

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 15 Issue 9
March 16, 2007



AU/Mt Royal Program Ends

Calgary College launches first degree

Craig at Night

Changing tastes in nighttime TV

Fisherman's Tea

Cruiscin Lan protests

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

Mar 16, 2007 - Volume 15, Issue 9

Welcome To the Voice PDF

The Voice interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom-right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

articles

CANADIAN FEDWATCH!

Karl Low

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS BRACING FOR BUDGET

Nadya Bell

HUNDREDS DEMONSTRATE AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY IN MONTREAL

Jesse Rosenfeld

columns

FROM WHERE I SIT

Hazel Anaka

CHRONICLES OF CRUISCIN LAN

Wanda Waterman St. Louis

from the readers

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CLASSIFIEDS



We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to voice@ausu.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.

To AU Students

Microsoft Office 2007 will be officially released by Microsoft January 31, 2007, and has been available for download from Microsoft for a while.

While AU staff will eventually be using Office 2007, a full conversion to this software is several months away. An announcement will be posted when the conversion is complete. Until then, documents sent to AU staff should be saved as Office 2003 format. Save your documents as follows:

Word/Excel/PowerPoint 2007 - Create your document and immediately click on the Office start button (upper left hand corner), Save as and choose Word/Excel/ PowerPoint 97-2003 compatibility. The title bar will reflect the document is in the compatibility mode. The help files in the 2007 software (search for compatibility) explain this feature in detail.

Access 2007 - Create your database and immediately click on the Office start button (upper left hand corner), Save as and choose Access 2002-2003 compatibility. The title bar will reflect the document is in the compatibility mode. The help feature in Access 2007 (search for file format) will show how to change the default save format for Access to a different format.

AU Computing Services Helpdesk

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

1200 10011 109th Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5J 3S8
800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Publisher AU Students' Union
Editor In Chief Tamra Ross Low
Copy editor Jo-An Christiansen
News Contributor Lonita Fraser

Regular Contributors:

John Buhler, Karl Low, Mandy Gardner, Katie Patrick, Hazel Anaka, Bill Pollett, Janice Behrens, Barbara Godin, Wanda Waterman St.Louis, John Buhler, Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

**THE VOICE ONLINE:
WWW.VOICEMAGAZINE.ORG**

The Voice is published every Friday in HTML and PDF format

Contact *The Voice* at:
VOICE@AUSU.ORG

To subscribe for weekly email reminders as each issue is posted, see the 'subscribe' link on *The Voice* front page

The Voice does not share its subscriber list with anyone

Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its frequent contributions

© 2005 by The Voice



Mount Royal Granting Nursing Degrees

Athabasca University has successfully helped another college to begin delivering full degree programs. This week, the Honourable Doug Horner, Minister of Advanced Education and Technology for Alberta, announced that Mount Royal College has been granted the ability to award four year nursing degrees (1). Previously, Mount Royal did not have sufficient nursing courses approved by the Alberta Campus Quality Council, so students would typically finish off their program through Athabasca University.

Some worry about this move reducing the number of students AU will have, but it is expected that AU will be able to make up the difference, for the time being, in the conversion programs that enable RNs and LPNs attain their full four year degrees, allowing AU to concentrate on its core model of delivering top quality courses by distance.

That's not to say that this announcement won't cause some problems. As the deadline for enrolment for this program is in April, there is a concern that some students who have been enjoying the Athabasca model, which allows for part-time and distance study, may be left out in the cold if they are employed and unable to commit to a full-time in-class program. Athabasca University has dealt with this to some degree by ensuring that those who are in the AU program will be allowed to complete it. Unfortunately, for those students who may have been planning to enrol this year, it seems their time has run out.

The Alberta government is providing ten million dollars to Mount Royal College as a one-time payment for startup costs such as recruitment and initial program delivery (1). It hopes that this, along with a similar announcement for Grant Macewen College, will go a long way toward addressing the health-care professional shortage that Alberta is facing. It's interesting, however, that the government did not simply expand the funding already available through Athabasca University.

Of course, the reason for this might be best understood by looking at those who do not understand at all, such as Mr. Don Braid of the Calgary Herald. Mr. Braid wrote, "Under an odd arrangement, the college has been teaching nurses since 2000, and then handing Athabasca sheepskins to the grads. The reason for this (if any reason makes sense) is that it's kind of risky to teach nursing by correspondence" (2).

Had Mr. Braid researched the issue, he would have found that "correspondence" is only a small part of the program, and that graduates from this program have a pass rate on the Registered Nurses Exam that exceeds the national average. So to say that "it's kind of risky to teach nursing by correspondence" suggests that the real risk is thinking that the Calgary Herald cares about making sure its content is well-researched and truthful.

Farms Encouraged to Fail

The federal government has announced a change to the previous Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization program that will see an extra billion dollars (that's a thousand million) to "help address gaps in existing programs and significant increases in cost of production" (3).

Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, Chuck Strahl, went on to say "this new program combined with the disaster relief framework, improved production

insurance, and an improved margin-based program represents this Government's proposal for the replacement of CAIS...funds will be delivered through a direct payment to producers of non-supply managed commodities. Producers will receive a payment directly and will not have to apply. Details will be available in the coming weeks."

In layman's terms, this means if it's gotten more expensive to plant, don't worry, the government will make it so you don't feel that cost. Worried about insurance payments? Why bother, the government already has a program set up to bail you out.

In any other industry, if the cost of production goes up, the business people would be expected to raise their prices accordingly, and if they couldn't, to find another line of work. Someone running a Mr. Sub in Alberta who has to pay more for their workers because of the economic boom certainly doesn't receive a "margin-based program" subsidy, to say nothing of getting one without having to apply.

What this program does is allow farmers who have grown poor selling crops to keep growing them instead of looking for more efficient ways to grow or finding better selling crops. Put another way, those who make their living by supply and demand are getting taxed to pay for those who do not.

Government Employment Services: \$13,000/head

The federal government recently announced it was providing funding of 232,876 to help 18 youth in Alberta find work. This money will pay for a six month course for these youth in Brooks, Alberta. The kicker is that they only expect 80% of the participants will be successful in finding work or getting back into school.

\$232,876 split between 18 people works out to \$12,937.55 each. This is in Alberta -- the province that is hosting career fairs in Atlantic Canada and Europe to try to encourage people to come here to take jobs. Yet the federal government has decided that it needs to spend nearly \$13,000 per person to enable them to find a job. That's the cost of 2 year diploma right there, and if you're going to be spending that much on them, why not split it up among 36 people and give them each their first year of post-secondary free, or alternatively, put half of them entirely through post-secondary so that they can go out and start developing businesses of their own to hire the other half and boost the economy at the same time.

Investing in our youth is a winning proposition, but can't we invest more wisely?

1. New nursing degree program established at Mount Royal College

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/acn/200703/211865650C1D9-A8AE-207B-92C03CAAB6A3E690.html>

2. University nursing degrees kick off new era at Mount Royal

<http://www.canada.com/calgaryherald/columnists/story.html?id=da330acc-34e6-45c0-9772-97e19aaf30d8>

3. Minister Strahl Comments on Farmer Savings Program and the Replacement of CAIS

<http://news.gc.ca/cfmx/view/en/index.jsp?articleid=284709>

4. Canada's New Government invests \$232,876 to help 18 youth in Alberta find work

<http://news.gc.ca/cfmx/view/en/index.jsp?articleid=283159>

Hundreds demonstrate against police brutality in Montreal

15 arrested at annual clash between protesters, police

By Jesse Rosenfeld

CUP Québec Bureau Chief

MONTREAL (CUP) -- About 500 people gathered in Montreal on March 15 as part of the International Day Against Police Brutality.

According to police, 15 people were arrested: four will face arson charges, one will be charged with assaulting a police officer, one with mischief and nine with illegal assembly.

The march wound through the predominantly working-class immigrant neighbourhood of Cote-des-Neiges, stopping to mark where Mohamed-Anas Bennis was killed by two Montreal police officers in December 2005. Police have said the shooting was in self-defence after an officer was stabbed in the leg and the neck, but they have not made any evidence of the wound or the knife public. They have also released little of the autopsy findings. The Coalition Opposed to Police Brutality has demanded a full public inquiry and the disclosure of police evidence.

"There have been 37 people killed [by police] in the past 20 years in Montreal, that's way too many," Kerre King from the COPB told the crowd. "They're doing this with complete impunity and they're getting away with it and we can't let them do this."

The coalition also demanded an end to police crackdowns at political protests, an end to police harassment of homeless people and squeegee kids, and an end to racial profiling. Montreal police were condemned in a 2006 United Nations report for the use of mass arrests during demonstrations.

Women's organizations in Montreal also called for people to attend the protest in response to a violent police crackdown at the March 8 International Women's Day demonstration. Three women were injured by police as they tried to capture Montreal activist Jaggi Singh. Singh was eventually arrested [for] allegedly breaching his bail conditions; the charges have since been thrown out of court.

"We were directly the victims of police brutality and the police acted with impunity. We have asked there to be an investigation and action from Mayor [Gerald] Tremblay and Premier [Jean] Charest," said Dolores Chew from Women of Diverse Origins in an interview. "One of our slogans is going to be 'Who do you call when the police assault you.'"

Participants in the demonstration also brought their personal stories of encountering police brutality, tying them to the greater problem of what they said was police acting with impunity.

"I am [at] today's demonstration today because in 2003 I was in Quebec [City] for a demonstration against the Charest government. It was my first political demonstration and I got shot in the face with a tear-gas bomb from three metres away," said Sherbrooke CEGEP student Rene Ouelette. "I spent two weeks in the hospital [as a result]."

The demonstration was followed by numerous vans filled with riot police and police helicopters. A few of the marchers destroyed a McDonald's sign, and broke the windows of several telephone booths and a bus shelter.

After the demonstration officially ended, about 70 participants blocked the intersection at St Denis and Maisonneuve for 20 minutes and went down a side street. Several participants spray-painted another McDonald's and broke the windows of some local businesses.

The march has been held in Montreal for several years, and has ended in arrests each time. Last year, 33 people were arrested.

Women's organizations bracing for budget

Tax cuts won't serve lower income women: advocate

By Nadya Bell

CUP Ottawa Bureau Chief

OTTAWA (CUP) -- Women's groups are concerned that impending tax cuts could hurt lower-income women. Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has announced the federal budget will be released on Monday March 19. Flaherty has said cuts to income tax are planned for this budget.

"It's not that lower income women don't want tax cuts -- they do," says Nancy Peckford from the Feminist Alliance for International Action. "But the amount of money they will save won't be significant."

Women make on average \$24,000, according to the 2003 Statistics Canada numbers. Peckford says the amount lower-income women will save from tax cuts will be much less than people who earn more money.

"With this upcoming budget what we're fearing is that spending initiatives that are really important to women will be entirely marginalized because of the heavy emphasis on tax cuts," Peckford says.

Funding to Status of Women Canada was cut last fall, only to be reinstated March 7, when the government put \$5 million back into the organization's budget.

Plans to increase transfer payments to the provinces as a remedy to the fiscal imbalance could be good news for women, Peckford says. More money means provinces will be able to better fund programs such as social assurance, legal aid, and post-secondary education, she says.

But Peckford says she is worried that there will be no accountability in the way the federal transfers are used by the provinces.

"We are afraid that those dollars will be transferred in a way that those women on the ground will never see how that may actually translate into those communities," she says.

Joint agreements on how the provincial government will spend the increased money would ensure that the spending reached women, Peckford says.





*From
Where
I Sit*

Hazel Anaka

It could be menopause. Then again, it could be years of first living with the torn rotator cuff and the past three months of living with the post-surgery pain. It could be our new furnace that starts with the decibels of a jet engine and the air rush of a turbine. It could also be an over-active mind replaying today and anticipating tomorrow. Or perhaps it's all of the above.

At any rate, I'm sick and tired of not getting a decent night's sleep. I'm sick of seeing the hours tick by on my clock as I toss and turn trying to get comfy and settled, of flipping my pillow to the cool side, of covering and uncovering, of one or two trips to the washroom. I'm glad that Roy can fall asleep within nano-seconds of hitting the pillow, though when he snores that's just one more irritant to me.

I don't exercise right before bed. I try not to eat before bedtime. I aim for a consistent bedtime. I do my list making ahead of time.

I've even given up my late night news fix and switched to Jay Leno and Craig Ferguson. I've traded gruesome for garrulous and bad news for frivolous news. I find David Letterman irritating. The hyperactive, over-grown redheaded kid (aka Conan O'Brien) aggravates me to no end. It's scary to think Conan is being groomed as Jay's replacement when Jay hangs up his microphone and drives off into the sunset on one of his bikes.

I love many of Jay's regular features, including Monday Night Headlines, Jay-Walking, Did it Sell on EBay?, Jeopardy and more. I love his beating of the "how fat are we" drum in virtually every monologue.

However my new favourite is Craig Ferguson, formerly of the Drew Carey Show. His humility is touching, perhaps tongue-in-cheek, but touching nonetheless. Leno has the stars autograph a Harley, Craig's guests sign a Vespa. There's no in-house band. The set is small. The guests aren't exactly A List.

I find him clever. I love the double entendres. I love the references to the past and the need to really pay attention to get it. I even love the goofy sound effects. All the late night guys have had a field day with the recent spate of celebs going into rehab anytime they act like jackasses (e.g., Isaiah Washington, Rev. Hagerty, Kramer, and Lindsay Lohan). Ferguson is very open about his own alcoholism and just celebrated 15 years of sobriety. After Britney Spears' recent meltdown and the Anna Nicole Smith circus, Craig spoke eloquently and seriously about how as a comedian he has exploited the misery of celebrity lives for a laugh. But as he marked his own successful recovery, he committed to no longer target victims. The rich and the powerful are still fair game, but not those who so desperately need help.

The vulnerability and wisdom he displays makes me love him more. His stance makes sense. It may even help me sleep nights. Let's hope so, from where I sit.

classifieds

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

THE VOICE

1200, 10011 109th Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4 -- Ph: 800.788.9041 ext. 2905 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

Publisher Athabasca University Students' Union

Editor In Chief Tamra Ross Low

Reference/copy editor Jo-An Christiansen

News Contributors Lonita Fraser, Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

Regular Columnists: Janice Behrens, Wanda Waterman St. Louis, Karl Low,
Katie Patrick, Hazel Anaka, Bill Pollett, Barbara Godin, John Buhler

Contributors to listings columns: Zil-E-Huma Lodhi, Lonita Fraser

THE VOICE ONLINE: WWW.VOICEMAGAZINE.ORG

The Voice is published every Friday in html and pdf format

Contact *The Voice* at: VOICE@AUSU.ORG

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, see the 'subscribe' link on *The Voice* front page. *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list
Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its contributions

© 2005 by The Voice