

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 19 Iss 46 2011-12-02

## Something Old, Something New

Alternative medicine in Alexandria

## Overstuffed

Wallet on a diet

## Drum Line

The Bard & the *cuica*

*Plus:  
From Where I Sit  
Write Stuff  
and much more!*



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***The Voice  
Magazine***

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

For weekly email  
reminders as each issue is  
posted, fill out the  
subscription form [here](#).

*The Voice* does not share  
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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.



## EDITORIAL

Christina M. Frey

**Wallet on a Diet, Part II**

Holiday cravings settling in? Surf the web this season, and you'll be overwhelmed with articles, blog posts, and Tweets full of tips and tricks to avoid growing your own Santa belly.

Overindulging in treats isn't the only seasonal pitfall we have to contend with. Yet it's harder to find similar tips for avoiding a different, but equally worrisome, holiday habit: overspending, over-buying, and over-accumulating.

Oh, articles on a *thriftier* holiday season are everywhere. With leaner economic times for many, our wallets are feeling the cost of Christmas a little more keenly this year. But although discovering how to save on that perfect gift, treat, or decoration is definitely helpful, it's not the only story.

In fact, all those good deals might be doing the opposite of what you're hoping. How to keep that wallet on a reasonable diet so that you don't have to deal with some real January blues when the credit card bill arrives?

Let's take a cue from the world of health: it's possible to navigate both the holiday buffet and the Christmas shopping season without regrets come January 1. This week we'll look at some popular holiday diet strategies—and apply them to our wallets.

First tip: **"Eat beforehand,"** says *Shape Magazine*. This works at the store as well as the party; going food shopping on an empty stomach means you'll be more likely to grab hunger-motivated treats you and your family don't really need for a "fulfilling" Christmas. Even if you're shopping for non-edibles, be aware: hunger (and exhaustion!) can cloud your judgment, which translates to a lot more impulse purchases. Follow the same logic when shopping online—do it when you're fresh, not exhausted.

**"Use a smaller plate,"** advises *Canadian Living* magazine. This is pretty easily applied to the department store. Ever wonder why shopping cart sizes have increased over the years? It's a psychological game; we feel we aren't buying all that much if the cart has only a few items rolling around on the bottom. Instead of grabbing a cart, pick up a basket at the entrance—chances are you'll rethink a few nonessential buys when you realize you'll need to carry them around the store yourself. Now just don't load up that basket with tiny, high-priced electronics!

*By the end of the season, the only slim thing around is our wallet. Reverse the bad habits and mix finance and health!*

What's your personal weakness? **"Identify the . . . culprits,"** says the Mayo Clinic. If you know you can't resist adding yet another cute nail polish—or another cool iPod case—to your collection, stay out of those aisles. Then you can save yourself the internal battle in the first place.



Really having trouble controlling your wallet? **“Step away from the banquet,”** says Marie Claire. If you’re near the source of temptation—whether the buffet table or the department store—you’re more likely to give in. Limit your shopping trips by planning ahead; figure out your needs, make your lists in advance, and choose one day each week for getting in all the shopping. The less you’re around the mall, the better for your credit card bill.

Many North Americans tend to over-shop—buy far more gifts, treats, and decorations than are necessary. When at a holiday party, WebMD recommends that revellers **“[resist] the urge to go back for more by waiting at least 20 minutes for [the] brain to register that [they’re] comfortably full.”** Similarly, don’t wait until the week before Christmas to discover you’ve over-bought once again; take a physical inventory a couple times a week. Make sure you hang on to those receipts, too; tape or staple them to tags or items. Unlike the party tray, you get a second chance—buyer’s remorse means you have the opportunity to return items that you probably shouldn’t have bought in the first place.

And while out and about shopping, slow down! When there’s a time crunch, you’re more likely to cast around for anything to fill the cart or basket. This especially applies to web-based deal-seeking. Make a policy of avoiding limited-duration sales unless there’s an item you had already researched and decided upon. Fifteen minutes to make a sale doesn’t leave much time for good judgment. Even if this means you might miss a good deal, you’ll still save money in the long run.

Finally, and most importantly, **don’t “[succumb] to peer pressure,”** the *Huffington Post* warns. Beware of buying into the expectation game: even Santa has started advising kids to aim lower, as this *Daily Mail* article notes. Talk with family and friends about holiday expectations. If your finances are tight, choose fewer or less showy, but perhaps more meaningful gifts, or go homemade. If Scrooge turns up his nose, then he’s the one who’s missing the meaning of Christmas.



Which brings me to my last point: Christmas isn’t all about food, and it isn’t all about spending. But exercising moderation in both can leave you with more time, patience, and serenity to enjoy and appreciate friends and family. And isn’t that what the season’s all about?

## CLICK OF THE WRIST

## Toy Story

LeapPads, singing dolls, and Lego Star Wars sets: these are just a few of this year’s top toys. How do they stack up against the most popular choices of the past? Click through this week’s links for the scoop on some other top toys.

### Simple Success

Sure, “simple toys” usually refers to traditional wooden toys without lots of colour, plastic, or distracting sounds and lights. But when offered a gift, whether simple or complex, what child won’t first play with the

box? This Wired.com article spotlights the five top playthings that are part of a complete childhood. Here's a hint: they don't come in a plastic package!

### **Century Mark**

What toys were popular 100 years ago? Many of the top picks of the 1910s were building and construction-related: TinkerToys, Lincoln Logs, and Erector Sets, for example. The Classic Toy Museum has online "exhibits" featuring trivia about these toys and other classics from your own childhood—or even your grandparents'!

### **Top of the Lot**

The theme of "top toys" wouldn't be complete, of course, without a nod to the top—one of the world's oldest known playthings. This article outlines its history, including archaeological findings, types and variations, cultural tie-ins, and literary references. Who knew the humble top could be so fascinating!



### **DID YOU KNOW?**



If you have undergraduate courses ending December 31, 2011, you'll want to note the University's special holiday exam procedures—and order your final examinations as soon as possible.

If your course contract date is December 31, you must submit your exam requests before the University closes for the holidays. Athabasca University will be closed from December 23, 2011, at 5 pm MST until January 3, 2012, at 8:30 am MST. No examinations will be shipped during that period.

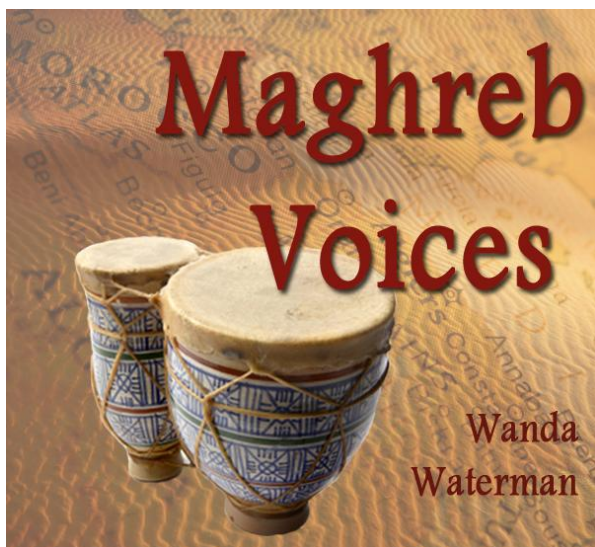
Exam requests received after the close of business on December 23 will be treated as Late Examination Requests, and the Late Examination Request Fee will be assessed.

Due to the holiday postal rush, the University may not be able to guarantee specific write dates. Additionally, exam requests received after December 20 may not be processed until the University reopens in January.

However, if you submit your exam request before the holiday closure, you will have until January 15, 2012, to take your exam. Note that this is not a course extension; all other course components, including essays, projects, and quizzes, are due by the December 31 course contract date.

For further information, check out the holiday exam policy [here](#), or contact the Information Centre at 1.800.788.9041.

### **AU Holiday Exam Procedures**



## Alternative Medicine in Alexandria: The Old is New Again, Part I

On the afternoon of November 22, Dr. Mohamed Dorgham is heading out to join the protestors in Alexandria, Egypt, his native city—and the location of his new clinic, Integrated Alternative Medicine.

As a mere 20-something, he feels a sense of hope when he sees the proactive stance of his generation and the possibility of his country emerging with a healthy level of autonomy and social justice after decades of stifling leadership.

In fact, he sees a need for his country to return to the spirit of Islamic justice as relayed to humanity by the prophet whose name he bears. Dr. Dorgham believes that the answer to Egypt's woes is just as much rooted in the past as are the woes themselves.

Similarly, his choice of healing practices is just as progressive—and just as entrenched in the past. In his innovative clinic, Dr. Dorgham uses therapies like cupping (an external suction technique used in the Arab world for centuries and mentioned by the Prophet Muhammad), herbal medicine, and acupuncture, all branches of traditional healing that greatly predate conventional Western (allopathic) medicine yet now represent the vanguard of new treatments.

Why “integrated” alternative medicine? “Integrated means body and mind, external and internal” says Dr. Dorgham. “You gain more insight into a disease if you keep in mind that a human being is an integrated system, not a bunch of mechanical parts connected to each other. Take knee pain, for example—its cause may actually be in the stomach.”

Working as a representative with large pharmaceutical companies gave him first-hand experience with the con games endemic in that industry. After observing the side effects of pharmaceuticals and the beneficial effects of alternative remedies, he decided to build a practice around proven natural therapies.

Dr. Dorgham initially studied conventional allopathic medicine, and this has stood him in good stead as it has allowed him to avoid the pitfalls of practicing alternative healing without a medical background. For example, in unskilled hands cupping carries some risks, and practitioners without a solid understanding of human anatomy, physiology, or the proper techniques can imperil a patient, administering a treatment that's worse than the disease.

*“Integrated means body and mind, external and internal . . . You gain more insight into a disease if you keep in mind that a human being is an integrated system, not a bunch of mechanical parts connected to each other.”*

*Dr. Mohamed Dorgham*

“Studying microbiology helped me to ensure that there were hygienic conditions in my practice, and studying immunity helped me to understand how people can be healthier and more disease-resistant,” he says.

***“[In] the end I am just the doctor; the healer is Allah.”***

When it comes to herbal treatments, Dr. Dorgham believes that simple is usually best. He generally uses single, unprocessed herbs to treat patients, “giving one agent time to do its action before selecting another.”

“I’m not for mixing 10 different herbs together because they can interfere with each other,” he explains. “There’s a possible synergistic effect, but the tendency is often to mix too many herbs together in an effort to make a treatment more effective, and it really doesn’t work like that; the results show us that a single herb creates the same effect as a mix of several. The maximum number that I use is in a topical cream I make for muscle pain, a combination of four oils.”

Integrated alternative medicine does not involve the patient choosing from a smorgasbord of treatments; rather, the patient presents with a problem and Dr. Dorgham works out a plan that may include a number of different therapies.

However, Dr. Dorgham acknowledges that alternative treatments can take longer and demand a higher degree of personal responsibility from the patient than allopathic treatments require. “One case was a woman in her 80s with a history of arterial thrombosis in her left leg,” he says. “She had just been released from the ICU, diagnosed with cerebral thrombosis. After a few days of being back home she stopped eating, drinking, speaking, and moving. Her relatives took her to a conventional doctor, who administered IV solutions to no effect. She was restored to normal after two sessions of integrated cupping and acupuncture.”

However, he notes, “Another case with a similar history stayed four sessions with little improvement, but then her treatment did not have the support of relatives; [they] assumed that because of her advanced age, her health condition was irremediable.

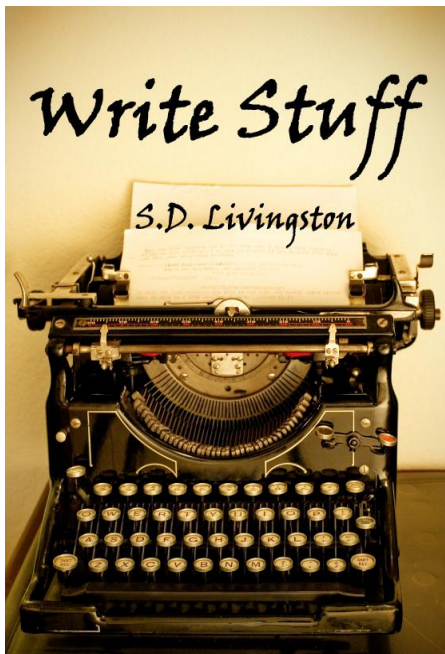
“Yes, it may take time, as what we do is reverse the symptoms by helping the body restore its natural healthy status. The treatment can take even longer if a case is chronic, complicated, or if the family at home does not support the treatment.

“I’m trying to provide the most effective applications to help [patients] to restore [their] normal, healthy condition of well-being, but in the end I am just the doctor; the healer is Allah.”



*(To be continued . . .)*





## Epics and Egos

Book covers can conceal lots of dark, fearsome things. Delve inside their pages and you might come across ogres or pirates or murderers. Rarer, but equally scary, lurks another literary danger: an author's epic-sized ego. When this emerges into daylight, lawsuits and quarrels can wreak havoc—even on unsuspecting readers who've dared an unflattering review. So what makes some writers think they're the only ones who get to have a say?

Most writers, whether they're self-published or a HarperCollins constant, know that putting themselves in the public eye is a two-way street. Professional reviewers, private bloggers, and everyone in between have the right to voice an opinion about a book. As long as they stay on the right side of libel laws and reveal any conflicts of interest, it's fair play.

But unlike Jane Austen's universally acknowledged truth about bachelors, this basic rule doesn't seem quite so obvious to some. Take author Jonathan Lethem, for example, and his novel *The Fortress of Solitude*. Eight years ago, the book was reviewed in *The New Republic*. The review, even by Lethem's account, "wasn't horrible." Yet Lethem has now come out swinging against the reviewer, in a post that (revealingly) turns out to be "completely and utterly" about himself, as the *Moby Lives* blog [notes](#).

Then there's the case of Chris McGrath, the self-published author of *The Attempted Murder of God: Hidden Science You Really Need to Know*. Vaughan Jones was one of several readers who gave the book negative customer reviews, and McGrath is now suing him. Not content with that, McGrath is also going after Amazon and Richard Dawkins in the case (as this *Telegraph* article [explains](#), "the Richard Dawkins Foundation also published an article by Mr Jones on its website").

Obviously, if writers' public words are open to public scrutiny, so are reviewers'. No one gets a pass on that. But just as reviewers (whether professional journalists or customers on retail sites) should never grind personal axes disguised as thoughtful opinion, neither should a writer presume that his delicate ego deserves to be soothed in public.

It's one thing to point out flaws in fact or reasoning; quite another to sue a reviewer whose honest opinion is that your book is "meaningless crud." Or to rant in a public comments section, like Alain de Botton did in his [famous attack](#) on a *New York Times* reviewer, saying "I will hate you till the day I die and wish you nothing but ill will in every career move you make."

No one likes a bad review, whether it's about your latest novel or your day job as a bus driver. But learning to accept legitimate criticism is simply part of life. For writers tempted to forget that rule, they could quickly find themselves in the grip of another literary monster: the editor's slush pile.

*S.D. Livingston is the author of several books, including the new suspense novel Kings of Providence. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing (and for more musings on the literary world!).*

## THE MINDFUL BARD

Wanda Waterman



The Mindful Bard enjoying the handmade *cuica* drum.

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

*"Happy New Year! The Conjunto Roque Moreira wishes you peace, health, happiness, success, and we hope in 2011 we can go to Canada to show our work to this wonderful country . . . We have news! We begin to record our new CD in January. Cheers!"*

Anderson Almeida, drummer and vocalist for Conjunto Roque Moreira, in a message to Wanda Waterman on New Year's Day, 2011

### The *Cuica* Story, or How a Handmade Brazilian Drum Found Its Way to My Doorstep in New Hampshire

Think of this as a kind of Mindful Bard side trip. It's not my typical ramble on why this or that film, book, or CD might inspire your next oeuvre, but it's a story that involves a little of each—and which, but for the Mindful Bard, might never have come about.

It started when I discovered a Brazilian rock band called Conjunto Roque Moreira. They were a highly rousing bunch, and their music was a combination of indigenous sounds and Brazilian rhythms. To this they often added elements of reggae, tango, jazz, blues, and any genre or sound that happened to tickle the ears of these highly creative and aesthetically curious musicians.

I decided to get in touch. They sent me their CD, *Sintonia da Mata*, which I readily recommended in this column. Soon after that we did an email interview—a singular mission considering their partial lack of English and my complete lack of Portuguese.

I was impressed enough by their music. But what really blew me away was something else: Conjunto Roque Moreira had founded Fábrica Roque Moreira, an organization that designs musical instruments which underprivileged children can make from natural and recycled materials. These kids can then sell the instruments and help support themselves. Here was a band that was deeply motivated as much by a passion for humanity as by a peculiarly Brazilian sense of fun.

In other words, it was the perfect Mindful Bard match.

Not long after the interview the band asked me if I could help them come to Canada to perform. Although first I sent them the contact information of a good tour manager and various world, jazz, and folk festivals that I thought would be glad to nab the group, I later I remembered Ali Hancharyk, whom I had just interviewed. Ali and his cohorts had developed Home Routes, a highly innovative model of touring that was relatively low stress, highly enjoyable for all concerned, and a system that actually permitted musicians to come home with money in their pockets. It sounded like a good fit.

Home Routes involves a network of private homes where musicians perform. The houses feed and house the musicians overnight and provide a small concert space where they invite friends, family, and neighbours to come over and spend around \$15 on a small live concert. The hosts take away nothing but the pleasure of hosting professional musicians for a night.

This model worked so well that some musicians were reporting making half their year's income in one short tour, and the system has now spread to other parts of Canada.

I encouraged Anderson Almeida to get in touch with Ali in the hopes that they might be able to work together. To my surprise, the process zipped right through, and Conjunto was booked for a Home Routes tour. Just as I had expected, Canada loved them.

As a thank-you gift the band sent me a *cuica* (Portuguese for "opossum"), a drum used in samba. YouTube the instrument and you'll recognize its sound if you've listened to samba at all. It's played by rubbing a wet cloth along a rod centred inside the drum and rooted in the drum's sheepskin head.

Arnaldo Oliveira tells me that the body of the drum is made from "a creeping plant that [grows] in the sandy soils." The plant," he adds, "is often used is to carry water for consumption . . . [and as] food dishes for people working in the field." It's also used to make other instruments, like the *caxixi* and *shekere*.

Of my drum Arnaldo says, "It's the first instrument made by Fábrica do Roque. We are already designing it for various people and places, but you're the first to have an international instrument."

And this note from the band toward the end of their tour: "We are now leaving and going to North Battleford in Saskatchewan, Prince Albert' the next day we go to La Ronge . . . [we] finish our last show day 8 November, [but] we'll be in Winnipeg until after the Nov. 24 . . . *Obrigado* and happiness."

Last night I played the *cuica* at our Friday night musical gathering in Whitefield, New Hampshire.

It's been a good week. A very good week. *Obrigado* and happiness.

Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book *They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good*, a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.



The interior of a *cuica* drum.





*From  
Where  
I Sit*

*Hazel Anaka*

## A Walk in the Park

As I write this on Saturday afternoon, I am 1,110 words away from completing my first-ever National Novel Writing Month challenge. I wrote just shy of 2,500 words today. I've averaged over 1,800 words per day, which is above the 1,667 needed to finish in the full 30 days. I will over-write just to be sure there is no glitch with the NaNo word counter versus my own—I'm not "losing" this high-stakes game now because of a technicality!

For a long time it looked as though I could be done by the 23<sup>rd</sup>, then a few poorer output days pushed it to the 24<sup>th</sup>. Now I'll be grateful to finish on the 27<sup>th</sup>. My best output was day one, with 3,792 words; my worst, day nine (only 284 words!).

But numbers aside, what has this experience meant? Here's what I know today:

- I am most proud of the fact I wrote every single day. Now there is no denying that it is possible for me.
- I learned I was freshest and that the writing came easiest earlier in the day. When I couldn't get to the computer until evening, the writing was forced, and clunkier than usual. I was pooped, and it showed.
- That said, writing 284 clunky words every single day is better than sitting on my hands imagining I'm a writer and waiting for ideal conditions.
- It took a leap of faith to simply write—and not constantly edit. The minimal planning I did in late October shows. There isn't enough compelling action in this book, but that's okay. It's just the first draft. Someone once said that the only thing you can't fix is a blank page, and I'm counting on that. I'll have a helluva great start: 50,000-plus words. They simply can't be *all* bad.
- The NaNo team pep talks and videos were great. Because of geography I couldn't take advantage of any of the Edmonton write-ins, but did fine keeping myself going. The stat counter was my daily reward.
- I donated to the NaNoWriMo cause because I needed the good karma. It was a small price to pay for the experience and lasting benefits to me as a writer and a person. The bragging rights alone are worth it.
- There is NO downside to this experience whatsoever. For those who don't finish, every word written is just that: a word written.
- Kudos to those brave souls attempting this with a full-time job or children.



- My tweeting and blogging suffered all month, and I've got serious catch-up to do in reading my RSS feeds.
- During November I still managed to attend a conference, help facilitate a meeting for 50, visit my family, attend the local fireman's ball, keep appointments, and start a part-time job. Ah, real life.

After all that, getting 500 words written for you, dear reader, is a walk in the park, from where I sit.

## CHRONICLES OF CRUISCIN LAN

Wanda Waterman



### Mark your calendars:

The Voice will be taking a holiday break the week after Christmas—and our first issue of 2012 will be our popular annual “Best of The Voice” issue. More details to follow!

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



### At Home: Slackers Beware

Mind drifting at work? Easily distracted? Slackers, beware! Your boss may be watching—with a high-tech device that seems tailor-made for futuristic fiction.

As *The Globe and Mail* [reports](#), “Ontario nuclear plants are the first in their industry worldwide to test-drive a futuristic gizmo that measures employees’ concentration by reading brain waves.”

The device, which is small, portable, and “attaches via Velcro straps anywhere on your body,” measures its subject’s concentration level by “[using] the electric current released by neurons firing in the brain.”

Specifically, it monitors the waves created by brain activity. Subjects with a “higher . . . beta wave concentration [have a] higher . . . focus.”

Ontario Power Generation, which is implementing the device, feels that because of the volatility of nuclear power, “the imperative of teaching concentration is greater than ever.”

The technology was originally developed for use with ADHD children. It’s also been used with success for Olympic athletes and NASA employees.

### Around the World: Pass the Salt

Salt gets a bad rap, and it’s not entirely undeserved; research indicates that too much sodium can increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes. However, a new international study suggests that the opposite may also be true: insufficient sodium in our diets can cause us similar bodily harm.

As *The Globe and Mail* [reports](#), the study found that “people with a low salt intake had higher rates of cardiovascular death and hospitalization for congestive heart failure.” At the same time, the study confirmed earlier findings that excessive sodium consumption increased the risk of cardiovascular disease.

The results were unexpected, according to co-principal author Salim Yusuf. He told reporters that they “weren’t able to show” that “extreme salt reduction” would keep reducing the risk of heart disease and strokes.

The clear winner was moderation: those “who had moderate daily sodium intake—the case for a third to half of Canada’s population—[had] the lowest rates of heart attacks, strokes and heart failure.”

The study, which has been criticized by the Heart and Stroke Foundation, comes at a time when health care advocates are increasingly targeting salt as a villain. Yusuf, however, told reporters that the study is “challenging” the assumption “that the lower the sodium, the better it is for people.”

**AUSU UPDATE: October 21, 2011****Bethany Tynes, President****AUSU congratulates new party leaders!**

AU students are spread all over Canada and the world, but AU's funding comes from the Government of Alberta, so it's important for us, as AU students, to remain aware of political issues in Alberta. Alberta's political parties have recently undergone some transitions, as both the Progressive Conservative and Liberal parties recently elected new leaders: Dr. Raj Sherman will now head up the Liberal party, while Alison Redford has been selected to lead the Progressive Conservatives. Redford was sworn in as Premier of Alberta on Friday, October 7. AUSU would like to thank all those who participated in the leadership races, and congratulate Sherman and Redford on their wins.

**Councillors training to serve you better**

All eight current AUSU councillors, as well as our two full-time student service staff, are currently involved in a Certified Student Leader training program through the National Centre for Student Leadership. This training covers critical issues such as successful communication, strategic planning, and conflict resolution, which we hope will better equip us to work productively together to serve the needs of our student members.

**Increased student representation at AU**

At most Alberta universities, two of the highest decision-making bodies are the Board of Governors, which provides strategic direction, and the General Faculties Council, which deals with academic matters. At AU, meanwhile, there has always been a Governing Council and an Academic Council—until recently! The Alberta Minister of Advanced Education and Technology has amended the Athabasca University regulations, moving AU closer into line with other Alberta universities. AU's Governing Council has now been replaced by a Board of Governors, and while this is mostly a change in nomenclature, the transformation as AU moves from an Academic Council (AUAC) to a General Faculties Council (AUGFC) will be more noticeable. AUSU is particularly pleased that undergraduate students at AU will now have two seats on AUGFC, as opposed to only one on AUAC. There will also be a reserved space on the GFC Executive Committee for an undergraduate student representative. This is great news, and will allow us, as undergraduate students, to ensure that our voice is heard within this important decision-making body at AU!

**What are your course materials preferences?**

AU is currently re-examining their course materials model. Currently, the cost of all undergraduate courses includes access to the necessary textbooks, and these are usually mailed directly to your door. This is convenient for many students, but many others have asked for the opportunity to look for bargains elsewhere, or to buy and sell used textbooks. What about you? How do you feel about the course materials system at AU? AU is asking students for their opinion! The question currently being posed to students is as follows:

In response to student feedback, AU is considering changing the way in which students access or receive their learning resources. Currently, all the learning resources costs are covered through tuition fees and the learning resources fee. These costs include textbooks, printed materials, access to the LMS and other digital resources, copyright fees for third party materials, and the administrative costs associated with the production of such

materials. For items that a student could purchase directly from a source other than AU (e.g., books, e-books), which of the following options would you prefer?

- To purchase materials directly from a non-Athabasca University source such as Amazon
- To have the choice to purchase course materials from either AU or a different source such as Amazon
- To purchase course materials from AU but have the learning resources fee reflect the actual cost of the materials for the particular course (for example, if the learning resources in Course A cost \$100, then the learning resources fee would be \$100)
- The status quo (a fixed learning services fee per course –currently about \$170)

Email us your thoughts and we'll make sure that they're voiced in the appropriate committee!

### AU honorary doctorates

Did you know that AU bestows honorary doctorates each year at Convocation? Do you have an idea for someone you'd like to see honoured by the university? Candidates should "have distinguished themselves in education, science, the arts, public service, or other areas, and have made significant life-long contributions to endeavours consistent with the mandate and purpose of Athabasca University." AUSU has a seat on the committee that nominates and selects the recipients of honorary doctorates, so to have your voice heard, drop us an email with your thoughts!

### Have you heard . . .

. . . that we still have some of our awesome 2011 AUSU Handbook/Planners available? Some of the information in these little books is priceless when it comes to helping AU students navigate the university and our services—but they're free for you, just for being an AUSU member! We even mail them right to your door. All you have to do is ask!

. . . about our SmartDraw program? We've been arranging for a licence for our students to use this software for the last few years. It lets you create detailed charts and insert them into your assignments (even ones you submit as Word or PDF documents). The company has warned us, though, that there will be a massive price increase next year, so we want to know if our students feel that the software is a help to them, or if they'd rather have us look into other options. Get your copy today, and let us know what you think.

. . . there's a new AUSU website on the way? We want our site to provide dynamic content and updates so that it's a place that you, as an AU student, WANT to visit regularly! If you have suggestions on content you'd like to see on our website, please get in touch with us to share your ideas.

. . . AUSU has scholarships, awards, and bursaries for our student members? The next major awards deadline is November 1, but some bursaries are also available year-round. Make sure you check our site for more information!

### Get in touch with us

Have comments or questions about AUSU or anything in this column? Feel free to get in touch with AUSU President Bethany at [president@ausu.org](mailto:president@ausu.org). You can also email our office at [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) or call 1.800.788.9041 ext. 3413. We'd love to hear from you!

*This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. The Voice does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org).*



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## THE VOICE

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**Publisher** Athabasca University Students' Union  
**Editor-In-Chief** Tamra Ross  
**Managing Editor** Christina M. Frey

**Regular Columnists** Hazel Anaka, Katie D'Souza, S.D. Livingston, Wanda Waterman

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

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

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