UVic congratulates Nobel Prize-winning researchers

Several University of Victoria-based researchers woke up on the morning of Oct. 12 to find out they were co-winners of the most coveted award on the planet—a Nobel Prize. As is now widely known, the Nobel Peace Prize for 2007 is being shared by environmental activist and former US Vice President Al Gore and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The award cites the efforts of Gore and the IPCC, “to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change.”

In announcing the prize, the university’s growing reputation as an international leader in climate change research, notes Brunt. These strengths are enhanced by our close links with federal laboratories, especially the Canadian Centre for Climate Modelling and Analysis (CCMa), the Institute of Ocean Sciences (IOS) and the Water and Climate Impacts Research Centre (W-CIRC), all of which are located on or near the UVic campus.” The CCMa is an Environment Canada research centre, W-CIRC is a joint initiative of UVic and the National Climate Centre Research Institute of Environment Canada, and IOS is part of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The High number of IPCC contributors associated with UVic who contributed to human-induced climate change. The IPCC was established by the United Nations Environmental Program and the World Meteorological Organization in 1988 to provide policymakers with neutral summaries of the latest information related to human-induced climate change.

There are currently three working groups within the IPCC, focusing on the science, impact and mitigation of climate change. The views of the working groups are presented in “assessment reports” which are produced every five years; 2007 is an assessment year.

Assessment reports are based on peer-reviewed scientific and technical literature and are written by teams of authors from all over the world who are recognized experts in their field. Hundreds involved; none are paid for their time.

More than a dozen researchers associated with UVic were involved with the 2007 IPCC assessment as coordinating lead authors, lead authors or contributing authors. “We congratulate everyone associated with UVic who contributed to the IPCC’s work,” says Vice-President Research Dr. Howard Brunt. “Through their research, the world has become more aware of the challenges ahead of us and how we can mitigate the impacts of global warming.”

The high number of IPCC contributors at UVic underscores the university’s growing reputation as an international leader in climate change research, notes Brunt. These strengths are enhanced by our close links with federal laboratories, especially the Canadian Centre for Climate Modelling and Analysis (CCMa), the Institute of Ocean Sciences (IOS) and the Water and Climate Impacts Research Centre (W-CIRC), all of which are located on or near the UVic campus.” The CCMa is an Environment Canada research centre, W-CIRC is a joint initiative of UVic and the National Climate Centre Research Institute of Environment Canada, and IOS is part of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Writing student wins national Aboriginal writing prize

By Maria Leston

Her powerful tale of the life of a young girl at a residential school has earned writing student Kerissa Dickie a top prize (for the 19-29 age category) in The Aboriginal Writing Challenge—a short story contest for young Aboriginal Canadians. Dickie’s winning story, “Wild Flowers,” is about longing, loss, and connection as part of the residential school experience.

She wrote it in part of Uvic writing professor Lorna Jackson’s writing workshop. “Her story is full of heart, and she has taken such care with the depiction of another time and place,” comments Jackson. “Only a compassionated, talented writer can write this way. I’m so pleased that Kerissa’s work will reach a larger audience.”

A member of the Fort Nelson First Nations community, Dickie describes her stint as the project assistant to the Residential School Healing Project as one of her inspirations for the story. One of the project’s goals was to create a book using a compilation of survivors’ stories and artwork aimed to help in the healing process for each storyteller, to bridge the gap of understanding for younger generations, and to preserve a part of Aboriginal history that might otherwise be lost.

“Through reading their stories, I was given the opportunity to better understand what my grandparents, mother, aunts and uncles have been through and how it has shaped who they are today,” says Dickie. “It has given me an even greater sense of respect for the strength of those who came before me. I am a member of the first generation not to go to residential school in my community, and acknowledging that comes with a feeling of responsibility.

“There is nothing we can do to fix past sorrows, but we can honour them by emulating their strength in our lives,” Dickie explains. “As to where the inspiration for ‘Wild Flowers’ came in, I must say that the stories of the survivors in my family and community have made a huge impact on the way I see the world and on the kind of stories I want to tell.”

“Wild Flowers” is now taught as a classic in the Aboriginal Writing Challenge—a national writing prize that aims to preserve a part of Aboriginal history and promote understanding among younger generations.

COSMIC TRAIN WRECK baffles astronomers

A recent study by a team of University of Victoria researchers has raised new questions in the international astrophysics community about the fundamental nature of dark matter.

The study, led by Dr. Andisheh Mahdavi, a postdoctoral fellow in UVic’s Department of Physics and Astronomy, and Dr. Adam McAlpine, an adjunct professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, and a research scientist with the CCMa.

Astronomers in the Department of Physics and Astronomy and the Canada Research Chair in Climate Modelling and Analysis, have been conducting a series of observations of massive galaxy clusters—massive aggregates of hundreds of billions of stars, including our own Milky Way galaxy—over the past two decades.

Each galaxy cluster contains up to 1,000 galaxies, and each galaxy has billions of stars like our sun. Cluster collisions provide an ideal opportunity for researchers to study the nature of matter and gain a better understanding of how the universe is evolving.

The study, published in the International Journal of Modern Physics D, calls into question the widely accepted theory of dark matter—matter that cannot be seen but which we know exists because of its gravitational effects on visible objects, such as galaxies.

Using NASA’s space-based Chandra X-ray Observatory as well as the Canada-France-Hawaii optical telescope, Mahdavi and his colleagues were surprised to discover a chaotic scene in the debris left over by the merging clusters.

“If what we happened did something really unusual to the galaxies,” he says, “it moved them all to the outer edge of the cluster core, leaving only gas and dark matter at the centre. That’s never been seen before and it’s really hard to explain.”

There are three main components to galaxy clusters: individual galaxies; hot gas in between the galaxies; and dark matter—a mysterious substance that can’t be seen but which we know exists because of its gravitational effects on visible objects, such as galaxies.

SEE COSMIC TRAIN WRECK P4"
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UVic leads way with switch to 100-per-cent recycled paper
UVic marked International Campus Sustainability Day October 24 by announcing it will switch all bond paper supplies to 100-per-cent post-consumer waste content beginning January 1, 2008. In making the switch from 30-per-cent post-consumer waste content, UVic becomes the first BC university to make the commitment to using 100-per-cent recycled paper stock. “We’re very excited to be able to introduce this change as part of our sustainability initiatives on campus,” says UVic Sustainability Coordinator Sarah Webb. “Using 100 per cent recycled paper means we are helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while also enhancing our ethical purchasing practices.” With the improved quality of recycled paper stocks and more efficient equipment, the switch is not expected to result in increased costs. International Campus Sustainability Day is hosted by the Society of College and University Planners, celebrates sustainable achievements in higher education at North American colleges and universities. For more information about sustainability initiatives at UVic, visit the website at www.uvic.ca/sustainability.
Globe gives UVic high marks
UVic received an A- in the 2007 Globe and Mail University Report Card on students’ overall satisfaction with their university experience. UVic sent the Globe and Mail/ survey out to all 6,974 registered students that the university had on its database based on the opinions of its whole student body, not just those who registered with the Studentawards.com database, as was the case in previous years. UVic’s campus environment and atmosphere received top marks. In its compounding equipment, online resources, the library and faculty members’ knowledge of subject matter. UVic’s tolerance for diverse opinions and ideas also received an A-. The report was released last month and is available at www.theglobeandmail.com.
Food for Fines to help feed the hungry
For those known to return library books late, you’re in luck. This year UVic libraries is once again running Food for Fines and it’s a great way to clear your library debt while helping to support those in need. From Nov. 19–30, library users will have $2 waived from their library fines for each non-perishable food item donated, up to a maximum of $20. Donations can be made to the UVic Wilfred Johns Building, the main loan desk, and the music school’s audio and media services. Those without fines are also welcome to make food and cash donations. Food for Fines will distribute donations to the Mustard Seed Food Bank and the UVic Food Bank. For more information, contact Shaylor Bed, McPherson Library, at 721-8226 or shaylor@uvic.ca
Meet me next year at the BibliO Café
The BibliO Café is the name for the new BibliO Café which is due to open early in the new year in BibliO café. The cafe naming contest attracted 784 entries and 2000 creative names. The winner, Student Recruitment Officer Karen Waugh, received a $50 Food Services credit in October.
New lecture series—for your own good
Boost your commitment to health and fitness by attending a new lecture series aimed at staff, faculty and students provided by the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education. Presenters from the school will present a series of free lunch-hour lectures covering a variety of health-related topics. Nov. 15, Laura LaLason presents “Just for the weight of it!” in McKinnon 155. Then Lynnette Winkle rounds out the year with presentations. The year is topped off by the launch of The UVic Organics Shop in the UVic’s Wilfred Johns Building, room 116. All presentations begin at 12:10 p.m. and end at 12:45 p.m. Upcoming lectures in the new year include fitness planning and life-long strength training. UVic community members wishing to learn more about the research going on at the school are welcome to attend its new lecture research series. On Nov. 9, Joan Wharf-Higgins discusses the choices, chances and circumstances related to healthy living, and on Dec. 7, Ryan Rhodes analyzes why important for a healthy lifestyle only work for some people. All presentations are in McKinnon 150 from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. and will resume in the new year. Further details at www.educ.uvic.ca/phed/
United Way fun
The United Way campaign wraps up at the end of November, with this month’s events including the Libraries Book Sale, Nov. 6 and 7, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the SUB Upper Lounge, organized every year by the McPherson Library staff. ‘Most tickets are sold out. Presented by the School of Hotel and Tourism Management, the Crab Fest, Nov. 28, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in University Centre lobby, organized by Sheila Adams ( אבלדעג), students, Lynn McCaughey (career services) and Helen Ratanowich (women’s studies); and the Dr. Zonk Show, Nov. 22 in the Engineering/Computer Science Building, Room 123 at 5:30 p.m. (Dr. Reg Mitchell, UVic chemistry professor, surprises kids and adults alike with explosions and all manner of amazing things for his annual ‘magic’ chemistry show. Details at http://unitedway.uvic.ca/.
Calling all community heroes
Lever is Canada is once again inviting people to pay tribute to some of the city’s most outstanding and inspiring leaders. On Jan. 23, the fourth annual Victoria Leadership Awards event will take place, but nominations are only being accepted until Nov. 30, so you have until Nov. 30 to get your nominations in as soon as possible. Presentations will be divided into four categories (the University of Victoria Community Leadership Awards, the Rotary Community Leadership Awards, the Leadership Victoria Lifetime Achievement Awards and the Youth Award). Read more at http://www.vlcinterests.uvic.ca/leader release/rele sae.php?display=release&659 or visit http://www. leader ship.victoria. ca/awards.html for a nomination package.

Around the Ring

Filipino children express their struggles through art
By Suzanne Smith
For the past several years Drs. Lisa Mitchell and Marjorie Morse (anthropology) have been conducting research on the perspectives of chil-
dren living in a fishing community located on and alongside a waste
dump in the central Philippines. These children live in a distressed and dangerous environment without adequate housing, nutrition or safe

areas for play.
The UVic researchers are inter-
ested in learning what the children feel are risks to their health and

safety. Since the children were shy initially about being interviewed, the two anthropologists started out by asking them to express their

experiences through self-portraits and

body maps.
“Most researchers who study children’s health and safety issues don’t ask the children what they think, but instead they interview
doctors, nurses, police or teachers,” says Marjorie Morse.
“Children are sometimes regarded as incomplete adults, but we believe that they are active members of society who produce valuable cultural knowledge and have the right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives,” explains Lisa Mitchell. “We’re interested in learning what happens when you start by asking what the

children are thinking.”
For her master’s research, anthro-

pology graduate student Soma Morse worked with a group of these children to design and create an

exhibit of drawings, photographs and narratives that depict their

neighbourhood.

In addition to drawing self-port-
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tively to come up with the themes for the exhibit which included creating

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“It’s clear from the exhibit that the children not only expressed their concerns about health and safety, they

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community next year.

The UVic researchers hope the exhibit in the Philippines and in Canada raises awareness—not just of the

struggles these children face, but also of the contributions they can make to improve the conditions that affect their
The University of Victoria continues to lead all other comprehensive universities in Western Canada in terms of research effort, according to the 2007 ranking of the country’s top research universities by Research Infosource.

In the annual ranking, among comprehensive universities, UVic placed third behind Ontario universities Guelph and Waterloo. Comprehensiveness is defined as universities with a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs.

The University of Toronto topped the medical/doctoral category, while the Royal Military College, also in Ontario, led the undergraduate category.

On the blended list of Canada’s Top 50 Research Universities for 2007, UVic placed 17th, showing a sponsored research income increase of just over $100 million for the 2006 fiscal year. This represents a 40.2-per-cent increase over 2005—the highest growth rate among the top 25 universities.

It is a unique year that UVic has been so-called “$100 Million Club.”

“This achievement reflects the breadth and talent of UVic researchers and the relevance of the work they are doing to advance knowledge and address societal needs,” says Dr. Howard Brunt, UVic’s vice-president research. “This benefit’s everyone, including our students who are being taught by some of the best researchers in the country.”

Regionally, in fiscal 2006, BC’s four universities took in a total of $606.9 million in sponsored research income, an increase of 21.7 per cent over 2005. Research income declined in the other three western provinces.

The data to determine Canada’s Top 50 Research Universities 2007 and Research Universities of the Year 2007 are on Statistics Canada and the Research Infosource Canadian university R&D database.

The rankings are based on sponsored research income reported by the universities, as well as on other indicators such as number of publications per full-time faculty member.

Research Infosource Inc., a division of The Impact Group, produces specialized reports from its extensive database. To view the methodology and analysis visit www.researchinfo-source.com.


Inmemoriam
Dr. Frank Cassidy passed away on September 30 in Victoria. He was an associate professor in the School of Public Administration, founding director of the Administration of Aboriginal Governments Program and author of several books and articles on Aboriginal self-government treaties and Aboriginal law. Frank developed a passion for Aboriginal self-government, which animated his teaching, research and advising to First Nations and government. His books include Indigenous Government (co-authored with Robert Blit) and After Native Claims (co-authored with Norman Dale) as well as Aboriginal Title in British Columbia and Aboriginal Self-Determination. Frank was a deeply committed teacher who brought his research and advising experience into the courses he taught. Frank served as a senior research associate for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, with responsibility for the commission’s research on Aboriginal government and international Indigenous governance issues. He was an advisor for Aboriginal policy to the Privy Council of the Province of British Columbia and the Auditor General of Canada. He was a long-time advisor to the Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chiefs and served as senior advisor to the Vice-Chief for British Columbia of the Assembly of First Nations. Frank held both his undergraduate and doctoral degrees in political theory and public administration from University of Toronto. He also was a research associate for the Institute for Research on Public Policy and a visiting fellow to the Australian National University.

Contributed by Dr. Event Lindquist, Director of the School of Public Administration

Professor Terry Morley of the Department of Political Science died on October 10 after a brief illness. A sometime columnist for both the Victoria Times-Colonist and The Ring November 2007 Page 3

It was an unusually “constructive” summer on campus this year. Underground heating, water, gas, electrical, sewer and treated waste water services for new campus buildings were installed during July and August. Despite a challenging construction market, all projects were completed on time and on budget.

“We would like to thank the campus community for their patience,” says Eugene Herger, director of capital projects. “We planned ahead to ensure we brought in services for all new buildings, including First Peoples House, at the same time, with the aim of reducing inconvenience to the campus community in the future.”

Four new buildings are currently under construction. The new facilities will help to meet the infrastructure requirements of growing student enrolment, while providing much-needed research, learning and office space.

The newest building to move from design to construction (in August 2007) was the Support Services Building (SSB), located outside Ring Road between Centennial Stadium and the Continuing Studies Building. The new facility will house the executive team as well as other administrative functions such as accounting, research services, pension and payroll. In addition to providing growth for these areas, this move will open up space in the campus core for academic units and student support services. The project will be registered with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating Standards program.

The Enterprise Data Centre (EDC), a new campus computing facility that was originally earmarked for a location adjacent to the SSB, will now be built near the Technology Enterprise Facility off McKenzie Avenue. The decision to separate the two projects (because of vastly different infrastructure requirements) will help to preserve more open space near the SSB.

The revised schematic design of the EDC is scheduled to be presented to the facilities development sustainability subcommittee before the end of the year. The target completion date is October 2008.

The Means Centre for Learning will transform the existing McPher- son Library into a state-of-the-art educational facility that integrates the library’s extensive music, audio and video collections and technology services. The recently named Bibliocafé will be located on the main floor. Target occupancy date is January 2008.

An implementation committee for the First Peoples House has been meeting since August to discuss refinements to the original building design, developed by architect Alfred Waugh. The First Peoples House will be creating a welcoming and supportive space on campus for Indigenous students and the broader community.

The $7-million project is expected to break ground in April 2008, on a site between the Clearburn and Corner buildings. It will be registered with the LEED Green Building Rating Standards program, with an estimated completion date of June 2009.

The Science Building will accommodate the School of Earth & Ocean Sciences (SEOS), the Department of Chemistry, the Canadian Centre for Climate Modelling & Analysis (C3Ma), plus lecture theatres, labs and offices. Target occupancy date is September 2008.

The Social Sciences and Math- ematics Building will house the departments of geography, envi- ronmental studies, political science and mathematics, as well as the Water & Climate Impacts Research Centre (W-CLIRC) and a variety of classrooms and offices. The project will be registered with the LEED Green Building Rating Standards program, with a target occupancy date of October 2008.

For more information and current construction updates, visit the web site at www.ivic.ca/construction.
By Adrienne Holierhoek

With gorgeous, storybook illustration sets by faculty member Mary Kerr, the Phoenix Theatre’s production of Kenneth Graham’s classic tale Wind in the Willows will be a particularly visual affair. But for some audience members, the performance on Tuesday Nov. 13 will be especially so.

On this night, the dialogue of your favourite English riverside characters—Mole, Ratty, Toad and Badger—will also be made visual and accessible to a whole new audience through sign language interpretation.

The idea was initiated in 2006 by Kristi Falconer, the interpreting coordinator at the UVic Resource Centre for Students with a Disability, who saw the opportunity for the Phoenix to provide access to live theatre for the Deaf and Hard-of-hearing community on and off campus.

Sandra Guerreiro, audience services manager at the Phoenix, was interested in reaching out to a group that usually doesn’t have the opportunity to access live theatre here in Victoria.

“We’ve been offering infrared listening devices for several years, but this seemed like an innovative idea to bring our theatre experience to a unique audience. It is representative of the university’s vision on accommodation, diversity and accessibility,” she says gratefully to the Equity and Human Rights Office for funding to make this program possible.

Now that the performance is almost here, Falconer is excited to see her idea coming to fruition. She’s arranged for Nigel Howard, a Deaf interpreter who has 14 years’ experience on the international scene, to interpret Wind in the Willows into American Sign Language.

“Live theatre is something that Deaf individuals living in larger cities across Canada have regular opportunities to enjoy, but rarely have the chance to attend here in Victoria,” says Falconer.

“I’m thrilled that the Phoenix Theatre is paving the way and breaking down this barrier. Having someone like Nigel interpreting this performance will add such a rich visual dimension to an already colourful play. I can’t wait to see it.”

And the witty words he will be interpreting are those of acclaimed British playwright and author Alan Bennett, who was commissioned to adapt Wind in the Willows for stage by the National Theatre in London. The play follows the adventures and antics of four friends in the English countryside. With over 30 different scenes and as many characters, this fast-paced script will keep the interpreter busy.

The Phoenix Theatre’s production of Wind in the Willows runs Nov. 8–24. It is directed by Brian Richardson, chair of the theatre department, with production design by Mary Kerr and features an all-student cast.

Tickets for the Nov. 13 performance with sign language interpretation can be made in person or by phone at 721-8000 when the box office opens on Nov 1.

On Friday Oct. 12, a UVic student was struck by a vehicle while crossing Ring Road near the Human and Social Development Building. She was seriously injured and remains in hospital.

UVic has reached out to the student’s family and is offering support wherever possible. In addition, the university is calling for caution from everyone using the roads on campus.

All pedestrians, cyclists and drivers are asked to use extra caution and check both lanes when proceeding through traffic.

The university is currently under-taking a traffic and parking management study that will be completed in the Spring of 2008. It will examine vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian circulation and identify strategies for addressing parking and transportation needs on campus.

This study will help us better understand and plan for the movement of cars, buses, bicycles, pedestrians and all other traffic,” says Neil Connelly, director of campus planning and sustainability, “especially with so many of us moving daily through the university.”

Safety tips are available on the UVic Campus Security Services website at http://web.uvic.ca/security.

Applications are now being accepted from UVic students for the 2008 Blue and Gold Awards. This program recognizes those who demonstrate leadership in voluntary involvement with community groups, vanity and athletic teams and/or fine arts organizations.

There are two levels of Blue and Gold awards—one award worth $2,500 and five awards worth $1,000 each. The University of Victoria Blue and Gold Awards are sponsored by CBIC.

Undergraduate and graduate students who wish to apply for an award can do so online at registrar.uvic.ca/awards.

Aboriginal writing continued from p.1

part of the Fort Nelson First Nation’s Chalo School Grade 12 curriculum. Chalo School was where Kerissa first began her education as a child, and the school itself is named in honour of her grandfather, former Chief Harry—whose nickname as a young boy was “Talo,” or “Bear-Fat” because of his chubby cheeks.

The contest, which is organized by the Department of Literature and Language, invites young Aboriginal Canadians to submit creative short stories that explore a moment in Aboriginal history. This could be an event of personal, regional or national significance. Submissions are judged by a group of esteemed Aboriginal authors and leaders including Tantoo Cardinal, Tomson Highway and Chief Patrick Beausait.

As the winner for her age category, Dickie will receive a cash prize and a trip to Ottawa to meet with a group of Aboriginal leaders who will celebrate her achievement. In addition, her story will be published in The Beaver: Canada’s History Magazine and in an anthology celebrating emerging native writers published by Theytus Books.

Visit www.our-story.ca to access the 2006 and 2007 winning stories and information about the authors.

Excerpt from Wild Flowers

Settled into a hard cot that might, Rose listened to other girls chatter in the darkness. Some spoke Cree, but most spoke Smethe, and she listened to them make jokes about the corn in their stiffy dresses. From inside the world of the men, with the large windows at the end of the room. She tried to stay as still as she could, and squirmed her thighs together. They had been ordered to urinate before bed, but the staff’s and crowd of strangers in the bathroom had made her bladder lock tight as tight consciousness. Now it was ready to burst and she was using all of her energy to will it away.

From “Wild Flowers” by UVic writing student Kerissa Dickie

On October 1, His Excellency Do-

Annual utility bills are large and

Falconer, from the UVic Resource Centre for Students with a Disability, on the

By Kristi Falconer, the interpreter

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Aboriginal writing continued from p.1

part of the Fort Nelson First Nation’s Chalo School Grade 12 curriculum. Chalo School was where Kerissa first began her education as a child, and the school itself is named in honour of her grandfather, former Chief Harry—whose nickname as a young boy was “Talo,” or “Bear-Fat” because of his chubby cheeks.

The contest, which is organized by the Department of Literature and Language, invites young Aboriginal Canadians to submit creative short stories that explore a moment in Aboriginal history. This could be an event of personal, regional or national significance. Submissions are judged by a group of esteemed Aboriginal authors and leaders including Tantoo Cardinal, Tomson Highway and Chief Patrick Beausait.

As the winner for her age category, Dickie will receive a cash prize and a trip to Ottawa to meet with a group of Aboriginal leaders who will celebrate her achievement. In addition, her story will be published in The Beaver: Canada’s History Magazine and in an anthology celebrating emerging native writers published by Theytus Books.

Visit www.our-story.ca to access the 2006 and 2007 winning stories and information about the authors.

Excerpt from Wild Flowers

Settled into a hard cot that might, Rose listened to other girls chatter in the darkness. Some spoke Cree, but most spoke Smethe, and she listened to them make jokes about the corn in their stiffy dresses. From inside the world of the men, with the large windows at the end of the room. She tried to stay as still as she could, and squirmed her thighs together. They had been ordered to urinate before bed, but the staff’s and crowd of strangers in the bathroom had made her bladder lock tight as tight consciousness. Now it was ready to burst and she was using all of her energy to will it away.

From “Wild Flowers” by UVic writing student Kerissa Dickie

On October 1, His Excellency Do-

Annual utility bills are large and

Falconer, from the UVic Resource Centre for Students with a Disability, on the
Aboriginal sport a personal and scholarly passion for O’Bonsawin

By Patty Pitts

Christine O’Bonsawin is already realizing the fruits of her recent move to the West Coast from eastern Canada. O’Bonsawin was raised in Toronto. Her father moved south as a young man to improve his employment opportunities after the sudden loss of his sight.

“He was the only member of his family to leave the community,” says O’Bonsawin, who earned an undergraduate degree in sport management from Brock University. “I wanted to learn more about my Indigenous background.”

Her two interests merged during her master’s and PhD studies at the University of Western Ontario, home to the International Centre for Olympic Studies, where O’Bonsawin studied how Aboriginal representation in sport is used for nation-building purposes.

“I wanted to understand how Canada used images of Indians to represent nationhood. Sometimes Indigenous people were sent as delegates to the Games,” says O’Bonsawin. “I also wanted to learn more about my heritage and athletics has defined her academic career.

Although most of her extended family lives in northern Ontario, and their Abenaki relationship is with the Odanak reserve in Quebec, O’Bonsawin was raised in Toronto.

While she’s seen the positive impact that Aboriginal Olympic athletes such as cross-country skiers Sharon and Shirley Firth and water polo player Wanakee Hon-Miller can have to their communities, O’Bonsawin also supports increased interest by Aboriginal people to preserve traditional sports that have less of an emphasis on competition than mainstream sports.

O’Bonsawin is looking forward to being up close to next year’s North American Indigenous Games scheduled for the Cowichan Valley—southern tip of the West Coast life. She’s also looking forward to expanding the Indigenous studies program.

“At the moment we only have two courses in the program, the others approved by the program as having Indigenous focus are from various departments including history, anthropology, women’s studies and sociology,” says O’Bonsawin. “Eventually, I’d like to see more courses offered directly through the IS program.”

In the meantime, she’s adjusting to seasonal differences of West Coast living. “I’m really enjoying it here.”

Contrary to Canada’s reputation as a relatively clean and pristine land, environmental hazards can be found almost everywhere—in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat and the products we buy. That’s according to David Boyd, a research associate with UVic’s POLIS Project on Ecological Governance.

Boyd’s recent study—the first of its kind on environmental disease in Canada—indicates that all Canadians are exposed to harmful chemicals. Pollution is killing up to 25,000 Canadians each year and costing the nation’s health care system up to $9.1 billion and 1.5 million hospital days annually. The study also estimates that environmental pollutants in Canada cause as many as 24,000 new cases of cancer and 2,500 low birth-weight babies every year.

“If politicians took the time to understand both the magnitude of adverse health effects caused by environmental hazards and the overall costs to Canadian society, they would have no choice but to act,” says Boyd, an environmental lawyer who worked with the David Suzuki Foundation to help start a national environmental health strategy (See sidebar).

Boyd co-authored the paper, “The Environmental Burden of Disease in Canada: Respiratory Disease, Cardiovascular Disease, Cancer and Congenital Affliction,” with Dr. Stephen Genuis from the University of Alberta. Their research is the first to measure the magnitude of adverse health effects caused by Canadians’ exposure to environmental hazards such as air pollution (outdoor and indoor), pesticides, disinfectants, heavy metals, flame retardants and other persistent organic pollutants.

“There are 90 countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development,” says Boyd, “and our environmental record ranks 26th. When faced with a choice between protecting the environment or polluting industries, we continue to protect industries.”

Because there is strong evidence linking certain diseases to environmental contaminants, Boyd and Genesis estimated Canada’s environmental burden of disease (EBD)—the morbidity and mortality caused by exposure to environmental hazards—by addressing four categories: respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer and congenital afflictions.

“Most chronic diseases are multifactorial resulting from lifestyle, socioeconomic, environmental, cultural and genetic determinants interacting over a course of a person’s lifetime,” Boyd explains. “So it’s a challenge to accurately determine how much disease is attributable to adverse environmental exposures. Still, quantifying the EBD is an important endeavour because it highlights the magnitude of environmental harm and may identify specific risk factors that affect public health.”

This information can be used to direct research, inform public education efforts, assist physicians in providing advice to patients, guide health and environmental policy-making and evaluate the effectiveness of programs, policies, and other interventions.

The authors used the environmentally attributable fractions (EAFs) developed by the World Health Organization. EAFs developed by other researchers, and data from Canadian public health institutions to provide an initial estimate of the environmental burden of disease in Canada for four major categories of disease.

The study is available online at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2007.08.009.

Storm timber for new bridge

Recycling wood from blazed-down trees has long been a practice of UVic facilities management, and one example is the Bowler Creek bridge which re-opened in mid-September. Storm timber was used in the deck for the bridge which spans a section of the chapel trail between the Fraser Building and Fintry Gardens. L-R: UVic grounds staff Ryan Wheatley and Mike Eggiman, who did post construction and rock work on either side of the bridge, stand beside capital projects office Terry Moen and grounds manager Bentley Sly.

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The full report is online at www.davidsuzuki.org/Publications/Prescription_For_A_Healthy_Canada.asp.

Canada’s deadly environment

Canada needs a cohesive environmental strategy that includes more monitoring of people’s exposures to environmental contaminants, a strengthening of environmental laws, and increased awareness about these issues, says a new report by David R. Boyd, a research associate with UVic’s POLIS Project on Ecological Governance.

In September, the David Suzuki Foundation released Boyd’s 152-page report, “Prescription for a Healthy Canada: Boyd prepared the report based on a review of more than 100 recent scientific studies. It says Canada lacks a national system to track diseases and deaths from environmental causes.

The report identifies five areas that it considers failures on the part of the federal government:

• A lack of legally binding national standards for air quality and drinking water quality.
• The continued use of pesticides that have been banned in other countries.
• The allowance of higher limits of pesticide residues on foods compared to other countries.
• A lack of regulation of toxins such as polybrominated diphenyl ethers, phthalates and polycyclic hydrocarbons.
• Weak regulations for toxic substances such as radon, lead, mercury, arsenic and asbestos.

National environmental health strategy

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By Dianne George

Traveling by bus is good for many reasons—reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing the expense of travel, and making life decisions. Or producing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing the helpfulness of the staff, plus the short and I was already late in the application process, so the helpfulness of the staff, plus the kindness of an organization that appeals to Vincent's mind and my heart.” says Vincent. “These are the things that gave expression to my soul,” says Vincent. “So I was thinking about a career in an environment where I could provide business leadership, but also engage my way of life.” He was a driving force behind the creation of Pacific Rim National Park, founded and chaired the special committee on environmental pollution and fought for the protection of coastal marine life from oil transportation and exploration. In the latter stages of his political career he held high-profile federal cabinet posts, where he led efforts to conserve Pacific salmon and helped to establish the first marine protected areas. He also served as the first Canadian to be elected president of the governing council of the United Nations’ environmental program.

Vincent was born in Victoria, earned a law degree from UBC, and won silver medals in rowing at the Rome Olympics and Chicago Pan-Am Games. In February of 2007 he was appointed the founding director of the Guelfph Institute for the Environment. He will receive an honorary doctor of laws at 2:30 p.m., Nov. 13.

Don Vaughan is a nationally respected landscape architect. The beauty of the University of Victoria campus, which opened in 1963, and its transformation from a former army camp and farm land to a rich and diverse 160-hectare setting, is in large part due to Vaughan’s vision and expertise. He worked on the initial landscape plan for the campus and served as its landscape consultant for more than 40 years.

As the campus grew, Vaughan encouraged the development of ecological restoration areas, experiential learning opportunities and outdoor gathering places. The campus’ main quadrangle, the fountain at the McPherson Library, Fintry Gardens, the pond surrounding the campus’ main quadrangle, the pond surrounding the university, is in large part due to Vaughan’s vision and expertise. He worked on the initial landscape plan for the campus and served as its landscape consultant for more than 40 years.

Elsewhere Vaughan led site development for Expo ’86, Whistler Village and Granville Island. He operates a landscape planning and design company in West Vancouver. He will receive an honorary doctor of laws at 2:30 p.m. on Nov. 14.

One of Canada’s leading marine scientists, known internationally for his work in biological oceanography, Timothy Parsons contributions to the field are numerous and vast.

His research career began in 1958 at the Fisheries Research Board of Canada in Nanaimo (forerunner to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans) before he joined the faculty of UBC’s department of oceanography in 1971, remaining with the school until retirement in 1991.

Along the way, Parsons’ work was set apart by his conviction that oceanography should be conducted at the ecosystem level. Such approaches to fisheries management have become standard practice in Canada and around the world. He is a fellow of the Royal Society, officer of the Order of Canada, and holder of the Japan Prize for original and outstanding achievements in science. He is an honorary research scientist emeritus at DFO’s Institute of Ocean Sciences, in Sidney. He will receive an honorary doctor of science at 10 a.m., Nov. 13.

The University of Victoria will award 1,277 degrees, diplomas and certificates during Fall Convocation Nov. 13 and 14. In addition, three outstanding citizens will receive honorary degrees (see story this page).

By Dianne George

The University of Victoria faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

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A gift for communicating

By Patty Pitts

Anne Correia never made it to the first day of classes at UVic for her master’s English program. Instead, she sat outside on the campus lawn and cried. Newly single after a marriage break-up and back on the Island after living several years in a tiny hamlet in northwest BC, “I was starting over. I thought I was supposed to be married and having kids, not facing classes again.”

Correia did make it back to the classroom to complete her degree, earning respect and praise from her instructors and discovering a talent for editing in the process.

“Her skills are unique,” says English professor and Canada Research Chair in Humanities Computing Ray Siemens of Correia. “She has a real gift for translating between specific academic, theoretical and technical discourse and discourse that appeals to a larger group. Anne especially builds bridges between high theory and what we do with a computer.”

Siemens taught Correia, a graduate of Nanaimo District Secondary School, when he was a faculty member at Malaspina University-College and she was a part-time undergraduate student in directed studies. He encouraged her to pursue post-graduate work. Correia followed Siemens to UVic, staying two nights a week in town while maintaining a residence in Chemainus. She worked in the Electronic Textual Cultures Lab and her tasks included editing books that assist researchers to harness computing technology to enhance their work.

For Correia, the ability to bridge the technical and academic worlds came naturally. “I’m surrounded by people who didn’t go to university, and it’s important to be able to talk to the people I love about what I’m doing. A lack of vocabulary and a lack of education doesn’t mean a lack of intelligence. It’s important to be able to communicate without resorting to academic or technical jargon.”

Correia says she’s most proud of being able to “take faculty beyond email” and overcome their fear of technology while completing her master’s thesis on Patricia Williams, a woman who broke barriers as a Black female lawyer. Correia’s undergraduate work focused on Renaissance women who wrote at a time when women were not considered capable of such skills.

Correia sees a link between these women and how she once regarded herself. “I was not expected to succeed,” says the newly minted graduate whose ex-husband once told her she lacked ambition. Now in a new relationship with an old friend, Correia continues to work part-time decorating for weddings and other special events, a life-long interest. “I’m hoping to continue to edit, which I really like. I feel as if a whole new world is opening up for me.”

Co-op changed biochem grad’s path

By Jessica Gillies

A bachelor of science with honours and co-op in biochemistry wasn’t Simran Bhatia’s original goal.

“When she arrived at UVic, her plans for a chemistry degree changed.

“I really liked biology as well, so I felt biochemistry was the best medium for me. I knew that I wanted to stay in science, and biochemistry is one of the most novel sciences. A lot of upcoming biochemistry research is related to health research, so bringing chemistry and biology together takes on a new perspective in science,” she says.

Deciding to enter the co-op program in biochemistry and microbiology changed Bhatia’s path again, she says.

“I think my experience would have been really different if I hadn’t done co-op. It helped shape not only what I want to do in the future, but also how I decided to do my honours—everything kind of fell into place after I did co-op. If I hadn’t done it, I would have ended up with either a completely different degree or not nearly as great an experience. Bhatia credits biochemistry professor Paul Romaniuk with supporting her and encouraging her to do the honours program. After her first co-op work term at the University of Alberta, where she worked at the National High Field Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Centre, she spent three weeks studying zinc finger proteins with Romaniuk at UVic.

“As you can tell from the name, they’re kind of shaped like fingers, so they’re good for grabbing and holding different mechanisms in the cell. They’re really important for signalling, and in the future, if we know more about them, it’s possible they could be used for drug therapy. Dr. Romaniuk wants to know how they work, how they bind and how they interact with different things in the cell, so he basically gave me a protein and told me to alter parts of it and see what happened,” she says.

“When I first started my degree, I had no intention of doing my honours, so it was kind of funny how it worked out that he asked me to stay and continue working on the same project, and now he’s going to publish this work that I did in the honours program and co-op. His asking me to stay and convincing me that I could continue what I was doing and do it well was a huge factor in my success,” Bhatia says.

After taking this semester off, Bhatia will head to the University of Ottawa Heart Institute in January to begin her master’s degree.

Graduate finds solid ground in child and youth care

By Christine McLaren

From the streets of Vancouver to the University of Victoria, School of Child and Youth Care graduate Randi Rosso transformed her life. The road to a healthy lifestyle has not been easy. Barely graduating from high school without much encouragement or celebration has compelled Rosso to seek ways to support youth education. “My high school experience might have been more successful with the support of a mentor to encourage me,” she says.

Floundering for years in a dead-end job and suffering from drug and alcohol addiction caused Rosso to lose confidence and close the door to further education. The door opened when her financial aid worker suggested that she think about getting an education and exploring avenues for financial support. “I had no computer skills, huge fear around large educational institutions, and concern about my mental health, but once I decided it was what I wanted to do, people helped me on my path. I am grateful for the support I have received,” says Rosso.

Rosso received sponsorship from Lake Babine Nation in Burns Lake and numerous scholarship and bursary opportunities came her way as a result of her hard work.

Knowing that working with youth was her calling, she began her search for schools in earnest. She entered the child and youth care First Nations diploma program at Malaspina University-College’s Cowichan campus in Duncan. This choice enabled her to start at a small institution and transfer to UVic for her third and fourth year. “The child and youth care program challenged me to dig deep in order to be effective with youth. Faculty, staff and classmates in the program have been an inspiration for me,” says Rosso.

Rosso values the Indigenous supports at the university. Through the LE.NO.QUET Project, she joined the Indigenous studies group. “It was a great way to meet other Indigenous students from diverse backgrounds sharing different passions and strengths,” says Rosso.

Family support is important to Rosso. Several cousins are also attending post-secondary programs and there is a healthy competition between them as they jockey for the best marks and future prospects. As a single parent with an eight-year-old daughter, she is well aware of the sacrifices that her daughter made to help her achieve this goal. “She helped me release for my projects and even came to the class to observe when I presented. She has been my biggest fan, and now she is so glad we are done. Convocation will be a great celebration for both of us.”
The newly expanded UVic Writing Centre opened its doors to students at all levels of writing proficiency.

The centre, recently moved to the Learning and Teaching Centre in the Hickman building, began offering students access to tutors from a wide range of disciplines, along with workshops on grammar, essay writing and test-taking skills. It also provides increased support specifically for graduate students who may not speak English as their first language. This expanded mandate is preparing the Writing Centre to carry on the mission of the Means Centre for Learning when it opens in spring 2008.

Students can go online and book one-on-one 25-minute appointments at the Writing Centre with one of a dozen tutors from the faculties of education, fine arts, humanities, science and social sciences. Tutors are trained to take a developmental approach to student learning, helping them make clearer academic arguments by, for example, identifying patterns of error and clarifying the organization of their writing.

Dan Hitchner, a graduate student in the Cultural, Social and Political Thought Program, is excited to be working as a writing tutor. "Being a tutor and helping people with their writing is very satisfying," says Hitchner, who plans to pursue a PhD and teach at the university level. "I’ve been exposed to diverse people and the va- riety of students coming in; instead of just seeing first- and second-year undergraduates and international students, we’ve had a number of upper-level undergraduates and graduate students from a mixture of disciplines.

One of the students who have visited the new Writing Centre is Mohammad Nasser Jahani Asl, a PhD student in sociology. "I’m really pleased with the opportunity to work for an internationally successful online publishing company where I can encourage students to read and have the academic tenure with topics like social sciences. Tutors are trained to take a patient and friendly approach. They encourage learning a lot from them," Jahani Asl says. "They are very helpful in correcting a very pa- tient and friendly. They encourage you." Jahani Asl was born in Iran, Kurdistan, and has his first language. He had to study in Persian and Arabic, and he has also learned Turkish and English. "I still have university English as a language, so it’s level I would like, but I am always working to improve it," he says.

Laurie Wray, Writing Centre coordinator, has long been interested in language learning and writing de- velopment. "My experience teaching first-year composition and working with students for whom English is an additional language provides me with the pedagogic tools useful in creating a supportive and education- al environment for both students and the tutors themselves," Wray says. She is currently researching academic writing development for international graduate students who have English as a second language. For more information about the Writing Centre, visit their website at http://cacr.uvic.ca/writingcentre/wc.php.

By Maria Linniri

UVic computer engineering grad Stephen Hitchner has a sweet gig. This month the 27-year-old Vic- torian starts his full-time job as a software development engineer at Amazon.com in Seattle. But he didn’t get the job by posting a resume or filling in a job application—Amazon came to him.

"The way I got the job was purely haphazard," recalls Hitchner. "I was in an online computer science forum posting questions, and I began a con- versation with one guy for a couple of months. Then he asked me if I would be interested in an internship at Ama- zon.com. I didn’t believe him at first, but three phone screenings later I was given a job at Amazon.com."

The fact that Hitchner was snatched up by Amazon doesn’t surprise his former computer science/engineering professor George Trachtenberg. "I had the pleasure of having Stephen as a student in two courses as well as a directed study. One of the best things about Stephen is that he is one of those very rare students who actually read and are curious about material and are eager to engage in the discussion. His enthusiasm, hard work and motivation resulted in a referred conference publication where he was, and deserved to be, the first author—a rare achievement for an undergraduate.

In July 2005, Hitchner started his career as a software development en- gineer on the product matching team. "Let’s say there are different merchants selling the same product on Amazon’s website," Hitchner explains. "My job was to develop algorithms that are used to automatically determine which products are the same, so that customers can compare prices on a single page. It’s a hard problem to solve because everyone describes a product differently."

The interview system that Hitch- ner wrote during his internship has been picked up as a vice-president- level project at Amazon. "Basically if you go down, then the whole website goes down," he says.

What really attracted him to Ama- zon was that they encourage ingenuity and going above and beyond your duties. "It’s very much about getting things done. Online you either have to grow or die.”

By Tara Sharpe

This expanded mandate with workshops on grammar, es- a wide range of disciplines, along with forums around campus. Every UVic’s Career Ser- vices organization carries forward within a few weeks of the start of September classes. This year was the seventh year in a row, with forums on Oct. 16, 17 and 18 representing nine faculty areas and various schools. The forums are tailored to suit both the early and late stages of a student’s academic tenure with topics like ‘What can I do with a degree?’ and ‘How can I make my degree work for me?’

“Ours is busy throughout the year working with students around career development con- cerns,” says Jennifer Margison, manager of Student Careers. We know many students experience ‘career confusion’ or are unsure of their direction.

Other career events on campus also help to guide students in route to their chosen careers. In September and October, the Career Services team welcomed prospective employers of all kinds to the UVic Career Service Centre’s new edition of the Career Services’已经被上手。
A Vikings rugby MVP; a runner who became synonymous with the spirit of the Victoria Commonwealth Games, and an Olympic field hockey goalie will be inducted into the UVic Sports Hall of Fame when the University of Victoria presents the annual Legacy Awards dinner on Nov. 20 at the Victoria Conference Centre.

Gary Ducelow, MPA ’93, was a two-time Vikings rugby MVP (in 1978 and ’80), joining the team on tours of Europe and New Zealand that introduced him to the sport’s international fraternity. A member of the Canadian team that earned a quarter-final berth in the 1991 World Cup (Canada’s best finish at the tournament), “Duke” earned 14 international caps and later served as general manager of the national team. He teaches economics and coaches Grade 8 rugby at Shawnigan Lake School, where he also coordinates the school’s external relations program.

Cross country and track star Robyn Meagher, MEd ‘06, earned a silver medal at the 1994 Victoria Commonwealth Games in the 3,000 metres. The photos of her joyous one-two finish with teammate Angela Chalmers became an enduring image of the Victoria Games. Meagher competed in the Barcelona and Atlanta Olympics and earned two Canadian university championships during her Vikings career (1985-90). Meagher lives in Victoria and serves, today, as a councillor.

Deb Whitten, MEd ‘02, played goal for the Vikings women’s field hockey squad from 1985-91 and was part of two national (CIAU) championships and four Canada West conference gold medals during her varsity career. In international competition, she was captain of the national team from 1993-95, helped Canada win a silver medal at the 1991 Pan American Games, and was a member of the 1992 Canadian Olympic team. She is a vice-principal at Clarence Secondary School, where she also coaches goal field hockey.

The Department of Athletics and Recreation established the UVic Sports Hall of Fame in 2002. Involving this year’s inductors, 26 former athletes, teams, coaches and builders have been named to the hall for their career accomplishments and the way they exemplify the spirit and ideals of sport.

The Nov. 20 Legacy Awards dinner and awards presentations will also see the UVic Alumni Association present the 2007 Distinguished Alumni Awards and the Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching.

Ticket information is online at alumni.uvic.ca/legayswards.
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A day in the life of CONNIE KAMPE means helping graduate students and prospective grad students. That includes answering any questions they may have about the application process and academic programs, reviewing program requirements and otherwise helping in whatever way she can. As a graduate secretary in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, te Kampe works with students from the time of their initial application through to completion of their MEd, MA or PhD program.

“My job is anything student related,” she notes. Most students are working teachers, often with families, who don’t have much time, nor are they on campus all the time. “They are so overloaded with writing and research, it’s hard for them to remember everything. I’m sending out emails or phoning with deadlines all the time.”

She works with students who are in the on-campus programs, while her colleague Michele Armstrong assists students in the community-based programs. Their grad program has approximately 250 students. “We have great teamwork and communication with Graduates Records, especially Sherry Graver, who keeps us informed as to which students are missing documents or may not be registered.”

The most satisfying part of the job is seeing a student complete. “It is nice to see them, as tired and haggard as they are, come in and say goodbye. They’re done and it is cool when I can call some of them ‘doctor.’”

Born in Edmonton, te Kampe worked at the University of Calgary and was a semi-professional musician/dentist before coming to UVic nine years ago. Having started her acting career with the St. Luke’s Players, she volunteers in theatre groups and sits on the board of Four Seasons Children’s Musical Theatre. She’s been everything from props manager to director, chorus actor to lead, doing up to three shows each season. “I can sing, dance, and be a goof for the kids in the audience,” she laughs. “I can’t imagine not doing it.”

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF CONNIE KAMPE means helping graduate students and prospective grad students. That includes answering any questions they may have about the application process and academic programs, reviewing program requirements and otherwise helping in whatever way she can. As a graduate secretary in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, te Kampe works with students from the time of their initial application through to completion of their MEd, MA or PhD program.

“My job is anything student related,” she notes. Most students are working teachers, often with families, who don’t have much time, nor are they on campus all the time. “They are so overloaded with writing and research, it’s hard for them to remember everything. I’m sending out emails or phoning with deadlines all the time.”

She works with students who are in the on-campus programs, while her colleague Michele Armstrong assists students in the community-based programs. Their grad program has approximately 250 students. “We have great teamwork and communication with Graduates Records, especially Sherry Graver, who keeps us informed as to which students are missing documents or may not be registered.”

The most satisfying part of the job is seeing a student complete. “It is nice to see them, as tired and haggard as they are, come in and say goodbye. They’re done and it is cool when I can call some of them ‘doctor.’”

Born in Edmonton, te Kampe worked at the University of Calgary and was a semi-professional musician/dentist before coming to UVic nine years ago. Having started her acting career with the St. Luke’s Players, she volunteers in theatre groups and sits on the board of Four Seasons Children’s Musical Theatre. She’s been everything from props manager to director, chorus actor to lead, doing up to three shows each season. “I can sing, dance, and be a goof for the kids in the audience,” she laughs. “I can’t imagine not doing it.”

Cosmic train wreck continued from p.1

ies, stars, gas and planets.

Only a very small percentage of mass in the universe can be explained by visible matter. In fact, it’s believed that the universe contains six times more dark matter than visible matter.

Current theory predicts that dark matter and galaxies should stick together even during violent collisions. But Abell 520 is defying that theory, says Mahdavi.

“These two huge clusters of galaxies are passing through each other, and you’d expect to end up with two clumps of galaxies and dark matter with some gas in the middle.”

Instead, there is a core of dark matter and hot intergalactic gas, but no bright galaxies. And to add to the puzzle, there’s a nearby “light region” — a galaxy cluster with little or no dark matter.

The study was published in the Astrophysical Journal. In addition to Mahdavi, the study team included Drs. Hendrik Hoekstra and David Balam (both from UVic) and Dr. Peter Capak (California Institute of Technology).

“It blew us away that it looks like the galaxies are removed from the densest core of dark matter,” says Hoekstra. “This would be the first time we’ve seen such a thing and could be a huge test of our knowledge of how dark matter behaves.”

“These kinds of studies offer the best hope of understanding the elusive nature of dark matter,” says Babul. “If our results hold up to more detailed scrutiny, they’ll have a profound impact on our understanding of matter itself.”

In the coming months, the team will be using data from the Hubble Space Telescope and the Chandra X-ray Observatory to confirm their findings.
The UVic 2007 United Way campaign has been a long-time supporter of the United Way. “Making a donation to the United Way means that effective programs can be delivered—programs that address the central issues that people face in this community, such as programs that collaborate to provide safe and appropriate housing for people, that support people to learn and be excellent parents to their children, that ensure elders can be connected to people and services that help them remain independent in their homes,” says Purkis.

The collective effort of everyone involved at UVic will go a long way to assist the one in three Victorians who receive support through the United Way. $120 will buy 75 meals at a community meal program; $240 will ensure that a child with learning disabilities can attend eight sessions of intensive educational support; and $500 will cover 3 months’ of recreation expenses for a group of younger adults with mental handicaps and a mental illness.

The UVic 2007 United Way campaign has already collected more than 440 donations and over $165,000. The “Post-Secondary Challenge” is still on, issued by Royal Roads University to UVic and Camosun College. UVic which cut-rate tuition can achieve the greatest increase in participation and donations.

There’s still time for UVic faculty and staff to get in your pledge forms. In addition, donations from students and employees can be submitted online through the UVic United Way website (http://united-way.uvic.ca/). The campaign draws to a close at the end of November, so keep watching the site for details about additional events and end-of-campaign prizes.

Ever sat in front of your computer and read an entire book? Probably not, but chances are you will in the future. In fact, UVic English professor Dr. Ray Siemens predicts that within one generation, we’ll be doing most of our reading online, books included.

Siemens heads up a multidisciplinary group of researchers whose goal is to develop a new way of reading—the book of the future—in electronic form. It’s an extension of an existing trend, Siemens says, because plenty of online reading is already taking place.

“Kids about to enter adulthood do most of their reading online,” says Siemens. “They’re watching television less and going online for their news and entertainment.”

But so far, online reading hasn’t extended to book-reading for most people. Reading at the computer feels harder on the eyes than reading the printed page, and the computer’s lack of portability is another factor. While laptops can be taken many places, their structure doesn’t make reading on the bus or at the beach convenient.

Then there’s the whole issue of tactile experience. Many people like the feel of books, and enjoy everything from turning the pages to the smell of the ink.

These are all valid observations that Siemens and his researchers are taking into consideration in developing new online reading models. Upgraded technology, such as graphics monitors and the invention of “e-book readers” will likely address some of the practical complaints, while our own expectations about the reading experience will gradually change with technological advancement.

The diversity of expertise on the research team is unique. It includes historians, language specialists and social scientists, as well as computer experts. The idea is to examine all facets of the reading experience. This is an important point because in the past, the focus has been simply to get the information on the Internet. Little consideration was given to the other factors that people value when they read.

“We’re doing right now is looking back at 2,000 years worth of book culture and noting what has persevered over time,” says Siemens. “Preliminary results are really interesting. For example, things like the standard book index structure have been around since the 14th century, largely unchanged.”

Other book features that have stood the test of time include standardized spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, and the basic page layout. Siemens points out that to be successful, those things that have lasted throughout the centuries should be incorporated into the electronic reading experience.

Siemens visualizes the future of reading as an active endeavour.

“Let’s say you’re reading Pride and Prejudice. Imagine a world where you have links to movies versions integrated into the text, so you could click and see a director’s vision of a scene. Or if you wanted to know more about Victorian culture or language, or more about Austen, the information is only a click away.”

Siemens sees immense possibility in the books of tomorrow. “What the future looks like is not a single book in isolation, but a book integrated with everything else on the Internet. The key is figuring out how to present it in a form we’re all comfortable with.”