

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

March 22, 2005
Volume 13 Issue 12



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

THE VOICE

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ABORIGINAL REPRESENTATION IN CANADIAN GOVERNMENT *Mandy Gardner*



Earlier this March, the Liberal Party of Canada held their biennial convention in Ottawa. Party members and commissions from all over the country attended and took the opportunity to make their voices heard. Aside from giving party members an opportunity to socialize, the convention gave the Liberal Party the chance to re-evaluate its official policies and consider new ways to better serve Canadians.

Several policy resolutions were made by the Liberals during their 4 day convention, including the promise to further incorporate Aboriginal people into the government system. The Liberal Party has attempted to address the interests of these minority citizens since 1990, with the formation of the Aboriginal Peoples' Commission (APC). To date, theirs is the only political party with any formal representation of this country's native populace.

During the convention, members of the APC expressed their concerns about the disproportionate representation their people have in the government. Aboriginals make up 4.4% of Canada's population, and would have 14 representatives in the House of Commons, as well as 5 senators, if they were proportionately represented. Since gaining the right to vote in 1960, Aboriginal people have struggled to become more self-governing.

In 1999, the Inuit living in what was once the Northwest Territories took a giant leap forward in achieving that autonomy with the creation of Nunavut. The recently added territory is a realm governed by the Inuit living within its borders; a place where Inuit culture can be preserved by the very people it encompasses.

The updated Liberal policy seeks similar results with other Aboriginal groups within Canada - such as the First Nations, Non-Status and Métis people. According to the latest Plenary Report released after the Liberal convention, the Liberal Party will "...encourage the Government of Canada to conduct a study, through Elections Canada, to identify the legislative requirements for the installation of Aboriginal people as members of Parliament and as senators on an inclusive and proportional basis...". The party also promotes the appointment of five more Aboriginal senators before the next federal election.

As a means to further promote self-governance among Aboriginal communities, the Liberals also resolved to include more Aboriginal youths in the programs that affect their areas. Party members, as well as native people themselves, feel that young people should be more involved in the processes that influence their daily and future lives. Liberals state that they support aboriginal youth leadership and empowerment.

With the association of such a powerful political entity as the Liberal Party, it is likely that every Aboriginal group within Canada will be provided with the adequate funds and freedoms necessary to establish themselves as strong and self-governing societies. The decisions made during this past Liberal convention will surely help to create an Aboriginal population with more autonomy, better health care, and improved economic growth and sustainability. As this land's oldest members, the Aboriginal communities certainly deserve the opportunity to govern their own affairs.

Links:

2005 Biennial Convention - Aboriginal Workshop
http://www.liberal.ca/bcpolicyres_e.aspx?subid=2#68

Plenary Report of the Liberal Party of Canada <http://www.liberal.ca/PDF/Plenary%20Report%20English.pdf>

CBC Archives - The Creation of Nunavut - http://archives.cbc.ca/IDD-1-73-108/politics_economy/nunavut/

Aboriginal Peoples' Commission - <http://www.liberal.ca/commissions/apc/welcome/>

CBC Archives - Aboriginal Rights to Vote
http://archives.cbc.ca/IDD-1-73-1450-9556/politics_economy/voting_rights/clip4

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE Hit and Run

Debbie Jabbour



One of my favourite television dramas is *Nip/Tuck*, an incredible show I was fortunate enough to discover right from the first episode. I'm eagerly awaiting season three right now, but recently my daughter had an unusual incident that was straight out of a *Nip/Tuck* episode. In the opening scene of that particular episode, Dr. Troy's girlfriend is left waiting in his very expensive sports car while he goes in to select a rental movie. The vehicle has a very expensive sound system, and she turns up the music to full volume, singing along to *The Captain and Tennille*. The problem is, the girlfriend happens to be blind, and the loud music attracts the notice of a couple of punks, who, realizing she cannot see, quickly and professionally jack up the car and steal all four very expensive wheels and rims. When Dr. Troy emerges from the video store, he is stunned to see his vehicle stripped of thousands of dollars worth of equipment, and berates her, asking how it was possible that she was unaware of what was happening. Her defense is that she had the music up so loud that she thought the movement of the car was just the loud bass!

My daughter and her friends had gone to the movies the other night -- the dollar movie, since by the end of the week none of them have much ready cash left. When they exited the movie theatre to go home, to their consternation and amazement, they discovered that someone had jacked up her car and stolen one of her tires! The car was still left up on the jack, and the bolts had been fastened back on - all that was missing was the tire itself. Fortunately she had a spare, and in the crowd of people exiting the theatre there were plenty of willing hands to help out.

Dr. Troy's car doesn't have all that much in common with my daughter's, of course. Her car is an inexpensive beater, although it does sport a high quality stereo system. The *Nip/Tuck* episode, however, allowed us to see the humorous side of something that was not really that funny. It seemed clear that whoever had done it must have found themselves with a flat tire and no spare, and finding a vehicle with the right size tire, helped themselves to a replacement. Perhaps they even thought leaving the jack & the bolts somehow made up for what they did.

It might not seem that the loss of a tire is a big thing, but for a young person who doesn't make a lot of money, it represents an unfair burden. She will likely have to purchase two tires, plus the loss of time involved in getting things repaired and having her vehicle temporarily out of commission. What makes it more frustrating is that this is the second incident in a short period of time.

My daughter has had a disproportionate share of vehicle trouble this year. Her old beater truck had finally broken down and become undriveable only weeks before. It was left parked in front of our house (no room in the back), while she searched for a cheap replacement vehicle.

One afternoon I was at the rear of the house when I heard a loud bang from outside, followed by the sound of a vehicle engine revving. I thought it odd, and wondered whether someone had hit my

vehicle parked in front. I was going to run to the window to investigate but something distracted me and I didn't give it another thought. Later that day I went to pick up my daughter from work, and as we returned home, she suddenly gasped -- there was extensive damage to the rear end of her truck!

It seemed clear that someone had been driving too quickly down the street, bounced out of the icy ruts, and hit the rear of her truck (the city of Edmonton does not clear side streets of snow and they become a snowy, icy mess this time of year). The impact had forced the vehicle forward several feet into the curb, and most of the tail-light assembly was destroyed. We picked up the pieces and determined that a couple of pieces were not from the truck, therefore must belong to the offending vehicle. The plastic seemed new, and from the angle, height, and strength of the impact, we guessed that it was probably a newer truck or SUV. We tried to play detective, circling the neighbourhood in search of a vehicle with significant front end damage, hoping we'd be able to fit the two pieces into the gap and catch the culprit, but to no avail. I was kicking myself for not having acted on my instincts and checking out the noise I had heard earlier. Whoever did the deed was long gone, or had a garage they could conceal the vehicle in until repairs could be done.

It's discouraging and frustrating, to say the least. We work hard for things, and when someone randomly damages or steals from you, the feeling of personal violation is distressing. It isn't just the cost involved, although that is certainly problematic, and insurance does not cover such incidents (and they punish you for making a claim if you do). It's more that these kinds of incidents damage my opinion of my fellow man. I like to believe that people are inherently good, that they don't deliberately try to hurt others. Yet far too many people seem willing to commit these random acts of petty destruction or thievery.

In the end, however, we were able to laugh about what had happened with the missing tire, as it really is something like a scene out of a movie. At the very least, it provides an interesting anecdote!

BRAVE NEW WORLD

Busby LeClair



Okay, I am officially sick and tired of all those belly-aching whiners out there who go on and on about how shallow and trivial our society is becoming. I hear it all the time: burned-out hippies and irritating tree huggers prattling on about how bad globalization is, how our lives are being taken over by multinational organizations, how we're all becoming more and more tethered to soul-numbing technology, and have lost our ability to connect with each other or to effectively communicate, yada, yada, yada. Well I, for one, believe that we are living in the best of all possible times. And as far as I'm concerned, any

bleeding-heart out there who disagrees with me should run, not walk, to his or her family doctor and get on a good regimen of some of the fantastic mood and attitude enhancing pharmaceuticals that are now available.

There are, in fact, so many good things that have enhanced our quality of living over the past couple of decades that it's hard to even know where to begin. But here are a few of my favourite things:

1) **Cell phones** - For those of you not old enough to remember, spending time at events such as movies, symphonies, parent-teacher meetings, childbirths and funerals once meant being virtually out of contact with one's homeys, financial consultants, coke dealers and dating services. Thanks to the magic of mobile phones, though, I am now able to order take out Thai food, catch up on the results of my buddy's v.d. test, and have phone sex with a hottie I met on *Lava Life* - all without missing any of the vast array of cultural options available to me.

2) **Cosmetic Surgery** - Just a few years ago, before chemical skin peels, liposuction and Botox became widely affordable, and so much a part of our consciousness, I was - there's no other way to put it - *ordinary* looking. Just saying it makes me shudder with embarrassment and self-disgust. I had love handles, a wide ass, man boobs, and probably even combination skin, whatever that is. In short, I was limp and hard to manage. I was almost to the point of considering some sort of *exercise program*, regardless of the fact that it would likely cause me to sweat. Just then, though, I came across an ad in the back of a men's magazine that changed my life. A few dozen minor surgeries later, and I'm hung like a Viking and look uncannily like a cross between Antonio Banderas and Brad Pitt.

3) **Genetically Engineered Foods** - Remember when strawberries, tomatoes, apples and salmon all tasted entirely different? Remember how difficult it was to decide what to eat for dinner? Now that everything from the supermarket tastes more or less the same, and in fact has more or less the same genetic make up, it's far less complicated and exhausting. To make a nutritious salad now, you simply pick up a few items helpfully labelled *fruits/vegetables*, throw them together in a black lacquer bowl from *Pier One Imports*, and *Voila!* dinner is served.

4) **Cocooning** - Time was when it was virtually impossible to get through a single day without some form of actual face-to-face contact with other human beings, some of whom were dirty, unattractive, or even poor. Now, though, between iPods, on-line shopping and banking, cell phones, gated communities, drive-throughs, etc., etc. it is finally possible to achieve some peace of mind that is not in danger of being disrupted by all those other living breathing irritants out there. Ah, peace at last.

5) **Reality Television** - You may not believe this, but there were dark periods of my youth when the only television shows that were available to me were things like CBC documentaries, *Bowling for Dollars*, *The Beachcombers*, and *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau*. For years and years it went on like that, and still the government refused to step in. Turn on the tube now, though, and be prepared for a veritable televisual feast, a cornucopia of edifying entertainment. On any given evening, I can watch mentally disturbed individuals chowing down on yak testicles, at-risk youth having the snot kicked out of them by officers of the law, bimbos in wet t-shirts trying to seduce creepy-looking geeks, people getting fired, people getting surreptitiously videotaped, and people getting bombed in some other part of the world where cosmetic surgery and iPods are not widely available. Sweet.

I could go on, but I think you get my point. Let's face it, folks, we are living in a veritable wonderland of Western World decadence, and I say we give a good old-fashioned "fuck you" to anybody who doesn't buy into the program. All together now...



Happiness: Is it a false hope or is it really attainable?

Happiness. We all want it, and when someone's got it, they flaunt it and everyone else has the secret hope that money can buy it. What brings happiness? People ask the Dalai Lama since he seems to have it together about what constitutes happiness and how it can be attained, but is it something that can be learned from another who's got it, can it be developed on one's own, or is it something deeply engrained within our being to be happy or not?

If you asked people who seem to be happy, you would get completely different answers. To a new mother it may be the scent of her sleeping baby. To the teen, who has just celebrated his eighteenth birthday, happiness may be not getting a hangover the next day. To the old lady in a purple hat, happiness may be finally knowing who she is and being content just being.

Do we search for happiness only when situations in our lives turn for the worse? I don't have any talent for any specific thing. I am a mediocre singer, I'm an okay mom, and a so-so wife. I type at mid-range speed, and hell, I'm just an average writer. But you know what? I'm absolutely okay with that because I have a lot more to be happy about.

Happiness isn't about how much money you have (although some of us wish this were true), or what talents you possess or how much you are idolized by others. It's something elusive to a lot of people who yearn for a magic pill to give it to them. It's probably the reason for many of the addictions in this world, with so many people endlessly searching for anything to make them happy for a while.

There is one mistaken assumption made by many, and it is that happiness can be taught or learned. This is not the case. It isn't something that you can obtain by watching an instructional videos about how to smile and how hope it brings you inner joy. It's about that there is something deep within that your heart that decides you don't want to be unhappy. No, it is something within your subconscious that says rainy days will not deter your smile.

A piece of information that has recently come to my mind is about quality of life expectancy. It is a measured and calculated amount of happiness, really, but by whose standards are the measurements compared? One person with a severe mental disability is the happiest person you could ever meet, but according to society, they may not have "quality of life." So are they really happy? Of course they are. It isn't something that someone else can tell you that you have, not even if they are full of PhDs.

For me, happiness is hearing the sound of beautiful, perfect, miniature feet slapping against the floor, followed by an array of sensational giggles. Happiness is the smell of a freshly bathed child snuggling in my arms. Happiness is that full bed on Saturday morning with cuddles from two little girls and a husband. It is also in the knowledge that for all that I do, even if done incorrectly, I am still me, and that's okay. That's the source of my happiness. What's yours?



Bud & Bridey's Motion Picture Reviews



The Planet of Junior Brown (1997)

Director: Clement Virgo

Based on the book: *Junior's Groove* by Virginia Hamilton

Starring: Martin Villafana, Rainbow Sun Francks, Sarah Polley, Lynn Whitfield, Margot Kidder, Clark Johnson

Number 9 in Bridey's Top Fifty

BUD: Hard to believe this is a Canadian movie.

BRIDEY: This is *not* a Canadian movie.

BUD: See?

BRIDEY: Who are those folks keeps pulling up and talking to them homeless kids?

BUD: Army recruiters. Look at them kids all holed up in that old church. I must say it looks cosy. Cosy, like having afternoon tea and listening to Chopin whilst the lobster fishermen is rioting outside your dooryard...

BRIDEY: If we kicked Bud Junior out do you spose he'd go down and live to the church?

BUD: Father O'Shamelessly wouldn't know whether t' kick his arse or welcome him back to the flock.

BRIDEY: First'd come the welcoming, then the arse-kicking.

BUD: I like this kid. His ma's a little cracked though if you ask me.

BRIDEY: She's doing the best she can. She's not in the best situation.

BUD: This movie puts me in mind of—nothing! I've never seen the likes of it.

BRIDEY: It's all about somebody else coming along and pulling your brake cord, ain't it? Junior Brown had his brake pulled for playing piano. He had his brake pulled for drawing pictures of bare nekkids. They pull his brakes for wanting to learn instead of having to go to school.

BUD: I was sick to the heart for having to go to school.

BRIDEY: I suppose having to keep going back with the other kids getting smaller than what you was every year...

BUD: That was the easy part.

BRIDEY: Look! Now he's having his brake pulled for wanting to have a good meal onct in a while.

BUD: Now *that* I can see. Look at the boy—he's big as a planet! Let him live off the fat of the land!

BRIDEY: Maybe it's his glands. Either way he don't deserve to starve. And neither do I. Here, let me have some of them french fries.

BUD: What's this in your top fifty?

BRIDEY: Number nine. Right in between *Smoke Signals* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

BUD: Do I see a pattern here?

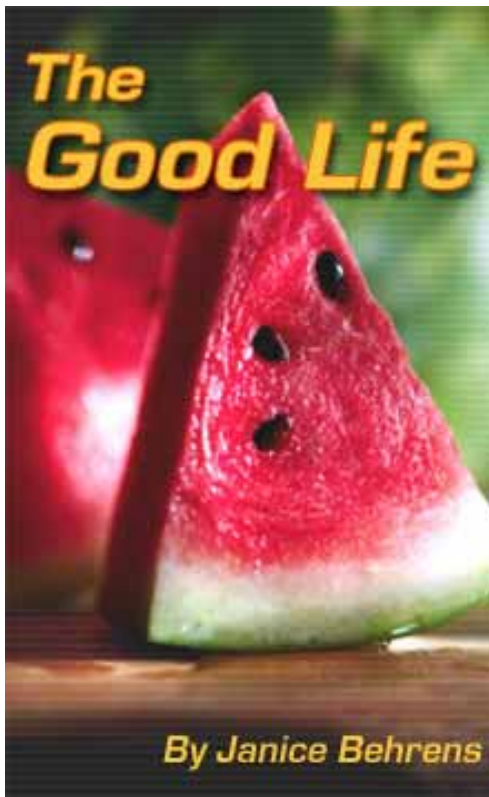
BRIDEY: The lost, the fatherless, the disenfranchised—

BUD: Speakin' of these ol' french fries, how's about handing 'em back?



Bud and Bridey only watch old movies. If you're looking for reviews of more recent films, check out Laura Seymour's Flicks and Folios Film Review

By Wanda Waterman St. Louis, with Steven St. Louis.



Conversations in the Park

Once every month or so, on a Saturday morning, my daughter Jessie and I get up early and head off to Commercial Drive for coffee, orange juice and a shared Spanish Omelette with Portuguese sausage at The Havana Restaurant. The Drive, as it's known, is Vancouver's funkiest street; a vibrant, truly multicultural neighbourhood filled with ethnic eateries and populated by a much higher percentage of people who "march to the beat of a different drummer" than you would find in any other part of the city. It's also the sort of place where the grimmer realities of life are often close to the surface, like the used hypodermic needles that can occasionally be seen lying around.

After breakfast, we wander up and down the street, checking out the used clothing stores and boho bric-a-brac shops. We go window shopping at the toy store and pick up some coffee beans, some good parmesan and pancetta from one of the delicatessens. Weather permitting, we head across the street to the park playground, where Jessie hangs out with the other kids on the swings and I take my place along with the other

parents on the nearby benches.

For some reason, there's something about this particular place that lends itself to striking up conversations with complete strangers. It's an activity that I rarely engaged in when I was younger, and that always puts me in mind of my own father, a man never at a loss for words, able to coax the life story out of just about anybody on a moment's notice. Coffee shops, museums, train stations, libraries, waiting rooms of every kind were, and still are, places where he would quickly and inevitably become involved in long, laughter-filled conversations with even the most unapproachable-looking people. It would never have occurred to him that anybody would just want to be left alone, and as far as I know he has never once failed to win anybody over. For the longest time, I just assumed he knew pretty well everybody in the world.

Not long ago I sat on my favourite bench beside a woman named Thora, a classical cellist who was visiting from London for a new music festival. We talked about chamber music and Glenn Gould, and she warned me never to buy tea that comes in tea bags. A little later, our conversation was joined by a woman named Suzy who teaches fabric arts at a community college. She showed us a beautiful Norwegian-style knit sweater she was working on, and a sketchbook filled with amazingly detailed pencil sketches of various types of ferns and herbs. When it was time to go, we wished each other well, and I left with a feeling of having been just slightly enriched.

Perhaps it's another one of those transitions that occurs as you reach a certain age, this need to form fleeting connections with the people about you, to rub elbows with the fellow travellers on this amazing journey through life. Another one of the good lessons I've subconsciously learned from my father.

AUSU THIS MONTH



AUSU's Website Has a New Look

The AUSU website has a new look and navigation. Please stop by to take a look and let us know what you think. It's possible that a few links may not be working as we go through and ensure the new menu system is updated, so please write webmaster@ausu.org if you notice any problems or have a comment.

AUSU Helps Sponsor the Alberta Services for Students Conference

The Alberta Services for Students Conference will be held this May at Mount Royal College and AUSU councillor Lisa Priebe will be in attendance to meet with students and answer questions. AUSU has donated \$500 to provide students with snacks and coffee during the conference. Students can attend the conference for \$110. For more details on this conference and how to attend please contact the AUSU Office at ausu@ausu.org or toll free at 1-800-788-9041 ext 3413.

AUSU Needs Volunteer Mentors

AUSU is in need of more volunteer mentors to help our new students adjust to AU and distance education. If you're an experienced AU student and interested in being matched to a new student, please email ausu@ausu.org for an application form. The mentor program is designed to aid new students in their adjustment to distance learning. If you're a new student and would like to be matched to one of our mentors please fill out the application form at this address: <http://www.ausu.org/services/mentorsforms.php>

The AUSU Office is Moving this May

This May the AUSU Office and the AU Edmonton Learning Centre will be moving to the 12th floor of the Peace Hills Trust building located on 10011-109 Street in downtown Edmonton. The new location is only two blocks away from our current location. Our office will be closed for a few days while we carry out this move. Keep watching this column and the AUSU website for more details.



When Duty Calls

I'm sorry, but we can't come to the phone right now because we are in the backyard sitting in the shade of a pear tree reading *Treasure Island*. Because we are across town eating hummus and listening to accordion music. We are watching an enormous beetle clacking about inside the shade of our table lamp.

I'm sorry, we can't take your call, because we are staring out the living room window at a cloud shaped like a bowler hat, are slow dancing in front of the fireplace, are down at the beach after dark turning cartwheels and writing our names with sparklers on the air.

So sorry we missed your call. We were drinking plum brandy and watching a snow white cat walk across our balcony railing. We were waiting for the wine to breathe, and the shrimp to boil. We were trying to think of a seven-letter word for luminous, watching a documentary about Harry Houdini, and listening to my niece's whooping laugh as she gets tossed up into the air and caught, over and over again.

If we don't answer the phone right now, it's not that we don't want to talk to you. It's just that we're making shadow puppets on the wall, taking turns reading aloud *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, bicycling around the seawall, and charting walking routes to the North Pole.

Your call is very important to us, so please call back when we're not eating mangos in the bathtub, practicing handstands against the wall, creating explosions with a chemistry set, chopping garlic and mint, painting our living room red, flipping through an atlas, trying on fur hats, burning popcorn, ordering curry, napping in the afternoon, building a bookcase, listening to a choir, drizzling oil on tomatoes, playing Chinese Checkers, lighting candles and blowing them out, learning Spanish, chasing the cat, creating a disturbance, stirring a pot of stew, cutting out newspaper articles, setting fire to the curtains, exploring caves, peeing in bushes, planting carrot seeds, burying bulbs, renting motorcycles, taking turns riding in a sidecar, laughing at funerals, whistling in graveyards, walking under ladders, telling tall tales, running backwards, perfecting martinis, losing at euchre, exchanging ghost stories over a campfire, skipping stones, drawing chalk pictures on the sidewalk, writing letters, eating muffins, reading tea leaves, losing our car keys, deciphering riddles, inventing new constellations, smoking joints on the rooftop, keeping a feather in the air with puffs of breath, searching for satellites, and counting our blessings.

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Dear Barb;

I am in my mid thirties and the mother of two young girls. My husband and I both work full-time and have a very busy lifestyle. I finally feel like my life is going really well except for one aspect. Through most of my growing up years my mother and I have had a tumultuous relationship. However, since I've gotten married we seem to get along better, but not as well as I would like. Do you know of anything I can do to improve my relationship with my mother? I'll be looking forward to your reply.

Gretchen in Kentucky

Hi Gretchen. Mother/ daughter relationships are always difficult, as you will no doubt find out for yourself as your two girls grow up. In fact, it seems by nature these relationships are either really close, or as you state, tumultuous.

As little girls we all want to be just like our mothers. We love the way they smell, the way they put on their make up and do their hair just so. Our mothers solve all our problems and make our pain magically disappear. Through our mother's eyes we see the person we can one day become.

However as we grow up this all changes, particularly when we reach adolescence. Suddenly we want to be anything but like our mothers. In fact one of the forces that shape a lot of what we do in our teen years is a result of our great desire to be the complete opposite of our mothers. Following years of power struggles we are usually able to reach a truce with our mothers. As we move through our adult years, our focus begins to change. Rather than wanting to be the complete opposite to our mother, the driving force is to have our mother's acceptance of the person we have become. Perhaps this is where you are Gretchen. You feel content with your life and are looking for your mother's acceptance and approval.

There are things you and your mother can do to build a stronger relationship, as conflicts are rarely one-sided. Perhaps you could begin by considering what each of you may be doing to add tension to this relationship. If you are looking for acceptance from your mother, ask yourself if you are also ready to give that same acceptance to her. Can you accept the decisions your mother makes for her life with no questions or judgments? Also, you both need to consider how you react to each other. You are both adults and can relate as two mature women. You no longer need to maintain a parent/child relationship, but rather give each other the same respect and consideration you would to a close friend. Remember neither person has any more control over the other's life than what they are given.

Without a doubt the mother/daughter bond is an emotionally charged one in which conflict is unavoidable, but how much that conflict affects the relationship will be up to you and your mother.

Finally Gretchen let me end with a quote by Albert Ellis:

"The best years of your life are the ones in which you decide your problems are your own. You do not blame them on your mother, the ecology, or the president. You realize that you control your own destiny."

Readers, don't hesitate to send in those questions. Remember your confidentiality is guaranteed!

E-mail your questions to dearbarb.voice@ausu.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.

CANADIAN FED WATCH!

NEWS ACROSS THE NATION...

By Karl Low

Us vs. U.S.



Statistics Canada recently completed a survey on participation rates in university education between the United States and Canada. While they found that America has a higher participation rate in general (39% compared to our 33%), the vast majority of that comes from the families who have income in the top 25% of the populace.

Almost two thirds of all university students in the United States come from these high-earning families. In Canada, less than half of the university students are from families in this same income range. Conversely, the poorest families are more likely to have a student attend university if they are in Canada. 24% of university students come from families in the bottom quartile of family incomes in Canada.

In America, the lowest income quartile accounts for only 15% of university students.

Causes listed in the article are -- no surprise -- much higher tuition and lack of availability in the local area. Both of these are causes that distance education seems designed to be able to handle. If we want a society where everybody has equal opportunities, it makes a lot of sense then to promote distance education and initiatives that ensure an accredited distance degree is recognized as being as good or better than those from campus based institutions. On the other side of the coin, even with higher tuition and lack of availability, it has to be noted that a higher percentage of high school graduates in the United States go on to take post-secondary studies. So we also need broad initiatives at the provincial and federal levels to promote the benefits that a post-secondary education can give to high-school students.

One of the ways I can think of doing this is for the federal government to demonstrate that post-secondary education is a priority by creating a ministry for advanced education. Currently, advanced education is an afterthought, simply a portion of the portfolio of the human resources and development ministry, which receives most of its funding for the employment insurance program. Since we're increasingly moving to an age where education determines prosperity, reflecting this move in the make-up of our government only makes sense.

Newfoundland & Labrador Commits to Three Year Freeze

The provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador has committed to a three year tuition freeze for the Memorial University and the College of the North Atlantic. According to the Education Minister, Tom Hedderson, this freeze means "that tuition in this province remains the lowest rate in the country, and 40 per cent lower than the national average."

What a great question to put to the Alberta Government. Why is it that Alberta, with its multi-year surplus budgets, can not match the commitment to a tuition freeze that is being promised by a government that is still running a deficit. How high a priority is the idea of life-long learning to this government? It seems apparent that education is a much stronger priority in Newfoundland & Labrador than it is here.

Students Speak to Alberta

The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) has taken the opportunity to present a plan [PDF] to the Alberta Legislature. The plan calls for a 10% increase in base funding to the universities, an expansion and increase of the student loans program, and student involvement in setting tuition regulation and policy.

While it may be unrealistic to expect that the government will give everything that's been asked for, there have been encouraging signs that at least someone is listening. Advanced Education Minister David Hancock has been engaged in several meetings with student representatives over the past couple of weeks. This is a much better turn of events than we had with the previous education minister, Lyle Oberg, who was often hard pressed to remember that Alberta has four universities, not three.

Taxing Times

Have you finished your taxes yet? If not, the Canada Revenue Agency wants to remind you that your post-secondary education could lead to significant savings. Even if you're not paying taxes, by submitting the forms, you could be entitling yourself to carry forward large tax deductions for later years based on tuition and how many months you spent enrolled in post-secondary studies. Also remember that any interest you pay on student loans is tax-deductible.

I know someone who's working now but doesn't bother submitting her taxes, even though she's also paying back student loans. What she doesn't seem to realize is that she's probably missing out on a big refund each year. It doesn't make much sense to me either.

Cool Tools

Lonita Fraser

Skype - <http://www.skype.com>

Some have said that the Internet has made the world a smaller place, and it has, giving us easier and more instantaneous forms of communication than we could have imagined even ten years ago. What it hasn't done, until the past couple of years, is bring us closer together via one of the most important methods of human communication: our voices. So how do we bridge that gap from text to speech? How do we make the distance that little bit smaller?

Skype is one of the new generation of computer tools that can bring a friend that little bit closer. A light-weight and simple to install and use program, Skype offers voice communication that's reliable and cheap. There are two ways to use the Skype software: You can talk free to other Skype users; or you can purchase time which allows you to use Skype to call almost any telephone in the world via VOIP (voice over IP) technology, even toll-free services - though calling to 900 numbers is not supported.

To use Skype, you talk through a microphone hooked in to your computer, and speakers to do the listening - both of which you can pick up very cheaply if you don't already have them. Speaking of cheap, the rates for making calls to telephones via Skype are insanely good. I spoke to someone in Australia for approximately one and a half hours, and it cost me the equivalent of about \$2 - \$3 Canadian. You can't beat that for economically attractive.

The sound is very clear, although I experienced a little bit of difficulty when using Skype to talk to people using cordless phones or headsets. Otherwise, both Skype-to-Skype and Skype-to-phone communications, were so clear that there were times I was amazed I was using a computer to do the talking.

The program is fairly straightforward and easy to install, but if you have any troubles or questions, the Skype website has very detailed installation and help information. There are also versions of Skype available for platforms other than Windows-based machines.

And best of all, Skype, the program itself, is free.

This column focuses on a wide range of issues affecting post-secondary students. Students are encouraged to submit suggestions and educational topics they are concerned about, or personal experiences with courses or university situations they feel other students should know about. If suggest a topic or a course alert for taking notes, contact djabbour@ausu.org



FAKE TEST-TAKER IMPRISONED

Debbie Jabbour

A New York man has received a jail sentence of 2 1/2 years for fraud after being convicted of operating a fake tutoring service and taking exams for other people. It was found that Zhigang Cao, and a group of at least five others, had used fake and altered identification to write more than 590 exams. People were guaranteed certain test scores and charged about \$3000 each for this service. Over the period from 1999 to 2003, Cao took in more than \$282,000 U.S.

The majority of the tests were graduate school admission tests, standardized tests that included the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language. These tests are administered by the Thomson Prometric Educational Testing Service, and each has comprehensive test security measures in place. These can require test-takers to verify ID with thumb prints, photographs, videos, and other electronic confirmation.

The group used fake and altered ID, and Cao was identified in about 45 pre-test photos. One imposter was caught with a miniature video camera, intending to record the exam for future use. Colleges across the U.S. responded by rescinding acceptance letters, annulling degrees and kicking cheating students off campus.

Although grad students are assessed on other admission criteria, almost all graduate schools require some form of standardized admission test. The validity of these tests is highly dependent on keeping the exam process secure and without compromise. Although Thomson Prometric officials insist that cheating is rare, some suggest this incident may only be the tip of the iceberg.

- New York man sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison for test-taking scheme. Associated Press, Baltimore. March 11, 2005. http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/cpress/20050312/ca_pr_on_wo/fraudulent_test_taker
- Thomson Prometric Educational Testing Service (ETS): <http://www.prometric.com/Default.htm>
- GMAT Test security - <http://www.gmac.com/gmac/TheGMAT/GMATOperations/TestSecurity.htm>
- Graduate School Admissions Tests: http://www.jobweb.com/resources/library/Grad_School/Graduate_School_119_01.htm

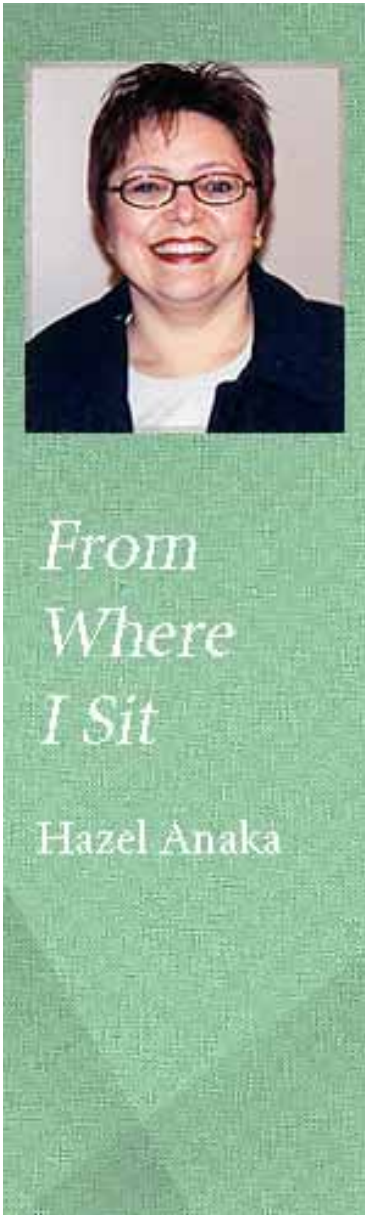
Women you should know

Compiled by Barbara Godin

Constance M.K. Applebee, (1873-1981)

Constance M.K. Applebee was born February 24 in Chigwell, Essex, Great Britain. Applebee became well known for introducing and promoting Women's Hockey in the United States. At this time hockey had already become a popular sport in England. Applebee went into the field of physical education because she had been a fragile child and believed this would help her to become physically stronger, and overcame her earlier limitations to go on to help found the "United States Field Hockey Association." As well, she produced and was editor of "The Sportswoman" magazine. Applebee's other achievements include opening the first hockey camp, "Tegawitha," in Mt. Pocono, Pennsylvania. During World War II she raised enough funding to be able to have four ambulances shipped to England all bearing the inscription "Donated by the Women Hockey Players of the USA." Applebee lived a long and productive life and was 108 at the time of her death on January 26, 1981.

To read more about Constance, visit: <http://www2.lhric.org/pocantico/womenenc/applebee.htm>



Paper Chase

Does anyone remember the promise of a paperless society that was to follow the widespread use of personal computers? It didn't happen, folks.

Paper is swallowing some of us alive and is the greatest cause of clutter in most households. I love paper. Let me correct that. I love some paper and detest the rest. On the most hated list is junk mail. How could we survive without weekly credit card applications from every bank under the sun? Or countless farm equipment sales fliers? Or the seasonal onslaught of farm chemical brochures? I've gotten good at sorting the mail over the garbage can. Hey, what Roy doesn't see doesn't end up in a pile on the kitchen table. I always save the weekly papers and the Princess Auto catalogues for him - what's up with men and Princess Auto anyway? Reading the *Edmonton Journal* and *National Post* daily contributes to the clutter but I'm not giving them up.

In addition to the sheer volume of mail coming into most households is all the paper related to work, study or hobbies. Is there anyone out there who doesn't have newsletters, meeting packages, periodicals and books piling up quicker than you can keep up reading them?

The key question becomes how long do we hang onto these materials and how do we organize them so we can find them when we need to. Will you ever need it again? Can you get the same information from another source? In my case it's a constant fight to part with stuff because I'm sure I'll need it.

I've used a combination of file cabinets, hanging and regular folders, accordion folders, and three ring binders. One thing that's made things simpler is re-labeling file folders with the name of vendors rather than generic categories like repairs, utilities, income. Another thing I'm trying this year is more folders to handle information on investments, life insurance info, air miles/rewards programs. Specific project files for things like the hail insurance claim or the exploration work have saved countless hours of frustration.

Three new bookcases house books and collectibles. Several decorative baskets and covered boxes store decorating magazines and photos.

I'm still working on the one-touch rule. Organizers advise handling each piece of paper only once. What action is required - file, toss, reply, act? Be strong and decisive they advise. Clutter is the result of decisions postponed announced one TV expert.

Managing the paper in my purse is another challenge. Organizing identification, receipts, money, shopping lists and my planner is the goal. Keeping a list of replacement cartridge numbers for the printer and fax makes life easier and minimizes buying errors.

A fridge calendar, leather-bound day planner and purse-sized month-at-a-glance calendar help keep me organized, on time and reasonably on top of a typically busy schedule.

In the war with paper, we need to marshal all our resources, tools and battlefield smarts to come out on top. Doing so will save us time, money and frustration - all good things from where I sit.

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Voice Events Listings

On and off campus events worldwide

To list events in your area, e-mail voice@ausu.org with the word "events" in the subject line.

alberta

APEIRON SOCIETY FOR THE PRACTICE OF PHILOSOPHY

Tuesday, March 29th, 2005 at 7pm
Valhalla Room of the Scandinavian centre,
739 - 20th ave n.w. Calgary.

Topic: " Publish or Perish - Basis of Jaded Sensibilities in Ethics and Aesthetics" Terry Storey

The Talk: The "publish or perish" syndrome in the U.K. and the U.S.A. after WWII encouraged funding of geological publications in order to counter shortages of geologists in industry and academia. In 1952, I became a vocal critic of modern geological concepts that lacked traditional stratigraphic principles, the basis of geology. In 1959, Storey and Patterson published a comparison of traditional and modern concepts of geology, and in 1968, Stewart warned that classical geology in universities was being replaced by a disconnected, analytic, and descriptive approach, which was devoid of syntheses. Stewart's note prompted my "Intellectual Pyramid" (never published), a blueprint or philosophy of how practitioners, specialists, experts and generalists in geology fit the actual practice of geology. This could improve the aesthetics and ethics of publication and education in geology.

Biographical notes: Terry was Vice-President of Apeiron for 9 years. He sees himself as a "non-joiner" in every way. He always lives in a state of questioning, just as with the Emperor's New Clothes, often suspecting intuition, never seeking high status and recognition, especially by publish or perish authorities.

Terry obtained his B. Sc. in Chemistry and Geology from the University of Manitoba in 1943. He worked as a Petroleum Geologist between 1943 and 1985 and is a member of the Society of Petroleum Geologists and a Professional Geologist and Life member of APEGGA. Terry worked in Norman Wells

between 1943 and 1946 and in the Middle East from 1948 to 1951 and again in 1971 to 1979. He spent the rest of his professional life in Western Canada and presented special reports in Rio de Janeiro and Caracas.

OXOXOXO

Annual Membership in the Society is \$30 (\$15 after January 1st to end of season). The Attendance Fee to each seminar, payable at the door, is \$3 for members (and for people visiting for the first time), \$5 for students and seniors, and \$7 for others.

The Society's Web Page, kindly maintained by Fred Appleyard and Britta Lenander, may be found at: <http://members.shaw.ca/blenander/Apeiron/Apeiron.html> .

quebec

CANADA'S ICE HOTEL
Now until 2 April 2005
Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier, Quebec

Duchesnay Ecotourism Station
143, Route de Duchesnay
Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier, Quebec
GOA 3M0
Tel 418 875 2122 Fax 418 875 2868
duchesnay@sepaq.com

From \$522.40 a night

This isn't a normal hotel. While riddled with creature comforts befitting plush five-star numbers, this snazzy hostelry forgoes fluffy cushions and bouncy king-size beds in order to make the best use of what surrounds it: frozen water. The net result of this eco-friendly design is a structure made entirely from ice and snow with ceilings as high as 16 feet, walls covered with original artwork and furniture carved from ice blocks.

Covering a total area of 3000 square metres, the Ice Hotel was forged with 11,000 tons of snow and 350 tons of ice. Just like its sister in Sweden, it boasts two art galleries, a movie theatre and an Absolut Ice Bar, as well as rooms where you can bed down for the night in toasty furry sleeping bags.

SALSATHEQUE

Every Wed-Sun, Montreal, Quebec, 9pm-3am

Salsatheque

1220, Peel St, Montreal, Quebec, H3B 2T6

514 875 0016

Disabled access: Yes

Cost - Fri & Sat when live bands play \$5; otherwise free

For the hottest Latin rhythms in Montreal, look no further than Salsatheque for non-pretentious fun with a crowd who know how to party.

Fridays and Saturdays are jam packed with snake-hipped shimmiers and those eager to join their ranks. For the more serious there are regular dance competitions: Thursdays see Merengue while Salsa competitors can be seen on Sundays. For those wishing to brush up their steps, or start from scratch, there are Salsa lessons on Wednesdays.

SIVANANDA ASHRAM YOGA CAMP

Daily - Val Morin, Quebec

Sivananda Ashram Yoga Camp

673, 8th Avenue, Val Morin, Quebec, JOT 2R0

Tel 819 322 3226 - Fax 819 322 5876

HQ@sivananda.org


The Sivananda Ashram Yoga camp is set in the beautiful Laurentian mountains near Quebec. Founded in 1962 it is one of the longest running and most successful yoga ashrams in the West. Various special programmes and training schemes are on offer - but you are basically free to arrive at the ashram anytime and stay as long as you like.

Participants rise at 5.30am, meditate through the dawn, then chant until early morning (sweet) tea-time. This is followed by two hours of basic hatha yoga, for which you get the reward of a delicious vegetarian meal at 10am. The afternoon continues in a similar fashion - yoga, food, meditation, with sufficient breaks along the way. The stumbling block for some is the compulsory "karma yoga" - when you get to practice your altruism helping out with ashram duties. Collecting-leaves karma yogics tend to be a bit more into the job than cleaning-toilets karma yogics. But remember, the harder the task, the greater the spiritual reward.

The Sivananda organisation is Hindu. The chanting is ancient Sanskrit and you are quite likely to be staying during a festival (Hindus festivals are frequent). There's no reason to be alienated if you're not a believer: Sivananda preach credence in a universal, non-denominational God, of which Shiva, Krishna, Rama et al are mere ramifications. Ashram rules apply: women should cover their shoulders, men and women sleep in separate quarters, there is no smoking or consumption of meat or alcohol.

It's worth phoning before you arrive at the ashram to make sure that there's room for you. Accommodation options are shared rooms, dorm beds or camping.

To list events in your area, e-mail voice@ausu.org with "events" in the subject line.



Searching for Internships

Lonita Fraser

RAWK GIRL

Staff Writer

Job Location: Anywhere, MA, United States

Job Description: Rawk Girl needs talented, young music writers to contribute to our articles database and newsletter. Staff writers are people who can be regularly counted on to contribute articles to us including, but not limited to, women in rock profiles, interviews, CD and event reviews, news items, and general information about the music business. Not only will this position look awesome on your resume, you'll also get the chance to earn free and discounted merch, attend music events in your area, and receive free CDs in exchange for a written review. See our website for an application

Job Requirements: Must have professional attitude, wide knowledge of contemporary music, and outstanding writing skills

How To Apply: Fill out the application at our website and send us a short writing sample as described on the application. No calls or mail please. If you have a question e-mail us.

Contact Information

Heather Greene

Rawk Girl

50 College St, South Hadley, MA, United States 01075

Phone: 413-565-9089

Email: rawkgirlbands@yahoo.com

WWW: <http://www.rawkgirl.nextdesigns.net/contribute.htm>

SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF ART

Development Intern

Job Location: San Diego, CA, United States

Job Description: This is an office position that mainly consists of the following: Research organize and maintain files on major donors and prospects; Calendar updates; Correspondence letters; Data entry; Filing; Research and compile information and collateral; work involved with our annual fundraiser.

Job Requirements: We are seeking individuals interested in contributing to the Development/Fundraising department. You must have good communication skills, computer skills, research skills, great attention to detail, be organized and have an interest in the arts. Please submit your resume.

How To Apply: Please submit your resume to tmurphy@sdmart.org

Contact Information

Contact: Tara Murphy

Development Assistant

San Diego Museum of Art, PO Box 122107, San Diego, CA, United States 92101

Phone: 619.696.1993 FAX: 619.232.9367

Email: tmurphy@sdmart.org

WWW: <http://www.sdmart.org/info-development-intern-form.html>

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Contributed by Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

GEORGE A. NIELSEN PUBLIC INVESTOR SCHOLARSHIP

The Public Investor Scholarship of \$5,000 (may be two awards of \$2,500 each) is available for award to an employee of a local government or other public entity who is enrolled or plans to enroll in an undergraduate or graduate program in public administration, finance, business administration, or related field. The purpose of the Public Investor Scholarship is to support the studies of full- or part-time undergraduate or graduate students with career interests in the efficient and productive investment of public funds.

Completed applications and other correspondence about the scholarship programs can be sent to:

Scholarship Committee
Government Finance Officers Association
203 N. LaSalle St., Suite 2700
Chicago, IL 60601-1210
(312/977-9700)

Eligibility: Employed at least one year by a state, local, government or other public entity; Enrollment in an undergraduate or graduate program in public administration, finance, business administration, or related field before funds are awarded; Citizen or permanent resident of the United States or Canada; Recommendation by your employer; Past winners of a scholarship administered by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada are not eligible to apply.

Web site: <http://www.gfoa.org/services/scholarships.shtml>

MINORITIES IN GOVERNMENT FINANCE SCHOLARSHIP

The GFOA's Minorities in Government Finance Scholarship of \$5,000 is available for award to an upper-division undergraduate or graduate student of public administration, (governmental) accounting, finance, political science, economics, or business administration (with a specific focus on government or non-profit management). The purpose of the Minorities in Government Finance Scholarship is to recognize outstanding performance by minority students preparing for careers in state and local government finance.

Completed applications and other correspondence about the scholarship programs can be sent to:

Scholarship Committee
Government Finance Officers Association
203 N. LaSalle St., Suite 2700, Chicago, IL 60601-1210, (312/977-9700)

Eligibility: Currently a full- or part-time upper-division undergraduate or graduate student in public administration, (governmental) accounting, finance, political science, economics or business administration (with a specific focus on government or nonprofit management).

Belong to one of the following groups (as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau): Black or African American, American Indian or Alaskan native, Asian native, Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino.

Citizen or permanent resident of the United States or Canada.

Recommendation by student's academic advisor, department chair (undergraduate students), or dean of the graduate program (graduate students).

Past winners of a scholarship administered by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada are not eligible to apply.

Web site: <http://www.gfoa.org/services/scholarships.shtml>



Provided by Lonita Fraser

Conference on Southern Literature **31 Mar - 2 April 2005**
Chattanooga, Tennessee, United States

<http://www.artsedcouncil.org/csl/cslit.html> - Contact: Susan Robinson - info@artsedcouncil.org - Nearly 40 writers convene for panel discussions, readings, lectures, book signings, and more. 2005 theme is The South: A Community of Outsiders. Keynote by Reynolds Price. Registration starts in January. Organized by: Arts & Education Council

American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Thirty-sixth Annual Meeting **31 March 2005**
Las Vegas, Nevada, United States

<http://asecs.press.jhu.edu/2005annualmtg.htm> - E-mail: asecs@wfu.edu

Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL) **31 March 2005**
New York, New York, United States

<http://www.dickinson.edu/nectfl> - E-mail: nectfl@dickinson.edu

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*

- **iCORE (Informatics Circle of Research Excellence) Summit - Aug. 2005 -Banff.**
The second annual iCORE Banff Informatics Summit will bring together leading information and communications technology (ICT) researchers for three days. The field of informatics encompasses computer science, electrical and computer engineering, physics and mathematics. (403) 210-5335. <http://www.icore.ca/>.
- **Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership Symposium - Oct. or Nov. 2005, Calgary.**
The Chumir Foundation promotes an active, involved citizenry and principled leadership. (403) 244-6666. <http://www.chumirethicsfoundation.ca/>.
- **InfraEDUCA 2004 - June 25-27 - Pragati Maidan, New Delhi -** The exhibition will be synergetic platform showcasing recent developments in Basic & Primary Education, Higher Education, Coaching Institutes, Specialized Courses, Vocational Training & Career Prospects, Distance Learning Systems, International Universities and Programs, E-Learning Tools and Educational Kits, Computer Education, Government Schemes and Programs etc. Details: <http://www.friendzexhibitions.com/infraeduca2004/index.htm>.
- **PISTA '04 - July 21-25 - Orlando, Florida -** Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are transforming our societies, therefore papers about research results, solutions and problems of the applications of ICT in Politics and Society are highly encouraged. Details: <http://www.confinf.org/Pista04/website/default.asp>
- **EDUTEX Bangladesh 2004 - July 28 - 30 - Dhaka, Bangladesh.** EDUTEX Bangladesh 2004 is the platform for you to promote your Institutions and services and to recruit students in Bangladesh. Details: <http://www.expam.com/bangladesh/>

Know of a conference that is not on this list? Contact voice@ausu.org with the details and we'll list it in Conference Connections.

classifieds

To list events in your area, e-mail voice@ausu.org with "events" in the subject line.

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



AU SCIENCE STUDENTS' SOCIETY (AUS3) ONLINE! The AU Science Students' Society is online at <http://www.ausu.org/clubs/ausss/index.php>. If you are an AU science student or a student with an interest in science, this club is for you! Contact aus3@ausu.org for more information. It's free to join!

THE VOICE

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