

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 25 2014-06-20

Transfer Credit Treasure

Get the Most From What You've Got

Photo Feature

The Road to Convocation

Chazz Bravado

His Sensitive Side

Plus:

*From Where I Sit
In Conversation
and much more!*



CONTENTS

The Voice's 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.

Feature

Transfer Credit Treasure: <i>It's Worth Digging For</i>	6
Photo Feature: <i>On the Road to Convocation</i>	12

Articles

Editorial: <i>Watching Convocation</i>	3
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Columns

Primal Numbers: <i>Van Gogh's Ear</i>	4
Writer's Toolbox: <i>You're Absolutely Right</i>	5
In Conversation: <i>With Luc Déry of micro_scope Films</i>	8
Mindful Bard: <i>The Greatest Show on Mars</i>	10
From Where I Sit: <i>A Day Off</i>	17
Dear Barb: <i>Getting and Avoiding Kids</i>	19

News and Events

Click of the Wrist	18
International News Desk	18
AUSU Update	21

Comics

Chazz Bravado: <i>Sensitive Side</i>	20
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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.

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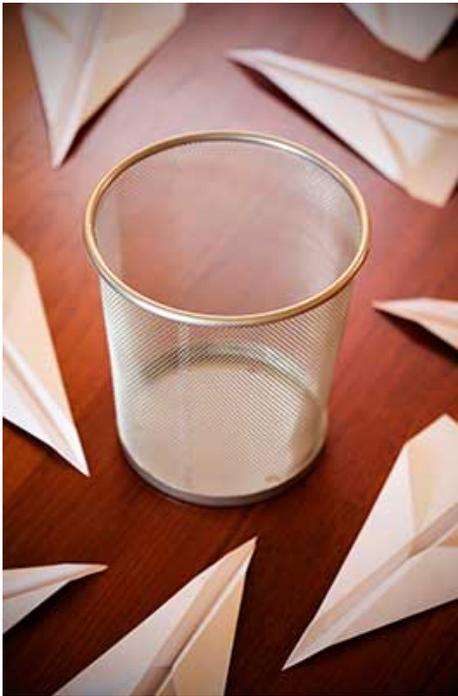
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EDITORIAL

Karl Low



Watching Convocation

Did you watch AU's convocation stream at all? I make sure to do so each year, at least on the first day or two, just to see if there are any signs for the future of AU that can be gleaned from the various speeches from the executive or assorted politicians that attend.

This year, it started with the traditional drummers sounding a heartbeat as the graduands walked into the convocation arena and filed up behind the university executive. The drummers, a trio of women called Asani, broke into some traditional native song/cries that nearly cracked my headphones. Frantically turning the sound down allowed me to keep listening as they then morphed to a multi-lingual medley of "Oh Canada," that you really have to hear to appreciate. The volume they manage to get from just their voices is quite remarkable, and clearly the sound guys for the webstream weren't prepared for it, as the next day's performance I noticed they'd adjusted it. I'm told from those who attend in person that being able to be there and listen to the performance live is even better and can "send chills down your spine they're so good".

Barry Walker, the Chair of the Board of Governors, presided over the convocation ceremony as usual. This year, in addition to the usual guests, there were also special guests from China, including faculty and students from Beijing Northern University.

The new, interim president, Peter MacKinnon, was one of the first speakers, and you know how new he is because Mr. Walker had to check his notes to read his name. We also had Jeff Johnson, the MLA for Athabasca and Minister of Education who called AU "a great gem for the province of Alberta," and praised us for leading in terms of access to education. If only those sentiments translated to support on an equal footing with the other universities, it would be interesting to see what AU could really do.

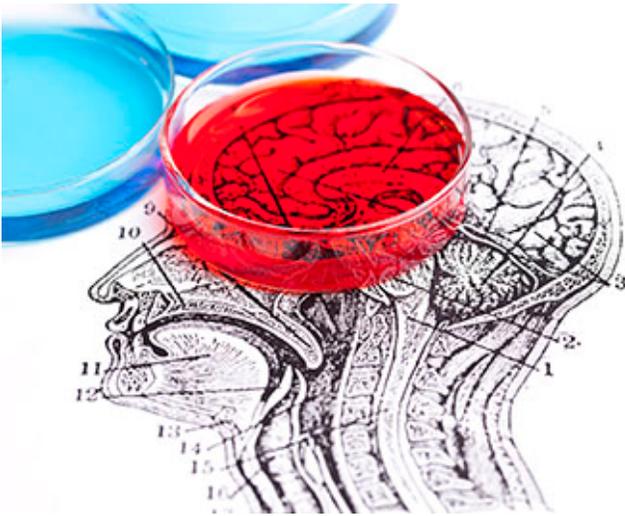
When Peter MacKinnon spoke, he described why he accepted the job of interim president by talking about what AU means to him, starting with a comparison of society between feudal times, where society was defined in terms of relation to land, to the industrial era, a time where society was defined in relation to the means of production, to the knowledge era, where we define our society in terms of the ability to deal with the knowledge economy and changes, and AU occupies a unique and vital place by being an open university, helping all people attain the abilities needed for this post-industrial society. No other Canadian university, he said, makes the commitment to educate people without regard to whether they succeeded in high school, while acknowledging their work experience and successes.

And while he acknowledged that all universities are doing more in the past than they used to for distance education, AU is a pioneer in the field and will strive to continue to be a leader in the field. He was impressed by AU's commitment to the idea of if you can take the challenge of university courses and succeed, AU wants you to be successful. To me, this bodes well for what he may attempt to do with AU.

After all, if they want us to be successful, presumably they'll listen to what we say we need to get there, right?

Primal Numbers Van Gogh's Ear

S.D. Livingston



In 1888, Vincent Van Gogh lost his left ear. Popular legend has it that he sliced the ear off himself. Other sources claim the ear was lost in a fight with fellow artist and friend Paul Gauguin. Either way, science has now created a copy of Van Gogh's ear, grown using DNA from his great-great-grandnephew. The technology holds great promise for medicine, but it also raises a big concern: what if someone wants to regrow your parts after you die?

The question would have seemed like science fiction to a 17th century mind. It's hard to imagine Van Gogh pondering the possibility, never mind including a clause about it in his will. That wasn't a problem

though, because his modern relatives gave the permission, and genetic material, for artist Diemut Strebe to recreate the famous artist's ear. As CTV News [reports](#), "the cells were shaped to resemble the ear" by using a 3D printer.

The organ is on display in a German museum, and is "being kept alive inside a case containing a nourishing liquid." Visitors can even speak into it (or perhaps sing a bit of Don McLean's [classic](#) "Vincent").

The technology behind 3D printing is fascinating, the kind of thing we could only imagine a mere 50 years ago. It's already offering new hope to millions of people around the world, especially amputees, as this [Atlantic article](#) notes.

But there's a huge ethical grey area between creating a prosthetic for a living patient, and recreating the body parts of your dearly departed Uncle Alaric, who might not be keen on having his hands or eyes regrown in a lab.

It's true that science isn't quite there yet but developments are moving quickly. And when we do reach the point where we can grow Uncle Alaric's ears as easily as we can sprout a bean plant, there's another issue: you might not even own the rights to his DNA—or your own.

Incredible as it seems, governments have been issuing patents on DNA to corporations and labs for over 20 years. As this [Washington Post article](#) explains, so many different genes have now been patented that "forty-one percent of the genes in your genome are not legally yours."

In practical terms, this means that if your doctor wanted to run a diagnostic test on one of your genes that a company has patented, his office might have to pay thousands of dollars for the right to run that test.

It would take an entire book to delve into the intricate science and legalities behind gene patents. But the fact remains that we're not merely on the threshold of such possibilities. We're already well into the game and figuring out the rules as we go. And whether you or your relatives own all the bits of your DNA or not, we need to start thinking about what could be regrown from that DNA when we're gone, and whether we'd choose to allow it.

Answering such big questions will take a lot of time and public discussion—and perhaps a little soul searching as we ponder the unknown on a starry night.

S.D. Livingston is the author and creator of the Madeline M. Mystery Series for kids, as well as several books for older readers. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing.

Writer's Toolbox

You're Absolutely Right

Christina M. Frey



Last week we looked at three commonly confused words: *there*, *their*, and *they're*. This week we'll move on to a related, equally tricky set: *your*, *you're*, and *yours*.

Challenge

But first: the answer's to last week's [challenge](#). Did you get them right? Alex Poulton was the first to send in the correct responses—congratulations, Alex!

Original: I look over they're and see that their there with their kids and there pets.

Corrected Version: I look over there and see that they're there with their kids and their pets.

Briefly: in *over there*, the first *there* is an adverb signifying direction; in *they're there*, *they're* is a short form for *they are*, and the original *there* was correct; *their kids* was correct because it indicates possession; and *their pets* also indicates possession.

Original: *Their will come a time when their going to fight because their just not happy with there relationship.*

Corrected version: *There will come a time when they're going to fight because they're just not happy with their relationship.*

Again, quickly: it's *There will come* because it's an adverb and isn't showing possession; *they're going to* because *they're* stands in for *they are*; *they're just not happy* for the same reason; and *their relationship* because it shows possession.

Your vs. You're

These two words are constantly misused to the point that many of us are unsure of the correct usage (social media and the advertising world are the biggest offenders). However, it's very, very simple.

Your is similar to *their*, in that it shows possession, ownership, or a similar relationship.

You're is a contraction that means *you are*. It's always spelled with the apostrophe; despite what your phone's autocorrect might say, it's not *youre*.

If you can substitute *you are*, use *you're*. If you're indicating possession, ownership, or a similar relationship, use *your*.

That's it. Really. Now for some examples:

Example A: You're really going to give him your watch? The first *you're* means *you are*, so *you're* is correct. The second indicates possession, so *your* is used.

Example B: You're out of your mind if you think you're going to the party without doing your homework. Both times you're is used, you can substitute you are; and it's your mind and your homework because there's a possessive relationship.

Yours

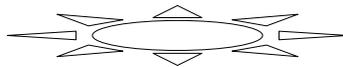
Yours is a possessive pronoun like *your*, just in a different form. It does *not* take an apostrophe—ever.

Example C: "Is that your watch?" she asked.

"No," I said. "It's yours."

Your, you're, and yours may be commonly confused, but there's really no overlap; it's easy to figure out if you stop and think. You're on your way (see what I did there?) to great grammar!

Christina M. Frey is a book editor, literary coach, and lover of great writing. For more tips and techniques for your toolbox, follow her on Twitter (@turntopage2) or visit her [blog](#).



Transfer Credit Treasure It's Worth Digging For - Part 1

Barbara Lehtiniemi



The experience of searching for information on a website is sometimes like wading through seaweed: the way is murky and there is a danger of getting bogged down with every step. University websites are saturated with important information and finding what you need can turn into an arduous adventure. AU's website can be a bit tricky to navigate, but it's much better than some other university sites.

If you're searching for information on transfer credits, expect to visit at least four different areas of the AU [website](#), only two of which are listed on the [A-Z Index](#). Although most of these areas have links to each other, it's easy to forget

which page contains what information. If you don't want to spend fruitless time searching around for that vital piece of information that you just read a few minutes ago, keep careful notes on what you found where.

Transfer Credit Services.

A good place to start. Located in the Office of the Registrar area of AU's website, the [Transfer Credit Services](#) page is a plain-language outline of transfer credits. This page mainly consists of FAQs, the answers to which are generally links to other areas of AU's site or to external sites.

Course and Program Search

A subpage of Transfer Credit Services, this [page](#) allows you to search for courses and programs that AU has already evaluated for transfer credit. You can look up your previous courses and programs from other institutions to see if AU has already identified them as worthy of credit. Check the "Status" field to see if the course has been approved. If you don't see the course you're looking for, don't despair—it just means that nobody has requested an evaluation of that course yet.

Undergraduate Calendar

The [Evaluations and Transfer Credit](#) section of the Undergraduate Calendar has the most information under one roof. There are nine subsections to read through. The [Procedure](#) subsection describes how and where to send transcripts and outlines to support your application for transfer credits, and the [Timeline for Evaluation Completion](#) subsection lets you know how long you'll wait for results. In [Transfer Credit Time Limits](#) you'll find important information regarding certain types of courses. In general, it doesn't matter how long ago you took a course but there are important exceptions for nursing and computer-science courses, among others. If your previous education was from outside Canada or the US, you'll need to read [Foreign Transcript Evaluations](#). And, if you're taking your degree at another institution and you want to use your AU credits towards that degree, you'll want to read [Transferring AU Courses to Another Institution](#).

Undergraduate Transfer Credit Policy.

Found in the Policy and Procedures Manual section, this [page](#) outlines AU's policy on transfer credits. This section contains valuable information on the methods used during the evaluation procedure. You don't need to read this policy in order to apply for transfer credits, but I recommend it if you'd like a clear understanding of the evaluation process.

If you think you have even one course from another educational institution that may qualify for a transfer credit at AU, it's worth the time to apply. With undergraduate courses running around \$700 (or more, if you reside outside Alberta,) the current fee of \$100 for a transfer credit evaluation makes the effort worthwhile. (Note that the \$100 is for evaluation of all your courses and programs, not per course.)

Apply for transfer credit early, so you can evaluate how those credits might fit in to your AU undergraduate program. If you haven't firmly decided on a program yet, just select one for now—you can easily change your program later without incurring any charges. (Be aware that you cannot enrol in an AU undergraduate program if you are already enrolled in a program at another institution. If you want to use your AU courses for credit at another educational institution, you need to refer to that institution's transfer credit policy.)

Ready to dig for transcript credit treasure? A summary of the steps to apply for transfer credit at AU follows next week.

Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario

(Editor's Note: While AU Program students can change their program without charges, be careful about doing so. Whenever you change your program, the current program requirements apply. So if you were a Business student who decided you wanted to try the English program but after a few courses realized you were better off with Business, then if the Business program has changed since you first registered in it, you'll have to fulfill the new requirements instead of the ones you had initially to graduate.)

In Conversation With Luc Déry of micro scope Films

Wanda Waterman



Sharp Instincts, A Good Team, and Great Stories: How to Pick a Winning Independent Film

"As emotionally poignant as it is damning, *Inch'Allah* is a wonderfully crafted film that will move you in a way unlike most films revolving around terrorism and conflict. It is an uncompromising look at the collateral of the decades-old conflict in the Middle East, venturing outside the realm of politics and political biases and presenting a realistic portrayal of the human cost of this conflict."

- Asif Hameed, *Cadence Canada*, 2012

"In the end, the effect of the sinuous, snaking drama—which elegantly traces a timeline stretching from contemporary Quebec to war-torn Lebanon of the 1970s and back—is like a tripwire. It knocks you off your feet and leaves you shaken. It is no surprise that it was nominated for a Best Foreign Language Film Oscar."

- Michael O'Sullivan, writing about *Incendies* in *The Washington Post*, 2011

Luc Déry meets me at Café La Rue et Fils in Montreal on a crisply cold and brilliantly sunny May morning. The café is crowded

with professionals tanking up for the morning fray, so he suggests we conduct the interview at one of the tables outside.

He's a serene soul with kindly blue eyes and a reserved *politesse*, and is apparently quite well known here—our discussion is often punctuated by greetings as people come and go.

It hasn't been easy to get an interview with this award-winning film producer; I'd started asking last year, but at that time he was busy at the Cannes film festival; Déry and Kim McCraw are the producers of micro_scope Films, a rapidly rising star in Canadian independent film.

How it All Began

Luke had started out his academic life studying biology when a fascination with film got the better of him.

"I loved films like everyone else," he says, but had never considered film as a career. I was studying biology, but I took a course on Bergman as an elective, and that turned out to be much more interesting than biology."

Before that, his upper-middle-class Quebecois background granted him access to the arts, which helped him cultivate the aesthetic required to produce finely crafted films. But when he made the decision to devote his career to film, the path wasn't immediately clear.

"At first I wanted to direct," he confesses, "but when I compared myself to friends who were really talented in that area, I realized my gifts might be better put to use in production, so I decided to do a BA in Media Administration."

After graduating he worked with a film distribution company; the valuable insider knowledge and experience he gained there prepared him to set up micro_scope in 2002.

Since then the young company's productions have steadily garnered positive attention from some of the world's finest film festivals. Intelligent, meaningful, and thoroughly engaging, micro_scope films proved to be entertaining and accessible, gaining both critical and popular kudos.

Picking Great Projects

How does micro_scope keep on picking such winners? It looks like the great projects were simply there and that micro_scope was simply savvy enough to know what was both doable and culturally significant.

"We look for a universal appeal," says Luc. "We also look for writer-directors who have a great vision and who can be trusted to follow through on it. So far we've been finding them."

Micro_scope is noted for the creative genius shining through its films, but in the last few years this creative genius has come in the form of three superlative features—*Incendies*, *Monsieur Lazhar*, and *Inch'Allah*—that are all based in some way in the Middle East. Coincidence? In a way, yes.

"It started with *Incendies*," says Luc, "and that film opened doors to the other two. We were very careful not to try to address specific regional issues in these films. They're about the Middle East—and the world—in general. We were careful not to make *Incendies* a film about Lebanon or *Incha'Allah* a film just about Palestine. And in *Monsieur Lazhar* we wanted to address immigration issues."

Luc also humbly credits his carefully selected team for micro_scope's successes. Some of the people he says have been most influential in micro_scope's success are directors Philippe Falardeau, Denis Villeneuve, and André Turpin, as well as producers Martin Paul-Hus, Lorraine Dufour, and Roger Frappier.

A Bit of a Clash

As one would assume, shooting films in the Middle East requires vigilance, preparedness, and diplomacy. A case in point:

"We were shooting *Incha'Allah*," Luc recounts, and we needed to recreate an outdoor café scene that takes place in Jerusalem. For all kinds of technical reasons we decided to recreate it in Aman, Jordan. So we set up a café scene with Hebrew signs and Hasidic Jewish characters walking around.

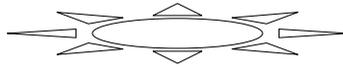
"There was also a bomb in that scene. So there was a bit of a clash dealing with onlookers who didn't know what was going on.

"Even more interesting was the wall. We had to build part of the Jerusalem Wall in Aman. No one could understand why we were building a wall in the middle of a dump. We had to talk to the press that day to clear it up."

Current

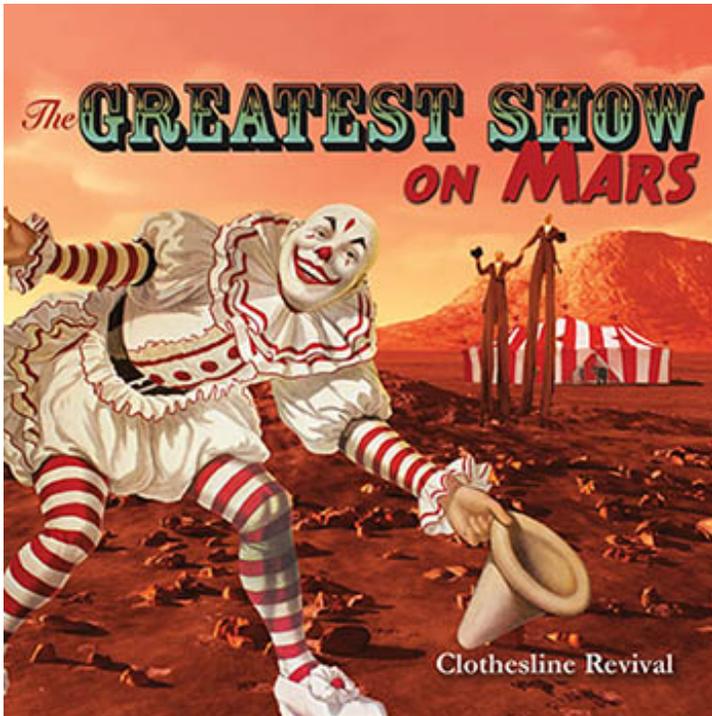
What's micro_scope working on now? "We're always working on 10 or 12 projects with the goal of completing two a year. Right now we have a project in South America."

Considering the source, this sounds like an exciting direction.



The Mindful Bard The Greatest Show on Mars

Wanda Waterman



Album: *The Greatest Show on Mars*

Author: Clothesline Revival

Weird America at its Beautiful Barnum-and-Bailey Best

"Never known to have performed before any live audiences on Earth, Clothesline Revival received an exclusive invitation to join an interplanetary circus on a mission to become the first musicians from Earth to entertain Martian colonists."

- from Clothesline Revival's official website

"I don't know where I'm being taken. I don't know what I'll find, beyond the earth and sky. But I'm not afraid to go."

- from *The Man Who Wasn't There*

Imagine you're one of the new Martian colonists. A childhood dream of adventure, or perhaps a longing to escape the madness of earth, has compelled you to set up homesteading on the Red Planet. Now imagine that after living there for a few heady months, during which you've learned nearly all you need to know about how to be a successful interplanetary pioneer, you start to experience excruciating boredom and loneliness—and that's when the circus comes to town.

It's a good old-fashioned Barnum and Bailey-type show but with a host of characters from American rural folk and pop culture, like The Dark Man, Little Maggie, Wildwood Flower, The Revenuer, Ghost Riders in the Sky, UFO's, space aliens, and The Old Time Bible-Thumping Salvation Show Preacher.

This is the premise that Clothesline Revival has set up presenting yet another fantastic set of tracks made up of archived field recordings of traditional tunes (many gathered by the famous Alan Lomax) and interviews interspersed with acoustic instruments in-studio, all composed and arranged by the inimitable Conrad Praetzel, the genius behind Clothesline Revival and one of my very favourite artists (witness an earlier recommendation and an interview).

The circus theme coupled with the outer space mission is a stroke of genius; it underlines the fact that the 1950's B movie era, which included loads of low budget sci-fi, coincided with a zenith in American folk and pop music.

The fascination with UFO's was an expression of frustrated spirituality; a longing for a better world (with a simultaneous fear of nuclear war and a paranoia toward alien races) compelled North Americans to look to the skies and, as we now see coming to fruition today, to see other planets as future real estate.

This premise also allows Clothesline Revival to bring the best of American music history into outer space, so to speak, and no one is better qualified to do this, both artistically and technologically, than Conrad Praetzel.

I'm no expert, but I've listened to enough studio projects like this to know that even with a team of the best technicians and musicians it's just not easy to layer live studio recordings over field recordings and make it sound all-of-a-piece. Somehow Conrad Praetzel—who selects the traditional archive material, arranges the recordings, and plays most of the live instruments on the tracks—manages to make the blend seamless and somehow enhances the primitive essence of the archive material. All while granting the music an ecstatic transcendent quality.

Here are a few high points:

"Move Up" was recorded by Alan Lomax at bluesman Fred McDowell's home in Mississippi in 1959. The singers were never identified, but they sound a bit like the Blind Boys of Alabama, and their song is a tremendous positive motivator for saints and sinners alike.

"No Have No Spot" stars an 80-year-old southern preacher giving the kind of hellfire-and-brimstone sermon that's still a fixture of Bible radio. His laundry metaphors are to die for.

"A Mysterious Light" features a wonderfully odd couple—a southern geezer describing an alien sighting to a female interviewer whose voice strangely swoons and sighs at every phrase.

"Leather Britches" just sounds wonderful.

The Greatest Show on Mars manifests five of the Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth a listen.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
- It inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
- It makes me want to be a better artist.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good, a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.

Photo Feature

The Road to Convocation



To get to Convocation one first has to arrive at the Town of Athabasca



Convocation isn't a small event for this town.



But just to be sure, you could stop in and check at the Visitor Information Center in the Town Square.



From there, it's a short drive to the west to find the turn off to University Drive. It's well-marked, as you can see.



University Drive winds through the natural campus of AU. Happening in late spring/early summer, convocation showcases the beauty of the grounds.



The ceremony takes place in the multiplex, but we'll get back to that.



Because just a little further up the road, we find the entrance to the University proper.



The main research building for AU. Here is where your courses get designed, your professors write those books we see for sale, and the university builds its reputation.



Next Week, we'll get up closer to the multiplex, and take a look at the convocation ceremonies and activities around it.



As well as a little more time in the research building and the various works of art AU has inside and around campus.



A Day Off

Most people I know are busy. But perhaps that's an understatement. I don't mean the occasional hectic burst of activity, I mean going full tilt day after day. By busy I mean trying to juggle multiple competing items on the calendar most days. I mean tearing from one event to another just putting in an appearance. Or having to decline other invitations altogether.

Another manifestation of this state of hyperactivity is the growing list of delayed projects. Tasks that might fall into M. Scott Peck's second quadrant called Important /Not Urgent. Other quadrants are Important/Urgent, Not Important/Urgent and Not Important/Not Urgent. He believed that if we sorted our tasks into one of these four areas our time and effort would be properly directed for maximum results and calm. In fact, most of us spend a lot of time putting out fires.

Among the older set this isn't exactly what we were promised. We were led to believe that life slows down and fighting boredom might be our biggest problem. The day would begin with a leisurely coffee taken on the patio with birds singing and flowers blooming. Next would be deciding between a day on the links or lunching with the girls at a fancy restaurant. Throwing pottery, taking up painting, writing one's memoir, restoring the '70s muscle car, or learning a second language would be our reality. Evening would come with us cooking a gourmet meal and savouring a glass of wine.

There would also be time and energy to babysit the grandkids, assist elderly parents, and volunteer at the soup kitchen. Our days would be our own to schedule and cherish. No more working for 'the man' or punching a time card. The daily demands of work and child rearing would be over.

Bull. Because other than a few deadbeats who've never broken a sweat in their entire lives most people I know are busier than ever. So when I stopped one Saturday to 'catch up' at home I was surprised at how long the routine (yet important) things take. Flipping the mattress then washing the mattress and pillow covers, coverlet, and blanket took time, but was necessary. Refilling the bathroom storage cupboard with toilet paper from the industrial sized package in the basement took time. Finding an unopened and unpaid (!) MasterCard bill on the table made me sick. Chucking out expired food, watering the houseplants, washing load after load of laundry, putting a roast in the slow cooker....

Then it hit me. If I didn't hurry to the north side of the house I would miss the blooming of the lily of the valley. A quick trip revealed that they hadn't budded yet. Phew. I still haven't cut a bunch of lilacs yet.

God only knows when we'll repaint the garage doors, re-mulch the flowerbeds, or get the backsplash tiled. Or spend the day with Grady. I get that it's important to stay mentally and physically active but, come on. A day off would be great, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is Lucky Dog. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

Click of the Wrist

Summer Safety

Saturday marks the first day of summer, and chances are you've already got plans to make this summer the best yet. But the key to great summer memories is often something people forget: safety. Click through these links and start planning for a happy, safe season.

In the Sun

You may be worried about harsh chemicals in sunscreen, but exposure to UV rays is a deadly solution. The Environmental Working Group's 2014 guide to sunscreen safety makes recommendations on safe, environment-friendly sunscreens and moisturizers. You *can* have it both ways.

On the Water

Water safety's not just for poor swimmers or for boaters far from shore. In Canada, cold water is often the killer; 60 per cent of Canadian drowning deaths occur in water that's under 10 degrees C. The Cold Water Boot Camp gives the facts and offers tips for prevention—and for survival in case of an accident.

On the Grill

You want people to remember your barbecue or picnic for the fun, not the food poisoning. This PDF is a great go-to resource for information on preparing and serving food during the summer months, and includes information on everything from how long you can safely marinate your meat to the amount of time you can leave perishables out on a hot day.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

At Home and Abroad

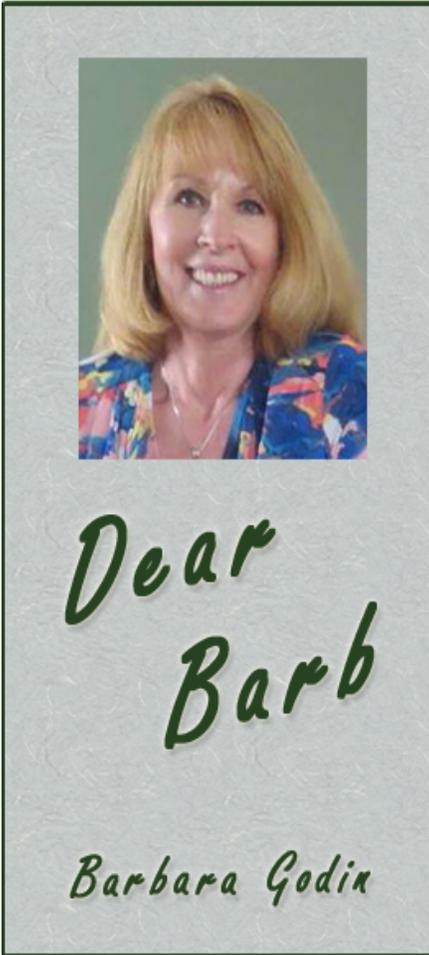


At Home: Canadian Education Providers "vulnerable" to unregulated agent use.

The PIE News reports that while the use of recruiting agents for education is widespread across Canada, the more that an institution relies on these, the less robust their screening and training processes are, which can lead to these agents providing bad information to potential students, causing bad press and possibly even legal consequences. The study the report was based on goes further to say that institutions that depend on international students may be in a more vulnerable position.

Around the Globe: Taliban kidnaps 35 professors from Kandahar

University World News is reporting on the story about how 35 professors and 10 students were kidnapped by a Taliban-linked group while they travelled to Kabul on June 10. The kidnappers set fire to the bus and took the professors to an unknown location. Afghan law enforcement agencies and tribal elders have been unable to secure their release so far. Taliban spokesperson Qari Yousuf has said that he's unaware of the kidnapping and would investigate the incident, but the Afghan administration believes the kidnappers "are armed anti-government militants" Reports indicate the professors were separated and an unconfirmed report quotes an Afghan official indicating 10 of the lecturers had been taken to Pakistan. It is unknown whether this kidnapping relates to the Taliban's stance against western education, or is simply an attempt at ransom or prisoner exchange.



Getting and Avoiding Kids

Dear Barb:

I am in my early thirties and I recently completed a methadone program due to my addiction to pain killers. During my years of drug addiction my parents had been raising my daughter and now they won't give her back to me. I am thankful they were there to care for Paige, but I really want her back and I feel I'm capable of taking care of her. I don't want to have problems with my parents and I don't think it would be good for my daughter to just take her from her grandparents, as she is very attached to them. I want to do what's best for my daughter. I am not sure how to handle this situation and keep everyone happy.

Thanks, Amanda

Hi Amanda:

Congrats to you for completing your methadone program! You were fortunate to have your parents care for your daughter rather than CAS take her into care, as you would definitely have a difficult time getting her back. Your parents may be fearful you will relapse and their granddaughter will have to go through the trauma of losing her mother again. I agree it is not in the best interest of your daughter to just take her away from your parents, however if they do not have legal custody you could take her back and there is nothing they could do about it. A gradual transition from grandparents to mom will give everyone time to adjust. As well, your parents will eventually become confident that you are able to take care of

your daughter once you have her back full time. Good Luck with this new phase in your life.

Dear Barb:

My husband is turning 40 and I would like to have a surprise party for him. I want to invite our friends but I don't want any kids at the party and I don't want to offend anyone. Therefore I'm not sure how to communicate this to my guests. Should I write it on the email invite, or would it be more personal to call everyone?

Help! Julie

Dear Julie:

It impossible to go through life without offending someone. Understandably you would not want a houseful of children, as it is an adult party. My suggestion would be to add a note to your email invitation similar to the following: "This is an adult party and your children would probably be more comfy at home in their own beds, rather than hanging around with a group of grownups. Looking forward to sharing this celebration with you." Be prepared as some people may be offended by their children not being invited, you can't please everyone. Enjoy!

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.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.

Comic

Wanda Waterman

SCHAZZ BRAYADO: Sensitive Side



LATELY I'VE BEEN FEELING LIKE A TOTAL HYPOCRITE.



ALL THIS TIME I'VE BEEN TELLING FEMINISTS TO BE FREE WITH THEIR FEELINGS, WHILE I'VE BEEN GOING AROUND HIDING MY INNER SENSITIVE GUY!



I'M GONNA START OPENING UP, AND I'M GOING TO BEGIN BY REVEALING THAT MY FAVOURITE FILM OF ALL TIME IS CANNIBAL WOMEN IN THE AVOCADO JUNGLE OF DEATH.



I CRIED WHEN THE TWO TRIBES OF WOMEN CANNIBALS MADE PEACE BY JOINING A CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING GROUP!

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN WITH INPUT FROM BEN WATERMAN



Changes to AU Course Materials

In the fall of 2013 AU began the process of replacing hard-copy textbooks for all undergraduate courses with e-text versions. Implementation has been staged in phases with about two dozen courses being transitioned each month. AUSU is supportive of the provision of electronic materials for students who want them, but has consistently lobbied AU to provide students with a choice of materials format to accommodate the diverse needs of our membership.

Over the last six months many AUSU members have been vocal in their opposition to e-texts as the only, mandatory option for all courses. AU has listened, and is considering several options to provide students with the choices they want. One option might include removing textbooks as a mandatory purchase with course enrolment, and allowing students to purchase their own books.

AUSU needed to know more about student perspectives on the options that have been proposed and held a survey to find out more. The results will be shared with members in an upcoming newsletter.

A New Era at AU - A New AU president

After two terms in the Office of President, Dr. Frits Pannekoek is retiring. Last week, in recognition of his contributions to distance education, the University of South Africa (Unisa) granted him an honorary Doctor of Literature and Philosophy award. AUSU congratulates Dr. Pannekoek on this great honour, and the recognition it brings to AU as a world leader in distance and open learning. We wish him all the best over his final weeks in the role of president, and in all his future endeavours!

We had hoped by now to be able to announce the selection of the presidential search committee for a new, full-term president; however, as a suitable candidate has not yet been found, AU has instead appointed an interim president: Dr. Peter MacKinnon, formerly of the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. MacKinnon has also served as chair of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and on the Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Canada. We look forward to working with him over the coming year!



Convocation travel information

AUSU wants to make sure this year's graduating class has a fantastic convocation. To make this happen, we're providing free transportation via bus or limo service to take people from Edmonton to the Athabasca Multiplex each day of convocation 2014. This applies to those graduating from AU undergraduate programs, and their guests (some limits may apply).

We've also arranged hotel discounts in Edmonton.

Plus, if you stay at the Edmonton hotel where our discounts apply, the shuttle will pick you up right out front, and drop you off at your hotel after the ceremonies.

This service is provided exclusively by AUSU, but grads in some faculties may already be eligible for free transportation. Check your program website or the dean's office to find out.

For more information, contact ausu@ausu.org as soon as possible. We'll also send you a tip sheet with more information about travelling to Edmonton, getting to and from the airport, etc.

This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. The Voice does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to ausu@ausu.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

Come One, Come All...
To DECSA's 8th Annual Community Pancake Breakfast
Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 from 7:30am to 10:30am
11515-71 Street, Edmonton AB
Everyone is Welcome!
Enjoy **FREE** Pancakes, Eggs, Sausages, Juice and Coffee
Games and activities for the children
RAIN OR SHINE

THE VOICE

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