

Mayor Lisa Helps has the hardest job in Victoria

Helps has inherited a bridge debacle, thorny amalgamation issues, and leadership of a city caught between the past and the future.

She also has student issues on her mind.

A *Nexus* exclusive interview.

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Camosun gets trades funding boost: 3



Interurban students create drop-in basketball night: 4



Spoken word fest returns: 8

NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

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OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "There are good bronies and there are bad bronies."

COVER IMAGES:
Lisa Helps: Jill Westby/*Nexus*
Camosun trades funding: Jill Westby/*Nexus*
Interurban basketball: Jill Westby/*Nexus*
Spoken word: provided

editor's letter

Change is in the air

Even those with only a passing interest in municipal politics (hey, wake up!) must admit that Victoria's new mayor certainly seems to signal a shift in direction for Victoria. So we thought we'd catch Lisa Helps while she's still fresh-faced and wide-eyed in her term to ask her some questions.

Really, it's what young student reporters should be doing: asking questions of people in positions of power about issues that matter to those currently going to institutes of higher education. So that's what contributing writer Sera Down did with Victoria's new mayor in this issue; head over to page 6 to read the story.

And while I'm bursting with pride over that piece, it doesn't end there: contributing writer Sarah Tayler examines Camosun College's recent trades funding boost, and the differing opinions from student groups about issues surrounding it, on page 3. Over on page 4 we've got a look at how some students at Interurban took matters into their own hands to get a drop-in basketball night started. And our arts section (pages 8–10) is full of exciting stuff, as always.

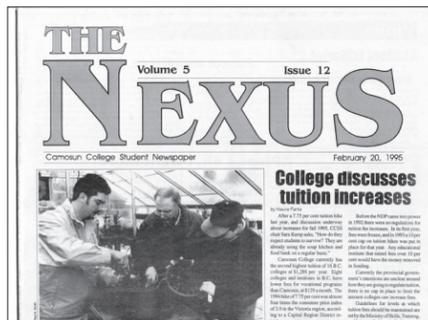
Gotta give a shout-out to our columnists here, too. It's another issue jam-packed with interesting pieces, so dive in to that feature, check out everything else, and, as always, make your voice heard by joining the conversation on our Facebook and Twitter pages, or at nexusnewspaper.com. Letters to the editor are always welcome at the email below, as well.

Until next time, keep asking questions and enjoy the ride as Victoria gets comfortable with its new leader at the helm. Time will tell if it's a good fit or not, and we'll be here to report on it.

Greg Pratt, managing editor
editor@nexusnewspaper.com

flashback

20 years ago in *Nexus*



Still with the *Family Circus*?: We mentioned a while ago how one of our columnists from 20 years ago had spent some time trashing the comic *Family Circus*; the hate showed up again in a subsequent issue, and, amazingly, in a letter to the editor in our February 20, 1995 issue. After rallying against our *Shit Happens* columnist Brett Gossman for hundreds of words, letter-writer Gord Aro concludes with "As for Bil Keane and *Family Circus*, each to their own." I suspect we haven't heard the last of either side in this intense battle.

I was right: So, moving on down the page, we find the latest installment of *Shit Happens*, where Gossman goes on another rant talking

about, yup, how much he hates *Family Circus* and its creator, Bil Keane. Gossman, you out there? Care to get in touch with us and let us know if the years have mellowed out your anger towards this comic?

Negated nipples: I feel like not a week goes by where I don't wonder why exactly I have nipples. I read about why men have nipples once, then forgot what I read, and constantly forget to look it up again. So, this issue's *Trivia* column, titled "Why do men have nipples?" was very interesting to me. Why are they there? Among other reasons, they make up an erogenous zone to encourage hugging, says writer Lisha Gunn. Fine. I still think they look weird.

open space

The ignorance of algorithms

Instead of the two-inch screws I was searching for, I had a two-inch chocolate coated in marzipan. Way better.

KEAGAN HAWTHORNE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Once upon a time there were three princes who set out from their kingdom of Serendip for a bit of a lark. They went over land and over sea, met some fine folks, and through a happy accident that none of them were expecting, they all came back home fabulously wealthy.

Come to think of it, a lot of the best stories end up being the ones where we set out not knowing where we're going or how, exactly, to get there. What would *The Hobbit* have been like if Bilbo and Gandalf had GPS smartphones to get them through the mountains?

I was thinking of those three princes the other day while wandering around downtown. Their adventure gave us the English word *serendipity*, and it was just that, "a happy accident," when I came across a chocolate store on Fort Street I had never seen before. Instead of the two-inch screws I was searching for, I had a two-inch chocolate coated in marzipan. Way better.

Despite that admittedly banal example, serendipity, or "discovering something incredible that you didn't even know you were looking for," as it's defined, is found in more than just stories. One estimate is that nearly 50 percent of scientific discoveries come about through some form of chance, everything from microwave cooking to antibiotics... and that even includes LSD.

The problem is that we seem to crave lives in which the discomfort and uncertainty of surprise have been removed.

Something on your mind? Send *Open Space* submissions (up to 400 words) to editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!

One of the worst culprits is our shopping habits.

It feels like such an effort to wander through a bookstore, or stroll about the downtown shops, when one-click shopping gets us exactly what we want without even having to leave the house. Does anyone even go and just hang out at the mall anymore?

The thing is, what we think we want and what we actually want are sometimes really different things. And without an element of randomness or chance, we might never have the opportunity to discover the difference.

We seem to distrust our ability to find things on our own. We rely on Netflix's algorithms to suggest our viewing schedule, Songza and Spotify to select our music.

"Recommended for you," they cheerfully suggest. Recommended based on what? The same-old action-flick rut I seem to be stuck in?

The problem with algorithms is that they can't provide us with anything truly spontaneous.

There's a lot to be said for the insights that come out of big data, and perhaps if we were all average citizens, those insights would be valid. But no matter how good their algorithms, Amazon will never be able to land me in a chocolate store when I was looking for hardware. Calculated and spontaneous can just never be the same.

In the 1960s, John Lennon was singing "Give Peace a Chance." If he were around today, he might be chanting "Give *chance* a chance."

Here's for a little bit of spontaneity, a little bit of chance, and a bit of time for serendipity to thrive.

SPEAK UP

What are your thoughts on Victoria's new mayor, Lisa Helps?

BY SARAH TAYLER



JORDAN SANDWITH

"I was just as surprised as she was when she won the election."



DAVID MORRISON

"She's very reliable, and she has a good platform to help Victoria. It might be relieving to have her in charge."



ABIGAIL BROADRIBB

"That is who I voted for. I'm pretty excited. I think it will be good."



STEWART MURRAY

"She made a big splash with not swearing her oath to the Queen. I think her open approach to the bridge project is going to win her a lot of favourites."



AMY LEE-RADIGAN

"I actually quite like her. I spent part of my reading break looking at her master's thesis for history."



EMILY CRADDOCK

"I saw a sign during the election where someone said 'Lisa doesn't help'; I thought that was funny. That's all I can think about when I think about her."

funding

Camosun receives provincial trades-equipment money

SARAH TAYLER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The BC government is funding three postsecondary institutions in the amount of \$939,000 for trades programs equipment, including \$400,000 for Camosun College, as part of the BC Skills for Jobs Blueprint initiative.

Camosun's injection of funding will be put into devices such as virtual welding machines, a refrigeration trailer, laptops, spot-welding machines, Lab Volt electronic stations, and gas-fired heating trainers, as well as a new building at Interurban Campus.

"Right now in BC, we're at the lowest institutional funding from the government that we've ever seen, so it's always encouraging to see money going into programs at Camosun," says Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) external executive Rachael Grant.

Minister of Advanced Education Andrew Wilkinson expects to see one million job openings by 2022, 78 percent of which will require

postsecondary education, and 44 percent of which will be in skilled trades and technical training.

"The Skills for Jobs Blueprint outlines a plan to align funding and programs to a data-driven system where training dollars and programs target these in-demand occupations," says Wilkinson. "In-demand occupations support sectors that are critical to BC's economy, including forestry, mining, and oil and gas."

Eric Sehn, dean of Technology and Trades at Camosun College, says that the blueprint prepares students to be "effective in their jobs, right from the outset."

"We want to ensure that we are aligning really well with the job opportunities for learners, as well," says Sehn. "So we keep an eye on the labour market demand data that comes from the province and try to ensure that when they're saying they have a waitlist and they have high-demand areas, like the Jobs Blueprint lays out, that we're aligned with those priorities."

Zach Crispin, chairperson of the BC chapter of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS-BC), is concerned about the discrepancy between how much has been cut from postsecondary education and how little is being put into the system.

"Over the last year we have had a \$45 million cut to operating grants for postsecondary education and about a \$30 million cut to Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language," says Crispin. "In the context of the province cutting tens of millions of dollars to postsecondary education, it's difficult to be enthusiastic about a few hundred thousand dollars going into equipment."

The CCSS also harbours some concerns about the funding, according to Grant, who says there's a heavy priority on trades programs specifically targeted towards supporting the liquid natural gas industry.

"It is alarming to see that a very specific area is getting funneled so much funding, where other areas are very much neglected," says Grant.

Meanwhile, Wilkinson adds that the government provides free online textbooks to students, as well as \$223 million in student loans, which aids approximately 70,000 students with the cost of education. He says that every year the government "invests approximately \$1.9 billion, or an average of \$5 million a day, to support public post-secondary education in BC."

Sehn says he's happy with the ministry's support. The applied nature of trades and technologies requires cutting-edge technology to



JILL WESTBY/NEXUS

Camosun College dean of Technology and Trades Eric Sehn.

support the curriculum, he says, and the lack of available classroom space is also an issue for trades programs. A portion of the funds are being put towards construction of a new building on Interurban campus.

"Some of our trades programs are learning in mobile classrooms that we built many years ago, and they are looking pretty tired," says Sehn. "The \$400,000 is great, but the only trick with the dollars is that they are fiscal year-end sensitive, which means we have to make sure to acquire our equipment before the end of March."

The CFS is concerned by shortening terms at the expense of safety-training skills, says Crispin, in which students may become a framer instead of a carpenter with a Red Seal ticket.

"Those programs don't allow people to move up in the industry

and don't allow people to get a wage that will allow them to support a family," he says.

Crispin suggests that to improve trades programs, an increase in core funding is needed, "so that institutions can offer these programs with adequate support and with proper training in the classroom," he says.

Grant wonders if the job market predictions will be reliable in five or 10 years, or if funnelling dollars should be considered "gambling." The CCSS wants to see funding for all areas of trades and schooling so students can better themselves in the directions they are passionate about.

"Students should be able to do what they want to with their lives," says Grant. "It should not be predetermined by what scene is in demand in the job market."



JILL WESTBY/NEXUS

Construction of a new building at Camosun's Interurban campus.

NEWS BRIEFS

Chargers volleyball kicks February butt

Camosun Chargers volleyball teams took on the Douglas Royals on the January 30–31 weekend. The Chargers women marked their sixth consecutive win, allowing the Chargers to claim the top spot and third in national rankings. Chargers men's volleyball saw mixed scores over the weekend, with Douglas taking Friday's win and Camosun snatching Saturday's win. The winning continued to the February 6–7 games, with the Chargers women capturing their seventh victory with scores of 3–0 (Friday) and 3–0 (Saturday) against Capilano. Men's volleyball also celebrated a win with 3–1 (Friday) and 3–1 (Saturday). On Saturday, February 14, the women's team defeated the College of the Rockies Avalanche at PISE 3-0, while the men's also defeated the Avalanche 3-0. The next night, the women's team won with another 3-0, and the men also were victorious with a 3-1 final score. As of press time, the women's volleyball team were ranked first in the PACWEST standings, and the men's team were at third.

Mixed wins for Chargers basketball

The January 30–31 weekend had mixed results from the Chargers basketball men's and women's teams. Both faced off against the CBC Bearcats and Kwantlen Eagles. The women suffered two losses; the men gained two wins. Both teams were number five in the PACWEST standings with a record of 6–8. Chargers women's basketball went up against the Langara Falcons on February 6 and captured a big win, 67–45. The men's basketball fell short by the buzzer and ultimately lost to the Falcons, 76–57. In the February 7 game, Chargers women suffered a loss of 61–38 against the Douglas Royals. Chargers men went head-to-head with the Royals, taking the game into overtime but ultimately losing 84–74. On Saturday, February 14, the women's team lost 52-39 to the Vancouver Island University Mariners and the men's team lost 87-62 to the Mariners. As of press time, the men's team ranked fifth in the PACWEST standings, and the women's team were also at fifth.

Hassan Phills earns Athlete of the Week

Camosun basketball player Hassan Phills earned the PACWEST Men's Basketball Athlete of the Week for his outstanding performances on the January 30–31 weekend. Phills played an energized game on Friday against CBC, making wise decisions while remaining conscious of the team's offensive and defensive system. Over the weekend, Phills produced a 78 field goal percentage.

Volleyball athlete of the week

The Camosun Chargers have earned yet another Athlete of the Week. Engineering student Alex Sadowski takes home the PACWEST Men's Volleyball Athlete of the Week award. Sadowski is no stranger to awards: throughout his time with the Chargers he has earned many different awards, including Rookie of the Year.

Camosun's dental health clinic open

Teeth a bit yellow? Feeling a bit broke? Don't sweat it: children and adults are encouraged to take

advantage of Camosun's dental health clinic services, which are available to clients of all ages and incomes. The clinic's Dental Hygiene students are known for their professional and exceptional level of service. Visit camosun.ca/smile or email smile@camosun.ca for info.

BC ignores adult learners' crisis

Adult students and new Canadians will be facing hundreds of dollars in educational fees for programs that were once free. The BC government's recent throne speech disappointed many students that did not address the financial crisis that many students will face, according to the Canadian Federation of Students-BC (CFS-BC). "There is no pride in a budget balanced on the backs of those most in need," CFS-BC chairperson Zachary Crispin said in a press release. "The BC Liberal government has missed an opportunity to make education more accessible, an important part of any jobs plan."

Youthspace.ca extends help to midnight

Youthspace.ca is a safe place for youth under the age of 30 to

vent any problem, big or small, to a group of trained professionals. Youthspace has extended their availability, offering their chat services until midnight every night of the week. Visit youthspace.ca for more information.

Music Heals donates

Music Heals will be contributing a large investment to music therapy on Vancouver Island. Donations have totalled more than \$27,000 for music therapy programs throughout Victoria, Comox Valley, and Qualicum. Music Heals Charitable Foundation is an organization that seeks to raise awareness of the healing powers of music. The organization has donated \$250,000 to music therapy programs in their first two years of operation.

Isobel Trigger remixin'

Isobel Trigger is a Victoria-based band that's giving DJs an opportunity to remix their track "Champion." DJs have until March 4 to submit their best work. The top 10 submissions will be released on March 11 on Isobel Trigger's social media. Visit isobeltrigger.com to find out more.

-ERIN BLONDEAU

recreation

Drop-in basketball comes to Camosun's Interurban campus

PASCALE ARCHIBALD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Students at Interurban will be pleased to hear of a new drop-in sport event that Camosun's Recreation and Fitness office has added. Drop-in basketball started up in the fall as a student project and could become a permanent part of Camosun's recreation and fitness agenda.

If it's successful, it will be the first drop-in sports night at Interurban, and it will be the only drop-in night to ever be initiated by students. Melissa Rollin, a student in the Bachelor of Sport and Fitness program with a specialization in Exercise and Wellness, says the project was a team effort.

"A group of eight of us got together for a community project in a leadership class," says Rollin (the other students involved are Paige Krelow-Weinberger, Kim Teichroeb, Anikka McTavish, Hannah Flahr, Carly McAndrews, Anna Walker, and Aaron Nauta). "We all noticed a community void here on Interurban campus, so we decided to try to get a drop-in night started."

Rollin points out that all the students pay the same athletics fee when they register at Camosun but, depending on location, could

"I was more than happy to put a little funds towards continuing it, to see if that interest remains for a full academic year, and so far it's looking successful."

MEGHAN LAMBETH
CAMOSUN RECREATION

be missing out on all that the fee pays for.

Meghan Lambeth, Camosun's Recreation and Fitness coordinator, says there's a good reason for the lack of intramural sports for Interurban-bound students.

"The situation was such at the Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence (PISE) that it wasn't easy to get access to the gym," says Lambeth. The combination of bus schedules and evening drop-in times made the location less than desirable, she explains.

Rollin and her classmates discovered the extent of the interest in Interurban intramurals through a survey of the student body.

"With surveys, we got over 280 positive responses," says Rollin. "We booked four trial dates for our pilot period, and they went really well."

With their positive results in hand, the students met with Lambeth to discuss their findings.

"We talked about how there was interest there," says Lambeth. "I was more than happy to put a little funds towards continuing it, to see if that interest remains for a full academic year, and so far it's looking successful."

Holly Dickinson, a third-year Sport and Fitness Leadership student at Interurban and a regular attendee, considers the drop-in basketball nights a success so far.

"It's really fun," she says. "We get a good mix of guys and girls and it's a nice medium, not playing competitively, but still having fun."

Dickinson says that Rollin and her classmates were encouraged by their peers to continue the project after the completion of the assignment.



JILL WESTBY/NEXUS

The PISE building at Interurban, where drop-in basketball happens.

"I think it's just great," says Dickinson. "The people are great who come out; they've got the right attitude and it's not too competitive. It's enjoyable, for sure."

And this kind of positive response is just what Rollin, her classmates, and Lambeth are hoping for.

"If it goes well, we will incorporate it in and make it a regular part of the drop-in sports that we fund every year," explains Lambeth. "I'm hoping that we start seeing reasonably good numbers out there, and I'm willing to run it for another year and see if that interest grows."

Seven sessions are planned so far, after which an assessment can be made as to whether the drop-in night will be a permanent event at Interurban. Rollin and her classmates are hoping for the best.

"We really wanted to unite the community of Camosun here through something that we enjoy doing," says Rollin. "We chose a good sport, with minimal setup and simple rules. We just want it to be a fun, social, and safe environment for everyone."

Drop-in basketball runs every Tuesday from 8:30 to 9:30 pm at the PISE gym at Interurban.

know your profs

Nursing chair Stephen Bishop cherishes student breakthroughs

JASON SCHREURS
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Know Your Profs is an ongoing series of profiles on the instructors at Camosun College. Every issue we ask a different instructor at Camosun the same 10 questions in an attempt to get to know them a little better.

Do you have an instructor that you want to see interviewed in the paper? Maybe you want to know

more about one of your teachers, but you're too busy, or too shy, to ask? Here's what you can do: email editor@nexusnewspaper.com and we'll add your instructor to our list of teachers to talk to.

This issue we talked to longtime Nursing chair Stephen Bishop about playing underwater hockey (!), the joys of student breakthroughs, and getting out on the water as much as possible.

1: What do you teach and how long have you been a teacher at Camosun?

I've been with the Camosun Nursing department for 15 years as an instructor in lab, theory, and clinical. I've also been a program leader and the curriculum chair and served for the past seven years as department chair. My nursing background includes 25 years in pediatric intensive care, where I worked until this year. I've just returned to teaching and it was great to get back to the classroom and to clinical education.

2: What do you personally get out of teaching?

I love interacting with students who are excited to learn, and then seeing those students as graduates out in the hospital or community engaging in their nursing careers. It's pretty special to see nurses I've had a hand in educating providing brilliant care in our community.

3: What's one thing you wish your students knew about you?

Believe it or not, I was an athlete. I played underwater hockey (Google it!) for 35 years, medalling at provincial and national tournaments. It's a great sport that needs more participants, so if you like to snorkel or scuba dive, come talk to me!

4: What's one thing you wish they didn't know about you?

That I occasionally "word search." I lose a word in mid-sentence and have to stop talking and

try to pull it out of my brain, or do impromptu charades. My students are generally very helpful throwing out suggestions—usually correct!

5: What's the best thing that's ever happened to you as a teacher here?

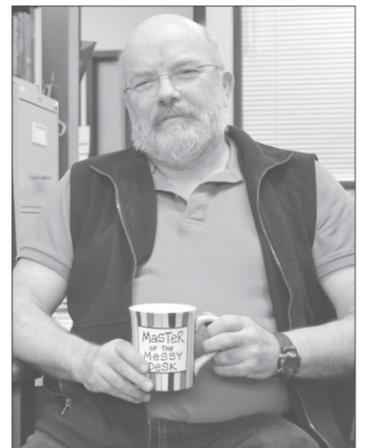
When I feel like I've really made a difference to a student, that's an amazing feeling. When someone "gets" something that just wasn't making sense, or when you can help someone navigate a problem and feel that they can be successful when they were feeling despondent, that's when I feel I'm in the right place.

6: What's the worst thing that's ever happened to you as a teacher here?

I've worked with several students who were struggling with depression, where I was completely unable to make enough of a difference for them to succeed. I have huge respect and gratitude for the members of the counselling department for the work they do.

7: What do you see in the future of postsecondary education?

Sadly, I believe it's in jeopardy. In Nursing we teach a combination of academic theory and hands-on practice, which makes Nursing a very expensive program. While I want to believe funding will keep up with our needs for technology in the classroom, and time in lab and clinical settings, I see funding restrictions slowly eroding the quality of our programs. Students



JILL WESTBY/NEXUS

Camosun's Stephen Bishop.

and faculty need to work together to prevent this happening.

8: What do you do to relax on the weekends?

Anything that involves water feeds my soul; sailing is a priority. Preferably with family and friends, though solitary time can be precious as well.

9: What's your favourite meal?

Food is an excuse for socializing, so anything that involves conversation over red wine and single malt scotch.

10: What's your biggest pet peeve?

People not being accountable for the outcomes of their actions. There are always factors outside our control that contribute to something such as a bad grade, but before blaming others we need to acknowledge our own responsibility.



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activities

Island sketching group brings artists together

“The more you do, the better you get, and the better you get at observing life.”

BRIAN HEBB
ISLAND SKETCHING

MELISSA FRASER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The room is crowded. People mill about looking at the variety of local goods available. But some stand back, taking in the scene. With bound books in arm and hands moving with purpose, they sketch.

Island Sketching, a Victoria artist meet-up group, was started in June of 2013 by Brian Hebb and his wife Cheryl. The two organize gatherings every other Saturday morning at interesting locations both indoors and out.

The group, which currently hosts 180 members, has a wide variety of ages, skill levels, and styles, from young students to those in their late eighties; from professional artists to those who have never sketched before.

Anyone can join Island Sketching at any time, says Hebb. “Bring your brain and your tools. That’s it,” he says.

Island Sketching never meets at the same location twice and encour-



A gathering of participants displaying their artwork at a meet-up of Island Sketching in Victoria.

PHOTO PROVIDED

ages people to continue attending the meet-ups.

“The more you do, the better you get, and the better you get at observing life,” says Hebb. “It’s an evolution of getting better.”

The Island Sketching initiative is part of a global art movement called Urban Sketchers, originally called Seattle Sketcher, created by *Seattle Times* artist and blogger Gabriel Campanario in 2006. It became an instant hit, with groups quickly forming and connecting around the world and sharing their artwork online.

“If you’re going travelling somewhere, you can email the urban-sketching people in that area and ask to draw with them,” says Hebb, recounting a visit to Toronto when

he did just that. “Urban Sketchers is a total revolution in art. It has gotten so many people together over the internet and around the world.”

Hebb says that the sketches turn into quite an impressive and memorable personal portfolio over time. Everyone is encouraged to exhibit their sketches and post images on the Island Sketching meetup.com site and other urban sketchers group sites. Last June, the group even had their own exhibit at the Oak Bay Library.

These sketching groups not only provide opportunities for the individual but also create a community gathering of likeminded people to share lived artistic experiences. After Island Sketching meet-ups, the group converges at a coffee

shop or restaurant to discuss and share their perspectives and inspirations. This aspect, coupled with the frequency of their gatherings, is

essential to improving as an artist, says Hebb.

“You learn by doing it,” he says. “It’s the only way.”

CAMOSUN COLLEGE HOSTS 2014-15



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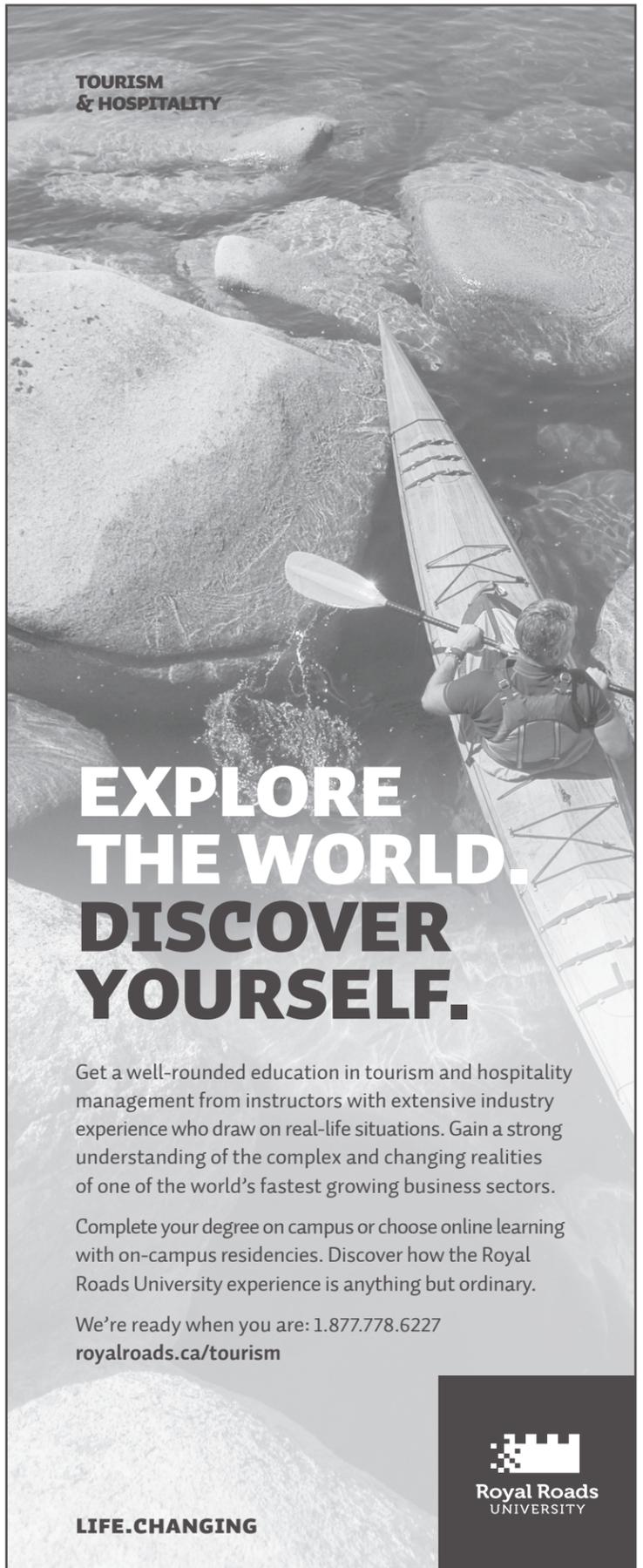


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LIFE.CHANGING



Why mayor Lisa Helps

If you haven't heard yet, there's a new mayor in town. Students in particular should heed this development with interest. Victoria's new mayor, Lisa Helps, is making a concentrated effort to address the questions and concerns of the student body through initiatives and promoting youth involvement.

Sworn in on December 4 after defeating previous Victoria mayor Dean Fortin in a close municipal election (there was a difference of only 89 votes), Helps' term is still in its infancy.

But let's start from the beginning...



Who is Lisa Helps, and why should students care?

Striding into Habit Coffee on Yates Street, Lisa Helps exudes a presence of discrete authority; she doesn't flaunt a suit or briefcase, but her posture and clean-cut manner convey confidence and openheartedness. The other patrons seem to regard her with silent respect, taking notice of her unique demeanour.

It seems a fitting place of introduction, as the choice of venue says a lot about Helps herself. Habit is all about sustainability; the coffee-doctoring station filled with compostable sleeves, organic honey, and reusable cutlery. Tethered to the bicycle rack, adjacent the café window, is Helps' bicycle: a worn commuter, blue paint flaking gently off the frame, sporting hefty saddlebags that carry important council documents.

It seems Helps has not forgotten her Fernwood roots, where the bicycle is king in matters of transport, and where Helps' foundation in economic development and operating a community micro-lending organization began.

Helps did not fall into the position of mayor, however.

"The biggest benefit I have in adapting to my role is that I was a city councillor first," explains Helps, attributing a seamless transition into office to pre-existing relationships with city staff.

"My objective is to bring as much of myself to the job as possible, to not leave those elements of openheartedness and

generosity that usually might get checked at the door in a political or bureaucratic context."

her, whether she is in City Hall or in the community. "She is inclusive in the way that she approaches politics and says Loveday, who mentions her efforts to include youth in civic often been left out of decision making and direction setting at

While the bulk of her time is spent in formal council meetings and boardroom.

"I have, as often as possible, one-on-one cups of coffee with council members," explains Helps. "When we're together as a council, it's not just there to ramble and talk with each other, but to make decisions, and not just there to ramble and talk with each other."

With small, local coffee shops like Habit composing an extension of her newly adopted city in a way that contributes to the

These attributes should make Helps intriguing, especially for those who are sporting a little ink. Personality, however, has little weight in

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LISA HELPS
VICTORIA MAYOR

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Affordable housing

"What I'd like to see in the next four years is affordable housing needs, but also to broaden our lens to make sure that regular, working people can afford to live in the city."

asked if she'll continue her and former mayor Dean Fortin's focus on affordable housing.

"The city is not a builder, not a developer, but we can create incentives and fast-tracking applications for affordable housing."

Unlike Fortin, whose experience as an addictions counsellor and work for the homeless and at-risk, Helps' plans are more broad-based for the next generation through conversion of pre-existing high-density, low-income housing.

"While shelters are a really important place for us to focus on, a larger spectrum of people who simply needed an affordable place to live."

Though most can agree housing has become a near-crisis issue where she faces criticism. "It involves giving property tax exemptions to units as affordable," she says. "Some say, 'Why would you give a housing tax exemption?'"

Daniel Reeve, Social Sciences chair at Camosun College, and the College Student Society, agree.

During their work in the classroom and the office, college students face whether it be exhaustingly long bus commutes from outside the city or impacted productivity due to financial constraints.

"Helps can continue the work of the previous council and ensure housing availability means lower rent for students. Rent is typically the biggest barrier."

Grant agrees, content with the goals Helps has set so far. "Housing is a huge issue for postsecondary students, and it should be a priority," she says.

With Victoria recently being rated the second-least-affordable city in a study of urban housing markets, students can only hope Victoria

Transportation

Transportation should also be something students hear about during the "settling-in" phase of office, Helps and her council are settling in.

Loveday is working on expanding Victoria's cycling network and stations. "I am pushing for the completion of the cycling network and better collaborate with Saanich to make sure the network does

safer, more sustainable, and cost-effective option for travelling to work."

Grant notes that with expansion should come an equal focus on "Cycling is an important aspect of conversations involving transportation that a thoughtful strategy that includes ensuring that

With many of the roads around Camosun, such as Shelbourne, are notoriously narrow, providing students with safer alternate routes to

os matters to students

By Sera Down, contributing writer

Photos by Jill Westby/Nexus

political or bureaucratic context,” she says once we get to her
tes and small personal effects, such as a My Little Pony doll,
rs, but Helps seems to be coping well. She feels that her new
contained her.

had lots of lofty goals. We never said, ‘This year we’re going
going to do this,’ and to really measure ourselves,” she says.
ard to a concrete plan with concrete goals.”

Helps’ honesty is refreshing. But Victoria City Council Member
trouble. “Mayor Helps has made some bold statements about
n Street Bridge. Completing these major projects efficiently
a tough balancing act.”

or concreteness: she requests specific details and is willing to
fill in the blanks when plans are too vague. This might include
producing the contact information of a developer, citing his-
torical examples, or simply giving constructive criticism.

“I’m a quick learner,” she chimes to a client presenting a
pitch back at Habit. Her notes, contained in a black Moleskine
notebook, follow a complex pattern of diagrams and tightly
woven cursive akin to the modest tattoo on her left forearm.
Her attentiveness is clear, and she maintains it all the way to
City Hall, astride her muddy-rimmed bicycle.

Passing the open offices of councillors and staff, Helps
introduces them individually, explaining what function they
have within the City.

They regard her with equal enthusiasm, referring to her
as “Missus Mayor” or, simply, “Lisa.” This attitude follows

and I think she listens with an interest to learn from the public,”
affairs. “I think students and young people in general have too
City Hall. Lisa’s approach is a step in the right direction.”

tings, Helps outlines the importance of connecting past the
with councillors to check in to see what they need to feel sup-
we’re really focused on driving forward initiatives, making
er, whereas over a cup of coffee it’s a lot more casual.”

ive network in the downtown core, Helps is utilizing the com-
se small businesses and strengthens internal relationships.
to students; she’s relatable, environmentally conscious, even
der the mayoral title without strong policies.

to keep funding and supporting
and broaden our policy toolbox to
afford to live,” says Helps, when
ocus on affordable housing.
ertainly be a partner through tax
ng,” she says.

or pushed him to focus on hous-
ly focused on providing housing
ritage buildings and condos into

our efforts, we’ve missed a whole
lace to live,” she says.

issue, Helps’ solutions are often
mptions to private land owners for designating some of their
give private developers money?” Well, because people need

and Rachael Grant, External Executive of the Camosun Col-

staff often become acquainted with the hurdles facing students,
the city because they can’t afford to live in town, or negatively

l Mayor Fortin to push for more low-income housing. More
ically students’ biggest expense,” says Reeve.

It’s great to see Mayor Helps making quality, affordable hous-

ble low-income housing market in Canada in an international
oria sees an improvement in the next four years.

ould the City accountable for. Currently in the “strategic plan-
ting their goals for the next four years.

cling network, which includes more bike lanes and lock-up
ork by 2018,” he says. “If we are able to complete our grid and
esn’t stop at municipal boundaries, then students will have a
g to and from school.”

ocus on safety.
g public transit. Many students are avid cyclists, and it is im-
safety and efficiency is prioritized,” she says.

rne Street, Hillside Avenue, and Foul Bay Road, being notori-
o improve both student safety and traffic flow are goals that

will hopefully accompany the expansion of the cycling network.

While expanding the cycling network benefits those living within city limits, transit is the main form of transport for students and low-income individuals.

According to Grant, council needs to address the large percentage of students who live outside the city but work and study within it if they want them to contribute to development.

“Helps currently has a seat on the Victoria Regional Transit Commission, a body that makes decisions regarding public transit, a service many students rely on every day,” points out Grant. “It would be great to see her support a seat on the commission for a student representative.”

Camosun’s Reeve explains the effects improved bus service would have, especially for late-night riders going in and out of the downtown core.

“The previous council and mayor pressured the province for more funding that allowed Victoria to expand its fleet of late-night busses,” says Reeve. “This not only means bar-goers can exit downtown in a timely fashion, but more allows all those students who work in restaurants and bars to go home without having to spend their tips on cabs.”

For Helps, this would mean a student population with more incentive to be green and utilize transit rather than driving because night bus routes are inconvenient and infrequent.

Youth involvement

Often disenfranchised and disinterested in municipal politics—and politics in general—students don’t realize the pull they have in government.

Though representing a large body within Victoria’s population, many students don’t vote and often do not have their interests promoted as a result. For those just entering high school and college, Helps points to a unique opportunity in the City of Victoria Youth Council.

“They range in age from 14 to 24, and part of their mandate is to connect with younger kids and draw them in to civic life,” she says.

This means being active in the community, as well as promoting youth interests. This focus on youth involvement is important to Helps in establishing effective government.

“One of the most profound things said to me just after I was elected was from our outgoing director of planning, Deborah Day, and this was also the last line in my inauguration speech. She said, ‘The most important decisions we make are for those who aren’t even born yet,’” says Helps. “That’s really hard for people to grasp.”

While the current focus is on engaging those youth entering high school and college, Helps notes older students have the ability to promote the cycle of bringing the next generation into civic life.

Another opportunity arising under Helps’ leadership is the emergence of what she calls “pop-up committees.” These are two-hour, one-off committees composed of approximately 10 people from a certain sector or demographic. This presents an efficient avenue for students to have their voices heard directly by municipal government.

“Assemble 10 people, and give me a presentation on what you need and would like to see. It’s to say, basically, ‘Hey, I’m

“I think students and young people in general have too often been left out of decision making and direction setting at City Hall. Lisa’s approach is a step in the right direction.”

JEREMY LOVEDAY
VICTORIA CITY COUNCIL

your mayor, what do you need?”” says Helps. She plans to begin implementing pop-up committees after strategic planning is completed.

Acknowledging the many movements and demonstrations by college students lobbying for their causes, Helps hopes to mend the gap between youth and the government.

“I decided a long time ago I would way rather be for something than against something,” says Helps. “I did my ‘protest against this, against that’ phase, but sometime in my early 20s I thought, ‘You know what? It’s way more productive to be for something than against something.’”

However, unifying local government and students to meet their unique needs through avenues such as the City of Victoria Youth Council and pop-up committees is a two-way street. The more students and youth take advantage of these opportunities, the more municipal government will be held accountable. Whether Helps will deliver on her end is yet to be seen, but the acknowledgement alone is a step forward.



performance

Victoria Spoken Word Festival returns for fifth year



PHOTO PROVIDED

Dave Morris and Victoria Spoken Word Festival artistic director Missie Peters perform as SpeakEasy.

TORI DMYTAR
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Spoken-word poetry doesn't have to be awkward or unapproachable, especially when you have artistic director of the Victoria Spoken Word Festival, Missie Peters, on the job. Five years ago, Peters wanted to help this discipline grow, change, and continue to be innovative, so she developed this festival that gives spoken-word poets opportunities that have nothing to do with their craft, inevitably contributing to the creative process.

"If I say to you, 'Go write something that no one's ever written before,' that's really, really hard to do, but if I say, 'Spend an afternoon with puppets. Can you write

a poem using puppetry?' Now you have a tool in your toolkit that you can bring out and use, and it gives people more skills with which to innovate," says Peters.

And at last year's festival, performers did use puppets, resulting in an edgy performance that lives up to Victoria's funky reputation. But don't be mistaken: while some of the methods may seem a little out there, there's a reason that spoken-word audiences are expanding, and Peters says it's because the poets speak from a place of truth.

"The reason that spoken word really connects with audiences is because it is immediate, it's very visceral, and it's very interactive," she says. "There's a lot of this feel-

ing of being in the moment with the artist and responding as an audience to each other."

The spoken-word audience is very diverse, says Peters. The festival also draws people from other disciplines, joining forces with the local dance and improv communities, who will be featured in the shows throughout the fest's events.

Then, for the fest finale, the poets write and perform a full show together in one day, using all of the new experiences and creative tools they've gained throughout the week. The result of this collaboration has Peters mesmerized.

"It's always magical. It's just something that I never film; I feel like it's un-filmable, it's something

that can only happen in that moment," she says. "It's for that audience and it's for those artists."

2015 is the fifth year of the fest (which will have Toronto's Brendan McLeod as the poet of honour), and to celebrate they're bringing back some all-stars. These poets have gone on to tour Canada, as well as being recognized nationally.

One of the poets returning to the festival is 20-year-old Chimwemwe Undi. She was a part of the Winnipeg Poetry Slam Team and is the communications director for Voices, Ink., a youth poetry project.

Undi was introduced to spoken word through a club at her school and late-night YouTube visits; however, she's convinced that she would have found her passion some way or another, regardless of having access to those resources.

"I don't remember a time when I wasn't writing, and I've been on stages in some form or another, musical theatre, classical music, speech, and debate, whatever, since I was about 10. My family is big on storytelling," she says. "Spoken word seems like a natural progression from those things."

Undi has been known to write about her experiences with immigration, religion, and, more currently, race, with all of the happenings in the news. But she believes that her words are only a component to spoken poetry and it's really more about the connection she makes.

"More than any message, I try to connect with people that are generous enough to listen to me. Spoken word is so much listening; it's holding space for other people, letting them say their piece," she says.

Undi says she's very grateful to the people who listen to her,

and, because of the connections she's established, it has allowed for success to follow, even at such a young age. But when asked for advice, she doesn't feel qualified to give it, mostly because she feels like she hasn't been doing anything long enough to know it's working, and partially because she eats ice cream even though she is lactose intolerant. However, she does think that self-expression is a key that can open many doors.

"There's a lot of this feeling of being in the moment, with the artist and responding as an audience to each other."

MISSIE PETERS
VICTORIA SPOKEN WORD
FESTIVAL

"It's important to find a way to express yourself. It's necessary to recognize the importance of the voice you want to share," she says. "Your thoughts and emotions are valid and deserve space in whatever conversation that's happening, and as long as it comes from a place with integrity, someone, somewhere will see the value in what you do. You'll connect with someone, and that's the only reason to do anything."



PHOTO PROVIDED

Toronto's Brendan McLeod is the poet of honour at this year's Victoria Spoken Word Festival.

Victoria Spoken Word
Festival
February 23-March 1
\$12-\$45, Various venues
missiepeters.ca/festival/

stage

Opera tells classic tale of love and tragedy

JAYDEN GRIEVE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's the classic story of love and hate, and the beautifully tragic opera *Lucia Di Lammermoor* will soon be wowing Victoria audiences. The opera, based on a book by Sir Walter Scott, is a familiar story of heartbreak and tragedy.

"A young woman falls in love with a young man who is the enemy of her family," says director Glynis Leyshon. "Her brother and [her lover] are at political odds and they're separated, much like *Romeo and Juliet*. In essence it's very much like *Romeo and Juliet*, the idea of innocence destroyed by the warring fanaticism of two opposing political points of view."

Leyshon, who has directed plays and operas all across Canada and the United States, knows this story well, as it's not her first time directing it. She's excited to return and give it a fresh spin.

"It was one of the very first operas I did for Pacific Opera, so now, some 20 years later, I'm delighted to re-enter it and work with new colleagues on it," says Leyshon. "I have chosen to revisit it in an entirely different way. We wanted to make the set minimalist, strong, extracted, rather than any kind of naturalism, so it has a much more abstracted and metaphorical impulse than the first production."

Leyshon can't say enough about how lucky she is to have such fantastic performers.

"It's very much like *Romeo and Juliet*, the idea of innocence destroyed by the warring fanaticism of two opposing political points of view."

GLYNIS LEYSHON
LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR

"They're all wonderful as well as superb singers and superb actors," she says. "We've really enjoyed a very theatre-style rehearsal period where we've invested a lot of time, energy, and discussion into details and specific moments between them as characters and their psychological relationship."

Ernesto Ramirez, the actor playing the male lead, says that the opera company and the whole cast has treated him very well, and he's really happy to be back performing in Victoria for the second time. He says that although he doesn't have as much anger as his character, he still relates to him on many levels.

"I relate to him a lot in terms of his personality. He's very driven. He's determined to get what he wants. I think that's something that I as an artist have; I'm very determined to accomplish my own goals," says Ramirez.

Ramirez, an opera fan who has seen more than 70 operas, says the music in *Lucia Di Lammermoor* is "breathtaking."

"Every time I'm singing the music it just makes me fall in love more and more and more," says Ramirez. "This opera is the most complete I've seen, in the sense of technique and how it's written for the character and brings the emotions to it."

Meanwhile, Leyshon says the show promises to be an exciting piece for everyone. Everyone who loves opera and loves singing will respond to this show, she says.

"But this is also a terrific intro piece for people who may not be very familiar with opera. It's a strong story and the music is very engaging and grabs you, so, for such a sad opera, it's a terrific date opera," says Leyshon. "It's something that young people may be drawn to,



DAVID COOPER

Lucia Di Lammermoor tells a timeless tale.

especially as we realize today the awful, awful cost on humanity that warring factions can cause, and it will have a potent sense of reality for our younger audiences."

Lucia Di Lammermoor
8 pm February 12, 14, 18, 20;
2:30 pm February 22
\$25-\$135, Royal Theatre
rmts.bc.ca

music

Victoria hip hop community building from within

ALEX KALICKI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On a clear winter's day at the end of North Park Street in Victoria, Marco Bermudez stands in a circle of people who are freestyling rap verses. Sharing stories with each other, everyone in the group is in the moment, getting lost to the rhythm of the beat, and letting their feelings be expressed with words.

Bermudez, also known as Nostic, has been a part of the hip hop scene in Victoria since he was 14 years old.

"My friends, the Pocket Kings and Illani, started this thing that they called Outright Cypher. It was just four MCs getting together at the end of North Park Street and free-styling rap with a boombox," explains Bermudez.

Outright Cypher, which began six years ago, still takes place most Wednesday evenings and has many more members today than ever.

"It's grown into such a big community, connecting different people from many areas. A lot of bands and groups have formed because of it," says Bermudez.

One of these groups is the Leg-Up Program, which was formed last year and is made up many local acts, including Nostic, coming together to create something completely new by mashing up musical genres.

"It's grown into such a big community, connecting different people from many areas."

MARCO BERMUDEZ
OUTRIGHT CYPHER

Going back to its roots, hip hop has always been a process of taking old sounds and creating something new. Ever since the well-known song "Rapper's Delight" by the Sugar Hill Gang was released in 1979, deejays and MCs have been sampling records and rapping to them. Back then, a lot of hip hop was influenced by the funk and disco era, but nowadays there's also a lot of electronic influence.

"These days it's easy to make a beat," says Bermudez. "You don't need any fancy equipment, just a computer, but that also makes it harder because there is more good music being put out there. That's why being original and trying something new is the progression of the sound, and that's what we are trying to do with Dia-Nos."

Dia-Nos consists of two musi-



PHOTO PROVIDED

Freestyle rapping at the end of North Park Street in Victoria.

cians: the rapper, Nostic, and the DJ, Dia (also known as Eric Norberg). Coming from different musical backgrounds, both of them bring their skills to the table, mixing hip hop with ancient tribal sounds and fresh electronic beats.

"We started making what felt right to us," says Norberg. "We'll play a beat that the crowd can dance or vibe out to, and Marco will basic-

ally just freestyle to it a lot of the time."

The beat of a track is what keeps its rhythm, but the lyrics are what give it meaning.

"Even though we just want people to dance, let loose, and have fun, there is also a deeper meaning in our music," says Bermudez.

Last summer, Dia-Nos released a song with a video, opposing one

of the pipeline proposals. It went viral within a week and was posted by Greenpeace on their blog.

"Within a week of it being posted it got taken down and deleted from the internet," says Bermudez. "We never found out why it was taken down. But we are actually kind of excited about the video raising awareness, and that's exactly what it did in a very interesting way."

music

Hey Rosetta! team up with Stars for ambitious tour

GILLIAN SELLMAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Canadian indie rock bands Hey Rosetta! and Stars are stopping in Victoria during their upcoming North American tour.

With both bands busy promoting new albums, it seemed natural for them to team up.

"We both had records that came out at the same time and we were both planning a pretty extensive tour," says Hey Rosetta! bass player Josh Ward.

Not unfamiliar with each other, Hey Rosetta! and Stars have toured together before, and, according to Ward, they had a lot of fun together.

Meanwhile, Hey Rosetta!'s new album features a wider variety of sounds than their previous work, he says.

"We went into the studio and our producer was really cool and he sort of allowed us, and forced us, to experiment with a bunch of different tunes," says Ward. "It was a fun studio with all kinds of fun toys, and we went a little crazy and just filled it up with weird little sounds and things."

This meant changing up their show a bit, says Ward. "You have to stop and go, 'Wait, hang on, how are we possibly going to do all this stuff?'"

For the concert-goer, this means you might see a lot more happening

"We definitely put some effort into making the visual component of it match the whole aesthetic."

JOSH WARD
HEY ROSETTA!

onstage during this tour than on previous ones.

"There's a lot more ground we have to cover, sonically, so you'll see people on stage playing two or three things at once and people running around and playing different things," says Ward.

The band has also added a seventh member: singer, keyboardist, and brass player Mara Pellerin.

In addition to the more electronic sound, Hey Rosetta! added special effects as well.

"We have a pretty cool light show that's happening," says Ward. "Stars have a really cool thing going on visually and we decided to kind of step it up as well."

Hey Rosetta! is hoping this will help the show match the sound of their new album, says Ward.

"We definitely put some effort into making the visual component of it sort of match the whole aesthetic," he says.



SCOTT BLACKBURN

Hey Rosetta! will be playing Victoria with fellow indie rockers Stars in March.

Stars have been around for over a decade; Ward says it shows.

"Stars are really masterful performers," he says. "We always watch their show."

Ward hopes that Hey Rosetta!'s

passion for what they're doing translates to the audience.

"We've been having an amazing time doing this and I hope that we get to share that with other people," he says. "It's really a lot of fun."

Hey Rosetta! (with Stars)
Sunday, March 1
\$28.50-\$44, Royal Theatre
rmts.bc.ca

entertainment

Copper Owl uses diversity to thrive as venue

DEREK JANZEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For nearly two years now, the Copper Owl has been a go-to music venue for emerging bands performing in Victoria. Since opening their doors in early 2013, the venue has hosted hundreds of performances by artists of all different genres, including folk, metal, electronic, and indie rock.

Jzero Schuurman and Renee Crawford took over the venue, located above Paul's Motor Inn, after the previous tenants were forced to close.

"Renee and I had been attending shows at Castle Video Bar put on by friends," says Schuurman. "We wanted to put on fundraisers for the Fifty Fifty Arts Collective but found out the space was closing. After inquiring, Renee decided to put together a business plan and propose us taking over the space at Paul's Motor Inn. The landlords were stoked on our idea, thus the Copper Owl was born."

The music scene in Victoria has been a hotspot for up and coming talent for many years. Musicians such as Aidan Knight, Japandroids, Hot Hot Heat, Frog Eyes, and even Nelly Furtado all got their start here. Considering everything these artists have achieved, it would be easy to assume that Victoria would be host to several venues showcasing newcomer talent, but many of the



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jzero Schuurman (left) and Renee Crawford (right) of the Copper Owl.

venues have either shut down or are constantly struggling to stay open.

This was the case with former downtown staple the Fort Street Cafe. They were forced to shut their doors in December 2012 after the building's landlord deemed them no longer suitable for the premises. (The Fort Street Cafe recently announced they will be re-opening in May at a new location.)

The opening of the Copper Owl came as a relief in the wake of Fort Street Cafe's closure, but it hasn't been without its own challenges.

"It's hard for bands on a tight budget to deal with rising ferry costs," says Schuurman. "We don't have a budget for that, so we've had to take some hits on shows in order to encourage out-of-town bands to keep coming back."

Schuurman believes that the key to the Copper Owl's success so far has been their very open-minded approach to the acts that come and play the venue. Additionally, he says that they have a space that's adaptable for diverse programming.

"We can host DJ nights, karaoke, quiz shows, private parties, wedding receptions, photo/video shoots, book launches, craft fairs... Diversity is definitely key, and adapting to our clients' needs and budgets," says Schuurman.

For those interested in running their own venue, Schuurman says it's a lot of hard work and foresight.

"Be patient, diversify your programming, and be ready for the workload," he says. "You also need to be open-minded and prepare to take hits here and there."

New Music Revue



The Golden Dogs
3 1/2
(Independent)
3.5/5

For 3 1/2, their fourth studio release, Toronto-based The Golden Dogs' original dynamic duo of Dave Azzolini and Jessica Grassia, along with new blood Alejandro Cairncross and Stefanie McCarroll, give a fresh take on some familiar sounds.

The dynamic, multi-genre album opens to a straight, funky bass line with its first track "Decided," and hits its stride with "Pretending," which stands out as a pseudo-homage to Elton John's charisma in "Bennie and the Jets."

Each track is unique as the group weaves its way through bygone eras, boldly experimenting with well-defined styles.

The result is a well-balanced, beautiful mess of upbeat energy that begs to be seen live.

But, as with all things familiar, 3 1/2 bodes well for one enthusiastic, reminiscing run-through and when finished can be returned to the shelf to be forgotten for a time with the other fondly-thought-of memorabilia.

-ORYANNA ROSS



Sylvan
Home
(Gentle Art of Music/E1)
3/5

I'll be honest: I found *Home*, the 11th release by German band Sylvan, difficult to get through.

It was promising enough, with intricate instrumentals that were somewhere between classical music and Euro-rock, but the lyrics filled with teenage angst were depressing.

Then you combine those lyrics with the deep, haunting voice of Marco Gluhmann, and the product is an album my 14-year-old self would be eager to listen to on repeat.

Sylvan has created a detailed storyline of a girl unable to find her true home in a hostile world of instability, battling with herself over what decisions to make once her truth is found. Although the premise sounds intriguing, the execution results in a confusing medley of different genres crammed together, and unfortunately the original message is lost.

Maybe Sylvan should consider venturing over to performance art and playwriting, as their ideas seem too grand to be limited to just music as a medium.

-REBECCA DAVIES



Lit Matters

by Keagan Hawthorne

John Steinbeck and the reality of a hangover



Steinbeck's reputation as a selfish, all-consumed artist may have been well deserved, but at least he took responsibility for who he was.

"All great and precious things are lonely," said John Steinbeck, best known as the author of books like *The Grapes of Wrath* and *East of Eden*.

But Steinbeck also wrote many shorter works, including travel memoirs, modern fables, and hilarious novels like *Cannery Row* and *Tortilla Flat*, which turn Monterey, California into an early 20th century Camelot filled with characters whose lives are bursting with good intentions ruined by bad luck.

What is remarkable about Steinbeck's characters are their many endearing imperfections. Mack and the boys, who live in the Palace Flophouse on Cannery Row, are lazy hobos who get drunk in the middle

of the day. Danny and his friends, who live in Tortilla Flat, fight often, pass out in ditches, and sleep with the wine merchant's wife to swindle a free bottle of booze.

But they're all driven by an impulse for doing good that transcends the poverty of their everyday lives and gives the larger story of their lives a noble purpose.

They show us that life doesn't always have to be fair to be good, that misfortune is not a personal statement of divine disapproval, and that while personality adds flavour to life, it's character that really counts.

American author Joan Didion once said, "Character is taking responsibility for one's own life."

This is precisely what Steinbeck's characters do in his novels.

In his own life, as in his novels, Steinbeck embraced this philosophy. His reputation as a selfish, all-consumed artist may have been well deserved, but at least he took responsibility for who he was.

He once said, "I have always lived violently, drunk hugely... worked too hard and too long in glory, or slobbered for a time in utter laziness... made love with joy and taken my hangovers as a consequence, not as a punishment."

John Steinbeck must-read:
Tortilla Flat
(Lansdowne library code: PS 3537 T3234 T65)



Ability's Muse

by Andy Chen

camosun college students with (dis)abilities collective

Self-care crucial for non-able-bodied students

How does living along a continuum of poor-to-superior health apply to a non-able-bodied person?

It makes all the difference in the world.

A non-able-bodied person needs to spend proportionately more time on a regimen of self-care, a healthcare term that refers to any necessary human regulatory function that's under individual control, is deliberate, and is self-initiated.

This could involve, but not be limited to, following a strict treatment regiment; exercise; meditation; avoiding risky behaviour or tendencies; therapy; or possibly

a combination of all of the above and others.

How does the added dimension of pursuing public postsecondary affect all this?

Any full-time student can attest that the barrage of assignments, labs, and exams requires a delicate work-life balance; for someone on a self-care regimen, it means accepting a state of less-than-optimal health without harming oneself.

What is the benefit of doing an all-night study session if that lack of sleep affects your memory and concentration?

We imagine student life as living

in residences and sharing roommate horror stories, but what if your self-care requires you to isolate in part to decompress on a daily basis?

Often, non-able-bodied students are fully aware of the consequences of deviating from that self-care and may reach out for every accommodation the institution can afford. When the options become trading off segments of good health to make minor strides towards reaching an academic or career goal, do others have a right to judge them for accessing it?

It's a daily regime of choosing not to harm oneself.



The Prodigal Planeswalker

by Andy Chen

camosun college magic: the gathering club

Levelling the playing field

Tournaments are a fun aspect of *Magic: The Gathering*. Competitive players can easily conjure up a cadre of the game's most powerful, rare, and expensive cards from their 60-card deck.

Back in 2007/08, I built a tournament deck that took me all the way to the City Championship finals in Vancouver. I managed to finish eighth overall in BC. The featured cards of the day were Tarmogoyf, Garruk Wildspeaker, Thoughtseize, and Doran, the Siege Tower.

These days, my passion has been introducing new players to the game.

Our take-a-card, leave-a-card box has now morphed into two distinct collections for players to pick through. We have been play-testing homemade decks versus factory-made duel decks with surprising results.

In the long haul, however, the "money" decks grind out the wins against novice players with their fledgling card collections. This was an enormous source of frustration for me as a teen learning the game on a limited budget.

Today, I'm proud to say we are levelling the playing field for newcomers with our complimentary

30-card starter decks, mini master tournaments, and booster drafts. For all the formats mentioned, no investment is required, as it free for Camosun club members.

Come join our next *Magic* club meeting on Friday, February 20 at 1 pm in Young 220, Lansdowne. We have organized a special event for the meeting: a free, limited eight-player Fate Reforged booster draft.

You must present your Camosun ID to enter. Preference will be given to current club members. A special thanks to Michael Lum of Skyhaven Games for sponsoring the event.



Bite Me

by Megan Dunn

Easy chicken and bacon meal

I don't know about you, but this semester is kicking my ass. I'm taking six classes and it has left me little time to eat.

To help out, here's a chicken and bacon recipe that's quick and easy to make, and extremely satisfying, too.

Chicken and Bacon in Puff Pastry

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes
Total time: 40 minutes
Serves six

Ingredients:

- 6 slices bacon
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cubed
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, or 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- 2 sheets frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 1 egg, beaten

Method:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In medium skillet, cook bacon until crisp; remove, drain on paper towels, crumble, and set aside. Drain pan; do not wipe out.

Add olive oil to pan and add chicken and onion. Cook together until onion is tender and chicken is no longer pink, about 7-8 minutes. Remove with slotted spoon to medium bowl.

Add cream cheese and bacon to chicken mixture, along with the thyme, and mix well; if you're adding fresh herbs, add them now.

Gently roll out each puff pastry sheet across the fold lines to make it a bit wider. Cut each sheet into thirds, following the fold lines of the pastry. Cut in half across the strips to make six rectangles from each sheet. Put 1/3 to 1/2 cup of the chicken mixture in the centre of six rectangles.

Top with the other six rectangles and gently stretch the top rectangles to fit. Seal edges and press with fork. Place on cookie sheet and brush with beaten egg.

Bake for 20-25 minutes until deep golden brown.

Remove to wire rack and let cool 5 minutes before serving; the filling is very hot!

NEXUS
By Jenna Cotton
If you think you might be able to make folks laugh with a short comic every other week, then we'd like to see your work in print. Get in touch!
editor@nexusnewspaper.com

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE
Find Your Voice. Speak Your Mind.
Lan: 6:45 PM Thur, Paul 216 Int: 5:15 Tue, Campus Ctr 320
Info on the web: <http://camosuncollege.toastmastersclubs.org>

HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR SUSTAINABLE MICROFINANCE FOR WOMEN IN AFRICA
COME OUT TO THE COPPER OWL
(A vintage venue located above the historic Paul's Motor Inn in downtown Victoria, Offering an awesome variety of drinks, including locally crafted brews on tap from Hoyne, Phillips, Saltspring Brewery, and cider from Lone Tree.)
ENJOY SOME GOOD FOOD & BEVERAGES
SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 8TH, 2014, 6:00 pm
LISTEN TO AWESOME MUSIC FROM A GREAT BAND, "THE SKY LIT UP"
(CONTACT NELLY FOR ADVANCE TICKETS 250-857-0113)
(The Cause you'll be helping out)
SOC 211 - Service-Learning Project Goal:
Help raise funds to expand the microfinance program for women in Rural Ghana:
-Micro-agricultural projects
-Food preparation and selling projects
-Petty trading projects
Jinjini Women's Project and Akropong Women's Project
-An impoverished, rural woman receives interest-free micro-loans for one year. She generates profit through her small business. This profit becomes her new seed money to continue her business when she pays the entire loan. The paid loan is given to another impoverished woman in the village. The process continues to expand to other women.

what's going on

by erin blondeau

TUESDAY EVENINGS

Weekly drop-in sports at Interurban

Interurban students are on a mission to spread health and wellness. It all started with a drop-in sports night on Tuesday evenings at the PISE gym. The idea is to give Camosun students opportunities to participate in free/drop-in activities in a safe, inclusive, and social environment. The drop-in sports take place on Tuesdays from 8:30 to 9:30 pm at the PISE Gym and are available only to Camosun students (so be sure to bring your Camosun student card).

FRIDAY AFTERNOONS

Magic in the Young building

Camosun's *Magic: The Gathering Club* is a place where club members (and newcomers) can test their skills and duel their decks. The club will be handing out Magic starter decks to new members, and everyone is welcome. The club takes place every Friday from 1-4 pm in room 220 of the Young Building at the Lansdowne campus.

UNTIL THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Get higher with the choir

The Getting Higher Choir is accepting new singers! If you love to sing, the choir will be looking for you on February 16-26. For more information about the choir and audition, call 250-920-4160.

UNTIL SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Ghost of a poet will haunt audiences

The ghost of Gwendolyn MacEwen, one of the greatest Canadian poets, is coming back from the dead to tell her tale to a contemporary audience at the Theatre Inconnu. Linda Griffiths' play, *Alien Creature*, was a

Governor General Award nominee and was described by *The Globe and Mail* as "an engrossing and convincing evocation of the creative spirit." Tickets are \$14 and are available at ticketrocket.org or by calling 250-590-6291.

UNTIL SUNDAY, MAY 3

Finnish design pioneer comes to Victoria Art Gallery

Marimekko is a Finnish textile and clothing design company known for its beautifully structured prints and modern looks. Marimekko will be coming to the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and will be presenting fabrics and fashions from 1960 to 1970. To learn more about the event, visit aggv.ca or call 250-384-4171.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Black power film for Black History Month

A collection of footage will be featured by Victoria Friends of Cuba at BCGEU Hall as a part of Black History Month. The footage uncovers the events of Black Panther activities, African-American artists and activists, and many other revolutionary events throughout America from 1967-1975. *The Black Power Mixtape 1967-75* starts at 7 pm and admission is by donation.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Sickest Friday night ever

Join Camosun anthropologists, biologists, communication and media experts, historians, scientists, and artists (phew!) as they discuss diseases such as Ebola during Fear, Loathing and Contagion, a night of intense disease discussion. Sound fun? The event starts at 7 pm in Fisher 100, Lansdowne campus. Admission is free.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21 AND SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Naked bungee jumpers en masse

The folks at WildPlay are hoping for 200 naked people to jump off a 150-foot cliff in the name of schizophrenia awareness in late February. But don't worry: the brave jumpers will be doing so safely at WildPlay's famous Bungee Jump attraction. The event is to help raise money and awareness for those suffering from mental illnesses. The naked jump takes place in Nanaimo and costs \$35+ to join up. Call 1-855-595-2251 to register or for more information on the event.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Jewish concert and free dessert

Join in on the toe-tapping fun at the Jewish Community Centre for a concert featuring The Klez. Desserts will be served to enjoy with Sephardic ballads and traditional Hebrew, Yiddish, and Latino folk songs. The concert starts at 7:30 pm and admission is by \$10 suggested donation. Contact info@vshj.ca for more information.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25 TO WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

Series of concerts at St. Mary

A series of concerts will be held at St. Mary the Virgin Church. The Lenten Lunchtime Concerts will run on Wednesdays from 12:10-12:50 pm with proceeds going to benefit Abbeyfield House Society. Admission is by \$8 suggested donation and guests are encouraged to bring a lunch to go with the provided coffee and tea. For more information, call 250-598-2212.

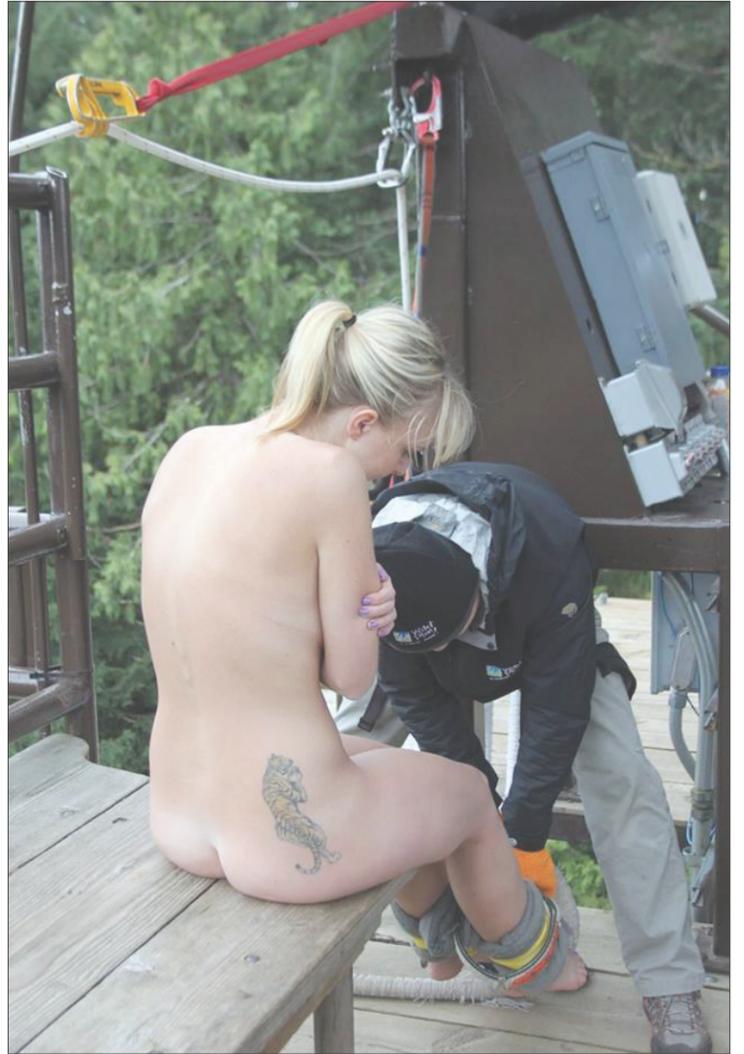


PHOTO PROVIDED

A naked bungee jumper at a previous jump (see February 21 and 22).

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25 AND TUESDAY, MARCH 31

Pizza and art collide

Who doesn't love pizza? Camosun Visual Arts students are combining the two greatest things on the planet and offering them to the public: pizza and art. The art students have turned pizza boxes into creativity and will be selling five mystery pieces of art in boxes for \$20, with the money going towards the students' final art show in April. The fundraiser will go from 8:30 am to 2 pm on both days and is located in the Fisher building foyer.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26 TO SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Who will be the volleyball champ?

Camosun College will be hosting

the PACWEST men's and women's Provincial Volleyball Championships. Camosun will be welcoming fans and competitors at the Pacific Institute for Sports Excellence, where the PACWEST's top six men's and women's teams will battle for the big win. The games run at various times in the afternoon. Contact matthews@camosun.ca for more information.

SUNDAY, MARCH 1

Talk with Reverend Allen

Reverend Allen Tysick works with the Dandelion Society, contributing to a mission to help those in need. Tysick will have a presentation on March 1 followed by questions, paired with tea and cookies. All donations received will go to the Dandelion Society. The event takes place at the Congregation Emanu-El Synagogue at 2 pm.

municipal politics word search

We grabbed some key words from our feature on new Victoria mayor Lisa Helps to make this issue's word search. Find the words on the right in the puzzle below.

Bring the completed puzzle in to the *Nexus* office and grab some prizes!

- CIVIC
- COLLEGE
- CONCRETENESS
- COUNCIL
- CYCLING
- DOWNTOWN
- EFFICIENT
- IMPLEMENTING
- MUNICIPAL
- OFFICE

- OPPORTUNITY
- PLANNING
- POLITICS
- POSTSECONDARY
- PRODUCTIVE
- STRATEGIC
- STUDENTS
- SWORN
- TATTOO
- YOUTH

S T N E D U T S Y C C I P D Z
 T A T T O O Y P R I F S R O L
 M B L O Y Z L G A G S W O W X
 P D O O S A H E D E Y O D N P
 M O U O N L G D N T C R U T G
 L T L N P E Z E O A H N C O N
 H I I I L P T Y C R A O T W I
 T N C L T E O H E T C L I N L
 G O O N R I F R S S C I V I C
 X C F C U Q C X T Z P W E N Y
 F R N F J O Z S S U U S Y P C
 A O K A I A C X O F N I B F N
 C D A O Z C L A P I C I N U M
 I M P L E M E N T I N G T P J
 E F F I C I E N T L P B E Y P

Your student voice.



Get involved! Email us today to get started:

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