

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 19 Iss 05 2011-02-04

Grocery Store Blues

It's in the bag

Feeling SAD?

Let the sun shine in!

News and Views

AUSU General Meeting

*Plus: From Where I Sit
The Mindful Bard
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, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



EDITORIAL

Christina M. Frey



Grocery Bill

Childhood obesity: few will deny that it's a serious problem facing North America today. But there's significant disagreement over the cause of the trend, and even more debate over possible solutions. Last week, we looked at the movements targeting fast food manufacturers who use kid-friendly marketing. Although well-intentioned, these campaigns are missing the point: before we focus on the ability to choose between healthy and junk food, we need to make sure the choice actually exists.

Although education may be a key factor, it doesn't tell the whole story. Even if we teach kids and parents *how* to make the right decisions, it doesn't necessarily mean that they'll be able to—and it's not a matter of weak wills, either.

There's a larger question of food economics at play here. Simply put, healthier food—food that's more nutritionally dense—costs more. A lot more. And there's plenty of research to back that up, including this [study](#), which noted that not only is healthier food more expensive, but “the price disparity between more and less nutritious foods appears to be growing.”

It seems counter-intuitive. After all, shouldn't over-processed food be *more* costly? We always hear that in order to save cash at the checkout, we need to make our own food. But it doesn't always work that simply, for both economic and social reasons.

We've seen it play out in the grocery aisles: frequently, the less nourishing, the cheaper. Whole wheat bread and pasta cost more. Brown rice isn't readily available in bulk. Lean ground beef or turkey is a much pricier, although healthier, substitute for the higher-fat, higher-cholesterol ground beef that's sold in the large packages. And on sale, sodium-laden canned vegetables are a far better buy than flash frozen veggies—let alone the fresh stuff.

Ironically, often it's cheaper to buy than make your own. For example, high-sodium, high-sugar spaghetti sauce costs less than the supplies you'd need to make your own homemade. And even among “convenience” foods, healthier offerings are almost always higher priced (and usually only available in smaller quantities)—sometimes, it's much more economical to eat off the McDonald's dollar menu.

*According to one study,
“the price disparity
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to be growing.”*

Not only does skewed food pricing mean we're drawn to cheaper, less healthy choices, but it also means that we're drawn to a more limited circle of foods. Nutritionists often tout the advantages of a varied diet—one including an array of grains and legumes and multiple colour families of fruits and vegetables. But if you look on store shelves and displays, there are just a few staples—like wheat (frequently processed until much of the fibre and nutrition are gone), potatoes, and bananas—that seem to be available most cheaply. Seems like a pretty bland plate.

Even couponing can lead us to poorer health. Frequently I'll get emails from money-saving blogs notifying me that a certain combination can lead to high-cholesterol frozen dinners or oversalted canned meals for

less than a quarter apiece. And it's tempting—nearly free meal, anyone? Meanwhile, even basic coupons for more whole foods are virtually nonexistent.

Mixing tight finances with the high cost of healthy food makes the problem even more serious. A few years back, *The New York Times* profiled one couple's intriguing experiment: to spend a month living on a food budget of a dollar a day. Surprisingly, they discovered that it was very, very difficult to maintain a healthy and balanced diet. Unhealthy options, like preservative-, sugar-, and salt-laden peanut butter, were often standard fare, but "fresh fruits and vegetables weren't an option." Nor was meat.

Nutritionally, their diet was lacking, and it showed. True, there was weight loss, but it was accompanied by an energy drop so significant that gym time was no longer an option.

Lower-priced but nutritionally poor food can be the easiest and cheapest choice—and often the only choice for those strapped for time and cash.

Not that it would have been easy to find the time to head to the gym in the first place. In order to exist on a dollar a day, the couple had to prepare many meal items from scratch, including bread and tortillas. They readily acknowledged the difficulty, telling reporters that it was "tough" to come home hungry after a 10-hour work day, and have make a meal from scratch.

And that's another factor in the food cost dilemma. Working long hours (or several jobs) and dealing with financial stresses—on top of the lethargy that's a result of poor nutrition—means little energy left for complicated cooking ventures. Plus, researchers have pointed out that many simply "don't know how to prepare foods from scratch, or lack the time."

It's a significant point. If you're exhausted and your kid's hungry, are you going to spend hours preparing a lentil stew and homemade bread, or are you going to raid the stash of boxed mac and cheese you bought on sale? Especially if the mac and cheese costs about the same as or less than the ingredients for the healthier meal?

It's true that sometimes there are big sales during which healthier options can be stockpiled at prices similar to their nutritionally poorer counterparts. However, that requires an outlay of capital (and storage space), and for some, that flexibility just isn't an option. After all, as one professor told this *Ecologist* reporter, food is a "flexible item," one that has to be seen in a larger context of fixed bills and priorities.

What's the solution? According to grassroots group Food Democracy Now, we need to find a new model of food growing and distribution, one in which both the farmer and the consumer are the primary beneficiaries (rather than a series of corporations in the middle). Food Democracy Now advocates for a "more sustainable food system."

Reaching that goal might be complicated, but there are some positive developments. Surprisingly, mega-chain Wal-Mart is pioneering plans to promote a healthier lifestyle. And it's going beyond the obligatory removing-additives and educational program tactics. Rather, it will attempt to reduce the so-called health food price premium and lower the prices on fresh fruits and vegetables through a series of initiatives that will remove "unnecessary costs" in the distribution chain. The Wal-



Mart CEO told reporters that families shouldn't "have to choose between food that is healthier for them and food they can afford."

It's quite possible that other food supply businesses will follow suit. And although the corporate agri-business model may be a large part of the problem, these are moves in the right direction. After all, widespread awareness of the food economics that drive society to unhealthier market choices is the first step toward a healthier future.

CLICK OF THE WRIST: Tell Me the Future

This past week, communities across North America celebrated Groundhog Day, the February 2 "holiday" on which local groundhog celebrities predict whether or not there will be another six weeks of winter. Fun aside, weather predicting is serious business; it affects farming, commerce, urban development, and whether or not you'll need a jacket today. This week's links look at some of the truth and hype about weather forecasting—and show how you can do it on your own.

Ask the Groundhog

How accurate are Wiarton Willie, Punxsutawney Phil, and Shubenacadie Sam? According to the [data](#), not very. But much weather lore is based on some scientific fact, and the Groundhog Day legend is no exception. Here, *The Farmer's Almanac* gives some historical perspective on why the superstition may have originated—and why it may have been more accurate a hundred years ago.

Check the News

If you rely on the 9 p.m. local news for your weather needs, you might be surprised to learn that their accuracy is usually quite poor for predictions more than a day or two out. This study, posted by *Freakonomics* co-author Stephen J. Dubner, will challenge your perceptions on weather forecasting.

Look Out the Window

Sometimes, shorter-term forecasting is as simple as looking out the window: today's cloud cover usually offers clues to tomorrow's weather. This photograph chart will help you predict whether to expect sun or rain. For more cloud photos, see [here](#).

Ask Grandpa

What about those weather proverbs, the folkloric sayings that for centuries were used to predict short- and long-term weather patterns? They're not all true—but they're not all false, either. This article explains why.



NEWS AND VIEWS

Sandra Livingston

**AUSU Annual General Meeting**

Cold and snow might have brought traffic to a halt, but thanks to teleconferencing, AUSU's 17th Annual General Meeting kicked off right on time and saw a solid turnout. The entire council was in attendance, along with several students and guests, and it's clear that Council's been busy.

Minutes of the 2010 AGM were approved and the focus quickly moved on to financial reports and upcoming projects.

In financial matters, Council's been diligent about keeping things in top shape. As the message from President Barbara Rielly notes, 2010 brought an increase in membership and higher revenues "beyond [Council's] very conservative predictions." Council has invested those funds carefully, and the interest generated will help keep current services in place as well as expand offerings, such as new web services for AUSU clubs and societies. Thanks to careful planning and a budget surplus, Council "sees no need to increase . . . student fees in the foreseeable future."

As well, Sarah Kertcher, VP Finance and Administration, noted that the working relationship with auditors Kingston Ross Pasnak is excellent, and a unanimous vote saw the firm appointed for the 2010/11 fiscal year.

One key note in the financial report is that surplus funds were used to purchase bonds, and a question raised during the AGM concerned a drop in those bond amounts. As Sarah explained, those investments are tied to market changes and can be expected to fluctuate. Following a brief question period, the financial statements for the 2009/10 fiscal year were approved in a unanimous vote.

Next up was an item sure to interest AUSU members: the Priority Activities and Planning Report, presented by Bethany Tynes, VP External and Student Affairs.

There's been plenty of action around existing projects and proposed ones, and one major advance has been the success of AUSU's complaint tracking system. In order to track complaints effectively (and increase success in resolving them), AUSU has been logging data into a secure database. As the Activities Report notes, AUSU provided AU with the "first report from the database" in 2010, and results are positive. Not only are certain high-volume complaints beginning to fall, but AUSU has secured a long-anticipated meeting with the Tutors' Union.

Another interesting project Council's been working on is called OrgSync, a software system that will free up a lot of the administrative time that goes into managing AUSU clubs. Although the clubs are popular with students, Council may spend far more hours than anticipated if a club finds itself without leadership. This can also delay new clubs from starting, and Council reports that OrgSync will "allow clubs to be more self-maintaining, and . . . give all members an opportunity to contribute."

OrgSync could also be tied in with AUSU's Points Program, a service that's been in development for some time. The OrgSync installation is complete, so watch for the upcoming announcement on the AUSU website.

Bethany also gave an update on some of AUSU's current programs, and there were definitely some surprises. One of those was the sharp increase in the licence cost for the popular SmartDraw program. As the Activities Report notes, the program has been "both cost-effective and a value-added benefit to members," but in late 2010 Council learned that the cost was set to jump by 500 per cent. Tamra Ross, AUSU Executive Director, explained that Council has negotiated a reduced interim price and renewed the licence for another year, but they're looking closely at whether or not to continue the program after that.

In other news, another successful Tutor of the Year contest wrapped up recently, and results will be announced soon. And if you love your AUSU Planner/Handbook, there's even more good news on that front. Not only will the service continue, but Council has negotiated a much lower cost for printing.

One program that hasn't met with the same enthusiasm is the AUSU Career Centre, and low participation means Council will look at whether to continue offering that service.

Following the reports, the AGM was adjourned and an open question session began. One question touched on an item in the Activities Report: student price cards. Although interest was low when AUSU first offered the discount cards a few years ago, the selection available with the cards is now much more diverse and Council is looking at introducing them again. One attendee noted that it might be a repetition of discounts that could be obtained through the AU MasterCard. However, the discount cards could still be an option for members who don't opt for a university MasterCard.

And finally, the question was raised regarding how proposed changes to Canada's Internet billing system might affect AUSU's online services, as well as things like downloading digital textbooks, uploading assignments, etc. Council's following that issue closely, but as of this writing it appears usage-based billing may not be approved after all.

For those who couldn't dial in to the AGM, there's one last thing worth mentioning, something you wouldn't have found on the agenda: the sense of cohesiveness and energy on Council. While we're knee-deep in textbooks and essays, it's understandable that there's not always time to get to know Council members or read meeting minutes. But as the 2011 AGM showed, AUSU is hard at work for its members, improving on current services and planning new ones.

To find out more or get updates on AUSU projects, visit their [homepage](#). And if you're an AU student who likes to plan ahead, make a note now to attend next year's AGM. You'll be glad you did!

Financial surplus, complaint tracking system success, a new software system for AUSU student clubs, Planner/Handbook news, discount cards, and updates on the SmartDraw program and the AUSU Career Centre—it's been a busy year for Council.



HEALTH MATTERS

Katie D'Souza

**Are You SAD?**

It's the middle of winter. And if you live in a cold, windy location (and isn't all of Canada cold and windy at this time of year?), you may be feeling those winter blues settling in. For many of us, this means feeling impatient with the cold weather and dreaming longingly of Caribbean beaches. But for some, these "winter blues" are a whole lot more than that, and aren't to be taken lightly. These are the people who suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Are you SAD?

Are you feeling depressed or pessimistic for no apparent reason? Do you have trouble getting out of bed in the mornings despite adequate sleep, have difficulty concentrating when you're awake, and lack energy and enthusiasm for anything? Is your libido nonexistent? Do you crave carbohydrates? These are some of the most common "red flags" for

someone who might be suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder.

The incidence of SAD ranges up to 10 per cent in the winter months in North America, and symptom intensity varies from person to person. An official diagnosis of SAD requires an additional four specific criteria dealing with past mental health.

Why?

The cause of SAD is still somewhat of a mystery. Access to natural light is a major factor; those living in areas with less natural light during part of the year have higher SAD rates than those in locations that are sunny year-round.

One theory proposes that low serotonin levels in the brain can predispose an individual to SAD. Serotonin is sometimes referred to as the "feel-good" neurotransmitter, since adequate levels can bring about a sense of well-being and happiness. Another theory relates low melatonin (a neurohormone produced in low light environments) levels to SAD.

But a further, more recent, school of thought states that SAD symptoms relate to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D, often called the "sunshine vitamin," is made by our bodies when they have access to full, bright sunlight for a minimum of 15 minutes. During winter in the northern climates, however, sunlight access is restricted, and even on sunny days, the latitude of the sun in the winter months is not strong enough to cause the body make vitamin D. On top of this, many in northern climates already enter the winter season with low vitamin D levels.

Sunny day? It may not be enough; during winter in northern latitudes, the sun's not strong enough to cause the body to make vitamin D.

What Can I Do?

Get checked out. If you think you might be suffering from SAD, talk to your health care provider.

Get tested. Have your vitamin D levels tested (ask for the 25-hydroxyvitamin D test). Although there's no

definitive consensus yet on minimum vitamin D levels, many practitioners refer to 125 nmol/L of vitamin D as the marker for low vitamin D status.

Supplement with vitamin D. You can self-treat with up to 1000 IU vitamin D. However, since vitamin D is not a water-soluble vitamin, for higher doses (i.e. above 5,000 IU) you should get the above blood test to make sure you are deficient. If you do supplement with vitamin D, the ideal form is D₃, since it's the form best absorbed by the body. (Note: D₃ is made from sheep's wool oil, so it may be inappropriate for vegetarians or vegans.)

Get a lamp. SAD lamps offer light that mimics natural summer sunlight. Using one of these will allow you to bask in the healing light of the summer sun—in the middle of winter!

Get light bulbs. You might also consider purchasing full spectrum light bulbs for those areas of the house or office in which you spend the most time. (A caution, however: the bulbs can be costly, and there's not a huge amount of research to support their use.)

Fortunately, there are many options to help sufferers of Seasonal Affective Disorder. You may not have to be SAD anymore!

Katie D'Souza is an AU graduate and a licensed naturopathic doctor. She currently lives in Ontario.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this article is for personal interest only; it is not intended for diagnosis or treatment of any condition. Readers are always encouraged to seek the professional advice of a licensed physician or qualified health care practitioner for personal health or medical conditions.



DID YOU KNOW? Field Study Opportunity

Interested in ethno-cultural studies or biodiversity? Appreciate humanitarian efforts? Enjoy travelling? How about experiencing all three—and earning university credit?

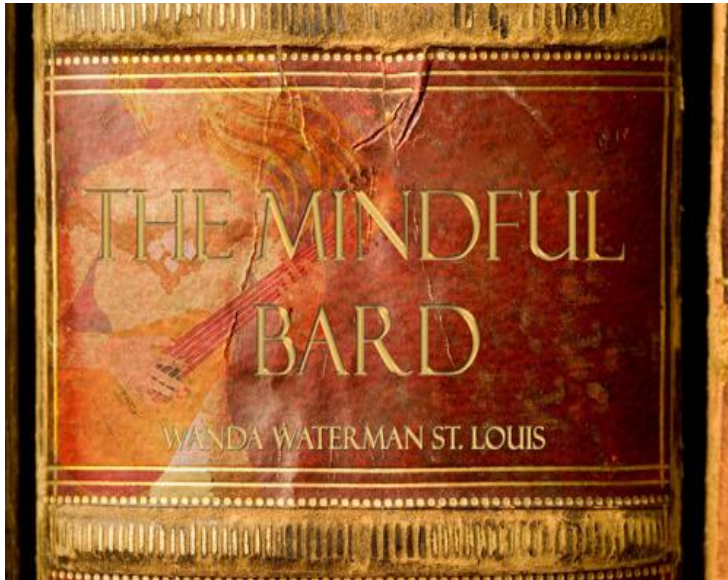
This May, AU students have the opportunity to participate in a “unique field study opportunity” in Borneo. In addition to receiving field lectures, students will either “participate in an ethno-ecological study with the Wehea Dayak” people while helping with “community development projects,” or “join a scientific team conducting the first comprehensive biodiversity study of the Wehea Forest.”

Participants can earn up to eight university credits for the field study.

The trip, which is sponsored by Ethical Expeditions, will cost US \$5,500, which includes “university credit, all meals, accommodation, internal travel and educational materials.” Airfare to Balikpapan, Indonesian Borneo, is the student's responsibility, as are other travel-related expenses.

Applicants should be “passionate about preserving biological and cultural diversity” and be “interested in the complex issues facing the island of Borneo.” There is space for up to 12 students to join the study.

For more information, contact AU anthropology tutor [Janelle Baker](#) or visit the [Ethical Expeditions website](#).



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

The Dizzying Music of The Henry Chinaski's Ashtray

"The beauty of the world has two edges, one of laughter, one of anguish, cutting the heart asunder."

Virginia Woolf

If Charles Bukowski had taken guitar lessons from Duane Eddy and Jimi Hendrix and then channelled his sullen-joyous world view into recordings—well, he wouldn't have sounded like this, but his sound might have appealed to the same people who like

this music.

The album titles, and even the name of the act (which I assume is just one friendless genius in a cold basement), look like the Facebook entries of people who are learning English and trying to make it look like they've invented some hip new slang. And the recording quality is awful, but it's so effective you've got to believe it's intentional.

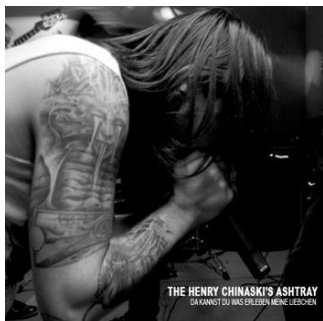
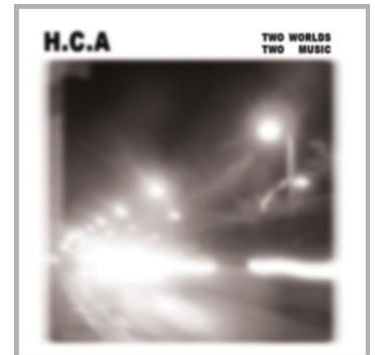
It's so wrong it's right, as Jim White would say. I mentioned this act in "Gregor's Bed" and it grew on me so much that I had to recommend it here. Plus it's free, so there's no reason Henry's aural miracles can't reach the audience of misfits and miscreants it so obviously deserves.

Two Worlds Two music (2009)

Henry Chinaski was the love child of a hippie chick in a '60s free love experiment here in Bear River, Nova Scotia. His mom never knew who his real dad was, but she had loved him very much and he had been part of the plan to change the world with just three chords and a self-righteous naïveté.

Henry grew up pantless, listening to protest songs and songs about freedom and songs about common folks who were nothing like his folks. There was nothing but yogourt and sprouts and bulgur wheat in the farmhouse, but one day young

Henry opened the icebox and found—guess what? Baloney, just like this story, which was meant as a lame effort to describe the general tenor of this album.



Da kannst du was erleben meine Liebchen! (2009)

The twangy guitars, the atmospheric desert sage slide guitar, the gospel tambourine, and a distant moaning male vocal are essential elements in this album. So is the post-apocalyptic, nihilist tone of the aural landscape. It's an inebriating brew of real sounds: trains, planes, traffic, marching foot soldiers, hoots, hollers, screams, and war whoops.

The tracks have raunchy Beefheart-esque titles like “Fuck You Thank You” and “Kick my soul.” I got a laugh out of the musical sarcasm of “Meditation (with candles)” while being simultaneously blown away by its eerie beauty.



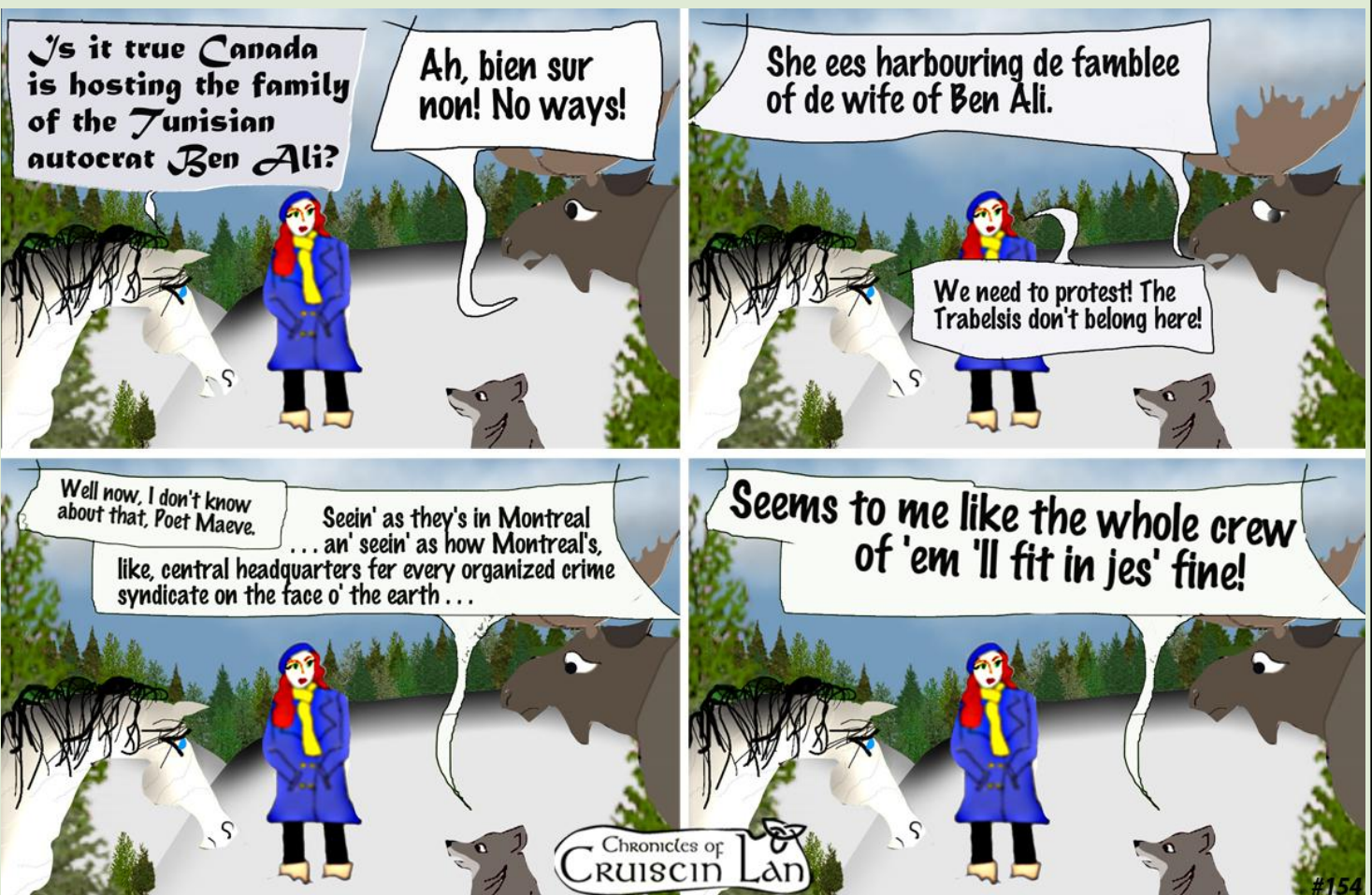
Weurk in progress (2010)

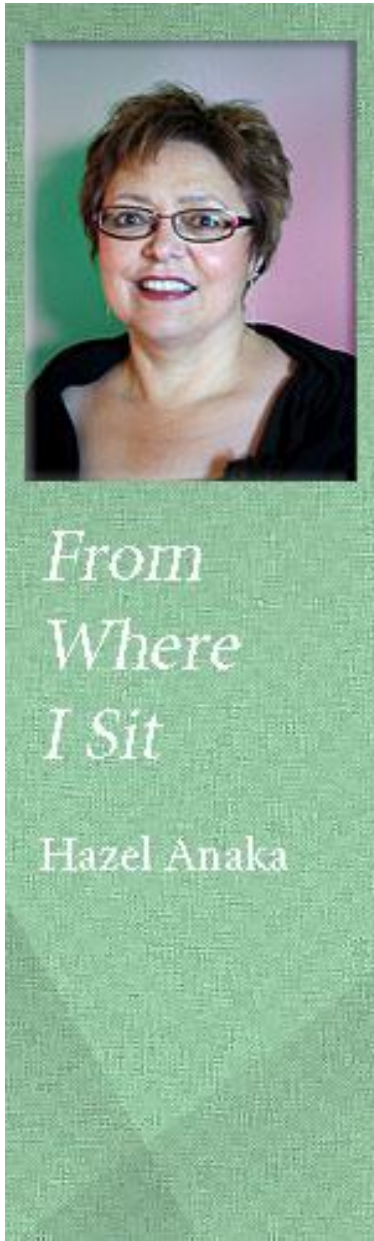
Here come the space sounds with the ubiquitous twangy and Hawaiian guitars. Look for that famous Ronnie Hawkins riff (“Heyyyy, Bo Diddley!”) in “I’ll never drink sangria with goldfish for the rest of my life, so bring me my royal cheese right now!”

The music of The Henry Chinaski’s Ashtray manifests five of The Mindful Bard’s criteria for music well worth a listen: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it gives me tools that help my art; 3) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 4) it is about attainment of the true self; and 5) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour.

CHRONICLES OF CRUISCIN LAN

Wanda Waterman St. Louis





He Shoots, He Scores

Because of our week-long Mexican getaway and our kids' two weeks in Palm Springs, we didn't get to see our grandson Grady for more than three weeks. That is an eternity when the little someone is only 18 months old.

We feared he might forget Nana and Dido. But he didn't. We expected that he would grow. And he did. We guessed his vocabulary would blossom. And it did.

What we didn't know was that escaping Edmonton's four-foot banks of snow and spending two weeks in the sun would turn our little boy into a Phil Mickelson wannabe. The kids rented a 3,000-square-foot house with a pool and grounds so that Grady wasn't stuck in a hotel and could be a kid. They replaced his plastic golf clubs with a three-piece metal set, plus bag. Brand name? It's a Snoopy set, no less. The driver is too long and is really heavy for this 32-inch-tall golfer, but it's his favourite because of the distances he can get. Prying it out of his grip is cause for tears.

When Roy and I visited them after their return from holidays, we were blown away by Grady. He lines up the driver with a ball, he pauses, he looks up, he repositions his hands on the grip, and he swings. He has a backswing for heaven's sake! And follow-through. I guess all the time spent watching golf with Dad and going to the Bob Hope Classic are paying off! Mom Carrie is now spending the better part of each day in the basement because of his obsession. He also insists on involving others—"play Mom, play Nana, play Dido"—so none of us are safe.

We all marvel at and applaud the shots. We laugh, silently congratulating ourselves on the genetic material we contributed. We can't believe what a blessing this little guy is. Though it may not be that awesome the first time he makes a hole in the drywall or knocks the block off a playmate or hits Nana in the shins. Roy says Greg needs to install puck board all around their

finished basement. Kidding.

Grady also has a pint-sized hockey net and takes slapshots into the net—with either a hockey stick or a golf club—and he's surprisingly accurate. He pauses after each goal to throw his arms in the air and yell "Score!" Greg is trying to teach him to fist pump after making a good golf shot. Since there are similarities between the two sports, some confusion exists, but over time Grady will learn the nuances of each game. Pausing before a golf shot is good, but in hockey you'd better one-time it. Oh, and I guess learning to skate and getting a puck will help reinforce the differences too.

Will he lose his conditioning with at least three more months of winter? When do the driving ranges open? What a joy to watch this child grow up, from where I sit.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Sneaky Sneakers

Shape-ups, specialty cross trainers, and other advanced shoe technologies: do they really aid athletic performance and prevent injuries, or are they more hype than help?

It might be the latter, according to Dr. Benno Nigg, a biomechanics researcher at the University of Calgary. As the CBC reports, all the fancy bells and whistles on some athletic shoes might be a waste of your money, since “spending hundreds of dollars to get the latest in running shoe technology isn’t as effective at preventing injury as simply buying a pair that’s comfortable.”

Dr. Nigg, who’s publishing a book on shoe biomechanics, has been studying orthotics and athletic shoe technology for 30 years. He has also “worked with industry giants such as Nike and Reebok,” but he’s not necessarily a fan of their higher-tech offerings. He feels that the so-called progress in shoe research has done little to improve running

injury rates over the years.

In fact, he told reporters that all you get “with the high prices is the gimmicks,” advising runners to choose shoes that “feel . . . comfortable.”

Around the World: Oh Henry

Old houses are a delightful source of historical musing. Who lived there? What were their lives like? And did they leave anything behind? Countless owners of historical homes have found antique books, old diaries, yellowed newspaper clippings, and the like—all items that have given clues about homeowners hundreds of years ago. For one British couple, the discovery was historically significant—and priceless.

As *The Daily Telegraph* reports, the couple was renovating their home when they uncovered [a] unique medieval mural of Henry VIII.”

The painted mural, which measures 20 by 6 feet, was hidden beneath “wallpaper and mortar.” It’s believed to have been made “at the turn of the 15th century.”

At that time, the home was occupied by Thomas Cranmer, who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury and a key pioneer in the early Church of England. It was Cranmer who, as Archbishop, declared the king’s marriage to Catherine of Aragon void, and then married Henry and Anne Boleyn.

Art historians are enthused about the discovery of the mural, which one former professor told reporters was of “enormous importance and significance.” In fact, since it is the only surviving mural of Henry VIII, it is considered to be “priceless.”

AUSU UPDATE



Convocation 2010

AUSU wishes to congratulate this year's graduates, whether attending Convocation in person or by distance. We wish you the best of luck in your future pursuits. You are an inspiration to all AU students!

AUSU Executive Election

AUSU has recently held its internal election for the Executive. We wish to congratulate Barbara Rielly (President), Bethany Tynes (Vice President External and Student Affairs) and Sarah Kertcher (Vice President Finance and Administration) on their election and thank those that ran for their willingness to serve.

Internal elections are being held to determine committee membership and we expect that all will be in place shortly. Our new Council is taking its bearings and has already begun to set the direction for this term.

Student Issues

AUSU recently completed a compilation of reported student issues covering a two year period; all issues were recorded in such a way as to ensure that student information remains protected and private. This effort confirmed what we long suspected; that tutor problems were the single biggest issue faced by our students (56 of 120 complaints).

Outdated course materials and errors in texts continue to be reported as well as were exam issues, slowness of the transfer process, and the scantiness of information in School of Business FAQs. Over that two year period there was a decrease in the number of complaints about student financing, exam request problems, difficulty registering in more than six courses, and materials shortages for courses. Kudos to AU for improving in those areas. Now if we could only get the Tutors' Union to the table . . .

New 2010 AUSU Handbook/Planners – Arrived!

Finally! People have already started receiving the new planners in the mail, and we're currently shipping them out as fast as the orders come in. Full of useful information about AUSU, writing styles, course grading, great finds online for your studies that you may not have known about, as well as having places to write down your phone numbers, keep track of your assignments, and, oh yeah, a year's worth of calendar to plan out your schedule too. We'll give one free to each AUSU member just for the asking.

Remember, though, we only print a limited number of these each year, so when they're gone, they're gone.

Let 'em Know who Represents for You!

AUSU logo mugs, hoodies, USB keys, and much more are all available for sale from our office. Also, used locks can be purchased at half price! Check out our merchandise catalog on our front page. You should

check out our hoodies in particular—made in Canada and 100% bamboo, we're offering them for just barely over our cost, and they're both durable and comfortable.

And if you have new little ones in your family, or know somebody who does, check out our baby onesies. Made by American Apparel, these onesies are high quality and let folks know your kids are growing up to great things as a "Future Graduate of Athabasca U"

AUSU Scheduling Meeting with Tutors' Union – Not really an Update

Some things resist change. We're still waiting for a response from the Tutor's Union as to when we might be able to meet with them to discuss ways that AUSU and the Tutor's Union can work together to ensure that students are getting the contact they need. Unfortunately, they haven't yet replied, so we're stepping up our campaign to get in touch with them. If you want to help, the next time you're talking to your tutor, ask them if they know when the Tutor's Union will meet with AUSU so that the groups can work together on common issues.

Our statistics we've been collecting from the forums and your calls show that issues with tutors - specifically the amount of time taken for marking assignments and exams are your number one concern. Help us help you.

SmartDraw Program Renewal

Some of you who took advantage of our program to provide SmartDraw software to members have been getting notifications that your software license will soon be expiring. Fortunately, AUSU will be continuing this program, so if you haven't already, go to the AUSU home page to download the newest version.

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.



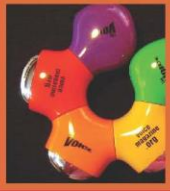



For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email.

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.

AUSU
Representing AU
Undergrads

Student Gear

2009 merchandise

Clothing
Technology
Fun Items
Home Decor

Fostering the Student Community

AUSU and Voice gear is intended to support your studies and help you feel like part of the AU student community. Suggestions for new items are welcome. Contact our office with any questions.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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