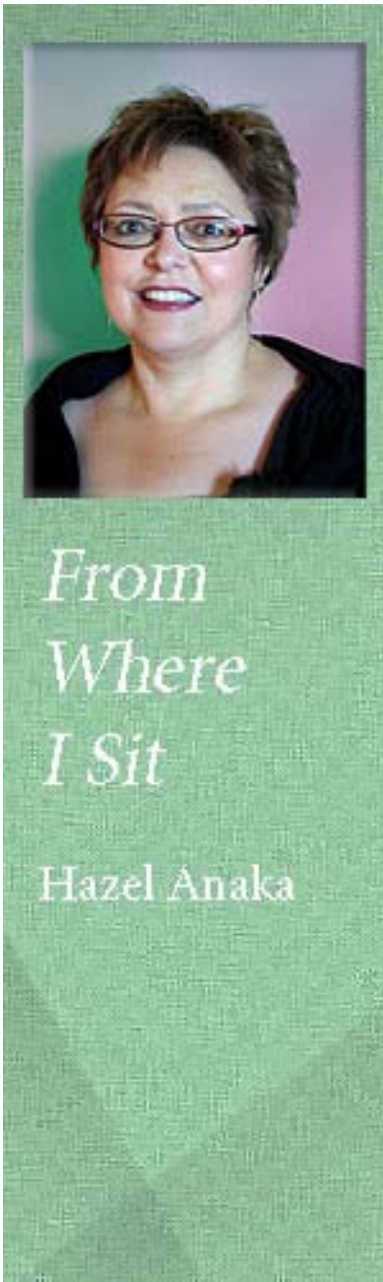
The name Coraline is an odd choice, but it may have been picked for coral's symbolic role as a healer of madness and a bringer of wisdom. Coral also protects children, and, because it grows under the sea, carries a connection with the unconscious.

Bruno Coulais's score is utterly enchanting and so beautifully echoes the sweetly odd tenor of this visual feast of a movie that he should be showered with awards from every quarter. Coulais wrote all the music except for one rollicking number from the very recognizable They Might Be Giants, which melds seamlessly with the rest of the soundtrack.

*Coraline* manifests ten of The Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it confronts, rebukes, and mocks existing injustices; 3) it gives me tools enabling me to respond with compassion and efficacy to the suffering around me; 4) it makes me want to be a better artist; 5) it gives me tools which help me be a better artist; 6) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; 7) it is about attainment of the true self; 8) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour; 9) it stimulates my mind; and 10) it poses and admirably responds to questions which have a direct bearing on my view of existence.

*Coraline* was recommended to The Mindful Bard by 11-year-old Tamika Meuse of Bear River, Nova Scotia.

*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](mailto:bard@voicemagazine.org). If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.*



## Cheap Thrills, Part II

As a follow-up to a recent column, here's part *deux* in the Cheap Thrills series. It is my attempt to help stretch your dollars this summer as our belt-cinching continues. So for your consideration:

1. How about packing a picnic for the park just like they do in the movies? It would surely be cheaper than a takeout meal and far more nutritious if done mindfully. Every community, regardless of size, has public spaces with ideal locations to lay out a blanket or commandeer a picnic table. In Andrew for instance, population 485, there's the Lions' Mallard Park that offers a built-in photo op with the world's largest mallard, wing span 28 feet. There's also playground equipment for the kids. Adjoining this park is a gazebo and memorial rose garden, all occupying what used to be the Canadian Pacific Railway right-of-way before the line was decommissioned.

2. One Canada Day, Hilary and two carloads of friends including foreign students from places like Mexico, China, and Columbia did a day trip visiting all the "world's largest" monuments in the area. They saw Redwater's oil derrick, Smoky Lake's pumpkins, Vilna's mushrooms, Glendon's perogies, St. Paul's UFO landing pad, Vegreville's pysanka (Easter egg), Mundare's sausage, and finally, Andrew's mallard. They also sang Celine Dion's "It's All Coming Back to Me Now" endlessly for miles. You just can't put a price on that. Fuel and some food: a few bucks. Memories: priceless.

3. All beauty and aesthetics schools offer discounted rates of up to 50 per cent on all services including haircuts, colours, massages, manicures, pedicures, facials, etcetera. Be prepared to be patient and allow more time to have the procedure done. In some cases you can be added to a call list and have the service done for next to nothing because you are the guinea pig . . . er, model on a student's test day. For a slight twist on this, look for a regular salon in its client-building phase that offers loyalty cards. It may be something like get seven cuts at the regular price and the eighth is free, which brings the overall average price down.

4. Aspiring gardeners or people who just love beauty can check out public gardens. Quite often they are free or request only a small donation. While attending a conference several years ago I visited the Halifax Public Gardens. I still remember the statuary, the ducks in the ponds, and wishing I could grow hydrangeas in my zone 2-3 garden in Alberta. It was a lush, tranquil retreat from the sights and sounds of the city. More recently I visited the Camrose Railway Station and Park. It included a Children's Secret Garden, the Morgan Garden Railroad, unique flowerbeds with heritage and native flowers, and areas to simply sit and enjoy the setting. For a few dollars you can enjoy tea, homemade baking or the "world's best large hot dog" in the museum tearoom.

What more could anyone ask for, from where I sit?

## 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.

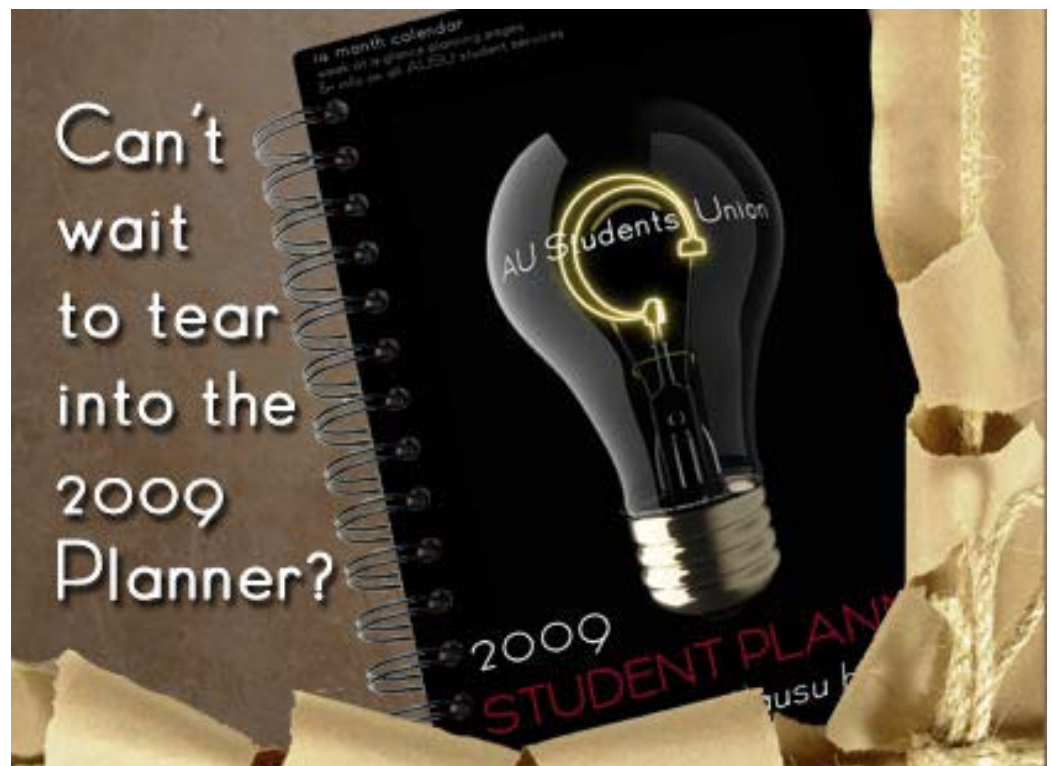
In that meeting a number of important revisions to the definitions of AUSU membership occurred, to make sure that the Councillors you elect are able to represent you during General Meetings and so that if you're a student in an AU collaborative undergrad program, you'll still be counted as an AUSU member 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

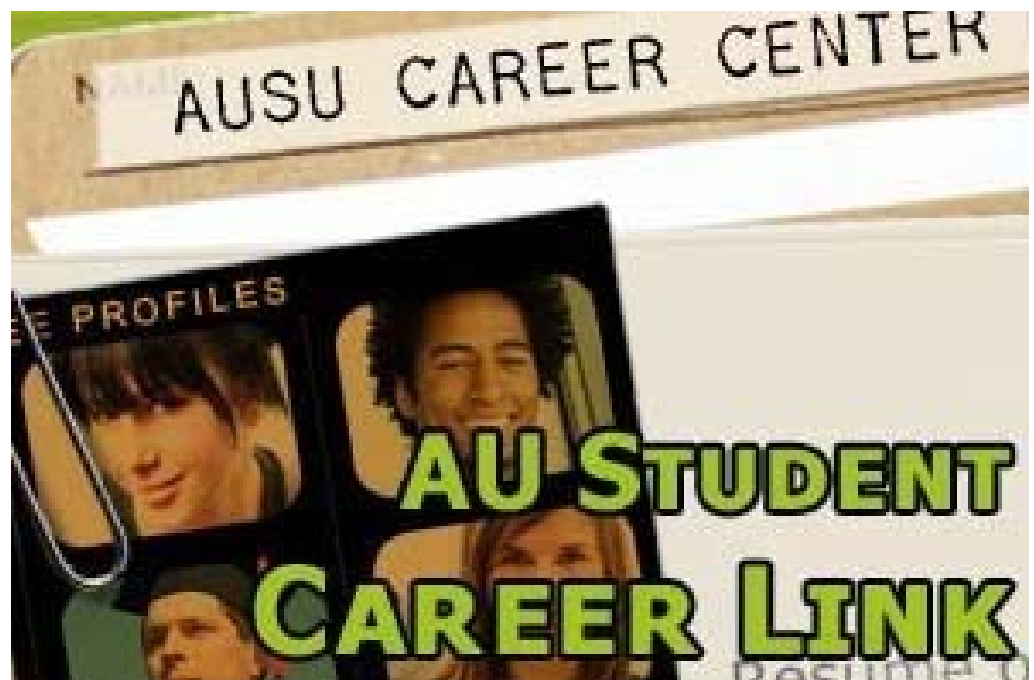
Still running, and still popular, the lock loan program can allow you to rest easy knowing your valuables are safe if you're taking an exam at the Calgary or Edmonton campus. The locks can be set to any combination, and are loaned to people without any deposit, but we ask that you please remember to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

A concert promoter is threatening to sue the Telus Convention Centre in Calgary after guards refused entry to fans wearing kirpans, and the event was cancelled.

Punjabi singing star Gurdas Maan was already on stage Sunday evening when about 10 fans were refused entry to the concert. They were stopped by security guards because they were wearing the kirpan, a ceremonial dagger worn by Sikhs.

As the *National Post* reports, concert promoter Nirmal Dhaliwal explained to convention centre officials that “the kirpan isn't considered a weapon,” but officials stood firm on their decision. Dhaliwal notes that he offered to be personally responsible for the patrons wearing the daggers, including escorting them to backstage seats. The Telus Centre’s general manager declined the offer.

At some point during the dispute the event was cancelled by Centre officials, on the grounds that “patrons refused to comply with the building’s safety policies.” The Centre allows miniature, locket-style kirpans in the venue; however, the kirpans worn Sunday had blades up to 12 centimetres long.

According to a spokesperson for the Centre, security policies are discussed with all event holders in advance, and there was plenty of opportunity for Dhaliwal to raise the issue of kirpans. Still, he’s adamant that Centre officials had no right to cancel the event and he plans to sue.

“It’s going to be a very big legal battle with the Telus Convention Centre very soon,” he told reporters.

### In Foreign News: Virologist says longer school holidays will fight H1N1 spread

As the H1N1 virus, or swine flu, takes hold across Germany, a leading virologist has suggested that an extended summer holiday for school children will help prevent the spread of the disease. Alexander Kekulé, director of Halle University’s institute for medical microbiology, told reporters that delaying the start of the school year would offer a “good chance to avert the spread” of swine flu.

According to *The Local*, Kekulé is predicting “a growing rate of infection just ahead of the new school year,” and is also cautioning the parents of children in day care about the risks. In the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia school is scheduled to begin August 17, and officials there are deciding whether or not to extend the summer holiday.

In other states, such as Thuringia, Lower Saxony, and Bremen, school officials plan on sticking to the planned schedule. Some students were due back in the classroom as early as August 6, while others return August 10.

The Robert Koch Institute, Germany’s infectious diseases authority, had confirmed 7,177 swine flu cases in the country as of August 4.

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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## THE VOICE

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