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VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



October 2004:
Vol. 22, No. 2

NEWSLETTER

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Congratulations and kudos to the *VCTA Newsletter* Editor and the newsletter team. Such a pleasure to find the new Newsletter in my mailbox! You have saved and enhanced the best of the old Newsletter style while avoiding the old pitfalls. It's great to see not only the syndical news, but also the visual and written contributions from the Vanier community at large. Thanks so much.

Alanna Horner,
Communications: Art, Media, Theatre Dept.
and former editor of the VCTA Newsletter

Dear Editor:

Just wanted to let you know that I think the *VCTA Newsletter* is great. I find it to be most informative because it allows a new teacher such as myself to be better informed about what is going on within the college and feel closer to the Vanier community. So, all I have to say is thanks for the Newsletter and I hope to see more of it!

Gina De Iaco,
Sociology, Research Methods and Explorations

Editor's Note: Thanks for your letters. I would very much like to hear from more Vanier teachers: What do you think of the Newsletter so far? Is there a good balance of syndical, pedagogical and common interest items? What would you like to see more of? Less of? Suggestions for improvement will be much appreciated.

In This Issue

Letters to the Editor	2
VCTA Executive + Office Hours	2
Message from the President	3
SRAM	4
Vice-Chair Resigns from Academic Council	5
October: Women's History Month	6
Union 101: CRT	7
Professional Development	7
The Open Door Network.....	8
Report from Board of Directors	10
Social Science Festival	10
Reflections on Becoming a Teacher	11
My Long Slide into Retirement	13
Psychological Harassment	14
Poetry Corner	15
Paying to Play: Do You Have a Cheetah in Your Class?	16
Breaking Out of Sanctuary	17
Staff Cafeteria Update	18
Do You Need a Lawyer	18
Life at Vanier: Cryptic Crossword	19
Odds 'n' Ends	20
Reading Suggestions	21
Pete's Picks	22
Clip 'n' Save Radio Programming	24

VCTA Executive 2004-05

President: Sylvie Tardif
 Vice Presidents: Eric Durling
 Dave Oram
 Secretary-Treasurer: Christian Roy

Office Hours in C-101

Sylvie: Mon. 10:30-11:30
 Thurs. 10:00-12:00
 Christian: Mon. 1:00-4:00
 Dave: Wed. 1:30-4:30
 Eric: Fri. 10:00-1:00

Office Assistants' Hours:

8:30 am to 4:30 pm
 closed for lunch 12:00-1:00
 Susan: Mon. Tues. Wed.
 Pat: Thurs. Fri.

The Executive meets every Tuesday 9:30-12:30; the Association council meets every third Thursday 2-4 pm; General Assemblies are held when necessary.

Join the VCTA and become a voting member. New teachers (full-time, part-time, hourly, Cont. Ed.) may join the Vanier College Teachers Association by paying a 1-time only fee of \$2 at Rm. C101.

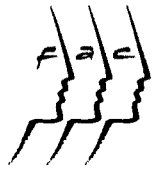
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Shirley Pettifer is the Editor - she solicits, accepts, and edits articles and does the initial layout.

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Deadline for next issue: Nov. 15, 2004.
All contributions welcome!



V.C.T.A.

VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Message from the President: SYLVIE TARDIF

FAC-INTERSYNDICAL COUNCIL:
Time Line — September 9, 2004

Quebec Education Minister Reid's closing remarks at the Forum back in June 2004 suggested an increased autonomy for colleges, a diversification of their institutional profiles and variable geometries.

The anticipated radical reform for Cegeps (*"Green Paper"*) that will be presented in November 2004 by Minister Reid will address seven avenues of so called "development":

- greater autonomy
- specialization of colleges
- "rationalization" in the regions
- increased flexibility in students' educational paths
- more variety and flexibility in General Studies
- new ways of college governance
- stronger links among the three orders of education (secondary, college and university) in Quebec.

The reform will be presented within the framework of demographic decline and fragile public finances. This means that locally granted diplomas, systematic ranking, discriminatory funding, introduction of tuition fees, and erosion of General Studies are slated to become a reality.

The FAC* Special Intersyndical Council (SIC) of September 9, 2004 agreed to increase the pressure on the government with united efforts within the Coalition of Cegeps and a parallel FAC action plan—a 2-hour walk-out and a 24-hour strike—to be voted on at General Assemblies prior to the October 13th SIC in Quebec City. (*FAC=Fédération Autonome du Collégial, comprised of Vanier and 16 other Cegeps.)

Will this plan be put into action in the fall? It depends.

- What will Premier Jean Charest announce on October 13-14 during the National Forum
- What will Education Minister Reid's *"Green Paper"*—expected in November—contain?
- The *"White Paper"* is expected to follow shortly after the January Parliamentary Commission.

NEGOTIATIONS - OUR COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENT: Time Line — Sept. 9, 2004

The government's original insistence that we settle the question of salary equity and recognition of working hours (the additional 173 hours) is no longer a prerequisite for negotiations.

When our FAC president, Alain Dion, and Alain Lavoie of the CPNC (Conseil Patronal de Négociation des Cégeps) met on Aug. 27, it was made clear that the employer party now has the mandate to negotiate on "related issues" in order to advance each of the negotiation items on the table.

Apparently, if FAC and the CPNC, reach an agreement and prove that additional resources are required, CPNC will make such recommendations to the Treasury Board.

Clearly, the future of the college system and teachers' contract negotiations are closely linked. We are demanding the return of what we once had—provincial committees representing disciplines and programs, composed of teacher representatives. We are also demanding that the province-wide ministerial diploma—the DEC (Diplome d'études collégial, now issued by the Ministry of Education—be maintained.

We must mobilize to support high-quality and accessible college education.

Time Line: September 29- October 2, 2004

Strategically we must remain united in our work-to-rule campaign, at least until Education Minister Reid's reform for Cegeps—the so-called *"Green Paper"* is made public in November 2004.

Our FAC-Nego committee has set up four negotiation meetings with the CPNC (Oct. 7 + 29, Nov. 10 + 24) in order to combine the dossier on Recognition of Working Hours (RWH-173 hours) with our Nego demands on workload. They will seek a final agreement on RWH and a summary of the discussions will be presented at the November Federative Assembly in Montreal. Should an agreement not be reached, the FAC-Nego committee will conclude the RWH dossier with the CPNC at a parallel table before the end of the current year.

Syndically yours,
Sylvie

SRAM*:

The new—not improved—application system under consideration at Vanier**

Why is the Academic Dean considering a change in the way students apply to Vanier College? What effects would the SRAM system have on our departments and programs? What is wrong with the current application system? Can we make improvements to the current system and avoid the pitfalls of SRAM? What are the pitfalls of SRAM? These are questions every department and program need to be asking the Academic Dean, and we need to ask them soon.

Vanier's long-standing association with Dawson, Marianopolis and Champlain has worked well for us over the years. Applying students indicate their first and second choice. The list of students not accepted at one college is forwarded to the next college on the students' list.

It is a system that ensures local autonomy, control and a great deal of flexibility. At our own discretion Vanier can keep open incomplete files, contact prospective students to inform them of this, provide access to student application information as soon as it arrives (eg. February, for the Music Dept.), accept late applications, and apply flexibility in program transfers.

These are important advantages for all programs, but for some—Music, Explorations, and any program for which applicants are interviewed—these advantages are crucial.

And there is money involved as well. For each student who makes Vanier his or her first choice, the College receives a \$30 application fee—a rather substantial revenue for the College—somewhere in the \$150,000 - \$190,000 range. SRAM would pocket this revenue and then charge Vanier for their service. At what cost? Would investing in improvements of our own processing system—a one-time only expenditure—be a better way to spend application revenues and avoid SRAM service costs?

The staff in the Vanier Admissions Office is patient, friendly, efficient and understanding; they will accept late applications and help students with incomplete files; they have developed open, cooperative relationships with departments/programs and are sensitive to our vast heterogeneous student population.

SRAM is a specialized application clearing house; incomplete files are returned to applicants and late applications are not accepted. There are three rounds of applications, but you can only apply for the 2nd round if you have been rejected on the first, and so on. John Abbott, Heritage in Gatineau and 26 French Cegeps—whose clientele is far more homogeneous than Vanier's—are on the SRAM system. The French-only web site can be found at www.sram.

Why is the Academic Dean considering changing Vanier's application system? Should Joint Coordinators convene to discuss the ramifications of such a change?

* SRAM: service régional d'admission du Montréal métropolitain

** Editor's Note : This article, compiled by the Editor, raises more questions than it answers and there are very likely more questions that need to be asked. And answered! SRAM first came to my attention at the Sept. 27 meeting of Department Coordinators and Association Council during a discussion about the possibility of reconvening Joint Coordinators. Thanks to Nadia Turbide for providing most of the information. This hasty attempt to expose potential problems with SRAM will be followed up in future Newsletters.

Vice-Chair Resigns from Academic Council

At the Council meeting of September 24 the main items of business included a report on the search for the new Director General, the creation of a task force on the future of Vanier College, and the resignation of the Vice-chair of Council.

Initially there was some confusion and difficulty as a VCTA representative to Council made a motion to adjust the agenda to move the items regarding the DG search to the top of the agenda. However, there were insufficient faculty members present to carry the motion, with 6 votes in favour, and 6 votes opposed, and 3 abstentions. This resulted in the Vice-Chair casting the deciding vote, and the agenda was adjusted as per the motion.

Following approval of the minutes of the Council meeting of September 3 the Vice-Chair reported on the activities of DG Search Committee. As the letter from Chair of the Board and Search Committee, Deborah Buszard, to the Vanier community indicated, the search committee is seeking input from the various constituent bodies in the college regarding their perspectives on the search criteria, as well as the main issues, opportunities and challenges that the new DG will need to be familiar with. This input should be forwarded to the search committee by November 1, 2004, care of Sam Kay. The search committee is also in the process of interviewing representatives from a number of executive search firms preparatory to selecting a firm to assist in the search.

In addition, the search committee will also be recommending to the Board and Council that the current Director General be appointed as Interim Director General from February 2005 to June 2005.

In order to begin to prepare the input from Academic Council for the DG search committee, the Academic Dean proposed the creation of an ad hoc sub-committee of Council, with a mandate to prepare an initial draft of recommendations. The proposed composition of the ad hoc criteria committee included the Vice-chair of council and one representative from each of the constituent bodies: faculty, students, support staff, professionals, and administration.

The VCTA representative to Council, however, proposed that there should be more proportional representation on the sub-committee, and since faculty make up the majority of the Council members, faculty should make up the majority of the sub-committee membership. This led to a number of council members pointing out that having a larger sub-committee would no doubt delay the progress of the committee's work, and faculty also have the opportunity to submit their recommendations to the search committee through the VCTA as well as Council. The original motion was then voted on and passed, with all faculty abstaining from the vote.

The faculty representatives to Council then prepared to leave the meeting, but the Vice-Chair asked them to remain for one more related item of business, which was the resignation of the Vice-Chair from his position on Council. The Vice-Chair

distributed copies of his letter of resignation to Council members. The most significant portions of this letter read as follows:

It is with regret that I feel I must resign from the position of Vice-Chair of Academic Council for the 2004-05 academic year.

Unfortunately, the current situation of tension and difficulty that exists between faculty and administration within the College has meant that I do not feel either effective or comfortable in fulfilling the duties and responsibilities associated with this position. It is becoming clear that these tensions and difficulties are unlikely to improve significantly in the near future. In fact, given the radical changes to the college system being proposed by the Ministry and their impact on Vanier College, I fear that this situation will only get worse.

I am willing to continue in the position of Vice-Chair of Council up to and including the scheduled Council meeting of October 15, 2004. I am also willing to continue to serve as a non-voting member of the Director General Search Committee until that time.

I feel that currently the best use of my time and energy will be within the framework of my responsibilities to the English Department and the Faculty of General Studies.

Following the distribution of this letter and the departure of the faculty members from Council the Academic Dean reported on the remaining business from the agenda. This included finding faculty members to participate in the Teaching Excellence Award Committee, an item which was not completed. The most significant announcement was that of the formation of a task force on the future of Vanier College.

The creation of this task force was announced by the Director General at the Board of Directors meeting of September 21. It follows on the meeting between the Minister of Education, Pierre Reid, and the DGs of the Montreal area Cegeps on Sept. 20. This task force will be mandated to deal with Vanier's reactions to and actions toward the proposed changes to the college system. These changes, which should be formally made public some time between October and December, are still only conjecture, but all signs seem to indicate that a radical and fundamental transformation of the Cegep system is imminent.

The DG suggested to the Board that the government may implement these changes as early as Fall 2006. The recommended composition of the task force includes members from the Board of Directors and representatives from each of the constituent areas of the college community.

Ron Curtis, Vice-Chair of Council (temporary)

Ron Curtis teaches English, and shares coordination of the English Department.

October: Women's History Month



by *Arlene Steiger*

October is Women's History Month. This year Status of Women Canada marks the occasion with the celebration of the women responsible for having women legally declared *persons* in 1929, through an appeal to the Privy Council of London. They are known, today, as the Famous Five: Emily Murphy, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby, Nellie McClung, and Henrietta Muir Edwards.

As of October 13, 2004, the image of these women who overturned the Supreme Court decision that the word "he" in the British North America Act meant that women were not persons and could therefore not serve in government will appear on the back of the Canadian fifty dollar bill.

We have not leapt into this celebration. The Women's Studies Program display in the Carrefour (October 4-15) seeks to develop its underlying themes and to expand reflection on the significance of women's history. In three, small display cases, we invite students to consider the exclusion of women but also to appreciate the many different ways in which women have addressed exclusion. Women have been active agents and many of our struggles have challenged existing social, economic, political, and legal frameworks.

We hope that our display will encourage students to explore the specific histories and experiences of women. These are not always part of the official record. Around the world, women have insisted that their economic, political, and legal status, their childcare arrangements, access to birth control, and experience of rape and sexual violence become part of this record. The process, slow and uneven in its results, is irrevocable.

Women's history includes the Famous Five and also the women who are not famous. Women's history includes the specific national histories of women and also the solidarity of an international movement become visible in Beijing in 1995 and in the World March of Women 2000.

This is a lot of "stuff" to put into three display cases in the Carrefour. We offer some points of entry to reflection and discussion. We count on you to continue the conversation, in your classrooms, in your interactions with students. Let us know what happens.

Arlene Steiger Ext. 7291

e-mail: steigera@vaniercollege.qc.ca

Arlene teaches Humanities, coordinates Women's Studies as well as the team-taught college complementary course, Alternatives for Women. She is the force behind Vanier's annual week of activities for International Women's Day.

Editor's apology: Due to numerous hold-ups in the production of this newsletter issue, the display to which Arlene refers has already come down. However, Women's History Month continues.

Promised the Moon

by *Stephanie Nolen*

Everyone knows the names of astronauts John Glenn and Alan Shepard, but few are familiar with Gerri Cobb or Bernice Steadman, just two of the so-called Mercury13—a group of extraordinary women secretly recruited for space training in the early 1960s. Passing gruelling physical and psychological tests, these women, all pilots, consistently outperformed the men in many key areas, but not one of them led their country into space.

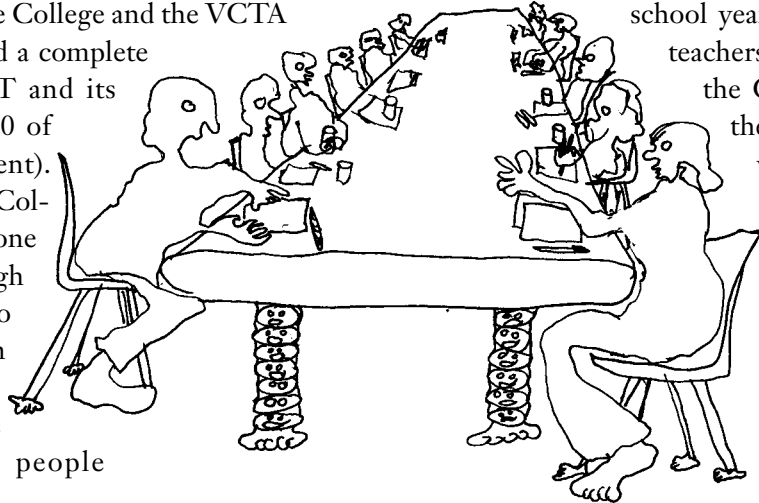
For *Promised the Moon*, journalist Stephanie Nolen tracked down the 11 surviving members of the Mercury 13 to learn more about the program and the political and cultural climate that led to its mysterious cancellation.

(Book description from Amazon.com; submitted by Lyne Marie Laroque, Sociology, Research Methods and Explorations)

UNION 101: CRT BY CHARLES F. LEVINE

The CRT (French acronym for Labor Relations Committee) is the place where virtually all important legal decisions that bind the College and the VCTA are made. (You will find a complete description of the CRT and its powers in Article 4-3.00 of the Collective Agreement). Each party (that is, the College and the Union) has one vote on the CRT, though there must be at least two representatives from each side present for a meeting to be valid (there are a maximum of seven people named to each “team.”).

If the two sides reach an agreement, the agreement is legally binding on both parties. If there is no agreement, the College may exercise its “droit de gérance” and proceed in the manner it sees fit. If the Union does not accept the College’s decision, a grievance may be filed



The CRT deals with an enormous variety of things, from household chores like the annual calendar for the school year, to attempts to fire tenured teachers. Every Spring, for example, the CRT discusses allocations for the following year over a three week period. During that time, tenured teachers who are being laid off are invited to have their situation explained and discussed.

I have had the pleasure of serving on the CRT for more than twenty years. I highly recommend it to anyone who has an interest in participating in the functioning of the College in the place where real decisions are made.

Charles Levine is a dinosaur who spent many years on the CRT, the VCTA Executive, and the Executive of FAC, our Provincial Federation. He also teaches Political Science.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The maximum amount available to individuals has been raised to \$500. Teachers with less than a full time workload receive the proportional funds. i.e. half a workload = maximum of \$250.

Applications and guidelines are available at the VCTA Office: C101. Applications should be submitted to the PD Committee, c/o the VCTA Office - C101, 3 weeks before the start of any activity.

There is no need to submit an application for Employee Fitness activities, but you do need a receipt to claim the expense.

The VCTA General Assembly of October 12, 2004, voted to continue the practice of combining 2 years of PD funds for one event.

Members of the bipartite PD Committee for the 2004-05 year are Dave Oram for the VCTA and Nancy Wargny for the Administration.

The Open Door Network: A Step toward Inclusiveness at Vanier College

BY NANCY LECLERC

Glossary of terms appears at end of article.

The subject of same-sex marriage comes up in Janie's Humanities class. Some students wonder why it would be allowed. "It's not natural!" one student exclaims." Another student is angry and states: "It's disgusting to think of two men or two women together. It's just wrong and I will never accept it!" The teacher seems uncomfortable with the discussion but dismisses the comments, saying that everyone is entitled to their own opinion.

Janie feels horrible. Since the age of 14, she has been grappling with her attraction to other girls. She is afraid that if anyone finds out, she will be stigmatized. She is afraid that her family and friends will reject her. She has just learned that even her teacher feels uncomfortable with this issue. She does not know what to do.

Samuel is in the locker room after practice one afternoon. Three of his team-mates come in. Two of them are making fun of the third because he missed a shot that they feel should have been easy. "I can't believe you missed it! My little sister could've gotten it," one of them claims. The second one exclaims loudly: "You're such a faggot, man!" They all laugh. The coach chuckles and turns away.

Samuel laughs but inside, he feels horrible. His uncle has been living with a man for 10 years. His uncle's partner is family to him so he hates the thought of laughing at the word "faggot". But he feels that he has no choice. If he speaks up, they will think that he is one too.

We have all heard about the statistical claim that 10% of the population is homosexual. If this is true, an average of four students in a typical introductory course of 40 students is gay or lesbian. This should be a good enough

reason for teachers to want to educate themselves on the realities of these young people.

But that is not the whole story. Gays and lesbians are not the only people who suffer from *homophobia**

There is a wide range of sexual orientations between the extremes of exclusive heterosexuality and exclusive homosexuality. And there are those who do not feel comfortable with the gender to which they were assigned at birth and who would rather express themselves as another gender. Yet other people feel that they were born with the wrong anatomical sex and that their physical body does not match their gender.

Not only do these people suffer from homophobia when the "mainstream" lumps them all into the category of "homosexual" or "gay", they are also frequently marginalized within what is sometimes referred to as the "gay community".

If we include the youths who are attracted to both sexes or who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, the number of "queer"* students per class is probably higher than what one would have previously thought. If we go a step further and include those students who are sensitive to *queer** issues because they have an *LGBT2IQ** person in their family or as a friend, then we realise that we have a large number of students who are being hurt by *homophobia** and *heterocentrism**

As faculty, we have a large role to play in helping to sensitize students. We have the potential to help make our students feel safe: safe against physical and verbal violence, safe against discrimination, safe to have access to information and resources that would help them in their questioning. We have the potential to create a positive space in which all of our students, queer or not, can fulfill their need for self-acceptance and self-identity.

In order to tap this potential, a few steps are needed. We first need to realize that homophobia differs from other forms of discrimination such as those based on sex, ethnicity and religion. Queer or questioning students

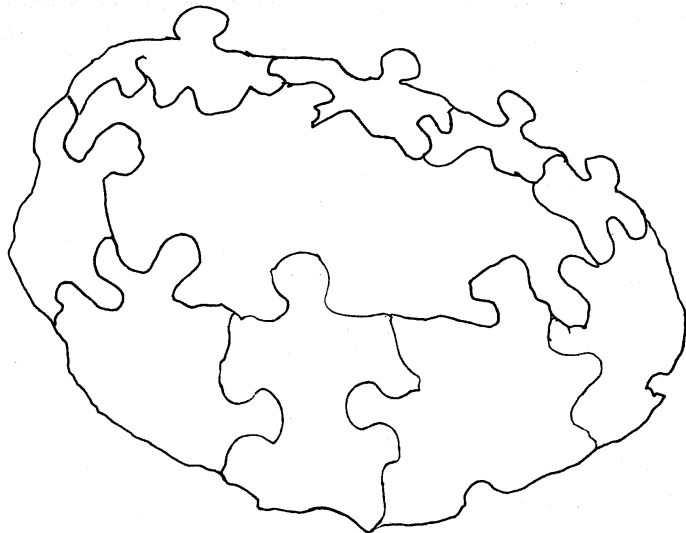
Continued on page 9

often receive no support at home and face the same risk of being ostracized at home as they do among their peers. Therefore, special measures are needed to make sure that these students know that there are resources available to them.

Secondly, we need to be aware of the variety of issues that may affect these students. Assuming that anyone who is not heterosexual is gay or lesbian can often do much damage to those who do not fit into either of these categories. The realization that one does not even fit into the “other” category can lead a young, or not-so-young, person to feel isolated, frustrated and shameful. It is therefore essential that faculty be made aware that the rainbow has many colours and that these colours are all worthy of respect.

Finally, we need to take measures to let the student body know that homophobia, along with other forms of discrimination and abuse, are not tolerated at Vanier College and that faculty members can be approached by students who want to discuss these issues in a confidential manner regardless of their own orientation/identity.

To this end, we are working on creating what we call *The Open Door Network*. Based on similar projects in other Canadian colleges often called “Safe Spaces” or



“Positive Spaces”, we will be providing training to interested faculty and staff to make them aware of the different realities faced by *LGBTT2IQ** youth as well as to make them more sensitive to the needs of these students.

Individuals who complete the training—in the form of interactive workshops at Vanier College—will receive a sticker for their office door showing that they are a part of *The Open Door Network*. They will also receive a list of resources that they can share with students who may approach them.

To begin to make the Vanier community aware of some of these issues and to introduce *The Open Door Network* project, we will be holding a panel discussion during the Social Science Festival on Thursday, October 21 at 11:30 in the Auditorium. We urge faculty, staff and administration to attend. You may also consult the links at the end of this article for more information on *LGBTT2IQ* issues.

Nancy Leclerc started teaching Anthropology at Vanier in 2003. She has been involved in a non-profit organization in Montreal's LGBT community for 3 years and is the proud mother of a 5-year old boy named Jacob.

Open Door Network Contacts at Vanier:

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Maureen Jones: jonesm@vaniercollege.qc.ca

Lisa Jorgensen: jorgensj@vaniercollege.qc.ca

Nancy Leclerc: leclerca@vaniercollege.qc.ca

Useful links

<http://www.alterheros.com>

<http://www.helpingout.ca/students/aboutsexuality.html>

Glossary of Terms:

Heterocentrism: An unquestioned assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is the natural state while other variations are “abnormal”. Also known as “heterosexism.”

Homophobia: A fear of real or perceived homosexuality that may lead to verbal or physical attacks or to exclusion.

LGBTT2IQ: Commonly known as “the alphabet soup”, this acronym comes in many forms. This particular form stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Two-Spirited, Intersexed, Queer.

Queer: A previously derogatory term that has been reclaimed by many *LGBTT2IQ* people as a positive term that includes all of these categories.

Report from the Vanier Board of Directors

Mark Prentice and Hode Erdogan Faculty Representatives, Board of Directors

The first Board meeting of this school year was held on Tues. Sept. 21. It was a rather short meeting, with mostly housekeeping issues.

There were two items of interest to the community. The first relates to statistics for this semester's registration. We are now the 7th largest CEGEP in the province, and the second largest Anglophone CEGEP. Our numbers are up 2.7% from last fall and we should end up with about 5630 students after validation.

Regarding gender, 54% of our students are female and 46% are male. As for language, 15% of our students

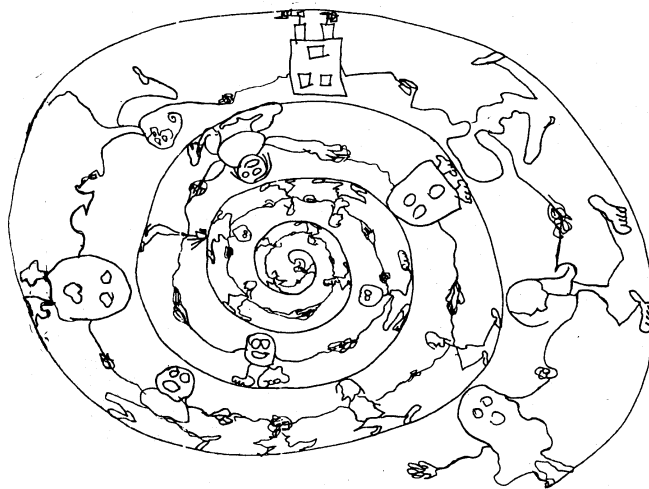
identify French as their mother tongue, 42% English and 43% other. Roughly 70% of our students are registered in pre-university programs and 30% in technologies. The bulk of our students are aged between 17 and 19 years of age.

The second item of interest is the creation of a *Task Force on the Future of Vanier College*. This committee, under the chairmanship of the Director General, will explore the consequences, effects and impact of the Government's reform of Colleges as well as Vanier's positions, reactions and strategies.

This committee is composed of the following members of the community: the Director General, the Chairperson of the Board, the Vice-Chairperson of the Board, the Academic Dean, the Secretary General, the president of the Association of Vanier College Administrators, a parent representative from the Board, a faculty representative from the Board, the Vice-Chair of Academic Council, the assistant to the Director General, the President of the VCTA, the president of the Professionals' Association, the president of the support staff union, the president of the VCSA.

SOCIAL SCIENCE FESTIVAL: OCT. 18 -22

Making Diversity Work



Great Speakers, Films, Student Panel, Archaeological Dig
Schedule: www.vaniercollege.qc.ca/socialscience/
Info: Myriam Mansour, ext. 7329 or mansourm@vaniercollege.qc.ca

Reflections on Becoming a Teacher

BY MARC BELANGER

When I was a young boy, I had no clear idea what I wanted to be when I grew up. According to my mood and current interest, I alternatively wanted to be an artist, a rock star, a writer, or a scientist. I drifted through school and found myself at university enrolled in Sociology.

I ended up in Sociology for a few reasons: because when my mother returned to University, that's what she took, and I would furtively read her textbooks because I found them interesting; because in Grade 13 in Ontario I took a Sociology course and got the highest mark in the class, so I presumed that this was something I was good at; because McGill accepted me into that program.

Personally, it was a good choice – I found the courses stimulating and did reasonably well. After doing all that work for the love of the game and obtaining a Master's degree, I belatedly turned myself to the obvious question – what do Sociologists do for a living?

By this point I was married and my wife was pregnant with our first child, so as a responsible husband and father-to-be, I went out and got a job.

I ended up working in the food business as a cafeteria manager. I tried to incorporate my sociological training into budgets, production sheets, and labour schedules, but this was a far stretch of the imagination. I still read my beloved Sociology books for pleasure, but braced myself for the mind-numbing trek to retirement.

It was my wife who insisted that I should apply for a job teaching. In one unwitting but fortuitous moment, I dropped off a CV at Vanier College at the precise time that there was a posting for a Sociology teacher in Cont. Ed.

When I got the call to come for an interview the following week, I did something I had never done before in my professional life – I took a day off in order to prepare an outline, make some rough notes, and read the text for the course. I really wanted this, but had so often been disappointed that I went in with guarded expectations. That fateful night, Jock Mackay called me to tell me I had the job. At home, we celebrated.



Now I had to go and teach this class. I sat in Jake's Mall, looked over my notes, chain-smoked and guzzled coffee to calm my nerves. What was I doing? Could I do this? Think of your family, I told myself. What will the students be like? Will they like me? Will they laugh at me? Will they be smarter than me?

As I looked at what I had prepared, a sudden panic hit me, right in the gut. There was no way that I had three hours worth of material here! Oh my God, what was I going to do? Like a prisoner going to the gallows, I entered the class.

***As I looked at what I had prepared, a sudden panic hit me, right in the gut.
There was no way that I had three hours worth of material here!***

How should I start – with a lame joke, an extensive biography from my primary school days onwards, take attendance? Yeah, take attendance. As I called out the names, my voice sounded muffled and echoed in my head. I could feel the blood rushing to my face and my hands were trembling. After going through my list, I noticed that some people were not there. The first class and I had already turned them off the course – man, I was a lousy teacher, because everyone knows that all the students always come to the first class.

I solemnly passed out the outline and read over it. Okay, that's done, now take out your notes and teach. I started reading. The big guy at the back just put his head down on the desk, but at least no one was walking out. I could tell that they were fading. A polite silence hung over the room, and all I could hear was my own quivering voice

Continued on page 12

booming inside my head.

In desperation, I turned around and wrote something on the board – **SOCIOLOGY**. The sullen mob behind me suddenly sprang to life! As I turned back, they were all taking out papers, pens, books, and pencils to copy down what I had written. I beamed at them like a Cheshire cat. Giddy with excitement, I turned back to the board and slowly, deliberately wrote **WHAT IS** before the initial word, and with a theatrical flourish, placed a beautiful question mark at the end of this sublime sentence.

Suddenly feeling like Plato at his Academy, I turned back to the class and stared at them expectantly. “What is Sociology?” I asked them in my best imitation of Orson Welles. They all stared back like deer caught in the headlights. “Anybody?” I pleaded. Finally, one poor soul raised his hand. I resisted the urge to rush over and embrace him.

“Yes” I asked.

“It’s like when you work with, like, homeless people and bums”, he said.

Oh, you dunce, you got it wrong. I asked a simple, beautiful question, I even wrote it on the board for you, and you got it wrong. You have let me down, I feel disap-

***Since that initial ordeal, I have discovered
that I truly enjoy teaching.
What’s not to like?***

pointment to the very depths of my soul. You have made fools of both of us.

“That’s right”, I said, deftly salvaging this awful situation. “Sociology is a *science*”, I paraphrased loosely.

After that, things improved. My voice and colour both returned to normal, the class took notes and answered questions politely and sometimes correctly, and when I let them go for a break, most of them actually came back! Maybe I wasn’t so bad at this after all. That night, my wife asked me how it went. I told her that it went well, and that I really enjoyed it. I was telling the truth.

Buoyed by this initial success, I prepared an even more elaborate presentation for the next class. Having already demonstrated my glib rhetoric, I would truly amaze them this time by revealing my capacity to speak fluently **and** operate a piece of technological equipment – the overhead projector – *simultaneously!*

An unanticipated glitch in my plans lay in my poor choice of acetate. When I slid this immaculate, ink-jet printed sheet onto the machine, a portion of my carefully enumerated gems of wisdom transferred to my hand in an inky, smudgy mess. I stared down at my blackened hand. In a crazy moment, I envisioned the students lining up and coming forward one-by-one to literally read my palm, but quickly dismissed that idea. I apologized to the students for the mess, and deciphered the smear as best I could.

Since that initial ordeal, I have discovered that I truly enjoy teaching. What’s not to like? When I was working for company S. in the private sector, I was putting in an arduous 50-60 hours per week, and sometimes more. I never had much time off in the summer. Teaching allows me to be home nearly every afternoon to do homework with my kids. I have considerable autonomy to design my courses and to set the standards.

I spend many hours outside of class reading, preparing, correcting, thinking, all with the goal of making the class more interesting, relevant, and informative for the students. I do this not out of obligation (though technically, this *is* what teachers are supposed to do), but because I truly want to. Teaching is not a job, it is a lifestyle.

Last year I was teaching a Research Methods class. A student was having a difficult time choosing an appropriate topic. We discussed it, and slowly I watched as he brought his ideas together, logically, systematically, beautifully. I was witnessing the miracle of learning, the sweetness of accomplishment. How many jobs allow you to see this on a regular basis?

Some of you might recognize and appreciate the situations, thoughts, and feelings I have described. I wrote this to share with you some of my own experiences. We should all give thanks that we have been blessed with this most wonderful of life works – teaching.

In his short time at Vanier, Marc Belanger has taught several Sociology courses, Research Methods, the Integrative Project, the Explorations courses Work-Future-and-Yourself and Skills for the 21st Century. He has rewritten course descriptions for the Sociology Web Site and is generally the first to volunteer when a departmental task comes up. Always ready for a challenge, he is currently preparing to teach Quantitative Methods in H05.

My Long Slide into Retirement Oblivion

BY HANNS WERNECKE

For the last few years I have been practicing what it would feel like to be retired by only working a quarter work load, and doing it all during the fall semester. That gave me time to travel a bit and see many parts of the world I hadn't experienced before; but there is still a lot more to see!

This year I turned seventy-five, and it's time to retire full-time while I still have some of my buttons. Perhaps some people feel that I have already overstayed my welcome. So this semester is the last one that I'll be working part-time at Vanier, and after the end of the fall semester I'll be gone. Not that I am totally looking forward to it since I'll miss the contact with students and colleagues and the gang in the Fitness Centre around 7:00 am.

On the other hand, my connection with Vanier College will not be completely severed since I have been elected Vice-President of the VCRTA. In some ways, this completes the circle: in the early years, I served as the Vice-President of the VCTA (under Roger Brassard and Diane Butler) and on the Board of Governors (Little, Shanahan and Scarpaleggia). How things have changed over the years!

In the meantime, I have tried to develop new interests. For a few years I have been active in a seniors organization for retired educators (LARSE) where I help put together the quarterly newsletter. Every February, for a week, my wife Mickey and I help interview senior high school students applying for one of the West Island Chamber of Commerce scholarships; the experience is marvellous. Mickey and I had the opportunity to connect with Elderhostel and both of us occasionally act as group leaders; we are responsible for groups as they travel from one location to another in Eastern Canada. The pay isn't great, but the people are, and so are the places we get to visit.

Luckily, Mickey and I have both managed to rack up the maximum 35 years of pension credits, so our pensions allow us to splurge a bit now and then. That includes the travel mentioned above and visiting our daughter in



Minneapolis, or treating her when she is visiting us in Montreal.

Like many retired and semi-retired people, we have found that there is never any lack of things to do: Two theatre and one ballet subscription, and all sorts of cultural events that Montreal is famous for. In the summer, I help run a bicycling group for seniors; we meet once a week and do about 30-40 km each trip. And then Mickey and I are part of a going-out-for-dinner group that meets fairly regularly. Of course there are all the projects around the house and the country place that are still waiting to be done. Well, one thing at a time.

I am looking forward to the occasional visit to Vanier, maybe the Happy Hour or Corn Roast and similar events to see old friends again. I've often been suspected of being cheap and a free meal obviously has a certain allure for me!

Hanns Werneke has taught Physics at Vanier College since 1970, and before that he taught elementary and high school on the West Island. Hanns spent much of his lost youth in school camps all over occupied Europe during the Second World War when he wasn't dodging bombs in Berlin, was apprenticed (in the medieval sense) to a master gardener in 1945, escaped to the West in 1947, lived in Germany, Sweden, the US and Canada (where he spent most of his adult life). These experiences made him the curmudgeon that he is today.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HARASSMENT

BY MARILYN MORE

Over the past few years the Office for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment has seen an increase in the number of complaints that fall outside of the scope of human rights legislation. Complaints of this nature are commonly referred to as *personal harassment*, *psychological harassment* or *bullying*.

In December 2002, the Quebec government passed Bill 143 amending the Act respecting labour standards in Quebec. On June 1st 2004 provisions dealing with psychological harassment came into force. This innovative legislation means that all employees have a right to a work environment free from psychological harassment. It imposes an obligation on employers to take reasonable action to prevent psychological harassment and to put a stop to it whenever they become aware of such behaviour.

The definition of psychological harassment is:

Any vexatious behaviour—in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures—that affects an employee’s dignity or psychological or physical integrity and that results in a harmful work environment for the employee.

Moreover, a single serious incidence of such behaviour that has a lasting harmful effect may constitute psychological harassment. It must then be demonstrated that this behaviour affects the person’s dignity or physical or psychological integrity and that it results in a harmful work environment.

Vanier’s soon to be adopted revised Discrimination & Harassment Prevention policy, now referred to as the Human Rights Policy, includes definitions of psychological harassment and bullying and procedures to deal with complaints when they arise.



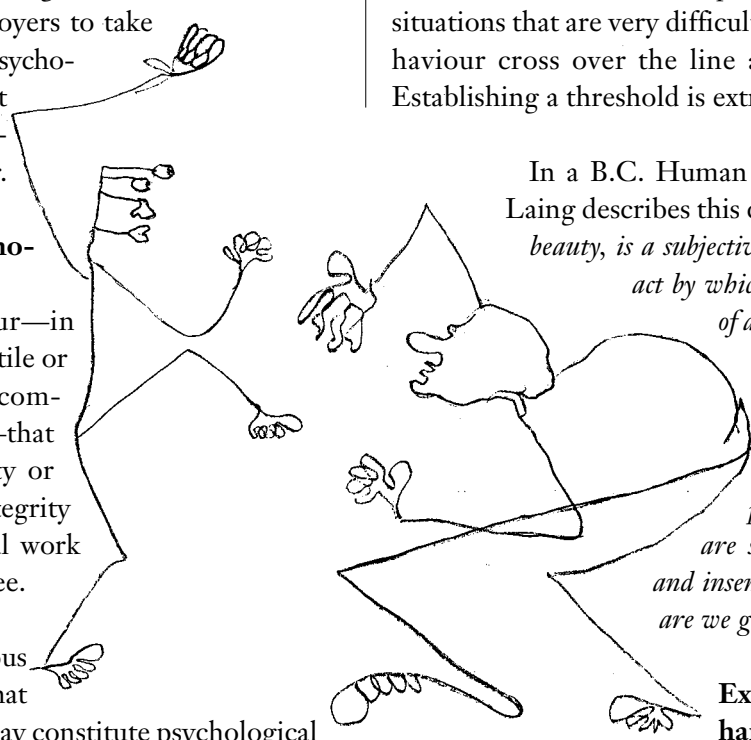
The policy sends a clear message that the College is committed to providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment that is free from any sort of harassment. It is currently in its final stage of revision and has been sent to the various constituent groups for consultation.

It has been my experience that complaints of this nature often stem from complex and ambiguous conflict situations that are very difficult to define. When does behaviour cross over the line and become harassment? Establishing a threshold is extremely challenging.

In a B.C. Human Rights decision, Heather Laing describes this challenge: “*Harassment like beauty, is a subjective notion. For example every act by which a person causes some form of anxiety to another could be labelled as harassment. But if this is so, there can be no safe interaction between human beings. Sadly, we are not perfect. All of us on occasion are stupid, heedless, thoughtless and insensitive. The question is when are we guilty of harassment?*”

Examples of psychological harassment:

- Staff continually imitate a co-worker’s speech impediment
- Members of a department are so divided about political issues that they single out certain members of the department by making rude remarks about their personalities and physical appearances to staff, students and faculty outside of the department



- A manager of a department deliberately sabotages a staff member's work performance by constantly changing work guidelines, setting impossible deadlines, withholding necessary information
- A faculty member continually communicates with his students by yelling and calling them stupid and defends his actions by suggesting that his students are just overly sensitive

We can prevent harassment by being aware that another individual's culture or values may cause him/her to place a different interpretation on actions that may seem harmless to you. What you identify as humour may be perceived as humiliation or insult by another. Harassment poisons the college community. Whether it is intentional or unintentional, harassment demonstrates a lack of respect for the dignity and character of the individuals whom it targets.

The Office for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment assists individuals and departments with the resolution of complaints and provides education on what constitutes harassment. The Office may be consulted with no obligation to file a complaint. If you wish to arrange a classroom or department presentation please contact me.

*Marilyn More, Coordinator
Office for the Prevention of Discrimination
& Harassment
N123, 7568*

Marilyn More has worked at Vanier since 1973. She started in Student Services in Placement and went to Academic Advising in the mid-eighties. She has handled the harassment dossier since 1985, when she worked with Keith Barrett (English teacher, now retired) on a volunteer basis. The position became official in 1995. Marilyn has worked with our athletes as long as she can remember and has been the Exploration adviser since its inception.

Poetry Corner

the meek have inherited

if I suffer at this
typewriter
think how I'd feel
among the lettuce-
pickers of Salinas?

I think of the men
I've known in
factories
with no way to
get out –
choking while living
choking while laughing
at Bob Hope or Lucille
Ball while 2 or 3 children beat
tennis balls against
the walls.

some suicides are never
recorded.

Charles Bukowski. (1982). *Love is a
Dog From Hell*.
Black Sparrow Press

Black Sparrow Press bio: An internationally famous figure in contemporary poetry and prose, Charles Bukowski was born in Andernach, Germany in 1920, and brought to the United States at the age of three. He was raised in Los Angeles and lived there for fifty years. He died in San Pedro, California on March 9, 1994 at the age of seventy-three, shortly after completing his last novel. He published his first story when he was twenty-four and began writing poetry at the age of thirty-five. He published more than forty-five books of poetry and prose in his lifetime. All of his books have now been published in translation in over a dozen languages and his popularity remains undiminished.

Thanks to Mark Prentice for this submission.

Paying to Play:

Do you have a



BY LINDA MACPHERSON

in your classroom?

Do you have a Cheetah in your classroom? Perhaps you have come across one in our hallways? A Cheetah? Why it's a Vanier College athlete of course! They come in all sizes and shapes from petite—5' 2" – 104 lb. flag football player—to XXX large—6' 6" 280 lb. football player. Most are not distinguishable from their classmates, unless you look at their day-to-day schedule.

For the pleasure of representing their school, they carry an academic load the same as any other Vanier College student. When other students are headed off campus for home or part time jobs, the athletes make their way to the Sports Complex. AAA athletes (football and men's and women's basketball) practice 4-5 nights per week between 6:00-9:00 in the evening and play games on the weekends. All the other teams practice 2-3 times and play 1-2 games per week. Many of them also manage to squeeze a few hours of part time work in to help pay for their school fees. Incredibly, given their schedules, the average athlete does better in the classroom than the average student. (1)

It is a privilege to represent your school on one of the athletic teams, and with privilege comes responsibility. One of the responsibilities is to pay athletic fees to help defray costs of putting teams on the field or court, anywhere between a low of \$145 to \$275 if you are on the football team. This is common practice at most, if not all Cegeps, post government budget cuts of the mid nineties.

If we're not able to fully support our athletes financially, how about getting out to some games and supporting them with our presence? You'll find an incredible wealth of talent, students competing for the love of the game and their love of the Cheetahs!

(1) *Data from the Quebec Minister of Education, compiled by Robert Dussault, ARSCIM, available at:*
http://www.arscim.qc.ca/my_html/reus-scol-02-03.pdf



Linda Macpherson has been at Vanier College since 1980—first doing a “stage” as a recreation student from Concordia University—and since then as a member of the Athletics Department: from Intramural Coordinator to Assistant Athletics Coordinator, to Athletics Coordinator from 1995 to the present. Linda is also presently the Convenor for Women's Basketball of the Canadian Colleges Athletic Association.

Breaking Out of Sanctuary

BY ERIC LAMOUREUX

The summer's over and memories of July are already fading. Sitting in the sun, relaxing, spending time with friends...it was all pretty mindless. We had an election, that much I recall. Otherwise, it all mixes into a pleasant blur.

Not to Alvaro, Mireya and Marcela Vega, the Colombian refugee family living in the basement of St. Andrew's-Norwood United Church, on de l'Eglise, mere blocks away from Vanier. July 2004 marked one year they had been in sanctuary.

Last spring, a group of Vanier staff and faculty formed the Vanier Vega Support Committee (VVSC). With the election heating up, the Liberal Minister of Immigration, Judy Sgro, made encouraging noises about reviewing their case. With the election past, those noises stopped abruptly.

Now more than ever this family needs help and we at Vanier are uniquely placed to offer it. Alvaro was a professor of finance back home. Mireya worked in a bank, was an active member of her church and volunteered with food and shelter programs for street children in Bogotá. Marcela is the age of our students.

They have not been outside in fourteen months. They need dental and medical attention, financial help, human contact and, most of all, our voices. As educated members of Canadian civil society, we must speak out against such injustice.

The Vanier community has so far stepped up to the challenge admirably. The Vanier College Teachers' Association has been generous in its support. Other unions are getting on board—support staff, professionals and our federation, FAC.

Classes have gone over to visit and learn about the situation; it has been a moving experience every time. Teachers and students have been tutoring Marcela or learning Spanish from Alvaro. The family has made it into the news, most recently on *Le Point*, *Radio Canada*.

More help is still needed, and it will be until Minister Sgro changes her mind. The VVSC asks you to please consider getting involved with us. We arrange visits to the church, fundraising activities, schooling for Marcela, and advocacy campaigns. Our information sheets have been circulated around the school and are always available if you wish to bring this up in your classes.

Comments by Minister Sgro sparked much media debate this summer about the legality of churches offering sanctuary. The argument is moot; sanctuary is not a legal concept. In its very nature it is an act of civil disobedience, to protest unconscionable actions of government. Those involved will not accept this family being sent back to torture and possibly their deaths on technicalities in a refugee law that offers absolutely no avenue for appeal.

If you wish to write to the Minister of Immigration and express your opinion, her address is:

The Honourable Judy Sgro
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6
(No postage is required.)

To contact the VVSC, please write to
vvsc@fclass.vaniercollege.qc.ca



Marcela, Mireya and Alvaro Vega in Sanctuary

Eric Lamoureux teaches History, Research Methods and Explorations at Vanier. He started here in 2003. He sits on the Board of Directors of the Montreal City Mission, a local community organization helping refugees, and he volunteers with the Social Justice Committee, a Montreal-based international solidarity NGO. During the Social Science Festival, his dynamic presentation, *Who Owes Who? Or, How the Third World got to be Third* is back by popular demand. Bring your students! Invite a colleague! (Wed. Oct. 20, 15:30-17:00 in B325)

Cégep André-Laurendeau voted to contribute \$100 to the Vega Family Fund at their General Assembly. They plan to make a motion at the Nov. Federative Assembly to ask FAC's local unions to join their action.

Staff Cafeteria Update

Going...going...

Photo by Mark Prentice

The mighty power of the press and the VCTA Executive efforts at the Liaison Committee have at long last yielded some movement toward improving the Staff Cafeteria. The dismal state of the Staff Caf shown in this photo should soon be a relic of its sad past. Painting began on Oct. 14, 2004. We expect new furniture, lighting improvements, art work and a thorough cleaning to follow and we'll be on the lookout for just that. Stay tuned.



NEED a LAWYER, NOTARY, FINANCIAL PLANNER or ACCOUNTANT?

People in need of a lawyer, notary, financial planner or accountant, are often at a loss as to how to find a "good" one. Under the assumption that word of mouth recommendations are often the best, the VCTA would like to prepare a list of such professionals recommended by fellow teachers.

Specifically, the VCTA would keep a list of any professional recommended by a teacher along with contact information of the teacher(s) making the recommendation.

Anyone interested in a name on the list can then contact the person(s) making the recommendations

for details. That would be the extent of the VCTA involvement.

Clearly the Executive has no means for validating a recommendation nor can the VCTA be considered as anything more than a facilitator in this matter.

If someone engages someone on the list, it would benefit all if they would report back to the V.C.T.A. on their degree of satisfaction.

Anyone with a recommendation or a complaint can simply call the VCTA at Local 7053/7054. The list of names will be posted in the V.C.T.A. Lounge, C101.

Eric Durling, Vice President, VCTA Executive

Life at Vanier WITH VALERIE BROEGE

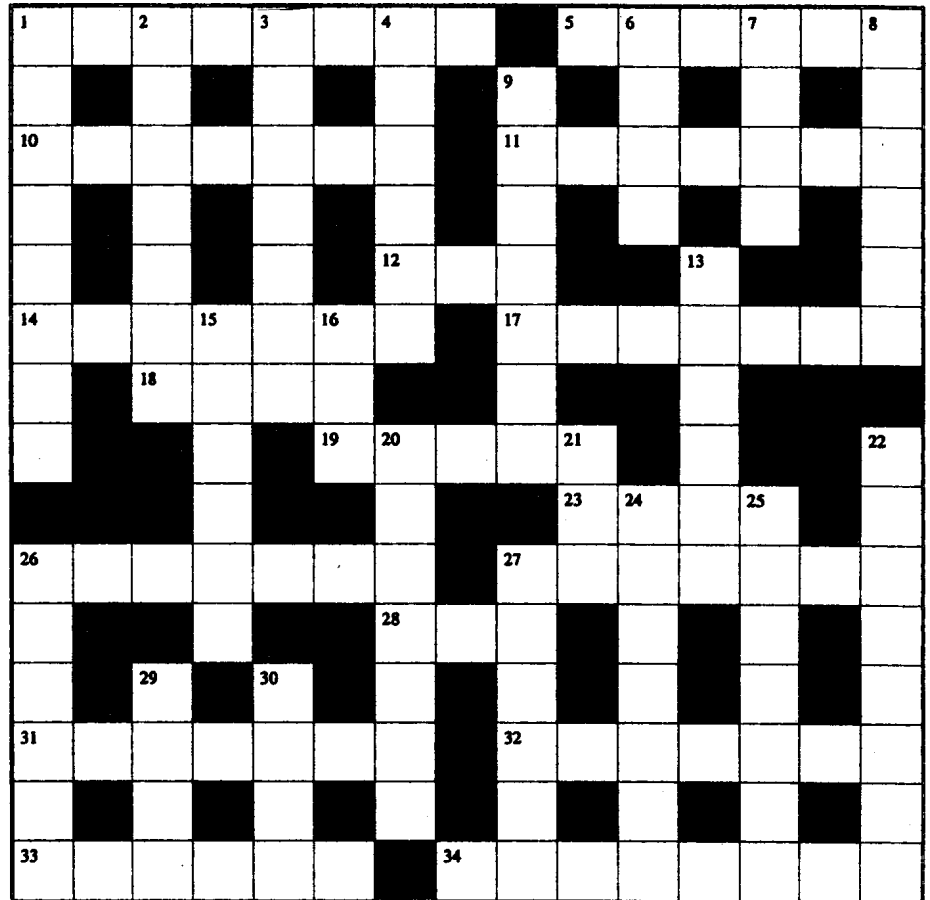
Many of the clues relate to persons, places and things at Vanier College. Test your Vanier lore as you try to complete this cryptic crossword puzzle!

ACROSS

- 1 Document colorful lingerie. (4,4)
- 5 So-called carpentry worker becomes an Arch Tech teacher. (6)
- 10 Generally comes before feathering. (7)
- 11 Mound of dynasty is superabundant. (7)
- 12 Is your Afghani llama under the weather?
- 14 Identifies handles. (7)
- 17 Vanier retiree joins mathematician to make room. (7)
- 18 Artist spends the beginning of year in former Portuguese settlement. (4)
- 19 Fixate fiercely on harsh light. (5)
- 23 Ancient structure lasts to AD. 2000. (4)
- 26 Vanier teachers, have your students ever done this when you entered the classroom? (5, 2)
- 27 Woman embraces me, ignoring clusters of stars. (7)
- 28 What is my ideology? (3)
- 31 Get ache in my head just thinking about controversial area in the college. (3,4)
- 32 Spice begins and ends with nothing, confounding anger in between. (7)
- 33 What Robert, Tom, Cheryl, and Katie have in common. (6)
- 34 Wild animals on campus want to win. (8)

DOWN

- 2 Run backwards beside half of prison to enter Vanier program. (7)
- 3 and 1. down. Surley sounds like we can make Peter fit the job as editor. (8)
- 4 Can a washer become a librarian? (6)



- 6 Honest man left behind becomes a murder victim. (4)
- 7 I become part of god in hideaway. (4)
- 8 Overcoat for the Lord? (6)
- 9 Art teacher is last conversationalist. (7)
- 13 This spirit one should imbibe at Vanier. (6)
- 15 First name of mathematician = last name of computer scientist. (6)
- 16 Fish rises up to torment. (3)
- 20 Back talk on October 15th creates living cellular material. (7)
- 21 Does the east of France belong to a North American time zone? (3)
- 22 Leave out erstwhile political movement from Vanier program to give speeches. (8)

- 24 Narrate 'The Night Before Christmas in such a way that it can relate to the First Lady. (4, 3)
- 25 Bound for state in which I can buy a mobile. (7)
- 26 Crush ethnic tape. (6)
- 27 Animal noise in middle of street — first harbinger of what we must free from obstruction. (6)
- 29 Jewish Studies teacher finds African river to be turbulent. (4)
- 30 Valley is appropriate landscape for Vanier photographer (4)

See page 23 for crossword answers.

SHAVE to SAVE, UB, Oct. 27: Once again this student group is aiming to raise awareness and money for breast cancer research. Mix 96 will host the event in Jake's Mall and people from *Coiffure La Coupe* will do the shaving. Last year they raised over \$5000! Teachers can help by making a donation—at the event or in the VCSA Office, C214—and by taking a few minutes to talk to their students about the event. Catherine Tsouvaltsidis, Health Science graduate, currently in Industrial Electronics, and Kiel Howden, 3rd year Music student are the brave volunteers. *Submitted by Susan Panneton, VCTA Office.*

LITC Announcement: The Library will be purchasing a site license for plagiarism software, called "EVE". Ron Curtis from the English Dept. gave it a try and feels that it will help to a certain extent. *Submitted by Cheryl Holmes, LITC.*

Classroom Etiquette for Teachers: When you leave a classroom, it should be ready for the next teacher: erase the board, put the desks back in order and keep in mind that there are Cont. Ed. Courses in the evening, so even if you leave late in the day, there WILL be teachers and students in the classroom after you have left. *Submitted by Nancy Leclerc, Anthropology.*

Chalk Talk Revisited: In the last edition of the *VCTA Newsletter*, teachers were asked to complain to Sam Kay, Director of Administrative Services, about crumbling chalk. However, Sam had addressed the issue almost a

week earlier. After the first complaints, the VCTA office phoned Sam on Friday, September 3 and he immediately put us in touch with the Purchasing Department, and the same day, samples of an alternative brand of chalk were delivered to us. The old chalk was gradually replaced during the week of September 13, and at present, the last remnants should have been removed from most classrooms. Please direct any comments in relation to the new chalk to the VCTA. We are interested in getting your feedback. *Submitted by Eric Durling, Vice President, VCTA.*

Quitting Smoking or Thinking About It? An interesting, fresh and effective approach can be found at <http://www.quitsmokingonline.com>

Quotes for Teachers: "Nearly every subject has a shadow, or imitation. It would, I suppose, be quite possible to teach a deaf and dumb child to play the piano. When it played a wrong note, it would see the frown of its teacher, and try again. But it would obviously have no idea of what it was doing, or why anyone should devote hours to such an extraordinary exercise. It would have learnt an imitation of music. And it would have learnt to fear the piano exactly as most students fear what is supposed to be mathematics.

What is true of music is also true of other subjects. One can learn imitation history—kings and dates, but not the slightest idea of the motives behind it all; imitation literature—stacks of notes of Shakespeare's phrases, and a complete destruction of the power to enjoy Shakespeare..." (*Sawyer, W. W., 1943 cited in Ramsden, P. (2003). Learning to Teach in Higher Education, 2nd Ed. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.*

OECD Ranks Canada: "The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development ranked Canada 19th out of 30 developed countries for its funding of primary and secondary schooling in 2001...The study also found that Canada has the highest percentage of 25 to 64 year-olds with a university or college education—43 per cent, almost double the OECD average." (*Alphonso, C., Globe and Mail, Sept. 14, 2004, p. A6*)

Zonta Club of Montreal, Advancing the status of Women, presents Sylvie Béland and Catherine Casgrain, scientists with the Canadian Space Agency, speaking on: "Actively Helping Women Making it through the Class Ceiling: the Canadian Space Agency Example", 6:30 PM, Tues. Oct. 26, 2004 at St. James Club, 1145 Union Ave., Montreal. The \$35 cost includes a delicious meal. RSVP by Oct. 22 to Maureen Engler at 514-425-2950 or maureenengler@videotron.ca.

7th Annual Holocaust Education Series, Oct. 12 to Nov. 9, 2004, full schedule available in VCTA Lounge C101, also outside office A410. Includes Photography Exhibition: About Auschwitz by Judith Lermer Crawley, former Photography teacher at Vanier College: Temple Emanu-El Beth Shalom, 4100 Sherbrooke West. Tel. 514-937-3575.

October 21 is Lobby Day for Refugees and the United Nations Anti-Racism Day.

Reading suggestions: When crime novels get real

BY MARK PRENTICE

They aren't old, British, or proper ladies, and when they drink it isn't tea.

A number of us at Vanier – faculty and staff – have been exchanging books, references and new discoveries relating to contemporary crime fiction. One of the main characteristics of this genre is that the emphasis is not so much on who did it, as on why it happened. The books center around the people, the places, the social climate as well as the demons we all have to face: these are novels with a social conscience.

James Lee Burke is one of these authors, and what he has to say about this literature is actually quite revealing and accurate: "More and more critics are coming to realize that the sociological novel, as it was at the end of the 19th century and during the Depression, has been replaced by the crime novel." This is a good way to describe the genre.

Other than the fact that these are all very talented writers, these novels are gripping portraits of the worlds in which they are set. Through the eyes of the main character—who is usually anything but a hero—we travel to places and realities that are portrayed with all the grit, dark humor, rawness and sometimes poetry of real life.

In these novels, the real bad guys are most often racism, sexism, violence, social inequality and injustice. They are far from depressing or preachy because the writing and plots are so well carried out.

My favorite and some of the best among these authors are: James Lee Burke, George P. Pelecanos, Walter Mosley, Michael Connelly, Paula L. Woods, Ian Rankin and Tony Hillerman.

The authors tend to have a favorite location where the story takes place, and their descriptions of these places and the people who populate them reveal incredible atmospheres of the sort only good writers can produce—the locale

becomes a character of the novel. Burke's novels are set in Louisiana, Rankin's in Edinburgh, Pelecanos' in Washington, DC, Hillerman's on New Mexico's Navajo Indian reservations and Wood's in Los Angeles.

At the same time, there are recurring main characters who, willingly or not, are plunged into the middle of some crime. But unlike the classic whodunits, the crime is usually just the excuse for the story, rather than its core. Jim Chee and Joe Leaphorn (Hillerman), Inspector Rebus (Rankin), Dave Robichaux (Burke), Charlotte Justice (Woods), Harry Bosch (Connelly), Easy Rawlins (Mosley) and Derek Strange (Pelecanos) are all flawed; sometimes alcoholic, violent, haunted or crossing the line between what is legal and what is not.

One thing that is common to all these novels is the role of social commentator played by the main character. Whether it is Jim Chee reflecting to a colleague that Native Americans are called Indians because Columbus was looking for India—which is not that bad considering the alternative: what if Columbus had been looking for Turkey?

Or Derek Strange, commenting on a newspaper feature about "African-American style" to a younger, style conscious colleague: "*That lady, she got a funny way of putting things. Says that black men have developed a dynamic sense of style, their 'tool against being invisible'. Cause I was wondering, that old man, practically lives out on Upshur, with pee stains on the front of his trousers? The one that gets his dinner out of the dumpster. Think he's using style as a tool against being invisible?*" The commentary, often biting and dry, is so to the point that it resonates with the reader and provokes that all too common uncomfortable laughter.

The list of novels published by the above authors is really too long to include here, but if you type in the author's name in Amazon.ca you will be able to read a description of the book and decide for yourself where, and with which author you want to start. I hope this very brief introduction will give you some exciting reading material and introduce you to the fascinating world of the modern crime novel, or at least have you discover previously unknown authors.

A recovering cynic with regular relapses, **Mark Prentice** has studied Anthropology and Law at Laval and McGill Universities, where he has also taught. He started teaching part time at Vanier College in the winter of the ice storm (which definitely should have been taken as a sign...). Since the year 2000 he has been teaching full time at Vanier in Anthropology, Methodology and Explorations. He has also sat on Joint Coordinators and Academic Council and presently sits on Association Council and is a faculty representative on the Board of Directors. A voracious reader, he has been known to occupy the corner stool of the Rio while pathetically struggling with crossword puzzles.



Pete's Picks BY PETE RASMUSSEN

Turn Your Radio On

*Turn the lights down low
And listen to the Master's Radio
Get in touch with God
Turn your radio on.*

Turn Your Radio On - Albert E. Brumley

Commercial FM radio has become omnipresent light rock interspersed with too many advertisements. But there is some excellent FM broadcasting being done by the community and public radio stations.

The diversity and quality of the weekend programming make it the best time to listen to the radio. Things get off to an early start on Saturday morning at 6:00 am on CIBL (Radio-UQAM) with Richard "Colt" Belanger's show *Sabot de Denver* (Denver Boot). Monsieur Belanger's taste in music is eclectic, ranging from alternative country to more traditional artists, plus he regularly promotes shows and festivals by Quebec and Acadian country artists.

From 8:00 to 9:00 am Belanger does a blues show, *Mosaïque Blues*, which again features contemporary and traditional music plus Quebec musicians. Sometimes the hour of blues will precede *Sabot de Denver* but it all makes for good listening and you can practice your French at the same time.

After *Mosaïque Blues* you can take a break, make a cup of coffee or tea and check out the morning paper but be sure to tune into the *Vinyl Cafe* at 10:00 am on CBC Radio Two. Hosted by Stuart McLean, the master raconteur of Canada, and featuring the music of Canadian folk and mainstream artists - FM radio doesn't get much better than this.

There's opera Saturday afternoons on both the CBC and Vermont Public Radio (VPR). In the evening, there are more popular music shows in the evening than there is time to listen! At 6:00 pm on VPR there is *Prairie Home Companion*, an institution unto itself and one of my favourite radio programs. The skits, monologues and great musical guests make this a show that is always worth a listen and a rarely missed event at our house.

Joel Najman's *My Place* at 9:00 pm on VPR gets my vote for the best FM radio program. Each show features an artist, group or theme and Najman entertains you for an hour with pleasant musical memories and the fascinating history behind those golden oldies.

There's two hours of new age with *Hearts of Space* at 10:00 pm on VPR but if you like your music with a bit more rhythm then you have to stay up late for Holger Peteresen's *Saturday Night Blues*. At one point CBC was threatening to cancel the show but it would seem that its popularity prevailed because it's still on the air.

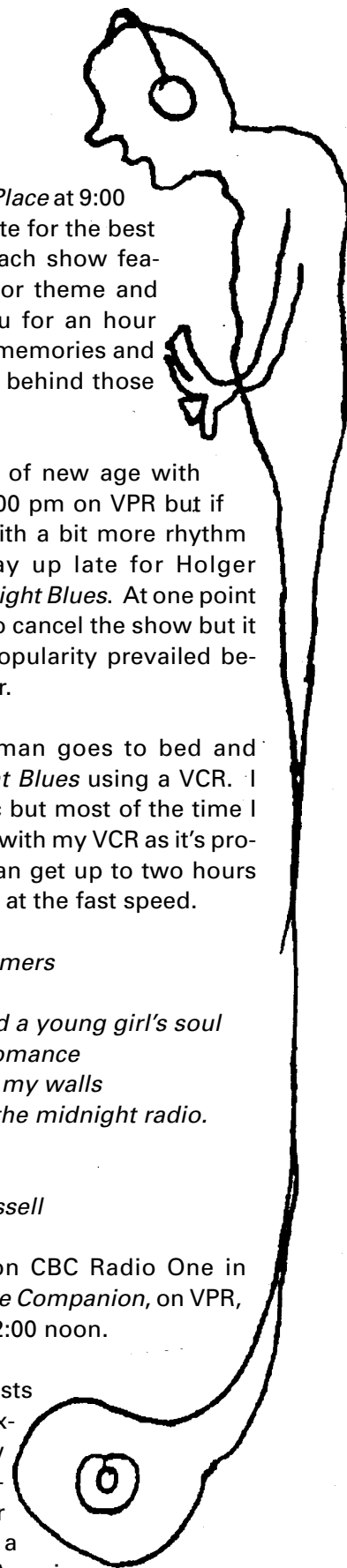
Actually this old man goes to bed and records *Saturday Night Blues* using a VCR. I sometimes burn a disc but most of the time I record radio programs with my VCR as it's programmable and you can get up to two hours of recording time even at the fast speed.

*A special time for dreamers
My only time alone
The music really stirred a young girl's soul
I learned of love and romance
And the world beyond my walls
From those voices on the midnight radio.*

Midnight Radio
Katy Moffat & Tom Russell

Both *Vinyl Cafe*, on CBC Radio One in mono, and *Prairie Home Companion*, on VPR, repeat on Sunday at 12:00 noon.

Robert Resnick hosts All the Traditions, an excellent folk music show at 2:00 pm Sunday afternoon on VPR. For two hours he plays a wide range of North American, including Canadian, folk music with a good dose of world music thrown in. From 4:00 to 5:00 pm he features the music of artists play-



ing in the Vermont area in the days and weeks ahead.

CKUT Radio-McGill is the station to listen to Sunday evenings. At 7:00 pm Ross Harvey brings in his vinyl for an hour of traditional bluegrass followed by an hour of classic country. He also features the music of Canadian and Quebec artists and provides information about local events.

At 9:00 pm on CKUT Captain John (Detcheverry) takes over for two hours of *Cha Cha in Blue*. His show features traditional blues to more contemporary offerings, plus news about local happenings and musical guests. Holger Petersen's *Saturday Night Blues* has become the premiere blues show of Canadian radio but I prefer listening to Captain John's show. Not to be missed by blues fans.

Weeknights are devoted to jazz but if you prefer folk music tune in Mike Regenstrief's *Folk Roots- Folk Branches* Thursday mornings at 9:00 am on CKUT. For two and a half hours he plays the full spectrum of folk music, from the traditional to cutting-edge with klezmer, world music, country and blues included. He features new recordings, interviews, musical guests and live performances. Why the CBC hasn't picked up on this show is something I don't understand. Again I use my VCR to record this show so I can listen and appreciate it when I have the time.

On the back page this issue of the VCTA newsletter is a grid detailing the radio shows to which I listen regularly and occasionally; it can be detached and re-

tained for your own use. If you like a radio program that I don't mention or list then please let me know - I always appreciate a good radio show.

Here are some URL's if you would like to check out more detailed radio listings and program information via the Internet.

CBC: <http://www.cbc.ca/programguide/schedule/index.jsp>

CIBL: <http://www.cibl.cam.org/new/index.php>

CKUT: <http://www.ckut.ca/programming.php>

VPR: <http://www.vpr.net/schedule/grid-Mon.shtml>

So, good listening and I'll leave you with the words of Nanci Griffith.

*Loretta Lynn guides my hands through the radio.
Where would I be in times like these without the songs of Loretta?*

Cause when you can't find a friend, you've still got the radio.

When you can't find a friend, you've still got the radio.

The radio, listen to the radio.

Listen to the Radio - Nanci Griffith

Peter Rasmussen has worked at Vanier since 1977 in a number of departments. Currently in Accounting, Peter shares his love for music with his wife, Pat, who works in the Bookstore.

Blast from the Past

1 in 10 working long hours

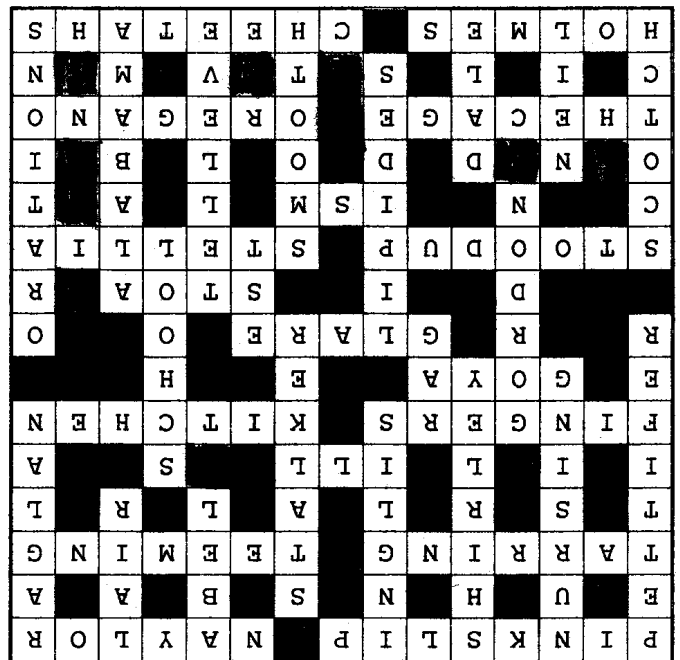
OTTAWA (CP) — A Statistics Canada study says 1 million employees, almost one in 10, habitually worked 50 or more hours a week last year.

David Gower, author of the study, says it's a widespread trend.

People in religious vocations work with a passion, with 65 per cent working 50 or more hours a week.

Managers and administrators follow with 22.3 per cent putting in long weeks. **Teachers are next, followed by doctors and finally those employed in the natural and social sciences.**

GAZETTE, October 25, 1986



Life at Vanier answers

CLIP & SAVE RADIO PROGRAMMING

<i>Saturday</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Genre</i>
6:00 - 8:00 AM	CIBL 101.5 MHz	Sabot de Denver	Colt Belanger	Country
8:00 - 9:00 AM	CIBL 101.5 MHz	Mosaïque blues	Richard Belanger	Blues
10:00 - 11:00 AM	CBC 93.5 MHz	Vinyl Cafe	Stuart Mclean	Folk
6:00 - 8:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Prairie Home Companion	Garrison Kiellor	Folk
8:00 - 10:00 PM	CBC 88.5 MHz	Finkelman's 45's	Danny Finkelman	Oldies
8:00 - 9:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	The Thistle and Shamrock	Fiona Ritchie	Celtic
9:00 - 10:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	My Place	Joel Najman	Oldies
10:00 - 11:00 PM	CBC 88.5 MHz	A propos	Jim Corcoran	Quebecoise
10:00 - 11:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Hearts of Space	Stephen Hill	New Age
11:00 PM - 1:00 AM	CBC 88.5 MHz	Saturday Night Blues	Holger Petersen	Blues
11:00 PM - 12:00 AM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Best of Hearts of Space	Stephen Hill	New Age
<i>Sunday</i>				
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM	CKUT 90.3 MHz	Dobbin's Den	Len Dobbin	Jazz
12:00 - 1:00 PM	CBC 88.5 MHz	Vinyl Cafe (Repeat of Saturday's broadcast)	Stuart Mclean	Folk
12:00 - 2:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Prairie Home Companion (Repeat of Saturday's broadcast)	Garrison Kiellor	Folk
2:00 - 5:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	All the Traditions	Robert Resnick	Folk
7:00 - 8:00 PM	CKUT 90.3 MHz	Bluegrass Rambling	Ross Harvey	Bluegrass
8:00 - 10:00 PM	CBC 93.5 MHz	Jazz Beat	Katie Malloch	Jazz
8:00 - 9:00 PM	CKUT 90.3 MHz	Country Classics	Ross Harvey	Country
9:00 - 11:00 PM	CKUT 90.3 MHz	Cha Cha in Blue	John Detcheverry	Blues
11:00 PM - 1:00 AM	CBC 88.5 MHz	Jazz Beat (Repeat of earlier broadcast)	Katie Malloch	Jazz
<i>Monday</i>				
8:00 - 9:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Riverwalk Jazz	Jim Cullum & David Holt	Jazz
10:00 PM - 12:00 AM	CBC 93.5 MHz	After Hours	Andy Sheppard	Jazz
<i>Tuesday & Wednesday</i>				
8:00 - 10:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Jazz with Gerge Thomas	Gerge Thomas	Jazz
10:00 PM - 12:00 AM	CBC 93.5 MHz	After Hours	Andy Sheppard	Jazz
<i>Thursday</i>				
9:00 - 11:00 AM	CKUT 90.3 MHz	Folk Roots - Folk Branches	Mike Regenstrief	Folk
8:00 - 10:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Jazz with Gerge Thomas	Gerge Thomas	Jazz
10:00 PM - 12:00 AM	CBC 93.5 MHz	After Hours	Andy Sheppard	Jazz
<i>Friday</i>				
7:00 - 8:00 PM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Marion McPartland's Piano Jazz	Marion McPartland	Jazz
8:00 PM - 12:00 AM	VPR 107.9 MHz	Jazz with Gerge Thomas	Gerge Thomas	Jazz

