

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 21 Issue 24 2013-06-28

Convocation

The graduates speak

Literary Games

Test your book skills

Peppe

True blue bohemian

*Plus:
In Conversation
From Where I Sit
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.



Re: "Convocation: the Graduates Speak," by Taurian Guinand, v21 i23 (2013-06-21)

It's inspiring to hear the thoughtful comments of a new graduate as he looks to the future and I want to thank you for providing this opportunity to enjoy my nephew's convocation address at Athabasca University this year. I was very disappointed that I was unable to listen to Taurian Guinand's remarks when they were live streamed on June 6th as I was in business meetings in Toronto at the time, and I am grateful to be able to read them now. As Taurian said, Athabasca U opens the door to higher education and infinite possibility for so many bright and talented minds.

We're thrilled to celebrate Taurian's accomplishment as a graduate of the Bachelor of Science (Human Science Major) with Great Distinction!

Lyn Brown (a very proud aunt) and Ray Brown (a very proud uncle)
Vancouver, BC

CONVOCATION: THE GRADUATES SPEAK

Melissa Mountain



Melissa Mountain graduated from Athabasca University this spring with her Master of Counselling degree. This address was given on Friday, June 7, 2013, as part of the Athabasca University Convocation ceremonies.

Mr. Chairman

Mr. President

Elected Officials

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Platform Party

Graduates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Welcome.

We are here today to celebrate the completion of our academic programs and the conferring of our degrees. Although we have come from many different locations and

for many different reasons we all chose to attend Athabasca University programs.

When I initially spoke of my plans to pursue an online distance education program I was met with support but I also received comments such as; “Does anyone ever finish those programs?”, “Why would you want to go to school alone?”, “Better you than me – I’d never have the discipline.” And, of course, the “How could you? - life is too busy already.”

Athabasca University’s approach to post secondary education, and OUR success, proves that students do finish, that online learning is accessible and effective, and dare I say, even enjoyable.

When I humbly accepted the invitation to deliver today’s graduation address my husband noted that I was giving up my favourite parts of a distance program. That today I could not just sit behind my computer in my basement home office.

Today I would have to arrive at a set place, at a set time, wearing something other than sweatpants, and I’d have to verbalize my thoughts not just type and spell check! That being said I would still not miss the opportunity to speak before you today.

For me, choosing Athabasca University’s Master of Counselling program was an obvious choice. Athabasca’s partnership with the Vancouver Art Therapy Institute meant that I could pursue both my Masters of Counselling and an Art Therapist designation. Although not everyone is looking for such a specialized program (there were only four students in my cohort), Athabasca’s partnerships with many

other institutions and organizations embodies the larger world we live in. Partnerships, shared ventures, and global connections are the norm for many professions. Placing students within a connected global arena at the onset of our learning prepares us for the expectations and realities of our future professions.

Distance learning eliminates the barriers of geography and class-time commitments. Online technology opens the doors for shared resources and seamless communication across time zones and land masses.

As students, with barriers eliminated and access opened, the rest was simply up to us. Just when we thought it may still be too overwhelming to continue we met our teaching assistants and our professors. Athabasca's teaching assistants and professors are not the usual brand of talking heads at the front of an overcrowded lecture hall.

Athabasca professors have the ability to, literally, read between the lines of our posts, to craft challenging, yet supportive and respectful, replies, and to help us bring forth our best, all without the aid of non-verbal cues or communication. How our professors knew when we needed a cheerful call or a smiley emoticon we'll never know!

Our assignments, group projects, papers, and exams required us not only to study but also to manage our life schedules, to juggle our priorities, to humbly accept help, to push ourselves, and to forgive ourselves. To our TA's and our professors, thank you for your support, wisdom, and your smiley faces.

Behind the scenes, many other Athabasca university personnel ensured our success. For some of us the staff in the tech department became our new best friends. Faculty administrators, librarians, researchers, the Deans of our faculties, and the students' unions all played a role as well.

We have our TA's and our professors to thank for helping us through the course curriculums. We have our classmates to thank for helping us through, well... just about everything else. Today may be the first time you have seen each other but it is certainly not the first time you have connected with each other. The perception that distance learning is impersonal or isolating is quite incorrect. Think of the time when a classmate's post helped you better understand the week's lessons, take a new perspective, or even just feel less alone in trying to meet the demands of school, work, and home. The shared dialogue between us created meaning and wisdom beyond the textbook knowledge and maintained our humanness throughout this stressful endeavour.

Within my program my classmates came from Alberta, Ontario, British Columbia, Japan, the Maritimes, Australia and, yes, even Saskatchewan. There were addiction counsellors, teachers, nurses, classroom aides and even a neuroscientist. Initially, we were just small pictures at the sides of a post, as the courses progressed we became



supports, confidants, and colleagues. Nothing warms your heart at 1 o' clock in the morning like seeing that one of your classmates is posting right alongside you. We saw each other fit class work in between employment demands, soccer lessons, and swim classes, as well as weddings, family holidays, and sadly, even a funeral. As I hope you have, not only did I gain an education I have gained lifelong friends. To our classmates turned friends thanks for being you and for accepting us.

Beyond our Athabasca community we had many other supports, although we sat alone at our computers this was far from a solo endeavour. To our moms, dads, spouses, sisters, brothers, and our own children, thank you for understanding. You inspired us to work hard on our own goals and forgave us when we couldn't work hard on your goals. Without your care and support we would not have discovered what we could accomplish or who we could become.

Graduates, just as Athabasca University became a leader in distance education; you have become role models and leaders as well. As Athabasca graduates you have joined the community of successful online learners as well the growing community of Athabasca Alumni. You are role models for your classmates, your families, and your communities. You now have the ability to use your expertise and education to become leaders in your workplaces and chosen professions, enriching the lives of others as your Athabasca university experience enriched your life.

Congratulations Graduates: Savour today's celebrations, lead from wherever you stand, and remember you CAN achieve your goals. Thank you.

CALGARY FLOOD UPDATE

AUSU and *The Voice Magazine* are deeply concerned about the flooding situation in Calgary and surrounding areas. Calgary has the single highest population of AU students anywhere, and AUSU estimates that close to 20 per cent of our total membership lives in areas affected by flood conditions (including students in Canmore, High River, and other ravaged areas).

We are currently assessing how this has affected our members and plan to offer some assistance once we have a better idea of students' needs. We will be communicating more information here and via our regular AUSU distribution channels over the coming weeks.

Additionally, assistance may be available to AU students who have lost their course materials. Contact AU at 1.800.788.9041 ext. 6366 for further information.

PEPPE VOTARELLI: TRUE BLUE BOHEMIAN

Wanda Waterman



Photo: Giada Ripa.

Pepe Voltarelli is an Italian singer-songwriter and accordion player noted as much for his searing social commentary as for his tender tributes to the people of his region, winning his songs the label “tarantella punk.” Singing in his native Calabrian dialect, he creates delightfully engaging songs that are somehow universally understood. Pepe will be performing at the Montreal International Jazz Festival on July 3 and 4 at the Savoy du Métropolis. Recently he took the time to share his history and personal aesthetic with Wanda Waterman.

What does it mean to be a true bohemian? The outer trappings are always changing— from gypsy garb to love beads to cross-dressing—and sadly, today’s true bohemian breeds tomorrow’s hordes of craven *poseurs*. That’s why it’s so refreshing to discover an entertainer who is so sure of himself and so creatively independent that his public persona seems absolutely natural, oozing bravado, pointing out hypocrisy while remaining somehow immune to it himself. Like Tom Waits, Voltarelli possesses the genius of being perfectly ironic without being arrogant, deeply emotional without bearing a trace of the maudlin.

Working Class Autodidact

Born in Cosenza, a city of about 100,000 people in the Calabria region of Italy, Pepe soon moved with his family to Mirto-Crosia, a small seaside town on the North Calabrian Jonio coast, where Pepe remained for almost 18 years.

“I came from a normal worker’s family,” he says. “My mother was a teacher and my dad a sports coach. It was a pretty happy childhood; I always had a passion for reading and there were a lot of books in the house.”

Getting into Music

When he was 11, Pepe started playing the guitar. He and a school friend got together to play music, soon creating. “I always loved the performances in school at Christmas,” he says.

“My family loved Italian music. One day my parents came home with a bag full of Peppino Di Capri and Fred Bongusto’s albums [Italian crooners from the ’60s]; Dad asked me, ‘Please, can you learn to play these songs?’ I was 12 or 13 years old but, at that time my favourite songs were by Lucio Dalla, Edoardo Bennato, and Francesco De Gregori, that kind of stuff.”

At 18, Pepe moved to Bologna to attend university. “In the ’80s, Bologna was a very important place for arts experimentation in Italy,” he says. “I took DAMS [*Discipline delle Arti della Musica e dello Spettacolo*], an undergraduate degree in music and theatre arts disciplines.”

In Bologna he had the opportunity to meet many musicians playing different genres, including folk, punk, jazz, and pop. This is also where he was introduced to the idea of mixing genres, a concept that led him to begin blending his own peculiar folk traditions, sung in the Calabrian dialect, with punk. His sensibility owed much to the punk stance of minimalism, reckless gusto, and social criticism, and just as much to his love for his culture and language: “I’m very proud of my language and its extraordinary strength of expression.”

Peppe has also acted in theatre and films (most recently *The True Legend of Tony Vilar*, by Giuseppe Gagliardi), exemplifying the same type of performance and persona he shows on the music stage. “My rhythm of acting is very spontaneous and direct,” he quite rightly discerns. “I try to work in this direction also with the music, creating a character that’s unique and original.”

He remains actively attached to the musical traditions of his country. “I love to sing in the little villages’ historical centres,” he says. “When I perform in these locations, I feel like my music and my voice descend from older generations of popular singers and performers. It’s a way of being at peace with my history and my people and of paying back what I owe them.”

“Peppe is a wonderful man—a true bohemian! He goes wherever his guitar takes him.”

Daniela Nardi, in an interview with Wanda Waterman

Roots of a Social Conscience

Peppe’s father was active in the Socialist party and sometimes Peppe would accompany him to events and meetings. Peppe retained a devotion to social concerns, one that only grew stronger over time.

“Italy 1990 there was a great student movement in the University called ‘La Pantera.’ That was when my way of thinking about art and music changed. Music is not just entertainment—it’s one path to freedom and social emancipation. I believe that music can help change the future of humanity, but we have to work on it.”

Peppe’s joining of art with activism is truly seamless. He even sees activism and social concern as catalysts for the creative impulse: “Seeking social justice is a great motivator for nonstop singing and writing.”

One of his most poignant and passionate songs, for example is “Marinai.” What inspired it? “Fishermen in my village,” says Peppe, “and their mystical relationship with the sea. I like the depth of their language, the secular sense of their work, and their ancient faith.”

On Canada

“Canada was one of the first countries outside of Italy where I had my album distributed (by the Casanostre label). I’m really fascinated by Quebec. On my last album I did a song called “Coup de Coeur in Montreal,” with a special guest, my friend Marco Calliari. I admire your great ability to blend together peoples and cultures of different origins and for your great attention to art and artists.”

IN CONVERSATION

Wanda Waterman

Elizabeth Shepherd

Elizabeth Shepherd is a jazz/soul pianist and singer. In 2006 her debut album, Start To Move, was voted one of the top jazz albums by listeners of the Gilles Peterson Show on BBC Radio Worldwide. She's toured the world and shared the stage with Christian McBride, Victor Wooten, and Branford Marsalis. Her latest album, Rewind, showcases her skills as a musical arranger and stylist as she covers some carefully chosen tunes. She'll be performing at the Montreal International Jazz Festival on June 30 and July 1 at the Savoy du Métropolis. Recently she took the time to share with Wanda Waterman about her past, her influences, and some little-known facts about the tradition of Salvation Army music.



Photo: Zuzana Hudackova.

Music the Only Constant

Elizabeth Shepherd was born in Winnipeg to Salvation Army ministers. The family left Winnipeg when she was just a toddler, and every few years would move to different locations in Canada and France. Changing cities naturally meant changing schools, churches, friends, and conservatories.

This frequency of life change may be disrupting, but it can be mentally stimulating for a child, as long as there are some stable conditions. “For me, music was the one constant,” says Elizabeth; “that and my family. But I always felt happiest and most ‘at home’ in Paris.”

Musical Nurturing in the Salvation Army

The family was very musical. With four church events, choir, junior band, music theory lessons, and conservatory, and surrounded by excellent musicians (“incredibly supportive, generous, and for the most part devoid of ego, which is rare among musicians,” she says), Elizabeth grew up with unique opportunities for nurturing her love, and natural affinity for, music. “If you were to draw a line from childhood into adulthood,” she adds, “it makes perfect sense that music would still be such an integral part of my life.

“In terms of jazz, there was no jazz in the house growing up; our household was basically split between classical music and Salvation Army music. For those not in the know, Salvation Army music is comprised of—for the most part—highly sophisticated, long-form compositions for [a] 30-piece brass band, drawing on the romantic and contemporary classical traditions.”

Despite the wealth of musical exposure she had growing up, Elizabeth insists that her most moving musical experiences involved listening.

"I feel jazz musicians often run the risk of letting their own flashiness and musical prowess interfere with the very basic and skilful art of interpreting a song, and remaining true to the essence of that song."

Elizabeth Shepherd

"From the time I was about two, I would spend hours listening to music with my father's oversized headphones. Before I even had the language, I was drawn to and fascinated by the details, subtleties, and counter melodies that I could detect."

The Jazz Shift

She also cites Kenneth Woodman, her piano teacher at McGill, as being one of her most important influences. "It may have been timing, but he was the one who really encouraged me to pursue what I wanted (which was to switch from classical piano to jazz), and he helped me get there, even though he himself stated that he

didn't know much about jazz. What I took from that encounter was the importance of following my heart."

What's her jazz era? "There are so many—the New Orleans roots are gloriously honest; the swing era feels great; be-bop is genius; the cool is just that. But I guess my favourite epoch (and this isn't exclusive to jazz) is the 1970s (Headhunters, Miles, Herbie, Freddie Hubbard) era. Like so much in the '70s, it felt like a time of really honest experimentation, where the mandate was to have fun, to dig deep and see where it would take you. There were no constraints on who the music was being made for, nothing overly cerebral. And I just love the aesthetic of the '70s."

On Arranging: Keep it Simple

"Generally speaking, I prefer to keep the arrangements fairly simple and minimal, in order to not take away from the song. I feel jazz musicians often run the risk of letting their own flashiness and musical prowess interfere with the very basic and skilful art of interpreting a song, and remaining true to the essence of that song."

On Audiences

"I do have to say that my recent tour of Mexico left me with a love of Mexican audiences. There seems to be a real sense of authenticity and a lack of artifice and the kind of irony that plagues northerners. It's not uncool to be sincere and to speak from the heart in Mexico, and that comes out in how the audience responds to the music.



Photo: Zuzana Hudackova.

It's beautiful."

Creative Inspiration and Spiritual Growth

Elizabeth is inspired by Akira Kurosawa's film *Dreams* and Wim Wenders' film *Wings of Desire*, as well as by Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* and the *Tao te Ching*. She's also creatively influenced by her personal spirituality, which influences her approach to her art.

"I believe in God, as mother. She's good to me and keeps me going. I'm aware of how dysfunctional and unjust our world is, and I feel the need to use my musical platform to try to bring some joy—something more beautiful human than the dominant madness."

What's next? "Musically, three albums—I've almost finished recording one, I'm partway through writing the other, and the third is still at the stage of idea—and personally, to find more balance."

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.

DID YOU KNOW?

Convocation



Here at *The Voice Magazine* we'd like to extend our heartiest congratulations to all new graduates! We wish you all the best as you take the next step in your educational or professional journey.

If you were unable to attend Convocation or your graduation is still far off and you want a preview of your own big day, Athabasca University's [Convocation page](#) is a good source of information about Convocation weekend.

Although videos from the 2013 ceremonies are not yet available, you can access [photo galleries](#) and [video coverage](#) from past years.

If you attended Convocation this year, whether in person or virtually, we want to hear from you! Contact us at voice@voicemagazine.org for further details.

And look for our continuing *Voice* coverage of Convocation this month. We'll have photos, addresses from graduates, and more!



Let the Games Begin

Ah, summer. Time for relaxing pursuits like reading on the beach or playing games at the cottage. For book lovers, there's an even better combination: games about all things literary. Kick off your sandals, pull up a deck chair, and get ready to challenge your novel know-how.

The best place to start is at the beginning—the very beginning, as in famous first lines. It Was a Dark and Stormy Night is a board game that tests your knowledge of opening lines from books. As the write-up at Good Reads Games explains, the game isn't just for devoted bibliophiles. Casual readers will have fun naming the title or author that belongs to the first line in categories that range “from novels to poetry, from mysteries to children's books, from science fiction to books made into movies,” and six more categories besides.

If your expertise runs more toward knowing miscellany like Jane Austen's only sister's name, there's the Pride and Prejudice Trivia game. With 300 trivia cards about the book and several bonus questions about the author, this board game should keep even the most diehard Austenite happy during a weekend at the cottage.

Of course, if you're a fan of Jane Austen you'll probably know that, like many other writers, she didn't start out publishing under her real name. But unlike Austen (whose name appeared on her books posthumously), many of those writers have only been published under their noms de plume. Who Am I? is a “name game of literary stars,” and it tests your knowledge of the authors behind real-life names like Howard Allen Frances O'Brien. Answer: Anne Rice, author of the *Vampire Chronicles* series.

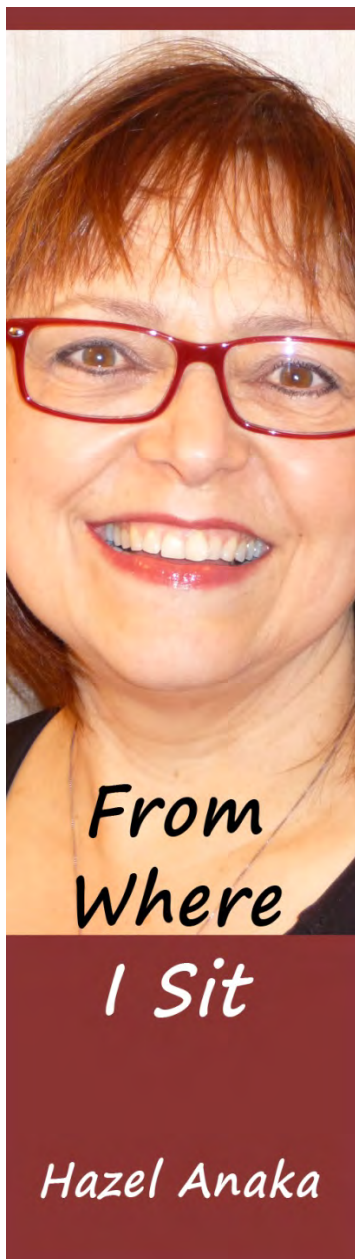
Younger readers can get in on the fun too, with Little Librarian. It's a kit made just for kids, and it's got “everything they need to transform their book collection into a library.” With book pockets, checkout cards, library cards, and other supplies, it's a great way to keep kids interested in reading this summer.

If you prefer your book quizzes online, you can sit on the deck and surf the trove of book quizzes on the *Guardian* site. Whether you know the names of every character in Roald Dahl's books, can quote DH Lawrence for days, or could navigate every nook and cranny of Tolkien's Shire, you'll find more than enough quizzes to while away a sunny afternoon.

And if playing all those games makes you hungry for a snack, why not enjoy a slice of book-themed cake--or at least a look at some? These 24 amazing creations should be more than enough to get you started.

The summer holidays are here. Grab your sunscreen and let the literary games begin.

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!).



It's So Easy

When one gets busy, it's so easy to forget and forego stuff. Important stuff like life lessons, good habits, and best practices. Stuff like taking time for friends and family.

Hard-won weight loss becomes a slippery slope when I forget that I can't have certain foods in the house. That for my health and well-being, the 24-pack of chocolate ice cream sandwiches needs to stay in the No Frills freezer section. Or that the more restaurant or "outside" food I eat, the more likely the pounds will creep back on.

As I get immersed, swamped with long to-do lists, outside commitments, and tight deadlines, the first thing to suffer is my diet. It's followed closely by regular exercise and personal hygiene.

You know things are getting bad when I tell you I can't afford the full two minutes to brush my teeth. Or when I rely on dry volumizing shampoo to give me an extra day between washes.

Touch wood, most nights I fall exhausted into bed and have a reasonably good sleep. But when my overactive mind won't turn off and I can't fall asleep, it's bad. Or when I wake at two or three and can't go back to sleep, and even an amethyst under my pillow doesn't help, it's bad. I don't function well the next day.

When my day includes two steps forward and one step back, when nothing goes right, I can picture the cortisol flooding my body. We know how destructive that stress hormone is, and how it promotes the accumulation of belly fat. Combine that with a lousy diet and too many hours sitting at the

computer, and it becomes a recipe for disaster. The stiff body aches. The stressed body is poised for fight or flight. The knots in my neck and shoulders grow. The pain in my forearms and hands intensifies.

Everything becomes magnified and so terribly important. When I stressed about my key role in a recent media event, my cohort reminded me that having faced the threat of cancer to his daughter's life helped him forever put things into perspective.

So I'm forcing myself to unclench. To set some limits on how much this job encroaches into my life. This morning I forced myself into runners and just walked for over an hour. I went for lunch and attended a grad party. I filled a vase with the irises that are almost done blooming and the peonies that look ready to burst. Yesterday I weeded a flowerbed. Days ago I took time to meet, for the first time, a dear friend, Sandra Livingston, who with her husband John was driving through Alberta. Laughing and catching up was just what the doctor ordered.

So instead of thinking that working longer, harder, and nonstop is the answer, I'm experimenting with the notion that being healthy, well rested, and balanced will serve me better in the long run. No job is worth losing my health or mind over, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is *Lucky Dog*. Visit her [website](#) or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

CLICK OF THE WRIST

Flood Advisory

With the flooding that has ravaged southern Alberta, including Calgary and surrounding communities, it's a good time to review flood safety and disaster preparedness. Whether you live in one of the affected communities or may face flood conditions or other natural disasters in your lifetime, check out these links—and stay safe!

Be Prepared

Floods, tornadoes, house fires, and severe storms can happen anywhere, and there's no better way to face disasters than by having a plan in place. This comprehensive website, administered by the Government of Canada, helps users learn the risks for their area, create an emergency plan in case of a natural disaster, and put together their own emergency preparedness kits.

Coming Home

If you've been evacuated due to flood conditions, here's what to expect when you come home—and how to keep safe as you try to put your life back to normal. This checklist from Alberta Health Services is a must-read.

Food and Flood

It's just water, right? Isn't food safe to eat after a flood has receded? Wrong—flood waters coming into contact with food can contaminate it and make it unsafe to eat. There's an exception for certain types of shelf-stable food, but it's very limited—and the containers must be carefully sanitized. Read this thorough document to learn how to safely deal with food after a flood.

In a Flash

Flash floods are common this time of year, when drought conditions meet sudden, violent storms. Did you know that half of all flood-related deaths occur when people try to drive through water covering the road? This podcast explains why it makes sense to "Turn around—don't drown."



COMIC

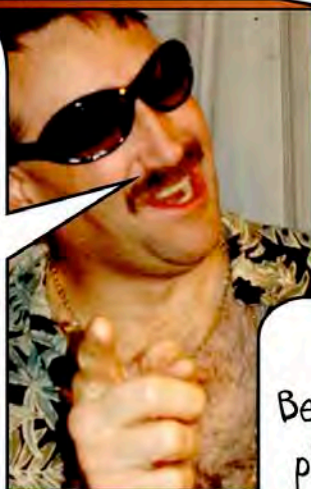
Wanda Waterman

CHAZZ BRAVADO IN: REACHING HIGHER

So I said, "Hey, Yer Honour, I just don't get why I'm here. What was my crime?"



In this world full of hate and fear and loneliness, I was just trying to connect!



Because that's my personal philosophy— spread that love around, I say! I was just trying to reach out!



Maybe I should have reached higher— and used both hands!"

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN WITH CREATIVE INPUT FROM BEN WATERMAN

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: A Real Arctic Adventure

Want to see the Arctic—without the artificiality of a traditional tour? Some tourists got a little more adventure than they bargained for when they found themselves floating on an ice floe in frigid waters north of Arctic Bay, Nunavut.

As the *Toronto Sun* [reports](#), the group of “tourists, hunters and Inuit guides” was “at a camp on the ice when it dislodged” from the shore. The ice floe floated out into open water.

Fortunately “a lucky change in wind direction” pushed the ice floe back toward solid land—twice. By early Wednesday morning, everyone from the group had made it safely back to land.

The Air Force dropped food and supplies to the survivors, but as of Wednesday the group was still “waiting to be picked up by police and military search and rescue crews.” Rescue operations have been slowed by the weather, which has created conditions making rescue very difficult.

The survivors soon will be back in Arctic Bay, but odds are they’ll never quite forget this Arctic vacation.

Around the World: Mummy Movement

Move over, spooky campfire tales; here’s a summer story that’s got plenty of chills. What’s more, it’s true!

As the *Huffington Post* [reports](#), a 10-inch statue that sat still in a British museum for 80 years has started to move.

The statue, which was found in an Egyptian mummy’s tomb and is believed to be 4,000 years old, “was originally an offering to the god Osiris.”

Although the statue remained peacefully at the Manchester Museum for nearly a century, the museum curator recently discovered that the statue had turned around. He told reporters that the artifact “is in a case and I am the only one who has a key.”

When the movement was repeated, staff set up security tapes on time-lapse video. The result “shows the statue moving without the help of humans.”

While some speculate that visitors’ movement around the glass case is causing subtle movements, others point to the suddenness of the movement and the path the statue takes as conflicting with the theory.

Curse or not? Check out the video for yourself!

AUSU UPDATE



Dear Members,

You may have recently seen information on the internet speculating about the future of Athabasca University. These reports suggest that the Alberta government may broker a merger between AU and University of Alberta, and that this may result in drastic changes to the services and programs offered to students AU students.

We want you to know that AUSU is aware of these rumours and is actively investigating the source – we will keep you informed as we know more.

We can tell you that AU is governed via a bicameral structure with two main governing bodies: the General Faculties Council (formerly Academic Council) and the Board of Governors (formerly Governing Council). AUSU has representatives on both of these governing bodies and we can confirm that there has been no formal discussion of a university merger among these groups. The AU president, Frits Pannekoek, has also assured the press that there is no truth to the rumour. On behalf of our members, we are seeking more information from the Board of Governors, the minister, and AU executives.

At this time we simply have no evidence that a merger is being seriously considered by AU, the U of A, or the Alberta government, and we note that among the many committees and working groups of AU, planning and development for the future continues as usual.

We know that our members are worried and want more information. We will update you as soon as we know more. At this time we do not feel there is any reason for students to worry or make changes to their study plans.

Do not hesitate to contact our office if you wish to talk about this or any other issue affecting AU students.

AUSU.

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.

CLASSIFIEDS

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THE VOICE

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