

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 15 Issue 10
March 23, 2007



Facing Challenges

A way to grow

Masks

which face is real

When madness approaches

Daath album not easy to comprehend

*Plus:
Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan
Music to Eat Lunch to
This and That
From Where I Sit*

and much more...

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

March 23, 2007 - Volume 15, Issue 10

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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.

To AU Students

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

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

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

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

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THE VOICE GROWS

New Editor Expands Staff and Brings New Focus to Voice

By Tamra Ross

Dear friends and loyal Voice readers,

I'm delighted to announce that *The Voice* has a brand new Managing Editor and you might already know her. Sandra Livingston has been writing for *The Voice* since 2005, submitting some fantastic articles on a wide range of topics as well as a terrific book review for the newsletter of the Athabasca University Literature Society.

A program student at AU who lives in Ontario, Sandra is keenly aware of the joys and challenges encountered by our readers and students of distance education.

And what of me?

Readers have no doubt noticed that I have had less time to devote to *The Voice* for some months now. While I love this publication and will always remember it with fondness (I began with *The Voice* in 2002, hired on a pitch to move to a magazine, rather than a newspaper format), the fact is that AUSU is growing at a rate of 10% or more a year, keeping pace with the University, and the demands of representing the AUSU membership continue to grow. While it was once easy for a single person to balance Voice production with communications and management duties for AUSU, those days are gone. AUSU itself has increased from one to three staff, with more positions possibly being created in the next year or two. For some time the Voice has been completed regularly over the weekend, as my AUSU duties fill my days (and some evenings) during the week. The staffing change will ensure that your paper comes out on time, that it has the attention it deserves, and that I have more time to devote to my AUSU duties.

I am not leaving *The Voice*, however. I will remain your Editor in Chief, overseeing operations and managing Voice finances. We do not intend to dramatically change the paper—rather, we want to expand it by increasing content and the breadth of coverage. Readers like our format and the kinds of articles we offer, and we will always keep that in mind. Having a managing editor who can devote her full time to the *Voice* will ensure that we can offer more of what you want.

In Sandra we have found an editor who cares passionately for this paper and the people it represents. She has some fantastic ideas for bringing the student voice to the forefront of this paper (which is, after all, our purpose), and I'm excited to see them come to fruition.

Also, because the new editor does not also work directly for AUSU, she is in a position to view AUSU operations with a more detached eye, and I encourage her to provide commentary on the union wherever she sees fit.

Of course to make this paper a success, nothing is more important than the writers. We need people who want to share their stories, and who can write with passion and conviction. All topics are considered, because our readers are from every walk of life. If you don't have time to write an

article, you may want to be interviewed by Linda for a student profile. If that's not to your liking, then submit a Letter to the Editor to share your thoughts with fellow readers.

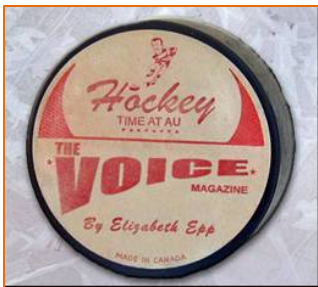
We'd also love to revive a column like the popular "Sounding Off", where students can share their comments on important issues. We need you, however, to tell us what issues you want to see covered.

With our new editor in place, *The Voice* is ready to fulfill its potential and become the best student publication it can be.

I've had a great time with *The Voice*, and I hope this position is fulfilling for Sandra as it has been for me. I've learned so much about the AU student body from this paper, and about Canadians and people around the world. I will take that knowledge with me wherever I go, and be wiser for it.

Thank you for sharing your stories and lives with *The Voice*. Please never hesitate to write and let us know what moves you, and how we can serve you better,

Tamra Ross
Editor in Chief



Hockey Time at AU

By Elizabeth Epp

Hey folks. It's been a while since I wrote a hockey column, but there hasn't been much happening in the NHL—until now. Playoffs are just around the corner (literally weeks) and the game has been getting faster and harder (and dirtier). A few nasty hits have been thrown around; nasty enough to warrant suspensions from the league. That's never a good thing, but this close to the playoffs it could be unbelievably detrimental to those teams as a whole.

First of all, there was the Kaberle - Janssen hit on March 2, and that has had tongues wagging all through the league. During a game, Kaberle was smashed in the side of the head by Janssen's elbow—deliberately. Kaberle fell to the ice, hitting his head off the surface on the way down. He was removed from the play area by stretcher and diagnosed with a minor concussion, and is already eager to get back on the ice. According to Kaberle (1), he doesn't expect an apology. "It doesn't matter to me really," he said. He's expected to return later this week. Janssen was suspended from the league for three games and fined.

The nastiest hit so far is definitely reminiscent of the McSorley - Brashear hit of seven years ago. On March 8, New York Islanders player Chris Simon delivered a two-handed blow to Ryan Hollweg with his stick, leaving Hollweg bloody and unconscious on the ice for several minutes. Simon was immediately ejected from the game, and has been suspended for the remainder of the regular season as well as from the playoffs (2). In terms of games missed, it is the longest suspension yet in NHL history. Hollweg is recovering nicely, requiring only a few stitches, and is expected to return to the ice with the New York Rangers in their upcoming game versus Pittsburgh.

This just goes to show the extreme tension the players are under during this rush to the playoffs. The only guaranteed shoo-ins are Buffalo and New Jersey in the East, and Nashville and

Anaheim in the West. All the other spots are still up for grabs, leaving players desperate to pull off the performances of their lives. The following is a list of the teams in the order they stand at the moment, most points to least, according to the NHL's online standings (3). Remember, only the top eight teams in each division (East and West) will make the playoffs.

Eastern Conference: *Buffalo, New Jersey, Atlanta, Ottawa, Pittsburgh, Tampa Bay, NY Rangers, Carolina, Toronto, Montreal, NY Islanders, Florida, Boston, Washington, Philadelphia.*

Western Conference: *Nashville, Anaheim, Vancouver, Detroit, San Jose, Dallas, Minnesota, Calgary, Colorado, St. Louis, Edmonton, Columbus, Los Angeles, Chicago, Phoenix.*

(1) The Sporting News. "Kaberle expects to return on Friday." Retrieved March 22, 2007.
<http://www.sportingnews.com/yourturn/viewtopic.php?t=189241>

(2) CBC Sports. "Simon suspended for rest of season, playoffs." Retrieved March 22, 2007.
<http://www.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/story/2007/03/11/chris-simon-suspension.html>

(3) The National Hockey League. "Standings." Retrieved March 22, 2007.
<http://www.nhl.com/nhl/app?service=page&page=StandingsPage&type=CON>

Lost & Found

By Bill Pollett

Gallery of Masks

I made this mask out of sycamore bark and my grandfather's silver hair. It is the one I wear to all official public functions—banquets, weddings, funerals, hangings. I stole it from his face when he was inside his coffin and no one was watching. With this mask, I always wear a golden pocket watch, and a black wool cloak, lined with cherry silk.

This is the mask I wear for cheap magic tricks, like stealing hearts and bringing back the dead in the shape of ghosts. I made it from the skin of those who trusted me with their deepest secrets. I keep it soft with midnight oil.

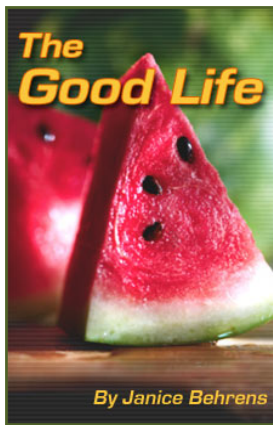
This is the first mask I ever made. I stapled it together from odds and ends: black construction paper from my grade five classroom; the skin of a poisonous snake I found at the bottom of a dry creek bed; a *Green Lantern* comic book; a photograph of my mother laughing beside a gargoyle the year before she died. I painted the mask burnt umber and wore it on the back of my head whenever I walked home after dark, so that all the ghosts would think I was looking their way.

This is the mask I use to write doggerel and fake obituaries. No, those aren't diamonds decorating it, just bits of a shattered mirror. Wait until I turn off the light, then you can shine this flashlight in my face, and I'll throw constellations across the ceiling.



For years, I thought I had lost this one. I stole it from a fat Hungarian fortune teller who worked out of the back of a tea shop on Mercer. For fifty cents, she would scatter the bones of lost cats across her table, and tell you when and how you will die. For a dollar more, she would lift up her blouse and show her giant breasts, luminous with scar tissue. In the room upstairs, her daughter played *Surabaya Johnny* on an out-of-tune piano.

This mask is my particular favourite, the one I wear whenever I leave the house. You may have seen me wearing it at the theatre or the shopping mall. Do you like the blue and green feathers, the upturned lips? Look closely, you just may see your own reflection, tiny and perfect, in the fake glass eyes. Be careful when you try it on, though; the jagged hooks can leave a mark.



The Good Life

By Janice Behrens

The Value of Challenge

I remember a very wise person once telling me that one of the luckiest things you can come across during the course of your day is the opportunity to face a challenge that will cause you to grow and change in ways you never expected. It is during these times of being stretched and shaped by unexpected events that we break out of our moulds, and surprising new horizons can open up before us.

Most of us, when we are being interviewed for a new job, claim to really thrive on new challenges. This is what prospective employers want to hear, and it is a comforting, positive thing to tell ourselves, as long as we are not imminently faced with a real challenge that we fear may be beyond our capacity to handle.

I wonder, though, in our heart of hearts, if we believe this to be true. I hate to admit this, but much of my life I have been in the business of avoiding problems and situations that I am not really sure I will be able to overcome. I still remember, for instance, pretending to be sick in elementary school gym class to avoid having to do the flexed arm hang in front of my classmates. In high school, I somehow developed the belief that creative expression was not my strength, and I spent many years avoiding painting, drawing, and creative writing. My skills were math, science, and physical education, and I unwaveringly stuck to my strong suits. Far too late, I came to the realization that, like all human beings, I am a complex being, filled with ideas and the creative energies needed to express them.

If we accept that life is an adventure, a mysterious experience filled with danger and opportunity, we should also accept that danger and challenge are part of the adventure. Of course, accepting danger and challenge also means accepting the inevitability of moments of sorrow, pain, and failure in our lives. We are none of us immune to making mistakes or falling flat on our faces. What is important is that we do not let the knowledge of such risks cause us to always play it safe, to always sit on the sidelines.

If I believed in the value of having any regrets in life, I would like to take back all those years I spent avoiding situations that I worried would make me look foolish or weak. I would take a whole lot more chances, and learn a lot more things from the times that I "failed." And right now, I'm hoping that the next time I'm lucky enough to meet a challenge, I won't back down from it, and I'll recognize it for the opportunity it is.

The Chronicles Of Cruiscin Lan

Wanda
Waterman
St. Louis



Budget a First Step to Good University Funding: Critics

Federal budget separates PSE money, promises increases

Nadya Bell, Ottawa Bureau Chief

OTTAWA (CUP) -- Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion says there is nothing in the federal budget for students, but some groups are hopeful increases to provincial transfers will mean money for universities.

"The dedicated transfer is kind of a macro issue, it's providing reliable transparent funding for provinces, which is going to force them to improve post-secondary education for students," said CASA director Phillippe Ouellette.

"It's kind of a couple steps away from helping students, but this is one of the major problems in post-secondary education—lack of accountability."

Other groups are disappointed, but still encouraged by the spending on transfer payments, scholarships and research. The Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Canadian Federation of Students both criticized the budget for not providing enough money for students and universities.

The budget increases university funding by \$800 million next year, after a consultation with the provinces. It also plans to increase the Canadian Social Transfer by three per cent for every year after.

"I think it's a positive first step but there is still a lot of work that needs to be done in terms of making sure that money reaches students," said Amanda Aziz, national chairperson of the CFS. "The budget was very silent on issues of a national grants system for students."

The big debate is on change to the Canada Social Transfer, money the federal government gives the provinces [to] pay for social assistance, social services and post-secondary education.

This budget changes the transfer by giving provinces money on a per-capita basis, and by saying that 25 per cent of each province's payment should be spent on post-secondary education.

CASA and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada argue that setting aside a quarter of the transfer for universities is a positive step towards a dedicated transfer for post-secondary education, while the CFS and CAUT say there is not enough money.

Ouellette says showing exactly how much federal money the provinces should spend on their universities will make the system much more accountable.

"Now students can really point the finger at provinces if tuition goes up," Ouellette said.

A dedicated transfer payment has been a common demand from all university and student lobby groups since health-care groups won the Canada Health Transfer from the federal government.

The budget increases university funding by \$800 million next year, after a consultation with the provinces. It also plans to increase the Canadian Social Transfer by three per cent for every year after.

"I'm not sure why it's going to take them a year to do, their projected surplus is more than any other government has ever had, the priority is to do it now," Ouellette said.

Robert Best, vice-president of national affairs for AUCC, says it will be important for students and professors to watch the negotiations between the federal and provincial governments over the next year.

"It will be very important for the governments to negotiate mutually agreed objectives to ensure that the dollars really are spent on post-secondary education," he said.

Aziz says the CFS will be pressuring the provinces to pass the money along to universities. But the amount of the money in the transfer will be still \$1 billion short of the amount spent in 1992 on post-secondary education, according to James Turk of CAUT.

In two years the provinces will receive \$3.2 billion for post-secondary education. Turk says that if the government was spending as much as they did in 1992, accounting for population and inflation, the amount should be \$4.2 billion.

"In terms of what is needed for post-secondary education [the budget] was a disappointment," Turk said.

Denise Savoie, the NDP critic for post-secondary education, hopes the government will consider her Canada Education Act, a private members bill, as a way to ensure the money is spent on maintaining national standards for post-secondary education. But she says the promise of funding for universities is empty without an agreement from the provinces.

"There is so much room to fudge, because if it's not a dedicated transfer we don't know where it is going," Savoie said.

The decision to give provinces per capita funding based on population is also drawing criticism because it is not reflective of the number of universities in the provinces. Provinces such as Nova Scotia—with many universities but a low population—will receive less per student than other provinces.

Music To Eat Lunch To

By Mandy Gardner



Daath: The Hinderers

Released: March 20, 2007
Label: Roadrunner Records
Tracks: 13

Okay, first things first, the band name isn't pronounced the way it looks; say 'goth' but put a 'd' at the front and you've got the idea. *The Hinderers* is death metal, pure and simple. Daath uses complicated, furiously fast, high-pitched guitar riffs behind a gruff voice that can at best be described as incomprehensible. At worst, it's the kind of voice that makes a humble music reviewer wonder if she can withstand the impact for an entire 13 tracks. If you're used to metal bands then you're better braced for *The Hinderers* than some, but if not you might want to take a moment to think about your real feelings toward Slipknot, Korn, and especially Napalm Death before you pop this into the CD player. As it happens, I spent some quality time listening to a few metal bands when I was in high school and due to that essential training I did last the entire album! I like to think this proves my dedication to the musical world.

Now, I have to admit that I can't possibly rate this record. It's simply too far off my scale of comprehension, and I don't want to unfairly accord a number to something I can't even interpret. My usual questions of melody and meaning are lost in a sea of frenzied guitar solos and guttural shouts, and since the band doesn't seem to have published their lyrics anywhere I have to give up hope of ever understanding an entire phrase throughout. My very best language skills were stretched to get this tidbit from "Festival Mass Soulform":

Philosophies are fraught, the earth is overwrought (1)

So, let's call this a deep album. Fair enough? Given the genre, it is pretty self-evident that Daath is not singing about something entirely inane, let's say the girl all the bad guys want. In fact, it's the kind of soundtrack I would give to those obscure fantasy novels that only me and a handful of other weary airport dwellers ever seem to read. Ever read *Gifts*? If so, imagine it made into a 3D animated movie and then give *The Hinderers* free rein. "Who Will Take the Blame" and "Dead on the Dance Floor" in particular have a movie feel to them; tracks like these sound like they were made for hard-core vampire movies, and if done well I'd really enjoy the two in conjunction with one another.

Alone, it's another story. Maybe one black day when I am tragically alone and bordering on madness I will remember this . . .

(1) Daath. (2007). Festival Mass Soulform. On *The Hinderers* [CD]. New York: Roadrunner Records.

This and That . . .

Entertainment Tidbits

By Elizabeth Epp

Forbes Magazine and Forbes.com recently released their annual list of the world's richest people. Topping the list for the umpteenth time is Microsoft founder and owner, Bill Gates, who is worth a reported 56 billion dollars. What do you do with that much money? Coming in a close second is an investor by the name of William Buffet, whose total net worth equals up to 52 billion dollars. Rounding out our top three is a relative unknown, owner of American Movil (a Mexican telecommunications company), by the name of Carlos Slim Helu, worth about 49 billion dollars (1).

For all us working stiffs, it's tax season again but this year there was an interesting twist. A computer glitch in the Canada Revenue Agency's computers prevented people from filing online for several days, delaying the entire process. Yet a statement from Stephen Harper reveals that there will be no extension on the tax deadline (2). Sorry folks. Taxes still have to be filed on time—but don't expect the same about your return. Many fear that the only effect felt from this "glitch" is a definite delay in the acquisition of the tax returns.

Artificial limbs have become commonplace in humans, but what about within the animal kingdom? A Chinese rescue team in the northern reaches of China are attempting to find a way to give a panda bear a replacement paw. The panda was rescued after a vicious fight with two other pandas, resulting in the loss of its paw. The panda's ability to walk and eat have been severely impaired, leaving the rescuers no choice but to attempt a replacement as they believe that the panda will certainly die without it (3).

It's been a tough time for some Hollywood parents. Johnny Depp spent days in an England hospital with a desperately ill daughter. Lily-Rose Depp became seriously ill with a blood disorder that went undiagnosed for some time, but which has been revealed today to be the deadly E. Coli. The virus apparently shut down the child's kidneys, putting her life in danger. Depp and his partner, French singer/actress Vanessa Paradis, stayed at the child's side for days, with Depp taking time away from filming Tim Burton's *Sweeney Todd*. Filming will resume next week (4).

Did You Know: Bill Clinton's cat, Socks, was the only "First Cat" to ever hold residence in the White House? While all the other Presidents were animal owners, all those coming before and after Clinton boasted dogs as their pets.

(1) Forbes - The World's Billionaires http://www.forbes.com/2007/03/07/billionaires-worlds-richest_07billionaires_cz_lk_af_0308billie_land.html

(2) Canada.com - Harper: No deadline extension despite glitch <http://www.canada.com/topics/technology/story.html?id=a9bb250e-b72c-4d5f-b025-0acf7d012e1e>

(4) Yahoo News - China panda seeks artificial paw http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/afp/070308/oddities/china_animals_panda_offbeat

(3) Hollywood.com - Depp's Daughter Had E. Coli Virus http://www.hollywood.com/news/Depps_Daughter_Had_E_Coli_Virus/3672691



International News Desk

By Mandy Gardner

Social Credit Lives?

Now I was under the impression that the Social Credit Party had gone out of action years ago, but a weekend trip back to my hometown of Stettler proves this theory wrong. I saw Party posters on two homes and can't say for sure just how much support it has there but, as usual, Stettler has surprised me (on

two counts, specifically: with the existence of a political movement that is not *exactly* right wing and the with fact that its recycling facilities have actually *diminished* in the last four or five years).

For those of us who reached adulthood after 1971, Social Credit is the political party that governed Alberta for 36 years beginning in 1935. Claiming affiliation with neither right- nor left-wing policies, this group concentrated on local ownership and the creation of the Alberta Credit Union so that Albertans had access to low interest-loans. The Party was promoted by Calgary's Christian pastor William Aberhart during the Depression, as the ideology appealed to a failing economy. Aberhart believed in the Social Credit Party as he agreed with their idea that each citizen had the right to a part of the wealth he helped produce. Instead of detached federal governments or economies controlled by hugely successful companies, Social Credit wanted to make the provincial monetary system work in benefit of its own people.

It's an idea that has openly been promoted by left-wing parties for a long time, but the obvious difference between Social Credit and the New Democratic Party is the former's basis on Christian principles. This must also be the reason an otherwise socialist-sounding idea has been picked up in the heart of Christian conservative country. Following the death of the Party's first leader Aberhart in 1943, Ernest Manning took up the position and tried to rid the organization of its inherent anti-Jewish theories, and also worked to rid the province of its overwhelming debt with the discovery of significant oil reserves. After a strong run, the Party was defeated in 1971 by the Progressive Conservatives and in the 1980s joined together with other fringe parties to form the Alberta Political Alliance, a party which in turn soon dissolved.

You see why I had assumed Social Credit dead and gone? Well a few diehards have apparently refused to quit, and under the leadership of Lavern Ahlstrom they're congregating on the 31st of March to talk about ending "poverty in the midst of plenty" (1). If they're talking about those run-down houses on the market priced for more money than ever, or the fact that the only jobs you can get in much of Alberta are minimum wage yet we are still said to be the richest province in the country, all I can say is it's about time someone mentioned it.

(1) Alberta Social Credit Party. Retrieved March 22, 2007, from <http://www.socialcredit.com/index.php>

Media Release

March 22, 2007

University of Guelph becomes first in Canada to stop using eggs from caged hens

Cruel Eggs off the menu at Canada's premier agriculture university

(Guelph, ON, Vancouver, BC) Two years after a shocking undercover investigation exposed the deplorable conditions of egg-laying hens on a farm owned by a poultry veterinarian closely linked to the University of Guelph, the venerable agricultural institution has decided to remove eggs from caged hens from all its food services starting September 2007.

"In a vote of eleven to six, the university's Hospitality Services Advisory Committee voted to accept the proposed policy to buy only eggs that come from hens who were given the chance to flap their wings," said Misha Buob, a member of the committee and strong supporter of the initiative.

"Guelph will be the first university in Canada to make the switch, joining over 90 US universities and colleges. It is fitting that it happened here first."

"The science is clear, hens suffer in cages," says Bruce Passmore, a Guelph graduate and coordinator for the Vancouver Humane Society's Chicken Out! project. "Battery cages represent one of the worst forms of animal cruelty in our society, but the problem is also one of the easiest to fix. If you buy eggs, choose cage-free options such as certified organic, free-range or free-run. Watch out for misleading labels like 'Omega-3', 'Born-3', 'vegetarian fed' or 'natural' as they are from caged hens."

Approximately 98 percent of egg-laying hens in Canada are kept in tiny wire battery cages, where five to seven hens are crammed so tightly together that the hens can barely move, let alone flap their wings. Countries such as Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands have banned the use of battery cages, as will the entire European Union beginning in 2012.

classifieds

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

THE VOICE

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