



VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



November 2004:
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NEWSLETTER

The Letter Box

DELAYS IN PUBLISHING: OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

I read the last issue of the VCTA Newsletter with great pleasure. As a teacher who is neither new nor prepared to retire, I was moved by the articles by Marc Belanger and Hanns Wernecke, voices from the two ends of the career in which I live. I do think that one lives this career. The Newsletter speaks to its complexity: in-house politics, provincial issues, the demands of teaching in an institution where diversity is not just an easy slogan but an opportunity for reflection and renewal. I hope that the Odds 'n' Ends page, Reading Suggestions, and Pete's Picks will continue to be part of the read that brightens the prospect of eating yet another chicken salad sandwich from the cafeteria for me. I am learning to do the cryptic crossword puzzle.

Having said this, I must also say that I am concerned about the delay in publishing the October issue of the Newsletter—a delay that rendered the article on Women's History Month irrelevant. I place this negative note here in the hope that it will encourage us to re-think the way in which editorial control of the Newsletter by the VCTA might be exercised.

As I write this letter, I re-read the message from our president: FAC, FAC-NEGO, green papers, white papers, CPNC, RWH –

173, Treasury Board, SIC. My energy for engaging these subjects is nourished by the rest of the Newsletter. What a wonderful range of articles! I feel informed about important issues, moved by personal testimonies, challenged by new ideas. Most importantly, I feel connected to the people with whom I work and confirmed in the belief that this is an educational system that we must defend.

I need this Newsletter as frequently as it can be produced. When will I next find it in my mailbox?

**Arlene Steiger,
Women's Studies and Humanities**

The causes of the delays have been subject to on-going discussions among the VCTA Executive, the Association Council and the Editor. There is a strong collective will to resolve these problems, move on and deal with the issues that threaten our colleges and our profession. I apologize for the delay and I thank you for your encouraging comments. The Editor

MEETING TIMES FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Please note that as a single parent, I cannot go to union meetings at 6 PM. I must be with my children then. I would really appreciate it if, at least some of the time, you would move the VCTA General Assembly meetings to Universal Break or to some time earlier in the day. I would be interested in attending and participating, but CANNOT, due to the time of the meetings. If you would

be so kind as to bring this up and discuss it at a General Assembly, I would truly appreciate it.

**Respectfully,
Silke Lach, History and Liberal Arts**

The VCTA Executive and members at the last General Assembly heard your request and moved swiftly to ensure that parents of young children are able to attend our meetings. The next General Assemblies Dec. 8— will take place during Universal Break. Thanks for raising this issue, and speaking on behalf of others in your position. The Editor

ORDERING A MEAL FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Dear Editor: In the next issue of the VCTA Newsletter please remind faculty that it is important to reply to the notice of a VCTA General Assembly. We would like to make sure that everyone gets a meal. At one of our previous GAs, many faculty showed up and even though extra meals had been ordered, there were not enough to go around. Thank you.

Susan Panneton, VCTA Office

Faculty please take note! Replies to Susan or Pat at 7411 can be made the previous day for a daytime meeting of the GA or as late as the morning of a GA that takes place in the evening. If you haven't called, be kind: wait for those who have sent in their RSVP to claim their meal first. The Editor

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VCTA Executive 2004-05

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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

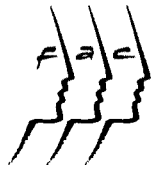
Office Assistants' Hours:

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

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V.C.T.A.

VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Message from the President: SYLVIE TARDIF

Note to Readers : See GLOSSARY at end of article.

On the morning of November 21, 2004, I wrote to our Editor, Shirley, indicating that the Federative Assembly of Nov. 18-20 was historical in terms of content, quality, duration, and recommendations that were adopted. Here is why :

Negotiation of our Collective Agreement

The Special Intersyndical Council (SIC) of two federations—FAC, the Vanier teachers' federation and FEC—met on Oct. 13, 2004. Out of this came a recommendation to establish a negotiation cartel of local unions affiliated with these two federations..

The ultimate goal of this cartel is to obtain the most advantageous collective agreements possible—by harmonizing our demands and by jointly preparing and negotiating our collective agreement objectives.

The first draft was presented and extensively discussed at the FAC-SIC of October 28-29, 2004. The FAC Federative Assembly of November 18-20, 2004 recommended the adoption of the second draft whereby :

- The Cartel Council is composed of all FAC-FEC union delegations on the basis of the number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) at the end of the preceding academic year;
- Decisions are made by a simple majority of votes; the double majority when required means 50% of unions representing 50% of voting members;
- The harmonization of FAC-FEC sectoral negotiation demands (programs, professional development, NTIC (new technologies of information and communication), workload, continuing education, harassment and violence in the workplace, and other demands);
- Unifying and joining the central table negotiation demands of the CSN, CSQ and FTQ (increase salary of 12.5% over three years).

This does not mean that our demands related to improving our rights for retirement purposes (RREGOP) are completely dropped since the Government is doing

an actuarial analysis of the plan in the context of renewal of collective agreements.

This FAC-FEC Cartel Council, if adopted, constitutes one entity—the number of members is that of the two federations that make up the cartel. It is clear that if adopted, the intention is to stick together until the end of the negotiation process. Vanier teachers will be consulted by the V.C.T.A. Executive at the General Assemblies in December for a return of mandate to the December 9 & 10, 2004, Intersyndical Council.

Regarding FNEEQ, at this point, it is impossible to imagine anything close to an alliance of two, CARTEL-FNEEQ, or three, FAC-FEC-FNEEQ. It appears that FNEEQ has clear instructions from the CSN not to rush anything since the CSN, would like to settle the health sector first. Our collective agreement expired on June 30, 2002, and in the present context, education is our priority!

Recognition of Working Hours (RWH)

Discussions within the framework of our negotiation demands on the workload issue are continuing. A report will be presented at the December 9 & 10 CI. It seems that the 173 hours are an absolute but that discussion is still possible on accountability, professional/pedagogical autonomy and academic freedom.

Mobilization

December 15, 2004, seems to be the perfect date for our legal 24-hour walkout in relation to our opposition to decentralization, increase in institutional autonomy, local diplomas, optional general studies courses, multiplication of AECs, dismantling of the Cegep network, etc.

I leave you with a question: What will the English or French Exit Exam mean in the soon-to-be announced reforms for the Cegeps?

*Syndically yours,
Sylvie*

Continued on page 4

The «WALMART-ization» of our CEGEPs

By Sylvie Tardif

Mystification, ambiguity, euphemism, and double talk describe the context in which we find ourselves when we address—in writing or in person—Education Minister Pierre Reid or representatives of his office, the Conseil Patronal de Négociation des Cégeps (CPNC), and the Fédération des Cégeps (Fédé) representatives.

Local union presidents met with Education Minister Reid, Deputy-Minister Pierre Lucier, Political Attaché Jean-François Belleau, and M. Gendreau from MEQ (Quebec Ministry of Education) in Quebec on November 3 & 4, 2004. The Minister's opening remarks were:

- Teachers are the first line professionals and they have an essential role in colleges.
- Teachers do not need to be told what to do since they are professionals of pedagogy and education.
- Teachers need not be subordinated to anyone telling them what/what not to do.
- Cégeps should be regarded as a box of teachers that decide and organize themselves in it.
- Education for life is fundamental to individuals in a society.

Please, pinch me! Shortly before this, the report from the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial du Québec (CEEC) came out on October 4, 2004 during a mundane evening where Directors General and Academic Deans congratulated themselves quite a bit. The report entitled *The Exercise of Responsibility in Quebec Colleges: A First Institutional Evaluation* concludes that institutional local autonomy is the solution. The major obstacles to that autonomy are the legal framework of Cégeps that is still too constraining for institutions of higher education; the elaborate and detailed descriptions of programs which slow down the initiative and creativity of institutions; the Cégep teachers' collective agreements are a hindrance to the develop-

ment of Cégeps. The conclusions concur perfectly with the development plan of the Fédé, the brief published by the Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation (CSE), and the closing remarks of Minister Reid at the June 9 & 10 Forum.

Please! Where are all the other reports? For example, Pierre Fortin's report! Remember that the CEEC defines itself as an independent government organization whose evaluation mandate covers most aspects of college education, with special emphasis on student achievement and programs of study. Legislation attributes the power to evaluate and to make recommendations to MEQ, to institutions including management, and union.

More locally, we have the strategic management plans that are more like business plans. These are aimed at rationalizing programs, encouraging profitable AECs (Attestation d'Études collégiales which are diplomas without General Studies courses), private-public partnership (PPP), a profit-driven model of governance, numerical performance indicators of success, marginalization of the professional input of teachers, and increasing accountability for teachers of the production-line type.

We teachers, have other ideas and models. How about a model that supports the teacher-student relationship, real consultative/representative structures that go beyond rubber stamping (Board of Directors, Academic Council); a Pedagogical Affairs Committee where programs can really be addressed and new profiles elaborated; a similar provincial committee where the actors are teachers instead of technocrats; a decrease of student numbers in the classroom; an increase in the number of teachers; using student-success grant monies directly for students; high academic standards and requirements for all programs and disciplines (general studies and others)?

Cégeps are not ready for «WALMART-ization»! Please Minister Reid, where is the light? Maybe in your Green Paper?

Message from the President, *Continued from page 3*

Glossary of Terms:

AEC Attestation d'Études Collégiales (a college diploma without General Studies courses—English, Humanities, Phys. Ed). Different from a DEC, Diplôme d'Études Collégiales, which includes General Studies courses

CI Conseil Intersyndical; meetings attended by a representative from each of the local unions affiliated with FAC—Fédération Autonome du Collégial comprised of 17 local teachers' unions including the VCTA.

Cartel/Cartel Council The joining of unions affiliated with FAC (our federation) and FEC for negotiation purposes. FEC is the Fédération des enseignantes et enseignants de Cégep which represents teachers in 7 Cégeps.

CSN Conseil Syndical Nationale; represents many workers, including those in the health field and teachers belonging to FNEEQ—Fédération Nationale des enseignantes et enseignants de Québec, which represents teachers in 25 Cégeps.

CSQ Centrale Syndicale du Québec; represents workers in education, health, social services and daycare centres. FEC, representing teachers in 7 Cégeps, is also associated with CSQ.

FTQ Fédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses du Québec; represents workers in many sectors of Quebec's economy—public sector of Quebec, construction, communication, energy, forest, food industry, arts, aerospace, postal services, textiles, transportation.

RREGOP Government and Public Employees' Retirement Plan.

Can you dig it?

Reflections on an archaeological dig

By: Matthieu Sossoyan

Ever since I can remember, I have always loved antiques, flea markets and dusty book stores. I am also very nostalgic, especially when it comes to time periods and settings that are particularly significant to me. I guess this is why, as a Cégep student (and a long-time collector), I hesitated between history and archaeology as a potential university program.

After choosing to enrol in the Anthropology Department at Université de Montréal, I discovered the world of archaeology as I had never imagined. It was a fascinating world of research and investigation. And, as one of my all-time favourite archaeology teachers (Norman Clermont) put it, I also discovered that «*l'archéologie est une maladie mentale*». I guess I was not (that) mentally ill, because after two summers of field school, back-breaking digging, and lab work, I drifted towards another branch of anthropology known as ethnohistory.

However, I never lost my interest in archaeology. Four years ago, when Mark Prentice organized the first Social

Science Festival, I suggested that a small archaeological dig along the N-Building pathway would be an interesting educational activity. I was also curious to see what would actually come out of the ground—though I was not very hopeful. I figured students would get a kick of seeing what an archaeological dig (and archaeologist!) looks like.

During this first experimental dig, I was the first one to be completely thrown off-guard when I discovered a cow's front tooth about one foot down in the ground. Then came flat nails from the late 19th century and later, the fragment of a toothbrush made of bone, as well as pieces of an early 20th century clay pipe! And did I mention the china? And glass? And let's not forget more recent forms of cultural heritage such as plastic forks, sea shells and beer bottle caps (left-overs from VCTA parties?), keys, coins, and even chewing gum.

Since then, I have done some research on the cultural and geographic setting of Vanier, as well as the history of the buildings that make up today's College. Considering that the H-Building (Saint-Alfred school, circa 1913) stands in the location of a stone chapel built in 1818 (where cholera victims were buried in 1832-34), that the Sisters of Saint-Croix started teaching in



the present-day location of the Continuing Education building in 1847, and expanded in what we call the C-Building in the 1890s (see image), it is not surprising to find interesting remains from over a century ago.

By using a trowel and shovel (while staying far from the cemeteries that surround our campus) I have been able to slowly piece together a fascinating side of our history, one we rarely think about when we are rushing from one building to the other. Students and teachers who come by the dig sites are actually amazed at this.

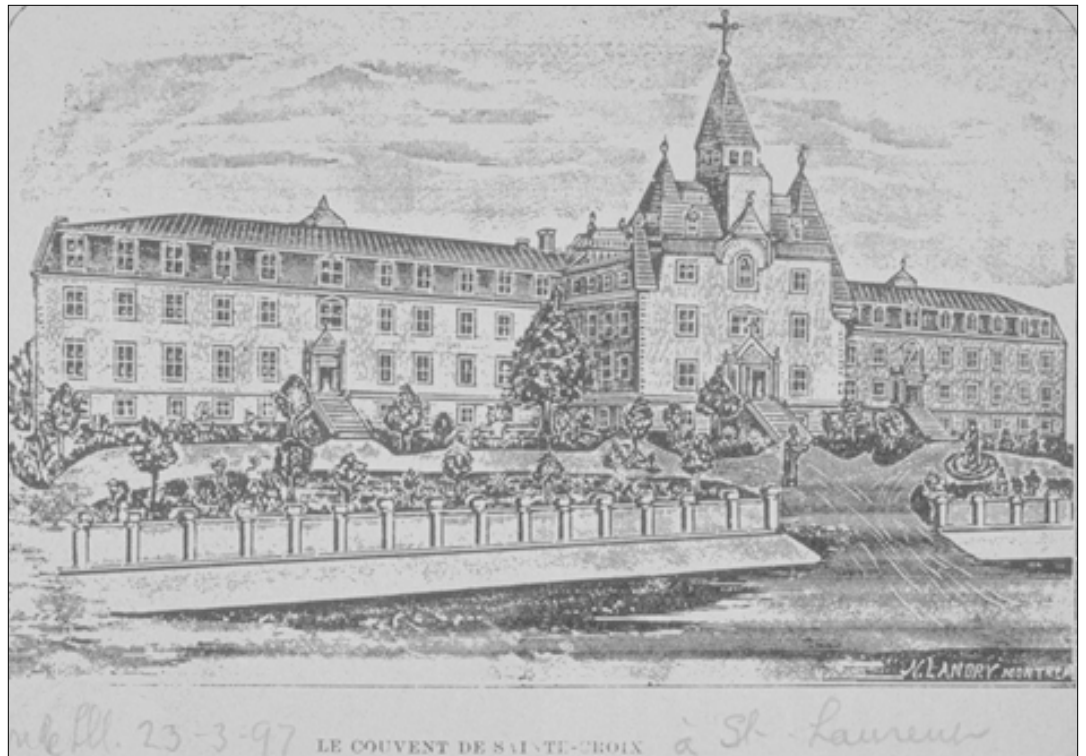
This year's four-day dig revealed ever more interesting items such as a horse's molar, a cow's rib, more pieces from that clay pipe, china,

glass and a wide range of metal nails, including more flat nails from the late 19th century. I have shown these find-

ings to students and colleagues, who are quite impressed with what one actually finds in the ground in the so-called «Orchard».

Ultimately, I feel that this dig elevates our awareness as to the cultural history of the surroundings in which we teach: we were not the first to be here, nor will we be the last.

Matthieu Sossoyan has been teaching Anthropology since 1999.



Le Couvent de Sainte-Croix à St-Laurent, 1897



NEGOTIATIONS!

By Hodé Erdogan

Who are We Negotiating With?

We are negotiating with the **government**—the Minister of Education and Treasury Board—as well as the **Fédé**—Fédération des Cégeps, composed of director generals and academic deans.

What are We Negotiating?

Unlike negotiations for previous collective agreements, this time we are negotiating on three different parallel structures:

1. **New Salary Structures/Recognition of Working Hours**—the result of the bill on pay equity. FEC and FNEEQ, the two other college teachers' federations, have already agreed to the government offer of some selective salary increases in return for the recognition of 173 hours per year (the hours teachers are supposed to add to their workload). Our federation, FAC, rejected this offer. The government then incorporated this dossier into the collective agreement negotiations.
2. **Collective Agreement Negotiations:** Our collective agreement expired on June 30, 2002. Normally, negotiations take about a year or a year and a half to complete. During negotiation periods, we work under the terms of the old collective agreement. Once the new collective agreement is agreed upon, the new salary scale is retroactive to the previous year(s). Even though we deposited our demands on time, the government has not yet deposited its counter offer. It seems the government is waiting until Minister Reid makes his green paper on College Education known some time in early December 2004.
3. **The Forum on College Education:** As you know on June 9 and 10, 2004, National Assembly hearings, called The Forum on College Education took place in Quebec City. Education Minister Reid is supposed to declare his intentions for the future of College Education some time in early December, 2004.

What Does the Government Want?

Basically the government wants **to increase student success rate** without adding new resources to the teaching budget, and **to increase regional economic development**. Unfortunately, the government sees the education system as an expense rather than an investment in the future of Quebec Society.

What Does the Fédé Want?

The Fédé is seizing this opportunity to promote its own agenda. Basically, it has two major orientations.

- **To improve its finances:**

The Fédé wants to use all the money allocated by the government for student success purposes towards its operating budget. In the past few years, at Vanier, we have been receiving roughly \$543,000 for student success, \$496,000 for student encadrement and orientation and \$95,000 for NTIC (Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information des Communications)—more than a million dollars a year!

No more than 20% of this money is used directly for student success purposes.

Across the entire Cegep system this transfers to roughly between \$50,000,000 to \$70,000,000 every year. The cost of the entire salary relativity for the whole College system was about \$50,000,000.

Should we not ask the College and the government to allocate these student success grants to the actual teaching budget, for teaching our students?

The Fédé wants to have a single envelope budget—i.e. it wants to open up the E-budget, teacher salaries. Currently, this budget is frozen. Any unused portion of this budget is transferred to the next year.

- **To control our pedagogical life: erosion of teacher/departmental/program autonomy.**

Does this sound familiar? Remember the creation of a managerial position for the Center for Learning Enrichment and Support Services for Programs? The Center for Learning and Teaching Excellence? Taking over the Kevin O'Connell Math/Science Resource Center? Magic, is it not? All these teaching-learning activities will be under the control of a single managerial position! Is this the vision of our local Academic Administration? **Is this the best that our Academic Administration can do with the \$1,000,000 for Student Success?**

The Fédé wants local collective agreements and to grant AECs instead of DECs—i.e. eliminate General Studies courses, particularly for the career programs. Note that we are still waiting for the results of the *General Studies Survey* from our Academic Dean.

Witness the **Fédé’s Orientation 12:**

“The Colleges, in their new model of higher education, plan to modify the college program and diploma structure:

- *By revising the number of credits as well as the duration presently set for technical programs so that these credits and duration may vary according to the education needs and characteristics of the clientele.*
- *By offering to graduates of technical DEC (DCS), in areas where a specialization is required, specialized diplomas of college studies.*
- *By creating immediate certification types to recognize the paths of students who have developed a certain number of competencies leading to a work function.*
- *By diversifying the certification types offered in continuing education, so as to better meet the diversified needs of adult students.”*

Does this vision prepare our students for our knowledge-based global economy?

Where Do We Go From Here?

During the National Assembly hearings, i.e. the Forum on College Education, the positive role that the Cegeps have played in modernizing Quebec’s education system and their contribution to the **social, cultural and economic development of Quebec**—including the regions—was repeatedly demonstrated through numer-

ous studies and statistics. Furthermore, the role that the Cegep system should play in adjusting to the new knowledge-based global economy has been forcefully reiterated.

The academic integrity of Teachers, Departments, and Programs must be defended.

Traditionally, the VCTA has always developed strong and credible positions through open democratic dialogue. We have consistently shown strong leadership at the Federation level and we need wide participation of our membership to continue to do so.

It is in this spirit, that Christian Roy, on behalf of the Executive, is writing a series of articles that critically analyze important negotiation issues. (See *Decentralization...* page 12.) These will provide information and an opportunity for VCTA members to critically reflect on what is at stake.

Let us recognize our achievements. Let’s have a clear position and strategy to defend and promote our profession. We need to do this for the future of our children, for the future of this society. **With active participation of our membership, we can negotiate with a clear strategy from a position of strength. There is a lot at stake and we have much to be proud of!**

Hodé Erdogan has served many terms on the VCTA Executive. He currently sits on the CRT, Association Council and the Board of Directors. He is also the Physics Department and SA/MS Program Coordinator.



SANCTUARY: THE VEGA FAMILY

As we go to press, Marcela, Mireya and Alvaro Vega have been in sanctuary at St. Andrew’s-Norwood United Church, on de l’Eglise, for close to 500 days. The longer the sanctuary, the more they need support—of all sorts. This is the Colombian family who fled their country after the father, a teacher, was tortured and had his life threatened. Please contact the Vanier Vega Support Committee at vvsc@fclass.vaniercollege.qc.ca to get involved. The father, Alvaro, offers Spanish conversation courses. The daughter, Marcela, loves to sing and play the guitar, and very much enjoys accompaniment. She also appreciates the opportunity to practice her English conversation skills. The whole family welcomes visits from teachers and students.

SRAM:

Report to the Joint Coordinators Committee on the Proposed Implementation of the SRAM Admissions System at Vanier College

By Silke Lach, Nadia Turbide & Jacqui Paull
Nov. 15, 2004

The Present Situation

Please see Appendix I which describes the present system whereby a student's application is processed by the College.

The College is presently in a state of transition. The present computer and operating system is about 10 years old. The College is planning to replace the system in about a year. This update is clearly necessary for many reasons but it is to be timed so that the College will be ready to install the first modules produced by SRIC, which should be available about eighteen months from now. SRIC (*Société du Réseau Informatique des Collèges*) is a data management system which is being produced specifically to service the Cegeps. It will be able to interface directly with the Government and will be compatible with SRAM. The College is committed to spend \$400,000 on the SRIC project.

The College has been a member of CAS, the Common Application System since the mid-1970's. The other member colleges are Marianopolis, Dawson, and Champlain (St-Lambert Campus). John Abbott and Heritage College are both members of SRAM. CAS is a loose grouping of four colleges that come together to agree to certain things in regard to admissions. They also share the cost of producing all printed materials. They have a common application form which, at least in theory, stops students from applying to two of these colleges. Students may apply to one program in one college as a first choice and a second program which may be in a different college as a second choice.

See the table in Appendix II for a summary of the college's admissions system.

Interviews

The following College representatives were interviewed by the Committee:

Rhena Moscovitch and Deborah Resnick - Academic Advisors

Beverly Chandler - Director, Enrolment Management Division

Larry Callahan - Manager, Data Processing

Peter Ross - Academic Dean

Dianne Tessier - Registrar

Carmella Macri - Coordinator of Admissions

Telephone interviews with representatives of the registrar's offices of Dawson, Marianopolis, Champlain and John Abbott were carried out.

SRAM

SRAM (*Service régional d'admission du Montréal métropolitain*) is a corporation set up about 25 years ago by a number of the French colleges to tackle the problems of admissions, particularly the problems raised by duplicate applications, i.e. when the same student applies to several colleges. It is a non-profit organization governed by a board of directors which represents the 30 member institutions.

Students send their application directly to SRAM. They open the envelopes, inform students of any missing documentation, open a paper file and computer file. Statistics, including complicated weighted averages, are performed on each file and a recommendation to accept or not is made based on criteria given by the college. If the college so desires, letters of acceptance can be sent out by SRAM to the candidates.

The paper and electronic files are returned to the college by March 8th. The college can then make its admissions decision and send the appropriate letter to the

student. There is a second round of applications in late April for those students refused in the first, as well as a third round in late May.

SRAM charges each applicant \$30, which is the application fee now paid by the student to the College. As there is no reduction in staff foreseen, the cost to the College would be the loss of this income. The Academic Dean indicated that this would come out of the College's Operating Budget. He also stated that there would be a one-time initiation fee which he estimated would be about \$20,000 - \$30,000.

SRAM charges \$25 to foreign students who wish to have their documents evaluated.

More information can be found about SRAM from their website www.sram.qc.ca

Vanier's Trial Run

A04: 100 student applications were sent to SRAM for processing as an experiment. These files were also processed in the normal way by the College. The results are presently being examined by the Registrar's office.

H05: All students who have applied for January admission (about 1000) have been evaluated by SRAM. The students applied on the usual CAS application form, their information was entered by Vanier and then sent to SRAM, where it was evaluated. The cost for this service was \$15 per student.

A05: The plan for A05 is that all student files will be processed and evaluated by SRAM. The College will then have to make a decision as to whether to continue with SRAM or not. The decision will probably have to be made following this trial period.

Where Did This All Come From?

Under the present system high school applicants are processed first. These are by far the simplest group to handle. Much pressure has been put on Admissions to produce results quickly because of early orientation sessions for science and social science at the beginning of April. (The value of these sessions needs to be re-examined).

Because of this, some small programs and most of the technologies are left to the end. It can take up to two months to process some applications. Technologies expressed their concern that they were losing students; as a result the Academic Dean decided that

he wanted all applicants processed within a month.

A consultant was called in. The recommendations contained in his report are in Appendix III.

The Options

The choices presented to us by the different interested parties include:

1. Join SRAM completely, cost \$30 per student
2. Continue using the CAS application form and use SRAM only to analyse (and process/take out) the applications, cost \$15 (?) per student
3. Develop our own in-house system as Dawson and Champlain have done.

Continued: See Plusses and Minuses on page 29



Adjunct Teacher's Song

By Grace Hawley

In my newly ordered office
The evaluating lady sat,
Important as a report card,
Complacent as a cat.
With sturdy suit and ear-length hair,
«Talk to me,» she said.

Let me hear your sentence structure, measure your unease,
Check up on your thinking, «Think out loud,» said she.
«Do you love your lovely students?
Are they blooming forth for you?»

And I a lowly adjunct, with little left to lose.
My self love struck with poverty,
Far from the tenured track.
Why risk the little left me, trouble untroubled air.
«The students are happy as clams,» I said,
The teachers are happy too.
It's almost the best of all possible worlds...»
But she more curious grew.

«Why settle for «almost?» she questioned.
«What would you will to change?»
This prospect nudged my fancy, tugged sly on my northern
tongue.
The old nerve touched, the guard let down,
I told her what I thought.

«I would not be an adjunct; it's beggary, not fair
And not for my self only, for armies of adjuncts here
We teach the self-same students,
Our courses count the same.
Our classes are as full as yours,
And our vocabularies too.
Yet we are not essential, check a dictionary and see.

It's more than just the money, though money says things to
me.
We feel like part-time persons,
Without identity.
Treat us with almost- fairness, the way that God would do.
That is if God loved justice and working mothers too.

The lady looked in sharpness, in some surprise at me:
«Our adjuncts make us feel like lords, a clear necessity
They glow in our reflective light.
They keep the costs down low.
We know the way they're feeling, encourage them to talk
We offer pot-luck dinners and pray for them at church.»

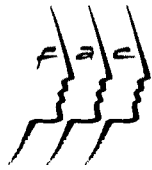
But I, once stared teaching, grew heated to my theme.
Visioned hosts of adjuncts high in heavens' blasts
Glorious bursts of hymn songs,
Full time souls at last.
Multitudes admitted to that Great Chairperson's feast
Who counts us all as counting, blesses all as blessed,
We circle with the tenured class, all pensioned and insured.

But the stern suit rose directly
Seriously displeased.
Clearly a talking adjunct, troubles the southern breeze
At the door she turned abruptly
And dropped the bottom line:
«What we mostly disapprove of is outsiders such as you
Coming here to tell us
Things that we should do.

The sweet and southern breeze moves slow,
You're clearly out of step
Be equal at McDonald's
Be equal after death.»

She thinks these last words linger, with their attendant
pain,
Too miserly to know that, adjunct though I be,
I've turned evaluator too
And put her in a poem.

Grace Hawley has taught English at Vanier College since 1973.



V.C.T.A.

VANIER COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

DECENTRALIZATION: What is at stake for teachers in the College system?

By Christian Roy

Last Spring, the proposal of the Federation of CEGEPs opened the debate on the future of the Colleges. It was a stormy and uneven debate during which, surprisingly, a substantial consensus emerged about the success of the CEGEP system: It has provided access to higher education to a great many students and allowed Quebec to achieve a higher education graduation rate compared to those of the most developed countries. The performance of the CEGEPs is all the more remarkable because the current system actually allows the province to save 170 million dollars a year by offering pre-university education at the college level. (1)

Nonetheless, society evolves. The beginning of the 3rd millennium put an abrupt end to the strong economic growth of the 90s. In Quebec, demographic factors began to cut into student numbers. In conjunction with the migration towards the big cities, the reduced birth rate led to the closing of schools in the villages of Quebec.

Would the education system, one of the main axes of the Quiet Revolution, be shaken up? Some students, parents, employers, teachers, union representatives, school commissioners, administrators, economic development agents and politicians are concerned that it may be.

Certainly, the demographic decline will have a direct impact on the financing of the education system because the network is financed based on the number of students, and it will also have a great impact on the economy of the regions. Fewer workers with fewer jobs directly affect regional GNP.

Are there any solutions?

Such widely varied individuals as Guy Chevrette, former Pequiste Minister of Regional Economic Development, Gaetan Boucher, President of the Federation of CEGEPs and even Alain Dion, President of FAC have all spoken of decentralization.

Is decentralization really a panacea? Both for the economy of the regions and the financing of the Colleges? What do the people and the teachers think?

While the debate about decentralization seems to be well advanced among union leaders, few of the ordinary members have a clear opinion on the matter. The majority of our members would be hesitant at this time to engage in a struggle against decentralization without knowing the real nature of the enemy.

What does decentralization mean? Giving more power to local administrations or more responsibility? If it is more power, what powers are we talking about? Will administrators have the means to override our Collective Agreement? To define the content of programs? To give diplomas?

Last spring, when they adopted a position about the future of the CEGEPs, the Federation of CEGEPs clearly asked the Minister for more powers for local administrations, powers which would radically strengthen the position of administrators vis-a-vis teachers. (See the article, **Negotiations!** page 7 of this Newsletter.)

The position of teachers and teachers' unions is clear: ***There is no question of diluting our positions in matters of pedagogy and working conditions in favour of local administrators. The current Collective Agreement must be protected. It is a minimum base on which to build.***

The proposals by Guy Chevrette and others involved in economic development concerning decentralization are rather different. Decentralization is essential to the economic development of the regions. The current centralization of powers and programs favours the metropolitan areas to the detriment of peripheral regions which are faced with unemployment rates much higher than the provincial average. Former Minister of Regional Economic Development, Guy Chevrette, instituted the idea of 'Resource Regions' to designate the regions which are weakest economically so that they might benefit from special provincial assistance.

Former Minister Chevrette's vision presents another aspect of the concept of decentralization. It's a position

founded in economics, based on the fact that it is not possible to support regional economic development by elaborating “wall-to-wall” programs. We need local action plans with objectives, measures and financing that take account of local reality.

In a centralized context, programs are financed in proportion to the number of users. For example, to finance a technical course such as Industrial Design in a region, the Ministry of Education pays the College about \$11,000 per student, per year. For this to be profitable, about 12 students per year must be recruited. However, it is far more difficult to recruit 12 students in Saint Georges de Beauce than in Laval or Longueuil. If manufacturing is an important sector of economic activity in Saint Georges de Beauce and employers need industrial designers but, in good or bad years, considering reduced birth rates and the exodus of young people, they are not able to find 12 students in industrial design, what can be done?

In a centralized system, there are two solutions:

- Do not give the program.
- Give the program at a loss.

In a decentralized system of regional economic development, one would finance a local development plan in which the manufacturing sector would be designated as a high priority axis of development. To support the development of this axis, one portion of the financing would be used to sustain the Industrial Design Program and to fill the “break-even” gap left by the financing from the Ministry of Education.

Practically, the means to do this range from simple budgetary transfer to the sharing of space with the school commission. Could this type of decentralization be a threat to teachers?

Another example: In comparison to Colleges, hospitals are evolving in a somewhat more decentralized system. Thus, the Hospital of Haut-Richelieu called on the community to help it equip a completely new paediatric service. Gifts from the community totalled \$300,000 and allowed the hospital to completely finance investments in buildings and equipment outside the envelope provided by the Minister of Health. Could this type of decentralization pose a threat to health professionals?

In the two cases just stated, there are risks. The first danger is that the government might partially withdraw from financing while permitting recourse to other sources. On the other hand, neither in the case of Industrial Design nor in the case of the paediatric service were Collective Agreements, salaries or working conditions of the first line employees put into question, at least not directly.

As a corollary, the quality of services might fluctuate as a function of the capacity of local organizations to find financing. And decision making power could slip from the hands of health or education professionals into the hands of local budget administrators.

On the other hand, in terms of collective participation, decentralization might become an opportunity. Teachers might, for example, ask for more responsibility in the local educational project. This requires that the teaching profession be given its proper value. Considering the salary slippage of the last twenty years, this is far from guaranteed.

If it is beginning to be difficult to recruit secondary school teachers to replace those who are retiring, that already means that teaching is losing out as a career choice. At the College level, retirements will increase considerably from now to 2008. Less job security, bigger workloads and non-competitive salaries will all turn talented people towards more promising fields of work, as happened in the hospitals with nurses.

In the current situation, financing of government services constitutes the heart of the problem. However, the government’s final position on decentralization is not yet known. For the College system, Education Minister Pierre Reid will announce his position at the beginning of December. Let’s pay attention because we have to negotiate with the Minister to defend our gains.

Let us remember, however, that the very concept of decentralization deserves reflection before we adopt a definitive position. Can the union be totally opposed to government financing as a function of regional needs? For its part, should the government envisage asymmetrical financing with the aim of providing equivalent quality of services throughout Quebec?

Yes and no.

If the problem is to assure services of quality throughout Quebec while demographic evolution is unequal and the province’s capacity to pay (with respect to the GDP) has reached its limit, what can be done?

The solution is mixed:

- Maintain educational services (and expenses) at current levels.
- Add resources “à la carte” according to specific regional needs.

The first strategy is more or less the status quo in terms of our present situation with respect to working conditions and salaries with indexation. In some respects, it’s the centralized system we already know.

The second strategy involves financing the needs

Continued on bottom of page 14

You asked . . . Who does the drawings for the VCTA Newsletter?

The artist's name is Marnie Macdonald. She has been teaching at Vanier since 1976—initially taught sculpture and painting, then created creative expression courses and was edging into the theatre studio by having her students making sculptures with their bodies and large 'paintings' with textile on the floor before she began teaching theatre: her true love. She's been teaching improvisation character bodywork workshops as well as her own creations, *Mask & Clown* and *Collective Creation*, since 1983.

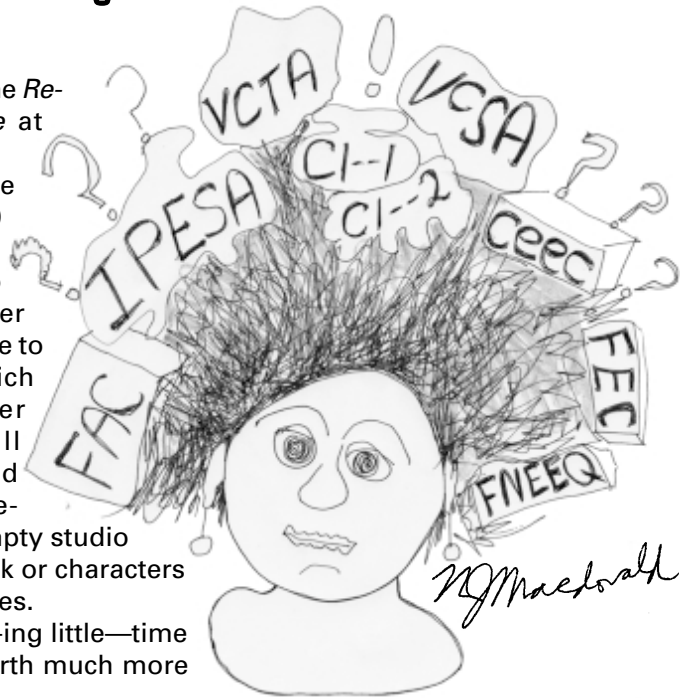
Outside of Vanier she makes masks (presently with broken mirrors) and leads workshops of *Mask and Clown* as well as spiritual 'magic' workshops (the latest one being *Piece Peace Circle*) working with sacred dance, sound, movement and energy work. In the summer, she has taught with

Starhawk as part of the *Re-claiming Collective* at summer intensives.

She taught full time at Vanier until 1990 when she realized that if she wanted to continue to love her work, she would have to work half time which she has done ever since. And she still loves her work—and her students—especially seeing the empty studio come alive with mask or characters moving in their stories.

She is happy earn-ing little—time and freedom are worth much more to her.

Marnie went to India in 2002, built a large snow labyrinth in Outremont Park and helped her friend with cancer die at home in 2004. It looks like Asia is coming up again in 2005.



Decentralization...continued from page 13

that arise locally outside the central envelope coming from the Ministry. Acting in this way, the government seeks to maintain the current quality of services and to finance new local services from other sources.

In the current negotiations, there will be two strategic levels corresponding to two levels of objectives. As union members, we are accustomed to defending our interests at the first level. But the second level represents a real challenge, a change of direction for which we must/could prepare in other ways.

All the same, let us keep in mind that the quality of education is linked to the quality of the student-teacher relationship. There is no reform, strategic plan or computer infrastructure that can replace the work of a teacher in a class. However, in our highly bureaucratized environment, too often, the work of the teacher is taken for granted.

That is a false notion. The work of the teacher must be more highly valued and that idea must be at the center of our demands.

In order to help with our reflection, in a second article we will look more deeply into the context of negotiations: the socioeconomic position of Quebec, the

necessity to invest in the knowledge economy and the development of the regions.

- (1) Groupe d'analyse. *L'Apport des cégeps à la société québécoise.* (2004)
Groupe Secor. *Impact financier de l'élimination de l'enseignement universitaire au milieu collégial.* (1992)

12% Rise in Education Spending in Quebec

Government spending on education in Quebec has increased by 12% during the last ten years to reach the sum of 11.5 billion dollars today. During this same period, the Ontario Government has increased its spending by 57% to reach a sum of 15.4 billion. (Institut de la statistique, 2004)

Christian Roy, on behalf of the VCTA Executive. Christian teaches music and is currently serving as Secretary-Treasurer of the VCTA Executive.

GO AHEAD MAKE MY PAY!

Or...How I used to love payday...

by GALE MARTIN

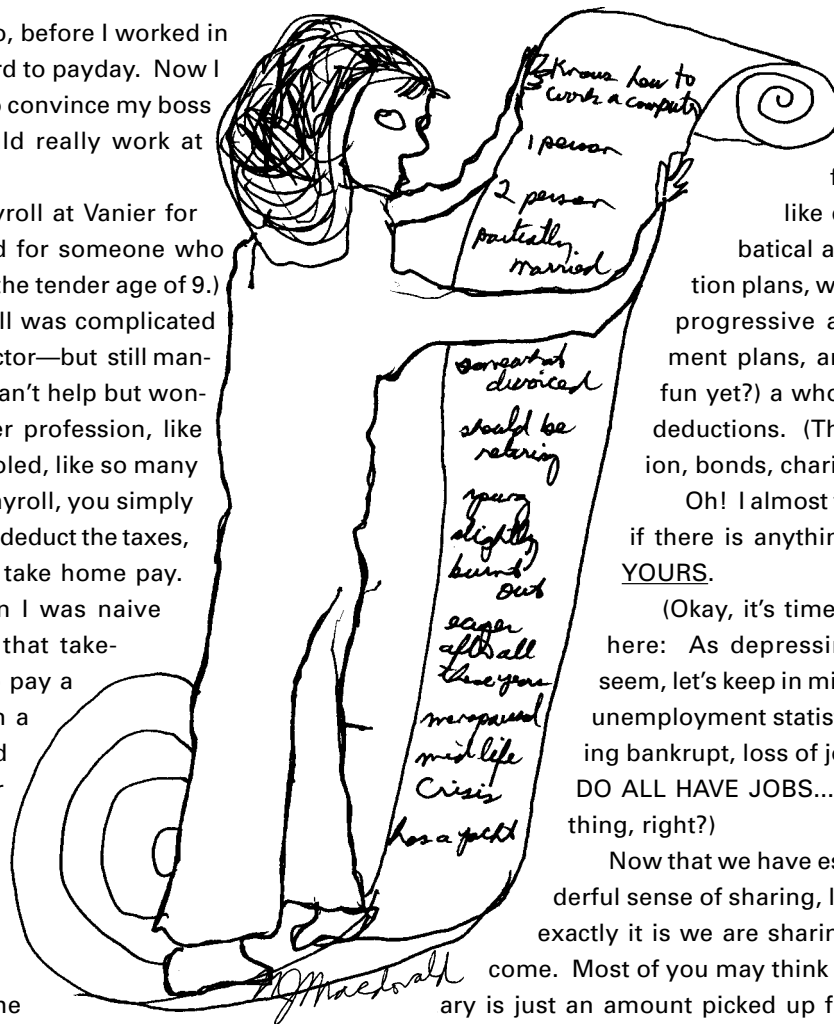
Many, many year-ends ago, before I worked in a Payroll office, I looked forward to payday. Now I find myself thinking up ways to convince my boss that a bi-annual payroll would really work at Vanier College.

I have been doing the payroll at Vanier for more than 20 years. (Not bad for someone who surely started working here at the tender age of 9.) When I first started, the payroll was complicated in comparison to the private sector—but still manageable. I look at it now and can't help but wonder why I didn't pick an easier profession, like Microbiology. I guess I was fooled, like so many others, into believing that in Payroll, you simply establish someone's gross pay, deduct the taxes, and give them the balance as take home pay. Okay... I admit that back then I was naive enough to believe that from that take-home pay, one could afford to pay a mortgage, raise two kids, own a car, take a yearly vacation and even have a few dollars left over for some luxuries, like groceries. Silly me.

So, I ask you, what ever happened to that simple concept of take home pay? Well, I suppose I can sum it up with the longest four-letter word in the English language: GOVERNMENT. As far as I can tell, this whole mess started with a TEMPORARY measure during World War 1 called INCOME TAX. (I think someone forgot to tell Revenue Canada the war is over!) It has escalated since into something that in certainty and popularity can only be compared to Death.

We are hired, we work, we give away half our income. So where does all our hard earned cash go? Here's a sample:

REVENUE CANADA TAXATION:	anywhere from 1% to 35%
REVENUE QUEBEC TAXATION:	not to be out done.... 1% to 35%
CANADA EMPLOYMENT (Alias EI):	1.98%
QUEBEC PENSION PLAN:	4.95%
RREGOP PENSION:	5.35%
VARIOUS UNION DUES:	1.5% or 1.66%
INSURANCE DEDUCTIONS:	various amounts



Of course, to make the entire picture a little more interesting, let us not forget little things like deductions for sab-batical and additional vaca-tion plans, workload reductions, progressive and gradual retire-ment plans, and (are you having fun yet?) a whole slew of optional deductions. (Things like credit union, bonds, charity, parking, etc.)

Oh! I almost forgot the best part; if there is anything left over its ALL YOURS.

(Okay, it's time for a reality check here: As depressing as all this may seem, let's keep in mind that with today's unemployment statistics, companies going bankrupt, loss of job security, etc. WE DO ALL HAVE JOBS.... and that's a good thing, right?)

Now that we have established our wonderful sense of sharing, let's talk about what exactly it is we are sharing. Our GROSS income. Most of you may think that your gross salary is just an amount picked up from a salary scale. Well, in about 25 % of cases, that is true. As for the rest of us, although we do have a base rate or salary, we must rely on other information or calculations to establish gross pay. (Just ask the VCTA about the CI calculations).

Of course, none of this can be accomplished until one is actually hired by the College. This is not as simple as it sounds. (Contrary to popular belief, one does not simply have to show up to get a job.) Once again many people contribute to hiring. The biggest contributor is, you guessed it, the GOVERNMENT. They provide us with enough rules and regulations to make a grown payroll supervisor cry. Of course, you also have to throw in the union rules, college policies, labour standards and the BIGGIE... budget restric-tions. The end result of this smorgasbord of delights is actually getting the employee paid.

How does all of this translate into a gross income, a net

income, and your pay? Well, let's skip the jargon and double talk and get down to basics. **NO ONE SHOULD BE WORKING AT THIS COLLEGE WITHOUT AUTHORIZED HIRING DOCUMENTS.** The rules are simple:

GET A BUDGET CODE (no money - no candy).
GET THE AUTHORIZATION FOR HIRING DONE.
GET SIGNATURE (S) OF AUTHORIZATION.
AND GET IT PROCESSED BEFORE THE PERSON STARTS WORKING.

There are too many ways to hire, too many classifications of worker, too many types of contract etc. to elaborate on in this one article. However, there is only one Human Resources Department and they "know their stuff". If you follow the rules above and consult Human Resources when in doubt, the NET result will be the NET PAY.

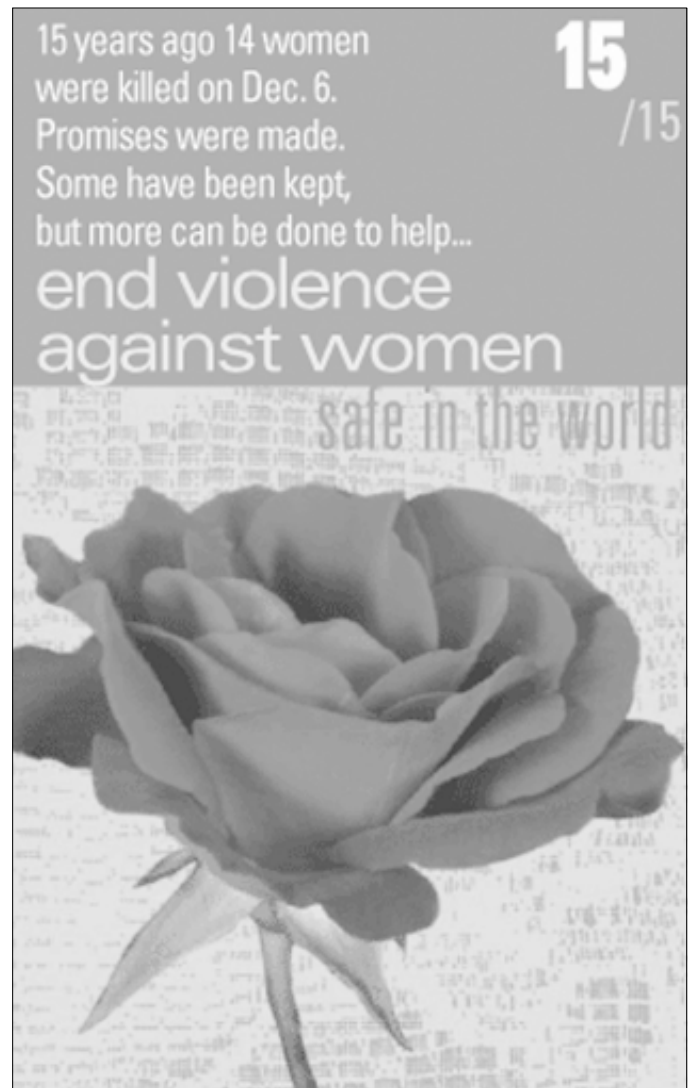
Payroll processes many types of payment: regular salary, overtime, service contracts, day contracts, evening contracts, student pay, casual pay, replacement contracts, substitution payments and of course those two extra cheques per month for payroll staff. (Only kidding.) Every rule and regulation must be applied to every payment, and payroll must evaluate each file differently. When paperwork is received late, it affects both the current and back pays for the employee, causing us to have to re-evaluate previous pay periods as well as make adjustments to mandatory and optional benefits. Most importantly it causes late payments to employees and to those with whom we share our net pay. (i.e.: Hydro Quebec and Visa).

Like everything else involving the government, (there's that word again!) life for the Vanier Payroll Department can be trying at the best of times. (No one is allowed to say the word "retro" aloud anymore.) Our primary function in Payroll is GETTING EVERYBODY PAID. Unfortunately, it is not our only function. We also have two year-ends each year, (fiscal and taxation), as well as statistical reports for the Pension Commission, the Workers Compensation Commission, Revenue Canada, Revenue Quebec, reports for our finance department, reports on labour cost and budgets, reports for the unions, reports for the insurance companies, and reports for Statistics Canada, EI and La CARRA. We must keep up to date on Labour Standards, union changes, government budget changes, yearly tax changes, EI changes, and all other changes to the income at source picture. But, the bottom line is always getting every Vanier College employee paid on payday.

Well, it seems that I have painted a rather bleak picture of Payroll doesn't it? Let's be honest. I've lasted here for 20 odd years, there must be something good about it. (At least my analyst thinks so.) Maybe it's the terrific people I work with in Payroll, Toni Bellantoni and Enza Facchino. Maybe it's the challenge. Maybe it's just Vanier... the community,

my colleagues and friends. Whatever it is, I'm staying right here. Besides, I have a payroll deadline, payday is just around the corner.....

Gale Martin is also the creator of the Bag Lady Skit, a regular treat at the Women's Champagne Breakfast. A writer of plays and sometimes stand-up comedian, she keeps John Lynch in the Service Dept. on his toes.



15 ways, 15 days to end violence against women: Nov. 22 to Dec. 6, 2004.

15 years ago, 14 women were killed on Dec. 6. Promises were made. Some have been kept, but more can be done to help end violence against women. Join the Postcard Campaign:
http://www.clc-ctc.ca/menu/english/en_index.htm

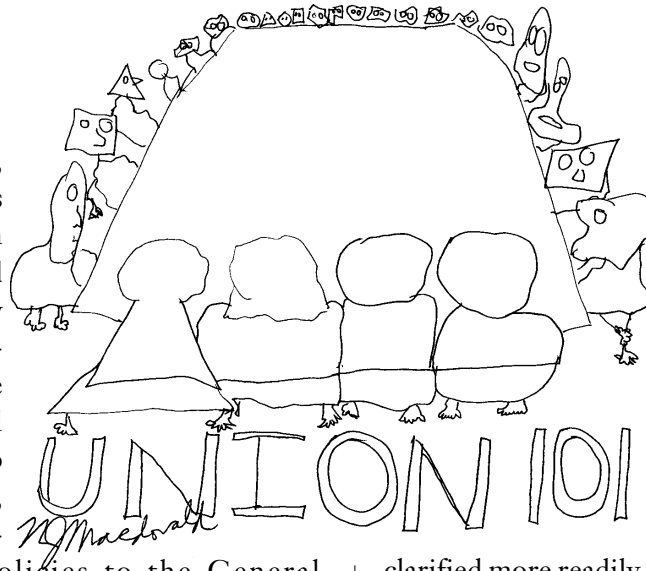
UNION 101: The Association Council

By Charles F. Levine

On a day-to-day basis, the VCTA Executive runs the union. The Association Council is rather like a board of directors setting policy between General Assemblies. It is the place where members representing all areas of the faculty meet to advise the VCTA Executive, talk about issues, make decisions and recommend policies to the General Assembly.

Widespread membership on the Association Council guarantees that all areas of the faculty will have a voice in matters concerning the life of the union: two teachers from each of the Faculties, two at-large representatives and two members appointed by the VCTA.

The Association Council meets at least once a month (on Thursday afternoon) to consider all the matters that have arisen in the previous weeks and to hammer out the agenda of the next General Assembly.



Normally, when the Council recommends something to the General Assembly unanimously, the Assembly passes that item. This is largely because the representative nature of the Council fairly well assures that all sides of any argument will have been heard. Since the Council is so much smaller than the General Assembly, debates can often be

clarified more readily and decisions arrived at in a timely manner.

For anyone who would like to dip a toe into the work of the VCTA, the Association Council would be an excellent place to start. (Meeting times are, of course, blocked out on schedules for elected members.)

Charles F. 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.

Open Door Network: Update

from Nancy Leclerc, Anthropology

News...

The Open Door Network has launched a student contest for the logo that will represent the Network. There will be a launch party in February for the project and training sessions for all members of the Vanier Community who wish to be part of the Network will start shortly thereafter.

...and Erratum

I would like to correct an important omission in my article: "*The Open Door Network: A Step Toward Inclusiveness at Vanier College*", Vol. 22, Issue 2 of the VCTA Newsletter, (Oct. 2004). The Open Door Network project is an initiative of the Women's Studies Program. Without their encouragement, support and brainstorming capacities, this project would not be where it is.

Over and Gout: the health column

By Karen Runnels

Gout was coined the rich man's disease of the 18th century because only the rich could afford to indulge excessively in the alcohol and purine rich foods that would elevate their blood levels of uric acid. Gout is alive and well in the 21st century regardless of income because we are still an indulgent society when it comes to our food and booze consumption.

WHAT IS GOUT?

Gout is a debilitating disease for those who are afflicted. Excess uric acid overwhelms the kidneys and over time crystallizes and settles in the joint spaces, most commonly the big toe or ankle joint, though the hands, wrists, knees and elbows are not exempt.

This results in severe joint pain, swelling, tenderness usually beginning at night after ingesting the offending purine rich foods and drink. In fact, even the weight of a bed sheet on a complaining toe can be agonizing. Attacks tend to last a few days or weeks and the frequency of attacks varies.

If you don't treat the gout you will keep having more attacks. More joints will be affected and the attacks will last longer. Over the years you may develop tophi which are soft tissue swellings caused by uric acid crystals, usually formed on the toes, fingers, hands and elbows. In addition there is always the danger of getting kidney disease or kidney stones (uric acid stones). Interestingly, men are 20 times more susceptible than women to experiencing gout.

WHAT CAN I DO?

You can't change your sex but cooperative patients can avoid or ameliorate gout attacks. Eliminate *alcohol* and the following extensive list of "gouty" purine rich foods from your diet: *anchovies, liver, sardine, salmon, kidney, herring, mackerel, red meat, meat gravies, cream sauces, scallops, mussels, crab, roe, asparagus, peas and beans.*

You should lose weight if you need to because being overweight can result in increased uric acid production.

It would definitely be advisable to stay clear of the



THE GOUT. James Gilleray, 1799: from the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

popular high protein diets {e.g. Atkins} as this can worsen conditions.

A recent study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, March 2004, revealed that a high intake of *low fat dairy products* reduces the risk of gout by 50%. It is unknown why low fat dairy products offer a protective effect. *Colchicine* is the primary drug prescribed to treat gout. It has no direct effect on uric acid levels, but works by reducing inflammation. Colchicine is also associated with serious side effects (e.g. bone marrow depression, hair loss, vomiting, diarrhea). Many people can't tolerate this drug.

Drinking lots of water can help flush uric acid from the body. Even better drinking one cup of *nettle, celery seed or dandelion tea* 3 times daily for several weeks will help flush out uric acid from the tissues. Please note that these herbs have diuretic properties and would not be advisable if you are already taking prescribed diuretic medication.

Dark or red berries such as cranberry, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries and cherries are an effective remedy against gout because they contain anthocyanidin. Anthocyanidins are flavanoids which have strong anti-inflammatory properties which prevent collagen destruction and neutralize excess acidity in the body including uric acid. Eat lots of them!

If you own a "juicing machine", juice celery or parsley which are very effective for combating and flushing out uric acid from the body.

Prevention is the best defense against this disease; not great news as we approach the often over consumptive self-indulgent holiday season.

If you are interested in a homeopathic approach to treating gout try www.holisticonline.com

Karen Runnels, who runs the Employee Fitness Program, has taught Physical Education at Vanier College since 1974. She is also a Natural Health Consultant and Chartered Herbalist.

DEPARTMENT
COLLEGIALITY
SURVEY

You are invited to participate in this Collegiality Survey for your colleague _____

Statistical summaries and your anonymous comments will be shared with your colleagues. Please answer each question by circling your answers.

1. Does your colleague reasonably available to students and co-workers in the Department?
a. *always available*
b. *usually available*
c. *sometimes available*
d. *rarely available*
e. *never available*
Comments: _____
2. Does your colleague consult with co-workers to solve problems affection the delivery of your program to students?
a. *always consults*
b. *usually consults*
c. *sometimes consults*
d. *rarely consults*
e. *never consults*
Comments: _____
3. Does your colleague participate actively in Department meetings?
a. *always participates*
b. *usually participates*
c. *sometimes participates*
d. *rarely participates*
e. *never participates*
Comments: _____
4. Does your colleague communicate openly with Department colleagues?
a. *always communicates openly*
b. *usually communicates openly*
c. *sometimes communicates openly*
d. *rarely communicates openly*
e. *never communicates openly*
Comments: _____
5. Does your colleague accept feedback in an open and professional manner?
a. *always accepts*
b. *usually accepts*
c. *sometimes accepts*
d. *rarely accepts*
e. *never accepts*
Comments: _____
6. Does your colleague interact sensitively with all the segments of the diverse population that makes up your student body?
a. *always interacts sensitively*
b. *usually interacts sensitively*
c. *sometimes interacts sensitively*
d. *rarely interact sensitively*
e. *never interacts sensitively*
Comments: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

An English Teacher's Response

Dear Colleagues:

As an English teacher, I am appalled by the quality of the writing used in the college administration's questionnaire featuring the deceptively bland title, "*Department Collegiality Survey*". You may already have received critical feedback, but I'll add mine anyway. It goes without saying: this approach to summative evaluation is **non-collegial**, improper and probably illegal, but I wish to focus here only on its use of the English language.

Two major points are striking, and they would receive an automatic failing grade in any English essay: Point number one is **grammar**. Question 1 begins with the wrong verb. It should read, "*Is your colleague...*" Again, Question 2 confuses nouns and participles. It should read "*...problems affecting the delivery of your program...*"

Point number two is **diction**. For a document claiming to be a credible survey to be turned into "statistical summaries" and used to fire teachers, this one is full of undefined and unquantifiable terms. For example, in Question 1, what does "*available*" mean and how does any colleague measure it, given that we are not present watching every minute of contact with students: on the phone, on e-mail, consultations in the classroom after teaching, in the halls, in the office, etc.?

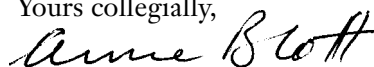
I would say the same thing of Questions 3 to 6 as well. Which of one's colleagues actually sees, hears, and reads all of our participation in meetings, our communications with colleagues, our reception of feedback, and our interactions with the segments of the student body? (And why does this sound like dissection of an insect, by the way?)

In Question 1, which of a,b,c,d, or e in the responses qualifies as "*reasonably*"? In Question 2, *consult*, *solve*, *delivery of your program* are all words which are so subjective that they would be difficult to quantify. The same is true for *participate*, *actively*, *communicate*, *openly*, *accept*, *feedback*, *open and professional*, *interact*, *sensitively*, *all the segments*, *diverse population* in Questions 3 to 6.

The real problem with such subjective terms is that they could so easily be used by someone with a grudge against a colleague to destroy his or her reputation and possibly his or her career. On the other hand, we have seen so many dubious appointments hand-picked by the administration to suit their interests that I can also imagine a questionnaire like this being used to retain someone the administration favours, all by the judicious selection of who fills in the answers. (Note the language: *You are invited to participate in this Collegial Survey for your colleague _____.*")

I believe we are on the right path in opposing this kind of instrument on principle, and a close examination of its language just confirms my doubts about its validity and usefulness.

Yours collegially,



Anne Blott, English Department
Oct. 13, 2004

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

By Alena Perout, Vice-Chair

The last Academic Council meeting was held on October 15th, 2004. At that time, Faculty members were still boycotting the majority of Council Issues.

The main items on the agenda of concern to Faculty were the election of a new co-chair, a briefing and vote on the search for our new Director General, as well as naming the members of this year's Teaching Excellence Awards sub-committee.

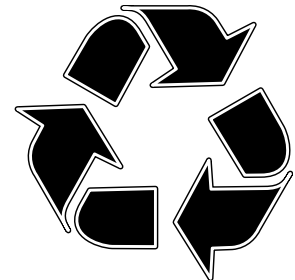
- Council voted to name Michael Macchiagodena as Interim Director General until August 2005. This will give the search committee the time needed to recruit a new Director General.
- Council voted to name Alena Perout new co-chair of Academic Council.
- The following individuals will make up this year's Teaching Excellence Awards sub-committee.
 - Shirley Pettifer, last year's recipient of the award
 - Alena Perout, Vice-Chair of Academic Council
 - Julie Plante, Coordinator, IB
 - Rose DeSouza, L.I.T.C.
 - Claude Campbell
 - Peter Ross, Academic Dean

On Tuesday, October 26th, 2004, we decided to cancel the next scheduled Academic Council Meeting. Two days later, during the VCTA General Assembly the boycott was lifted. Following the lifting of the boycott it was decided to reconvene the various sub-committees of Academic Council that had not met during the boycott. All previous sub-committee members were contacted and asked whether they would serve again. New members were also recruited. All sub-committees (including the Academic Space Committee and the IT in Teaching and Learning Committee) will be complete and functioning by next Council meeting where their memberships will be discussed and approved.

The next Academic Council meeting will be held on November 26th, 2004.

Alena Perout, a geography teacher, coordinates the Dept. of Social and Cultural Sciences. Former President of the VCTA, she has also served on the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

Recycling Paper = Helping the Trip for Tolerance!



What is the Trip for Tolerance?

It is an educational student trip to New York and Washington D.C. lasting 5 days and scheduled for March 20-25, 2005. It invites students of all departments to learn about tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. Last year's trip was an unforgettable experience for both students and teachers. Included are visits to the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, Washington's Grand Mosque, and the Smithsonian Institution. Planning the trip and other fundraising activities are well underway. Please see Matthieu Sossoyan for more info. (ext. 7354 or sossoyam@vaniercollege.qc.ca)

How will the recycling of paper help?

A 5-day bus trip to the US is expensive. Our goal is to reduce the cost for each student to \$300, including bus, accommodations and entrance fees (We succeeded last year). This allows us to attract students of all walks of life. For the next 4 months, and starting November 8th 2004, all paper that is recycled in the College will be sold to recycling services. The money that is made from this will help finance our trip, and preserve the environment. And so, the time has come to finally clean up your filing cabinets and throw away those old newspapers, assignments and photocopies!

Thank you.
Matthieu Sossoyan,
For the Trip for Tolerance 2005 Committee

Launching the “REAL MUG” Campaign!

By Myriam Mansour



Many members of the Vanier community are increasingly concerned about our unsustainable use of resources across the college and feel that we have to stop talking about it and start taking action. An example of good action for a good cause, is the re-launching of paper recycling—first initiated years ago by Geography, thanks to

Alena Perout, and now also embraced by Matthieu Sossoyan—which in the process, helps fund the *Trip for Tolerance*.

Since we have to “choose our fight”, I’ve chosen at this point to go after Styrofoam cups using their dire enemies: REAL MUGS! Believe me, whenever the REAL MUGS invade, Styrofoam cups vanish. And, who want these ugly, plain white, cheap containers to drink highly valued (and much needed!) warm liquids? They are unstable and spill over easily; they don’t hold that much; and they don’t really keep drinks warm anyway... you know *what* I mean.

The alternatives? Easy. Soooo easy! **As an individual:** offer yourself one of those strong, elegant, colourful, stable, thermos or not, mugs! The Vanier bookstore sells a whole array of these environmentally sound products (Bill, you’ll owe me a commission on these... *Oops, did that come out?*). **As a department or sector of Vanier:** make REAL MUGS available to your community! Only \$1.15 each at the dollar store, or if you really want to be pro-active, 49c at Friperie Renaissance or Village des Valeurs! The only inconvenience is that they have to be washed... ah, what a drag. “Big Deal!” you say? Well, I agree. Big deal. Can’t we all wash a mug once or twice a day? Don’t we all know how to do that? Is it that difficult?

Now, you’re thinking, “Who is this Myriam person, trying to tell us what to do? Is she one of those preachers who doesn’t put her money where her mouth is?” In fact, no. I am proud to inform you that over the past summer, I have gone shopping for 15 colourful, stable, elegant, second-hand mugs for my department. I’ve put a note up

saying: “Real mugs available! Please wash after use.”

I can also assure you that since that very special day, our members are visibly the most cheerful, happy, staff in the entire college. (Academic source with authentic empirical results available upon request or come and check for yourself in A301A.) If you are a regular disposable-cup user (perhaps addicted, in which case you should call up the DCU Anonymous immediately), you just can’t imagine the ultimate satisfaction of drinking from a REAL MUG. ♪What a feeling!♪

Even better is the feeling of launching the REAL MUG campaign in your own sector! You will become a hero, yes a hero! Now, since everyone got this message and is reading at the same time, there is no time to waste! You must hurry! Be quick and be the **first one**, the **only one**, the **best one** to whom all your colleagues will turn and say: “*THANK YOU!*”

P.S.1. The above can also apply for cutlery, plates, etc. but I’ll leave that for someone else to make his/her personal battle and have a chance to shine.

P.S.2. No copyrights required for reusing or forwarding this article. You have my consent.

P.S.3. Since I don’t mind being a hero again, it will be my pleasure to purchase second-hand mugs for you during one of my trips to my favorite second-hand stores. Just contact me and hand me your order. I only select the best looking mugs. This is not a joke, it’s a REAL offer!



Myriam Mansour teaches Geography, Research Methods and the joys of recycling to anyone who will listen. She is the mother of two and the organizer of this year’s wildly successful Social Science Festival.

Report from the Board of Directors

By Mark Prentice and Hode Erdogan

The last Vanier College Board of Directors meeting was held Tuesday, Nov.9, 2004. A number of issues of interest were discussed:

- The audited College budget for 2003-2004 was presented and adopted. The issue of how and where the money for student success was spent was again brought up and the Director of Financial Services assured the members of the Board that a complete breakdown of how this budget is spent will be presented to Board members. Annually we receive \$543,000 for student success, \$496,000 for “encadrement et orientation” and \$95,000 for NTIC*—over one million dollars.
- After unanimous recommendations by the Director General Search Committee and Academic Council, the Board approved the nomination of the present Director General as interim Director General from February 2005 to June 30th 2005.
- A new Board Chairperson was elected to replace Deborah Buszard whose mandate is over. The new Chairperson is Mr. Giovanni (John) Di Schiavi, previ-

ously Vice-Chair. The new Vice-Chairperson is Mr. Kan Zhang. A new Executive Committee of the Board of Directors was also elected. In addition to the Director General, the six other members are: John Di Schiavi, Kan Zhang, Mark Prentice, Danielle Villemaire, Nicolangelo Piccirilli and Renzo Orsi.

- The Vanier College task force that was formed at the last Board meeting will convene, after the Education Minister’s green paper on College education becomes available some time in December. It was requested, and agreed, that the college will make available to this task force all pertinent documents, including the general education survey questionnaires generated by the CAP (Commission d’Administration Pédagogique) on behalf of the Federation of Cegeps and the response to the survey submitted by our Academic Dean that constitutes part of this Federation’s position presented to MEQ. (Quebec Ministry of Education)

* NTIC = Nouvelles technologies de l’information des communications

Being Osama A new film by Mahmoud Kaabour

Being Osama is a documentary film which opens a window onto the lives of six Montrealers named “Osama”. Through an exploration of the interior and emotional lives of these subjects, the film connects the experiences of these individual Arab-Canadians to those of the larger cultural community and to Canadian society as a whole, seen against the backdrop of continuing conflict and suspicion between the West and the Arab/Islamic world.

By turns lyrical, observational, impressionistic, and factual, Being Osama, is an intimate exploration of six people, highly diverse in their backgrounds, interests, and personalities, united by their first name and by their experience as Arabs living in Canada in the post-9/11 world.

Produced by CBC’s *The Passionate Eye* and Diversus Productions. 40 min.

Mahmoud Kaabour, a local filmmaker, will be present to discuss his film and audience reactions. Discussion may tackle themes like documentary-making, identity, immigration, Quebec and Canadian multiculturalism, Mid-East politics and Islam.

**Two Showings:
Tuesday, December 7, 2004
at 2:30 pm and at 4:00 pm
A001H**

All Welcome!
Sponsored by the Faculty of Science & General Studies, the Faculty of Social Science, Commerce, Arts & Letters, and the Vanier College Student Association (VCSA)

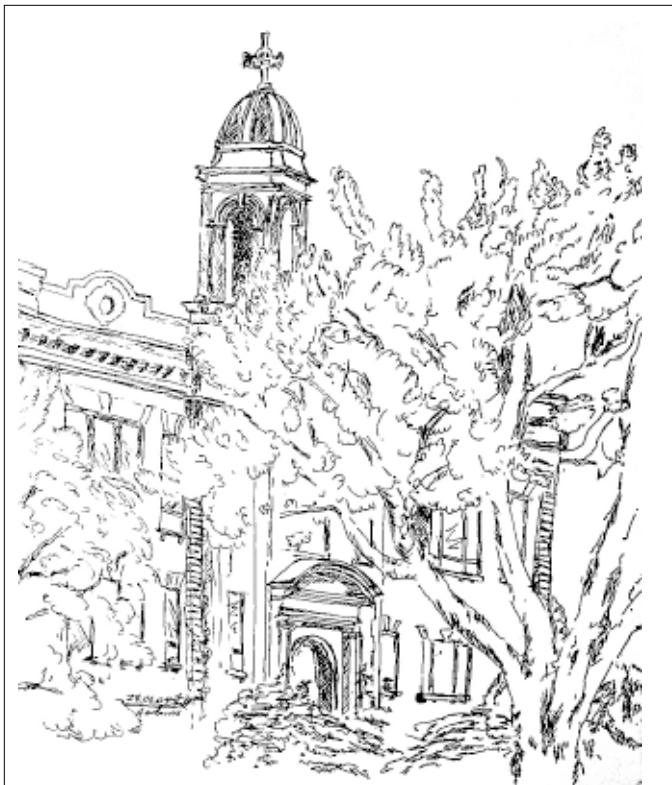
The Fred Andrews' Exhibit*

By Henry Lehmann

A recent show at Vanier College's Gallery 305 uncovers the talent of a faculty member better known for his work as a professor of computer science although Fred Andrews' exuberant figurative paintings and drawings have none of the crisp precision we associate with computer graphics. Indeed, we might initially see his portraits, still-lives, interiors and street scenes as downright messy.

Yet, this is, in fact, what gives them their special élan—their feeling of movement and risk. The nervous line and smeary modelling in a work such as the head and torso, a self-portrait, are counterbalanced by the rightness of certain “punctuation” marks that indicate, for instance, the locus of the shoulder blade or of the concavity at the centre of the neck. Also, it should be noted that Andrews achieves a convincing likeness of himself, not just in a purely physical sense, but also in terms of subtle emotional tensions, reflected in the slightly tense eyelids.

Perhaps the most striking painting on view was that depicting a kind of verdant, rolling surreal landscape which, on second look, was a gourmet nightmare. In this work, in fact a unique still-life, certain utensils seem to have become alive, with a knife and corkscrew ominously



poised near assorted fruits.

These seem to cringe, their boldly brushed-in forms churn, so that their undulating contours suggest an elemental response to the impending slaughter. And the brushwork does double duty, both as signifier of a specific object and as record of the artist's contact with canvas or paint-board. What does all this mean? Has the artist become a pioneering vegetable-rights activist—power to potatoes, rhubarb rules? In fact, the meaning may just be in the quirkiness itself and in the handling of the paint.

Certainly, this little show gives a sense of art and process, of the struggle to link external reality to subjective impressions, as well, as of the true breadth of Andrews' talent. In his work Andrews combines controlled exuberance and profound observation of the banal. If there is one major quibble, it is in regard to anatomical consistency.

In some of the portraits, the artist alternately indicates key body parts with a nominal but entirely effective,

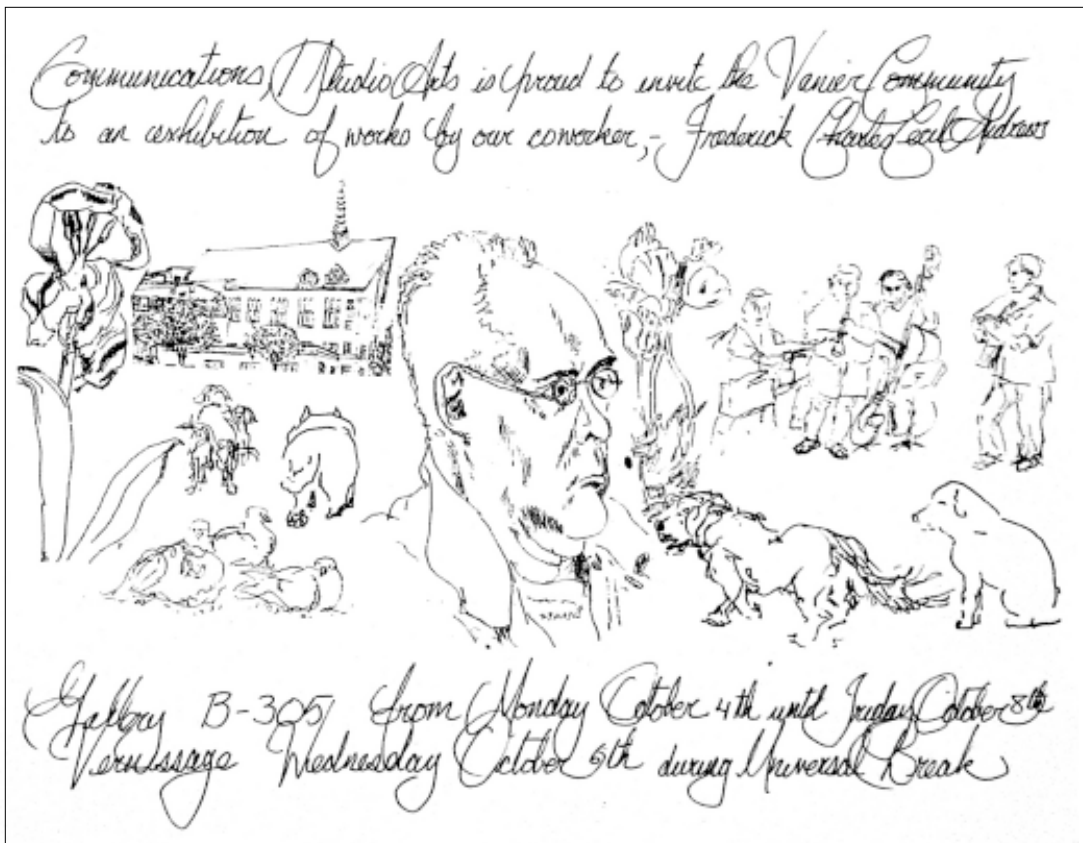
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well aimed mark—harder to do than most people imagine—and other such points with a less definitive blur; the result is a kind of visual dissonance not in line with what the artist is attempting.

Nevertheless, this show was a real delight, with works that were as fresh as they were deliberate. Also, Andrews makes us become keenly aware of paint as paint and, also, as a means to keep memory in the present tense.

**If you missed the show or would like to see it again, check out Vanier NewsMakers on the Vanier Home Page. Denis Lafontaine has done a marvelous job of recording it. You can view the show as a whole, or click on a “thumbnail” for a close-up view of each piece.*

Henry Lehmann teaches in the Communications: Art, Media, Theatre Department. He also writes regularly for the Montreal Gazette on matters of the art.



EDITOR'S NOTE: A special thanks must go from the Vanier Community to Alanna Stalker Horner of the Communications Dept. for spear-heading this exhibition – convincing and cajoling Fred, being there to help him hang it, and sending out the invitation that appears above. Well deserved thanks also go to Fred's wife, Carol.

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.

Centre for Teaching & Learning Excellence

An invitation to participate...

By Judy MacDonald

It appears that Centres for Excellence abound across North America. With the unfailing help of Google, I found many such centres in a variety of institutions – colleges, universities, health institutions, in all kinds of government and private agencies. The mandate of these centres varies according to the needs of their communities as well as—if one reads between the lines—the resources available.

At Vanier, the Centre for Teaching and Learning Excellence was conceived as a resource and support for teachers, staff and students. In fact, the Academic Success Plan 2004 – 2009 highlights the development of the Centre and suggests that through it, teachers could be supported in pedagogical experimentation. Its creation was particularly timely in that, at this point in our history, many teachers and staff are in the process of retiring and it is important that the traditions and expertise gained over so many years not be lost.

On July 1, along with many other dossiers, I took on the responsibility of developing this Centre at Vanier. With my colleagues in Academic Advising and under the supervision of the Academic Dean, I proposed a series of workshops this fall which some of you have attended. My idea was to simply start somewhere and then evaluate the results. Were people interested? Were the workshops useful? While I can't say the participation numbers have been overwhelming, I can say that the presentations have been very informative and the ensuing conversation absorbing. I should have been taking notes but I frankly was too busy just listening!

At the same time, it seemed sensible to have a website with relevant information on research opportunities, conferences, awards and grants, and student mobility, as well as government and organizational links. Summaries of workshops conducted through the Centre would be included in a *Teaching and Learning Practices* section.

For now, certainly, this Centre can't be too ambitious; we simply don't have the resources. However, what is absolutely needed now is your input concerning the



Ron Curtis, English and Caroline Hanrahan, Dean of Science and General Studies

direction(s) this Centre should take. I would love any emails you want to send about possible future workshops or about what else could be added to the website. You could also just drop by the Learning Centre (B205) to share your ideas.

At the same time, I would like to invite you to join an Advisory Committee which would help guide and shape the Centre. Please let me know if you would like to be part of this new venture. Everyone is welcome.

Judy Macdonald has worked at Vanier as the Coordinator of The Learning Center since 1973 and as the Coordinator of the Language School since 2002. She has given numerous workshops on integrating study skills into the classroom for teachers and has supported efforts to encourage literacy across the curriculum. In 1987, along with Fran Davis and Mary Ferger, she edited the booklet, *Engaging the Learner, An Anthology of Teaching Strategies*, copies of which can be found in The Learning Centre—B205. She can be reached at Local 7903; macdonaj@vaniercollege.qc.ca

The Blue Room

By Marcia Goldberg

I. To celebrate a triumph, an Arab student giving his first oral in English, a reading of Erdrich, the green dresses issued to girls and boys in boarding schools, government issue, the scars poor treatment, shame impressed upon the runaways,

you step into the lunchroom where, you're told, redecoration has started. Rushed from Xeroxing and a morning meeting, needing to check out equipment for your next class, you pick up pizza on the run, want to slip into a tranquil space and digest life's real surprises.

II. You go there where the dirty yellow's painted, thinking, *fresh*— but get the set-back of the week when grave-ash blue's been poured all across the wainscoting, a dim, dull, grape-Jell-O mold blue swills down, yanks down the walls of the faculty café,

sucks up light bounced off a misplaced lamp and three stacked coffee tables by the untreated window on the far wall, round and round the room like yellow wallpaper, like gray green government dresses, the tongue-scum walls make only white mats behind tired prints seem real.

...

VI. Oh, bobo blue, Jean Coutu gauze-wrapped, band-aid blue, poisoned Pepto Bismol blue, onguent à base d'eau bleu, it's bleached, blah boo blue, bletch blue, I'm thinking here at the bus stop looking at Indigo, Bell signs, parka royal, levis, stone-washed baby blanket blue things, a naby baby carriage and bright pinks beside the lady wearing kelly green and black, here, where earlier this morning, an accident happened,

a bad, bad accident on Cote de Neige, and now a thin gal in slacks with a chartreuse windbreaker stands with a deadly nightshade purple pack slashed with black straps, her string-like brown hair falling half-way down her cheeks.

Here in the bright sun, smiling, even she puts me in a better mood than that bilge spill in our lunch room.

Marcia Goldberg teaches English, coordinates the Jewish Studies Program and also participates in the Women's Studies Program.

Staff Caf Update: Editor's report

Expect a lovely surprise when you start the H05 semester: phase 2 and phase 3 of the clean-up and redecorating—including plans by a professional decorator—are scheduled to take place during the break.

Inside Joke: A few Vanier graduates, who are now Vanier Faculty, were overheard speculating about the possibility of taking this opportunity to restore "The Green Room"(!). This inside joke will have to be explained to those not familiar with Vanier's Ste. Croix Campus, circa 70's and early 80's.

The LANGUAGE SCHOOL AT VANIER COLLEGE

By Saira Manjothi

This semester, the Vanier College Language School has 137 students registered in its evening and daytime English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. This is quite an achievement when you consider that in January 2002, that number was just 11. Several factors have contributed to the School's growth, but perhaps the two main reasons are niche-marketing and building on Vanier College's existing reputation.

With so many competing language providers in Montreal, it was clear that the Vanier College Language School had to determine its competitive advantage. This meant moving away from traditional "one-size-fits-all" ESL courses, to courses that met the specific needs of different groups. After several semesters of trial and error, four distinct niches were established.

The first niche group is comprised of students who are preparing for the English Admission Test for entry into Vanier College's academic programs. In the past, when Vanier applicants failed the language proficiency test, they were refused admission and told to upgrade their English skills elsewhere. Now they have the option of taking *Academic Writing Skills* at the Language School. The aim of the course is to help students improve their essay structure, development, and summary writing skills. In the last two years, 253 students registered for this course. Approximately 50% of the students who wrote the English Admission Test after following the course passed.

Many students require much more than a 45-hour English course to prepare for college studies, and so the Language School recommends *English for Academic Purposes*, an intensive, non-credit ESL program, which attracts about 50% international students and 50% local students. Students can attend the program anywhere from 1 month to 1 year, and then switch over to Vanier's academic programs once they've fulfilled the College's language requirement. Language School graduates have been accepted to programs such as Science, Science Plus, Nursing, Social Science and Commerce. (Next month, Leila Auguste will become the first former Language School student to graduate from Vanier. She is completing a DEC in Commerce.)

The Language School also offers courses to students from French high schools. In the summer, the course is in the form of a 4-week intensive; during the school year, a part-time Saturday course is offered instead. Nineteen Secondary IV and V students are enrolled this semester (up from 7 in A'03). Each student is planning to attend an English CEGEP in the future and Vanier College is at the top of their list.

The most popular Language School offering continues to be *English Communication*. Over 400 students have registered in these evening courses since January 2002, and five levels are now offered. Most of the students are adults who live in, or near, the Saint-Laurent community, and they are taking English classes at Vanier for either personal or work-related reasons.

English Communication classes do not directly increase the number of students applying to Vanier's academic programs, but opening the door to these adults does increase the College's reputation within the community.

The Language School advertises its courses on the Vanier website, in the Continuing Education catalogue, and in community newspapers, but word of mouth is often the best publicity. Over the last three years, Vanier students, staff, and faculty have recommended the Language School to neighbours, friends and family. Students from Japan, Mexico, Taiwan and China have all returned for second summers at the Language School, and many former students return to enroll a parent, cousin or sibling.

As it heads into its fourth year of operation, the Language School plans to welcome more students than ever before, and continue to broaden Vanier College's reputation on both a local and an international level. Those who would like more information about the Language School can drop by Room B228A. Comments and suggestions are always welcome!



Saira Manjothi is a Vanier graduate who has been working at the College since the summer of 1997. She worked part-time in The Learning Centre, Continuing Education, and Super Camp while she pursued a Joint Honours degree in English Literature and Creative Writing at Concordia. After graduation, she traveled throughout Western Europe. In January 2002, she began her work as the Language School's Admissions and Recruitment Officer.

Cherchez la femme!

By Janice Paquette

I was really happy to see Mark Prentice's article on mystery novels in the last issue of the *VCTA Newsletter* because mystery novels are a real passion of mine. One of my favourite activities is to curl up with a good mystery and forget everything else for a while. So I am looking forward to some of Mark's "picks". At the same time, I was surprised that so few women authors were mentioned because there are so many great women mystery writers out there. So I decided to write and make sure that people know about them.

One of my favourite writers as the moment is Minette Walters, who usually sets her stories in England. As far as I am concerned, her *Acid Row* is a classic on racism and the lynch mob mentality. I was sorry to finish it and plan to read it again, as I have done with another one of her books, *The Dark Room*.

Another writer with a setting in England is Anne Perry, but her mysteries are set in Victorian England and often have references to the beginning of nursing, since one of her major characters is a nurse who worked with Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War. You learn a

lot about early nursing and Victorian mores in her books.

Sara Paretsky, an American, writes great books set in Chicago, including one on a homeless woman living in the Chicago subway system with her children. And another American, Faye Kellerman, writes mysteries set in Los Angeles, about an Orthodox Jewish woman and her policeman husband, who was adopted into a Protestant family, but has gone back to his roots and converted to Orthodox Judaism.

We even have Gail Bowen, a Canadian writer who sets her stories in Saskatchewan. I love reading about Saskatchewan in the winter and she does a lot of social analysis about politics in the province.

All that without even mentioning Amanda Cross, Sujata Massey, and many others!

Janice Paquette started teaching at Vanier in 1980. She currently teaches Sociology and IP and has also taught courses in the Explorations Program, and before that, Access. She has served on the VCTA Executive, represented Vanier teachers at FNEEQ (the federation we belonged to before we joined FAC), is a past editor of the Newsletter and currently sits on Association Council.

Another Response to Mark Prentice's Reading Suggestions:

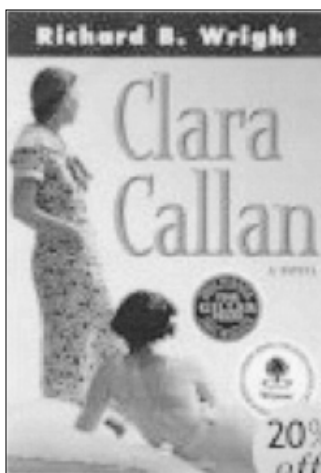
Hi Mark:

I was happily surprised to read your book suggestions in the October issue of the *VCTA Newsletter* and since I know you read French as well, do you know Fred Vargas? Son meilleur est *Pars vite et reviens tard* — très psychologique et cette dame réussit à séparer la commission du crime et la culpabilité du crime! Trois personnes sont instrumentales dans chaque crime?!

Au plaisir, Julie Plante

Clara Callan

by Richard B. Wright



A finely detailed depiction of the Depression era, *Clara Callan* is told entirely in the letters and journal entries of two adult sisters, Clara and Nora Callan, and their older lesbian friend, Evelyn. The novel, Wright's ninth, made a surprising sweep of Canada's major awards for best novel—the Giller Prize and the Governor General's Award—in 2001. Wright has the gift of making the reader care deeply about these characters and their worlds, which include small town Ontario, where Clara is a sensitive schoolteacher, and New York City, where the younger Nora has moved to become a radio soap opera star. Since both sisters are still "on the shelf," their roller-coaster love lives—Nora's in worldly Manhattan and Clara's in the more restrictive atmosphere of

small-town spinsterhood—are a primary subject of their letters and Clara's journal. (Amazon.ca)

The book reads well, and you will be wanting to stay up late, late at night, (just) saying to yourself "Just one more letter..." And the ending will hopefully be a beautiful surprise, as it was for me. I enjoyed this book tremendously.

Lyne Marie Larocque, Sociology, Research Methods, Explorations

Plusses +	Minuses -
<p>1. Join SRAM</p> <p>They offer a complete package. They will have on-line applications by H05 Will be the only method of applying by A05 Compatible with SRIC Can access other databases, such as the Ministry to get student grades, can also access civil status. May be able to access many high schools' report card information. All complete files processed by March 8. Increase the visibility of some of our technologies to a greater number of students.</p>	<p>Complete package is expensive - \$30. SRAM does not handle the 40-45% of non-high school applicants efficiently. Unlike Vanier, SRAM does not include failing grades in averaging marks. Likelihood of more duplications with Dawson. Possible loss of some Francophone applicants (presently 900- 1000). Programs (around 12) that do testing (e.g. Music auditions) would face a time crunch. In-house programs (majors) are not listed on the application form. Possible impact on vulnerable small programs. Loss of personalized approach. Staff need to be retrained.</p>
<p>2. CAS Form / SRAM Process</p> <p>This may to give us the best of both worlds. We stay with the Common Application Form, but we get the advantage of the SRAM system.</p>	<p>It seems unlikely that SRAM will agree to this. It will have to be negotiated by the Academic Dean. They favour us taking the whole package or nothing.</p>
<p>3. Develop Our Own System</p> <p>We stay in the Common Application System with Dawson, Champlain and Marianopolis. An in-house system may be cost effective in the long term. It could be customized to better serve our clientele.</p>	<p>It is not possible to start building any new software until the new computer and operating system is installed, eighteen months from now. The first task of DP will be to install the SRIC system. The development of an admissions system would have to be contracted out and this would be very costly.</p>

The staff in the Registrar's Office work under a great deal of pressure at times with probably the worst equipment in the college. These machines are incredibly slow and are continually crashing, resulting in lost work and a great deal of wasted effort and frustration.

Recommendations:

- *We recommend that the College look into immediately replacing the computers in the Registrar's Office.*
- *We recommend that the College get a realistic estimate of the cost of developing our own Admissions system.*

Opinions regarding the 'Dawson Effect' and other concerns:

- The Admissions Officers, Academic Advisors and Larry Callahan think that we could be swamped with duplicate applications and that it could be a major problem in terms of projections and registration. This is exacerbated by the fact that our students are not required to pay fees until after they have registered.
- Peter Ross and Dianne Tessier do not see duplication as a great problem. Dianne pointed out that we already get about 400 duplicate applications with John Abbott and 150 with the French cegeps. She estimated that there might be more initially with Dawson.
- There is also the concern that Vanier would have to change its traditional guidelines, such as the way we calculate av-

erages. The admissions officers expressed the concern that Vanier could become a second round Cegep as a member of SRAM if we do not have a sufficient number of high school applicants (55-60% traditionally), and our non-high school applicants are not processed efficiently and in addition we lose some of our Francophone applicants.

Since we have to make a decision about joining SRAM before experiencing the full reality of being one of its members some of the answers we are seeking cannot really be found.

Finally

Peter Ross and Dianne Tessier impressed upon us that no decision has yet been reached: and the final decision will depend on two factors:

- 1) How well the A05 admissions process goes:
 - a. SRAM has to clearly benefit the College;
 - b. the admissions staff have to be comfortable with it;
 - c. we must not lose students as a result.
- 2) The negotiations with SRAM with respect to using only part of their system.

The College expects to make a decision about applying to join SRAM in June 2005

Appendix I

The Present Admissions System for New March 1st Applicants

1. Envelopes are opened and documents checked. Any student

Continued on page 30

missing documents is informed and given a deadline to complete his file.

2. A file is opened for each student, as a paper file and on the computer. Social information such as name, address and so on is entered into the student's file. Setting up computer files has at times been outsourced to a private company. It costs \$2 per student.
3. Each file is evaluated by an admissions officer. The student's averages are calculated by hand on a small hand calculator with a paper output. The paper strip is stapled to the student's documents.
4. The file is coded using a system of coloured tabs, numbers and letters. The coloured tab indicates the student's first choice program. For a student coded 75B this would mean his overall average is 75 and the average of the courses related to his first choice program is between 80 and 84.9. Others codes are added for other criteria
5. Letters are mailed out and places are offered to students who meet the criteria set by the program. The paper file is then moved into a separate filing cabinet and the computer file updated. The first letters mailed out are usually to Science and Social Science students who meet the stated criteria, and the strongest high school students in all of the other programs Some programs have extra requirements, such as auditions or personal interviews,

these applicants are handled by a coordinator or teacher in the respective department in conjunction with an admissions officer.

6. The students mail back a card, which was included with their letter, indicating acceptance or rejection of the place. If no response is received by the given deadline the student receives a cancellation notice. Their paper file is then moved to another filing cabinet and their computer file is updated.
7. Students who were ineligible for their first choice are offered their second.
8. Files of refused students are received from and sent to the other colleges in CAS.
9. At the beginning of April Science and Social Science hold their orientations
10. Students are invited in to write placement tests and an information session with the Academic Advisors in May. Sessions are also held in June and August.
11. In the second week of July the College receives the official transcript of marks for each student. Files are reviewed in the light of this information and offers may be rescinded if a student has failed to meet the criteria. Students who have the qualifications will be offered a place in an alternative program. (Modified Science or Explorations for example).
12. In the middle of August the student registers. Although many students do pay their fees earlier the last day of registration is the deadline for fee payment

Appendix II

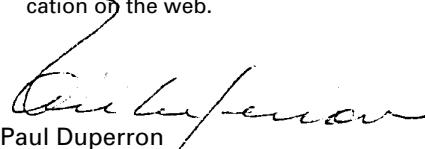
	Vanier	Dawson	Champlain- St Lambert	Marianopolis	John Abbott
Present System	CAS	CAS	CAS	CAS	SRAM
Student Population	5535 (Sep '03)	7449 (Sep '03)	2433 (Sep '03)	generally 1700	5422 (Sep '03)
Future Intentions	Now exploring SRAM	Will never use SRAM	Will never use SRAM	Not currently interested	
Response time	About 3 weeks for strong high school students, up to 8 weeks for the remainder.	Most after 4-5 weeks, up to 8 weeks	Replies out in 3 weeks	Replies out by 3rd or 4th week	Files and computer files are back in the college by March 8. SRAM can send out acceptances if required.
Data entry	Manual in-house system. Has used outside company for some of the work.	Manual in-house data entry system.	Manual in-house system	Edited application forms are sent out for data entry. Returned as hard copy and electronic file.	Performed by SRAM. Student sends application directly to SRAM.
College/Program Choice	2 choices	2 choices	2 choices	2 choices	One choice of college and program, can apply to another college or program in the second round, same for the third round.
Data Analysis	Produces own data analysis, averages etc.	Produces own data analysis, averages etc.	Produces own data analysis, averages etc.	Produces own data analysis, averages etc.	SRAM
Fees Paid	Last day of registration	Day before registration	Two weeks after the letter of acceptance is received	1 or 2 installments-1st is Day 1 of classes-2nd is 6 weeks after classes begin	Upon acceptance
Registration	August	August	August	late May - early June	August

Appendix III

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Vanier must acquire an automated coding system. The automated coding system should generate classification lists necessary to simplify the selection operation and detection of non-Quebec residents and out-of-Canada applicants.
2. Admission should be done by professionals, not by technicians, because it is clearly a job for professionals.
3. Considering the number of student applicants for the autumn admission (about 5000 including program transfers), Vanier will need four full-time professionals.

4. These four professionals should have individual offices very near each other and adjacent to current student records.
5. Vanier must review the numerous tasks done by the current Admissions Officers.
6. If Vanier chooses to develop its own system, Vanier should build this system to be compatible with a near-future admissions application of the web.


Paul Duperron

Poetry Corner...

Little devils

I've seen them: the fixers
 setting up their advantages,
 the arriviste's alibis,
 rich cheapskates spreading their nets,
 poets drawing their boundaries;
 but I've played with clean paper
 in the open light of the day.

I'm a journeyman fisherman
 of living wet verses
 that break through the veins;
 it's all I was good for.

I never contrived opportunities
 out of mere vainglory
 or a schemer's perversity;
 whatever I say in my songs
 is more than benign propaganda.

True, I did it all clumsily
 and for that I beg pardon:
 now leave me alone with my ocean:
 I was born for a handful of fishes.

Pablo Neruda. (1970). *Five Decades: Poems 1925-1970*. Edited and Translated by Ben Belitt. Grove Press: New-York.

About Neruda:

Chilean poet and diplomat, Pablo Neruda was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971. His original name was Neftali Ricardo Reyes Basoalto, but he used the pen name Pablo Neruda for over 20 years before adopting it legally in 1946. Neruda is the most widely read of the Spanish American poets. From the 1940s on, his works reflected the political struggle of the left and the socio-historical developments in South America. (Taken from <http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/neruda.htm>)

Thanks to Mark Prentice, Anthropology, for this submission.

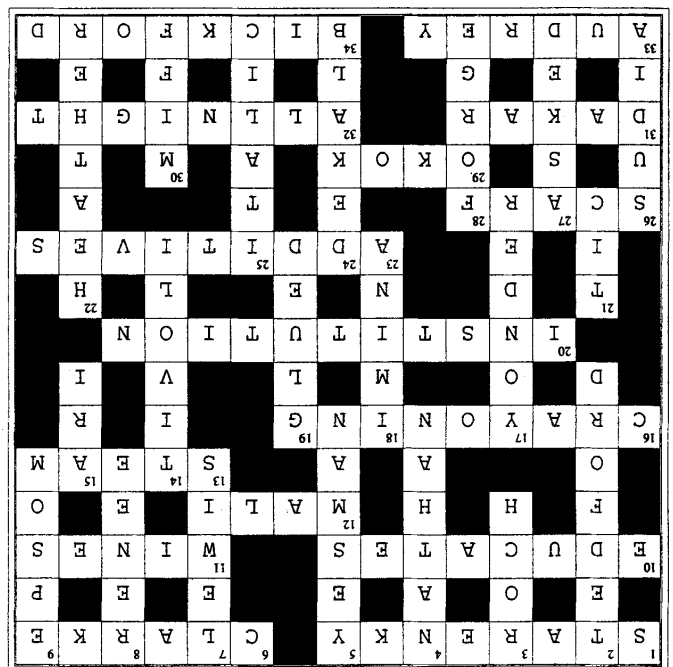
KUDOS!

- 4th Annual Social Science Festival: Making Diversity Work-Oct. 18-22: Kudos to Myriam Mansour, the organizing team, all the presenters and participants. This Festival gets better every year! To view photos of the events go to: www.vaniercollege.qc.ca/socialscience
- Neil Caplan, Humanities and Jewish Studies teacher, distinguished scholar and authority on the history and politics of the Middle East, founder of the Annual Kleinmann Holocaust Symposium at Vanier College, has received the Jacob Zipper Education Award 2004, for his outstanding contribution to Jewish life and culture.
- Mariam Pirbhai, English teacher, received a Governor General Award for her PhD thesis. Congratulations!

QUOTES FOR TEACHERS:

Schools teach you to imitate. If you don't imitate what the teacher wants, you get a bad grade. Here, in college, it was more sophisticated, of course; you were supposed to imitate the teacher in such a way as to convince the teacher you were not imitating.

Robert Pirsig. (1974). *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. London: The Bodley Head.



VANIER REVISITED ANSWERS

VANIER REVISITED BY VALERIE BROEGE

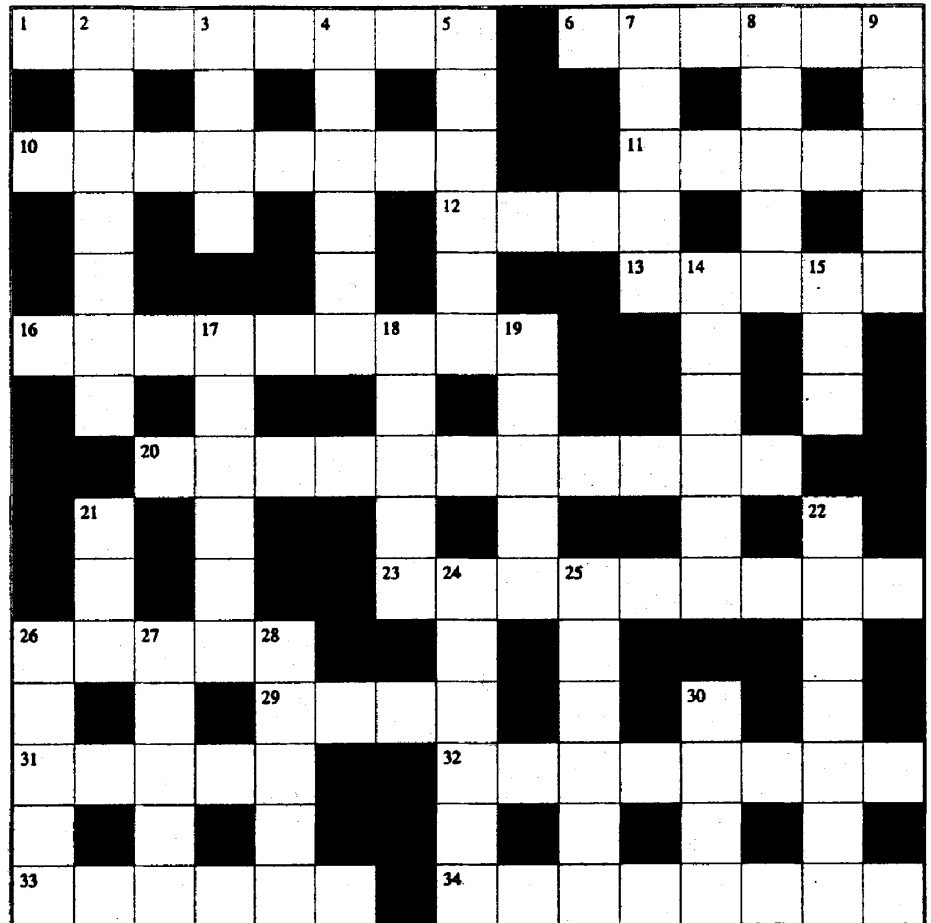
Once again you are challenged to demonstrate your knowledge of all things Vanier. Bonne chance!

ACROSS

1. Vanier promoter should look intently at start of kingdom in the heart of the city. (8)
6. Bird in the middle of third interval turns into Vanier teacher. (5)
10. What Vanier does to a suede cat. (8)
11. Damaged sinew can be healed by potatoes. (5)
12. Excited Vanier teacher takes trip to African country. (4)
13. Kind of plant that keeps Vanier going. (5)
16. Synthetic material in makeup enhances creative activity. (9)
20. Wear no tin suit – it does not fit the dress code at Vanier College. (11)
23. I divest ad of impurities. (9)
26. Wolf down a muffler. (5)
29. To cook okra results in exasperated repetitive approval. (2, 2)
31. Physician assimilates alias to travel to African city. (5)
32. Time interval Vanier teachers would rather not spend on marking. (3, 5)
33. Gene, change one letter in your name and you will become a Vanier employee. (6)
34. Flick this, add a bit of ketchup next to president, and – voila! – you have created a Vanier teacher. (8)

DOWN

2. Man alongside Cross River espies Vanier retiree. (7)
3. Great legendary bird initiates heroic journey to the Old Building in quest of Vanier employee. (4)
4. Hale and hearty man was executed. (6)
5. Affirmative male becomes over-eager assenter. (3-3)
7. This Vanier retiree is part of expedition with 6 across lacking tail end. (5)
8. Descartes begins essay for Vanier English teacher. (5)
9. Salts one can keep sometimes are synthesized in Vanier chem lab. (5)
14. Verdi recitativo lit my fire to reside in Italy. (6)
15. "The Music Man" is playing on campus. (3)
17. Beyond Eritrea – I want to go over there! (6)



18. Pickle the end of expression of difficult situation in which I find myself. (2, 2, 1)
19. Force lewd-sounding behavior and get stuck. (5)
21. So-called sound of clock gives me nervous reaction. (3)
22. Leaving Vanier has made this woman flower. (7)
24. Man goes back dead to his birth place in Illinois. (2, 4)
25. It is vital I call you as soon as possible about choice of type style. (6)
26. Advisor at Vanier bends over backwards to aid us more. (5)
27. Being taken to task educated courtier concerning the proper way the king should be petitioned. (5)
28. Hammer out counterfeit. (5)
30. To offend Madam, if fat, with jokes about overweight people is impolite. (4)

Valerie Broege has been teaching Humanities at Vanier since 1974, and taught mature students for several years as part of the Explorations Program. She loves knitting and crocheting as well as solving and creating cryptic crossword puzzles. In the summer of 1995 while on a train trip to Toronto she had "a cryptic crossword creation epiphany" and spontaneously tried her hand at making a cryptic crossword of her own. Her initial experiment was successful and she hasn't looked back since!

Please see page 31 for crossword answers