

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 26 2014-06-27

## Transfer Credit Treasure, II

Get the Most From What You've Got

## Photo Feature, II

The Road to Convocation

## In Conversation

Michael Gauthier

*Plus:*

*From Where I Sit*

*Dear Barb*

*and much more!*



Skills Transfer



Part 2

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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

Karl Low



## Hiatus Corpus

Just a reminder, this issue is going to have to last you two weeks, as I've been told that I'm required to take a vacation every once in a while by Alberta Law. Fortunately, for you and me, the week that I'll be missing contains Canada Day, the Fourth of July, and, if you're here in Calgary, the start of the Calgary Stampede. So this means I'll at least get to see a whirl of fireworks, a parade or two, and William Shatner. If you're not in Calgary, you'll still get the fireworks, and maybe a parade, but probably no Shatner. Whether that's a good thing or not I'll leave up to you.

Of those, Canada Day is the one I most look forward to. I have an inordinate amount of gratitude about being Canadian, we've developed a society that shares the best out of a lot of worlds, and I think that's something we should be proud of a little more often than one day a year. But at least for that one day each year, I get to get out and see a lot of other Canadians who feel the same as me. Do yourself a favour on Canada Day, don't stay inside watching the show in Ottawa on the television. Record it and fast forward through it later so that you can skip some of the bad entertainment and worse speeches. Instead, spend the day getting

out and picking up the energy of the day and the crowds at the various celebrations that are going to be going on, and get a better sense of the real Canadian pride that exists. And if you're in Calgary, who knows, maybe we'll say hello and never know it.

But if you're not out celebrating, then at least you'll have this issue of The Voice to keep you busy. This week, Barbara Lehtiniemi finishes up her article on getting the most out of the education you already have. Also, Wanda Waterman gets an interview with Michael Gauthier, a jazz guitarist who teaches at the University of McGill. If you like jazz at all, this is a definite must-read. And if you don't think you like jazz, then you might want to go [here](#), and see if you change your mind after listening to some of his music. At worst, you'll find some music that's great to have as background while you're studying.

We also have the second part of our photo feature, and honestly, the staff sent so many interesting photos that once I get back, I'm going to do a third part to let everybody see some of the things that they didn't see if they watched the convocation through the stream. For instance, did you know that at convocation, AUSU, the AUGSA, and a lot of the faculty associations have booths there with various AU merchandise? Or that AU sponsors a light lunch with lots of goodies and desserts? No? Well you'll be able to see it in our July 11<sup>th</sup> edition. After all, who doesn't enjoy a bit of food porn now and then?

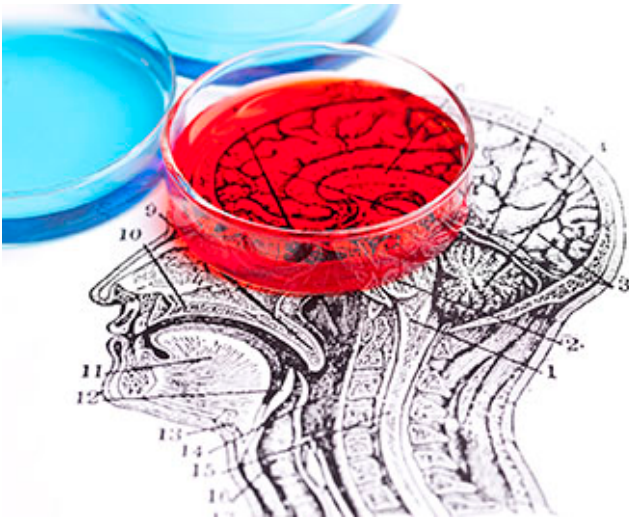
This week, we also have an interview with two of AU's recent graduates. Read in their words what they found best and worst about their AU and convocation experiences. You can also celebrate Canada Day here with both the Writer's Toolbox and the Click of the Wrist, looking at some of the things that make us Canadian, whether it's our flag or our toques, or Timbits.

So until the 11<sup>th</sup>, have a great couple of weeks!

## Primal Numbers

### Robo-Crop

S.D. Livingston



From HAL 9000 in *2001: A Space Odyssey* to the machines in *The Matrix*, we've always feared a future where robots are in charge. We envision a violent, sterile world, in which human emotion is the only way to restore peace and harmony. Yet, as recent events remind us, artificial intelligence can sometimes be more caring than the human kind.

Human nature is, of course, an incredibly complex thing. The species that created the sublime beauty of Michelangelo's *David* and Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* is the same one responsible for the Rwandan genocide. There is no pre-set dosage for

good and bad traits, no perfect combination of compassion and ruthlessness.

So far, this unpredictable jumble of behaviour has been all we've got, and it hasn't always served us well. Nor does it always serve those who've been most dependent on the kindness of human caretakers, such as the cows at Canada's largest dairy farm, Chilliwack Cattle Sales.

These animals suffered horrific abuse at the hands of eight people. And as the CBC [reports](#), the farm's management allegedly knew but did nothing to stop it.

And the abuse at Chilliwack Cattle is not the rare event that most of us would like to pretend. A look at recent [investigations](#) by Mercy for Animals Canada proves that, as a species, we haven't come as far as we'd like to think. True, there are many farmers and breeders that care for their animals well. But it's hard to ignore the fact that those shocking undercover videos only represent the findings of one small organization in one country.

But then, in sharp contrast, comes the news of a dairy farm with robots in charge. Not in charge, perhaps, since the farm's owners are decidedly human. As the CBC [reports](#), though, everything from milking to feeding is handled by robots, with the cows being "taught to enter one of six robotic pens when they are ready to be milked, whether that's mid-morning or in the middle of the night."

With the help of a laser, the robotic milker can identify the unique udder of every cow. It can also test the milk and act as an early-warning system, sending a text message "when a cow shows early signs of illness or is ready to become pregnant."

All of this relies, of course, on the humans who oversee the robots. But short of machine breakdowns or software glitches, the robots pose no deliberate threat to the animals. Electronic arms won't beat them with rakes, won't kick or punch them or tie chains around their necks to drag them when they're injured and in pain.

Clearly, we don't want a world devoid of living contact. Animals and humans alike are social creatures. We need physical contact to thrive.



Yet sometimes, as the events at Chilliwack Cattle show, the cool, impersonal touch of a robot can be far more comforting than the touch of a human hand.

We may never find that elusive balance, that stage of evolution where our crueler instincts are a thing of the past. And robots are hardly a perfect answer, since they can't (at least not yet) replace the positive side of human contact.

But I'm still glad HAL refused to open that pod bay door.

*S.D. Livingston is the author and creator of the Madeline M. Mystery Series for kids, as well as several books for older readers. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing.*

## Click of the Wrist

## Maple Leaf Forever

**Maybe you'll proudly be flying the Canadian flag this weekend, but how much do you know about its history and use? This week's links will get you up to speed on your heritage:**

### Many Flags

Has it always been the maple leaf? No! In fact, Canada's flown many flags before the one we know today. Check out this sampling for a quick history lesson.

### Right and Wrong

Did you know that you should never fly a faded flag? That when the Canadian flag passes, you should face it respectfully? That there's a particular size ratio that the flag must follow? This handy list of dos and don'ts will ensure proper flag etiquette.

### Ask the People

Canada didn't get its current flag until almost a century after it became a nation. But choosing a flag wasn't that easy. This entertaining article showcases some of the rejected designs (including one featuring the Beatles!).

### Flying the Digital Flag

If all this talk about flags has you feeling somewhat patriotic and you want something to put on your blog or a new avatar for your forum postings, a good place to start for a Canadian flag image is, appropriately enough, the Canadian Flag Clip-Art Gallery.



## Writer's Toolbox

### Uniquely Canadian

Christina M. Frey



Next week we'll celebrate Canada's 147th birthday—and revel in all things uniquely Canadian. But our uniqueness is not just about poutine, ketchup chips, and the vast superiority of Tim Horton's. Canada also has its own distinct style for grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling. Let's take this time to celebrate our differences!

### Canadian Spelling

Americans often think that Canadians use British spelling; British, that we follow American conventions. But Canadian spelling is its own thing. While Canadian English follows some British spellings (for example, both British and Canadian English use *labour* rather than *labor*), it also uses some US spellings (for example, British English's *specialised* versus *specialized* in US and Canadian English). And then there are compound words, expressions, and other phrases where Canadian spelling differs from both British and US spelling.

Getting Canadian spelling right is challenging for most Canadians, even those who work with words. There's no substitute for a good dictionary; I recommend *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (affectionately known as *Canox*). Train yourself to pick out words and phrases that might receive a different treatment in Canada, like words that are spelled differently in British or US English, and double-check for accuracy. Hyphenated expressions are also sometimes punctuated differently (for example, "daylight saving time" in Canada is often written "daylight-saving time" in the US).

### Words of Our Own

Obviously Canadians are known for their multipurpose *eh*, but there are other words that we use that might stump non-Canadian English speakers. For example, Americans might not know what *serviettes* are, and they use *sled* and *hat* instead of *toboggan* and *toque*.

When I moved to the US 12 years ago, I had some fun with this. I also discovered that few outside Canada know what Timbits are. Their loss.

### Style Guides

Canadian organizations may still follow Chicago or AP style, but some follow CP (Canadian Press) style and others a hybrid. Generally speaking, consult the Bureau of Translation's *The Canadian Style* and the Editors' Association of Canada's *Editing Canadian English*, both excellent resources on Canadian spelling, usage, and style conventions. You can also freely search the online version of *The Canadian Style*.

Have a safe and happy holiday weekend!

*Christina M. Frey is a book editor, literary coach, and lover of great writing. For more tips and techniques for your toolbox, follow her on Twitter (@turntopage2) or visit her [blog](#).*

## Transfer Credit Treasure It's Worth Digging For - Part II

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Last week's article reviewed where AU has buried information about undergraduate transfer credits on their website. Like many university websites, finding the information you need takes a bit of digging, but it's (usually) all there. In the case of transfer credits, the effort is worth it if you think you have even one course that may be accepted at AU for transfer credit.

Ready to dig for transcript credit treasure? A summary of the steps to apply for transfer credit at AU follows:

### 1. Read the instructions.

Don't skip this step. Read everything you can

find on AU's site about transfer credits.

### 2. Enrol in a program.

Log in to your AU student account through [myAU](#) and click on "Change Your Program" under the heading "Manage Your Program." When filling out the online application, you'll be asked "Would you like AU to evaluate your previous education for transfer credit?" Click on "yes" and have your credit card ready for the one-time non-refundable evaluation fee, which is currently \$100.

*(Editor's Note: Again, a warning, any time you change your program you're signing up to fulfill the **current** requirements of the program, which may not be the same as when you first enrolled.)*

### 3. Request transcripts from your previous institutions.

Make sure these are sent directly to AU from the issuing institution, following the instructions in the [Undergraduate Calendar](#). Expect to pay a fee to the issuer. I paid \$15 but the fee varies widely between institutions.

### 4. Wait.

Expect to wait 8 to 10 weeks at least (I waited 11 weeks in early 2013.) Check for progress under "Check Your Program Admission Status" in [myAU](#) to monitor progress and find the results of the evaluation. When the message "your transfer credit evaluation is now complete" appears on the Admission Status page, you can click on the transfer credit report to see the results of the evaluation. Next to each of the courses listed on the assessment report you'll find information on if and/or how your course was accepted for AU credit. Courses that have been accepted for AU transfer credit will show the number of credits, the area of study, and the equivalent AU course, if applicable. If zero credits appear next to the course, read the description column to find out the reason why it wasn't accepted. In some cases, AU requires more information to evaluate the course. If you have any questions about your transfer credit assessment, follow the link at the top of the report to contact a [student advisor](#).



### 5. Follow up with course outlines.

If, on your Transfer Credit report, the notation "Require Outline" appears next to one of your courses, then AU does not have sufficient information to evaluate that course. If you didn't keep, or can't locate, your course outlines, contact the educational institution where you took that course to request the specified outline(s) making sure that the outlines are from the year you took the course (as indicated on the Transfer Credit report from AU.) Mail copies to AU to the address specified in the Undergraduate Calendar, remembering to keep copies for your own files.

### 6. Wait more.

AU doesn't specify how long this process usually takes, but I waited a reasonable four weeks to have my course outlines evaluated. Once the evaluation is complete, you'll receive a letter from AU's Office of the Registrar. You'll still need to log in to your AU student account and click on "Check Your Program Admission Status" then "Transfer Credit" to see the results. You can also access "Degree Works" to see how your credits fit into your selected program.

The above is a simplified summary of the steps involved. In all cases, abide by the information provided by Athabasca University when applying for transfer credit or when registering in a program.

Remember, if you get any of your previous courses accepted at AU for transfer credit, you'll save time and money as your work towards your degree. Some universities will not even consider granting transfer credits for courses taken at other educational institutions. Transfer credit is something that AU gets right.



## The Mindful Bard

Wanda Waterman

### Japan's Compact Jazz Powerhouse Swings Like Nobody's Business



**Album:** Alive

**Artist:** Hiromi

"I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity."

- Billy Joel

"Occasionally in life there are those moments of unutterable fulfillment which cannot be completely explained by those symbols called words."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

I remember an English professor at Dalhousie who taught us that if we had a thought that we couldn't put into words, perhaps we should consider that it wasn't really a thought. At the time this made perfect sense. But although it was a great way to push us to become

better writers, time and experience later taught me that some thoughts and feelings run too deep for words. Nothing illustrates this better than the music of Hiromi.

Pianist and composer Hiromi Uehara famously pointed out that the deepest things are often better said without a voice, and her recordings provide a mountain of evidence. Her compositions and performances draw up audible treasures as if from the bottom of a fairy sea, wonders that awe and fascinate, and yet seem strikingly familiar.

How did she get here? A formidable talent, the best of musical educations, and herculean efforts. Hiromi was born in Shizuoka, Japan in 1979 and began piano studies at the age of 6. By the age of 17 she'd performed with the Czech Philharmonic. She'd also embraced a host of musical styles and genres; her 2003 recording debut was one of the most delicious smorgasbords of late jazz imaginable.

Just a few seconds into the album and you're blown to the sky—it's reminiscent of the opening of Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*—and it just keeps getting better, every corner turned revealing a new delight.

She doesn't quite play Winton Marsalis's "all of jazz," but I think it's safe to say she plays every genre that's emerged since the fifties. Thus we find swing ("Seeker"), barrelhouse ("Spirit"), fusion, bebop ("Player"), prog rock (title track), soul, and perfume-and-rain jazz ("Firefly"), all of it fresh, original, spirited, and expertly executed.

As on her previous album, *Voice*, there are no voices. She's again joined by bassist Anthony Jackson (who's played for Paul Simon, The O'Jays, Steely Dan, and Chick Corea) and drummer Simon Phillips (who's worked with Toto, The Who, Judas Priest, David Gilmour, and Jack Bruce). These musicians were entirely her choice as opposed to the decision of some recording executive. She confesses to loving bass and you can feel it in her music—how the piano sits on the bass line like a racehorse, steering it while letting it carry her. (Don't miss the great walking bass line on "Player.")

You get your money's worth; these are all long tracks and they're so chockful of joy you're glad they don't cut off before Hiromi has exhausted a fair bit of the musical possibilities of the themes she's set up.

The track titles are all nearly all names of archetypes, e.g. "Wanderer," "Dreamer," "Seeker," and "Player," so it all sounds like a hero journey. I think Joseph Campbell would say that the golden bowl is floating upstream.

*Alive* manifests four of the Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth a listen.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It stimulates my mind.
- It provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
- It makes me want to be a better artist.

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.

## In Conversation With Michael Gauthier, Part I

Wanda Waterman



### Organically Honing the Art of Jazz

"One of the things I like about Jazz, kid, is I don't know what's going to happen next. Do you?"

- Bix Beiderbecke

"Ahhh, those Jazz guys are just makin' that stuff up!"

- Homer Simpson

*Michael Gauthier is a Montreal-based musician who teaches jazz guitar at the University of Montreal and at McGill University. A fixture of the Montreal jazz*

*scene, his memory houses a vast and irreplaceable knowledge of the history of jazz in Montreal since the sixties. Recently he took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about improvisation, reading music, and jazz and blues as folk genres.*

### How is teaching guitar at McGill different from teaching at the University of Montreal?

McGill is a little narrower than the University of Montreal when it comes to playing strictly jazz. It's like, if you don't love traditional jazz, all of jazz up until today, what are you doing at McGill? The University of Montreal has a bit more latitude.

The students who apply to McGill come from all over; Americans, all of English Canada—including all of English Quebec—and every country in the world will apply to McGill. They have a much bigger applicant base so they can afford to be selective, whereas the University of Montreal gets applicants from French-speaking Quebec, and then *maybe* France, Haiti, Vietnam, Algeria, and that's about it. Their applicant base is much more limited because there are a lot fewer French speakers in the world than English speakers.

### Where are you most comfortable—with traditional jazz or with music that admits multiple genres?

I'd have to say I'm more comfortable with more traditional, history-oriented jazz. That's not to say that I'm more comfortable at McGill; at any university there's more than one guitar teacher, so at the University of Montreal those who want to learn the more conventional thing will opt to study with me, but those who want to go slightly out of the jazz box would opt to study with somebody else.

There are teachers here in Montreal who've done work with Cirque du Soleil and are very good readers. They'd never hire me to do something like that because when they'd put a chart in front of me I'd look at it and say, "Let me take that home for a while." In my system of jazz teaching you learn by ear, above and beyond anything else. A lot of the great jazz players, then, and now, could not—and cannot—read music.

**Really? Can't most jazz players at least read a melody well enough to play around with it?**

Most, yes. But many of the really great players couldn't read. Think of it this way—if you can't read music you can really hone your retention abilities.

**You see this among illiterate people, too. Many of them have an amazing ability to quote things they've heard, verbatim.**

Most people here in Quebec today have to go through the CEGEP system to get into university, so they all learn how to read fairly young, but it's amazing how they're book and sheet dependent and how difficult it is for them to learn a tune by heart. From the internet you can download sheet music and tablature, and that's been available for a couple of generations now.

I've always tried to avoid that. My music reading ability is limited, but I don't have a complex about it; I want to look at blues and jazz as folklore music, which I think, ultimately, they are.

Jazz has become an academic music. Before the forties it wasn't in the schools at all, and in Quebec it wasn't in the schools before the seventies. So before then you had to learn it in the clubs, on the streets, by hanging around with other musicians, and by listening to records and trying to figure it out by yourself.

**So it was like play, even though you worked hard at it.**

Yeah. And you know it's been amazingly fun. It's like learning a language by going and living in that land instead of downloading Rosetta Stone. On the other side of the mirror, I wish I could read better. I guess some people—the extremely gifted ones—have it all, but if I have to make a choice? I choose my ears and better retention over high reading skills.

For a classical musician it's the opposite. He or she needs reading desperately. If you have a concert tomorrow you're not going to try to memorize the score tonight—you have to have the sheets. And for them it's not about improvising anyway.

**Jan Wouter Oostenrijk, a jazz guitarist from the Netherlands, pointed out that most music in world history has been improvised—the Western classical tradition of performing from reading sheet music is actually the anomaly.**

Improvising makes it personal. It might be a bit of a negative view, but no matter how great you are as a classical musician, you're just proving how great the composer is. You're not saying much about you.

**You hear a lot about musicians who grow up playing jazz and yet who later in life have no problem picking up Bach and Beethoven. But it's rare for a classically trained musician to be able to pick up jazz later in life. Why is that?**

They just can't cross over. Jazz musicians have honed their skills in a more organic way.

*(to be continued)*

*(Author's Note: In the last issue, in the article "In Conversation With Luc Déry of micro\_scope," we would like to apologize for a couple of errors. At one point in the text, the name is written as "Luke" when it should be "Luc." In another paragraph we call it "micro\_scope Films;" the name is simply "micro\_scope.")*

## Convocation Interviews



## Intrepid Staff

*At Convocation, AUSU's intrepid staff sought out various graduates to get short interviews from them about their convocation and AU experience for the Voice. This week, we present the interviews from Graduates Rocco Addaboo and Annet Chu*

### ***What program did you graduate from?***

Rocco: Graduated from Bachelor of Management

Annet: Master of Arts Integrated Studies - Cultural and Educational Studies

### ***Did your faculty have any special programs in place for graduation? and if so did you attend them?***

Rocco: Faculty of Business did have special programs but I did not attend due to prior commitments.

Annet: No, they didn't.

### ***Do you have any praise, complaints, and/or suggestions for improvement about convocation?***

Rocco: I thought it was a very well planned and special day for all involved. Each and every individual at AU made me feel very good about graduating. I am very glad that I made the trip to convocation 2014.

Annet: It was well organized and I was very impressed with how professional it was. The shuttle service from Edmonton to Athabasca was a nice ride. The meals were good to have as well though I'd have preferred more vegetarian options.

### ***Have you made use of the student union before convocation? (for advice, help with tutor or course issues, entering AUSU email contests)***

Rocco: I reached out to AUSU once previously for a course issue and it was solved quickly. I did not enter any AUSU email contests.

Annet: No.

### ***Do have any praise, complaints, and/or suggestions for improvement for AUSU?***

Rocco: AUSU definitely was very helpful as I organized my trip to Athabasca for convocation. Someone always returned my email promptly with the information I had requested regarding hotel and shuttle service. I appreciated the van shuttle from Edmonton to AU. Now that I have been there, I definitely was able to relax coming to AU, enjoy convocation and cherish time spent talking with other students and family that was on the shuttle with us. Even as convocation has come to a close I still am in contact with AUSU regarding website video access.

Annet: Nothing comes to mind.

### ***What made you choose AU?***

Rocco: I chose AU for the flexibility of taking courses on my time with no disruption to family and work life. I started out in a certificate program that I completed in 2006.

Annet: The online nature and flexibility of the courses



***Do have any praise, complaints, and/or suggestions for improvement for AU?***

Rocco: My only suggestion would be to ensure tutors be more flexible when a student requires help. There were a few classes in which it was difficult for a tutor to call back in a timely fashion and it only prolonged my course completion. Most course tutors were great and very helpful.

Annet: It's good post-secondary that allows those who cannot leave their homes to study.

***Lastly we would love to hear your reflections on your life as a distance student. The challenges you faced throughout your time with AU, how AU has helped pave your path to success, and if AU can continue to influence your path to success.***

Rocco: Being an AU distance student required much dedication. It prepared me with time management skills and ensuring certain deadlines were met to ensure course completion. It was challenging to maintain the dedication throughout but my goal to graduate .. that was what kept me moving along to ensure that I completed my courses on time.

I started out at AU with a certificate in Computing and MIS. I just used that as a tool to motivate me to step higher and obtain that degree that I always wanted to complete. Now that I have reached that goal, I plan to take a short break and look into the MBA program.

I must admit watching all the MBA graduates at convocation made me think that perhaps that is my next challenge. I spoke with a few of them and they all suggested that I follow my dreams if that is what I want to do.

I also praise AU to anyone that I have come in contact with that has inquired. I can say truthfully that I have convinced two people to take courses at AU, both successful at finishing their courses in the past. I will continue to tell people about AU and the benefits that it provided me over the years during my studies.

Annet: The fact that the program is not cohort based allowed more flexibility.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**Free Pancake Breakfast in Edmonton!**



If you haven't noticed in the past few issues, the Distinctive Employment Counseling Services of Alberta (DECSA) is having a free pancake breakfast on July 9th, 2014 up in Edmonton. DECSA is a community based, non-profit organization that assists individuals with employment barriers to achieve paid employment. DECSA works collaboratively to overcome barriers to employment in a changing world. It seeks to be inclusive in all of its programs by accommodating both cognitive and physical disabilities and central to DECSA's mandate is to accept and include people with disabilities.

The group also runs programs to help people with various challenges to start and maintain their own businesses, to help people who have been the victims of sexual exploitation, and to work with practicum students from colleges and universities around Edmonton. They are also open to placements from AU if any students are looking for help or opportunities.

The breakfast is free for all who can attend, and is being held on Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 from 7:30am to 10:30am at 11515-71 Street, Edmonton, AB. Breakfast includes pancakes, eggs, sausages, juice, and coffee, and there will be games and activities for the children.

No matter the weather, if you're in the Edmonton area, take advantage to get some food and find out more about this organization that's helping people succeed.

**Photo Feature****The Road to Convocation**

**This week, we'll look more at the research centre. As you can see to the right, both small and large minds are made at home here.**



**Art inside the research building, to keep minds active even when walking around.**





But the Convocation action all happens over at the Multiplex



One of spaces inside the research building. This could be where a revision to your course was initially thought of.





Arrive early enough in the morning, and enjoy a delicious breakfast with friends, family, and other graduands



Okay, it may not be the healthiest breakfast ever, but hey, free food, right? We kid, they had some healthier choices (like fruit) as well.





But soon enough, it's time to head into the ceremony.



It all starts with the guests of honour, the graduands.



Followed by faculty and board members entering the room





Speeches are made from various people of import and insight, they were streamed live on the day, and it's hoped AU will put up the recordings as they did before. If they do, you'll be able to find them at: <http://convocation.athabascau.ca/videos/index.php>



Next time, we'll see what else was going on in the multiplex surrounding convocation.



## GIWIST

For every person who's ever felt hopelessly out of the loop because she doesn't understand what those young kids are always doing on their phones, take heart. For those employers who resent the lost productivity when staff members steal time to update their status, tweet, and post, take heart. For those parents who despair that they will never again have a meaningful conversation with their children, take heart.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has spent countless time and taxpayer dollars to create an eighty-three-page document translating 3000 Twitter-type phrases and shorthand. Some of the shorthand is so long and undecipherable as to be useless. Some is used so infrequently as to be pointless. Some is short form for hopelessly outdated expressions: BTDTGTSAWIO (been there, done that, got the t-shirt and wore it out).

Imagine this conversation: That is a BOGSAT (bunch of guys sitting around talking). DILLIGAD (does it look like I give a damn?) No, but you know I ALOTBSOL (always look on the bright side of life). Hell, yeah, going through life with an E2EG (ear to ear grin).

Or a clandestine online relationship: What are you doing? I'm NIFOC (naked in front of computer). Does that mean what I think it means? IITYWIMWYBMAD (If I tell you what it means will you buy me a drink?) Oh, you make me LMSO (laugh my socks off)! BTWITIALWY (by the way, I think I am in love with you). Or at least BFFLUDDUP (best friends for life until death do us part). Later, SOMSW (someone over my shoulder watching).

YKWRGMG (you know what really grinds my gears)? Goofy projects that waste money. Not knowing all the acronyms. Not having the time to engage in these frivolous time-wasters myself.

Perhaps this is simply the most recent example of how sub-groups of people create their own language. Teens do it to eke out privacy and create distance from their parents. Criminals do it to thwart police through coded communications. The language of adulterers attempts to keep secrets; titillation is simply a sexy by-product.

Most fields of endeavor have their own jargon or insider language. This type of shorthand presumably saves time and builds camaraderie and teamwork. For those outside the circle it is also exclusionary; the inside joke. It takes time and effort to decode and learn the acronyms. I remember being shocked to learn that medical people talk about dying patients as 'circling the drain.' Yet that black humour is likely just what's needed at the end of a tough shift.

FCOL (for crying out loud) I just wish we were BFF (best friends forever) who could ETW (enjoy the weekend). Instead we're stuck here answering FAQ (frequently asked questions) because if we left it to Bob with his BAM (below average mentality) it would be the EOTWAWKI (end of the world as we know it).

In a world of misinformation and disinformation most days I consciously attempt to clarify BAMN (by any means necessary). Other times it's just GIWIST (gee, I wish I said that), FWIS (from where I sit).

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



*Dear  
Barb*

*Barbara Godin*

## On the Darker Side

**Dear Barb:**

*I have just finished my B.A from Athabasca. It was great having six months to complete my courses instead of four, as I suffer from depression and some days I can't even get out of bed. Now that it's done I want to get out and find work; however this depression is really affecting my life. I haven't discussed this with anyone, my parents don't even know. I really don't want to go on anti-depressants, as I have heard the side effects are pretty brutal, including suicidal thoughts. I don't want to make myself any worse. Not sure where to turn.*

**Sad in Calgary!**

Hey there Sad:

Congratulations on finishing your degree, especially while battling depression. Depression can be caused by a variety of things, including physical illness. If you haven't had a complete physical recently, including blood work, this would be the place to start. Physical illness such as hypothyroidism, an illness of the thyroid gland, could mimic the symptoms of depression. Once you have addressed your physical health, your doctor may prescribe antidepressants or refer you to a psychologist. Often depression is the result of a chemical imbalance in the brain. Don't be fearful of treatment, your symptoms will not improve without help. Many people who suffer from depression are successfully helped through the use of antidepressant drugs.

**Dear Barb:**

*My father recently passed away from a long battle with cancer. When my sister and I were quite young my mother passed away, so dad was our only parent. My sister did not get along with dad and once she left home she rarely visited him, even when he became ill. My wife and I were the main caregivers for dad throughout his long illness. In his final days Dad often expressed his desire to see Lisa. I tried to get her to visit Dad, but she ignored my request and did not visit during the last weeks of dad's life. Following dad's passing we discovered he had a huge sum of money in a bank account and I was left as the sole beneficiary. I don't know whether I should tell my sister about this money or keep it a secret. My sister was left a small insurance policy. Not sure what to do, Daniel.*

Hey Daniel:

First I would like to say sorry for your loss. The loss of a parent, especially the last parent, can be very difficult. I really don't think you have an obligation to tell your sister of your inheritance; however you may want to share this information with her for fear it will come out at some point and cause problems between the two of you. Ultimately the final decision is up to you.

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



Comic

Wanda Waterman

# Weird Canada

## CANADIAN "POPE"

FOR FORTY YEARS JEAN-GASTON TREMBLAY LEAD THE APOSTLES OF INFINITE LOVE, A BREAKAWAY CATHOLIC CULT HOUSED IN A CLOSED COMMUNITY 130 KILOMETRES NORTHWEST OF MONTREAL. WHILE SERVING AS THE CULT'S LEADER, TREMBLAY DUBBED HIMSELF POPE GREGORY XVII.

ALTHOUGH MANY CRIMINAL CHARGES WERE LAID AGAINST TREMBLAY, AND ALTHOUGH 14 FORMER MEMBERS OF HIS CULT NOW RECEIVE FINANCIAL COMPENSATION FROM QUEBEC AS VICTIMS OF CRIME, MOST CHARGES AGAINST HIM WERE DROPPED, AND HE SPENT VERY LITTLE TIME IN JAIL. HE RETIRED TO THE LAURENTIAN COMPOUND WHICH HAD BEEN FOUNDED IN 1962 BY HIS PREDECESSOR, MICHEL COLLIN, A DEFROCKED ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST WHO HAD ORDAINED HIMSELF POPE CLEMENT XV.





## Changes to AU Course Materials

In the fall of 2013 AU began the process of replacing hard-copy textbooks for all undergraduate courses with e-text versions. Implementation has been staged in phases with about two dozen courses being transitioned each month. AUSU is supportive of the provision of electronic materials for students who want them, but has consistently lobbied AU to provide students with a choice of materials format to accommodate the diverse needs of our membership.

Over the last six months many AUSU members have been vocal in their opposition to e-texts as the only, mandatory option for all courses. AU has listened, and is considering several options to provide students with the choices they want. One option might include removing textbooks as a mandatory purchase with course enrolment, and allowing students to purchase their own books.

AUSU needed to know more about student perspectives on the options that have been proposed and held a survey to find out more. The results will be shared with members in an upcoming newsletter.

## A New Era at AU - A New AU president

After two terms in the Office of President, Dr. Frits Pannekoek is retiring. Last week, in recognition of his contributions to distance education, the University of South Africa (Unisa) granted him an honorary Doctor of Literature and Philosophy award. AUSU congratulates Dr. Pannekoek on this great honour, and the recognition it brings to AU as a world leader in distance and open learning. We wish him all the best over his final weeks in the role of president, and in all his future endeavours!

We had hoped by now to be able to announce the selection of the presidential search committee for a new, full-term president; however, as a suitable candidate has not yet been found, AU has instead appointed an interim president: Dr. Peter MacKinnon, formerly of the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. MacKinnon has also served as chair of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and on the Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Canada. We look forward to working with him over the coming year!



## Convocation travel information

AUSU wants to make sure this year's graduating class has a fantastic convocation. To make this happen, we're providing free transportation via bus or limo service to take people from Edmonton to the Athabasca Multiplex each day of convocation 2014. This applies to those graduating from AU undergraduate programs, and their guests (some limits may apply).

We've also arranged hotel discounts in Edmonton.



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Plus, if you stay at the Edmonton hotel where our discounts apply, the shuttle will pick you up right out front, and drop you off at your hotel after the ceremonies.

This service is provided exclusively by AUSU, but grads in some faculties may already be eligible for free transportation. Check your program website or the dean's office to find out.

For more information, contact [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) as soon as possible. We'll also send you a tip sheet with more information about travelling to Edmonton, getting to and from the airport, etc.

*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).*

# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

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Come One, Come All...  
**To DECSA's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Pancake Breakfast**  
Wednesday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 7:30am to 10:30am  
11515-71 Street, Edmonton AB  
Everyone is Welcome!  
Enjoy **FREE** Pancakes, Eggs, Sausages, Juice and Coffee  
Games and activities for the children  
RAIN OR SHINE

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## THE VOICE

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

Contact *The Voice* at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).

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