ERIN KARPLUK
Star on the rise, feet on the ground
Phyllis McOrmond and her son Gordon, UVic '75, believe that supporting talented students is one of the most meaningful ways to invest in the future. As a tribute to a husband and father and much-loved professor at UVic for 41 years, they established the Grant McOrmond Scholarship for students of English literature in the Faculty of Humanities. The scholarship honours his memory and ensures that UVic students will continue to benefit from his commitment to education.

Many UVic students depend on scholarships and bursaries to realize their educational dreams. Your gift to UVic’s annual campaign will help to create awards for exceptional students who are driven by a desire to improve their world.

TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN INVEST IN BRIGHT FUTURES FOR DESERVING STUDENTS, PLEASE CALL US AT 250.721.6003, VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.DEVELOPMENT.UVIC.CA, OR SPEAK WITH THE UVIC STUDENT CALLER WHO CONTACTS YOU.
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*On the cover: Erin Karpluk, photographed by Brian Howell on Feb. 11, 2009, at Kitsilano Beach in Vancouver.*
Zen and the Art of the Sandwich Line

A FEW TIMES EVERY WEEK I MAKE MY WAY TO THE UNIVERSITY CENTRE TO GRAB lunch at Sweet Greens, the popular spot for made-to-order deli sandwiches and wraps. I’ve developed impeccable timing in that I always seem to show up just after classes have ended. Let it be known that I am not unfamiliar with the frequent and substantial line-ups that test the fortitude of the undernourished.

But worth it, it is. The patient are rewarded with fresh fixings and the welcoming smiles of a good-natured trio of sandwich makers who perform unheralded miracles with bread, tortillas, and everything good that goes with them.

I’ve also come to appreciate something else about Sweet Greens. Instead of rushing through the noon hour crowd, the sandwich line forces me to stop and take note of things. It’s come to be a welcome immersion into the heart of student life and the ebb and flow of social interaction.

It’s often entertaining to be treated to conversations about last weekend’s parties or the group project that’s due next Tuesday. It’s also given me cause to wonder why anyone would ask for extra ranch dressing on his roast beef sandwich. And yes, unavoidably, over the din of conversation in the cafeteria, there are the mobile phones, ear buds, text messages and, lately, “tweets”.

But, lunch at Sweet Greens reminds me about my own student days and the importance of friendships, and the way some of the best moments are the informal ones, away from classes and homework.

At one point, each of them was just like the students at Sweet Greens: getting through the day, keeping up with the work, and looking forward to life after university.

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During one recent lunch, I thought about the stories of the three women who are at the heart of this issue. Alumnae Erin Karpluk, Tamara Vrooman and Lynne Beecroft come from similar backgrounds—growing up in smaller towns before coming to UVic—and they share something that, in hockey terminology, would affectionately be called “grit”. When obstacles are presented, they each have a fire and determination that pushes them through. They’ve achieved great things.

At one point, each of them was just like the students at Sweet Greens: getting through the day, keeping up with the work, and looking forward to life after university.

It’s fascinating to think about where today’s students may end up. Witnessing the potential that they’re about to unleash on the world is one of the things that makes being around campus such a great privilege.

Just how they’ll make their mark, only time will tell. But like a good lunch, it’ll be worth waiting for.

MIKE MCKENNEY
EDITOR
mckenney@uvic.ca
A WELL-STRUCTURED IQ TEST

MR. ROBERT MOYES’ COMMENTS IN THE LATEST ISSUE DESERVE many accolades (“Confounding Cornett,” autumn 2008). Perhaps in designing the building, Mr. Di Castri was inadvertently reflecting the fact that my father, Thomas Warren Cornett, while teaching at Craigdarroch Castle, in the summer sessions of 1921–23 was pursuing graduate studies at Berkeley in educational psychology. Specifically, he was engrossed in developing IQ testing procedures! It is therefore quite fitting that the building is one of them.

MADELEINE CORNETT MACFARLANE
SAANICH

THANKS TO ROBERT MOYES FOR HIS ARTICLE ON THE CORNETT Building. Along with the profiles of other (newer) buildings on campus in the latest issue, it was refreshing to read a re-evaluation of the Cornett.

Having only attended one course in the building, I can hardly claim an intimate knowledge of it, however the experiences I did have there were positively tempered by the architecture of the place.

As Chris Gower notes in the article, John Di Castri (who also designed the original Student Union Building in 1963) was one of Victoria’s most interesting architects of the modern era and his design for the Cornett came as a response to the sparer ethos of high modernist design that had come over from Europe earlier in the century. Also taking cues from the practice of Frank Lloyd Wright, the Cornett is a wonderful example of a more organic and localized take on modernist design that somehow seems intertwined with the psyche of the campus.

I for one admire the building and was glad to be reminded also of the other fine structures at UVic: the Sedgewick, designed by Vancouver architect Barry Downs, and the Elliott, designed by W.R.H. Curtis, among them.

Finally, Moyes’ comment that the Cornett is “always destined to be a challenge” is probably true but it is worth remembering that sometimes the best architecture can take time to absorb and time to fully reveal itself to us.

Thanks again for the great issue.

CAMERON MCELellan, BA ’94
VANCOUVER, BC

DON’T FORGET DUNSMUIR

I HAVE TO SAY IT WAS WITH A BITTER TASTE IN MY MOUTH THAT I flipped through the autumn 2008 Torch. I normally enjoy
reading the goings on and updates of the university. However, you can imagine the irony I felt when I read about three new state of the art buildings, and the vision behind them, after learning that my husband’s place of employment, Dunsmuir Lodge, will be closing.

I have to believe that with some creative problem solving Dunsmuir Lodge can still be a vital part of the university and the surrounding community. At the very least, the employees at Dunsmuir deserve to be placed at other jobs in the university as a result of this unfortunate decision.

In the interests of sustainability, preserving a building with west coast architecture, which has utilized local wood and rock material, would seem to be in keeping the university’s vision.

ALISON WEST, BED ’97
VICTORIA

A LOVE STORY
I was 17 years old, attending Victoria College in lovely old Craigdarroch Castle. Dances at Victoria College were quite formal, and everyone had a dance card where you would ask a girl for the privilege of a dance.

In February they celebrated Sadie Hawkins Day, where the girls asked the boys. I was astounded when Valerie, clearly 18, asked me for a dance. She had missed a year of school after losing the sight in one eye. We got on well and we became friends, with a few kisses.

I was invited to a dance at the Oak Bay Yacht Club, where her father was a member. The girls wore long dresses, most of them made by their mothers—their first long dresses. The band played Hawaiian music, which was all the rage at the time. Transportation was provided so that all the girls were home safely by 1 a.m.

We continued to see each other, usually at her home, through the spring. I invited her to a German film that was advertised as a romantic story but was actually a propaganda epic for the Hitler youth. No matter, we didn’t watch the film anyway!

I got a summer job at Tranquille (in Kamloops) and on the day I left I sent a dozen roses. I think it was a first for both of us.

I got several letters after I left, then a good-bye. She said she had found another friend. It took several years before I realized the truth: Valerie’s eye cancer had returned and she didn’t want to be seen as a cripple.

To me, she is always my first girlfriend; a lady, woman and a warm, charming memory.

BEN GIBSON, VC ’33
LANGLEY

How do we rate?
The University of Victoria and the UVic Alumni Association will be conducting an online survey this spring.

On May 12, an e-mail will be sent to alumni inviting participation in the online survey. If UVic Alumni Services does not already have your e-mail address, please go to our online subscriptions menu to join our list:

alumni.uvic.ca/subscriptions

All alumni who complete the survey will be eligible to win a draw for a slim new aluminum 13-inch MacBook computer.

University of Victoria

REFERENCE
The shifts in the world economy witnessed in recent months have been dramatic, widespread and nearly unprecedented in their scale.

In light of the global economic crisis, it has never been more important for British Columbians to continue to focus resources on education and innovation—a strategic approach that will anchor the province’s economy long into the future.

Such investments are critical.

The University of Victoria and its partners in the Research Universities’ Council of British Columbia (the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and the University of Northern British Columbia) strongly believe in our province’s ability to succeed in the global economic landscape.

We have been encouraged by recent federal and provincial government initiatives that enhance funding for student spaces, allocate funds for infrastructure development, and create more opportunities for graduate students.

The global scale of the economic crisis has demonstrated the depth of our integration in a world economy, and BC must be able to compete in this increasingly globalized environment.

It has long been recognized that well-educated people are critical to improving competitiveness and quality of life. It was echoed recently in the United States, when President Barack Obama, in announcing the appointment of his secretary of education, stated: “If we want to out-compete the world tomorrow, then we are going to have to out-educate the world today.”

BC’s research universities are key strategic partners for governments, communities and businesses.

Our alumni bring comprehensive skill sets to the workforce. Our researchers are actively moving new knowledge into our communities.

The University of Victoria can be proud of a number of initiatives and entities that demonstrate our leadership in innovation and education:

- The NEPTUNE Canada and VENUS cabled undersea laboratories, based at UVic, are bringing fibre optics, advanced instrumentation, and the Internet to the study of the ocean processes, climate and marine life.
- The Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, hosted and led by UVic, brings together the strength of BC’s four research universities to develop climate change solutions and strategies.
- The Vancouver Island Technology Park is the largest university-owned tech park in BC. The technology park creates invaluable synergy among companies and the unique working environment helps them to create high-value job opportunities in our community.
- Our Innovation and Development Corporation helps to turn ideas into economic activity.

It is our students, however, who play the most significant role in knowledge transfer. Graduate students, working so closely with our faculty, are vital to the research process. Undergraduate students play an essential role in transferring knowledge beyond the university to the business, public and non-profit sectors.

Through our co-operative education programs (in 40 academic areas, offering 2,700 co-op work terms every year) our students are contributing to companies, the public sector and other organizations around the province and around the world.

Through these and many other examples that can be found across BC, strong research universities are contributing to the generation of new knowledge that can make our province more productive and more prosperous in the long run. We have the momentum—let’s keep it going.
Solace

Environmental Studies student Karsten Klawitter named this picture “Solace” after spending several winter nights under the stars, shooting time-lapse images at Mystic Beach. Because of the 92-second exposure, the brilliant twilight spectacle of Venus leaves a trail in its path. He summed it up pretty well on his Flickr page: “Good times. Relax! This ain’t the mainland!”

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KARSTEN KLAWITTER
2009, the International Year of Astronomy, marks 400 years since Galileo introduced the telescope. UVic astronomer Chris Pritchet is part of the effort to commemorate the anniversary. He’s also a member of the recently completed Supernova Legacy Survey team. They used the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope (above) to detect faint, distant supernovae. Their results could help explain our expanding universe.

How do supernovae, or exploded stars, change our view of the universe? About 80 years ago Hubble, and others, thought that if the universe was expanding it should be slowing down because of gravity. But in 1999, two groups of (supernovae) researchers showed that the universe wasn’t slowing down—it’s actually expanding faster and faster.

How did they prove it? Special classes of supernovae all have pretty well the same luminosity at maximum light. So if you look at a supernova and you can see where it is in the universe, based on how fast it’s moving away you can also measure its apparent brightness. It’s a chain of reasoning, but you can say how big the universe was at that cosmic epoch.

And so they’re like cosmic markers. Exactly. It’s basically a way of seeing how fast the universe was expanding in the past compared to today.

How can that expansion be explained? It means that the universe is filled with some remarkable property, dark energy (not to be confused with dark matter), which pushes out. Somehow the universe is creating dark energy. It goes against all the conservation laws that we know. The total energy content of the universe should be fixed. It’s not. It’s growing, basically as time cubed. So it’s a remarkable discovery.

So is it leading to more questions than answers? This is telling us something about physics that we don’t know about. It’s probably an indication of the most remarkable new physics in the past 70 or 80 years. If there is dark energy, then where does it come from, why should it be there, and why does it have the precise value that it does?

How does this all connect with your work? Ours is the largest sample of distant supernovae. We have the most precise measurement of the nature of dark energy. What we found is that dark energy is very much like something called vacuum energy, a certain type of dark energy that Einstein postulated in the early years of general relativity theory, then rejected. It looks like the universe is filled with this stuff.

So what’s next? I think the next thing people have to do is measure how the properties of dark energy vary with time, if at all. Dark energy, if it’s vacuum energy as Einstein postulated, then its properties should be invariant with time. If we see variation in the properties, then that would indicate that dark energy is something else.

Online: astronomy2009.ca
Facing up to Racism

Psychologists from UVic and Brown University in the US have co-authored a study suggesting unconscious racial biases can be overcome by keying on facial features.

Twenty Caucasian subjects were asked to look at photographs of African-American faces. Their unconscious biases were measured by a test that asked them to say whether words associated with the faces were factual or nonsense. The researchers found the subjects responded more quickly if the associated word was negative.

In the next stage, half of the subjects were trained to recognize individual African-American faces. The others were trained to tell only if the faces were African-American or Chinese. When they repeated the first test, those who had learned to recognize individual faces lowered their bias score. The group trained only to differentiate between races did not lower their score.

“We are much better at recognizing people from our own race than we are from other races,” says UVic’s Jim Tanaka. “If we can’t individuate people from other-race faces, we’ll tend to categorize them and this will play into stereotypes. If you’re trained to individuate other-race faces, that seems to help disrupt stereotypes.”

The findings were published in PLoS One, an online journal of the Public Library of Science.

Prostate Cancer, Alcohol Linked

A meta-analysis of 35 existing studies concludes that prostate cancer can be associated with heavier alcohol consumption, according to the UVic-based Centre for Addictions Research of BC, and colleagues in the US and Australia. They found that men who drink two or more standard drinks a day (or 14 drinks a week) or more have a 20 per cent greater chance of developing prostate cancer. They added that more research is needed on the balance of risks and benefits for different types of disease from drinking alcohol at different levels. The findings were reported in the journal, Molecular Nutrition and Food Research.

Five More Years

President David Turpin will lead the university for a third five-year term starting next year. A performance review and consultation process led by the Board of Governors, concluded that Turpin is one of Canada’s “truly exceptional educational leaders.” Turpin, 52, joined UVic in 2000 and says it has been the most rewarding part of his career: “This is a great university, and it’s an honour to be part of such a productive community.”

Prepared for Lift-off?

Could Physics and Astronomy Prof. Geoffrey Steeves be bound for space?

He’s one of 16 finalists in the Canadian Space Agency’s astronaut recruitment campaign. From 5,000 applicants, the CSA has interviewed candidates and put them through rigorous medical, physical and skills tests—sometimes in extreme conditions. For Steeves, it’s a lifelong dream to be an astronaut. His research is on condensed matter physics and he has a commercial pilot’s licence.

Dunsmuir Closes

The university closed Dunsmuir Lodge, its North Saanich teaching and conference facility, at the end of March. Gayle Gorrell, Vice-President of Finance and Operations, said the university couldn’t divert financial resources from teaching, research, and student support in order to make the lodge financially sustainable. The 40.5-hectare property was donated by the late George Poole in 1985 on the understanding that UVic would operate Dunsmuir for at least four years. It had employed 71 people.

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RINGSIDE

Murals by Harrison

Two murals by renowned Yukon artist Ted Harrison (right) and which had been affixed to the walls of his former home, are now hanging in the new Social Sciences and Mathematics Building. The murals are a gift from Harrison, who holds an honorary fine arts doctorate from UVic, and were created after he moved to Victoria from the north in 1995. Later this year a biography, Painting Paradise: The Ted Harrison Story by Katherine Gibson, MEd ’90, will be released. As well, from September to November, UVic’s Legacy Gallery will present a retrospective celebrating Harrison’s 40 years as a painter.

Dykstra Dominates

Kayla Dykstra is the player of the year in Canadian university women’s basketball, becoming the fifth Vike to win the honour and the first to do it since 1987. Dykstra led the Canada West conference in field-goal percentage, scoring and rebounding—totals that were good for first, second and third place in the country. The 6’2” Faculty of Education student “is not only a great player, she is a great person, teammate and leader,” says Vikes head coach Brian Cheng. “She is also a three-time Academic All-Canadian. She’s one of our captains and she’s always working with her teammates to help them get better.”

New Gym?

The university is examining funding options for the first phase of upgrades to the McKinnon Building and the construction of an adjacent building. The School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education would remain in the renovated McKinnon Building while the new building would house Athletics and Recreation and CanAssist—the disability technology program. The project would include additional: gym capacity; changing rooms; indoor multi-use recreational space; and more lab, teaching, office and meeting space.

A consultant’s report found that McKinnon, nearly 40 years old, faces rising maintenance costs and hasn’t had a major upgrade in 10 years. Potential funding sources include federal infrastructure grants, private donations and student fees.

Cool (or not) on Campus

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On the Move

More than 33,000 students, faculty and staff go to campus during the fall and winter terms, roughly the same figure since 2006. Here’s how their modes of transportation add up:

- 8,236 average daily in-bound vehicles (9,169 in 2006)
- 74% single-occupant vehicles (75.5 % in 2006)
- 9,426 in-bound BC Transit passengers (7,885 in 2006)
- 2,483 in-bound bikes (up 37% from 2006, possibly due to weather)
- 3,396 in-bound pedestrians (3,326 in 2006)

Source: 2006 Campus Traffic Survey
I witnessed a truly historic American celebration—the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America, Barack Obama. I was one of the estimated two million people standing on the National Mall watching the inauguration ceremony on that Tuesday. It was an extraordinary experience to embrace such a memorable moment in history.

I was among the 5,000 university students and alumni attending the University Presidential Inaugural Conference as “inaugural scholars”. Each day was packed with public and private events building up to the inauguration. We also had a chance to hear former vice-president Al Gore and former secretary of state Colin Powell speak about building leadership skills and making a difference in the world.

When the “day” finally came, everyone could not be more excited. Despite the freezing cold weather, hundreds and hundreds of people stayed overnight just to get a good spot to see Obama. While there were people from all walks of life, the number of African Americans stood out in the crowd. Many came from other areas of the country to be part of history. Their joy was contagious. It was indeed their moment to be proud after many years of mistreatment.

Since I did not stay up overnight, I watched the ceremony on a giant screen on the National Mall with thousands of other people. While you could imagine such a crowd being extremely noisy, as soon as Obama started to speak, everyone was quiet. Everyone was so eager to hear him speak. It was amazing. People cheered and praised as they listened to their new president addressing issues that matter dearly to them. They saw their hope for the future in Obama. Obama has not only become their new president, but their hope in a country that faces so many problems and challenges.

The overall experience was thrilling and emotional. The whole of Washington, DC was in “Obama-mania”. I met people cheering, dancing, singing and praising their new president in a way that I have never seen before.

I would say that this whole experience inspired me greatly. It proves that anyone can achieve the highest position in their society if they have passion, wisdom and the drive to unite people. And that we can make a difference. The power of people is unlimited and everlasting. Especially as young people, we have the power to change the world and shape our future. No matter what the past held, we can definitely influence the future.

Lulu Yuan received a grant from the UVic Alumni Association to attend the inauguration conference. Originally from Shanghai, she graduates in June with her Bachelor of Commerce degree.
Alumni Week 2009

The second annual Alumni Week, a tribute to UVic grads everywhere, brought together nearly 800 participants for 14 events including a Teaching Awards Celebration, Distinguished Alumni Awards, Alumni-on-Campus Breakfast, and a special career/team-building workshop for young alumni. Several sponsors helped out, led by the Clearsight Investment Program from Wellington West, an official partner of the UVic Alumni Association.
Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching winner Barb Cumie with Chemistry Professor Emeritus Gerry Poulton, a past recipient of the award.

Alumni Jeopardy!

The Alumni-on-Campus Breakfast included Alumni Jeopardy! with Vikes Basketball hall-of-famer Luanne Krawetz, MED’93, exhibiting game show hosting skills that would give Alex Trebek a run for his money.

Test your trivia skills against some of the Alumni Jeopardy! clues:

100 The parents of this star of the 90210 TV series attended UVic in the ‘60s.
200 UVic’s first convocation ceremony was staged in this building.
300 These two campus buildings both have astronomy domes.
400 True or false: the Torch has a circulation of 63,000.
500 This Philosophy alumnus co-created Flickr.com.

Visitors tour the new Mearns Centre for Learning at the McPherson Library.

Clearsight Investment Program President Michael Burns, Faculty of Business alumni award winner Jeff Harris, MBA’95, Distinguished Alumni Tamara Vrooman, MA’94, and Bob de Faye, MPA’85, at the Distinguished Alumni Awards.

Maryanne Trofimuk, MEd’04, and Anne Forester, MA’75, Distinguished Alumni Awards night.

Teaching assistants Melanie Siebert (Writing) and James Biggar (Environmental Studies), at the Teaching Awards Celebration.

Derek Wong, BSc’08, mugs for the camera at the alumni breakfast.

Answers: Jason Priestley; the Old Gym; Elliott and Bob Wright/Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences buildings; True; Stewart Butterfield.
Dave Hill wipes away a tear as he thinks about his hard-scrabble upbringing on the Six Nations reserve at Grand River, Ont. “You are surviving,” Hill says as he sits in a lecture theatre in the David F. Strong Building. “I grew up pretty fast but now I’ve shut a lot of those doors. My life turned around since I had my son. It’s come full circle here” at UVic.

Hill, a third-year political science student, has just finished giving a presentation on his experiences in a program that helps First Nations students fit into life at UVic. Hill had a rough time settling into the university’s culture. But the affable 24-year-old was soon steered toward the Le, Nonet—a Straits Salish word meaning “success after enduring many hardships”—is in its final year of a four-year pilot, offers Aboriginal students like Hill peer support, funding, and research and community apprenticeships. A program has also been developed for UVic faculty and staff to better support Aboriginal students.

“Without Le, Nonet, I wouldn’t be here,” Hill says. Through the project, Hill was able to return to his home reserve on a fully-funded work-term where he sat in on negotiations between First Nations and federal government officials and worked at the Six Nations Eco-Centre.

An evaluation report, issued in November, indicated that the project has created a welcoming institutional climate, provided better financial aid, created links with surrounding First Nations communities and contributed to the students’ decision to return to school the following year.

“Each of these programs builds special relationships on campus and it would make me very sad if we lost any of this,” says Psychology Prof. Chris Lalonde, who is tracking Le, Nonet. The project is vital to Aboriginal students, Lalonde says. “It’s one-stop shopping.”

— Grant Kerr

House Nearly Open

Construction is to be completed in July on the new First Peoples House. Located south of the University Centre, between the Clearihue and Cornett buildings, the 12,000-square-foot structure’s design is based on the pre-contact longhouses of the Coast Salish people.

The main entrance features a sheltered timber canopy and two welcoming poles. Major works of art for the house are being created by three outstanding Coast and Straits Salish artists: Doug Lafortune of the Tsawout First Nation, Xwa-lack-tun (Rick Harry) of the Squamish Nation, and Charles W. Elliot of the Tsartlip First Nation.

The house will include a ceremonial hall, kitchen, meeting and office space, and is intended to be a centre of support for more than 650 Aboriginal students and the broader community. Look for a full set of photos of the First Peoples House in the autumn issue of this magazine.
Contrary to what your mother may have said, a trip to the pub isn’t always bad for you. Neither for brain, nor body. Providing you walk.

As a child, Brian Christie, a UVic neuroscientist, remembers hearing such dire warnings about potential brain damage. It seemed, “every time you look the wrong way, you will lose some brain cells.”

Turns out that, yes, there are all sorts of ways you can lose brain cells—aging is chief among them. But you can also re-generate those neurons by doing something as simple as taking a walk: exercise benefits not only our bodies but our brains as well. In fact, exercise not only makes you smarter, it can help reduce symptoms of depression, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Alzheimer’s disease.

This was good news to the 100 people who packed the penthouse suite in Swans Hotel. Most of those gathered are over 50 and, no doubt, have done some thinking about their own mortality. Led by UVic’s Centre for Biomedical Research, they are here for Café Scientifique, a regular pub night that mixes ale and appetizers with health-related research done by some of the university’s—and Canada’s—top minds.

The topic? “Benefits of Exercise for your Brain: Hope or hype?”

Anybody who had come in expecting the latter would have likely left with an extra spring in their step as Christie extolled the virtues of exercise for increasing brain capacity.

“When we exercise, we are increasing the number of synapses (the ‘telephones’ that allow neurons to talk to each other) and the cells themselves. You are taking your old cells and making them better and more proficient, as well as creating new cells,” Christie tells the crowd.

Drinking it In

Café Scientifique puts a tasty twist on the free public lecture by serving healthy helpings of research alongside ales and appies.

By Grant Kerr
Dressed in jeans and a Centre for Biomedical Research golf shirt, Christie weaves stories about his education and research with hard science, employing a comic’s timing.

This is the fourth Café Scientifique session and the most successful by a long shot. Many were turned away at the door after every nook and cranny was filled with the curious. When I arrived half an hour before the start time, the pubbier main-floor meeting space had been scrubbed in favour of the more spacious penthouse two floors up, crammed with art and antiques. I was able to grab one of the last seats, but was left craning my neck around a 12-foot red cedar Tsimshian house post created by Roy Henry Vickers.

Handling Christie’s introduction was the director of the Centre for Biomedical Research, Paul Zehr. His goal is to bring science to the people. Since beginning last fall, Café Scientifique has been building its audience. Zehr’s goal is six sessions a year. The idea has been an international smash since starting in Europe in the 1990s. Taking science into an informal setting allows the audience valuable one-on-one interaction with an expert.

“I’m a big anti-ivory tower guy,” Zehr says, explaining the pub setting attracts a wider audience than a free university theatre lecture might. To Zehr, UVic has a social responsibility to the community in which it exists. Café Scientifique is one way of giving back while informing the public of what the university’s researchers are up to.

Christie can only help. A gregarious, engaging speaker, Christie riffs informally for about 25 minutes after which he entertains questions for the next hour. During his research that began a decade ago at California’s Salk Institute, Christie was one of the scientists who found that mice, bearing a similar neurological make-up to humans, increased their brain capacity when they exercised every day. Experiments on rats were equally successful.

That’s good news for sufferers of Alzheimer’s and FASD. The latter is caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy, which can lead to brain damage. After exercising for just 12 days—several months in human terms—FASD-affected rats were indistinguishable from rats without the symptoms, Christie says. Alzheimer’s sufferers’ symptoms were reduced by 50 per cent, although Christie cautioned that getting active won’t eliminate Alzheimer’s or FASD.

“Exercise won’t cure Alzheimer’s disease but it will slow the progression,” he says.

You don’t have to be an ultra-marathoner, either. A 20-minute walk three times a week is enough to keep the brain and body supple. It’s a huge help for those suffering from some forms of depres-
sion too, as good as any medication, Christie says. “Housework and gardening count too. Just get moving.”

That is great news for Adam Leuchter, 84. An avid hiker, the retired electrical engineer gets out for a walk every day. Still, Leuchter was sceptical going into Christie’s session. But after grilling the scientist on whether there was contrary research—there isn’t any—the fit octogenarian is satisfied that he’s on the right track.

“I am 84. Aging is an important subject to me,” Leuchter says, with a wide grin. “I was hoping to learn how I can continue to have my brain function. Most people say the older you get the stupider you get. It’s great that there’s a way of slowing it down.”

Leuchter doesn’t plan to slow down and he’s doing mind and body good when he goes for his daily strolls.

Of course, just exercising won’t make you any brighter. You actually have to use that brain when you’re growing all those new neurons. Crossword and sudoku puzzles are always a help, as are writing and practising music. Ballroom dancing is a terrific blend, combining enormous mental discipline with physical activity.

A fit 45, Christie practises what he preaches, biking five kilometres to work and back every day. He also runs about the same distance three times a week. A life-long athlete, Christie found himself getting soft during his days as a university student following a knee injury during a volleyball game. Doing brain research “was a little bit of an instigator to exercise. I had my knee rebuilt before I started this research. The evidence is just too compelling and you want to get active. I have felt more mental clarity and I have ramped it up the last couple of years,” Christie says.

Dave Platt, 71, took in the talk with friend Carolyn Zyha. Platt lifts weights three times a week, attends water fitness classes and hikes. He loves the fact that anybody can follow through on Christie’s message. “It’s nice to have validation of what you are doing. What’s heartening is that you don’t have to be training for a marathon.”

Ideas Served Right
They call it their own version of “theatre of the mind.” The UVic Centre for Biomedical Research introduced Café Scientifique last fall, but the concept dates back to the salons of 19th century Paris. It was revived in the 1990s by groups in the UK and France and has since caught on elsewhere.

Locally, the informal seminars with UVic science and biomedical researchers offer insight into health-related issues. Talks about science are brought outside of the domain of the expert and allow everyone to voice an opinion.

Next up:
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History and the Bottom Line

Her academic work focused on BC women’s history, but Tamara Vrooman has quickly climbed to key leadership roles within the province’s financial circles. The CEO of Vancity credit union says it’s all in how you think about it.

By Norman Gidney
Photography by Dina Goldstein

So, just how does a history degree prepare you for handling billions of dollars on behalf of the taxpayers of British Columbia, and then for the customers of the biggest credit union in Canada? Actually, quite well. Take for example Tamara Vrooman, MA ’94, BC’s former deputy finance minister and now chief executive officer of Vancity credit union.

Vrooman recently visited a group of history students in her old department in the Clearihue Building on the day that she would formally receive the UVic Alumni Association’s Distinguished Alumni Award. She sat perched on a desk in front of the classroom and talked for an hour about her eight years at UVic and her subsequent, and somewhat unorthodox, career path into the world of finance.

She claims she wasn’t a great student, although she had strong grades in high school and in social science courses at UVic—the ones that offered lots of old exams to study and memorize, she says, with a smile. The first time she had to write a history paper proved much more difficult. “You have to think on your own,” she says. “That actually was what motivated me to get an MA.”

Born in Victoria and raised in Kamloops, like many small-town BC students, Vrooman picked UVic over the big-city campuses. Her honours essay was on the activity of BC women outside of domestic life and her MA thesis was about the compulsory sterilization of young women at BC’s Industrial School for Girls, an example of now-discredited theories of eugenics that were prominent a century ago.

From her master’s research grew an interest in finding out how the government of the day made its decision to sterilize women. That interest in policy making led her to the finance ministry, the central department of government. But Vrooman was only hired after her second try. A member of her first interview panel told her they all knew about the reputation of arts students: “We’re afraid you can’t add.”

“I was quite bummed out by that, to use that technical term,” she says. Vrooman returned to UVic for a year in the School of Public Administration and took every statistics and economics course she could, then went back to the ministry for a second job interview, which was successful. The numbers courses got her in the door—“It wasn’t quite called mailroom clerk, but it was quite low”—
but Vrooman credits the skills honed by the study of history for her rapid rise through the ranks at finance. She developed a reputation for explaining complicated subjects. “I was able to take fairly complex financial concepts and explain them to cabinet ministers.”

Tell a story, convince others, document your facts, be clear what your opinion is—these skills were learned studying history at UVic, and she says, they’re useful in any position of leadership, in business or the public service.

“It’s a key way you convince a premier to implement, or not, a new initiative.”

**AS DEPUTY IN FINANCE** from 2004 to 2007 under finance minister Carole Taylor, Vrooman helped the province reach triple-A credit rating. “I’m pretty proud of that. It translated into real value.” She also helped Taylor deliver long-term collective agreements with BC’s public sector unions.

When it comes time to ask about career advice, one student wonders about the best way to make the transition from academe to public service.

Maybe studying history doesn’t prepare for “how to market yourself,” Vrooman says. “Think about what it is your academic training prepares you for. What are you serious about?”

Is a career in government “something you do because you can’t do anything else, which is the stereotype?” In fact, the opposite was her experience. “Some of the brightest people I have met work for the public service.”

Another student asks: what’s the best arena to achieve results, business or government? It’s easier and less complicated in business, she says, “but the results you achieve in government, when you achieve them, are greater, more relevant.”

She’s convinced there is a place in business for liberal arts students. “We still need people who know how to think.” And history students aren’t the only non-business students who can find fulfillment in the private sector. She says that one of Vancity’s best thinkers is a theatre grad.

He's helping Vancity use social media like YouTube and Facebook. Who better, Vrooman says, than a theatre student to figure out “how to engage an audience, how to get an audience to engage with you. The skills that come out of your history degree prepare you for the modern discipline of thinking. It’s a modern skill set, not as the title suggests, outdated or old.”

Dressed in a grey pinstripe pantsuit and turquoise blouse, Vrooman projects confidence, but surprisingly credits another intangible for what followed her time at UVic. “It’s not skill, it’s luck. Good fortune is a huge part of it.”

The lucky streak has continued at Vancity, where she was named CEO in 2007. It reported a 43-per-cent increase in profits last year, on what Vrooman told the *Vancouver Sun* was a renewed “focus on the basics of banking, focus on retail and member deposits.”
She’s proud of Vancity’s beginnings, when half a dozen people sitting around a kitchen table in 1946 each contributed $20 to start the credit union. Today, there are 400,000 members and a shiny high-rise headquarters tower beside the SkyTrain line in Vancouver.

The location is significant, she says, right on Main Street, the dividing line between East Van and the city’s more prosperous west side. And she’s proud of the fact it was the first financial institution to lend women money in their own right, without having a husband or father co-sign the loan, long before the banks.

Vrooman is keen to offer a hand to anyone who wants her advice. She wrote her e-mail address and phone number on the blackboard and invited students to call. “I’m not a big scary person.”

It might take a week or two to get back but she promised, anyone who calls gets a face-to-face talk. And that’s her final bit of advice. Identify the important decision-makers in the organization that you want to work for, ask their advice. Go right to the top, says Vrooman.

“Don’t underestimate the value of a cold call. You have no place in business if you can’t make at least one cold call.”

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**The Essential Vrooman**

**POSITION:** Chief Executive Officer, Vancouver City Savings Credit Union (Vancity)

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor of Arts (History), ’91 and Master of Arts (History), ’94

**UPBRINGING:** Born in Victoria in 1968 and raised in Kamloops

**CAREER PATH:**
- CEO of Vancity in Sept. 2007 –
- 2004 – 07: BC Deputy Minister of Finance
- 2002 – 03: BC Deputy Minister of Health
- Prior: Progressive responsibilities in ministries of finance and health

**ACHIEVEMENTS:**
- Vancity’s consolidated earnings rose 49 per cent in 2008
- Developed and implemented BC government fiscal plan ($33 billion)
- Led the health ministry to its first balanced budget in 16 years

**HONOURS:**
- 2008 UVic Distinguished Alumni Award;
- 2007 Knowledge and Leadership Award, Association of Women in Finance; past member of Canada’s Top 40 Under 40™;
- 2003 Queen’s Jubilee Medal for outstanding contributions to the public service in BC.

**WHAT OTHERS SAY:**

“Tamara is able to look beyond the numbers, to the broader impacts of policy on our province, communities and families, and to communicate her assessments with compassion and precision.”

—Carole Taylor, former BC finance minister

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[www.continuingstudies.uvic.ca/alumni](http://www.continuingstudies.uvic.ca/alumni)
She plays the time-travelling Erica Strange on CBC’s *Being Erica*, reliving past regrets. But personally, Erin Karpluk will take a pass on any do-overs. From her small town Alberta upbringing to this year’s potentially career-making role, she
It’s Jasper, Alberta in the late 1980s and Erin Karpluk—10 years old and with unstoppable determination—is riding an ancient bicycle through the snow to deliver copies of the Jasper Booster. With 32 customers, she has the largest paper route in the Rocky Mountain resort town. It takes her six months to save up for her own television; the one that her parents flatly reject and the one that she, just as flatly, insists on having.

It wouldn’t be the last time their daughter’s will would prevail.

When she has accumulated $400 in earnings, the girl marches down to the local Home Hardware store and puts her money down on her new TV. “I quit my paper route and sat in my room for two years and watched,” Karpluk remembers, only half-joking about her childhood fixation on Three’s Company re-runs.

Karpluk, BFA ’00, relates all of this as she sips her way through a late Sunday afternoon tea at a table in Jitters, a West 4th Avenue café. The Kitsilano neighbourhood has been her adopted home since coming to the city eight years ago to carve out a career in television and film.

It has proven to be a wise move. Her resume is now filled with gradually more prominent roles, but none has given her the chance to test her versatility more than the part of Erica Strange, the single-and-seeking Torontonian in CBC Television’s dramatic comedy, Being Erica. With the aid of a mysterious therapist, the over-qualified and under-achieving Erica is able to revisit regrettable, often painful episodes of her past in order to put her present circumstances in perspective.

It’s one of the most highly acclaimed Canadian-produced programs to come along in some time and it’s hard to imagine anyone other than Karpluk in the leading role. She has comedic charm. When the part demands dramatic depth, she brings it. And her natural good looks stand in welcome contrast to the polished glitz and glamour of American stars. In short, she represents—at the risk of sounding stereotypical—the friendly, likable all-Canadian woman.

After Being Erica’s premiere in January, a Globe and Mail review called Karpluk’s performance “magnificent, superbly effective.” When it debuted on ABC’s Soapnet cable network in the US, a New York Times review applauded the series’ “willingness to portray single womanhood as something beyond a sum of consumer choices” and said that it “feels (like) the right kind of counterprogramming to balance the mood of the moment.”

THERE WEREN’T ANY DRAMA CLASSES or high school productions in a town the size of Jasper. So Karpluk grew up the “hugest tomboy” who had a painful dental incident involving a waterslide. When she declared her intentions to play left wing for the Bantam AA boys hockey team, her dad the railroader and her mom the high school principal reacted the way a lot of parents would: “They said, ‘Oh please God, don’t play hockey!’” she recalls, laughing. “I wasn’t very good at stickhandling and I would definitely get suicide passes from the defence. The first day, I looked up and someone hit me. Wham! It was so much fun though.”

The acting bug didn’t really bite until Grade 11 when she and her classmates took part in an emergency response drill for volunteer firefighters. The students had to pretend to be victims in a car crash.

“They said, the more real you make it, the more it’ll benefit the emergency teams. So when they said go, I just got right into it. I remember my guidance counselor saying, ‘Erin, are you okay? Are you okay?’ The next day in school he came up to me and said, ‘You should be an actor’ That was the first time in my life I thought, oh my God, maybe... So the door opened” and led to UVic.

It was a simple mistake on Telereg, the old course registration-by-phone service, that landed her in the Theatre Department. She really just wanted to take a single acting class but wound up in the full program. “My mom was like, ‘The hell you are!’ and I remember walking across from the Trutch residence for my first day of acting class and thinking to myself, Holy shit, I don’t know how to act! I think I had my first grown up panic attack. All the people that were there were stars in their high school plays. But I thought, why not try it for a year, and it just kept going from there.”

Retired Theatre Prof. John Krich remembers Karpluk, 17 when she arrived at UVic, as a student who tended to get overlooked for major parts in Phoenix productions. “She was young and little girl-
ish, but she took chances and threw herself into stuff,” says Krich. “She’s very much like you see on the screen: talkative, that kind of quirky quality.”

She had roles in Phoenix productions of Les Canadiens and A Midsummer Night’s Dream and she did a lot of work for directing classes and shorter one-act plays. In the summer after UVic, she and Krich performed opposite each other in David Mamet’s Oleanna, at the Victoria Fringe Festival.

“John was a really amazing prof,” she says. “The reason I liked him so much, and we all did, was because of his stories and his life experience... being able to learn from his storytelling and his own vulnerability.”

**THE TRANSITION FROM THE STAGE** to the small screen can be a tough one. Production days can go on for 16 hours, and because scenes are often shot out of sequence it can be a challenge to maintain focus. But it’s something that came naturally for Karpluk after graduation. She tried the theatre route, but had no success when she auditioned for the National Theatre School or the Shaw and Stratford festivals.

Film and television work, on the other hand, came quickly—it was just a matter of putting her mind to it. After graduation she had taken a solo trip to Thailand, and on New Year’s Eve 2001 she was back home and thinking about a trip around the world.

“I was drinking coffee and looking out the window and my mom was doing the dishes and she’s like, ‘so sweetie do you want to do this acting thing?’ And I said, I do, mom. And she said, ‘Well, your father and I were talking and we’re going to help you put a down payment on a place in Vancouver.’ Half an hour later we were in the car driving to Vancouver.”

They said, ‘Oh please God, don’t play hockey!’... The first day, I looked up and someone hit me. Wham! It was so much fun though.

That’s the thing. For all of her determination, the resolve and the independent streak that might have put her at odds with her parents, Karpluk and her family are tight. They managed to stay that way even after her parents divorced when she was in Grade 7. From them she got support and inherited a strong work ethic.

“My family was really good about letting me do whatever I wanted to do,” she says. “They usually didn’t have a choice. But as long as I’m happy, they’re happy. They didn’t have any expectations. If anything, I put the expectations on myself.”

 Until now, Karpluk’s biggest role was in the Bravo network’s Godiva’s—about sexed-up 20-somethings working in a Vancouver restaurant—for which she received a Gemini award nomination.
She was in Los Angeles, taping a guest spot on the *L Word* last year when she got the call offering her *Being Erica*.

“When I first read the part I just loved the character because she’s so flawed and complex,” Karpluk says. “A lot of things get thrown at her and she has to go and re-live a lot of dark things in her life. The stakes are high: either make some big changes or accept her mediocre life.”

After her initial excitement, Karpluk actually wasn’t too sure about how the show would be received. “I didn’t know how they were going to make a series out of it, to be honest. How many regrets could she possibly have? But to the writers’ and the creator’s (Jana Sinyor) credit, as the series went along I was shocked with what they did with the season. Instead of painting us into a corner, they just opened different doors of possibilities. In fact, where they’re going to start the second season is fantastic. It really changes things around. It could go in a bazillion different directions.”

Karpluk sees Erica Strange in one respect as “absolutely a representation of our generation. Sometimes the more educated you get, the whole big fat world and every option is overwhelming and you just don’t know what to do. I have a lot of friends who still don’t know what they want to do with their lives.”

Choices and consequences, options selected and options rejected—they’re what make *Being Erica* so universally appealing. If we could only relive life’s big moments with the wisdom of hindsight, who knows how things might have turned out differently?

“That’s why I like this series because it’s like, what door do you choose? If my mom hadn’t brought up (going to Vancouver), maybe I would have travelled around the world and met some guy in India, had babies there, and never would have acted a day in my life. Maybe that would have been great too. But I’m really happy with that conversation with her and where it’s led me to right now. I may be single, but I’m happy to be single too.”

Karpluk sees Erica Strange in one respect as “absolutely a representation of our generation. Sometimes the more educated you get, the whole big fat world and every option is overwhelming and you just don’t know what to do.”
It’s lunch time at the University Centre and a line-up snakes out the door of Sweet Greens as students crowd in for some sustenance before heading back to class. Nearby, in the lobby, 18 pensive-looking souls hang in small groups. Half of them are teenagers; the others are nervous-looking parents waiting for the arrival of our tour guides.

Although it’s late January, it’s prime time for prospective students and their families to fly, drive or take the ferry to Vancouver Island for their first-hand look at the university.

The Walkabout

On a campus tour, would-be students and their parents get a taste of life at UVic. It’s enough to make a guy want to hit the books again.

BY GRANT KERR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JULIE NIXON, BA ’99

It’s been more than two decades since I have spent much time on a university campus and it pains me to note that I have far more in common with the middle-aged parents than their teenaged offspring. My own children are a decade younger than these UVic hopefuls but I go on the tour as a visitor to see what campus life is like in the 21st century. Other than attending a handful of performances at the University Centre, I’m unfamiliar with the rest of campus, something of a green-hued mystery that spins largely inside the road that rings the campus.
Although we haven’t met before, I immediately recognize our chief tour guide from the click-click of her high heels. A vivacious third-year economics/psychology major, Jillian Kelly is somewhat famous on campus for her footwear. Today it’s black pumps with little bows on the toes. Kelly admits that she’s more comfortable in high heels than sneakers. “I don’t own any flats,” she says. And away we go.

Over the next hour-and-a-half, Kelly and Zang (Shiny) Hanyue will guide us through a good chunk of the 160-hectare campus that caters to 19,000 students. That’s a sizeable population, roughly equal to Courtenay. But the campus feels spacious and several visitors comment that they love the size and feel of UVic. It’s hard to disagree.

Kelly, the more experienced guide, takes the lead and does most of the talking, while Zang hangs back a bit and provides colour commentary to her colleague’s play-by-play. First stop is the McKinnon Building, home to the UVic Vikes and the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education. It’s a boon for anyone interested in getting active. There are far more activities available now than a couple of decades ago: beach volleyball, Ultimate Frisbee and dodgeball, along with more traditional university sports like soccer, basketball and volleyball. There is even raffleton, a quadrrathon of sorts for hardcore racquetheads who compete in tennis, squash, badminton and table tennis.

Since 1976, 156 students from UVic have joined the Olympics, Zang says as she points out the triple gymnasium and swimming pool.

He is also impressed with the meeting he had with business faculty, saying that the co-op program appeals to him. “I like how it’s more experience-based.”

It’s a brilliant winter day, warm enough that students are in shirt sleeves and shorts, including a dude slicing the air with a series of well-practiced martial arts kicks near the new Tower residence. As we tour the campus, it strikes me how wide open it is with plenty of green space and trees. The ubiquitous campus rabbits are a hit with the visitors as cell phones and digital cameras are whipped out for souvenir photographs. “Awwwww, I love the bunnies,” utters one young woman, unaware that the long-eared bounders are considered a garden-eating nuisance by resident neighbours.

At the Student Union Building, Kelly explains health and dental benefits available to students, provided through the University of Victoria Students’ Society. But some prospective students are already planning their social lives, eyeing the campus pub, Felicita’s.

“That’s where I want to be,” says West Vancouver’s Amanda Berenjian, 18. Kelly cautions prospective first-year students that BC’s liquor laws are strictly enforced on campus. “You have to be 19 or older and they will ID,” she says.

I clearly remember the temptation of the campus pub where I often spent more time than study hall. This doesn’t hold much appeal to North Vancouver’s Nadia Grutter, though. A quietly confident 17-year-old interested in enrolling in creative writing, Grutter...
is touring the campus with her mother, Bev. “It’s not for me,” Nadia says of the party life.

Just in case things do go sideways, UVic offers Safe Walk and Campus Alone programs. The former ensures that students can get where they need to go late at night with an escort, whether back from the bar or from a red-eye study session. The latter gives students who are working alone late at night piece of mind. Once a student contacts security, her whereabouts are recorded, as is her departure time and destination. Students are provided with a number they can call Campus Security 24-7 and 12 campus pay phones are also linked to Campus Security, no coins needed.

Over at the campus residences, Kelly points out the Village Greens restaurant. “Anybody here a vegetarian?” she asks. “No? Well, they’ve got really good veggie burgers and stir-fries and I’m not a vegetarian.”

After a quick run-down of how residence meal plans work—the options are basically small, medium and living large—it was off to one of the residences for a look. UVic has 20 residence buildings offering singles or doubles for those who don’t mind bunking with a roommate. In the six-storey, 126-bed Tower residence, one of the three newer complexes opened in 2004, we were ushered into room 101. The space was small, spare and clean with a bed, desk and wardrobe. But for a first-year student away from home for the first time, it shouts freedom.

In the newer residences, it’s all co-ed with shared, private showers on each floor and separate toilets.

First-year UVic students are guaranteed a space in res if applications are received before June.

“It has to be quiet after 11 o’clock,” Zang says. Parents nod approvingly.

Nearby at the McPherson Library, Vancouver Island’s largest, Kelly extols the virtues of the university’s Learning Commons where students can get complimentary tutoring in math, science and term paper writing. It allowed her to get through a troublesome math course. “I was getting a D and I ended up getting a B+,” she said.

Next, Kelly and Zang lead us through the impressive, steel, glass and laminated wood edifice of the Social Sciences and Mathematics Building. An example of UVic’s new green spirit, the building features a “green” roof, pine-beetle wood, and plenty of windows for natural light. The new buildings also feature showers for cyclists. Lockers everywhere are free too.

The tour winds up in the Business and Economics Building where Derek Wong, BSc ’08, an affable student recruitment officer, answers questions about scholarships and entrance requirements. Caught up in the sunny enthusiasm of the tour and impressed by the campus’ attractive, open feel, I’m tempted to submit an application as a mature student. For now, though, I’ll leave it to the teenagers.

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Beecroft’s Eleven

Lynne “Buzz” Beecroft’s team-first coaching strategies have produced 11 women’s field hockey championships.

BY TOM HAWTHORN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JULIE NIXON, BA ’99

Lynne Beecroft is telling a story about herself while sitting in her office. The walls are papered with handmade posters. Mementos cover her desktop. She shares this office with another coach, who prefers using another space, which is handy, since she has placed a large trophy on his desk for safekeeping.

Beecroft’s anecdote involves being a little girl confronted by puzzle pieces. Not for her the patient testing until correct piece meets correct space. In the retelling, she is hammering her open hand down on her desk.

“I always tried to bang them into the hole when they didn’t fit,” she said.

A lesson learned long ago—square peg will not go into round hole, no matter how hard pounded—has served her well in a quarter-century as coach of the University of Victoria women’s field hockey team. Her squads have won 11 championships in 25 seasons.

Such prolonged success is the exception in university sports, where many seasons conclude with graduations that leave teams in need of an overhaul. I stopped by Beecroft’s office a few months after her latest triumph—and only days before she would launch a new season—to learn the secret of her success.

Even before an audience of one, the coach becomes spirited in defining her coaching philosophy. She spoke not a word of victories on the pitch, instead describing the morale-building exercises adopted in years past to transform a disparate collection of young athletes into a cohesive team. Her program is not determined solely by wins and losses, but by how the players and the coaching staff operate together.

Every season brings new players, new pieces to the puzzle. Her experienced eye will determine a role for them on the Vikes. She coaxes and cajoles. An ill-fitting piece cannot be pounded into place.

“I sell the team game,” she said, leaning forward in her chair. “It’s not about individuals. Everybody’s got their jobs.”

Beecroft’s diminutive stature—she stands just 5-foot-3 and, during her eight years on the national team, weighed just 110 pounds “soaking wet”—contains an intense character. A single question earns an eager, 10-minute exposition in return. She is a sprite inside which burns a Knute Rockne spirit.

She has come a long way from the day in 1984 when she was first asked to take over the coaching duties. Her inclination was to turn down the job. She did not think she could ever stand in front of a group of players and address them with authority.

Beecroft grew up with the freedom to try any sport she liked. Her father was a logger and, later, a manager for MacMillan Bloedel. Born at Comox, she grew up in logging camps, including a stint on Graham Island in the Queen Charlottes at Juskatla, established during the Second World War to supply lightweight spruce for warplanes. The closest elementary classroom was at Port Clements, about 20 km northeast.

Many years later, she would reflect on the carefree gambols of her youth, learning to maintain balance as she raced over, around, and atop fallen logs.

Her family moved to Port Alberni and, later, to Duncan. She played soccer, basketball, and road hockey. (Around that time she was tagged with the nickname “Buzz”, for the way she would buzz around the court or field. Anybody who knows her has called her Buzz ever since.)

“I never got pigeonholed into ‘This is what girls have to do,’” she says. Her favourite was ice hockey and it became a family tradition to eat supper on trays in front of the television on Saturdays at 5:30 p.m., when the CBC aired Hockey Night in Canada with a sign-on beginning late in the first period of a game from Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto, or the Forum in Montreal.

After being introduced to field hockey’s shorter, heavier sticks, she chose to become a goalkeeper. “I thought I could be Gump Worsley,” she said. “Dive on the ball.” It did not take long before she realized a truth about the sport that has come to dominate her working life: “You don’t want to have people shooting at you. You want to be the one doing the shooting. That ball is hard.”

Each season is approached as a new puzzle. Her job is to find where each piece best fits.
In high school, Beecroft ran middle distance in track and took part in the long jump, a rather hopeful exercise for so short a girl. Field hockey was a way to get in shape for basketball season, yet it was on the pitch where she found her calling. She developed into a spunky centre-half under the tutelage of coach Peter Wilson. Beecroft compared him to other coaches and came away with a model that would inform her own style.

“You don’t scream and belittle,” she said. “You encourage.”

In 1973, she helped lead Cowichan High to a Girls’ AAA British Columbia championship in a showdown against a private school played in the Lower Mainland. It was her school’s first provincial title in any sport.

She had in mind a higher goal. A few years earlier, she had watched on television the Summer Olympics from Mexico City, vowing to become an Olympian herself. She enrolled at UVic in 1975, playing for the Vikes for four years, a time during which she also qualified for Canada’s national team. All that sport delayed her own degrees—BA ’82 (Kinesiology) and MEd ’95 (Coaching Studies).

In 1984, she marched into the Los Angeles Coliseum behind the Canadian flag during the Opening Ceremonies of the Summer Olympics, completing the vow she had made as a girl 16 years earlier. The Canadians finished fifth in the Olympic tournament.

She returned to Victoria, where coaching success came early. The Vikes went undefeated in 1984, claiming a national university championship. In 25 seasons, she has a record of 11 gold, seven silver, and four bronze medals at the Canadian Interuniversity Championship nationals.

She does not dwell on the success. “I appreciate every championship,” she insists. “But then I just move on.”

More important to her is the building of a rapport with her athletes. Each season is approached as a new puzzle. Her job is to find where each piece best fits.

She finds a theme for every season, expressed in such acronyms as FAITH (Finding Answers Inside the Heart), or TRUST (Tomorrow’s Results Ultimately Start Today), or MAGIC (My Attitude Generates Incredible Coincidences). The intent is to engage the athletes in team-building exercises. The themes are bookmarks to which the coach will return during the season, a shared language of common purpose.

Beecroft also learned a lesson on the Olympic team, when an edgy coach insisted on full workouts within hours of game time. “Instead of working my athletes to the bone,” she said, “we might go to Starbucks instead of practice.” She has also been known to cancel a study of game tapes in favour of watching the Karate Kid, during which bowls of popcorn are served. The coach believes team spirit builds cohesion, on and off the pitch.

It is hard to argue against the results. On the other desk in her office rests the magnificent McCrae Cup, a prize awarded to the top university women’s field hockey team. It makes for an impressive paperweight.
RALLIES, ELECTIONS, ART—AND CONTROVERSY.

Long before Facebook and Flickr, student life was documented in the university annual, the Tower. Published by the student societies of Victoria College and the University of Victoria from 1946 to 1968, its title came from the clock tower at the Lansdowne campus. Volumes from the mid to late 1960s reveal a publication that was often political, always witty and strikingly creative.

The tumult of student politics was regularly featured, and the Tower itself was not immune to controversy. In 1964, the Martlet ran the headline: “Tower Severely Criticized; Censure Passed for 'Bad Taste'” following outrage over the satirical nature of that year’s annual. The editors were accused of using the Tower as a venue for personal attacks. The student council vice-president acknowledged that the debate “brought a spirit to the campus that did not exist before.”

The Tower usually covered the main events of the year, from pranks to protests, clubs to concerts. The hijinks of Frosh Week were immortalized and the “Log Saw” fundraiser at Clover Point was well documented. President Malcolm Taylor presided over a tug-o-war for charity, pitting students against faculty and local politicians.

In 1967, the Campus Committee for Peace in Vietnam organized “teach-ins” and a seminar that included folk singer and anti-war
activist Joan Baez. Clubs were varied and included theatre (the Player’s Club), photography, foreign films (Kinema), the Outdoors Club, sailing, and chess.

There was even something for students who rejected organized activity: "Undoubtedly the largest and most active group on campus was the Non-Club, whose chief aim was the fostering of non-activity and non-participation. Members never got around to holding a meeting."

Art 140’s “Happening” of 1968 was all “frenetic frenzy, pulsating strobes, painted people… a swerve of psychedelic music and a cacophony of colour.”

There was a special annual game of “ruggah” between the sexes—and photos from the 1966 Tower show it was a muddy match.

Eye-catching design was important as part of the annual—Eric Metcalfe, BFA ’70, experimental artist and founder of Vancouver’s Western Front artists centre—created the 1967 cover art (far left). With its black and white inside pages, the Tower was ideal for photography; the campus architecture and natural environment were frequent subjects, including the iconic panels on the exterior of the Mearns Centre for Learning/McPherson Library.

BY LARA WILSON, MA ’99, UNIVERSITY ARCHIVIST
WITH FILES FROM JANE MORRISON, ASSOCIATE ARCHIVIST

UVic and Victoria College annuals and other student publications are listed in the library catalogue and included in University Archives holdings. University Archives is open to the public Monday to Friday, 8:30 to 4:30 (September to April) and 10:30 to 4:30 (May to August).
Greener Wheels
Students take the “EcoCar” challenge.

As the North American auto sector frantically restructures and seeks government bailouts, a group of engineering students is coolly working on building a greener car.

More than 40 UVic students and faculty are designing a vehicle that can minimize environmental impacts and have some power to boot. UVic is competing with 16 other universities in the continent-wide “EcoCar” challenge. The objective is to re-design a 2009 Saturn Vue into an extended range electric vehicle hybrid, similar to the soon-to-be released Chevy Volt.

The UVic crew recognized that reality and function had to go together, hence their plug-in hybrid concept. “Most of us drive something like 40 kilometres a day,” says Curran Crawford, BEng ’01, a mechanical engineering professor and EcoCar team advisor. As well, Team UVic wanted to design a vehicle that would be able to handle the island’s varied terrain and have enough power to tow a trailer or boat.

Accepted into the three-year competition last spring, the students have since designed an electric power train, ensuring all the components work together before their Saturn arrives in August.

“We have to make it better than the GM hybrids, otherwise we don’t look too good,” says Jeremy Wise, a fourth-year mechanical engineering student, the project’s team leader.

That’s a Wrap
Looking back on two rewarding years.

By Kathleen Barnes, BA ’98
President, UVic Alumni Association

2009 has brought exciting events and challenges for the UVic Alumni Association.

In early February, we completed our second annual Alumni Week which was even more successful than our first one.

In May, I will complete my two-year term of office as the president of the alumni association. It has been an honour for me and I am sure the future president will find the position to be equally as rewarding and satisfying. During my term as president, I have represented the alumni association at many events held in Victoria, Vancouver, Seattle and Prince George and felt privileged to do so.

Our current board of directors has worked hard serving on various committees as without them, we couldn’t achieve our goals. They work diligently in the background and such work brings great results and I thank them for their important contribution.

I have had outstanding support from the UVic Alumni Services office staff; from Don Jones our director of alumni services and from Shannon von Kaldenberg, Associate Vice President, Alumni and Development. Thanks also to Dr. David Turpin, President and Vice Chancellor of UVic. He has attended several alumni events and meetings during my term of office, offering his advice and support. His interest demonstrates the great importance we hold for our alumni.

Meeting alumni during my term of office, I am aware of how many look forward to each edition of the Torch as it keeps them connected to UVic and our many new and exciting developments. Most alumni enjoy the “Keeping in Touch” section of the magazine and current events at our university. We are always happy to hear from you and hear of your achievements and the path your life has taken. Check out our Web site which provides information on upcoming events.

The new president of the alumni association will be elected at our annual general meeting in May. With this appointment, I am certain you will find continued enthusiasm for our alumni. I sincerely wish the future president much success and enjoyment during his or her term of office.
So far, the UVic team has fared well, receiving top marks for the computer-designed plans they submitted to Argonne National Laboratories, a division of the US Department of Energy, a headline sponsor of the competition. GM is the other main sponsor.

“Right now we are at the head of the pack,” Wise says. Excited by the prospect of working on environmental technology, Wise, now 29, went back to school four years ago. “The environmental aspect of the project was pretty appealing,” Wise says. “One of the reasons I went back to school is to work on this kind of project. It was kind of a no-brainer to work on something like this.”

Crawford is also heartened that the Detroit Three seem to be moving toward greener technology. “I think finally they have realized that building big SUVs isn’t the way to go.”

The UVic Alumni Association has renewed its longstanding affinity partnership with TD Meloche Monnex insurance. The five-year extension was signed earlier this year and builds on a 10-year business relationship. TD Meloche Monnex offers alumni preferred group rates on home and auto insurance. In the photo, from the left: Kathleen Barnes, president of the UVic Alumni Association; Don Jones, director of UVic Alumni Services; and Lone St. Croix of TD Meloche Monnex.

The UVic EcoCar team is supported by $3,000 in grants from the UVic Alumni Association.

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Hats Off to Kathleen

Volunteers make the association tick.

BY SHANNON VON KALDENBERG
ASSOCIATE VICE-PRESIDENT ALUMNI AND DEVELOPMENT

GREETINGS FROM CAMPUS! SINCE MY LAST UPDATE IN THE AUTUMN Torch, we’ve had many opportunities to get together with alumni here in Victoria and elsewhere.

No other group is more directly involved in bringing alumni and the university together than the volunteers who serve on the board of directors of the UVic Alumni Association. There are about 20 individuals on the board and its committees. It takes commitment on their part, not to mention strong leadership.

That’s why I would like to commend the association’s president, Kathleen Barnes, BA ’98, for her work on behalf of alumni. As you may have read on the preceding page, Kathleen is this spring, completing her two years as president.

The university is fortunate to have people like Kathleen who are willing to go the extra mile. When we’ve gone “off-Island” for alumni events in Vancouver and Seattle, Kathleen was there. When we’ve staged the many events that make up Alumni Week, Kathleen was there. And each convocation ceremony, Kathleen was there with a warm message of welcome to the new graduates.

I can’t say enough about Kathleen’s service to the alumni association and the university, not to mention the wonderful support of her husband, Lloyd. Thank you to you both!

Alumni Week was one of the initiatives that began during Kathleen’s term. Alumni Week 2009, in the first week of February, built on our first year, growing to 14 events with nearly 800 participants.

A highlight for me was the celebration of two of our Distinguished Alumni Award winners: Tamara Vrooman, MA ’94, CEO of Vancouver City Savings Credit Union and Bob de Faye, MPA ’85, BC deputy minister of aboriginal relations and reconciliation. They are fine examples of the outstanding community leadership that our alumni provide and they are tremendous role models for students. It was also great to see Beijing Alumni Branch leader (and 2008 Alumni Volunteer of the Year) Peter Forster, BSc ’74.

Be sure to mark the first week of February 2010 in your calendar for Alumni Week 2010. I look forward to connecting with you throughout the year.
Keeping in Touch
Let your friends from UVic know what’s been going on in your life. Send your latest news to torch@uvic.ca. You can also go to uvic.ca/torch to find our online reply form.

1964

LARRY CROSS, BEd, was elected mayor of Sidney in November 2008 municipal elections. Larry is a member of the UVic Senate and past president of the UVic Alumni Association.

1972

LINDA HUGHES, BA (History/Economics), has been elected the 19th chancellor of the University of Alberta. The former publisher of the Edmonton Journal is a past recipient of the UVic Alumni Association’s Distinguished Alumni Award.

1974

DON BACH, BA (English), has been employed by the Kelowna and District Society for Community Living for the past 15 years. The society provides community-based services for mentally challenged adults. Don has been married to BonnieJean for 28 years and has two sons, Donovan and Sean. He lives 30 yards from the house where he grew up, in Rutland. "Sort of a homeboy I guess!" Don would like to correspond with long lost friends and acquaintances from UVic. Find him on Facebook.

1976

Marilynne V. Brown Black, BEd (Elementary), sends an update: “After graduating I continued working as a teacher-librarian in Courtenay, Golden and Vancouver over a 25-year period. I completed two diplomas in education in 1990 and 1996. It was during this time that I began to give professional development workshops. After retirement in 1999 and some travelling I began working on my master of arts (children’s literature) at UBC with completion in 2005. Over the last dozen years I have been concentrating on my business as an independent children’s literature consultant. In addition to giving workshops locally, nationally and internationally I have authored and co-authored several articles in professional journals, and I’ve written book reviews. Now living in Chilliwack, I continue to be involved in children’s literature by working with a local chapter of the International Reading Association as well as a community-based literacy committee. My biggest project now is learning how to maintain my Web site. Retirement is anything but boring!”

Peter Forster, BSc (Psychology), works for the Canadian Embassy Beijing and, as the alumni branch representative (and 2008 Alumni Volunteer of the Year award winner), is “looking to add more alumni to the Beijing group. Goal is to have 100 active UVic alumni in Beijing.”

Michael B. Hare, BA (Political Science), became conference minister for the Prince Rupert Presbytery of the United Church of Canada on July 1, 2008.

Joy Davis, BA (History), writes: “After completing a master’s of museum studies at U of T in ’78, I’ve worked in Continuing Studies at UVic. I directed the Cultural Resource Management program along with several other diplomas and certificates in related areas. I was seconded by the Office of the Registrar and Enrolment Services to undertake enrolment planning before starting a study leave (in April) to focus on a PhD.”

Jane Richardson (née Walden), BSc (Biology), is now a retired biologist and college lab instructor. I have just opened an art space in Vancouver that is devoted
to promoting BC artists: www.leigh-
don.ca.”

MICHAEL SCOTT-HARSTON, BA (Political Science), recently returned to Ottawa following a four-year assignment as consul in Hamburg, Germany and a year of building in North Saanich. “I am currently working in the EU Institutions and Southern EU Relations Division with responsibility for the Holy See, Italy, Malta and San Marino.”

1977
JANIS KIRKER, BA (Pacific and Asian Studies), is “still dreaming of old friends.”

1978
DAVID BENNETT, MEd, topped the polls in municipal elections held November 15, 2008, for a three-year term as councillor for the District of Sooke. David credits his dedicated election team for his success.

1980
JERRY CARTER, BSc (Mathematics), is in his 16th year of teaching at Oak Bay High School. “I originally taught math and science, but it’s been math only for quite some time now. Despite what the Fraser Institute might say, I think Oak Bay is among the best schools in the province in many ways. Like most alumni, I wonder where the people I made friends with while living in residence are now. I see a familiar name in this section from time to time, but most of them are “sight unseen” since grad. Reunion, perhaps?”

RICHARD WUNDERLICH, BEd, teaches in Salmon Arm and works on textbooks for math and science courses. His novel, Tomorrow’s Paper, has been published in the US. richardwunderlich.blogspot.com.

1981

LESLIE ALLAN DAWN, MA (History in Art), earned the Raymond Klubansky Prize for best English work in the humanities for his book National Visions, National Blindness: Canadian Art and Identities in the 1920s (UBC Press). In the early 20th century, visual arts were considered central to the formation of a distinctive Canadian identity and the Group of Seven’s landscapes became part of a larger program to unify the nation and assert its uniqueness. Using newly discovered archival evidence, his book traces the emergence of a young nation. He is an associate professor in the department of art at the University of Lethbridge.

1982
AVIS RASMUSSEN, MEd, writes: “As a Victoria College student from 1955-57, and a visual artist, I am very pleased to be included in The Lansdowne Era by Edward Harvey. Winchester Galleries, Oak Bay featured my plein air paintings 2008: Paris, Provence Paintings, in November 2008.”

1983
PAULA JOHANSON, BA (French), has been writing non-fiction books for school libraries on science, health and literature for Rosen Publishing and Enslow Publishers. She just signed a six-book contract for a series on extreme sports.

MARNIA LELAND, BA (Psychology), returned to Victoria two years ago after leaving university in 1983. “Loving the slower island pace after being in Vancouver for the past 20 years. Can often be found sailing away in our boat.”

MARIA NEWBERRY (née HOUSE), LLB, writes from Calgary: “I have been at the Legal Aid Family Law Office since 2001. I have been busy parenting and this year brings four graduations: twins, Peter and Stephen Dixon are graduating from high school and will be entering neuroscience and engineering respectively at U of Calgary in September. Vanessa and David Dixon will graduate from U of C in math and engineering respectively.”

TERRENCE TURNER, LLB, directed the 2008 documentary film Adele’s Wish. It’s the story of the theft and recovery of the “Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I” by the Austrian artist, Gustav Klimt. “It’s a fascinating look at a political cultural conflict and legal dispute of epic proportions.” www.adeleswish.com

1984
CHRISTOPHER RAGAN, BA (Economics), is the 2009-2010 Clifford Clark Visiting Economist, at the federal Department of Finance. He is on leave from his faculty position in the McGill department of economics.

1985
LYNN MCCAUGHEY, BA (French), has been working on campus as a career educator since 1994, initially in Career Services, and most recently in the blended Cooperative Education and Career Services department. She works with students and recent graduates to help them put their education to work.

1986
CHRIS KEMPLING, MEd (Counselling), recently accepted the position of elementary special education coordinator at St. Ann’s Academy in Kamloops, the oldest continuously operating school in the province (est. 1880). “In addition, I have resumed my private marriage counselling practice here, sharing office space with two psychiatrists and a clinical social worker. I spend free time refereeing volleyball, singing in two choirs, mountain biking and playing with my two grandkids.”

JACK MILLER, MEd, and VERNA MILLER, BA (Geography) ’96, are still residing on the Basque Ranch, south of Cache Creek, and are looking forward to retiring and spending time just working around home, interspersed with some more travel.

Jack has been at Thompson Rivers University since 2000 and is currently the dean of the school of education. He is scheduled to remain as dean until the end of June 2010. He is also the coach of the cross-country running team at TRU and continues to pursue his interest in Aboriginal languages. Jack completed an education doctorate at UBC in 2004. Verna is the director of the Nakapamu Health and Healing Society in Lytton. The society was established as an organization to deal with community-level support for residential school survivors, of which Verna is one. They are proud grandparents to Annika, 7 and Ross, 3, children of Dusty and Virika. Former classmates who are travelling the Fraser Canyon are encouraged to visit. jamiller@tru.ca

1987
JOAN CONNORS, MA (Education), writes from Prince George: “This year I retired from my instructor’s position after 32-and-a-half years at the College of New Caledonia where I taught mathematics and physics in the college and career preparation program. I have joined my husband, Keith, in the operation of our wilderness lodge in the beautiful Cassiar Mountains of northwestern BC.”

1988
ROSEMARY COLLINS, BA (History), works in information management with the BC government and is “looking forward to another great alumni year.”

DAWN DOIG, BSc (Linguistics) has been living and working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia since 2005; “I am currently the supervisor of the audiology unit and thoroughly enjoying this very challenging and rewarding time in my career. Our hospital has been targeted as the national cochlear implant centre, which we are hoping will open within the
next five years. My husband, BRUCE DOIG, BA (History)/BEd ‘92, is a teacher at the American International School of Riyadh. I am excited to have had my first book published in October, 2008. And So Ahmed Hears… is about a hearing-impaired boy and was published by Widex Canada as a humanitarian project. It is available free to families via their Web site. We are thoroughly enjoying the beautiful landscape of Saudi Arabia and having the opportunity to travel to other countries on this side of the globe. Friends can contact me at shoebears@yahoo.com. I have lost touch with some people over the years and would love to hear from them again!"

1989

ANNE SWANNEI, BFA (Writing), had her third book of poetry, Shifting, published late in 2008 by Ekstasis Editions, Victoria. Anne has also written and illustrated a children’s picture book; she paints and makes mosaics. She and her husband, RAYMOND VICKERY, MEd ’87, recently returned from an extended trip to Turkey.

ANDREW WOOLDRIDGE, BA (Anthropology), has become publisher of Orca Book Publishers, specializing in books for young readers. Founding publisher BOB TYRELL, BA, ’70 (Psychology), remains president of the company and has assumed the duties of editorial director. The changes are part of the succession plan initiated in early 2007 when Woolridge bought a 50 per cent share of the Victoria-based company.

1990

JAMES DE BRUIN, BA (History), is a major in the Canadian Forces, most recently completing his second posting to Afghanistan in three years. He was responsible for the 22-member combat service support unit at Task Force Kandahar.

DOUG RANSOM, BEng (Electrical), has moved his investment and financial planning business to Canaccord Capital in Victoria. He is also chair of the Engineering Alumni Chapter, and married to LISA RANSOM, MPA ’93.

1991

SUSAN L. BEACH, LLB, has left her partnership with Cox, Taylor and is now practising with the Province of BC (ministry of finance, risk management branch).

DOREEN GEE, BSc (Psychology), sends a note: “I have evolved into a professional writer due to all the writing I do about social justice issues. I have been published in two books, in Monday Magazine, and have been working as a volunteer journalist at the James Bay Beacon newspaper for three years. The stories I have written have covered everything from homelessness to sewage treatment. The most exciting part of being a reporter is the people I meet, such as Carol James. All those years at university have done me well—essentially, they taught me how to think. My degree was good preparation for a career in the media, where analytical skills give me an edge. My present project is a book where I am seeking a publisher. Hello and best wishes to all alumni out there. To all you students struggling with exams and all that academic pressure— it is all worth it!”

LISA STEINMUELLER, BSN, writes from her home base in Hawaii: “I went to Honolulu Pacific University and finished my MSN (family nurse practitioner), and an MBA. I teach nursing for HPU, practice as an NP at a clinic on the windward side of Oahu, as well as being an advancing practice nurse for Queens Medical Centre in the Cardiac ICU.”

1992

KARL PIRES, BA (Pacific and Asian Studies/Economics), lives in Tokyo: “After graduating, I worked in the international affairs division of a local government in Japan for two years during which time I met my wife. After backpacking around the world for a year, I entered law school at the University of Toronto. I worked at a Japanese law firm for one year after graduation before practicing law in Vancouver for eight years. We decided to relocate to Tokyo again earlier this year to give our 4-year-old daughter a chance to be exposed to her Japanese heritage while she is young and can hopefully become bilingual. I am employed by a New York-based law firm in their Tokyo office.”

1993

DAVID LEACH, BA (Writing), received a special jury mention at the 2008 Banff Mountain Book Awards for his book Fatal Tide: When the Race of a Lifetime Goes Wrong (Viking Canada). The book dramatically retells the controversial events surrounding the 2002 Bay of Fundy Multi-Sport Race, which led to the first death of an adventure racer in North America. Fatal Tide was reviewed in the autumn 2008 edition of this magazine.

LOUISE WILSON, BA (History in Anthropology), researched and annotated her grandmother’s life in early BC, The Judge’s Wife (Ronsdale Press) by Eunice M.L. Harrison, which is in its second printing. Elouise has lectured on the book at the Women’s Canadian Club, Nanaimo Library, and the Nanaimo Historical Society. She also holds a BFA (Visual Arts), and has painted murals from the Royal Canadian Legion in Nanaimo. She remains active in nature conservation efforts and is a member of Naturescape.

JENNIFER ZELMER, BSc (Health Information Science), is CEO of the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organization, Prior to joining IHTSDO, Jennifer led programs related to health information standards and analysis at the Canadian Institute for Health Information and worked with a variety of health, academic, and government organizations in Canada, Australia, Denmark, and India.

1994

ANN ERIKSSON, BSc (Biology), has published her second novel, In the Hands of Anubis (Brindle & Glass Publishing). It’s the story of a transformational relationship between a young man and an elderly woman.

PAT MARTIN BATES, Hon DFA, invites her Visual Arts students from 1963–93 to get in touch by e-mail: patmartinbates@shaw.ca.

1995

ROBERT COBURN, PhD (Music Composition), is chair of music studies and program director of music composition at the University of the Pacific Conservatory of Music, in California where he also directs the SoundImageSound Festival of Experimental Music and Video. His recent composition, Fragile Horizon, for viola, computer, and video was commissioned by and premiered at the Dave Brubeck Festival, 2007. He is currently composing a composition for bass, computer and video popsicle.
for Glen Moore, bassist with the jazz group Oregon.

1996

PETER HILTON, MPA, is the new chief enrolment officer at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops. Since 1995, he had worked in recruitment and international relations at Jonkoping University in Sweden.

TAMMY HINSCH, BSc (Environmental Studies/Geography), writes from her home in Australia: “I have been working for the past 10 years with Medecins Sans Frontieres and just recently moved to Sydney to work with the MSF office in their field human resources department.”

JANELLE MOULD (née VEASEY), BEd, started her master’s program last September at Vancouver Island University. In addition to teaching kindergarten, she often acts as a teacher in charge of Davis Road School in Ladysmith, as well as coaching flag football and organizing special events for the school.

1998

ANNE-MARIE SAVARD, BSN, is working as an RN in Penticton and says: “I’ve taken up running in the last few years and am currently training for a marathon through Team in Training to raise money for leukemia research. My niece Kayla, in her first year at Uvic, is a leukemia survivor, thanks to her sister Amanda, who is in her fourth year at Uvic. Amanda was a perfect match to be a bone marrow donor for Kayla.”

1999

SALONI D.K. BOWRY, BComm, has been named co-chair of the foreign lawyers committee of the international law section of the Boston Bar Association. The committee provides professional development opportunities to foreign lawyers in the Boston area.

2003

PHILIP KEVIN PAUL, BA (Writing), has a new collection of poems: Little Hunger (Nightwood Editions). Poet and Writing Prof. Lorna Crozier finds “a wisdom in these pages, quiet and near to the bone, that I’ve been waiting to hear.” Kevin’s first book, Taking the Names Down from the Hill, earned the 2004 Dorothy Livesay Award for Poetry. He’s a member of the WSÁ, NEC (Saanich) Nation and lives in Brentwood Bay.

2004

CHLOE FAUGHT, BSc (Geography), and CHRIS MCDONALD, BEng ‘03 (Computer Engineering), recently married, left for one year of service in Namibia as volunteers with WorldTeach, the non-profit service organization established by Harvard students in 1986. Faught and McDonald were accepted into the competitive program based on their community service experience. After training in Namibia, Faught and McDonald are teaching math, English, and science. They will also instruct primary and secondary school teachers on computer literacy. McDonald had been teaching at Stelly’s Secondary for four years and says: “I feel that I’ve reached a point in my career where I can take some time to give back to the world.” Faught has been a Girl Guides leader since 2000, where she has also worked as a public relations advisor and youth and adult trainer in global and health issues.

2005

TIM DARVELL, MEd (Counselling), is a child and family therapist: “In October, 2008 I was honoured to give a poster presentation on “Psycho-socia...
2008

EMILY BRADEN, MA (Hispanic Studies), is set to release her debut studio album this summer. The soul/jazz vocalist completed recording in New York City and was in Harlem on presidential election night. In a message to friends and supporters, she wrote: “The parade on 125th street last night was incredible. The energy, the screaming, the chanting, the drums… being part of that is something that I will remember forever.”

CHRISTOPHER MACKIE, LLB, received a coat of arms from the Governor General in recognition of his mother’s community service. In September last year, the Chief Herald of Canada, exercising the Governor General’s mandate to grant arms to deserving citizens, recognized the community contributions of Christopher’s mother by honouring her and him with coats of arms. As heraldry in Canada is part of the national honours system, this grant was a happy moment for the family.

VICTORIA COLLEGE

GERARD WYATT, VC ’41, sends an update from his home in Ontario: “In the latest Torch, I was surprised to see no entries before 1964. There was life before 1964. I attended Victoria College in Craigdarroch Castle from 1941-43, then went to UBC. I recall my time at Vic as one of the brighter phases in my education. From Ruth Humphrey I learned a critical view of English literature; from Jeff Cunningham I acquired enthusiasm for biology, which became my career. But the library on the top floor of the castle was cold in winter! I am now retired from teaching at Queen’s, enjoying a second marriage, living in Kingston and in good health.”

DAVID R. FRANCIS, VC ’50, writes: “After leaving Victoria College to take journalism at Carleton College in Ottawa, I worked for three Canadian newspapers before joining the Christian Science Monitor in 1960 as a reporter. I worked for the Monitor in Boston, New York, Washington, and Bonn, West Germany. I was business editor for 18 years. In 2005, I retired but continue to write a weekly column on economic issues. It is available at CSMonitor.com, with an archive of the latest columns available at the top of the commentary page. Rosemarie and I have two daughters and two grandchildren.”

JOHN N.W. WEBB, VC ’55, writes from Sechelt, where he is the pipe major of the Pender Harbour Legion Pipe Band: “We still live in Sechelt but have returned to an old hobby: sailing. We recently returned to Jedediah Island and had a visit to Lasquitai as well. Most enjoyable. I noticed Roger Bishop’s name attached to the (Lansdowne Era launch invitation). Is that the English prof from the 1950s? The staff sponsor for the Player’s club? Is he still around?” (Yes, yes and yes. – Ed.)

Farewell

HORACE “ACE” BEACH, former director of counselling services, died on Oct. 2, 2008 at the age of 89. He was chair of the senate committee that established the Learning and Teaching Centre.

SONIA BIRCH-JONES, former director of alumni services, died on Nov. 28, 2008 at home in Qualicum Beach. She was the publisher of the first edition of the Torch, in the fall of 1981, and she came up with the name for the publication. She was born in Wales in 1921.

NEWTON CAMERON, VC ’33, started Victoria Plywood in 1950 and was a founding supporter of the university. He died on Oct. 6, 2008.

DAVID COWPER-SMITH, VC ’46, died on Sept. 27, 2008 after a career in law. He was a pilot and past president of the Calgary Flying Club.

BILL GADDES, a founding member of the Psychology departments of Victoria College and the University of Victoria, died on Nov. 19, 2008. Former students remembered him as an exceptional mentor and as a teacher who “twinkled” as he “threw out sparks to highly combustible students.” Contributions to the William H. Gaddes Scholarship Fund at UVic would be appreciated.

FRANK HILLIER, VC ’41, died on Oct. 1, 2008. A mechanical engineer, he started Hillier International and was the Social Credit candidate for Vancouver South/Burrrad in 1978.

DOUG JOHNSON, LLB ’80, died of cancer on Nov. 19, 2008, age 61. He is survived by his wife Karen, twin brother Don, and sisters Holly and Cheri. After graduation, he articulated with Skillings & Co., eventually becoming a partner with David Skillings. Doug was a past president of the UVic Alumni Association and also gave generously of his time to other community organizations including Anawim, CNIB, Victoria College Student Society, and the CRD Arts Council.

HAL KNIGHT, VC ’41, died on Oct. 2, 2008. His was a life dedicated to environmental research, renewable resources, and community service, including seven years on Saanich council.

NICK LANG, BA ’67 (English), died on Nov. 11, 2008. A well-regarded Crown prosecutor in Victoria, he was at the forefront of historical sexual abuse prosecutions in the 1980s and the introduction of child-witness evidence. He was 63. A buz- sary in his name has been established in the Faculty of Law (contact Anne Pappas at 250-721-8025 or e-mail apappas@uvic.ca).

ART MANN, VC ’37, started his pharmacy apprenticeship after Vic. When the war was over, he joined the first pharmacy class at UBC before returning home to Duncan where he was a fixture for 40 years at Mann’s Drug Store, the shop started by his father. He died on Dec. 9, 2008.

JAMES MCCORKINDALE, VC ’45, a man known for his devotion to family, unique humour, and eccentricities, died on Dec. 21, 2008 at Glenwarren Lodge in Victoria. He was 94 years of age.

CHUCK NEWMARCH, VC ’36, died on Dec. 21, 2008. A geologist, he helped map the Crowsnest Coal Basin, leading to the first open pit mine in the Crowsnest Pass.

NIEL PEARCE, MEng (Mechanical) ’05, died on Aug. 30, 2008 near Sooke. His family was in awe of his many achievements, scholarships and awards, all of which he accomplished under a prolonged battle with depression. He was 41.

BUNTY RIVINGTON (née CHATHAM), VC ’37, died on April 30, 2008 in Ottawa. She raised four children with her husband, Neville Rivington. In later years, she insti-gated adventures that included hot air ballooning, line dancing, skinny dipping, and tales yet untold.

MILDRED RUGGLES (née DUNCAN), VC ’38, died on Dec. 20, 2008. Earned her master’s in geography, was a sessional instructor at UBC, and research assistant to her husband, Richard Ruggles.

TOM SALLAWAY, VC ’38, died peacefully on Sept. 12, 2008 in Victoria, age 89.

DAVID SMART, VC ’44, worked for many years in the auto service industry before opening the Sayward News Stand in Victoria with his wife, Carol. He died on Sept. 29, 2008.

ATHENA STRUTT, VC ’38, died on Oct. 16, 2008. She overcame polio to teach high school English and history in Chilliwack and Vernon. She and Douglas were married for 59 years.

NEIL SWAINSON, VC ’35, died on Feb. 21, 2009 at the age of 89. He was UVic’s first Political Science professor, the author of several books, and a former member of Oak Bay council.

DAVID WADDELL, VC ’33, died on June 8, 2008 in Ontario, in his 92nd year. He enjoyed a career in the federal department of agriculture and was an ardent badminton player and national organizer.

PAMELA WETMORE (née FRAS- ER), VC ’46, died on Dec. 2, 2008 in Nanaimo. She grew up in Victoria, a descendant of early Saanich settlers.
Alumni Calendar

May 3  
UVic Plant Sale, McKinnon Gym

May 4 – 7  
UVic Philomela Women’s Choir – Hong Kong Tour

May 12  
Beijing alumni branch event

May 11 – 17  
Bike to Work Week

May 21  
Café Scientifique (“Faces of Autism”), Swans Hotel

May 26  
UVic Alumni Association annual general meeting, University Club

June 4 – Sept. 25  
Art Education master’s and doctoral 25th Anniversary Show, Maltwood Gallery

June 15 – 18  
UVic Spring Convocation, University Centre

August 6  
UVic Golf Classic

September 22  
Alumni and friends event, Seattle

September 29  
Vikes Championship Breakfast

October 13  
UVic Legacy Awards, Victoria Conference Centre

For event details visit alumni.uvic.ca
What’s New?

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**Say it with pictures:** e-mail high resolution photo files (300 dpi, at least 5cm wide) along with your text update.

We also welcome news about fresh babies, new marriages — even election to public office. All updates may be edited for style, clarity and length.

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I’m an Internet exhibitionist.

Don’t go firing up your search engine just yet—you’re not going to find pornographic images of me lurking in cyberspace. I hope.

I’m talking about emotional and personal exhibitionism. A curious Google will give a candid view of my family, my writing, my worldview, my tastes in music and books, and my many and varied crises. I’ve never been a tell-all blogger, and I’ve never written anything that would impugn my professionalism, but there is a fair bit of intimate revelation. Friending people on Facebook, publishing a blog post: they’re ways of connecting, ways of interacting with the world without actually interacting. Like it or not, it’s who I am and I’m comfortable with that.

Or at least, I was.

Just before the publication of my first novel, Before I Wake, I legitimized my Internet presence with a personal site and blog, complete with a “submit your thoughts” e-mail link.

I quickly realized that my disclosures weren’t going into the ether: they were accruing density. I was building, word by word, a simulacrum, a version of myself that might be the only Robert J. Wiersema people ever “met”.

Which didn’t actually trouble me at all. I learned a long time ago not to put my name to anything that I’m not willing to answer for in the future.

The problem came when people started talking back.

It’s an odd position for a writer to find himself in.

Historically, writers are a solitary breed, working in small rooms, only finding connection through the printed page. Sure, there have been literary superstars, but for every writer whom readers might recognize on the street, there were at least a thousand others, toiling away in virtual anonymity.

So what happens when readers can communicate with a writer? When he can get their thoughts and responses in real time?

I was fine with the few bad reviews and negative e-mails—not everyone is going to like every book. I know that as well as anyone. It was the positive messages that flummoxed me. Readers writing to tell me how much Before I Wake meant to them, or to ask when the next book was coming.

Those responses began arriving around the time I started my next novel. Sometimes a couple a day, never fewer than a couple a week. And they stopped me in my tracks. Suddenly, rather than writing in isolation, with no expectations, I was essentially trying to write in a public space that I had created. Naked.

Note the “trying”.

This was a foreign pressure, writing with an awareness that my words had connected, in a meaningful way, and the attendant fear: what if the new words didn’t?

I was paralyzed. Blocked. Strangely enough, it was the Internet, the root of my problem, which ended up solving it.

It might have been the friendships that I struck up with some of the bloggers, or the group of first readers I found in a Springsteen Usenet group, or correspondents like Caleb, a teenager from Georgia who sent his copy of Before I Wake to a bookstore in Spokane for me to sign. The virtual world crept off the computer screen, real friendships and relationships forming out of the ether.

Once that shift happened, I could pick up the pen again. I could write.

And then, a few weeks ago, I got an e-mail from an Israeli teenager named Sha-ked, who had read Before I Wake. “You made me understand how similar a killer and every signal one of us can be. We all make mistakes.”

Words like that, from a 17-year-old Israeli…I was speechless. Humbled. I really didn’t know how to respond.

In the last paragraph of the note, though, Sha-ked confessed something: “I am now writing a book…do you have any tips or suggestions for a learning writer?”

I do. And it’s the simplest, most complicated advice I can give: connect. In any way you can. It’s not only the ultimate goal for any writer, it is what makes us human. I’ve been trying for a long time, and it looks like I might have finally figured it out.

Robert J. Wiersema’s next project is a novella, coming this summer from ChiZine Publications, with a novel forthcoming from Random House—shortly after he actually finishes it.

I was paralyzed. Blocked. Strangely enough, it was the Internet, the root of my problem, which ended up solving it.
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