Dr. Bert McBride is hanging up his stethoscope, this time for good.

The long-serving physician has been with Student Health Services since 1973 and will retire from his position there in March. He technically took early retirement in 1997, but decided to stay on part-time in the clinic. “Most of that part-time was close to full-time,” he said with a chuckle. “I’ve enjoyed working with young people, and it’s been rewarding to help students.”

A passion for helping students achieve their broader education goals, as well as mediating their medical maladies, is what kept him on campus for 42 years. “Student Health isn’t just about helping the person’s stomach get better, or controlling their acne,” he said. “It’s also about enabling them to carry on with their training and education.”

McBride graduated from the College of Medicine in 1963, and soon moved into a family medicine practice in Outlook. He returned to Saskatoon in 1972 as a research associate in the College of Medicine before moving into Student Health in 1973.

In his time working on campus, he has seen a number of changes in terms of illnesses and the social environment. “When I started at Student Health, it was not uncommon for a doctor to see 40 or 50 or more patients a day,” he said, noting that acute infectious illnesses such as colds and coughs were much more prevalent then than they are today. “We had flu epidemics, and there weren’t big immunization programs so whenever something like that came through the community, we were run off our feet.”

McBride said that mental-health services and supports have increased in demand over the years, adding that the catalyst that started Student Health was the need for psychiatry services on campus. “I think there’s less stigma attached to things like mental illness,” he said. “People are more open about coming for help than they used to be.”

Similarly, the rise of learning disabilities, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), have changed the medical landscape. “I’ve seen capable students who got to the point that they couldn’t complete their program,” he said, describing a former patient who was about to be kicked out of his graduate program. By diagnosing him with ADHD and providing treatment options, McBride was able to help the student get back
Keen interest in grad, international students

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Tammy Marche, PhD
Research Interests:
Cognitive development; Memory development across the lifespan; Memory accuracy and memory distortion; Psychology and Law; Pain Memory; Memory and Education.

Gerry Farthing, PhD
Research Interests:
Stress, coping and resiliency in children embroiled in custody disputes; Mood and eating disorders in children and adolescents; Adolescent intimacy.

Paulette Hunter, PhD
Research Interests:
Psychological interventions to promote health and quality of life; Personhood in dementia; Quality of life factors for older adults with dementia living in long-term care.

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On track and finish his PhD. “To me, that’s a pretty significant thing, because you sort of rescue somebody’s career. It’s fulfilling to see somebody, especially somebody who’s had some health issues, be successful.” The physical environment has changed, too. When it was located in Saskatchewan Hall, Student Health looked more like a cozy apartment than a doctor’s office, complete with cushions for students to sit on and thick carpeting in almost every room. While perhaps more warm and welcoming, it was not the most hygienic, said the doctor. “We would never think of doing that now. This space (in Place Riel) is much more sterile and clinical.” McBride greatly enjoys the social aspect of meeting with patients, both to learn about their medical history and chat informally about their studies. “I have always found it interesting talking to students about their careers and what their research is.”

And his connection with patients spans multiple generations. He has some patients he saw decades ago as children, when their parents were attending university, as well as patients who delivered him. To remember them he and vice versa. “I saw them when they were six years old and now they’re 26.”

McBride also has a keen interest in the health and wellbeing of graduate students, particularly international students who he estimates make up half of his practice at Student Health.

“They bring a different set of concerns,” he said, explaining that many are not prepared for the culture shock they experience, both physically and socially, when they arrive in Canada. “They have left their home country. A lot of them have left their families behind so there’s the emotional stress that they need help with.”

Additionally, he has treated a number of conditions in international students including leprosy, malaria and tuberculosis that are not typically seen in Canadian patients. “It’s been a challenge to learn the effect of cultural changes on health.”

While challenging, McBride finds his work with international students immensely fulfilling, and he has made personal connections with the international community in Saskatoon as well. He lends his time to a program that assesses the skills of international medical graduates looking to gain licensure in family medicine in Saskatchewan, and volunteers with a community ESL program helping newcomers with their English language skills. He is looking forward to strengthening these mentoring relationships when he retires.

But even when retired from Student Health, McBride will remain on campus teaching in the College of Medicine. “A lot of what I enjoy about medicine is teaching,” he said. His first and second-year classes focus on developing professional clinical skills, such as interviewing and communicating with patients, a passion and central focus of his career for more than four decades.

Lending an empathetic ear to his patients has made all the difference in his practice, he said, and in keeping students healthy, engaged citizens.

“Students need to know that the staff at Student Health understand their needs. If anything dictates how well Student Health functions, it’s that.”

Around the Bowl

Aaron White, research scientist with VIDO-InterVac, had his appointment as the Jarislowsky Chair in Biotechnology renewed for a five-year term. The mandate of the chair is to attract students and faculty to the field of biotechnology, motivate colleagues, and promote and support efforts to develop teaching and learning opportunities in the field. Financial support comes from the Jarislowsky Trust Fund and other sources.

The Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation has presented John Gordon, professor in the Dept. of Veterinary Microbiology and co-chair of the Immunology Research Group, with its 2014 achievement award. The honour recognizes Gordon’s scientific contributions at the local, national and international levels.

Patrick Pitka has been appointed chair of the Board of Governors of St. Thomas More College for a one-year term that began Jan. 1. Pitka has been a member of the board since 2010 and works as chief legislative officer for a number of not-for-profit organizations in Saskatchewan.

The following appointments have been announced by the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic:

- Bruce Sparling to the position of interim associate dean academic in the College of Engineering until Dec. 31.
- Trevor Crowe renewed as associate dean in the College of Graduate Studies and Research until December 31, 2019.
- Ken Van Rees as head of the Department of Soil Science for a five-year term which began Feb. 1.
**University students and healthy diets have never been synonymous, but the possibility that there may be a significant segment of the student population that is food insecure has raised some flags on campus.**

One of those concerned at the possibility was Lynn Kuffner, manager of Student Health Services, particularly after she saw the results of a recent student health survey.

The survey revealed that our students weren’t hitting the mark when it comes to eating five to 10 servings of fruit and vegetables per day, explained Kuffner. “We want to know if this is choice or necessity; is it a choice or a matter of money?”

In her search for more answers, Kuffner took the survey results to the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology and met Rachel Engler-Stringer, an assistant professor with a background in food security and nutritional inequity.

“It piqued my interest,” said Engler-Stringer, who proposed a more comprehensive look at the issue. “There have been a couple studies in the U.S. that have revealed a high prevalence of food insecurity in student populations, but nothing in Canada has been done looking at an entire student body.”

In a Queen’s University study, Engler-Stringer continued, in-depth interviews were conducted with students who frequented the food bank and that study revealed “significant hidden food insecurity. People only go to food banks out of desperation and Queen’s is seen as a privileged university. We want to know what the situation is at the U of S.”

The U of S survey, which will be sent to 4,300 randomly selected students at the end of February, will examine four elements of food security: quantity; nutritional quality; access to food that maintains human dignity; and food that is culturally accepted.

“We’re hoping to use the data to help improve food security on campus,” said Engler-Stringer. “Some universities have food charters and by policy have fruit, vegetables and protein sources at reasonable prices. Marquis Hall does a good job, but lunch is still $10. I don’t know too many students who can afford that everyday.”

Another issue facing the campus, she explained, is that the city neighbourhood around the main campus is “kind of a food desert. It lacks close geographic access to a wide range of healthy foods.”

Consider a student who does not have a car and has a limited budget for monthly groceries. “That student probably goes to the closest grocery store, which isn’t that close, and buys nonperishable items to limit the number of trips,” she said. “Vegetables and fruit are more expensive than Kraft Dinner.”

And the effects of food insecurity are significant, said Kuffner. “This matters on so many levels. It is about whether or not one wants young people to be hungry. You can’t study well if you haven’t eaten, and if you haven’t studied then you aren’t doing well academically.”

Lack of nutrition is linked to various health and social problems across the lifespan, added Engler-Stringer. “Being a student struggling with this is not conducive to a good student experience. They are aspiring to fulfill important roles in society and we need to support them.”

The U of S survey is the first step, and initial results will likely be available this summer, Engler-Stringer said. Other Canadian universities, including Acadia University, Queen’s and the University of Alberta, plan to follow the U of S lead and survey their students. “We are testing the waters and will share our lessons learned with those universities.”

Kuffner said that getting a full view of the food insecurity picture will help determine if current services on campus—including a food bank, fruit and vegetable markets and cooking classes—can adequately support students who are food insecure or if more support is required.

“If the issue cannot be solved with current resources, Engler-Stringer said, “the question becomes how do we make being a student more affordable.”

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**From the Archives**

**Young and fancy free**

From the first day of classes in 1909, those who work and study at the university have been a much coveted market. Retailers, manufacturers and recruiters have all advertised in the pages of campus publications. From clothing to entertainment, from school supplies to that cherished graduation photograph, the pursuit of the customer has been continual. One advertising target has been "the dashing young man about town." Here is an ad that appeared in the Sheaf on September 13, 1966. Kim’s of England was a men’s clothing store that sought to bring the style of London (swingingest place in the world) to Saskatoon. Like many retailers, Kim’s offered a student discount.
Something quite extraordinary happened over the past week or so in the usually calm and quiet offices of university communications, which is also home to On Campus News world headquarters.

You may recall that the cover image in our last issue featured two PhD students hamming it up in front of a research poster featuring Canadian actor, director, screenwriter, musician and businessman Ryan Gosling. The poster detailed Sarah Sangster and Linzi Williamson’s look at how Internet memes influence feminist beliefs and attitudes. And their meme of choice for their study was Gosling’s “Hey girl” one.

Some of our best story ideas for OCN are found on bulletin boards around campus, and this was no exception. When the poster was spotted in a hallway, writer Lesley Porter sought out and interviewed Sangster and Williamson about their work. The result was a great story about young and creative researchers, plus a photo with Gosling’s mug front and centre for Page 1 of the paper. Who wouldn’t want to see Gosling somehow connected to the University of Saskatchewan?

The issue came out Jan. 23 and communications staff went to work pitching the story to select media outlets. It was posted on our news site, on the U of S Facebook page with the headline “Going gaga for Gosling,” and tweeted to world. By Jan. 30, the story was everywhere. It had been picked up by, among others, the StarPhoenix, CBC, National Post, Vancouver Sun, Toronto Sun, The Independent, Huffington Post, Hollywood Reporter and assorted website around the world, some in languages nobody even recognized. Our two PhD students did a lot of media interviews in the days following the release.

(We always thought we got our best pick up on stories that include photos of lambs in leg casts or a bunch of beagles named for Peanuts characters, but apparently the key is to use the image of a heartthrob. Who knew?)

As I was scanning the various versions of the Gosling meme story, I came across a piece in the Jan. 28 issue of The Washington Post. That story, written by Caitlin Dewey, stated that Sangster and Williamson’s meme research “was first reported by Canada’s CBC.” Wrong.

How quickly people have forgotten that the whole thing started right here, in On Campus News. Frankly, it’s quite a treat to scoop the world with a biswically in-house publication.

And no, I did not write a letter to the editor of The Washington Post correcting the misinformation in their story. It’s really not that important. What is important is that great news from the University of Saskatchewan is spreading around the world.

Ed

Unverricht conducts for silent movie showing

Brian Unverricht is preparing to be the ringmaster for a three-ring circus, but the performance won’t include lions and trapeze artists.

Unverricht, a sessional lecturer in the University of Saskatchewan’s Department of Music, will be conducting the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra as well as pianist Rick Friend of Los Angeles during the showing of the silent movie Safety Last! Feb. 7 at the Roxy Theatre. It is part of the symphony’s Silence is Golden series.

“It’s a much different kind of conducting,” said Unverricht, motioning with his hand. “Everything is tied to the action on the screen. Most musicians and conductors like to play with the music and be expressive. This has to be very precise. Tick. Tick. Tick.”

A retired high school band teacher, Unverricht plays trombone with the symphony orchestra and has conducted the orchestra for several of its Silence is Golden performances over the past few years.

The trick to conducting an orchestra during a silent movie is to know the movie inside and out, he explained. In preparing for the Feb. 7 performances, Unverricht has watched the 75-minute movie more than a dozen times. And he’s watched certain scenes over and over again.
Social science at the source

DEE HOBSBAWN-SMITH

Metaphor and science may seem like odd bedfellows, but to the first-ever social scientists in residence at the Canadian Light Source (CLS), the two are completely compatible.

Psychologist Ulrich Teucher and sociologist Jennifer Poudrier, both associate professors in the College of Arts and Science, moved their offices to the CLS at the start of January to begin residencies that will last until June.

As social scientists, their interest in the CLS is as a unique society of researchers brought together from around the world. For six months, Poudrier and Teucher will work closely with scientists to gain insight into their relationships to one another and to their work. When they have finished, they will explore ways of sharing their results with the CLS researchers and the greater social science community.

A pair of $7,500 research grants from the U of S Office of the Vice-President Research will aid Teucher and Poudrier in their projects, while the college’s Division of Social Sciences will cover the cost of releasing them from teaching duties until the summer.

> Ulrich Teucher

Teucher, whose father was a German physicist, grew up at the nexus of science and art. As a child, he heard about elementary particles and other aspects of his father’s work at the University of Chicago and at DESY, Germany’s first synchrotron in Hamburg.

“Dad read literature, German and English, Shake-speare and Goethe.” Teucher said. “I grew up in an interdisciplinary household, with sciences and arts as part of the talk.” His father died young, of cancer, with “no language to adequately communicate about his illness.” Years later, Teucher’s doctoral studies would combine his pediatric cancer-ward nursing experience with literature and psychology in a dissertation on cancer metaphors. “This is the language we use when we talk about cancer, the language my father was missing,” he said.

Working with the light source’s scientists and guests from around the world will help Teucher address many questions about scientists working together in large research facilities.

“One metaphor that interests me, especially in the context of the Canadian Light Source, is around laboratory light. I’ll be shining a light on what is happening in the lab.” Jennifer Poudrier

“It is not so easy for usually competitive scientists to work in groups. As collaborators, guest scientists, host scientists, technicians and directors, all must agree on what and how things are to be done. It is an interesting challenge: how does that work, how do people get organized? How do outsiders collaborate with insiders? How do insiders deal with outsiders? I would expect that host scientists would have different answers than a guest researcher from the College of Medicine or another discipline.”

The CLS residency resonates for Teucher on a personal level as well. “It adds a nice circle to my life,” he said. “It will be interesting for me to look at my dad from that perspective, that of his work. I would like to do surveys, ask questions. Speak with the scientists. Find how they feel about work, about collaboration. I’d like to interview them about what they like about the science they are doing.

“Such huge machines and the smallest particles,” he said in amazement. “Some scientists meet these experiments with awe.”

> Jennifer Poudrier

Jennifer Poudrier is a sociologist trained at the PhD level in communication information technology: the way information and knowledge are shaped by or shape society. Her interest is in looking at the ways society and science interact—how scientific facts are social enterprises. Through her research, she also hopes to “humanize” the hard science work undertaken at the CLS.

“The work of a sociologist is to show how humans and society work at a problem,” she said, “and to illustrate that (scientists are) people doing scientific work and that it is a social process. Despite common conceptions, scientific work is really messy, not just scientists in tidy labs and lab coats. A lab is full of messy social elements, like people, politics, hierarchy—everything that is social.”

Poudrier is also interested in looking at the relationship between humans and machines. “Humans build machines, but when they are working with it, the machine shapes their interactions and behaviors. When the beamline (at CLS) goes up, it runs for 24 hours and people have to stay overnight, so the maintenance of the machine requires humans to change their activities. (You may) think of it as a pristine white coat sci-di place, but it looks like a manufacturing garage, with tinfoil covering machines, and things under construction. It’s clear that human activity takes place there.”

Like Teucher, Poudrier is fascinated by the metaphors people use for science. “One metaphor that interests me, especially in the context of the Canadian Light Source, is around laboratory light. I’ll be shining a light on what is happening in the lab, which uses light to look at minute and specific specimens. We’re all learning to see.”

dee Hobbsbawn-Smith is a Saskatoon-based freelance writer.

The Gail Appel Lectureship in Literature and Fine Arts

Experimental throat singer and 2014 Polaris Prize winner

Tanya Tagaq

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

PROTEST WITHOUT WORDS: ART AS ACTIVISM

Leatrice & coffee 1:30 p.m. Neatby-Timlin Theatre (Arts 241)

THE LONG ROAD THAT KEEPS GOING: MY STORY

Conversation with Linda Christensen, host of Saskatchewan Morning on CBC Radio One 7:30 a.m. Convocation Hall (Peter MacKinnon Building)

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Baking the ultimate test for wheat

“Gluten is what makes wheat wonderful,” said Connie Briggs, research officer and co-manager of the Grains Innovation Laboratory located just across Preston Avenue from the main University of Saskatchewan campus.

Briggs continues on the subject of wheat and the importance of gluten as she shows a visitor around the labs. She batters at the bad rap gluten has received in the media. Health Canada estimates about one in 100 Canadians with celiac disease cannot digest gluten and some American sources estimate about six per cent of people live with non-celiac gluten sensitivities. But for the majority of people, Briggs said gluten is perfectly fine. “I might be a little passionate on the gluten thing.”

Gluten is found in wheat, barley, rye and related grains. It allows dough to expand by trapping gases produced by yeast, producing bread of high volume with soft, springy texture, she explained, and it is just one of the things Briggs and her colleagues test for the University’s wheat and durum breeders.

In the lab, wheat samples are ground to meal and milled to flour to produce data on everything from mineral and protein content to final product performance. New wheat varieties must perform as well or better than registered varieties in a wide range of tests before they can be considered for registration with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

The “breeder lines” produced by U of S scientists and tested in the lab number in the thousands. Briggs said in the winter of 2013-2014, the lab evaluated more than 13,000 samples from three classes of wheat.

On one lab bench, a steel wheel turns behind a clear plastic shield, its single notch picking up one grain of wheat at a time, feeding it to a piston that crushes it. A technician carefully notes the numbers that appear on a display, a measurement of the hardness of the grain.

“Hardness is an important factor for milling and baking,” Briggs explained. “If the wheat grain is too hard, some of the starch granules can rupture during milling. Flour with a lot of damaged starch tends to absorb more water. In bread dough mixing and baking, the damaged starch cannot retain the water, and the dough becomes sticky and the bread gummy—not good when it comes to baking quality.”

Flour is also tested for gluten. Technician Vinh Tang works with small, sticky balls of gluten produced by washing starch out of flour dough, testing them for elasticity and strength. Not all gluten is the same, depending on its characteristics, it may be better suited for use in making bread, cookies and cakes, or flat-breads, pastas and noodles.

At another lab station, a machine is used to evaluate dough-mixing characteristics. Here, Briggs compares graph information about various wheat varieties looking for characteristics that indicate mixing strength ideal for bread baking.

Canadian red spring wheat yields a near-perfect curve on the graph, showing good strength and mixing tolerance, not surprising, as this type of wheat is well known around the world for its quality. An extra strong variety of wheat is true to its name; the curve does not fall off at all. “Its gluten is way too strong,” Briggs said. “The bread won’t be able to rise properly and loaf volume will be low.”

Briggs herself runs the baking test section, which includes lab-scale dough-mixing equipment that produces one small piece of dough at a time for baking. The final test loaf is about half the size of a store-bought version.

“When mixing the dough, I can tell when the dough is at peak development because it snaps like gum; you can hear it.”

Every step in the testing must be consistent, since handling the dough changes its characteristics. Briggs kneads each ball of dough seven times before putting it into the fermentation cabinet, a warm compartment beside the oven where the dough is allowed to proof or ferment. After a short time, the dough is formed into a loaf using special small-size equipment, proofed again and finally baked.

Depending on the number of samples being tested, the process can keep Briggs on her feet working and recording data non-stop from 9 am to 5 pm, an ordeal that is not kind to her feet. Baking day is, however, popular with her colleagues. “At the end of a bake day, I slice up a bunch of bread and wheel it out into the hall with some margarine, peanut butter and jam. People come from all over the building for their afternoon snack.”

Aboriginal student achievements awarded

The Aboriginal Students’ Centre hosted a student awards ceremony Feb. 5 to acknowledge the accomplishments of Aboriginal students across campus during Aboriginal Achievement Week. Outstanding students from each college were recognized for having excelled at their studies, conducted unique and compelling research, showed leadership or made significant contributions to the community.

Below are the student award winners and the category of the recognition.

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND BIORESOURCES: Alfred Gamble, community Braden Myhre, academic achievement

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE: Avery Michael, academic achievement Dakota Swiftwolfe, academic achievement Lisa Langar, academic achievement

ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM: Lisa Langar, Victory Harper, Monica Iron, Michaela Shannon, Erola Frank, Raylene Keshane, Milo Cameron, Naomi Muskogee and Lisa Borstmaier, leadership

EDWARDS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS: Martha Janvier, academic achievement Nora Joyza, academic achievement

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION: Ashley Ironstand, academic achievement and leadership Samson Lamontagne, leadership

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING: Connor Theoret, academic achievement Jordan Gonga, community recognition

COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH: Blake Charles, community recognition

COLLEGE OF LAW: Lorna Popo, community Loretta Markowski, leadership

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE: Karina Brabant, leadership JoPua Batch, leadership

COLLEGE OF NURSING: Danielle Stilborn, academic achievement Ronald Johnson, Denise Huet, Erica Martin and Tsnenille Esperance, research

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND NUTRITION: Dallas Ogders, academic achievement Kirsten Sweet, academic achievement
Send in the drones

Tiny helicopters flying over crop fields may become a common sight thanks to a research partnership between the U of S and a Saskatoon-based company.

Drones outfitted with a specialized camera will enable agriculture producers to get real-time information on the health of their crops and improve management practices, explained Gordon Gray, professor in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

Gray has a background in photosynthetic fluorescence imaging of plants, and all it took was a phone call from Draganfly Innovations Inc. last year for the idea of using drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for imaging to take flight.

Draganfly specializes in drone technology and turned to Gray for his expertise in plant imaging. “They said they wanted to meet and explore the potential of imaging crops with these drone helicopters,” he said.

The drones, which are small enough to fit in a suitcase when unassembled, were outfitted with a camera “capable of capturing multispectral images,” Gray explained. “Essentially, it measures the reflection of leaves and vegetation in the fields it flies over.”

All plants absorb and reflect light, Gray continued, and by capturing the reflection data, a value called the normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) can be calculated. The images are then analyzed with software that assigns colors to the values, making the NDVI an effective indicator of plant health.

“If the image is bright green, then the plants are healthy. As the intensity of the color decreases, then the plants are not growing as well,” said Gray, who used an NSERC Engage Grant to pursue the research partnership.

And while the use of this type of imaging is not novel, using drones to gather it is.

“Typically this has been done in the past using satellites or aircrafts,” he said, but those platforms are far too expensive for the average producer. The drones, in comparison, are far less expensive and can also be used at low altitudes—less than 400 feet above ground—which allows them to capture images below cloud cover.

Comparing to the old ways of collecting this information, compared to the old ways of collecting this information.

See Crop, Page 8

Up, up and away

The Draganfly-built drones have been used for numerous tasks, most notably, in 2013, to find a missing person in the nearby wilderness of Saskatoon following a car accident. The drone used heat-sensing technology to locate the man. It was one of the first times a drone was used to save a life.

As a scholar of Aboriginal languages, Spreng hopes to be able to contribute to revitalization efforts.

“I’m interested in working on under-studied or lesser-studied languages. We know so little about them and many are going to be extinct soon unless more research and of course money is put into language preservation and revitalization efforts.”

“Language is a unique property of the human mind,” she said. “Communication exists with everything, but language with a grammar and the ability to create an infinite number of sentences is unique to us.”

Spreng taught at the University of Toronto while working on her PhD, which she completed in 2012. She joined the U of S on a term position in 2013 to continue her research and teach. She said while the language program is small, it is vibrant and growing.

“With the students here, the students are so engaged. I’m very proud of the students here. They make my life a lot of fun.”

As a scholar of Aboriginal languages, Spreng hopes to be able to contribute to fostering education on the subject, and thus further a priority area for the U of S.

“I’m interested in working on under-studied or lesser-studied languages. We know so little about them and many are going to be extinct soon unless more research and of course money is put into language preservation and revitalization efforts.”

“I’d love to create a course purely on introducing Aboriginal languages. Definitely, it’s something we want to expand toward.”

Spreng was growing unsure of her choice of linguistics as a major at the University of Toronto when she took a course on a northern Canadian Aboriginal language that reignited her passion for the field.

“Iuktitut was so different from what I thought I knew about language up to then,” she said. “I saw how languages can do things differently, in a way I had not noticed before, and that’s been fascinating me ever since.”

An assistant professor in the Department of Religion and Culture, Spreng explained that human creativity has yielded numerous ways of expressing ideas.

“Language is a unique property of the human mind,” she said. “Communication exists with everything, but language with a grammar and the ability to create an infinite number of sentences is unique to us.”

Spreng said that while an English speaker expresses ideas with sentences made of words, a speaker of Inuktitut builds long words instead.

“In English, . . . our complex words are not terribly complex, consisting of only a couple of elements,” she said, “In Inuktitut, a word can have 25 or more elements.”

“Prisons are not treatment centres: the human rights travesties of criminalizing those with mental health issues

Preventing and Addressing Wrongful Conviction

Guest Speaker: Bettina Spreng

Monday, Feb. 9, 2015
12pm (noon)
RM 150, MTL Lecture Theatre
15 Campus Drive
College of Law
University of Saskatchewan

Guest Speaker: David Milgaard

Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2015
1:00 pm
RM 150, MTL Lecture Theatre
15 Campus Drive
College of Law
University of Saskatchewan
From the heart
Poets’ letters include tirades, humour, longing

COLLEEN MACPHERSON


Thus begin just a handful of the often touching, sometimes poignant and occasionally surprising letters brought together in a new book entitled Where the Nights are Twice as Long: Love Letters of Canadian Poets. For co-editor Jeanette Lynes, English professor and co-ordinator of the MFA in writing program at the U of S, the new book proves that while some things change—using email to send letters rather than paper—the joy, and sometimes pain, of love is constant.

The book, published by Goose Lane Editions, includes romantic correspondence by over 100 poets, some who lived as far back as the 19th century, some just beginning their careers today and those in between. It was the brainchild of her co-editor David Eso from the University of Calgary, said Lynes. He approached her about the idea three years ago after a potential publisher “told him he should team up with—this is the part I don’t like—someone more established; someone older.”"The part I don’t like—someone who should team up with—this is the part I don’t like—someone older.”

What he should have said was someone more established; Lynes’ seventh book of poetry will be out in the fall, she is looking for a publisher for her second novel, and there is yet another manuscript—“my other novel”—sitting on a side table in her office.

Goose Lane asked the editors to include a broad historical span of poets, she explained. “For those no longer alive, Lynes and Eso drew up a list of people they could potentially include and then we went looking for their papers. We spent a lot of time digging through boxes in various archives.” For contemporary poets, “as often as not they’re people we already knew in our networks. It turned out well being a two-person project because David has a different network than I do.”

What Lynes and Eso were looking for was personal correspondence between poets and their lovers and spouses. “The publisher also thought it was important that the book reflect a range of relationships, male with male, females with female, transgendered poets, male with female, outside of the white paradigm. Someone even had a love poem to a burrito, but we didn’t use it.”

With permissions in hand, Lynes and Eso organized the letters in the 417-page book by the age of the poet at the time of writing: teens and 20s; 30s; 40s; 50s; and finally 60s, 70s and beyond. And to be true to the authors’ intent, letters with doodles include the doodles, work by a visual poet is accurately reproduced, and email and text correspondence appears as it would on a screen. Although Lynes had difficulty naming her favorite letter in the book, she pointed out several that touched her in different ways. The most moving, she said, were letters written by Louis Riel to his wife from prison in Regina in late 1885 as he awaited execution. Lynes described one in particular as “a heartbreaker.”

Among the strong contingent of Saskatchewan poets featured in the book are two writers, the youngest to be included, who met in a class at the U of S. One is in the MFA in writing program; the other is a recent visual arts graduate. “It’s a kind of U of S romance,” said Lynes.

And although the book is a collection of love letters, “there are a lot of tirades and tantrums, and a lot of blue language, F bombs. There’s a lot of remorse, a lot of acrimonious bitterness but also a lot of hilarity—the whole gamut. Robert Service, his letters are really melodramatic.”

This all points to one universal truth: relationships are complex.

“In some cases, it was almost like the poet was using writing to make sense of their choices, to address some guilt. One of the lessons I learned is that for these poets—and I don’t think they’re different than anyone else in this—even after a relationship had ended, it’s not like they could turn off a switch and not love that person.”

The book also documents the history of letter writing, said Lynes.

“I think it meant something different to write a letter with a pen, put it in an envelope, seal it and walk to mail it, and maybe the person would get it in two weeks. If it’s transatlantic, they might not get it for three months. Email has a much different rhythm. And the young writers from Saskatoon, theirs are text messages so that’s the other end of the spectrum. “But what really struck me is the geographical space of Canada, that one person in the relationship is in Victoria and the other person is longing, longing over 3,000 miles for another person in Montreal. That aching longing that comes with huge geographical distances seemed like a very Canadian, romantic discourse to me. In a way, all of this discourse is mediated by the physical conditions of this country, which is still not easy to traverse. Even with email, if the people are far apart, there is still plenty of longing.”

Where the Nights are Twice as Long: Love Letters of Canadian Poets will be launched March 12 at McNally-Robinson Booksellers.

Crop management tool

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Gray said the remote-controlled helicopters are, other than some Transport Canada paper work, much more accessible for producers who want this data.

“The images from above are quite striking, and we know from our field tests we performed this past summer with colleagues in the Department of Plant Sciences and Crop Development Centre that they can collect meaningful data.”

To use the technology, producers would purchase a drone equipped with an imaging camera, map its path using GPS co-ordinates and send it on its way. The resulting images would provide detailed information on plant health, growth and yield.

“We know the images can be used to differentiate crops. When we tested them on representative cereal, pulse and horticultural crops we could detect differences in irrigation, fertilization and disease,” said Gray.

This type of imaging is an enabling technology for a crop management concept known as precision agriculture, he continued. It allows producers to determine if, when and where inputs are required.

“The ability to better target inputs has the potential to enhance both the economic efficiency and environmental sustainability of agricultural production, ultimately improving food security.”
Inuit artists’ creativity a lesson for Edwards students

JESSICA ELFAR

You would not typically associate a business school with fine art, but Sam Schwartz saw a fitting connection.

Schwartz, a 1950 graduate of the College of Commerce (now the Edwards School of Business), has made the largest Inuit and First Nations sculpture donation in the university’s history in the hope the work will inspire students in the school. The donation was made in memory of his wife and avid art collector, Margaret Lois Schwartz.

The collection of nearly 100 pieces, which includes Inuit sculptures, Alaskan ivory carvings and north-west coast figures made from argillite, a black slate stone indigenous to Haida Gwaii, BC, had been carefully acquired by the couple over a span of nearly 40 years, Schwartz explained. Margaret was the driving force behind the collection and as a nurse and artist with a great interest in human and animal anatomy, he said she was impressed with the beauty and realism of Inuit art, and how faithfully the artists would execute their carvings.

While acquiring the collection, one important characteristic to the couple was that most pieces were handcrafted no later than the mid-1900s, Schwartz said.

“In doing so, we recognized we were looking at carvings that must have required extraordinary creativity and dedication by the artist. At a time there was no electric power in the North during the time they were created, people had to remain indoors, then lighting by lamps, likely fueled with whale oil. In that dim light, they would take a block of stone and study it, and suddenly see in that block the figure that had been trapped inside. It might be an animal or a shaman—the mission of the artist was to free it from its surroundings.”

Schwartz saw this process of discovering a piece’s potential as the most intriguing aspect of the artists’ work, and he wants students in the Edwards School of Business who view the art to be encouraged in their own lives.

“I recognized that these were pieces by people working under the considerable disadvantage and hardship. They demonstrated creativity and dedication.”

A native of Moose Jaw, Schwartz originally enrolled in the College of Arts and Science to pursue a BA in chemistry. Once completed, he changed direction to realize his true passion—economics—and switched to commerce where he completed his second undergraduate degree.

Since then, he has had a successful career with the energy company Conoco in a variety of roles, including leading internationally across Europe, the Middle East and Asia. In 1988, he concluded his career as executive vice president of Conoco and as a senior vice president of DuPont. Now, Schwartz said, it is time to give back.

Daphne Taras, dean of the Edwards School of Business, is thrilled that her students will benefit from the donation, she said.

Schwartz said the placement fits perfectly with his vision and would rival this donation but the artworks complement the university’s collection nicely.

“This donation develops our Inuit and First Nations art collections considerably, in both breadth and scope. It contributes important examples of north-west coast art previously not represented in the university collection.” He added the argillite and ivory pieces are particularly interesting as they are unique examples of work.

“Because of the distinctive nature and scope of the collection, Archer worked with independent curator Norman Zepp in the acquisition process. Zepp and Archer visited Schwartz in Naples, Florida to assess and catalogue the collection and were both immediately intrigued. Zepp, who was previously the curator of Inuit art at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, noted it is “a first-rate collection with very fine examples of sculptures by best-known Inuit artists, and some of their finest examples.”

The majority of the artworks are on display and there are plans to rotate in other pieces at regular intervals. Schwartz’ personal favourite is a carving of a shaman. The piece, he said, is fitting for those looking to achieve more as it represents maximum effort. “Seek the counsel of this piece. If you want stimulation to do more … you just look up at him!”

The deadline for submitting your nomination to stand for council is Friday, February 13, 2015.

Jessica Elfar is development communications specialist in Advancement and Community Engagement.
**Conferences**

- Ignite on Feb 13 2015

**Educa...
Interpretation of score varies in live performance

Referring to the movie’s score, Unverricht explained, “when I see here, ‘Harold uses the man’s bald head as a mirror,’” I know exactly what it’s talking about and I have 16 seconds. When that shows up on the screen, we start.”

Friend is not only the guest pianist but also the composer of the musical score that the orchestra will be performing. He and Unverricht have worked together a number of times before.

“It’s a real give-and-take,” said Unverricht, explaining that sometimes he will defer to Friend and his interpretation of the music while Friend will often prefer Unverricht’s interpretation.

The black-and-white movie from the 1920s is classic slapstick comedy. It is a boy-meets-girl story that follows the boy as he moves to New York City to make good with the promise of returning for his girl.

“If anything can go wrong, it will go wrong. And safety is the last concern but they all live happily ever after,” said Unverricht, with a hearty laugh.

The members of the orchestra performing during Safety Last! will be sitting between the first row of seats at the Roxy and the stage. It is a bit “squishy,” said Unverricht, and a seat in the first row is prime for some people who have become regulars of the Silence is Golden series.

Show times on Feb. 7 are 1 pm and 7:30 pm. Tickets for the matinee are $32 each and for the evening are $40 each. They can be purchased through the symphony’s website or at the Roxy Theatre.

Lana Haight is a Saskatoon-based freelance writer.

Faculty get opportunity to share their passion

We want to expose them to what real passion about a subject and real expertise can lead to.

Gordon DesBrisay

From Page 4

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From Page 3

thing sits in the revised curric-ulum also took some time.

“It’s categorized as a general elective and will apply to any degree but it doesn’t meet the particular criteria for any degree so it’s something of a hybrid.”

For faculty members who have signed on to teach a unit, DesBrisay described it as a rare opportunity: “You get to talk about the stuff that really gets your heart thumping, and then you get to walk away because you have a day job. Think of this as a prestigious week of volunteerism and an energizing labour of love.”

There was no shortage of people willing to get involved, he said, calling the group “an all-star dream team.” He stressed, though, that the course “is definitely not an incoherent mishmash under the guise of interdisciplinarity. We want this to be a showcase course for the college. We want to help students think about multiple academic disciplines in interesting ways that inform their own choices.”

DesBrisay said he would ultimately like to see The Art and Science of Almost Everything initiative expand to include a capstone seminar course in the final year of students’ programs, a revisiting of broad perspectives on a single topic but with “senior students from different corners of the college bringing their disciplinary expertise to bear on a designated problem facing the world. It’s on the agenda for future discussions.”

“For DesBrisay, the course’s success will come in helping students find their passion but also in showing them what are likely unfamiliar levels of intellec-tual energy.

“We want to expose them to what real passion about a subject and real expertise can lead to. Students may never have seen that before; they don’t necessarily know what it means to deeply know something. Or what an exciting prospect that is.”

Have your office recognized for its efforts and leadership in sustainability!

Launched fall 2014, Work Green is a network of campus workplaces committed to improving sustainability.

To get started visit: sustainability.usask.ca
99-year-old kiss

Alumnus and university senator Joe Wickenhauser is committed to increasing knowledge about the little-known history of Saskatchewan's LGBT communities. One recent project was Greystone Secrets, a walking tour he designed and led to help introduce and commemorate the history of sexual and gender minorities on campus. Wickenhauser was particularly inspired by a remarkable photo album belonging to Annie (Nan) McKay (BA ’15) at the University Archives and Special Collections. The album documents the lives of Nan and other female students living in university residence in 1913 and 1914 and all quite at ease in expressing and recording affection towards each other. At the conclusion of the Greystone Secrets tour, Wickenhauser invited participants to recreate, in costume and at the original residence site, what he called the “99-year-old kiss,” a photo of McKay and another woman named Hope embracing and kissing.

The University Archives and Special Collections subsequently commissioned artist Cathryn Miller to produce a book that would commemorate the walking tour and the documentation around it. Again looking to the McKay album for inspiration, Miller produced a cased album. It includes black and white photos from the tours, several as pop-ups or “sliders” to suggest animation, as well as envelopes holding posters, handouts, buttons and CDs preserving media coverage and audio recordings of the guest speakers.

More information about the tours, McKay and the Greystone Secrets album is available through the artist’s blog at byopiapress.wordpress.com. Use the search term greystone secrets.

From Annie McKay’s photo album.