

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Volume 14 Issue 14  
April 14, 2006



## ***Jesus and Buddha 2.0***

*Nothing on the originals*

## ***Response to Boycott Canada***

*Letter reveals another side to seal hunt*

## ***In my City***

*Bill's Dreamscape*

*Plus:*  
*Lost & Found*  
*The Good Life*  
*Dear Barb*  
*Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan*  
*AUSU This Month*

*and much more...*

# THE VOICE MAGAZINE

April 21, 2006 - Volume 14, Issue 15

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

JESUS AND BUDDHA VERSION 2.0 FALL FAR SHORT OF THE ORIGINALS	Tim Peppin
BLANK SLATE	Melanie MacDonald
OPENING MAX STERN'S BOX: THE REAL RAIDERS OF LOST ART	Bercedes La Rosa

## columns

AUSU THIS MONTH	
THE GOOD LIFE - Some thoughts on the second half	Janice Behrens
LOST & FOUND - What it's like in my city	Bill Pollet
DEAR BARB - Are there more twins?	
CHRONICLES OF CRUISCIN LAN - Candibelle's Movie	Wanda Waterman St. Louis

## news and events

INTERNATIONAL NEWSDESK - Italian overseas voters oust Berlusconi
SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS
VOICE EVENT LISTINGS
CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

## from the readers

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
CLASSIFIEDS



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

**Re: “Boycott Canada” by Mandy Gardner, v14 i11 (2006-03-24)**

I first want to state that I think Mandy Gardner's article is well-written and well-needed. Every year, there is the issue of the annual seal hunt, with the cruelty, mass slaughter, blood, killing, etc. of baby seals. However, much of the world, and even Canada, have the wrong impression of the annual seal hunt. I would like to provide the truth, as objectively as possible, behind most of the misconceptions that the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and others put forth. Most of these misconceptions are described in a CBC news story and web pages of the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). They include: .

1. “Seals are clubbed” - In Newfoundland, seals are not clubbed. They are killed with guns. In Québec’s lower north shore, clubs or hakapiks are used, and have been shown to instantly and humanely kill a seal (DFO, March 17, 2006).
2. “Seals are skinned alive” - The seals are not skinned alive, despite a report from the IFAW. [Of note, many of the IFAW’s reports have been found to be fabricated, such as the report that a chef in New York has boycotted Canadian seafood (**editor's note:** source of comment unverified at press time).] The seals may appear to be alive while skinned, but this is due to their nervous system and a swimming reflex (DFO, March 22, 2006).
3. “Seals are killed to preserve fish populations” - The seal cull is an economic activity and way of life. Seals eat more than one type of fish. Many people have blamed seals for the reduction in cod stocks in Newfoundland. However, scientific reports state that over-fishing was the main cause of this reduction in cod stocks (Winters as cited in Hutchings et al, 1997, pp. 1200-1201).
4. “Seals are hunted solely for the fashion industry” - While the IFAW claims that seals are hunted solely for fashion, why did they insist Costco take seal oil pills off their shelves? Though it is true that many seals are killed for fashion, others are hunted for food and clothing (not necessarily fashionable clothing) (DFO, March 28, 2006).

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To some, the seal hunt looks barbaric. Of course, hunting anything can look barbaric. The unsightly pools of blood and carcasses covering the white ice look barbaric. So does the slaughter of cows, chickens, and lamb look barbaric, but we do not see this displayed on our televisions. Nor, are these animals as cute as the cuddly, glossy eyed, sad looking seals. What about other mass slaughters? Why are celebrities and the IFAW not concerned with the massive shrimp, crab, and lobster fishery? Millions are killed every year, while their populations are depleting. Do they not deserve attention? Are they not suffering when they are dumped, alive, in boiling-hot water? Are their shells and innards not tossed in the garbage dumps to rot? But then, they are not cute. Simply put, if seals were ugly, who would care?

Another point to note is that when I eat seal meat or use seal oil, I need not think of any part of the environment that was damaged to get this seal. When I eat beef, however, I need to think of the hundreds of acres of habitat that was destroyed to raise the animal used solely for human needs. Not that I am against beef.

I am not trying to convince others that the seal hunt is right. I am simply trying to convince others to look at the issue objectively. I do not agree with a massive seal hunt solely for the purpose of the fashion industry. I do, however, agree with the seal hunt for providing an income to those who desperately need it and have depended on this hunt all of their lives. I agree with the hunt if it provides food and clothing to those who need and depend on it.

So, I would not deprive myself of seafood through a boycott. Seafood is very healthy and nutritional. I would further research a controversial topic. I would not believe everything posted on the Internet. If I were still not satisfied, then I would protest in other ways, such as writing a letter or a petition. Just a thought.

**Leanne Elson**  
**Goose Bay, NL**

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**Bushwoman Bonnie donates to Wigs for Kids for the third time!  
A three-peat endeavour!  
Funds this year go to the Canadian Diabetes Association!**

On April 1, 2006, Bonnie (aka "Bushwoman") Nahornick hosted the Canadian Diabetes Association Fundraiser where her head was shaved for charity. Doorprizes were donated by a variety of individuals and businesses, including The Voice. Proceeds from the event will be donated to the Canadian Diabetes Association and her hair will be donated to Wigs for Kids. Bonnie works in the Calgary Learning Center of Athabasca University as a student advisor and this is her third shearing for charity in as many years.

Among the attendees were three current AU students, 2 alumni, an AU tutor a former AU Career Counsellor and the MLA from Calgary Varsity (Harry Chase). Bonnie's events bring together all facets of the AU community like nothing else!

Donations were received by both attendees and others, and it's not too late for you to contribute. While you mull it over, review the pictures of the event on the left to find out what you missed.

Wigs for Kids is a not-for-profit organization providing hair replacement for children affected by hair loss due to chemotherapy, alopecia, burns and other medical conditions.

You can still sponsor Bonnie. Funds are being collected for the **Canadian Diabetes Association**. It is possible to donate by cheque, cash and/or charge card (Visa, Mastercard or American Express). Income tax receipts will be issued on donations over \$15. For more information, please contact Bonnie (aka "Bushwoman") at 403-860-6569 or email [baldster2006@yahoo.ca](mailto:baldster2006@yahoo.ca)



## Jesus and Buddha Version 2.0 fall far short of the originals

By Tim Peppin

The Gateway (University of Alberta)

EDMONTON (CUP) -- In southern Nepal there was a 15-year-old boy named Ram Bahadur Bomjon who had apparently been meditating, without food or water, for over ten months. Despite the fact that that's impossible, and he was screened from public view every night, he was believed by many to be another Buddha. Many claimed a warm light emanated from his forehead, and, after having apparently been bitten by a snake, it was claimed he refused medical attention and meditated away the poison. Over 100,000 people came to see him, then he mysteriously disappeared.

Similarly, in Russia, there's a one-time traffic cop named Sergei Torop who's now touting himself as the reincarnation of Jesus. Upon meeting the director of a Russian UFO research centre who saw in him a "divine nature," he changed his name to Vissarion and started a commune.

Many of his followers think he has extrasensory powers and believe, among other things, that cancer is caused by aggression. Fittingly, one of his religion's maxims is "an untruth which brings good is wisdom." This new religion has 5,000 members living with Vissarion, and some 50,000 adherents scattered throughout Russia.

There are a few problems here. The first is that you wouldn't expect a reincarnated wise man or deity to be so concerned with money. There was an entrance fee to see Ram Bahadur, and money was also made from donations, and the sale of books, pamphlets, and audio tapes.

Likewise, Sergei Torop has been accused by many jaded followers of pilfering money, and often delivers his messages from atop a snowmobile. I guess this is the modern equivalent of a donkey.

The second is that you'd expect a reincarnated wise man or deity to be a little bit more awesome. The last Buddha was a prince, a master of martial arts, a skilled lover, and a knowledgeable scholar. Jesus walked on water, turned it to wine, and raised the living from the dead.

Now, we have a grubby teenager sitting under a tree, hawking audio tapes and trinkets, and probably sneaking meals at night, and a grubby middle-aged man wearing loose robes and preaching the virtues of farming.

That's weak.

The last problem with all of this was already mentioned. Hundreds of thousands of people have bought in to this nonsense. Despite the fact that the evidence supporting either of these people's claims is ridiculously flimsy, many people seem to find it compelling.

Despite the fact that many eyewitness locals deny them, rumours and legends have spread well beyond the region immediately surrounding these two.

And, despite the fact that these two, at present, are almost comically ridiculous, their influence is quickly growing. It reminds me of the spread of the world's major religions.

Go figure.

## Blank slate

*Buy a t-shirt, save a local job*

By Melanie MacDonald

*The Link (Concordia University)*



MONTREAL (CUP) -- It's probably fair to say that most of us haven't travelled around the world, but your closet has. While you'll surely find blouses from China, shoes from Brazil, coats from the Philippines, scarves from India and t-shirts from El Salvador, you'll be hard-pressed to find something made here. In an era filled with cheap labour and high production costs, clothing made in Canada has practically become obsolete.

In response to this, Blank, a store dedicated to selling clothes manufactured in Quebec, opened in November 2005 in the heart of the Plateau. According to Martin Delisle, Quebec has suffered from about 30,000 job losses in the textile industry in the past three years. Coming from a family that's been in the industry for forty years, this hit a

sensitive chord in him and he decided to do something about it. While his trade is graphic design, Delisle's foray into the clothing industry began about a year and a half ago. He started Trailer Park Trash with his friends, Michel Mayer and Benoit Gariépy. They wanted to print designs on shirts that were made in Quebec. Since they couldn't find any, they decided to produce their own shirts for their printed designs.

With the support of clients, they managed to turn Trailer Park Trash into a wholesale shirt-making company, developing the conception by opening Blank as a boutique selling these goods to help restore Quebec's textile industry. They created all the patterns themselves. "We created models that we then modified to satisfy our [wholesale] customer," he says.

Mindful of its beginnings, the clothing lends itself well to print design. All of the clothes are made from a blend of 50 per cent cotton and 50 per cent polyester. "We don't want our clothes to shrink or lose their colour," says Delisle. He says this is also the best surface for silk-screening, as the stretch of the fabric preserves the imprint of the design.

Delisle and his associates want to make local designers realize that if they don't stop buying material and labour service from China, they help contribute to increase in massive job losses in Quebec. "If you think you're going to save a dollar or two by buying something in China, it's going to cost you hundreds of dollars in unemployment insurance at the end of the year," he says. As such, one of the company's main priorities is to create jobs as well as to preserve the ones that are here. "It's simple," he says "we wanted to prove to people that we're still able to make affordable [clothing] in Quebec."

"When we started making our prototypes and evaluating their costs, we realized that we could deliver a product at reasonable price," he says. As well, local production gives Delisle the benefit of efficiency. According to him, the delivery and production time gets cut down to about two weeks compared to the five to six months one has to wait for a shipment coming from China.

The company employs about 25 people in total. According to Delisle, the company's dedication to preserving what they can of the Quebec labour has appealed to the current boutique employees. Part of Blank's dedication is to make sure that employees are compensated fairly for their labour. With employees working in production who have over 20 years experience in sewing, cutting and weaving fabric, Delisle is mindful of the kind of value that comes with the labour of shirt making. "We went to see the working conditions to make sure they were all acceptable," he says. Apart from ensuring that his employees receive very good wages, he mentions that all the employees are declared to the government.

Blank specializes in t-shirts, hoodies, camisoles, tank tops, scarves and bags. Riding on supporting the local industry, the boutique also carry jewellery that is made by two local designers. "The retail side [of the company] is exploding at the moment," he says. Apart from already including taxes in the products' pricetags, he also mentions that their products cost about 25 per cent less than American Apparel.

In a time when jobs within a local industry are lost in favour of getting cheaper labour in other parts of the world, Delisle gives good reason to open up as store like Blank. "I think it's about reinvesting in our industry, in our local economy, instead of giving money to someone else. It creates jobs directly in Montreal," he says.

Blank is located at 4276 Saint-Laurent. For more information check out their website at <http://www.wearblank.com>

## **Opening Max Stern's box: Finding out the real raiders of lost art**

By Mercedes La Rosa

The Link (Concordia University)

MONTREAL (CUP)-- Before Max Stern fled Germany for being Jewish in 1937, over 250 works of art belonging to his father's art gallery in Dusseldorf, the Julius Stern Art Gallery, were confiscated or sold by force by the Gestapo. When Stern immigrated to Montreal after leaving Britain for being German, he re-established himself as a force in the art world.

In the '40s Stern, having started as its intern, bought the renowned Dominion Gallery. He also spear-headed the initiative to open up Canadian art to the Canadian art market. He gave a significant amount of art work by artists like Paul-Emile Borduas, Emily Carr, John Lyman and Jean-Paul Riopelle to the Musee d'art contemporain since its inception in 1964. While Stern resolved to retrieve works confiscated from him, he eventually put this project to rest as his new life as an art dealer and collector in Canada started taking precedence. Out of the hundreds of pieces confiscated from Stern in Germany, only six were returned to him before he died in 1987. Upon his death, Stern bequeathed Concordia University, McGill University and Hebrew University as his estate's main beneficiaries.

The next few months will see Montreal doing its part to shaking the established art world as serious attempts are being made to retrieve art work from the estate of Max Stern. Headed by Clarence Epstein, president of Concordia University's Special Project's Department, the estate of Max Stern has found evidence proving 40 exact matches of art works belonging to Stern are being housed and sold primarily in 15 art auction houses in Germany.

On Friday, March 24, during the Max and Iris Stern International Symposium at Montreal's Musée d'art contemporain, Epstein declared an official notice to these auction houses to facilitate in gathering information for Stern's works. The Art Loss Register in London, the New York State Holocaust Claims Processing Office and the National Gallery of Canada Archives are collaborating with the Stern estate to reclaim works in question.

Years of research has found a recurring pattern where art auction houses, a majority of which are German, were consistently selling works once under Stern's name. Art auction house Lempertz, located in Cologne, was known to have advertised the 1937 forced sale of a painting owned by Stern. At the moment, the estate will start legal proceedings for a Stern painting located in Rhode Island.

Hoping to reclaim a significant amount of Stern's works, Epstein wants to make it known that those in possession of artworks being contested by the estate have a moral obligation to return the works to the estate and hopes that they respond accordingly.

# AUSU THIS MONTH

## New AUSU Executive Elected

AUSU elected a new council in March and now it has a new executive council which may be familiar to Voice readers. While AUSU executives are elected for two-year terms, last year council replaced the executive half way through the term due to the early departure of the VP External and the resignation of the President. To facilitate matters, the VP Finance voluntarily resigned and ran for re-election to allow council to hold a full executive election.

After half a term in their respective offices, the current executive all ran again for the positions and were re-elected by their fellow council members for the current term. Lisa Priebe of Calgary remains President, Lonita Fraser of Hamilton remains VP External and Karl Low of Calgary remains your VP Finance.

Special thanks to AU's Acting Vice President Academic, Dietmar Kennepohl, for collecting and counting the votes for this election, on behalf of AUSU.

## Health Plan for AUSU Members - Announced



Finally, AUSU members can save on health and dental benefits in Canada!

Your council has struck a deal with Student Benefits Administrators, an affiliate of Ingle International and Imagine Financial Ltd., to provide great rates to AUSU members on their commercial insurance products. The program offers a range of a-la-carte insurance services that include coverage for prescriptions, dental work, eye care and more. This program differs from those offered by other universities and students' associations in these key areas:

- the plan is available not only to AUSU members, but to all members of their families;
- the coverage can supplement other health and/or dental coverage you have in place with different providers. For example, if you have 50% dental coverage through another plan, you could "top up" your total coverage to 100% of your dental expenses;
- the coverage is flexible, to meet the needs of mature students and students in different locales;
- the plan will not be administered by your students' council, rather coverage will be set up directly through Ingle International and Imagine Financial Ltd. and Group Medical Services, who will also provide access to 1-800 support and customer service;

- this is an opt-in plan. No one is required to purchase coverage.

AUSU members who sign up for this program within 30 days of enrolment, or by May 31, 2006, are guaranteed coverage.

If you opt out now but later decide you want the plan, you and your dependents (if applicable) will be asked medical questions and also have restrictions placed on your coverage should you qualify. Because this is not the limited, mandatory plan offered by many universities our rates may not be quite as low as some school plans, but our coverage options are considerably more extensive. While standard university plans are designed to provide coverage for single people in their late teens or early twenties all living in the same locale and beginning and ending studies at the same time, this plan can accommodate families and persons of all ages who study year round and live across Canada. Actual rates will vary depending on your age and location. Please visit our Health Plan web page at

<http://www.ausu.org/services/healthinsurance.php> for more information and for all relevant contact information.

If you do not find your age group or location listed on the online rate sheets, or if you want additional coverage not listed with any of the plans, please call the insurer's toll-free line (the number is on the page listed above) and ask for more information about services not listed.

*\*AUSU has arranged for special rates for members. Tuition for AU undergrad courses includes an AUSU membership fee to cover the duration of the course plus six months. AUSU assumes no responsibility for the sale or administration of insurance services.*



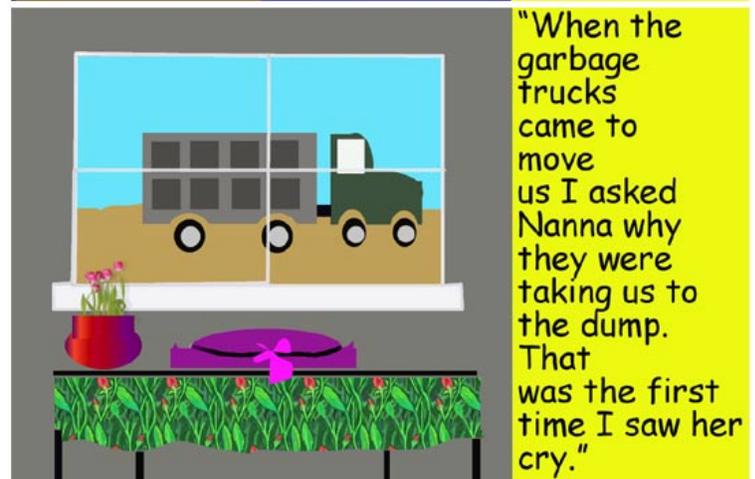
"I remember a place where the breeze was lilac sweet and peepers sang like throngs of angels."



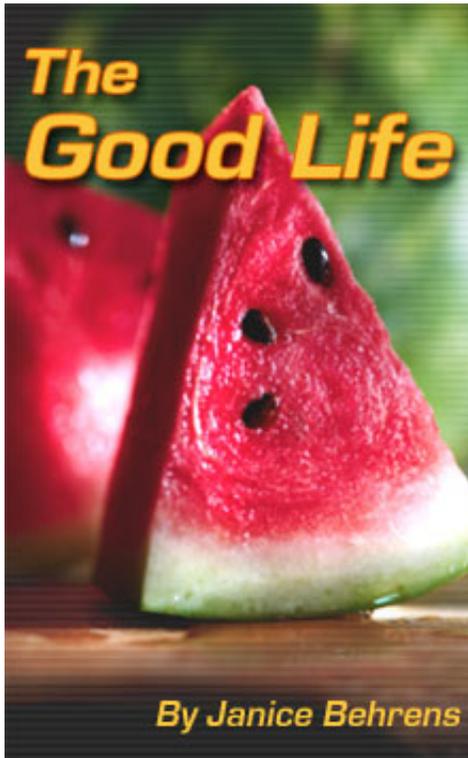
"I remember a place of prayer and rejoicing and deep thoughts."



"I remember a place where I became a fairy-tale princess every time I put on my Sunday-go-to-meetin' dress."



"When the garbage trucks came to move us I asked Nanna why they were taking us to the dump. That was the first time I saw her cry."



## Some thoughts on the second half

Perhaps inspired by the sense of rebirth that is tied up with Easter, my partner and I, both in our forties, were talking the other night about what exactly it is about the process of growing older that seems so pleasurable to us. I know that for many people, aging is filled with trauma and negative feelings. The conventional wisdom says that this negativity is fuelled by the sense that society doesn't place a very high value on age. In our western world, we celebrate youthful vigour and youthful beauty. Those of us in the second half of our lives are frequently made to feel unattractive, unproductive, and redundant. We are asked to step out of the way to make room for the young and the restless.

Still, as my partner and I concluded, there are many ways in which life becomes both simpler and richer as you evolve through the aging process. It becomes simpler because after you have experienced a lifetime of disappointments, struggles, sorrows, and all the other outrageous slings and arrows that inevitably come your way, you get to the realization that there

is not as much to be frightened of as you thought when you were young and scared of everything. When you're young, everything seems so serious and weighty. When you older, you simply understand that the sun will always rise tomorrow morning.

Life becomes richer as you age because (hopefully) you have learned something very important: to open your eyes and really see the wealth that surrounds you. I am not talking about mutual funds and real estate investments. I am talking about friends and family. I am talking about the cornucopia of simple pleasures that fill each and every day, from the smell of fresh baked bread and newly cut grass to the joy of hearing about your niece's latest soccer triumph.

Life also becomes so much easier because your experience has made you wiser. Hopefully you lose some of your inhibitions and neuroses. You can talk about things, like what pleases you in a sexual relationship, for instance, that would have been mortifying to your younger self. You finally begin to understand what is worth letting go of, and what is worth hanging onto for dear life.

Perhaps, if you've really paid attention to all those life lessons over the years, you may even have gained enough understanding of human nature and generosity of spirit to accept your own weaknesses and forgive your own failures as determinedly as you accept and forgive the weaknesses and failures of others.

# AU STUDENTS RUN TO HELP ABUSED WOMEN

## S.L.A.P. Update

*Here I am ready to write about training - so I spoke with my husband who gets the deer-in-the-headlights expression on his face after about tens minutes. This is when I realize that one person's obsession can be another person's instrument of boredom. Since the intent is not to inflict boredom, I think I should mix it up with some other "firsts" this group is dealing with.*

*When we began this venture the idea was to raise funds for our shelter and to challenge ourselves with an event that would bring a sense of unity to a group of completely diverse individuals. The physical training schedules are as different as the women involved and reflect the sections that each runner is committed to doing. I will write more on this in later weeks.*

*What is truly amazing is the organizational structure that has been put in place by a group of volunteers, from scratch. I believe that because of this we will be successful in our goals of bringing forward awareness of domestic violence and raising funds for the shelter. While all of us are committed, community spirited people this is the first time we have conceived/dreamed of an opportunity and implemented a plan to make it reality. That is the true gift that this event has given all of us; the ability to become the difference.*

*By the way, my training is going well. I did my first long run on Friday - 16 km in 1 hr and 45 minutes not bad for a beginning time. I ran watching the sunrise reflecting on the mountains...  
**GO DEATH RACER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!***

*Kim*

We are five normal, everyday ladies, all mums and two grandmothers, in training for this year's *Canadian Death Race*, a gruelling endurance race of 125km spanning over 24 hours and covering three mountains in Grande Cache, Alberta.

Why would we put ourselves through this? To raise money for Eagle Women's Emergency Shelter in the Foothills of Alberta, raise awareness, and help stamp out domestic violence. We have never tried anything like this but feel very strongly that domestic violence is out of control and needs to be addressed. Now.

It's a frightening fact that almost everyone knows someone who has been a victim of either physical or mental domestic abuse. We believe that increased exposure can help make victims aware that there are numbers they can call for help, and there is no need to suffer any longer. We also feel that domestic abuse and violence is a taboo subject that no one likes to acknowledge and this needs to change. Victims feel

humiliated and ashamed and we need to let them know it is ok to talk to someone and to get help.

We are now in full training for the race, and although before this all any of us had ever run was a bath and a temperature, we are determined to do as much as we can to help stop domestic violence. This is a very hard and gruelling race, but with the help and support from each other we hope to complete it and to raise as much money as possible for the shelter. If our hard work only helps one person get out of a frightening situation and gives them the strength to rebuild their life, then it will all have been worth it. Our team name is SLAP - Stop Letting Abuse Prevail. We have a team website with photos and information on each runner and about the shelter: [www.runforsafety.bravehost.com](http://www.runforsafety.bravehost.com)

We hope you will support us in our quest to stop domestic violence. The race takes place on the August long weekend, beginning Saturday the 5th at 8am and ending Sunday the 6th at 8am. Only 19 weeks to go!!! AU student, mother and death-racer, Kim Anderson.



*Dear Barb:*

*First, I want to say that I enjoy your column. Also, I've noticed lately that there seems to be more multiple births, especially twins. Everywhere I go I see someone pushing a double stroller. A few years ago this would be a unique sight and everyone would crowd around to see the babies. Now, most people just walk by, as I do. Has there been an increase in the incidents of multiple births, or am I just noticing them more as my biological clock ticks on?*

*Alexandria - Maine*

Excellent question, Alexandria. The incidence of multiple births has definitely increased in recent years. Since the 1970s the rate of twin births has risen sharply, as reported by Lynda Haddon, an educator who works with multiple birth families. According to Dennis Bueckert, who carried out a report for Health Canada, this increase is a result of advances in reproductive technology.

Bueckert says more women are establishing their careers before starting a family, resulting in childbirth at an older age. Many of these women are seeking the assistance of fertility clinics to become pregnant. Depending on the technique used, these pregnancies often result in multiple births.

According to Statistics Canada the rate of multiple births has increased from 1.9% in 1981 to 2.5% in 1997 and 97% of all multiple births are twin pregnancies. As reported in "Twin Life Magazine News" the highest incidence of fraternal twin births occurs in the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria and the lowest is in Japan.

Fraternal twins comprise 70% of all twins born. Fraternal twins share the same womb, but genetically they are no more alike than any two siblings. Identical twins are caused by one egg being fertilized by one sperm. Shortly after fertilization this egg splits into two identical halves. Identical twins are, in fact, clones of each other.

A woman has a higher chance of having a multiple birth if she has a family history of multiple births. For example in my family, my father has twin siblings, my brother has twin grandchildren and I have twin grandchildren. All the twins in my family are fraternal boy/girl twins.

I don't know how old you are Alexandria, but since you mention your biological clock, I will assume you may be into your thirties. Therefore keep in mind if you are planning to have children, the longer you put it off the higher your chances of having a multiple birth.

In the next few weeks I will be writing a column on some of the trials and tribulations of caring for and raising twins.

*E-mail your questions to [advice.voice@ausu.org](mailto:advice.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.*



## What it's like in my city

In the city of my imagination the tycoons and the plutocrats, the Donald Trumps and Jimmy Pattisons of the world, pull pedicabs up narrow cobblestone alleyways. There are dark stains under the armpits of their Armani suits. The cabs are filled with poets and midwives out for a bender.

In my city, the streets are all named after single mothers and surrealists. On the civic payroll, there are accordionists sitting in the branches of pear trees. Council meets monthly at the *Rainbow Laundry-Mat*. We exchange seaglass necklaces and jokes written on rice paper scrolls. We debate the relative merits of *A Day at the Races*, and *A Night at the Opera*.

All the city parks are named after stone-cutters and bellydancers. There are five year olds swimming in the fountains. Industrialists keep the public urinals sparkling clean.

In my city, council has come to the stunning decision that nature is, in fact, legal. Therefore any and all plants can be grown within the city limits, and all forms of harmless consensual sexuality are accepted and celebrated. Cell phones, SUVs, four dollar coffees, advertising billboards, and diamond-studded dog collars are, of course, illegal.

In my city, the statues in the square commemorate the heroism of clowns and kindergarten teachers. The pigeons enjoy them just the same.

During rush hour in my city the sky is thick with hot air balloons and the streets are clogged with stilt-walkers. On the every street corner the shrimp vendors and the cheese merchants, the palanquin makers and the pedlars of amulets, proclaim their wares. The smell of magnolia overpowers the stench of exhaust fumes.

Every city building is decorated with murals, and every boulevard is planted with nightblooming flowers. It is nearly impossible to find a single city block without a sidewalk cafe.

The haiku department at city hall spends most of its time on the rooftop garden, chatting with the civic astronomers as they busily draw maps of the constellations.

On hot summer nights every candle is lit at the all-night library. The french windows are open, and on every balcony a crowd gathers to watch the weekly lantern parade wind its way through the streets below.

My city is a city of mystery and intrigue. At midnight, when the moon is full, you can sometimes hear the eerie sound of flamingos howling up and down *Rene Magritte Avenue*.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

What's new here and around the world

Mandy Gardner



## Italian overseas voters oust Berlusconi

Mandy Gardner

In an exceptionally close April 9-10<sup>th</sup> election result, Silvio Berlusconi, Italy's Prime Minister (twice elected since 1994), lost his position ([CBC News, 2006](#)). The loss can be attributed to a change in electoral process that his government legislated. In December 2005, Berlusconi's centre-right political party named Forza Italia (translated as "Go Italy" and used as a soccer chant by fans of AC Milan, the national soccer team owned by Berlusconi) made an effort to equalize Italy's voting system by allowing overseas Italians to cast ballots. Now it seems those same, newly endowed voters have made enough of a difference to oust Forza Italia.

The Italian government has been in constant flux since the Second World War. In fact, every election since then has resulted in a coalition government. None of these governments has been able to serve its full five-year term, something that each consecutive governing body has tried, and failed, to put right.

Berlusconi is Italy's richest man, with property ranging from advertising and media to the national soccer team. His many critics accuse him of using his media holdings to paint a better picture of himself. It is said that the Italian voter cannot get away from favourable images of Forza Italia's leader. He has been accused of fraud and embezzlement, among other crimes. These accusations have resulted in charges, acquittals, and convictions that were overturned on appeal ([BBC News, 2006](#)). This week, Berlusconi is still not conceding defeat to his rival, Romano Prodi, who is the same man who took the Prime Minister's position away from Berlusconi in 1996.

Prodi is leading a coalition of centre-left political parties, brought together solely to challenge Berlusconi's conservative government. He served as Italy's Prime Minister immediately prior to Forza Italia's recent governance. He then served as President of the European Commission. He was responsible for the adoption of the Euro as currency throughout most of the European Union (EU). He has taken steps to make EU legislation more transparent to the public by publishing his own European Commission correspondence ([BBC News, 2003](#)).

This week, Prodi has accepted the challenge of cleaning up Italy's immense bureaucracy, reducing its deficit (which is higher than allowed by EU rules), cutting labour costs, and pulling troops out of Iraq. His coalition won power by a mere sliver of 25,000 votes, with a massive 83% voter turnout. The win is accounted to the overseas ballots; Berlusconi has demanded a recount.

### References

BBC News staff (2003, May 20). Profile: Romano Prodi. *BBC News*. Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3039757.stm>

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CBC News staff (2006, April 11). The Italian election; Hopelessly split? *CBC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/italy>

# SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

*Contributed by Zil-E-Huma Lodhi*

## GREAT CANADIAN SCHOLARSHIPS

Value: \$1,500 - \$2,000

Number of Awards: 4

Application Deadline: April 30

Description: Studentawards.com is pleased to offer up to \$8,000 in cash prizes through the fourth annual Great Canadian Scholarship Program. We are running this scholarship program for the fourth year in a row because we recognize the need for our members to find supplementary sources of funding to complete their education. This award is open to all studentawards.com members - Canadian citizens and permanent residents only. The winners will be notified by phone.

Contact Information:

<http://www.Studentawards.com/Boursetudes.com>

## RETAIL AS A CAREER 2006 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The 2006 Retail as a Career Scholarship Program is in full swing. Developed in conjunction with leading Canadian retailers, the Retail as a Career Scholarship Program is open to post-secondary students interested in a career in the retail industry. RCC will award twenty \$1,000 scholarships to provide financial assistance to committed and deserving students who are pursuing an education in retail or business related post-secondary program.

20 winners will be selected and will receive their awards at STORE 2006 - Canada's retail conference, taking place June 5 & 6, 2006. All travel and accommodation will be provided, as well as full delegate passes to the conference - a fantastic opportunity for you to meet with executives and see how the industry really works!

Web site: <http://www.retaileducation.ca/cms/sitem.cfm/scholarship>

## CBIE INTERNATIONAL LEARNING GRANTS

Academic Year 2005/06

Application deadline: April 22, 2005

The CBIE International Learning Grants (ILG) promote international education and international relations careers. ILG allow undergraduate students to finance the costs associated with international learning, e.g. travel and living costs.

Interested candidates must complete and forward to CBIE by April 22, 2005, an online application form along with supporting documents as outlined in the Guidelines of the program. (Please read the Guidelines before submitting your application form.)

Application Form

Website: [http://www.cbie.ca/download/grants/ILGguidelines\\_and\\_application0506-en.pdf](http://www.cbie.ca/download/grants/ILGguidelines_and_application0506-en.pdf)



# Voice Events Listings

On and off campus events worldwide

To list events in your area, e-mail [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with "events" in the subject line.

## british columbia

### SPRING THEATRE CLASSES

February 06 to May 01, 2006 - Kelowna, BC  
Kelowna Actors Studio - Ticket Prices very reasonable  
Kelowna Actors Studio - 250-862-2867  
[info@kelownaactorsstudio.com](mailto:info@kelownaactorsstudio.com)  
<http://www.KelownaActorsStudio.com>

### SEINENDAN THEATRE COMPANY OF JAPAN

March 10 to August 11 - 8:00 PM - Victoria, BC  
Metro Studio - Ticket Prices - All seats \$18  
(250) 383-2663 - [info@intrepidtheatre.com](mailto:info@intrepidtheatre.com)  
<http://www.intrepidtheatre.com>

## ontario

### THEATRE IN THE TREES "LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS"

on now to April 29, 2006

6:30 PM - 10:30 PM

Guelph, ON - The Arboretum Centre

Ticket Prices - \$53.00 / person inclusive for buffet dinner and performance. Cash Bar available.

519-824-4120 ext. 54110 [arbor@uoguelph.ca](mailto:arbor@uoguelph.ca)

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum>

"Last of the Red Hot Lovers" is an American comedy. It runs every Saturday except Easter Weekend.

### SCIENCE SATURDAYS WITH MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

January 22 to May 28, 2006 - Hamilton, ON

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM - Hamilton Children's Museum

Adults - \$1.00 - Children - \$3.00

905-546-4848 - [childrensmuseum@hamilton.ca](mailto:childrensmuseum@hamilton.ca)

McMaster University science students provide hands-on science activities for children and families. Venture Physics and Let's Talk Science Team bring along "the punky physics roller coaster" and other creative science demonstrations and activities. DATES: Saturdays, March 12, 19 & 26; April 16 & 30; May 21 & 28. 6 yrs and up

## maritimes

### ST. JOHN'S CIRCUS: GROUP PRACTICE

St Johns, NF - Tuesdays - Mun Athletics building - FREE

<http://nick.wirelesszero.net/cgi-bin/juggling/YaBB.cgi>

Everyone's a Star! Juggling, Unicycling, Magic, Clowning, Poi, Diabolo, Fire, and whatever YOUR skill(s) is!

Tues At 7:00 PM - Thurs At 7:00 PM - Sat At 2:00 PM

Sessions usually run about 3 hrs...

### 123 SENSE

St Johns, NF - Saturdays - 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Eastern Edge Gallery, 72 Harbour Drive

free - 709-739-1882 - <http://www.easternedge.ca>

Jean Klimack (Winnipeg); Dave Yonge (B.C); Tania Lewis (NY/Newfoundland)

These three artists present in different mediums (video, drawing and photography) odd senses of the everyday, urban myths and gentrification.

To list events in your area, e-mail [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with "events" in the subject line.



*Contributed by Lonita Fraser*

#### **CONTINENTAL DEFENCE: POLICIES, THREATS AND ARCHITECTURE**

May 4 - 6 2006 - Calgary

[njmackie@ucalgary.ca](mailto:njmackie@ucalgary.ca)

<http://www.cmss.ucalgary.ca/conferences/continentaldefence>

This conference will follow shortly after the report of the Binational Planning Group on the renegotiation of NORAD, and the emergence of Canada Command as a working organisation. These events foreshadow major changes in Continental Defence and the security relationship between Canada and the United States. They will draw public attention to these topics in a way that has not happened for two generations. This conference will bring together major figures from the Canadian and United States military, alongside leading public and academic commentators. It will address all aspects of Continental Defence, with topics ranging from the future of American-Canadian defence relations to the issue of strategic threat to North America. All Persons planning to attend must register in advance! All fees are quoted in Canadian dollars Includes 3 Lunches (May 4, 5, 6) and one dinner (May 5), all sessions, all coffee breaks, conference package.

Until April 1 - \$294.25 (\$275 + \$19.25 GST)

As of April 1st - \$347.75 (\$325 + \$22.75 GST)

You may register by credit card, cheque or by invoice.

#### **27TH ANNUAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON LEGAL ISSUES OF EDUCATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

April 30 - May 3, 2006

Orlando, FL, USA

Please visit [www.lrpconferences.com](http://www.lrpconferences.com) or call toll-free 1-800-727-1227 for more information.

#### **ANCIENT SCIENCE & MODERN SECRETS CONFERENCE**

May 5 - 7, 2006 - Kempton, Illinois, USA

<http://www.wexclub.com/pages/events.html>

##### **Guest Speakers**

David Hatcher Childress: Atlantis, Mu & the Power System of the Gods

William Henry: The Oracle of the Illuminati

Joseph Farrell: The SS Brotherhood of the Bell & the Reich of the Black Sun

Christopher Dunn: Evidence of Ancient Machining

Kenn Thomas: Parapolitics and Modern Conspiracy

Jerry Smith: The Spear of Destiny in History & Legend

Sesh Heri: Nikola Tesla & the Wonder of the Worlds

and more discussion between speakers and other special guests.

##### **Conference Costs**

\$120; \$50 for a.m presentations only (includes lunch); \$65 for p.m. presentations only (includes dinner).

\$25 per any session (excluding any meals); Drinks and tipping are extra; The bar is a cash bar.

Accommodations are not included in the conference fee. Call 1-815-253-9000 to book a room at the B&B's (they fill up early). <http://www.wexclub.com/pages/events.html>. For information on the conference or on accommodations, call WEX at 815-253-9000, or Adventures Unlimited at 815-253-6390 Mon.-Sat., 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.

#### **PAEDIATRIC UPDATE 2006**

May 1 - 6, 2006 - Toronto

<http://www.cme.utoronto.ca>

This 6 day paediatric conference provides current evidence based clinical information in a variety of learning formats, including a full APLS course, workshops and lectures on neonatal transport, sedation, emergency medicine, dermatology and much more. Intermediate to Advanced level of Continuing Medical Education - MainCert, MainPro and AMA credits.

### **GASTROINTESTINAL ENDOSCOPY**

May 3, 2006 - Blacksburg, VA, USA

<http://www.conted.vt.edu/introge/>

Gastrointestinal Endoscopy - Beginning Level - is scheduled for May 3-5, 2006 on the Virginia Tech Campus. This intensive endoscopy course will consist of 12 hours of classroom instruction and 12 hours of hands-on laboratory instruction. It is intended for Veterinarians that either have no endoscopic experience or limited (20 cases) endoscopic experience. Didactic instruction will be supplemented with case material demonstrating where endoscopy is useful in diagnosing GI cases. The registration fee of \$2,850 includes lodging May 2 through May 4, lectures and clinical laboratory, handouts, reception and dinner on Wednesday and Thursday evening in addition to a CEU Certificate.

### **DEVELOPING & OPERATING UPSCALE HOSPITAL FACILITIES AND PATIENT SERVICES**

May 4 - 5, 2006 - Palo Alto, CA, USA

<http://www.acius.net>

Network with executives in the healthcare industry that are looking to develop a more "luxurious hotel" like setting. Featuring an on-site tour of Stanford University Medical Center. Hear live case studies presented by Celebration Health, Johns Hopkins, NY Presbyterian, UCSF, University of Cleveland and many more.....

### **PRACTICAL ADVANCES IN DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING**

May 21 - 26, 2006 - Yosemite National Park, CA, USA

<http://www.cme.ucsf.edu>

The goal of this five-day course is to provide the practicing diagnostic radiologist with a practical and up-to-date review of recent advances in diagnostic imaging. This will include presentations on the current imaging techniques for the evaluation of diseases of the central nervous system, chest, abdomen, musculoskeletal system as well as current approaches to breast imaging.

### **CANCER, CULTURE & LITERACY: SOLUTIONS ADDRESSING HEALTH DISPARITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, 5TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE**

May 18 - 20, 2006 - Clearwater Beach, FL, USA

[http://www.moffitt.usf.edu/about\\_moffitt/calendar/events/200605.asp](http://www.moffitt.usf.edu/about_moffitt/calendar/events/200605.asp)

Our conference focuses on conceptual and methodological issues in community-based participatory research (CBPR) for creating solutions for impacting health disparities related to cancer, culture and literacy. The overall goal of this conference is to improve the care across the continuum of cancer control by providing and enhancing research strategies and skills of participants to better introduce culture and literacy components into the development of effective cancer communications and research. Participants and presenters will exchange and disseminate information relevant to communications in cancer control, and they will be challenged to rethink, refine and enhance their approaches in research. Participants will experience: presentations by keynote speakers, general discussions, poster presentations, break-out sessions, breakfast roundtable discussions and pre-conference skill-building workshops.

### **U.S. EPA SCIENCE FORUM 2006**

May 16 - 18, 2006 - Washington, D.C. USA

Your Health, Your Environment, Your Future

This year's Forum highlights advances in risk assessment science, investigates the relationship between the environment and public health, and examines the complementary roles of Federal public health agencies. [epa.gov/scienceforum](http://epa.gov/scienceforum). There is no registration fee to attend the EPA Science Forum. Once you register online, you will receive a confirmation email with additional logistical information within one business day. For More Information please contact:

Alina Martin - (703) 318-4678 - [tcs-events@saic.com](mailto:tcs-events@saic.com)

#### **DEPLOYABLE MEDICINE CONFERENCE**

May 15 - 17, 2006 - Washington D.C USA

<http://www.marcusevans.com>

Key Issues to be Addressed:

- Analyzing current and future developments in deployable medicine
- Effective conduct of forward surgical units and hospital wings
- Leveraging technology to assist in casualty treatment

#### **NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION OF INTRAMURAL RESEARCH**

May 11 - 12, 2006

Bethesda, Maryland, USA

<http://intramural.nimh.nih.gov/ResearchFestival/>

In addition to the scientific agenda, students will be given opportunities to meet with current post-doctoral Fellows and NIMH Scientists to discuss the science being conducted throughout the Division of Intramural Research Programs in an informal environment.

#### **DISEASE MANAGEMENT COLLOQUIUM**

May 10 - 12, 2006 - Philadelphia PA USA

<http://www.dmconferences.com>

The Disease Management Colloquium presents case studies of disease management efforts in a variety of settings. The Colloquium explores the role of disease management as it affects Medicare, Medicaid, the commercially insured, and the under- and uninsured; the role of evidence-based medicine; the use of incentives for physician and consumers; new tools and techniques; innovations by health plans and disease management companies; and key legislative and policy issues affecting the future of disease management.

The Colloquium seeks to better educate government agencies, the health care industry (including health plans and providers), employers, and the general public about the important role disease management programs play in improving health care quality and outcomes for persons subject to chronic conditions.

#### **THE 5TH ANNUAL HAWAII INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL SCIENCES**

May 31 - June 3, 2006 - Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

<http://www.hicsocial.org>

The main goal of the 2006 Hawaii International Conference on Social Sciences is to provide an opportunity for academicians and professionals from various social sciences related fields from all over the world to come together and learn from each other. An additional goal of the conference is to provide a place for academicians and professionals with cross-disciplinary interests related to social sciences to meet and interact with members inside and outside their own particular disciplines.

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

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## THE VOICE

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