Freeze Frames
Photographer
Paul Nicklen’s
Polar Obsession
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The world looks different from here.
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From across campus, expert insight on key issues for the new decade.
BY GRANT KERR

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Acclaimed nature photographer Paul Nicklen, BSc ’90, will take his camera almost anywhere to capture the types of masterful images collected in Polar Obsession and the pages of National Geographic.
BY MAUREEN LICATA

27 Excerpt: Ice Passage
Brian Payton, BA ’89, recounts the ordeal of the crew of HMS Investigator, among the first Europeans to contact the Inuit of the western Arctic Archipelago and the first to conduct sustained observations of the area’s climate, plants and wildlife.

28 Unexpected Career Paths
A poet-turned-accountant, and other alumni who proudly follow unorthodox career paths.
BY LINDSEY NORRIS, BA ’07
Getting There

Life’s unexpected twists: bring them on.


Of course, it’s usually not like that. (Can I get an amen?) Sure, we can make all kinds of grand plans and schemes, but fate — or whatever you want to call it: maturity, experience, restlessness — has a way of stepping in and jumbling it all up.

Sometimes, even if there’s a sudden 180-degree turn, we end up on the other side with an even clearer sense of the road we’re meant to travel. The unpredictable keeps it fresh.

Such is the case with many of the stories in this edition of the magazine and the experiences that our writers describe and our photographers illustrate.

If the adventuresome nature photographer Paul Nicklen, BSc ’90, had stuck with his initial plan to become a northern wildlife biologist we wouldn’t have his compelling images of threatened polar ecosystems. As a student, the night he spent mapping his career in photography instead of studying may have cost him a passing grade on an exam, but it was also the start of an amazing life behind the camera lens. He’s now regarded as one of the top photographers in his field. You can see why in our cover story and the images he and National Geographic have graciously shared with us.

Brad Cran, BFA ’97, is Vancouver’s Poet Laureate but I almost fell off my chair when he wrote in an e-mail that, apart from his craft, he wears a completely different hat: that of tax accountant. His story leads off our feature article on career paths that, founded on the fundamentals of a good education, have taken unusual and unexpected twists and turns.

In life as in fiction the best stories, the ones that are packed with meaning, seem inevitable yet still catch us by surprise. Even in (and maybe especially in) athletic competition, as Writing professor and sports literature specialist Lorna Jackson, MA ’93, finds in her essay on the drama that unfolded during the men’s hockey tournament at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.

So often the best things happen when they don’t go strictly according to the initial plan and instead veer into the realm of meaningful coincidences, where certainty meets the mysterious and the ending is what you always anticipate but can never completely define until you get there.

Enjoy the magazine. May it be everything you didn’t quite expect.
Bringing the food home.

Distinguished Prof. Nancy Turner, BSc '69, began learning about indigenous peoples and plants as an undergraduate student, working with Saanich First Nations elders. Her research examines the pivotal role of plant resources in Aboriginal cultures and languages. In this talk, she'll focus on the renewed interest in the cultural and nutritional significance of native plants.

UVic Alumni Association 2010 Annual General Meeting
Guest speaker: Prof. Nancy Turner, Environmental Studies
Alumni Volunteer of the Year Award: Margie McLellan, VC '45, PNS '46

Wednesday June 9 | 7 pm | Michele Pujol Room, SUB at UVic
RSVP by June 4

Register on-line at alumni.uvic.ca/events
or call 250-721-6000 (out of town: 1-800-808-6828)

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Almost.

In 2013, the University of Victoria will mark its 50th anniversary. A commemorative book – including an historical essay by History Professor Emeritus Ian MacPherson – is being produced.

Alumni can contribute their thoughts about what they remember most about their UVic days. Send photos, too!

Go to uvic.ca/uvic50
Closing the Gap

Aboriginal academic achievement is a main priority.

BY DAVID H. TURPIN
PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

IN THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH, THE PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL governments issued their budgets for the coming year. While each emphasized fiscal restraint, prudent planning and careful management, both recognized the importance of post-secondary education and innovation for BC and Canada: the government of British Columbia maintained funding for the post-secondary sector, and the Government of Canada’s budget included modest increases for the federal granting councils (SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR) and announced funding for a new post-doctoral fellowship program.

Advanced education and research are essential to future prosperity and well-being. One particular challenge we face in Canada is the gap in academic achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, and at the University of Victoria, we have made it one of our central priorities to be a university of choice for Indigenous students by offering a welcoming and supportive learning environment. A decade ago, our Indigenous student enrolment was just 76 students. Today, that figure stands at 697. Student recruitment, retention, and graduation rates have increased across the faculties.

I would like to share with you a few concrete examples of strategic UVic initiatives that demonstrate our commitment to offering Indigenous students the support they need to succeed at our university.

First of all, a number of years ago, faculty, students and staff at UVic developed a proposal to build a First Peoples House on our campus. Their vision was so compelling that it became part of the university’s strategic plan to “secure funding for and construct the First Peoples House, and enhance support services for Indigenous students.”

Subsequently, our local communities — chiefs, education experts and others — participated in consultations, and a task force was established to help guide the process. A gift of $600,000 from RBC supports the Indigenous Student Summer Camp and the Indigenous Adult Orientation programs, providing young Aboriginal people of Vancouver Island and BC with an introduction to academic life at UVic. We are also grateful for the financial support of BMO Financial Group, which became the lead donor for the First Peoples House with a gift of $550,000, and of TD Financial Group, which provided $500,000 toward the house and for the TD Indigenous Student Career Transitions Program.

It’s been a journey, but the dream has been realized. On Jan. 25, their Honours Lieutenant Governor Steven L. Point and Mrs. Gwendolyn Point presided over the official opening of the recently completed First Peoples House, of which they are Honorary Patrons.

Located in the heart of campus, UVic’s First Peoples House is a beautiful, dynamic “home away from home” for Indigenous students. There they can find programs and services, coordinated by the Office of Indigenous Affairs. It’s also a place where students can seek out the wisdom of Elders-in-Residence Victor and Joyce Underwood (T’sawout Nation) and Samantha Sansregret (Métis).

Award-winning architect and prime consultant Alfred Waugh (Chipewyan) based the building’s design primarily on the traditional, pre-contact Coast Salish longhouse. The 1,100-square-metre facility was built to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) gold certification. It includes a ceremonial hall with seating for 200, classroom and seminar space, and offices. The main areas of the building are filled with ceremonial art, representing Coast Salish and other Vancouver Island nations.

A decade ago, our Indigenous student enrolment was just 76 students. Today, that figure stands at 697.

A second example of our support for access and success for Indigenous students is the LE,NONET project, a pilot developed in partnership with the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, which completed its mission earlier this year.

In four years, LE,NONET helped to create a positive learning experience for Indigenous students, strengthened links with surrounding First Nations communities and contributed to students’ decisions to continue with their education towards graduation. Much of what we learned from LE,NONET will be part of the fabric of our First Peoples House and the important role it will have in our Indigenous students’ academic success and in their sense of identity and of belonging.

The world around us is rapidly changing. As we move forward, we will remain guided by our dedication to the important role to society of our university — our students, faculty, staff and alumni.
Totems at Night

“I took this shot on a brisk, windy October night,” says Tyler Lemery, a History and Geography undergrad. “The sky was exceptionally clear and the totems were lit by the MacLaurin Building, making them pop.”

“The Raven Soaring” and “Eagle on the Decayed Pole” were carved by Kwagiulth artists Henry Hunt and Tony Hunt and replicate Tsimshian poles in Kiwancool, on the Skeena River, and Gitladkamiks, on the Nass River. The carvings are on permanent loan from the Royal BC Museum and have been on campus since 1963.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TYLER LEMERY
Early Spring

The rhododendron blooms arrived a full month ahead of schedule this year in Finnerty Gardens. Ushered in by a mild winter, the early floral display even included the popular rhododendron loderi – the largest and most fragrant variety – that usually doesn’t bloom until May, around Mother’s day.

Fab 5

When we interviewed skier Lauren Woolstencroft, BEng ’05, for a feature profile that appeared in our last issue, she said she would be “unhappy” if she didn’t make it to the podium at the 2010 Winter Paralympics in Vancouver.

She made it to the podium, all right. In fact, by the end of the games she had carved her own path from the finish line to the medal presentation, bringing home five gold medals in the alpine standing ski races. Her five victories match a single-games Paralympic record set by swimmer Stephanie Dixon, BA ’09, in 2000 in Sidney.

Woolstencroft had been having a sub-par season on the World Cup circuit but worked hard in her final preparations for the games. She told the Globe & Mail: “I was really confident coming into these games. But I never expected to win every race. Everything worked in my favour. I feel extremely lucky.”

Woolstencroft, born with no legs below the knee and no arm below her left elbow, now returns to her job with BC Hydro with five big reasons to be happy.
Rabbit Control: Next Steps

A pilot project designed to trap, sterilize and find new homes for 150 of the feral campus rabbits missed its target and the university is now working with the SPCA and provincial wildlife officials to plan next steps to control the campus population of more than 1,100 rabbits.

Only a few of the 51 rabbits that were captured by an outside contractor were relocated, with about 40 sterilized rabbits returned to campus, away from residences and playing fields.

The campus rabbit population comes from people who abandon their pets on campus. An average of three of them die each day on campus roads, and many of them are injured or infected. They damage vegetation and burrow into playing fields.

One option is to establish “rabbit-free zones” with feeding stations for a reduced number of rabbits. The university hasn’t officially said if or when a cull would be carried out.

Meanwhile, the SPCA is encouraging tougher municipal bylaws on rabbit abandonment and to prevent the sale of non-spayed and non-neutered rabbits, except to qualified breeders.

Deep Connections

The switch is on and now the first 30 instruments — sensors, cameras, profilers — connected to the NEPTUNE Canada ocean observatory network have passed their initial tests and are generating data.

The UVic-led project officially went online in December and promises a new era in marine research, gathering real-time data from across the Juan de Fuca plate via high-speed fibre-optic cable and hundreds of instruments.

2010 Distinguished Alumni

Deborah Willis, BA ’06
Faculty of Fine Arts
Writer

Jiang Nan (Jane) Zhu, MBA ’06
Faculty of Business
Co-founder, DragonPass Travel (China)

Sandra Richardson, Cert ’00
Division of Continuing Studies
CEO, The Victoria Foundation

Ron Greene, BA ’89
Faculty of Humanities
Former owner, Capital Iron

Tracy Redies, BA ’84
Faculty of Social Sciences
President and CEO, Coast Capital Savings

Allan Seckel, QC, LLB ’83
Faculty of Law
Deputy Minister to the Premier

Betty Clazie, BEd ’73
Faculty of Education
Educator

Robin Harkness, PhD ’85
Faculty of Science
Associate Vice President, Sanofi Pasteur

Catherine Claiter, BSc ’00
Human and Social Development
CIO, Vancouver Island Health Authority

Catherine Roome, BEng ’90
Faculty of Engineering
COO, BC Safety Authority

Jiang Nan (Jane) Zhu, MBA ’06
Faculty of Business
Co-founder, DragonPass Travel (China)

Robin Harkness, PhD ’85
Faculty of Science
Associate Vice President, Sanofi Pasteur

Catherine Claiter, BSc ’00
Human and Social Development
CIO, Vancouver Island Health Authority

Distinguished alumni from nine faculties and the Division of Continuing Studies were feted at a special gathering during Alumni Week 2010 in February, hosted by Chancellor Murray Farmer, BA ’68 and UVic Alumni Association President Glenda Wyatt, BSc ’98.
At Peace

EVA MARKVOORT — THE CYSTIC FIBROSIS WARRIOR, known internationally for her blog, 65 Red Roses and an award-winning documentary film by the same name — never played the “ill” card when she took Theatre courses with Prof. Jan Wood. “She always dressed well and if she was having a bad day you knew because she put on more makeup. It wasn’t about her illness. It was, ‘I’m Eva — aspiring actor.’”

On March 27, Markvoort succumbed to CF. She was 25. Her straight-up, powerful online accounts of the hope and anguish of her disorder brought new awareness about CF and organ donor registries.

About a month before she died, Markvoort’s sister Annie, a Biology student, met with Prof. David Creasey. They talked about her sister’s condition and how Eva’s health (her body rejected a double-lung transplant) kept her from completing the last two electives for her theatre degree requirements.

After that meeting, Creasey approached acting Dean of Science Claire Cupples to see what could be done to expedite Eva’s degree.

“The first thing you know e-mails are flying,” says Creasey. “It all ended up coming together and about 26 hours later she had her degree in hand. It was a pretty remarkable thing. Lots of people put work aside to make it happen.”

Eva’s father, Bill Markvoort, was being interviewed at Vancouver General Hospital by a Polish TV crew (Eva’s story struck a particular chord in Poland) when a courier came in with the diploma. “The nurses all got excited — some big package had arrived,” Bill Markvoort recalls. “I was astounded.”

On her blog, Eva wrote: “Wow. What else to say?/I know there is nothing more cliché to say/my dream has come true/but it is true.”

Eva was the first of three Markvoort kids to attend Uvic. “It worked real well because it gave her just the right degree of freedom,” Bill Markvoort says. “It was close enough to come home (to New Westminster) if she needed medical interventions. The faculty gave her tremendous support. In one play, they cast her on a couch to minimize her coughing.”

Wood remembers the girl with the bright red hair, standing out in a Theatre department not lacking in flamboyant personalities. “I’m incredibly proud to have known her,” Wood says, “and to call her a graduate of our program.”

BC Transplant: transplant.bc.ca

Physics Prof. Michel Lefebvre, reacts to the March 30 start of proton collisions at Europe’s CERN lab and the potential discovery of fundamental new physics.

10 | UVIC TORCH | SPRING 2010
Environmental Psychologist Robert Gifford asks: If so many people are concerned about climate change, why aren’t more of them doing something about it? There are built-in, practical reasons. Rural residents usually don’t have easy access to public transit, for example. But beyond that, in a paper prepared for a forthcoming edition of the journal *American Psychologist*, Gifford lists psychological barriers or “dragons” that stand between attitude and action. He puts them in six categories:

1. **LIMITED COGNITION**
   - Ignorance, environmental numbness, uncertainty, judgmental discounting, and optimism bias. Because climate change is a global problem, many believe that they can do nothing about it as individuals.

2. **IDEOLOGY**
   - Worldviews, beliefs in suprahuman powers, and technosalvation.
   - Overconfident beliefs in the efficacy of technology appear to serve as a barrier to climate-mitigating behavior.

3. **SOCIAL COMPARISON**
   - Social norms and perceived inequity. The fear of being victimized by free-riders serves as a barrier for some who ask why they should contribute responsible behavior to the climate-change cause when (they fear) others will not.

4. **INVESTMENTS**
   - Sunk costs, behavioral momentum/habits, conflicting values, goals and aspirations, and (the lack of) nature-based place attachment.

5. **MISTRUST**
   - Denial, perceived program inadequacy, and perceived risk.
   - The pushback against advice or policy that seems to threaten one’s freedom. Substantial minorities in most countries believe climate change is not occurring or that human activity has little or nothing to do with it.

6. **LIMITED BEHAVIOR**
   - Tokenism and the rebound effect. Some climate-related behaviors are easier to adopt than others, but have little or less impact on greenhouse gas emissions. However, their ease of adoption means that these actions tend to be chosen over higher-cost but more effective actions. Or, after some mitigating effort is made, the gains made are diminished or erased by subsequent actions.

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**Green Dragons**

All-Steinway
The School of Music has become the first all-Steinway institution in Canada, with 64 Steinways — including a Steinway Concert Grand — selected for their superior artistic quality and longevity. “The way the instrument moulds to each performer’s character and style — it’s just absolutely incredible,” says student Christina Tong. “The possibilities on that piano are endless.” The Faculty of Fine Arts is raising funds to support the all-Steinway initiative. For details visit: finearts.uvic.ca/music/steinway.

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**House is home for Aboriginal students**

*First Peoples House* received its official opening ceremony in January and in the presence of its honorary patrons, Lieutenant Governor Steven Point and Her Honour Mrs. Gwendolyn Point. Nestled between the Cornett and Clearihue buildings, the new house takes its architectural cues from traditional Coast Salish long houses. It includes a ceremonial hall and the Office of Indigenous Affairs.
**Business Birthday Boost**

UVic Business, marking its 20th year, received a generous anniversary gift when Victoria businessman Peter Gustavson created a $10-million endowment for scholarships, professorships, research and innovation.

“I know what it’s like to struggle to find the money for tuition and living expenses,” says Gustavson, head of Gustavson Capital Corporation and founder of Custom House Global Foreign Exchange. “I had to work full-time while at university, and my grandma helped me out with $2 a week for gas. I’d rather see students spending their time pursuing their studies than coming up with ways to finance their tuition and living expenses.”

---

**Sinclair Makes Waves**

Vikes swimmer Nick Sinclair took the Canada West championships by storm. The Victoria rookie took home four gold — in the 400 IM (4:24.85), 200 butterfly (2:02.88) and 200 (1:59.54) and 100 backstrokes (55.24) — and two silver medals.

Sinclair also became the first swimmer to win the Canada West Athlete of the Meet and Rookie of the Meet in the same year.

The Canadian national junior team member was featured in the “Faces in the Crowd” section of the Feb. 15 issue of Sports Illustrated.

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**Coach of the Year**

Women’s basketball coach Brian Cheng is the CIS Coach of the Year after leading the Vikes to a second place finish in the tough Canada West Pacific Division with a 14-4 record, the team’s best winning percentage in a decade.

The Vikes were ranked nationally all season long and were the only team to beat top-ranked Simon Fraser, ending the Clan’s 54-game winning streak against CIS opponents. Cheng is the third UVic coach to win the Peter Ennis Award, following in the steps of his mentor, Kathy Shields, and Mike Gallo.

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**By the Numbers**

The hoarding is up, the scaffolding’s in place and the older buildings on campus are getting safety and energy efficiency improvements thanks to economic stimulus funding from the federal and provincial governments.

**Campus Makeover**

Buildings getting upgrades (Clearihue, Cornett, Cunningham, Elliott, MacLaurin and University Centre).

**6**

Buildings getting upgrades.

**40**

Average age of the buildings.

**$42.5**

Cost, in millions, of the project.

**1962**

The year UVic’s first academic building (Clearihue) was built.

**$180,000**

Anticipated annual energy savings.

**272**

Direct jobs created over the next year.

**32,000**

Plants in the Cunningham Building’s herbarium.
It’s Just a Click Away

Device helps to keep students engaged and gives instructors an instant read on how well a lecture is going over.

BY GRANT KERR

DAILEY MADU HUNCHES OVER HIS LAPTOP, PEERING INTENTLY AT the screen. Like many of the 200 students in this first-year Computer Science class, Madu is trying to unravel a problem posed by Senior Instructor Mary Sanseverino. Satisfied with his answer, the Calgary import punches his answer into a hand-held device that, at first glance, appears to be a cross between an iPod and a television remote.

Sanseverino and a handful of other UVic lecturers are using the white plastic i>Clickers as a teaching tool to enrich the learning experience for teachers and students.

“Usually, people teaching larger classes say, ‘Oh my gosh, my students are not engaging with the materials,’” says Sanseverino, who’s also an associate director of the Learning and Teaching Centre.

Clickers are a way to instantly assess levels of understanding, keep students’ attention, and encourage participation. “It has nada to do with technology. It’s a straightforward tool to let students know, ‘It’s OK to engage with material,’” Sanseverino says. That’s always been a challenge for lecturers, particularly those with first-year classes that can number in the hundreds.

Using clickers or not, it’s not hard to pay attention in Sanseverino’s class. Smartly dressed in a black pantsuit, she’s a natural performer who takes to the aisles regularly to make a point or to see how students are faring on a problem.

On most days Sanseverino begins her class with a couple of problems for her students to tackle. They’re provided with multiple choice answers, beamed onto a large screen at the front of the lecture theatre and students’ laptop screens. After a few minutes to work on the problem, Sanseverino asks them to punch their answers into their clickers, choosing A, B, C, D or E.

A receiver hooked to her laptop tabulates the answers and gives her an instant snapshot of how well the class has understood the question.

“Three minutes with them actually working on content is worth half an hour of me blabbing on. Rather than, ‘I’m a vessel, fill me,’ they engage in critical thinking,” Sanseverino says.

Students have mixed feelings about the technology. Some grumble about the cost (about $45) and complain that they don’t see how it contributes to their learning. But many, like Madu, see the benefits. “I thought it was the coolest idea. I use it in three of my classes,” says the economics major. The teaching aids were introduced three years ago and in the recent winter term, 16 classes were using them.

Erica Milner, 18, uses the clickers in three of her classes, including Sanseverino’s. Using the clickers “can tell you instantly if you are right or wrong about something, what you know and don’t know. You can follow along and see if you understand [the subject] or not,” Milner says.

That’s precisely one reason why veteran Biochemistry Prof. Ed Ishiguro uses them, but he cautions that it’s still always up to the professor to make the course material understood.

“I am still looking for the best way of teaching,” says Ishiguro says who, now beyond normal retirement age, is still searching for the magic teaching formula after three decades in the lecture theatre. “If I run out of ideas, then I will retire.”

One has the feeling that Sanseverino might tell you the same thing. She clearly loves what she does and has always gone to great lengths to connect with students. She’s also willing to use anything at her disposal to get students involved. It wasn’t too many years ago that she showed up at her lectures armed with bean bags. Posing a question, she would toss a bag at a student who would then be expected to answer.

“I don’t drill the beanbags anymore,” Sanseverino says with a chuckle. “The clickers have made the classroom safer for students.”
Unheard Voices

Master’s student Yasuko Thanh writes about people whose stories have yet to be told. Hers is a powerful gift, one that is earning national recognition.

BY RACHEL GOLDSWORTHY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HÉLÈNE CYR

YASUKO THANH’S PAST WAS TOUGH: AFTER QUitting SCHOOL IN junior high she spent time on the street, judged by people who saw only a fragment of the girl. Later, with a young family of her own, she wrote in isolation. She always wrote; it’s what she does. And now, honed by her early experiences, she uses both their sharp edges and their warm depths to craft the fiction that recently earned her one of Canada’s top literary honours.

Thanh’s MFA thesis advisor, an award-winning storyteller himself, Prof. Bill Gaston shrugs almost helplessly when he says that to talk about her is to use a lot of superlatives.

“She’s delightful and she’s different [than many students] because she has an abundance of life experience,” he says of the 38-year-old mother of two. “That gives her more wells to draw upon.”

Thanh, BA ’09, agrees that her history has shaped her writing — not necessarily the techniques but her approach to the people she writes about.

“I look for material that isn’t part of the literary dialogue already. I’m attracted to the stories that haven’t been told,” she says. “I think I know a lot about being the underdog, the underside of North American culture.”

Thanh dropped out of school at 15 and lived hard. As a “wild child,” a street kid, she “had a lot of experience with being heavily stigmatized.”

“People [only] see one tiny aspect of you,” she explains.

Those experiences have made her think about the nature of prejudice and she often questions assumptions, as poetry Prof. Tim Lilburn found out when she was in his literary creation class.

He was impressed enough to invite her into his classroom again last fall — this time as a guest lecturer. “The next day the students were quoting her,” he says. “She gave a superb lecture on writing and politics — do they converge or are they separate?”

Thanh talked about bringing into literature people who are underrepresented or not represented at all. “Then these people become part of who we think we are,” Lilburn says. “I think she feels a vocational push to bring these people forward. I think she’s quite brave.”
Gaston agrees that she’s an excellent teaching assistant, adding that first-year fiction students will often seek her out for consultation instead of him. She’s also her own best teacher, he says. “My role is that of an editor. I give her my two bits and she does what she wants with them. She knows what she’s doing. I try to stay out of her way.”

He describes their relationship as collegial rather than professor-grad student. “At most I would guide her,” he says. “She’s a professional.”

“I think she feels a vocational push to bring (the under-represented) forward. I think she’s quite brave.”

In fact, she arrived at UVic with her writing career already well underway. Because she hadn’t graduated from high school, Thanh was admitted to the undergraduate writing program based on her portfolio of published work, which includes stories in well-regarded literary magazines like The Fiddlehead. Her work can also be found in Descant, Prairie Fire, Fireweed, and Prism International.

It was a short story in The Vancouver Review that garnered her the 2009 Journey Prize — officially The Writers’ Trust of Canada/McClelland & Stewart Journey Prize — Canada’s most significant monetary award ($10,000) for an emerging writer. That story, “Floating Like the Dead,” tells of Ah Sing, a Chinese immigrant who dreams of life in North America’s Gold Mountain but is instead exiled to a leper colony on D’Arcy Island, near Victoria.

The place is real, Ah Sing is fictional, and the story rings true. “It was some of the finest, most evocative language we read in the submissions,” says Journey Prize juror Lee Henderson. “[It was] totally original in voice and subject matter, and the characterization was so interior, so present in the narrator’s consciousness and in-the-moment existence. She didn’t flourish the story with historical detail; that would have taken us out of this ghoulish limbo zone. It seemed very real, very original.”

“There is a kernel, a seed of historical fact,” Thanh explains of “Floating Like the Dead” and each of the other nine stories that form a collection McClelland & Stewart will publish in 2011. “But it’s not creative non-fiction. Definitely the characters come first and the story comes from the characters.”

Each tale in the series was sparked by a different little-known historical event on Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands or the Lower Mainland.

“I don’t want to be preachy or dogmatic,” Thanh says. However, she adds, “There’s room for a lot more voices. There’s a lot of room for voices that haven’t been heard.”

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Youth Suicide: A Wider Circle of Prevention
Child and Youth Care research invites different approaches to in-school suicide prevention programs.

BY KAT ESCHNER

Youth suicide isn’t an everyday issue for most people, but it’s the second leading cause of death among young people between the ages of 15 and 19 in Canada. Only car accidents claim more lives.

Because suicidal teens are more likely to turn to friends for help than adults, in-school suicide prevention programs have tended to focus on telling students what to do when a friend confides in them. But researchers from the School of Child and Youth Care say those existing programs — and the research behind them — have often been based on a narrow and singular view of the problem.

Prof. Jennifer White and master’s student Jonathan Morris are conducting an innovative case study that closely examines one in-school suicide prevention program in Vancouver. Rather than just looking at knowledge gains or attitude shifts among participants in a suicide prevention program, they videotaped classroom sessions and interviewed individual teachers and students about their experiences during the program’s design and delivery.

Among their preliminary findings: young people know more about the issue than researchers have traditionally given them credit for — and they have strong ideas about how to make the programs more relevant and engaging.

White says typical suicide-prevention programs counsel young people to go to an adult if they discover a friend is suicidal. “It’s not anything but just telling them what they must do,” White says. “It’s an exhortation saying, you must break the confidence.”

Students could instead be asked to talk about the conflict they feel about betraying a friend’s confidence. And they should be given chances to speak about their experience, White says.

She and Morris — who have both taught suicide-prevention in the past — point to situations where they would deliver information to an audience of teenagers who were often assumed to be passive participants. But as educators, they weren’t certain if they were teaching the right things, if students were learning — or if they might be unintentionally causing harm.

“I learned, and have learned, a lot about suicide prevention from the young people in a classroom,” says Morris.

Just as suicidal youth are many things — someone’s friend, someone’s child, a member of a larger circle — youth suicide prevention shouldn’t just be narrowly set on instructing young people about what they should do, White says. It should also be an open exploration of issues like ethics, community, and justice and how they relate to suicide and well-being.

Making space for youth voices allows teens to sort out their place in suicide prevention — just as it allows educators to learn from, and respond to, what their students already know.

“The more I began to think about my own experience and the more I read the (research) literature, the more I thought there was this growing disconnect. What’s being written about in the literature always sounded so neat and tidy,” White says.

The team had wanted to include parents in their study, but only one parent at the host school was interested in participating in a public meeting to talk about the issue. “It’s not a situation that people are experiencing and encountering on a regular basis,” says White. “So, people don’t see it as a serious concern, in other words not really the most important thing.”

Yet, White has been working with troubled youth all of her career, and she emphasizes: “Any time you’re working with young people and some of them are at risk or grappling with some kind of mental or emotional challenge, the issue of suicide is always lurking just below the surface.”

White and Morris plan to conclude their study — funded by the BC Medical Services Foundation, the Victoria Foundation and the Andrew Mahon Foundation — later this year.
How’s this for a master’s project: compile a database of all recorded symbols found near cave painting in 146 sites in the south of France, ranging from 35,000 to 10,000 years old. That’s exactly what anthropologist Genevieve von Petzinger, MA ’09, managed to accomplish. In doing so, she may have discovered the first glimpses into a basic system of written language.

Working alongside Anthropology Prof. April Nowell, and relying on digital technology, von Petzinger compiled existing records and compared lines, dots and zig-zags previously discovered at the French cave sites.

Her analysis identified 26 distinct geometric signs, many of which reappear at various locations over the course of 20,000 years. “It is this patterning across such a huge amount of time and space that really made my research exciting,” says von Petzinger, a second-generation UVic alumna. “It’s a very limited number of signs, and a real insight into the fact that there was a definite purpose in their use.”

The line was the most popular symbol — at 70 per cent of the sites and occurring across all time periods from 30,000 to 10,000 years ago. The next most common were the open angle symbol and dots — at 42 per cent of sites. The majority of the rest were seen in around a fifth of the French caves.

Most signs seem to have appeared in the Rhone Valley and Lot regions in the south (the north was still covered in ice).

The signs may be proof that ancient tribes developed abstract communication shortly after their migration from Africa, or — as von Petzinger and Nowell believe — they brought the system with them.

The symbols’ diversity and continuity suggests that they may have been created before the arrival of the first modern humans in Europe, von Petzinger says. If she is right, it would push back the date of the creative explosion by tens of thousands of years.

The discovery was initially reported in the journal *New Scientist*.

From around 35,000 years ago, this image shows how abstract cave imagery was often mixed with the animal images. Dots and negative hands appear together a lot during this period.

Von Petzinger’s typology of the 26 distinct geometric signs she indentified from various ancient French cave sites.
From evolving technology, to climate change, China’s rising influence to health care: faculty members from across campus offer analysis of what the new decade may have in store.

BY GRANT KERR
ILLUSTRATION BY NEIL STEWART

WHEN YOU LIVE near an active volcano, a mathematician isn’t usually the first person you would think of calling. But Prof. Florin Diacu would be handy to have on the speed dial given that he’s penned *Megadisasters: The Science of Predicting the Next Catastrophe* (Princeton University Press).

Diacu’s book examines a host of potential threats (volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, earthquakes, pandemics and financial crashes, for example) and the efforts of scientists to predict — or at least narrow down the likelihood of — when they might occur.

His first goal is to “show how the advancement of science in general, and of mathematical models in particular, help us understand megadisasters.” Apart from that, Diacu hopes to educate people “about what we can do to shield ourselves from the effects of megadisasters.”

In his own field, of celestial mechanics, the movement of stars, planets and other cosmic bodies can be predicted thousands of years in advance. So, a potentially deadly asteroid can be tracked mathematically, providing it’s discovered in time. The next step is figuring out if a celestial object poses any danger to earth — and so far none has — and what to do if that day comes.

“We are doing pretty well at computations. What we haven’t done is bring (an object) to rubble.”

OPEN-SOURCE SOFTWARE — where many contribute and many benefit — is a prime example of what Business Prof. Charlene Zietsma terms “co-creation” and she says there’s room to apply to all kinds of problems, not the least of which is international climate change policy. It means forestry companies working with environmentalists, or Big Oil looking...
for solutions with those demanding the tar sands in Northern Alberta be shut down. Government should be at the table too.

Zietsma says such delicate negotiations are best held behind closed doors. In a more open forum, the traditional antagonists “are protecting their positions. They play a particular role in front of an audience.”

But at the discussion table, outside of the media spotlight, even staunch adversaries can find common ground. “If you (start by) saying, ‘What do you care about?’ or ‘What do I care about?’ and do some research together, then you build a common knowledge base which makes it a whole lot easier to find a solution. “It’s very difficult but it’s better than not creating together, because what that creates is conflict.”

WITH A LITTLE MORE than a year to go until the scheduled pull-out of Canadian troops from Afghanistan, Gordon Smith, Executive Director of the UVic Centre for Global Studies, says it’s about time Canadians became more engaged in the issue. “I think we’re sleepwalking,” he says.

The “we” that Smith refers to is all of us: the public, the government, the opposition and the media. “We better figure out what we are going to do, following the departure of our troops in the summer of 2011, and American troops,” Smith says. “This is not a magic show where everything gets fixed” when the troops leave.

Without a sustained follow-up by the Canadian military, and aid agencies, providing support and education to the Afghan people, there could have disastrous consequences. The menace of Al Qaeda and tribal Pakistan will continue to be serious threats long after Canadian troops pull out, Smith says. “Those things don’t disappear.”

So is he optimistic that the federal government will do the right thing and help Afghans achieve a more stable society? “I have hopes but, then, I am an optimist. Otherwise, life would be too much. I am optimistic, but I don’t see any [positive] signs.”
2010 COULD GO DOWN IN HISTORY as the year of the electric car. Chevrolet will begin production of its electric Volt. At the same time, UVic continues to build its hybrid electric vehicle in a three-year, continent-wide EcoCar design competition.

The big challenge is that government policy doesn’t always keep up with changing technology, Crawford says. BC Hydro is in the midst of studying the effects of electric cars on the electrical grid to see where the chief plug-in vehicle hotspots could be. But he adds that BC Hydro isn’t allowed to “directly support” plug-in vehicles.

“Hydro sees these as an extra load, so we’re not allowed to promote (electric or hybrid cars), per se,” says Mechanical Engineering Prof. Curran Crawford. “But if the mandate is better defined by the province to consider the whole transportation/electricity sector all together, then plug-in vehicles make sense to reduce overall emissions.”

With two-tier pricing, BC Hydro could give electric car drivers the incentive to plug in during non-peak hours overnight when electricity is in less demand. Given that transportation makes up roughly 35 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in this province, Crawford says: “It certainly is an area that BC specifically needs to tackle if you want to reduce the overall emissions.”

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AS LONG AS CHINA wields its considerable economic power in 2010 and for the foreseeable future, the West will continue to look to it for inspiration. And that’s not necessarily a good thing, says Political Scientist and Chair of China and Asia-Pacific Relations, Prof. Wu Guoguang.

As China’s economy continues to grow, the West seems increasingly less likely to criticize the Asian superpower for its social, environmental or moral record. “The costs are really, really huge; bigger than many other countries with similar economic prosperity,” Wu says.

Social costs include a widening gap between the ever-growing middle class and the rural poor. Its insatiable consumption of resources and exploding carbon footprint has consequences to its own citizens, as well as everyone else on the planet. Its human rights record is something many in the West are no longer talking about.

“China uses its economic power to teach other countries, ‘Forget about your values,’” says Wu, himself a native of China. “When China boasts so much economic development, we are very keen to export the Chinese model of development (such as) ‘we have too many consumer rights here.’ I think that is really dangerous.”

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THE MUSIC INDUSTRY lost its shirt by slumbering through the download revolution. As band-width increases and large files take less time to download, the TV and movie industries could find themselves in much the same situation, says an intellectual property and copyright law specialist.

Embracing the Internet as another way to reach viewers should keep the industries healthy, Law Prof. Bob Howell says. “You will always have pirates out there but if you embrace technology and charge a reasonable price, people will get used to legitimacy.”

Still, holding Internet service providers to account is one way to deal with big illegal downloaders.

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THE DEATH OF LITERACY in the digital age has been greatly exaggerated, says Prof. Ray Siemens, English professor and Canada Research Chair in Humanities Computing.

It’s just that literacy’s physical trappings are changing. Just as they always have — from tablets to scrolls to books. Electronic tablets and e-books are merely the latest manifestation of the evolution.

In keeping with this constant change, the e-book of today will not bear any resemblance to what we’ll see a decade from now. “If the
IN THE OLYMPIC AFTERMATH, we all know a little more about obscure winter sports and their gruelling training regimens. Little is known, however, about what works for high-performance adolescent athletes.

“It’s not a group we often think about,” Physical Education Prof. Kathy Gaul says.

She’s overseeing a team of kinesiology grad students who are conducting separate two-month, in-the-field research projects on hydration and nutrition in elite 12- to 17-year-old soccer players.

Gaul suspects young athletes have different nutritional and hydration needs than they will have once they stop growing. Although much is known about what adult athletes need to replace the salt and water they lose during physical exertion, “adolescent sweat may be much different than an adult sweat. If adolescents are not hydrating properly, that can affect recovery or performance.”

The findings can then be applied across the sports spectrum, Gaul says. “We want to make sure these young athletes reach their full potential. It’s a population we assume is doing fine. But there is a difference between doing fine and doing great.”

“Putting health files into an electronic format could not only save time but potentially keep patients healthier. The problem is that moving millions of files into a format that can be easily shared among doctors, health care facilities and regions is costly. There aren’t enough people qualified to do the job, either. It’s also time-consuming and complicated, says Health Information Science Prof. Elizabeth Borycki.

“The past has taught us anything, it’s that changes are slow. Technology may drive (change) but ultimately what mediates technological drive is what people are willing to do.”

Siemens once met a man of an airplane who was reading Moby Dick on his Blackberry. And in Japan, writing novels on mobile phones is a craze that Siemens says could eventually wash up on these shores.

“I think what we are witnessing now is the beginning of a much larger movement, the end of which we can’t imagine,” he says. “Those who read may be reading something an e-reader but quite likely they will still have things on their bookshelf.”

“How do you link them so you can link them between hospitals and physicians?” she asks. Electronic health records would mean patients not having to go through the same tests time and again as they ricochet through the system from family doctor to specialist to hospital. One electronic system that all health care professionals have access to would mean greater efficiencies and better use of time. After all, under the current system when patients have to wait extended periods of time for results because of paperwork or re-doing tests, “the patient is getting sicker,” Borycki says.

Countries like Denmark are way ahead, already exchanging electronic health records between doctors’ offices and healthcare facilities.

“We do have money but the issue is human resources,” Borycki says. “We need to be educating (more) people.”

“(ISPs) can pick up major downloaders of material. There needs to be a mechanism in place that uses the ISP to deal with illegitimate downloading,” Howell says.

That means using a system like what’s in place in the United States that forces ISPs to take down anything that has been a copyright infringement. Suing illegal downloaders after the fact won’t work alone, he cautions. “I think there has got to be enforcement that works reasonably well. It has to be up to the internet service providers to take some action. Enforcement alone is probably not going to be enough.”

“AS NEWS HOUNDS increasingly seek information on-line, traditional newspapers can survive. But they have to change, says a long-time media watcher.

First, online content must be radically different from what is presented in a traditional newspaper, says Prof. Lynne Van Luven, Writing instructor and veteran journalist. “You need to do it differently online, rather than just slapping up what was in the newspaper.”

That means shorter, tighter, punchier columns and stories with several links attached, allowing the Generation Wired to check out additional sources, including video. Newspapers also need to employ young copy editors to handle the on-line content, given that they understand what distracted young people with short attention spans are looking for.

In order to keep traditional readers happy, the short and snappy needs to be balanced with long investigative pieces and more community-driven journalism and story-telling. The online paper, The Tyee, is a good example of a media outlet that does all these things well, Van Luven says. Traditional media just need to catch up. “I think this (change) will happen and it is happening, slowly.”

"SAVE AS..."
Freeze Frame
A male polar bear feeds on the ribs of a bearded seal, Spitsbergen, Norway.

Paul Nicklen will do, and risk, almost anything to capture images of the extreme polar regions he loves.

BY MAUREEN LICATA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL NICKLEN, BSC ’90
Paul Nicklen slips from the side of the Zodiac into the slushy sea, recoiling from the bitter chill. Immediately he experiences waves of nausea. His breathing becomes shallow and his head, clad in a wet hood, feels numb. Slowly exhaling, he regains his composure and descends.

Nicklen, one of the world’s foremost nature photographers, peers into the inky world 10 feet below the Arctic ice, aided by the strobe of his camera. He carefully advances toward today’s subjects, a group of walruses. He’s closely monitoring his
Working for National Geographic, Nicklen captures not just the beauty of the polar regions but also the effects of climate change, the consequences of which are apparent in the unprecedented rate of the melting of sea ice and the loss of the icy platforms so vital to the lives of polar bears and the Inuit. Basic members of the food chain — like copepod and krill — will lose habitat if the ice continues to diminish. “Over 80 percent of glaciers are currently receding,” he warns. “I want you to care about these regions as much as I do. And I hope to inspire you to help avert the warming trend that is changing them quickly and irreversibly.”

Nicklen is at the top of his game. In the opinion of National Geographic contributing photographer Joel Sartore, Nicklen has produced “some of the best natural history pictures ever shot.”

Cristina Mittermeier, executive director of the Washington, DC-based International League of Conservation Photographers, agrees: “He never cheats, never uses Photoshop and doesn’t ever cut corners. He also never endangers animals. He’s writing a new chapter in the history of photography.”

The awards and recognition have followed: this year’s first prize in the nature stories category of the prestigious World Press Photo Competition; BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year in 2000 and 2001. People are deeply moved by his photography, often brought to tears at his lectures. The response and recognition makes the risks and perils of his pursuits easier to shrug off.

“It’s not that big a deal,” he says. “I’m experienced. I take calculated risks. I’m trying to get the stories out, and I never lose sight of that. Polar bear populations are declining, and they could be extinct in 100 years. If we lose the ice, we’ll lose entire ecosystems. I want to bring the polar regions to people sitting in their lounge chairs.”

He’s a man, well, obsessed, and he proves that decisively in his second book, Polar Obsession (National Geographic Books, 2009). It features 160 striking photos of austere terrains and rarely observed fauna — from Svalbard, Norway to South Georgia in Antarctica — collected during an adventurous decade.

Nicklen is right at home in the howling winds and profound polar cold. His family moved from Saskatchewan to Nunavut’s Frobisher Bay, on Baffin Island, when he was four years old. They relocated three years later to Kimmirut, where his was one of three non-Inuit families among 200 residents. “We had no phone and no television, and my brother and I spent our time outside,” he says. “I felt so immersed in nature.”

Two male narwhales deeply engrossed in social behavior, Lancaster Sound, Nunavut.
The University of Victoria is about 3,600 km and a world away from Kimmirut. While most of his friends opted for schools closer to home, Nicklen found himself drawn to the marine biology program and the west coast vibe. “The campus was so lush and green,” he says. “I loved it there.”

He also discovered scuba diving, in an eight-week course through Vikes Recreation, and completed more than 300 dives during his UVic days. “I left so visually full of the beauty of nature,” he says. “Scuba diving was a way to explore beyond the diagrams and charts of the classroom. But it hurt my grades because I was in the water so much.”

The big moment came on the night before a final exam in genetics. Distracted, he plotted out the details of his career, instead of cramming for the big test. He’d aim to become a wildlife photographer for National Geographic, where his stories would reach 40 million readers. “This became my driving force,” he says. Nicklen didn’t pass the exam, but he graduated with his biology degree and a life plan. His scientific background and his love of photography would be combined to bring attention to polar ecosystems and the impact of a changing climate.

In 1994, after four years working as a biologist in the Yukon, he embarked on a solo journey in the high Arctic. In three months, he logged 1,200 km on foot and paddled hundreds of kilometres on the Horton River. “The isolation helped me think clearly about the future, and the experience affirmed what I already knew — that I had to go home and use my images to start telling the extraordinary stories of this wild landscape,” he writes in Polar Obsession.

**FOR NINE MONTHS OUT OF THE YEAR.** Nicklen leaves his home in Lewes Lake in the Yukon to travel to remote corners, with 1,500 pounds of gear and a keen awareness of animal behaviour.

Besides isolation and loneliness, he’ll deal with extreme and unpredictable weather conditions. Camped on the ice for up to two months, he and his guides constantly gauge its integrity. If the ice breaks up, they’ll have to relocate in a matter of minutes.

And there are moments that are not for the faint of heart. Take for example the time he was photographing the predatory leopard seals of Antarctica. Their fearsome reputation was nearly confirmed when a 500-kg female engulfed his head and camera in her enormous jaws.

But once she’d asserted her dominance, her behaviour changed. She began bringing him penguins — first live, then dead offerings — 30 in total. “She tried everything, then got frustrated when I didn’t accept,” he said in an interview on National Public Radio’s All Things Considered last fall. “It was more than feeding me; she was attempting interspecies communication.”

Nicklen’s book abounds with stories like that. In Antarctica, he was nearly snuffed by an elephant seal during mating season. On a quest to photograph bowhead whales, one of the leviathans swam under his 12-foot boat. As he reversed course, the whale panicked and with a flip of its fluke delivered a torrent of water into the vessel.

He’s crashed his ultralight plane, fallen through sea ice several times and suffered frostbite. He’s been charged by a grizzly bear, become lost in a blizzard, and bitten by fur seals and elephant seals. Doctors have told him that he may have permanent physical consequences because of the occupational hazards.

But there’s no fear as he goes about his life’s his work. Only self-assurance.

“I’m scared in the New York subway and when driving down the I-5 freeway in Washington state when it’s raining,” he says. “When I dive, I’m in control.”

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I want to bring the polar regions to people sitting in their lounge chairs.
The North: An Earlier Time

In *The Ice Passage: A true story of ambition, disaster and endurance in the Arctic wilderness*, Brian Payton, BA ’89, vividly reconstructs the suffering and survival of the crew of HMS *Investigator*, among the first Europeans to contact the Inuit of the western Arctic Archipelago and the first to bring back sustained observations of the area’s climate, plants and wildlife. In this excerpt he describes the crew’s initial encounter with sea ice — a battle that would go on for the next four years.

**THE WIND IS STRONG AND FAIR, THE AIR**

sharp and bright. At six o’clock, the morning peace is shattered by a loud cry from the crow’s nest. The brother joins the scramble up top for a view as the fragments advance across the sea to meet them. Beneath an unmitigated sun, the bright white spreads and grows with fearsome grace and beauty. For most men crowding on deck, it is a spectacle unlike anything they have previously seen. It is what they have been waiting for. It is the charged, dizzying sensation of at last meeting the foe is like having climbed to the edge of a precipice over which they must now will themselves to jump.

The temperature has plunged over the four-week voyage north through the Aleutian Islands, the Bering Sea, and around the northwest tip of the continent. Now, on August 2, it falls further still, to 38 degrees. As if the ice has been lying in wait, it suddenly rushes south to meet them. Within two short hours, the *Investigator* is encircled in flat masses of ice, and yet the ship sails further north. The floes show between six and eight feet of freeboard, with a draft of eighteen to twenty-four feet hidden below the waterline. The sudden shocks, concussion, and scrapes against the hull test the nerve of the crew, now well beyond the sight of land. After the first wave sails past, the density increases, and then what appears to be solid pack approaches. To the crew’s surprise, the sea remains navigable— with care. Could they press further still?

By two o’clock, the ship is trapped and motionless. From the crow’s nest, word comes down that, from one end of the horizon to the other, the ice is now complete. Skill and nerve are required to bring the ship about and make for safer water.

Along the way, the men encounter the first inhabitants of this floating archipelago, lying on the floes in huddles of a hundred or more, basking in the twenty-four-hour sun. Few of the Investigators have seen or even heard tell of such beasts. Some make wild guesses as to what class

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42 >>
Not everyone who studies biology becomes a biologist, nor every theatre major an actor. Here are three alumni who ventured from their disciplines’ traditional paths to take their careers in very different (and ultimately satisfying) directions.

**In Praise of the Peripatetic**

*BY LINDSEY NORRIS, BA ’07*

*PHOTOGRAPHY BY CANDICE ALBACH*

**Brad Cran, BFA ’97**

**WRITER TURNED ACCOUNTANT**

**THE OPENING CEREMONIES** for the 2010 Olympics featured a rare moment for poetry. An art form seldom seen in popular culture received a star place as 13 million Canadians watched a slam poet deliver a rousing tribute to Canada that has not inspired such romping patriotism since a certain Molson commercial.

Brad Cran was not that poet.

As Vancouver’s poet laureate, he was offered the opportunity. He turned it down for several reasons (he is not a performer, for one) but the point remains that he refused the sort of exposure some artists would give their eyeteeth for. And he was able to do so because he no longer makes his living just from writing.

“If I made my living solely off my writing it is possible I might have made a different decision,” he says. “But one of the benefits to my career change is that money doesn’t motivate me anymore.”

He is still a prolific writer, just not during tax season, when he focuses on his accounting practice. He realized he needed a change while working on his book, *Hope in Shadows*, about people living in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. “I found myself unsure how I was going to pay the rent and feed my kids. I got a grant that enabled me to finish the book, and in that time I was thinking, ‘I can’t go on like this.’”

His accountant mother convinced him to consider accounting, so in his mid-30s he was back in school. Despite warnings from friends, who told Cran he would never write again, he finds the two careers complementary. His new skills have helped him get his work published in places like the *Globe and Mail* and *BC Business*.

“Editors are keen to have people who can understand financial lingo and also write,” he says, “so it has turned into a whole new set of opportunities.”

It’s hardly the path you might expect of someone with a bachelor of fine arts degree. “I think people shouldn’t assume that because you follow your passion in one regard that you can’t take care of yourself financially,” he says. “Even in university we heard the myth about the starving artist a lot, and I think that is so wrong. Really, I think artists need stability.”

Today he half-jokes that if he could do it again, he would have started flying planes when he was 16. “They work eight days a month and make a huge salary. How perfect would that be for a writer?”

**Ron Armstrong, BA ’73**

**MAN OF MANY HATS**

In a culture where the first thing new acquaintances ask is usually “what do you do for a living?” it can be very difficult for a
Ron Armstrong has done it, and struggled with it for nearly all of his adult life. His résumé reveals a mishmash of jobs, some white-collar, some not: he’s been a brakeman for the Canadian National Railway, a government media relations officer, for 12 years, a taxi driver.

None of these jobs were planned. When he graduated, Armstrong applied to be an intern at the legislature. But he didn’t pursue it very hard, in part because of common youthful ennui and desire to travel, and in part because he has bipolar disorder. He wasn’t diagnosed until he was in his 30s, but he realizes now it explains a lot of his shifts in course. “When I was in university nobody talked about it. It was like cancer,” Armstrong says.

But fresh out of school, Armstrong only knew that no internship was a good reason to drive his 1954 Vauxhall to California to try to get a job on a ship. What followed was a job with the provincial government in Terrace and a series of jobs in Europe, where a friend convinced him to apply to be a cruise-ship projectionist. Armstrong tried to demur on the sensible grounds that he had never operated a projector, but he was told, “It’s not what you know, it’s what you can convince the employer you know.”

He must have been convincing, because he got the job and spent the next three years travelling the world. He returned home in time to experience the economic nosedive of the early ‘80s, when he took any job he could get. He drove buses, served as an immigration officer during Expo, and became the first manager of Goward House, a seniors’ recreation home. “Then I became a taxi driver, which was the longest job I had,” he says. “From that I became a commissioner, and here I am now.”

Now 59, Armstrong expects that this job is a keeper. The kicks he doesn’t get from his career he gets from his hobbies — hiking, paddling, freelance writing. While he regrets his missed opportunities, he knows that he pursued that internship at the legislature he would not have had the same experiences. This colours the advice he offers his stepdaughter, who is about to embark on her own university career — if she doesn’t find a career she wants to stick with, she will still walk away with a rich body of knowledge.

“My studies gave me an ability to reason, think and research,” he says. “I can carry on conversations with people about things not related to my job. I think it’s important to be able to comprehend different situations and not be overwhelmed by a situation. That certainly applies to this job, and other jobs, too.”

Patti Dibski, BA ’92
SALES PRO TURNED GALLERY OWNER

WHEN PATTI DIBSKI WAS AN UNDERGRADUATE, she always thought her career path would take her closer to the supreme court than to surrealism. She thought she take a straightforward career path with clearly delineated steps to success, and intended to go into law. It wasn’t until a friend said, If you don’t love the law, you shouldn’t become a lawyer, that she rethought things.

Instead, she went to Japan and taught English for three years. She knew she still wanted a stable career, so she opted for an MBA at the University of Calgary. While still in school, she and 12 other MBA students were hired by the Canadian National for its management training program. Dibski ultimately became national account manager in sales and marketing.

For the next seven years, Dibski toiled in her fast-track corporate position and discovered that a reliable paycheque was not all she wanted from her job — with two young children, she wanted flexibility too.

“Corporate life is great for lots of people, and it certainly works for the majority, but I wanted the flexibility,” she says. So in 2004, she started looking for a business to buy. Through a business broker, she found Gibson Fine Art, an art consulting firm and gallery for corporate clients.

“It sounded fascinating — it was almost too good to be true,” says Dibski. “It was right around the time of Charlotte [who worked in a gallery in] Sex and the City, and it was turnkey.”

So Dibski took out a home equity line of credit and made the leap. What came next was a steep learning curve to prepare her to pitch artwork to corporate clients. She hired an instructor from the college for art and design to give her a crash course in art history so she could properly critique a piece of art and she took courses in framing and colour theory.

Being a business owner is a very long way from where she first imagined herself, but she says it has been a natural fit. “Right away when I heard about it I immediately could imagine myself in this job,” she says. “I think it’s important if you make that kind of transition that it is a premeditated decision, and to think about what it is that excites you.”

What Next?
If you want to take your career to new places, don’t panic: you can leverage many of your existing education credentials to get you where you want to go. “Sometimes we have a narrow view of the way we can make our way in the world: you can be a doctor, a nurse, a teacher, but if people don’t see themselves in those roles, or aren’t successful becoming those roles, then there can be a lot of worry about what to do next,” says Norah McRae, executive director of UVic Co-op and Career Services. So they are taking a different angle, and “instead of studying x-y-z and becoming a geographer or an economist, we’re saying, here are core competencies that are of value in any workplace.” Then it’s a matter of identifying discipline-specific skills.

Alumni have access to many of the same career counselling resources offered to students. Alumni can meet with a career educator and attend career fairs and other events. Most events are on campus, but stay tuned to the co-op website, where a complete curriculum guide will soon be available for all students — past and present.

On the web: careerservices.uvic.ca
Ever wondered about the oldest book or object in the UVic Libraries? Wonder no longer: it’s a clay cuneiform tablet held by Special Collections.

Small enough to fit in the palm of your hand, the tablet (A) dates from 2046-2038 BCE, during the reign of King Amar-Suen of Ur (Assyria). The subject of its text is economic, and on its reverse side is a pictorial cylinder seal depicting a seated figure. It’s a rare, early example of pictorial printing.

The cuneiform tablet is part of a significant donation from Bruce and Dorothy Brown, world travelers who collected ancient and modern artifacts, medieval fragments, early modern documents, several books, modern literary and political manuscripts, autographs of various world figures, 16th–20th century maps, wartime surrender documents, and military and political orders, medals and decorations.

The Browns also donated the ancient Egyptian wooden block (B) with hieroglyphics dating to the 21st – 22nd Dynasty (1085–730 BCE).

Current Medieval Studies classes study manuscript fragments such as a parchment sheet of Commentary on the Psalms, ca. 1250-1300, and folia fragments of a text of Aristotle dating from 13th century France (C). The former was used as a wrapper around a thin booklet; the main text was written by one “hand”, the writing outside the main text is pen trials and other notations most likely added when the sheet was already used as a wrapper. The fragments were possibly re-used in a later book.

Oldest and Rarest
Many alumni remember Prof. Roger Bishop, a key figure in establishing the Archives and Special Collections. Bishop taught English at Victoria College and UVic. He was instrumental in securing a number of important manuscript collections, such as those of the English poets Herbert Read, John Betjemen, and Robert Graves. Bishop also donated a portion of his book collection, which includes the three volumes and oversize illustration volume of the first edition of Captain Cook’s voyages dated 1773, 1777 and 1784; These complement other holdings on exploration of western and northern Canada.

From the 19th century, the Archives holds the surviving records of the oldest Chinese cultural organization in Canada, the Consoliated Benevolent Association, established in 1884 in Victoria. It served as the main representative body for Chinese people in Canada until 1908 when the national Chinese Consulate was established. The records include population data, minutes of the Chinese Public School, and donation and fundraising records. A number of the files are closed to the public but some are online at multiculturalcanada.ca/node/1524.

The University Archives and Special Collections share the same reading room, work and storage space in the Mearns Centre for Learning (McPherson Library) and collaborate on acquisitions of library and archival materials of enduring value and that aid in teaching and research.

BY JANE MORRISON, ACTING UNIVERSITY ARCHIVIST
WITH ASSISTANCE FROM ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS STAFF

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)
The Week that Was
Alumni Week kept president on the go.

BY GLENDIA WYATT, BSC ’98
PRESIDENT, UVIC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

WOW, WHAT AN AMAZING ALUMNI WEEK WE HAD THIS YEAR. ALL kinds of events were held on campus and around the city during the first week of February. Nearly 1,100 people took part. This was the third edition and definitely the best yet. I would like to thank all of the staff at the UVic Alumni Services office for a job well done.

Former students of Victoria College (and a couple of their instructors) got the ball rolling on the first day of Alumni Week with a reunion that brought together a crowd of 200. They toured of the new Mearns Centre for Learning (named for former Vic College student Bill Mearns). The attendees enjoyed a luncheon followed by a great presentation on the NEPTUNE ocean observatory by project director Chris Barnes.

At dawn (or maybe before!) on Feb. 2, there was a delicious breakfast at the University Club for alumni who work on campus. I have to say I was impressed at the turn out for the breakfast — nearly 150 early-risers. There was fun and games and a fabulous take home gift, a very stylish blue and white Alumni Week umbrella.

That same afternoon, UVic’s outstanding teachers were recognized at a special awards presentation. This fantastic event really showcased the high calibre of professors and instructors we have on campus. I had the honour of presenting Stefan Scott with the Gillian Sherwin Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching. Stefan is the Senior Lab Coordinator for the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education.

Our premier event, the Distinguished Alumni Awards, took place on the evening of February 3. I had the distinct pleasure of co-hosting this spectacular event with Chancellor Murray Farmer, BA ’88. It made me so proud to be a graduate of UVic and to be a part of this event when I heard about and met such extraordinary people. (The full list of recipients is in the Ringside news section of the magazine.)

As Thursday night rolled around I found myself at Peacock Billiards for the Young Alumni Brilliant Evening of Billiards. When I mentioned to someone that I was going to this event, they snickered about me being a “Young Alumna.” Well I’m not a new grad but I’m still under 40 so I figured I was safe! Besides, young alumni events are open to everyone — you just have to be young-at-heart.

On a personal note, recent events in my life have reminded me how important my ‘network’ is. Please be sure to get involved with alumni whatever your discipline as it can be an important part of your network. Find out about alumni branches chapters, send us your Keeping in Touch news, and join the UVic Online Community (olcnetwork.net/uvic).

And check out the upcoming events at alumni.uvic.ca — I look forward to seeing you!

Awarded for “Remarkable” Teaching

STEFAN SCOTT, SENIOR LABORATORY coordinator in the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, is this year’s recipient of the Gillian Sherwin Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Scott’s labs “are as lively as they are academically challenging,” writes one of his nominators. Others describe him as “a highly effective, remarkable educator.”

The award was presented during February’s Alumni Week celebrations.

In his own words, Scott, MSc ‘01, defines teaching as “an advanced opportunity to learn, as well as a commitment to helping others gain skills that will better prepare them for future endeavours.”

Introduced by the UVic Alumni Association in 1989, the Alumni Awards for Excellence in Teaching are the most prestigious campus awards of their kind. Scott receives a $2,000-prize from the association and his photo will be permanently displayed in the McPherson Library alongside those of more than 40 past recipients of the award, representing some of the university’s most respected professors and instructors.

“I never had the opportunity to meet Gillian Sherwin (a senior Geography lab instructor for more than 20 years), but I’ve often heard of the legacy she has left as an outstanding person and teacher who deeply cared about her students, her co-workers, and about teaching excellence,” says Scott. “To receive this award named in memory of Gillian is really a great honour and very thrilling to say the least.”

The Sherwin award is designated for sessional lecturers, lab instructors and senior lab instructors. The other award in the category — the Harry Hickman Award for Excellence in Teaching — is for faculty members, artists-in-residence and librarians.

Nominations for the Hickman award will be accepted until May 28. Nomination forms are available at alumni.uvic.ca. The award is to be presented at the UVic Legacy Awards in November.
New Alumni Offices
The UVic Alumni Association and the staff offices of UVic Alumni Services moved to new headquarters in February. We’re now located in the office wing (north entrance) of the Ian Stewart Complex, 3964 Gordon Head Road. Phone numbers remain the same: 250-721-6000 or toll-free in Canada 1-800-808-6828.

Turner Speaks at AGM
Renowned ethnobotanist, Prof. Nancy Turner of the School of Environmental Studies, will be the featured speaker at the 2010 Annual General Meeting of the UVic Alumni Association. Turner, BSc ‘69, specializes in the traditional role of native plants among the regions Aboriginal cultures. Her talk will look at the renewed interest in native plants in landscaping, gardening and as sources of food and cultural significance.

The meeting gets going at 7 pm on Wed. June 9 in the Michele Pujol Room, Student Union Building. Register online at alumni.uvic.ca/events or call 250-721-6000.

At Your Service
Your responses to our survey are helping to forge closer ties.

BY SHANNON VON KALDENBERG
ASSOCIATE VICE-PRESIDENT ALUMNI AND DEVELOPMENT

SINCE COMING TO UVIC IN 2005 I HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY THE LEVEL of interest and support shown by our alumni in the life of the university. Whether at local events or in my travels across Canada and overseas, I’m constantly reminded of the important role the university has played, and continues to play, in the lives of individual graduates.

Because of your strength of commitment, we’re always looking for ways to help you build and maintain your connection with fellow alumni, the university, your department or area of study.

One way to make sure we’re in sync with the needs of alumni is through regular surveys. We’re grateful to the nearly 5,000 of you who took time last year to answer questions about what makes you feel engaged and connected. Because of your cooperation, we’re tailoring existing programs and designing new ones that keep the UVic connection strong.

Some of the results confirmed what we’ve known all along, other findings shed light on areas that we can develop further. Among the key conclusions:

• Younger alumni told us they want more opportunities to form career-building networks, and are generally more likely to participate in special events. Older alumni, especially Victoria College graduates, have higher levels of engagement with UVic than their younger counterparts.
• Across all age groups, you asked for more alumni events that feature guest lectures and learning opportunities.
• When it comes to opportunities to volunteer, you’re most interested in mentoring students and getting involved in alumni activities at the regional level.

So what are the next steps? With the volunteer members of the UVic Alumni Association board of directors, our Alumni Services office will focus on:

Getting to know you better
• The survey is a key step in getting a better handle on the preferences of our alumni members and creating new programs. We are also developing an in-house survey program for ongoing input and feedback.

Keeping you better connected
• We will continue to enhance the UVic Torch Alumni Magazine and the monthly @UVic electronic newsletter to keep you connected to the people and stories that define the life of our university. The alumni.uvic.ca website will evolve and the UVic Online Community Network (olcnetwork.net/uvic) will offer more interactivity.

Engaging students — our future alumni
• Our “Plan A!” program for students are being reviewed and renewed while the energetic Student Alumni Association continues to be strong. Programs for younger alumni (and the young-at-heart) is also emerging.

Our legacy leaders — engagement with older alumni
• With older alumni leading the way in terms of engagement, we’re working with the Victoria College Alumni Chapter to build on the success of recent reunion activities and to create even stronger ties with this important and active part of the alumni family.

Bringing UVic to you
• The survey confirmed the importance of building on the success of the three-year-old Alumni Week (in the first week of February each year). The importance of face-to-face engagement can’t be over-estimated. We will continue to work with alumni groups to offer events in cities where significant populations of alumni reside.

Let me know what’s working for you and what could be improved. The alumni family is UVic’s largest stakeholder group. You’re important to us and you deserve to be proud of your UVic education and your connection to fellow alumni. We’re here to make that sense of pride and connection even stronger!
Phone: 250-721-7690
E-mail: shannonv@uvic.ca
Victoria College Reunion Luncheon and Mearns Centre Tour Feb. 1

Joy Barrett, VC ’45

Alumni Week Breakfast Feb. 2

Tia Robertson, BSc’03

Sharon Roberts, VC ’62

Luanne Krawetz, MEd ’93, and Lara Lauzon, PhD ’02

UVic MasterCard rep Sean Mullen presents a Canucks prize package.

Joy Barrett, VC ’45
Alumni Week 2010
The third annual Alumni Week celebration of everything alumni do for their communities took place from Feb. 1 – 7 with events that attracted more than a thousand participants. There were daily prizes, including a grand-prize of $3,000-travel voucher courtesy of UNIGLOBE Geo Travel, won by Christine Yole, MEd ’09. The UVic Alumni Association also thanks all of our generous sponsors, led by platinum-level sponsor Clearsight Investment Program from Wellington West.
Celebrate with flowers.
Graduation is a special time in life. Make it brighter with roses. Bouquets are sold at convocation, at the University Centre. You can also pre-order online for pick up at the ceremony.
plana.uvic.ca/saa/gradflowers

A service of UVic Student Alumni. Proceeds support student and alumni programs.

Leave your mark for future generations.
A planned gift to the University of Victoria can create many bright futures. Just ask Sumeet Leekha, a fourth year electrical engineering student. Thanks to an estate-established bursary, Sumeet has the means to pursue his passion.

Your generosity will help ensure that future generations of talented students like Sumeet receive a quality education. You can establish a fund in your name, or the name of a loved one, to support any university program you wish. Planned gifts are forever.

“I am thankful for the bursary that I received; it allowed me to spend more time working on my final project. It’s inspiring to be the recipient of someone’s generosity.”

Showcase your achievement.
After your years of hard work, what better way to highlight your achievement than with a diploma frame from your alma mater. With many styles to choose from, all of the highest quality wood or metal, your degree will get the treatment it deserves.

All frames have acid-free mattes emblazoned with the university crest, and have no wires, screws, or complicated assembly.

Three easy ways to order:
uvicbookstore.com | merch@uvic.ca | 250-721-8311
*shipping costs are extra

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“I am thankful for the bursary that I received; it allowed me to spend more time working on my final project. It’s inspiring to be the recipient of someone’s generosity.”
And the fuel economy was amazing...

We’re not sure about the name of the hospital bed jockey, or those of his worthy crew, but we do know that this picture was taken in 1970 when Ring Road hospital bed races were a highlight of homecoming celebrations. The photo appeared in a 1971 edition of the Alumni Quarterly.

Keeping in Touch

Let your friends from UVic know what’s going on in your life. Send news to torch@uvic.ca. Reply and change of address forms are at uvic.ca/torch.

VICTORIA COLLEGE
IAN MCDougALL, VC ’56, was named a Member of the Order of Canada last fall, recognizing the jazz trombonist and composer’s career as a musician, bandleader and teacher. A Professor Emeritus in the School of Music, Ian is also a past recipient of the alumni association’s Distinguished Alumni Award.

1966

JOHN WEBB, BEd, writes from the Sunshine Coast: “My wife of 48 years and eight months succumbed to cirrhosis of the liver on April 8, 2009. Since then I have been well supported by my friends and children, and my dog Rufus who is my constant companion. The Pender Harbour Legion Pipe Band, of which I am honoured to be the PM, keeps me busy and able to forget my bereavement. Several of them are yachtsmen and we go boating together, too.”

1969

DAVID BENTLEY, BA (English), became the first recipient of the Ontario Premier’s Discovery Award for the Arts and Humanities for his work on Canadian literature and culture and Victorian poetry and painting. The award comes with a grant of $250,000. He was cited for...
“almost single-handedly renewing interest in early Canadian literature, prompting other Canadian scholars to recover and edit literary works, preserving our past for future generations.” He’s based at the University of Western Ontario and his most recent book is Canadian Architexts: Essays on Literature and Architecture in Canada, 1759-2006.

1971

ROD CHILTON, BSc (Geography), recently published Sudden Cold: An Examination of the Younger Dryas Cold Reversal, concerning the sudden, thousand-year cooling interval that occurred after the most recent ice age.

DARIN GUNESKEERA, BA (Economics), sends this: “My daughter Charu was chosen for Sri Lanka’s top junior choir at age 6. I was awarded the United Nations’ UNHABITAT Business Award for one of the Five Best practices in Affordable Housing (Business and Citizen Sectors) globally. My wife Chandrika remains the responsible party.”

1974

PETER FORSTER, BSc (Psychology), and DANIELA ALUSIK, MBA ’09, staff members at the Canadian embassy in Beijing, did a great job as co-captains of the embassy’s United Way campaign, breaking all records and earning commendations and an award presented by the prime minister. Peter writes: “Since the beginning of the campaign we often mentioned (we are) graduates of UVic. So when the ambassador introduced the awards he had to mention this fact. Then when the prime minister handed me my plaque he mentioned that he had taken a couple of summer courses at UVic. I think we have significantly raised the profile of our dear university in Beijing.”

1975

LARRY ROSE, MA (Political Science), retired in February from CTV News in Toronto. Larry began his broadcast career while a high school student 49 years ago. He worked for CTV News in Toronto and Kitchener for the past 24 years. His assignments included producer of CTV National News with Lloyd Robertson, foreign assignment editor, and news director of CTV SouthWest. Larry is a native of Rossland.

1977

SOPHIA LANG, BA (Linguistics), is back in Victoria after a few decades in Calgary. She’s a psychologist and is setting up a private practice in Victoria. She’s eager to reunite with friends and acquaintances.

1978

DOUG BALESHTA, BSc (Physics), writes: “During 1975-77 I was fortunate to play piano with the UVic Jazz Band. I also had the foresight to record several of our performances from those days and have transcribed them to a website for people to enjoy in an MP3 format at seymourarm.com/uvic.”

1980

SUSAN FIDDLER, BMus, has been working at UVic since 1987, most recently as a co-op coordinator with engineering, computer science and math students.

1981

CARMEN SCOTT, BA (Psychology), and CINDY DONATELLI, BSc (Mathematics) ’80, have designed and built a free community website for parents. Carmen writes: “We met at UVic over 30 years ago and have been friends ever since. Last year we decided to build an interactive directory website for children’s activities in Greater Victoria. ChildsPlay101.com is a planning tool for parents and caregivers; they can find just the right activity for their child. We have over 200 local facilities, organizations and businesses that are participating with us and we list over 4,000 activities. Our next website in the series is GreyPlay101.com, for people 50 and over, and then WeePlay101.com, for children one to 36 months.”

1983

THOMAS JAMES CRABTREE, LLB, has been appointed Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of BC, following a panel’s review of a number of candidates and a recommendation to cabinet. After specializing in litigation, he became a provincial court judge in 1999 and has been based in Chilliwack.

GRANT HUGHES, MSc (Biology), writes: “I am enjoying working as the director of community relations at UVic, where I started in February 2009. My earlier career was as director, curatorial services at the Royal BC Museum using my science and public administration training in the fields of natural history curation and museum management. In 1978 my wife Karen (Bed ’79) and I were married and we have two daughters — Vanessa and Jenna.”

PAULA JOHANSON, BA (French), has been working in the UVic housekeeping department for two-and-a-half years, and she’s also a prolific writer: “In December 2009 the UVic Library and the Bookstore hosted an event celebrating books written during the last year or two by UVic faculty and staff. My five books from 2008 were displayed.”

TRACIE SIBBALD, BSc (Geography/Political Science), is a 2010 inductee into the UVic Sports Hall of Fame. She had a five-year career with the basketball Vikettes and was named the CIAU’s Most Outstanding Player in her final season. She also played for Canada’s national team for six years, participating in the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

1984

LAI-HIM LEUNG, BA (Psychology), writes from Hong Kong: “Have been a teacher since I graduated. Migrated to Australia and returned to Hong Kong. Now completing an MA in English language arts. I am both a registered teacher and a registered social worker. Married for 20 years. Raising a daughter, now 15-and-a-half. She is attending Australian International School in Hong Kong.”

BART MILLER, BSc (Biology), writes from his home in California: “Just checking in… after 25 years of world travel. Being my first university and degree, I’ll always hold a special place in my heart for UVic. Life is what you make it.”

1986

ROBIN CICERI, MPA, has been appointed president of the Research Universities’ Council of BC after holding a series of senior posts in the BC civil service. She works with the senior leadership of UVic, UBC, SFU and UNBC to identify issues and work toward the development of related public policies at the provincial and national levels.

1987

JAQUI THOMPSON, BA (English), writes: “How I know I’ve been at UVic a long while: When I first arrived as a student, I remember a day when I looked down at the trees in the Quad from the third floor of the Clearihue Building. Now I work on the fourth floor of the library and I can see the tops of those same trees reaching about the roof level.”

1989

TED GODWIN, BA (History), completed his master’s certificate in project management through UVic Business in 2009 and is working in the McPherson Library.

1990

LYNDA TATE ROUSSEAU, BA (Sociology), reports: “Joe (Rousseau) and I moved to this part of the world about 25 years ago and have been here ever since. Joe was posted there by his company, the American Bureau of Shipping, to take the position of director of offshore technical and business development for Asia. We are very excited to move to this part of the world and look forward to travel and settling with our cats in our new home.”

1992

VICKI L. NYGAARD, MA (Sociology), is working on an interdisciplinary PhD at UBC, exploring the experiences of women who have had their dependent daughters die unexpectedly.

LISA READ, BEd, writes: “My years at UVic are always fondly remembered. I was so thrilled to learn that an old friend of mine was to receive
Global Alumni

**NAME** Joanna Wong  
**DEGREE** BA 2005 (Asian Studies/Professional Writing)  
**LOCATION** Beijing  
**JOB** Freelance journalist  
**KUDOS** Youth video contest winner, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

*What brought me to China was a UVic scholarship to study Mandarin for one year in Shanghai. It started to feel like home when new friends would invite me home for the pyrotechnic madness that is the Chinese New Year holidays.*

*The toughest lesson I’ve learned since moving here has been learning how to navigate the paperwork and inscrutable depths of China’s bureaucracy.*

*So far, the best part about China is the sense that something is always happening. The collective dreams of 1.3 billion people generate a boundless, inspiring energy.*

*The weirdest thing that’s happened was meeting Chairman Mao’s daughter Li Na at a banquet of calligraphers.*

*The best food here can be found served hot off the grill down a meandering Beijing “hutong” alleyway.*

*My degree has helped me in every aspect of my media and communications work in Asia. From learning the art of storytelling from Stephen Hume to studying the intricacies of cross-cultural relations with Dr. Leslie Butt, UVic provided a great training ground for my real-life work in Asia.*

*Canada’s future with Asia depends on people — our greatest resource. Canada is full of multi-lingual and culturally diverse people who are passionate about building new international opportunities.*

*The thing I miss most about UVic is the rabbits.*

---

**1993**  
**LUANNE KRAWETZ**, MEd, is marking her 30th year on campus — first as a student and currently as manager of the Faculty of Education’s teacher education field experience program.  
**CHRISTIE STEPHENSON**, BA (History), is celebrating a decade working in sustainable investing, focused on environmental, social and governance analysis of corporations. She has spent the past three years as the manager of sustainability evaluations at Northwest & Ethical Investments LP, where she manages the screening of more than $10 billion in assets for Ethical Funds and external clients. She is a frequent speaker on socially responsible investing and corporate social responsibility.  
**1994**  
**MORAG MACNEIL**, BA (Psychology), has “been happily working at UVic in administrative positions in Math, Law Library, Psychology, Vice-President Academic, and University Secretary, since 1973.”  
**BLAISE SALMON**, MA (History), has worked in the field of microfinance for the past 12 years and is currently executive director of Oikocredit BC, which channels investment funds from Canadians into small loans for the poor in 69 developing countries around the world. He’s based in Victoria.  
**1995**  
**JOANNE J. DAVIDSON** (née DRUMMOND), MSc (Biology), is working as a palliative care nurse and studying voice at the Victoria Conservatory of Music, giving solo recitals and singing with Ensemble Laude. “I am privileged to be married for over 33 years to the most wonderful person (Greg Davidson), who continues to inspire me musically, and am the mother of two adult sons, Matthew and Geoffrey.”

---

**1996**  
**LAURELEE KOPECK**, (Sociology), an accomplished field hockey player for the Vikes and the Canadian national team, was named to the UVic Sports Hall of Fame this year. Among her career highlights, she guided the UVic to two national titles and had 163 caps — the most of any national team member.  
**PATRICK MCCAULEY**, BA (Psychology), and **HOPE MCINTYRE**, MFA (Theatre), are in Winnipeg. Patrick writes: “Been working the last two years at an amazing hospital here in ‘Winter-Peg.’ The staff and volunteers are truly exceptional people, and I feel so lucky to be in such a great environment! Looking to catch up with any fellow grads from ’96, especially in the psych department! Also, any fellow ‘Peer Helpers’ from 1993-96 out there? It would be great to hear from you too!”  
**GARY WONG**, MEd (Curriculum Studies), has been enjoying retirement and travel for the past six years after 32 years of elementary school teaching in the Cowichan and Sooke school districts.  
**2000**  
**MATTHEW HOOTON**, BA (Writing), has released his first novel, *Deloume Road* (Knopf Canada – 2010 New Face of Fiction Series). Set in a rural Vancouver Island community during the first Gulf War, it’s an evocative story of love and tragedy that weaves together the lives of newcomers and long-time residents against the backdrop of a century-old suicide. The manuscript was his master’s thesis at Bath Spa University in England and earned him the...
in a healthy baby girl, Sawyer, on Sept. 3, 2009. On
May 2009 in an outdoor ceremony in Victoria, B.C.,
Patton, BEng '08, was married in an outdoor ceremony
in Pitt Meadows after meeting at UVic in 2006. They live in Coquitlam.
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the *Ring* newspaper: “I could not see the priceless youthful energy of my students spent on anything other than real community problems.”

**Peter Birch-Jones**, MPA, died on Sept. 23, 2009 of cancer. He was predeceased by his wife, Sonia Birch-Jones, a former director of alumni services. He enjoyed two careers, first with the Canadian Navy, then, after graduation from UVic, with the BC Ministry of Health.

**Erik Berglund**, BSc ’87 (Biology), took his life on April 11, 2009, at the age of 43, after a lengthy struggle with depression. Writes his sister, **Jessica Berglund** (née Volker), LLB ’97: Erik loved his years of studying biology and was active in BUGS (the Biology Undergraduate Society). After graduating, he discovered architecture and received his master’s from the UBC School of Architecture. He became a registered architect, enjoyed work in his beloved Victoria, including opening his own firm in 2007.

**Edward Kohse**, VC ’47, passed away in his 80th year in Sept. 2009, in Calgary. He is greatly missed by his wife Anita, his five children and their spouses and his 10 grandchildren. Ed completed his degree in geology at UBC, then worked with Mobil Oil until retirement, by which time he was chief geophysicist. Ed enjoyed camping and fly-fishing with his children and grandchildren, teaching them to respect animals, the land and the sea, all of which he greatly admired.
of creature they may be; most stare in rapt wonder at the grunting and growling multitudes.

The larger males stretch to twelve feet in length and weigh perhaps a ton and a half. When they slip down into the water, the fleshy they leave behind rise by as much as two feet. In the water, females are encountered with pups at their side, which crawl up onto their mother’s back at the approach of the ship. All have round heads, small eyes, and no visible ears. Their thick skin, gathered in deep folds at the shoulders, is covered with short, reddish hair, making them appear as if they’ve rolled in cinnamon powder. Their muzzles are short and broad, sporting prodigious moustaches of stiff, quill-like whiskers. Both males and females possess imposing ivory tusks, some as long as a man’s leg. They come and go from the edge of the ice, diving to feed on molluscs in the shallows, hauling out to take their rest. Like walrus populations known to exist in the Atlantic Ocean and Laptev Sea, these creatures spend a large portion of their lives atop Arctic ice, relying on it as a platform for both hunting and giving birth.

Aboard the Investigator, some of the more experienced seamen observe that these “marine beef” have a reputation for yielding delicious steaks. A rifle is loaded and a ball fired into a near specimen. However, wishing no further delay, the captain calls off the attack.

Sailing through the low, shifting maze, the crew seeks retreat to the southeast. But the dark water cracks are squeezed tight between the fleshy until the sea itself is a vast, stained-glass window of winter. When the ice presses in to trap them, it becomes necessary to dispatch a team to the surface for assistance. The men compete for the right to be the first to reach it. To the boatswain goes the honour. After finding his balance, he ceremoniously reaches down and touches the hard Polar Sea.

The men stow their summer clothes and gear. For a second day, the crew deftly tacks to and fro in the hope of avoiding collisions. As the brother watches, he recalls the ice he saw streaming down from Baffin Bay and Davis Strait on the far side of the continent. Those often immense formations dwarf the largest ships and are made of ancient fresh water suspended in time—up to fifteen thousand years. True icebergs, born on land from calving glaciers, are not seen in these western waters. Although less dramatic, the sea-ice fleshy encountered here are no less a danger. The men who have no ice experience of any kind find their previous notions at odds with the surrounding reality.

“Had I known that the ice was so hard and strong,” one seaman is heard to say, “I would have been only too glad to stay at home.”

The ice now striking the Investigator’s hull is far younger than anyone imagines. This multi-year pack ice begins as autumn
Frazil, fine needle-like crystals suspended in water. This forms grease ice, a thin, slushy frazil layer so named for its oily appearance on the surface of the sea. If conditions are relatively calm, this slush congeals into fields of soggy snowballs or schools of small, translucent ice jellyfish hanging just below the surface. These in turn become fragile rafts, and then finally solid cakes (up to twenty-two yards across) and floes (greater than twenty-two yards) that eventually freeze together until the sea itself is at last locked away.

As the ice solidifies, the crystals relentlessly expel brine down to the water below, evolving and densifying into hard, clear ice that is essentially salt-free. Some will anchor to coves and bays as landfast ice; most will become part of the contiguous polar ice cap. In all, Arctic sea ice survives no more than nineteen years before finding itself expelled to the edge of the pack. There, it is broken and cast adrift as the entire mass slowly rotates clockwise like a dense, frozen cyclone aloft at the top of the world. To the captain, officers, and crew of the Investigator, the ice they encounter here could well be the “barrier ice” separating the known world from the Open Polar Sea.

Excerpted from The Ice Passage, Vancouver-based writer Brian Payton’s third book. It made the longlist for the 2010 BC National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction and he was a finalist for the 2010 BC Book Prizes: Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Prize.

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The conclusion of the Olympic men’s gold medal hockey game was surprising — and inevitable.

BY LORNA JACKSON, MA ’93

“YOU COULDN’T WRITE A BETTER SCRIPT”: Cliché du Jour after Team Canada’s overtime win vs. Team USA in the men’s gold medal opera at Canada Hockey Place. But real writers — call them sportscasters — drafted a better one even before they let the Games begin.

Their über-narrative: Ovechkin vs. Crosby, a ’72 series remix, the Canada vs. Russia rivalry distilled into one epic game. Be thrilled. Trust us. We’re experts. The delight of sport, though, doesn’t come via hackneyed commentary, and that’s not how narrative works. A good story surprises. It thrills because we’re startled as challenges are overcome, defeat endured. When characters become more and less like themselves, stories get better.

We were permitted only two characters. Sidney Crosby: the shiny Nova Scotian with the impossible quadriceps; the twinkling composure; the skill-set, jaw line and curly hair of a Greek — or Hugo Boss — god. Alexander Ovechkin: the dentally-challenged Muscovite, the irreverent whirling dervish with the disposition of a cheery and patriotic gangster (In Russia, puck shoots you).

See the problem? Only one story — a win/lose conflict — for a 12-nation tournament, stock characters, and yet we’re expected to stay glued for two weeks. Plus, if this proposed climax becomes only a quarterfinal extravaganza (it did), what about the semi-finals? The final-final? They can’t both be, in the lingo of story structure, dénouement. This über-narrative: doomed.

By the time the Canada vs. Russian Federation game arrived in the late afternoon of February 24, both wonder boys had tanked. Alex the Great had concussed the tourney’s best archetype — the suddenly fire-bellied Czech vet, Jaromir Jagr. Sid the Kid performed a noble shoot-out goal (two tries!) vs. the sizzling Swiss and then — though he skated more minutes than any other Canadian forward — went invisible. The best? Really.

Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano, in his fine meditation, Soccer in Sun and Shadow, denounces the corporate gloss of athletics but also the lefty critics who trash spectator sport as mere opiate of the masses. “And when good soccer happens,” he writes, “I give thanks for the miracle and I don’t give a damn which team or country performs it.” Me, too, re: hockey. So while Sid and Ovie evaporated, I loved the stoked Slovaksians, especially Richard Zednik, whom I’d seen kiss death twice when he played in the NHL (elbow to the face; skate blade to the carotid artery). I admired the grief-thinned Brian Burke, GM of Team USA, best-selling author of the Naslund-Bertuzzi bromance in Vancouver, as he began a lifetime of stoic mourning for his recently dead son and led a litter of young Turks to the final. From day one, death — its threat, its aftermath — was the Games’ subtext. Coach Mike Babcock, whose mother died of cancer at 50 when he was 28, spoke of keeping in touch with her on the bench after wins.

The Russia-Canada story fizzled and multi-millionaire Ovechkin sulked. Was it time to abhor the game, all games? No. Cynicism about sport and the Olympics is like our after-work burdened stroll from car to house: inevitable, purposeful, but easy and unconscious. “I’m home, whatever.”

But an engaged spectator is a biathlete: gutting it out in the snowy woods — watch that ditch! — heart wedged in esophagus, elated by the fresh air and light on tall trees, stopping to lie down and blast off — a Scott Niedermayer turnover seven minutes in? Inevitable, yes. Was it Bobby Lou chesting that pointblank Joe Pavelski slapper off a Scott Niedermayer turnover seven minutes in? Inevitable, yes. Surprising, no.

The surprise came in the nano-moment we realized that the “national hero” we’d downgraded to “future superstar” had — all of a sudden, pass from Iggy, where’d he come from, presto, 7:40 — scored. Then came the full-body glee in response to what was face it — inevitable, since no other player on the ice that day was expected to be the best in the world.

Lorna Jackson teaches in the Department of Writing and is the author of Cold-cocked: On Hockey.
As recent graduates of UVic's school of music, Julie and Carli Kennedy's adventures in music are just beginning. Both top music students, the identical twin sisters are pursuing a career in music as a performing duo, Carli on guitar and Julie, violin. And thanks to a scholarship given by Dr. Betty Kennedy (no relation), this dynamic duo got a boost in their studies too.

“The time commitment to study and practice is heavy, and the scholarships allowed us to focus on our musicianship without worrying about finances,” says Julie.

“We’re so grateful for the support,” says Carli. “Scholarships provide the added inspiration that spurred us on.”

As a retired UVic professor of mathematics, Betty Kennedy wanted to make a difference in students’ lives. “I feel I’ve had a good life and now I want to enhance the lives of others.”

Betty chose to create scholarships in areas that reflect her personal interests: music, law, engineering and mathematics. “Mathematics was my own discipline,” she says, “law was my husband’s, engineering was my father’s and music because I love classical music.”

Many UVic students depend on scholarships to pursue their educational dreams. Find out how your gift of a scholarship will create bright futures for deserving students. Please call us at 250.721.6003, visit our website www.uvic.ca/givingtouvic.

Or speak with the UVic student caller who contacts you.

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“I feel I’ve had a good life and now I want to enhance the lives of others.”
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