

THE

VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 18 Issue 23

June 11, 2010

UNiTE

Taking action

Spicy Rhythms

Conjunto Roque Moreira

Health Matters

Magnesium

Plus:

*Around eCampus, Sister Aurora,
The Mindful Bard, and much more ...*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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



Correction

Re: "The Mindful Bard, Betty Soo" by Wanda Waterman St. Louis, v17 i26 (2009-07-03)

In a Mindful Bard review, *The Voice* misspelled the last name of reader Jela Webb, who recommended BettySoo's *Heat Skin Water Sin* to the Bard.

Our apologies for the error, and *The Voice* would like to thank Jela for several new recommendations!

TAKE ACTION: UNiTE

Kimberley Sanders



“Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It can include physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and it cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography.”

Say No—UNiTE to End Violence Against Women [website](#)

Take action!

Inasmuch as these words inspire community engagement and transformation, to witness real change requires a collaborative commitment to “walk the talk.”

There comes a time in our lives when we are confronted by someone who challenges our personal and political ideologies, forcing us to question how and what we “know” to be true and, in facing the fallacy of our dogma, we are forced to concede our ignorance. If one can embrace even the possibility of transformation, however faint, change will inevitably follow.

Recently I attended the UNIFEM panel discussion corresponding to the UNiTE to End Violence Against Women campaign, a global call for action on ending violence against women and girls. Launched in 2008, the campaign advances UNiTE’s objectives through social mobilization. What I heard has inspired me to think and act locally, and globally, in order to be part of the solution to ending violence against girls and women everywhere.

Moderated by Charles Coffey, O.C., the panel of guest speakers included The Honourable Senator Mobina Jaffer, Q.C.; Nanette Braun (Head of Communications, United Nations Headquarters, UNIFEM); Dr. Shafique N. Virani (Professor, University of Toronto); Madame Lise Watier (President and Founder, Lise Watier Foundation); Zahra Rasul (Faculty of Women and Gender Studies, University of Toronto at Mississauga); David Kelleher (President, Amnesty International, Canada); and Almas Jiwani (President, Canadian National Committee of UNIFEM), the event organizer.

Senator Jaffer spoke of her experiences as an emissary to the Sudan, and of participating in the peace process in Darfur. “In both of those locations,” she said, “I saw just how far the arms of UNIFEM extended.” After sharing a particularly tender story about a young Masai girl in Kenya who, due to birth complications suffered from a fistula and was banished by her own husband, Senator Jaffer encouraged everyone in the audience to stand up for the rights of women and girls everywhere.

“Write to Prime Minister Harper and tell him exactly what you want to see our government do for women everywhere,” said Jaffer. She then encouraged the audience to get involved in the G8 and G20 summits and ended by saying, “Let’s work together to change the lives of women and girls around the world.” Clearly Senator Jaffer got Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s memo: this woman walks the talk!

Nanette Braun told the audience that violence against women and girls strips countries of the full potential of human capital. In one of the most illuminating moments of the entire event, she said, “VAW is not inevitable ... it is a problem with a solution. VAW is one of history’s great silences.”

Reiterating that gender equality is one of the United Nations Millennium Goals, she explained that the UNITE campaign moves to accelerate action in order to meet the 2015 millennium goal deadline.

“In more than 50 countries, maternal rape is still allowed and, in many more countries if a man rapes a girl or woman he is free under the penal code if he marries the victim,” said Braun. Speaking about the need to expand our focus from responding to violence after the fact, she shared how UNIFEM is strongly advocating for the establishment of innovative primary prevention strategies and national action plans. Braun reminded us that anyone can become a champion for change.

Professor Rasul explained the global consequences of violence against women and girls. Interpreting data from Afghanistan, we learned that 87 per cent of Afghan women have experienced violence. Rather than blaming religion or culture, Professor Rasul emphasized the need to examine the roots of patriarchy and violence against women and girls. She encouraged Canadians to question whether or not the climate of war, and occupation, produces and accelerates violence against women. “We need to ask ourselves, here in Canada, what are we contributing to it,” she said, “and then critically evaluate whether or not occupation helps or hinders.”

***“No data.
No problem.
No action.”
Alfred Solari***

She spoke of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), established in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1977 as an independent socio-political organization of Afghan women fighting for human rights and for social justice in Afghanistan. She also spoke about the Women’s Action Forum (WAF), a 29-year-old Pakistan-based women’s rights organization supportive of all aspects of women’s rights and related issues, irrespective of political affiliations, belief system, or ethnicity. “Become fully informed and engaged concerning the issue of VAW—wherever you are,” said Rasul. “Here, in Canada, you can support the Stolen Sisters campaign, an Amnesty International human rights response to discrimination and VA indigenous women in Canada.”

Demonstrating activism here in Canada, Lise Watier shared stories from her vision to encourage women to take charge of the present and build for the future. This can be accomplished through structure and support, including her foundation, a non-profit organization whose primary mission is to help women in need.

Later, David Kelleher of Amnesty International reminded us that legislation only works if it is enforced, and emphasized making the personal political wherever possible.

So back to the point about a time in our life when we are confronted by someone who challenges our personal ideology, and the warning “No data. No problem. No Action.”

Although the impact of those words resonated with my core belief in the importance of grassroots community advocacy, I wondered how I could become part of the solution. What I learned is simple: do something. Acknowledge the fact that change is required and, however small, begin taking steps to achieve change.

“People may forget what you say and what you do, but they never forget how you make them feel,” said Coffey.

I say, “People may forget what you say and what you do, but they never forget that you showed up.”

Take action. Today!

IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis

**Conjunto Roque Moreira**

Conjunto Roque Moreira is a Brazilian group that plays a delicious blend of spicy rhythms and genres including reggae, samba, rock, and funk and some little-known but highly infectious Brazilian forms. The band has recently begun teaching underprivileged children to make special musical instruments to sell. Recently drummer Anderson Almeida spoke with Wanda Waterman St. Louis about the group's highly socially conscious music and vision.

Musical Education

We grew up in Teresina, Piauí, which is northeast of Brazil. Our childhood memories all include music, with children's games, families and friends, parties, dances, and participating in musical groups.

Creative Conditions

To be creative you need good physical and mental health. But even in difficult times we can get enough inspiration to create, because crazy people believe in their dreams. It's in the need for innovation that creativity flourishes.

Listening

We listen to Brazilian rhythms like baião, xote, samba, samba rock, samba funk, embolada, repente, bossa nova, and world rhythms like rock, blues, jazz, funk, soul, salsa, rhythm and blues, reggae, classical, Indian, and African music.

We like Luiz Gonzaga, Mutantes, Tom Zé, Alceu Valença, Titãs, Black Rio, Tim Maia, Raul Seixas, Jackson do Pandeiro, Secos e Molhados, Rush, Bryan Adams, Pink Floyd, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, The Who, Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Desmond Dekker, James Brown, Michael Jackson, The Jackson Five, Ray Charles, The Beach Boys, Mozart, Bach, and Beethoven.

Social Conscience

Our social conscience is stamped on the band's name; the word "Conjunto" (group) conveys our philosophy that together we are more than we are divided.

Since becoming musicians we've deeply touched the lives of people who've heard us, we've become closer to each other, and we've made a cultural contribution.

Returning to our "home" and putting our feet on the floor, we realize how hard a musician's life is and that a band is like a company, with a duty to provide services to society.

Dogma

We don't take sides in politics, especially not when the political parties do no more than seek power. But as Greek philosopher Aristotle said, "Every human being is political."

As for religious beliefs, we believe that the same Energy that conceived and aligned the universe should be respected regardless of the forms that worship takes. We just don't concede to the manipulation of those centred on private or financial interests.



The Name

Roque Moreira was a broadcaster in the '70s who had a radio program that played only the B sides of Brazilian records. His program served as a kind of Facebook; the listeners could communicate by sending messages through the radio and this marked the lives of many people in Piauí. When audiences saw our first performance they identified themselves with our musicality and with songs played in his program.

Rehearsals

Usually a rehearsal takes two hours. We arrive early to set up the instruments and hopefully our time in the studio. We talk about the activities that move the band (concerts, repertoire, finance, projects) and cultural events. To warm up we play songs already in our repertoire. We continue practicing until the songs

are perfectly executed. When the music stops, we critique any problems. When we don't have an upcoming gig we diversify, adding new music and seeking new presentation formats.

Combining Brazilian and World Rhythms

It isn't easy. But like people, all rhythms have something in common. There may be several meanings for a word just as there can be several words for one meaning. Music is characterized by accents and this is hard to feel or translate, but as in culinary tastings, it's by experiencing that we reach the right spot. Our role is to expand the variety of music in the world and to make our fans dance, uniting them in a love of life.

Fábrica do Roque (Roque's Factory)

Since the beginning of Conjunto Roque Moreira we've created tools to enhance our sound. As time passed we improved and matured our techniques and research, consolidating it into a promising new development. The name "Fábrica do Roque" (Roque's Factory) was the most evocative name for our business.

Several people and institutions approved our instruments. We make derbake, djambé, caxixis, berimbau, cuíca, gopyang, drumsticks, carinhões, and exotic instruments like the contrabalde, made of recycled materials. Our services are sought out in building instruments and teaching others how to play them.

Nowadays we provide services in governmental and non-governmental teaching classes to adolescents and needy children. Along with the Ferreira de Sousa Defense Center Association, we are seeking financial help to make a headquarters in order to expand our activities and provide an alternative income and education for poor people by encouraging the creation of new musical groups.

Distant Plans

To acquire a studio, a sound structure for our presentations, and a headquarters for developing our actions. And to be on a constant world tour.

CONVOCATION 2010



Congratulations, AU Grads!

June 10, 11, and 12 mark a very special event in the lives of AU graduands and their families and friends. It's Convocation 2010!

Preparations have been underway for months to celebrate this milestone—and that doesn't include the years of study it takes for graduands to cross the stage and receive their parchments.

The campus will be abuzz with activity as grads and guests arrive from around the world, but if you can't make it in person you can still watch the ceremonies with AU's [live webcast](#). And if you miss any of the action, don't worry: *The Voice* will have plenty of coverage in our special convocation issues beginning June 18.

Congratulations to AU's Class of 2010!

HEALTH MATTERS

Katie D'Souza



"Dear Dr. Katie,

I recently spoke to a friend of mine about magnesium. She says that it's imperative to get enough magnesium daily to maintain good health—health in terms of prevention of heart problems, leg cramps, insomnia, and all kinds of other things! Is everything she claims about magnesium really true?"

Unsure About Magnesium

Dear Unsure About Magnesium,

Magnesium, as your friend mentioned, is indeed a valuable mineral necessary for life. In fact, we wouldn't be alive if we were completely void of magnesium! Magnesium is necessary for muscle

relaxation (the muscles contain up to 40 per cent of the body's stored magnesium) and bone health (over 50 per cent of the body's stored magnesium is in the bones). Biochemically, magnesium is a cofactor in myriad minute chemical reactions in the body that enable healthy physiological functioning on a cellular level. Magnesium levels also appear to be tied to levels of other minerals in the body, such as calcium and potassium.

Because of magnesium's numerous, far-reaching functions in the body, a deficiency of this mineral is noted by numerous side effects. These can include arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat, since magnesium relaxes the heart muscle between contractions); restless legs and leg cramps (due to magnesium's muscle relaxant effect); PMS and related menstrual cramping (again, think of magnesium's relaxant effect on smooth muscle); poor bone health (magnesium and calcium are intricately linked for bone health); headaches; and insomnia (think relaxant), to name a few.

According to the World Health Organization's (WHO) 2002 Report on Magnesium, the recommended daily intake per adult (19 to 65 years) is between 220 and 260 mg of magnesium per day. (Value ranges depend on gender and weight.) Adults over 65 years may need less, according to this report: 190 to 224 mg per day. However, the WHO indicated that most adults are not consuming these recommended magnesium intakes daily—far less, in fact.

Possibly the next question to address is whether you are getting adequate magnesium through your food, or whether it would be a good idea to supplement. The answer isn't, unfortunately, clear-cut; it all depends on your lifestyle. For instance, constant exposure to stressful situations can reduce magnesium levels, as can certain pharmaceutical drugs (such as diuretics, some antibiotics, and oral contraceptives). Diet also plays a significant role—is your diet rich in magnesium? Foods that are high in magnesium include *raw* nuts (sorry, roasted ones don't count!) like almonds (220 mg per 100 g), brazil nuts (240 mg per 100 g), and cashews (267 mg per 100 g), as well as blackstrap molasses (258 mg per 100 g) and raw beet greens (178 mg per 100 g).

... the chocolate-magnesium theory ... essentially postulates that those who crave chocolate are actually magnesium deficient, and the cravings they express are a loud signal of the body's deficiency.

An interesting item to consider is the chocolate-magnesium theory. (Sounds edible, doesn't it?) This theory essentially postulates that those who crave chocolate are actually magnesium deficient, and the cravings they express are a loud signal of the body's deficiency. Although there's no serious research-based evidence for this, it's interesting to note that cocoa powder does contain a high magnesium content compared to most foods. Cocoa powder (100 g serving size) offers about 420 mg of magnesium; compare this to a same-size serving of unpeeled apple, which contains 8 mg magnesium.

It's important to add that, as with many things in life, there's always the danger of too much. The most common side effect of too-high oral magnesium is mild diarrhea. (Rarely do adults get this effect from dietary magnesium; this effect is almost always the

result of supplementation.) The good news is: reduce the magnesium dose and the diarrhea quickly resolves.

However, excessive magnesium supplementation for long periods of time (ignoring the initial diarrhea) can result in hypermagnesemia, nausea, and hypotension (low blood pressure). Additionally, the prolonged diarrhea associated with these conditions can cause electrolyte and fluid imbalances.

I hope this answered your question about magnesium. Please note that if you do decide to orally supplement with magnesium, most magnesium supplements start at 75 mg magnesium per capsule and range upwards. New magnesium-related products on the market include sprays and gels for topical use (but most research on magnesium has been performed using oral doses).

Good luck in the search for good health!

Katie D'Souza, B.Sc., ND

Katie D'Souza is an AU graduate, and also a licensed naturopathic doctor. She currently lives in Ontario.



The information contained in this article is for personal interest only; it is not intended for diagnosis or treatment of any condition. Readers are always encouraged to seek the professional advice of a licensed physician or qualified health care practitioner for personal health or medical conditions.

Sister MURDER

There's a rainbow dancing in the sky tonight, and I think I'm gonna go outside

#44 Murder isn't a basketball game, Jodi!

...but you can't expect people to be good sports about losing a family member!

You can get over losing a game...

What if--

Wait. I think Bert has a plan. Why don't we just listen.

So Bert. What did you have in mind?



AU's People and Places

Lori Van Rooijen

Editor's note: Lori has resigned from AU to pursue other opportunities. Her last day is June 25. Pamela Walsh will be acting as interim VP Advancement.

Lori Van Rooijen is the Vice President, Advancement at Athabasca University. In this role, she is "in charge of a team of professionals who look after internal and external communications (including media and the university web site),

government relations, student recruitment and marketing, and alumni relations."

She is also responsible for "fund development for both the university in general and for specific areas and programs. That entails fund development in the private sector and we're also responsible for securing funding from a number of government sources, programs and departments." Van Rooijen also sits on the university's executive, which as a whole is responsible for "both the day-to-day operations of the institution, the budget and medium- and long-term planning."

"In any given day, I will meet with some or all of my staff, the president or other executive members to discuss projects, what is working and what is not, and together we make decisions on where to go next," she says. "We have many large projects on the go at any given time, ranging from restructuring our web presence to developing new creative for our next advertising campaign to planning for our fund raising campaign . . . There is much work to keep us all busy."

"Advancement is relatively new at AU," Van Rooijen explains. "We came together about four years ago. There are quite a number of accomplishments by our people over that short time, though. In the past year alone, we've won two awards in the communications area, a Gold MarCom award for our *Open* magazine online and a Platinum Hermes award for our new recruitment video, which is available on our main webpage."

"I'm particularly proud of our Stand Out advertising campaign," she says, "which has also gathered a number of awards, and our recruitment people have done an outstanding job attracting new students to the university. Our call centre gets more than 10,000 calls per month, many of those from prospective students looking for more information about AU."

"Another significant accomplishment is our agreement last fall with the Western Hockey League, which allows young hockey players to get a post-secondary education while spending a lot of the time on the road. Only AU has the flexibility to let students do that, and the partnership is a particularly good fit for both the league and the university. There are many more of these types of partnerships on the horizon for AU."

Van Rooijen is very proud of the achievements of her fund development team as well, noting that they have "worked very hard to build a culture of philanthropy within the university and extended that to the external community, our alumni, our current donors and prospective donors."

"We have also made great strides with government at both the provincial and federal levels," she says. "Awareness of AU among government officials has never been higher. And this past year, the university was

successful in receiving Knowledge Infrastructure funding (a provincial and federal program) and the Community Adjustment Fund (a Western Economic Diversification program). This funding will allow many important IT and course conversion projects to move forward ultimately benefiting students by allowing us to continue to offer flexible, quality experience for students."

Van Rooijen works from an office in Calgary, but because "the university is unique in that it is not only a distance university for students its staff and faculty are dispersed as well," she also frequently travels to Edmonton and Athabasca for "university meetings and events and to meet with staff." She may also have to travel to "external meetings with potential donors and existing donors to talk about the opportunities at AU, and there are many for those interested in donating or partnering on a particular project or program."

When asked if she ever has the opportunity to interact with students, Van Rooijen replies "Yes! All the time. I attend several functions each month, meeting with community groups, alumni . . . and other academic and government contacts. I look at all these contacts as meeting potential students. It never ceases to amaze me how many people I meet who are, or have been, students of Athabasca University."

"This university is a great place to work," Van Rooijen concludes. "I lead a very dedicated and professional team of people, and we expect many good things in the months and years ahead. I particularly like AU's focus, which is always on the student. Not just in advancement, but everywhere. We haven't lost sight of why we're here, and everyone I work with supports that philosophy fully."

CLICK OF THE WRIST – Animal Rescues

It happens every spring and this year is no exception: rescue workers have already been busy dealing with bears, deer, and other wild creatures roaming around urban areas. This week, we take a look at the drama and danger involved in animal rescues—whether they're wild or domestic.

Dog Rescuer

In this dramatic footage, an injured dog is rescued from a busy highway in Santiago, Chile. But it wasn't a passing driver that helped out; it was another dog, one that actually used his paws for leverage to drag his fellow canine out of danger. Caution: this video might be disturbing for small children.

Five Amazing Rescues

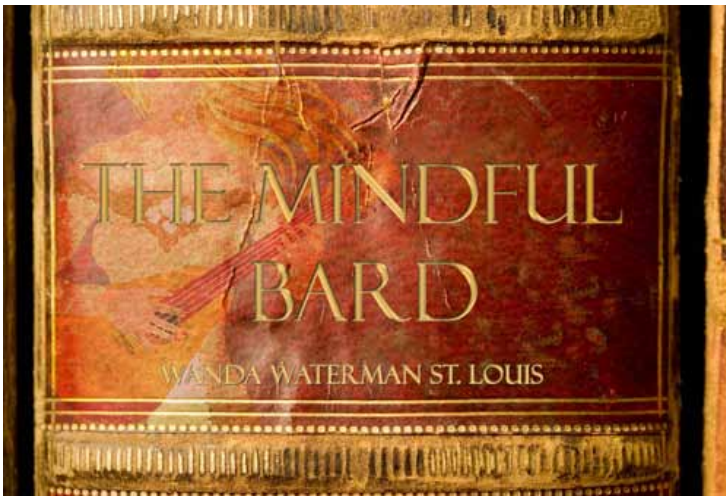
From horses trapped on an island in the Netherlands, to a tiny cairn terrier paddling a mile offshore in the North Sea, these five animal rescue stories show there's no shortage of predicaments animals can get into—or humans willing to help them out.

Polar Bear Rescue

Most of the time, we imagine polar bears roaming on giant ice floes or frolicking with their cubs in the snow. So this young female looks distinctly out of place perched on a rocky cliff above the ocean. This dramatic rescue had a few tense moments but it all worked out fine in the end.

Muttshack

When disasters strike, it's understandable that most of the coverage is focused on the welfare of the people affected. But along with people come their pets, and thousands of helpless animals are often left behind, injured or abandoned in homes without food or water. Since the lessons learned after Hurricane Katrina, an organization called Muttshack is working to change that.



Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

SLAM!, *Through the Coin*

Full Digital Studio of San Mattedo Della Decima, 2010

Luca De Marchi - trumpet; Matteo Sgarzi - bass, doublebass; Silvio Peroni - keyboards, soprano saxophone; Andrea Zucchelli - drums

Vibrantly Innovative Stew in a Purist Pot

"How great musicians demonstrate a mutual respect and trust on the bandstand can alter your

outlook on the world and enrich every aspect of your life, understanding what it means to be a global citizen in the most modern sense."

Wynton Marsalis

What if Charles Mingus, Miles Davis, and John and Alice Coltrane were revived long enough to make one album of original material? I for one would imagine something like *Through the Coin*. And the fact of this phenomenal group being Italian is just one more bit of evidence of jazz's longstanding status as a truly international genre.

This is some of the best cool jazz I've heard in years. The rare aural secrets divulged in the horn solos are absolutely yummy, and the bass lines and drum rhythms are at times jarringly original and at other times elegantly inconspicuous. There is that beautiful symbiosis among these musicians that we saw among the masters, a give and take in itself worthy of contemplation.

SLAM! is based in Bologna and comprises a group of superlative musicians who met at university. Formerly the Alma Jazz Legacy Quintet, the group went through several personnel changes before the present incarnation, SLAM!, put out *Through the Coin* as their debut album.

There are healthy dollops of funk and hard bop in here that add some extra fun and sex appeal, and the recording quality is fabulous.



Through the Coin manifests four of The Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth a listen: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it makes me want to be a better artist; 3) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour; and 4) it stimulates my mind.

AUSU UPDATE



Convocation 2010

AUSU wishes to congratulate this year's graduates, whether attending Convocation in person or by distance. We wish you the best of luck in your future pursuits. You are an inspiration to all AU students!

AUSU Executive Election

AUSU has recently held its internal election for the Executive. We wish to congratulate Barbara Rielly (President), Bethany Tynes (Vice President External and Student Affairs) and Sarah Kertcher (Vice President Finance and Administration) on their election and thank those that ran for their willingness to serve.

Internal elections are being held to determine committee membership and we expect that all will be in place shortly. Our new Council is taking its bearings and has already begun to set the direction for this term.

Student Issues

AUSU recently completed a compilation of reported student issues covering a two year period; all issues were recorded in such a way as to ensure that student information remains protected and private. This effort confirmed what we long suspected; that tutor problems were the single biggest issue faced by our students (56 of 120 complaints).

Outdated course materials and errors in texts continue to be reported as well as were exam issues, slowness of the transfer process, and the scantiness of information in School of Business FAQs. Over that two year period there was a decrease in the number of complaints about student financing, exam request problems, difficulty registering in more than six courses, and materials shortages for courses. Kudos to AU for improving in those areas. Now if we could only get the Tutors' Union to the table . . .

New 2010 AUSU Handbook/Planners – Arrived!

Finally! People have already started receiving the new planners in the mail, and we're currently shipping them out as fast as the orders come in. Full of useful information about AUSU, writing styles, course grading, great finds online for your studies that you may not have known about, as well as having places to write down your phone numbers, keep track of your assignments, and, oh yeah, a year's worth of calendar to plan out your schedule too. We'll give one free to each AUSU member just for the asking.

Remember, though, we only print a limited number of these each year, so when they're gone, they're gone.

Let 'em Know who Represents for You!

AUSU logo mugs, hoodies, USB keys, and much more are all available for sale from our office. Also, used locks can be purchased at half price! Check out our merchandise catalog on our front page. You should

check out our hoodies in particular—made in Canada and 100% bamboo, we're offering them for just barely over our cost, and they're both durable and comfortable.

And if you have new little ones in your family, or know somebody who does, check out our baby onesies. Made by American Apparel, these onesies are high quality and let folks know your kids are growing up to great things as a "Future Graduate of Athabasca U"

AUSU Scheduling Meeting with Tutors' Union – Not really an Update

Some things resist change. We're still waiting for a response from the Tutor's Union as to when we might be able to meet with them to discuss ways that AUSU and the Tutor's Union can work together to ensure that students are getting the contact they need. Unfortunately, they haven't yet replied, so we're stepping up our campaign to get in touch with them. If you want to help, the next time you're talking to your tutor, ask them if they know when the Tutor's Union will meet with AUSU so that the groups can work together on common issues.

Our statistics we've been collecting from the forums and your calls show that issues with tutors – specifically the amount of time taken for marking assignments and exams are your number one concern. Help us help you.

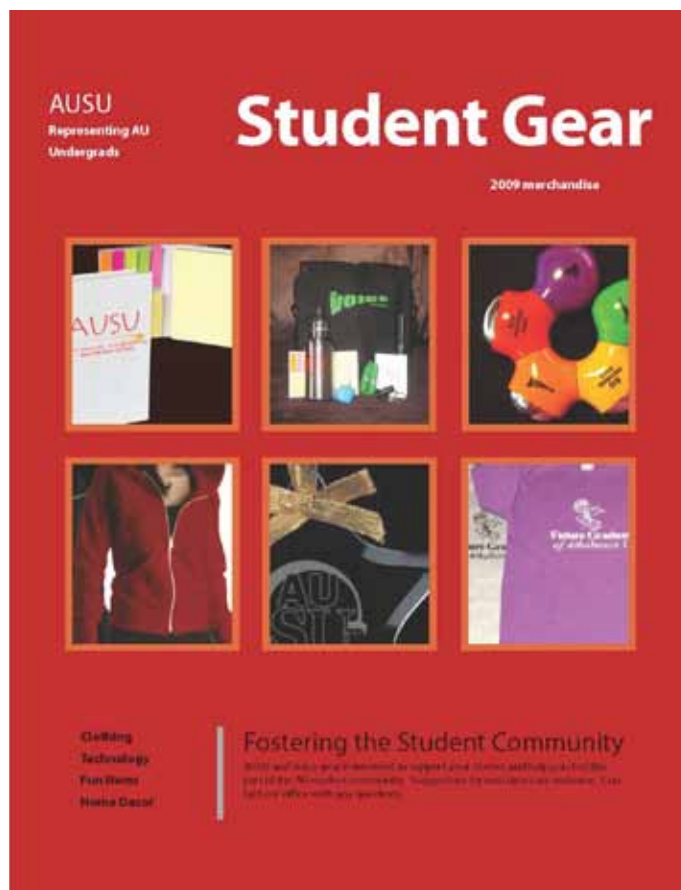
SmartDraw Program Renewal

Some of you who took advantage of our program to provide SmartDraw software to members have been getting notifications that your software license will soon be expiring. Fortunately, AUSU will be continuing this program, so if you haven't already, go to the AUSU home page to download the newest version.

SmartDraw allows you to create a wide range of graphics for your assignments and submit them electronically in a Word file. You can also place your graphics in Excel or PowerPoint files, or export them as TIF, GIF, or JPEG files to make a web graphic or even a logo. Just a few of the graphics you can make include Venn diagrams, genetics charts, graphs, organizational and flow charts, and Gantt charts.

For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email.

Remember, though, that you should always check with your tutor to find out if there is a specific format he or she prefers. Your tutor does not have to have SmartDraw to view these graphics, however. Installations under this program are good for one year. The package includes both the Standard and Health Care editions of SmartDraw.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Alberta homeowners deal with their own oil problem

Between the Gulf oil spill and Alberta's oil sands, a lot of coverage focuses on the big events in the industry. But some Alberta homeowners have oil problems of their own: abandoned oil wells on their property.

As the *Globe and Mail* reports, Alberta is dotted with abandoned oil wells, and many of those wells have been taken off property records. That means "land title searches don't reveal them," and unsuspecting homeowners could face relocation or plummeting property values.

Part of the problem is that Alberta law allows the wells "to be taken off property records." In 1999, the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) told municipalities that they were responsible for checking the location of abandoned wells. Town planners and developers were to contact the ERCB for that data.

Not all towns did so, however, and their lapse is affecting older homes as well as new neighbourhoods. One of those towns is Calmar, where the public works director sought out records and has so far found 19 abandoned wells. One of them was found to be "leaking in a schoolyard." The leaking wells not only affect existing properties, but could also pose a hazard if they're damaged during construction work.

In Foreign News: Students' virtual chatroom to be scrapped

An ambitious new virtual-classroom project in Australia will be going ahead in September—but without its planned Facebook-style pages.

As *The Age* reports, the ultranet is a \$77 million online network that will "give parents round-the-clock access to their children's lessons, homework, results and attendance." The ultranet will be available by September in every state school in Victoria, the second-smallest state in the nation.

The project was slated to include an "eXpress landing page" for every student. Similar in concept to a Facebook page, the eXpress landing page would have allowed students to have "learning contacts" and to chat by posting wall messages.

However, concerns about the eXpress pages were raised in a privacy impact assessment commissioned by the Education Department. Helen Versey, the Victoria Privacy Commissioner, told reporters she shares the concerns over privacy. "I have been advised that the department is addressing the privacy issues raised by the privacy impact assessment, which will result in some changes being made," she said.

Although the ultranet can only be accessed by parents, teachers, and students, one potential problem of the eXpress pages is the growing problem of cyber bullying. Some research suggests that "one in 10 students is bullied online or via other digital technology."

Although eXpress pages will not be included in the project, students will still be able communicate online in "collaborative learning spaces." However, it's believed any comments there will be moderated by teachers.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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