

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS

# LAURENTIAN

FALL 2006

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OF LU

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Laurentian University Alumni Relations  
935 Ramsey Lake Road, Sudbury ON P3E 2C

[www.alumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.alumni.laurentian.ca)

# LAURENTIAN

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS

**Publisher** Tamás Zsolnay, University Advancement, Laurentian University

**Editor** Shirley Moore

**Associate Editor** Laura Young

**Design/Layout** Melanie Laquerre  
JoAnn Wohlberg

**Additional Contributors** Craig Gilbert  
Greg Hoddinott  
Carrie Ivardi  
Kevin Roche  
Judith Woodsworth

**Translation** Michelle Lejars\*  
Mots pour Maux

**Photographs** Mike Dupont  
Kim Leger-Frawley  
Mary-Catherine Taylor  
Brent Wohlberg

**Printer** Dolco Printing

**Special thanks to** Suzanne Chartrand, Ray Coutu,  
Sylvie Chrétien-Makela, Lise Nastuk,  
Guylaine Tousignant

**Editorial Advisory Board** Phil Andrews\*  
Lindsay Crysler  
Rejean Grenier  
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Advertising, inquiries and address updates can be directed to  
[magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca) or 705-675-1151 x4120.

For alumni inquiries, please contact  
Alumni Relations at 705-675-4818.



Laurentian University  
Université Laurentienne

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# Making a cover story out of straw

FROM THE EDITOR, SHIRLEY MOORE



**WE'VE AFFECTIONATELY DUBBED** this issue "from straw to suits" around the office. That's because we have such a wide variety of grads in this issue from the famous, to the corporate, to the not-so-famous but fascinating.

It just goes to show, you don't have to be high-profile or have attracted a lot of ink in order to get on the front cover of a magazine.

In fact, there are two main reasons we chose "straw-bale" for the cover: because it's timely given the fact that concerns about global warming are getting a lot of press these days and it peaks interest.

As a rule, we usually leave the cover choice until the final weeks of production, so we're better able to judge how our feature stories are panning out, and we're better able to take the pulse of our audience as we release the magazine. To me, timeliness is next to godliness, and if we can finalize our decision closer to press-time, we're better able to see how certain stories will resonate with our readers.

I usually have two or three possibilities for the cover as we go through the production process, and I like to try them out on the designers, the writers and other people I meet. Anecdotally, "straw bale" was very well received. People I had spoken to hadn't heard much about the phenomenon of building homes using straw as insulation and how it cuts down on heating bills. It's an interesting look at how one couple is trying to do their part for the environment. It comes at a time of news stories about the anticipated collapse of global fish stocks, British Prime Minister Tony Blair's cautions about how climate change will affect economies, the documentary on former American vice-president Al Gore's warnings of how quickly global warming could occur, and the controversy surrounding the federal Conservatives' new plan on air pollution.

I admire Pierre Harrison and Susanne Leffler, the builders of the straw-bale home. They are doing more than just their "own little bit" to help the environment, and they should be commended. It's not only an honour to be included on the cover of a magazine, it's a statement about what people care about.

## LETTERS

To the editor:

Thank you for taking on the challenge of writing about the lock-out and the lawsuit, and for providing a fair and balanced article [summer 2006]. The Neuroscience Research Group and all of its dedicated researchers take animal welfare concerns very seriously and have made every effort to address them in a compassionate, reasonable and scientific manner.

We wish to further emphasize that there were no animal welfare issues at the Paul Field Animal Care Facility.

Our students and graduates have gone on to become students, doctors, researchers, and professors in world-renowned institutes such as the University of Toronto, Cambridge University, Baylor College of Medicine and the Hospital for Sick Kids in Toronto. The Neuroscience Research Group has been conducting valuable and published experiments for many years in diverse fields such as obesity, epilepsy, and neonatal development. We are still hoping for a speedy resolution through the courts, arbitration and appeals systems, as with every additional week that researchers are prevented access, learning experience, discoveries and knowledge are lost.

Vivien Hoang, Sudbury, ON

*Editor's note: As of publication time, this lawsuit was still before the courts. Any statements that relate to the suit have not been proven in court.*

### Letters to the editor

We love hearing your take on stories we publish in the magazine.

If you would like to write a letter to the editor, please address it to [magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca) and include your name, the city where you live and your telephone number (phone numbers will not be published).

Please note that letters are published at the discretion of the editor and are subject to fact-checking and editing.

## TAKE YOUR PLACE IN THE SUN

Do you have a story idea for us? Do you know of a grad doing something "very cool"? Are you doing something "even cooler"?

We're always interested in what grads are doing. Here are some possible themes we plan to cover in the future: grads who have unique jobs and grads who are working outside North America in "exotic" places.

If you know of anyone who fits the bill, drop us a line at [magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca).

# NEW CENTRE AIMING FOR PLATINUM



**Planned research centre strives to win prestigious environmental designation**

BY CARRIE IVARDI

A leading-edge environmental research centre being developed at Laurentian is aiming to be part of an exclusive club in Canada and to achieve the prestigious Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum certification, given to buildings which follow strict guidelines to become the most energy efficient in the country.

As of publication time, only one other building in Canada – the Operations Centre, Gulf Islands National Park Reserve in Sidney, B.C. – had achieved the platinum certification and did so in July of this year.

The Living With Lakes Centre (LWLC) will be a research facility for studying aquatic ecosystems and the impact of human activities on the lakes, streams and wetlands in northern environments. Designing the building, in partnership with Sudbury-based architecture and engineering firm JL Richards and Associates, is world-renowned architects Busby, Perkins + Will of Vancouver. Brian Wakelin, associate principal-in-charge of the LWLC project, said in an e-mail, “We are striving to be the most energy efficient building in the country in order to set an example for others to follow.”

“The building will live off the water falling on the building and site,” said Wakelin. “The air and water pollutants coming from the site will be zero. The building itself will be a living laboratory that continually monitors its own performance.”

**“The air and water pollutants coming from the site will be zero. The building itself will be a living laboratory that continually monitors its own performance.”**

From a LEED perspective, says Wakelin, this means the project will score top marks in the sustainable sites and water efficiency areas, two of the five key criteria that allow a building to achieve the platinum designation. The other criteria include energy and atmosphere; materials and resources; and indoor environmental quality.

The LEED structure was adapted from a similar rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. According to John Johansen, public relations manager with Busby, Perkins + Will, the American system has been in place for five years and in Canada for two or three years. Peter Busby, one of the partners in the architecture firm, was instrumental in bringing the certification to Canada and in tailoring it specifically for Canadian climates, construction practices and regulations. The LWLC will be designed for the climate of 2050, which is expected to be warmer in summer and winter.

The business manager for the LWLC, Elizabeth Bamberger, says industry and government partners are working together with Laurentian to find the funding for this project, which is moving ahead. She said the building is being designed so that its operating costs will not drain its research budget, and overall, it will be very close to the cost of constructing a conventional building.

The new LWLC building and its equipment are expected to cost \$12 million and the design will likely be complete by spring 2007.

*Carrie Ivardi is a freelance writer living in Sudbury.*

# “Sending off” students to follow their dreams

PRESIDENT JUDITH WOODSWORTH



NOW IN MY FIFTH YEAR as president of Laurentian University, I find that I am graduating students whom I met when they entered the university. I remember the smiling, eager, but somewhat apprehensive faces I first saw at “send-off parties.” At convocation, they have the same smiles, and some of the same apprehension about the future they face, but they walk across the stage to collect their diplomas with pride and confidence.

The send-off parties and all the excitement of move-in weekend, orientation and the start of classes, combine with graduation festivities to make up my favourite moments in the academic cycle. Last August, for the fourth consecutive year, Alumni Relations organized send-off parties in Ottawa, Barrie, Unionville (GTA), Timmins and Sudbury.

Hosted by local alumni, these events give new students and their families an opportunity to get to know one another, meet representatives from the university, and hear from alumni how positive their experiences at Laurentian have been. My husband Lindsay and I attended all five, along with staff, student leaders and the highly-charged “Orientation Team.” Once again, the send-offs enabled us to showcase our personalized approach to education and to hear from students and parents why they had chosen Laurentian as a place to study.

Not long after the last send-off party and the start of school, a sizeable delegation from Laurentian attended the Ontario Universities Fair. It was just September and – voilà – we were off and running again recruiting the next crop of students. Around 80,000 people trooped through the Toronto convention centre gathering information about the schools, programs and careers open to young people. In a booth designed to replicate the gorgeous Brenda Wallace Reading Room in the J.N. Desmarais library, with its cozy interior fireplace and leather couches, and a stunning view of the northern Ontario landscape, we spoke to prospective students about our innovative programs and student services.

Once again, enrolment has hit a record high with nearly 9,000 full and part-time students and increasingly satisfied “customers.” I wish to thank the students, faculty, staff and alumni who make this possible through their enthusiastic participation in our entire recruitment cycle.



## A history of Laurentian to be published in 2010

BY CARRIE IVARDI

IN PREPARATION FOR THE 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Laurentian University in 2010, the Office of the President has commissioned the history department to publish a French and English book about the university that will cover its beginnings in the 1960s to the present time.

“The whole project is quite exciting and we have a good group of people (working on it),” said Dr. Matt Bray, a retired Laurentian professor, who is editing the book. The other committee members who are working on the project include Dr. Sara Burke, Dr. Linda Ambrose and Dr. Guy Gaudreau.

Burke says university president Dr. Judith Woodsworth hired Dr. Charles Levi as a consultant to compile a huge amount of research to get the project started. Levi worked under the supervision of the committee, and Bray took over as editor after that.

Six students have worked with Bray as research assistants over the last year, and these assistants have focused on various areas of the history of Laurentian, including poring over past student newspapers. They have also created an index for past newspapers to be used not only for researching this book, but also for future investigation.

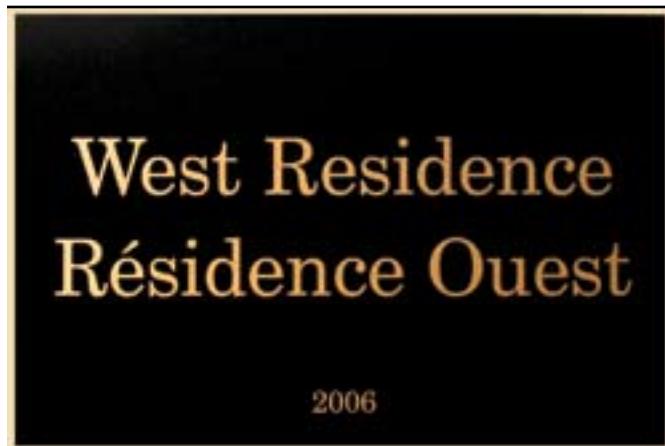
The research process has led the committee through the volatile 60s, to reforms that created the university atmosphere that students and staff are familiar with today.

“The 1960s in the academic world were very volatile. There were student uprisings and reforms (which led to) more power for the students and faculty,” said Bray. “Faculty life was quite different; even the faculty association didn’t have much power. By 1969, things were changing.”

Bray said that Laurentian students were “very much at the vanguard of change.” In 1967, the administration and the president at that time made some minor amendments to the LU Act. The changes were made without consulting students and staff, and the students reacted to that. They sent a group to Queen’s Park to protest and those changes were cancelled.

“That was the beginning of academic reform and led to a democratization movement on campus,” said Bray.

Only one other history book has ever been created for Laurentian, and that was written by Gwenda Hallsworth for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the university. This one, according to Bray, will be more lengthy and detailed than the last.



## LU ADDS ANOTHER PHD PROGRAM

**LAURENTIAN HAS ADDED A PHD** in Human Studies, making it the sixth PhD program for the university.

The interdisciplinary program will focus on human development and students will have a chance to work with professors who specialize in cognition and communication; Franco-Ontarian and francophone studies; interpretation, values and ethics; regional and cultural studies; and gender relations and sexuality studies.

A university press release states that approximately 20 candidates have said they plan to apply for the program, which will be offered in both French and English as of January 2007.

## NEW RESIDENCE OPENS

**STUDENTS ARE NOW SETTLING** into the new West Residence after most of the work on the building was complete just as Labour Day weekend was approaching this past September.

The 223-bed air-conditioned building is reserved for students in third year and up. It is divided up into four-bedroom apartments and each apartment has a kitchen, living room, two bathrooms, appliances and furniture, and every student gets his or her own room.

The main floor of the building houses offices, meeting rooms and two large conference rooms that can seat 300 and 100 people each.

This past June, construction crews broke ground for an addition to the Arts building to house a new full-service Tim Hortons and an auditorium to accommodate more than 100 students. The addition is expected to be complete some time during the 2006-07 academic year.

This past spring, construction also began on the new School of Education building and the expansion to the Ben Avery Physical Education building, which will include another gym and other facilities. The physical education building is expected to be ready for September 2007, and the School of Education building is expected to be ready for occupancy by the summer of 2008.

## CAMPUS QUIZ

How much do you really know about your university community?

**In what city's Olympic Games did alumnus Alex Baumann win two gold medals?**

Send the correct answer to [magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca) with the subject line "Fall 06 trivia" before December 24<sup>th</sup>, and we'll enter your name in a draw for a Laurentian gift-pack. Good luck!

**Congratulations to Christine Ivezic (Simard) who entered our last Campus Quiz contest. She won the draw and received some great Laurentian swag after correctly answering that the university was founded in 1960.**

## POPULAR ALT BAND VISITS LU

Photos by Kim Leger-Frawley



The hot, Juno-nominated alternative band **Metric** played Laurentian University this past September. Approximately 600 students and others attended according to the Students' General Association, which sponsored the event.

The Toronto-based band has received a lot of interest to date, and this year alone, opened for the Rolling Stones in New York City's Madison Square Garden and performed at the Reading and Leeds Festival in the United Kingdom.

**Metric** combines the talents of Emily Haines (vocals/synths), Jimmy Shaw (guitar), Josh Winstead (bass) and Joules Scott-Key (drums).



## ATHLETICS ATTRACTS NEW RECRUITS

**LAURENTIAN VOYAGEUR ATHLETICS** coaches were once again very busy this past off-season filling empty roster spots with top-level talent from across the province, country and continent. This year's group boasts two players from British Columbia, one player from Michigan and 21 recruits from across Ontario including five recruits from Sudbury.

### LADY VEES

**Basketball:** Lisa Furchner (Sudbury), Lasalle S.S.; Katie Goggins (Sudbury), Lockerby C.S.; Kauri Lafontaine (Whitby), University of Toronto; Kelly Lafontaine (Whitby), University of Toronto; Norma-Jean Roberts (Burnaby, BC), New Westminster S.S.

**Cross Country Running:** Hilary Kilbreath (Stirling), Bayside S.S.; Stephanie Flieler (Trenton), Trenton H.S.

**Soccer:** Caitlin Kelly (Peterborough), Holy Cross C.S.S.; Danielle King (Aurora), Aurora H.S.; Anjelica Mazzella (Sudbury), Lockerby C.S.

**Swimming:** Kyleigh Committo (Sudbury), Laurentian Swim Club; Kendra Driscoil (North Bay), North Bay Titans; Carley Kenwell (Sudbury), Nepean Kanata Swim Club; Laura Slee (Shedden), St. Thomas Jumbo Jets; Valerie Testa (Nepean), Nepean Kanata Swim Club

### VOYAGEURS

**Swimming:** Alexander Bonne (Sault Ste. Marie), Sault Ste. Marie Aquatic; Zack Hurd (Barrie), Barrie Trojans Swim Club; Michael Murray (Ajax); Darcy Powers (Picton), Quinte Dolphins Swim Club; Liam Wilson (Cobourg), Coci West

**Basketball:** Craig Bauslaugh (Kitchener), Niagara College; Shane Bertolacci (Toronto), George Brown College; Jason Brown (Saginaw, Mich.), Delta College; Bryan Davidson (Sudbury), Lockerby C.S.; Ryan Vtrie (Victoria, BC), Sault College

**Soccer:** Jason Cerilli (Barrie), Barrie Soccer Club; Daniel Cormier (Ingersoll), London Aces; Derek Lubertino (Hamilton), East Hamilton Soccer Club; Roger Teves (Brampton), F.C.P. Woodbridge

- Greg Hoddinott

## 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL POWWOW

Kendra, Kristen,  
Kelsie and  
Carter McGregor



Approximately 600 people came out to celebrate Laurentian's 12<sup>th</sup> annual powwow in September. The weekend event also included an education fair for high school students from the Sudbury region.

## LAURENTIAN SUPPORTS FIRST NATION THAT MADE NATIONAL HEADLINES

BY CARRIE IVARDI

**LAURENTIAN HAS MADE A FIVE-YEAR** financial commitment of approximately \$33,000 a year to the Aboriginal Literacy Summer Camps program in Kashechewan, a First Nation in northern Ontario that made headlines when it was evacuated because of poor drinking water conditions and, then, for flooding. The three-week camps program for First Nations communities across Ontario, was created by the lieutenant-governor for Ontario, James K. Bartleman, and aims to help young people build self-esteem and further their education.

This project has the support of the Laurentian University Native Education Council and, according to president Judith Woodsworth, it fits with Laurentian's mission as a tricultural institution as well as the

university's interest in promoting the educational needs of aboriginal children. "We seek to place our own university students in these camps so they can have meaningful work experience, and we are hoping to extend these placements in the future," said Woodsworth in an e-mail.

Tiffany LaSalle, a third-year health promotion student at Laurentian, worked with Cree children in Kashechewan between the ages of five and 15 when she took part in the program this past year.

LaSalle was chosen by Frontier College, Canada's oldest literacy organization, which administers the camps. She attended two different camps this summer, and Kashechewan was the second.

LaSalle travelled there with two others, and they arrived one week after Kashechewan residents returned from the evacuation caused by the latest spring flooding. "It seemed pretty normal, not like the papers had made it sound," said LaSalle. "They had brought houses in on barges, because a lot of houses had been damaged by water. There were kids playing, people working."

To prepare for her experience in Kashechewan, LaSalle first attended a training session in Thunder Bay. Speakers talked about native issues and reinforced the goal

of the literacy program, which is to build literacy and leadership skills in youth.

Thanks to the support of many donors including universities like Laurentian, colleges, teachers' federations, corporations and the Ontario government, the lieutenant-governor's website states the program has enough funding to run in more than 30 remote First Nations communities for five years. "After that, the goal is (for) the native leaders to take over," said LaSalle.

LaSalle said she tried to keep the camp fun for the children by playing games like Boggle, hangman and Scattergories. "We also took them on nature walks, did crafts and played dodge ball. We called it 'camp' and not 'school.' I had my kids do a daily journal, and told them they could draw a picture if they couldn't write it."

After working in the literacy camps, LaSalle noticed the kids always asked for more reading time. She said she felt the program was having a positive effect on the kids and the community.

"I think they're doing well, but there (are) not many jobs up there, and two litres of milk costs \$9," said LaSalle. She said she hopes to work in a literacy camp again next summer, because she feels it is an experience that helps with her teaching skills.

# STRAW & SACRIFICE...

## the trials, tribulations and joys of building an environmentally friendly house



With news reports on how British Prime Minister Tony Blair is urging the planet to do something to stop climate change, and former American vice-president Al Gore being featured in a documentary about his fight against global warming, the environment has become front-and-centre again.

A graduate of Laurentian University and his partner are doing their bit for Mother Nature. The two are in the midst of building a home that few others attempt, and it'll be the first known of its kind in the Sudbury region: a custom straw-bale house.

Far from being the stuff of barns and horses, straw-bale homes are making their stamp on the housing market. The natural, highly insulative material is not mainstream yet, but it's gaining in popularity.

The magazine visited alumnus Pierre Harrison and Susanne Leffler in their little piece of heaven to find out more about the joys, and frustrations, of building their own straw-bale house.

BY SHIRLEY MOORE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARY-CATHERINE TAYLOR (AND SUPPLIED)

**P**ierre Harrison and Susanne Leffler have spent the summer and autumn sleeping in an old multi-coloured bus called Thomas Archibald, so they could stay on-site while they build. They have no running water, use a composting toilet and have put up several make-shift sheds on the property.

There are signs of their great hospitality. There is a guest tent for visitors, and several people have written accolades on the side of the outhouse. Someone named Faye writes "Terrific place!" Others tell of how they've left food for the couple.

Leffler, 30, has built her own gardens on the property with stones and wood, and she has made her own loveseat using bent twigs.

The house has to be a labour of love, because it has taken almost two years to get to the point where they could complete the foundation, erect the bale-filled walls, lay the wooden floors and put up a temporary roof for this winter.

"The rain has been such our nemesis," says Harrison, 41.

After making some progress, Harrison and Leffler endured weeks of almost daily rain during an unusually wet autumn in Sudbury and had to cover the house with tarps to protect the bales.

Harrison compares the experience to "having a child," and also had to wake up almost every hour at night to check the tarps when it was raining.

Not only has the rain caused them problems, but it took much longer than they expected to get the go-ahead from the city to build.

Despite the headaches, the reasons they are building are simple.

"We both love being outdoors," says Harrison. They talk of seeing bears, moose and snapping turtles on their secluded property.

"We're both very concerned about the environment. So we thought well, we'll just find a big plot of land and build an environmental home (to) sort of minimize our footprint."

Harrison isn't joking about minimizing impacts on the environment. The house will be completely off-grid with solar panels and wood heating.

They won't need a lot of energy to keep the house warm either. The 18-inch thick walls are considered to be R40 says Harrison. In new R2000 homes the walls are rated R20 or R22, so this straw-bale house will be twice as well insulated as an already well-insulated home. Harrison and Leffler figure that when they need heat, they'll only need to make a fire every 12 hours because the heat will easily stay within their home's thick walls.



Pierre Harrison and  
Susanne Leffler admiring the  
view from their building site.



When it's complete, the roughly 1,500 square foot, two-storey home will have no television and no energy-guzzling clothes dryer.

According to the Ontario Straw Bale Building Coalition, this type of home dates back to the late 1800s when, in Nebraska, new settlers could not find traditional building materials and started using blocks of compressed straw from their fields. The construction caught on again in the 1980s, when builders in the American southwest went searching for cheaper and more environmentally friendly material, and it has been gaining in popularity ever since.

The website of a Canadian building company, Green Planet Homes, states straw-bale structures are usually constructed in one of two ways: by building a wooden structure and stacking bales between the framing to use as insulation, or by using a method called "load bearing" where the entire wall is made up of only bales with no wood or steel framing in the wall.

Anita Carr, the coalition's treasurer and membership coordinator, says there are more than 100 straw-bale buildings in Ontario and about two dozen new buildings going up every year.

## "WE DON'T HAVE QUITE SO MANY PEOPLE SAYING, 'WHAT?!'"

They are being built all over Canada, from British Columbia to Nova Scotia, and all over Ontario including "big expensive ones" in the Muskokas, which is an exclusive cottage area north of Toronto.

The phenomenon has caught on around the world as well. Just this past September, Carr's coalition held an international conference for builders and representatives from 14 countries attended. Builders from Sri Lanka are making replacement houses for victims of the 2004 tsunami and, in Pakistan, straw-bale homes are being made to shelter earthquake victims, she says.

"Since I found out about straw bale buildings 12 or 15 years ago, it's getting out to the mainstream now," says Carr. "It's really getting more popular. More people know about it. We don't have quite so many people saying, 'What?!"'

Harrison first got the idea to build a straw-bale home when

he was in New Zealand about six years ago and has been researching the concept ever since.

It's also where Harrison met Leffler while they were both travelling. The couple continued to travel together, and finally decided to settle down two years ago.

While Harrison grew up in Valley East (now a part of the city of Sudbury) and studied at Laurentian, earning his Bachelor of Science in biochemistry and a Master of Science, Leffler grew up near Hamburg, Germany and worked as a child youth educator.

They decided on settling in Canada because they love nature and there are big tracts of land for sale. Land out west was expensive, so they looked in northern Ontario where Leffler can easily get to Toronto and fly back to Germany whenever the need arises.

In December 2004, they found the place where they wanted to build: a 25-acre property on the outskirts of Sudbury in the Wanup area, with bush and its own pond.

"We cleared off the pond; we had a little bit of a skating rink," Harrison says. "We came out and we had some fires in the snow. We really enjoyed the land and walked around and hiked in it."

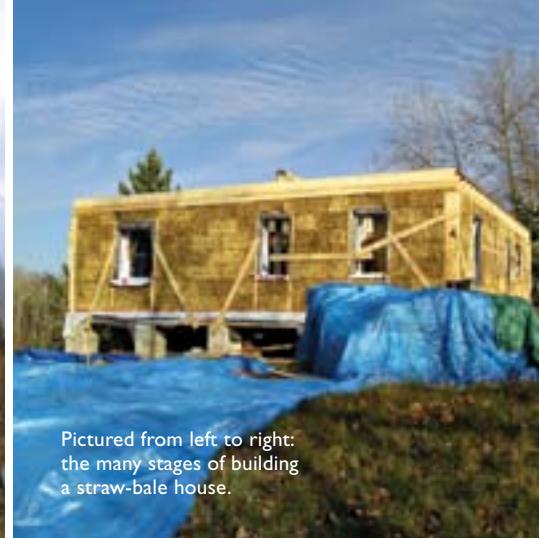
Then in May of 2005, the two moved onto the property, cleared the land for the house and took delivery of the straw bales.

Then came a delay. "We were hoping to start building last year but it became evident fairly soon that the city had requirements that we had to meet, so it took us a long time to find engineers to help us with that." To get a building permit, they needed different types of "stamps" or expert approvals and a structural engineer.

Harrison has advice for others. "Make sure you talk to the city and understand all their requirements, because I called them up and they told me I needed structural stamps, and I just left it at that. And then I brought them that, and then they said, 'Now you need this that and that.' So make sure you understand all the requirements from your city."

The building process itself wasn't as straightforward as Leffler and Harrison had thought either, and construction has taken longer than they ever anticipated. The foundation took a long time to build; so did their floor.

They laugh when asked how this house has affected their relationship. "We've travelled together. We've done everything that people say are a test of relationships. We're building a house together. Piece of cake. The thing that will be the true test is to see if we can just live normally in the house. That'll be the true test."



Pictured from left to right:  
the many stages of building  
a straw-bale house.

Although most people have no problem getting permits, it's not uncommon that owner-builders end up spending longer than they originally anticipated because they're not professionals, Carr says.

Carr, who built a straw-bale house south of Ottawa, says the costs vary. "There is an urban myth that it's super-cheap, but we try to dispel that myth. Professional builders charge what is appropriate."

The costs can start at \$125 a square foot. For a 2,000 square foot home, it could mean a total of \$250,000 with a builder, but that's also dependant upon the finishes inside and the material. If, like Harrison and Leffler, you build it yourself, you can save money. You can save approximately 50 per cent of the total cost, so that house could cost approximately \$125,000, Carr says.

Because they have not yet finished, Harrison and Leffler haven't figured out the final cost of building their home, but they know they have saved money on labour. To pay for other expenses and give them time to build, they've been using savings and have lines of credit. Harrison does educational consultancy work when he has the time.

They are grateful to their friends and neighbours for their help and support as well. "Friends and neighbours (have been) so incredibly nice," says Leffler. "Everyone has been thinking about us a lot, and I think without that help we wouldn't be where we are right now."

When the project became frustrating, Leffler says, "You look out and you say, 'Yeah, this is a nice spot. It's worth it.'"

Harrison and Leffler are optimistic now that they've almost finished, and they plan to complete their home next spring.

When they're finally able to live in the house, Leffler expects they won't "come out for two weeks." ■

*Shirley Moore is the magazine editor and manager of publications. Shirley has worked as a journalist and writer and has her MA and BA from University of Waterloo and her BJ from University of King's College.*



Harrison and  
Leffler relaxing.

## Advice for building a straw-bale house

If you're interested in building your own straw-bale house, the Ontario Straw Bale Building Coalition recommends you follow these steps:

- Research the project on the Internet. There is a lot of information available.
- Sign up for a hands-on workshop to learn more.
- Participate in a tour of homes, so you can get a sense of what other straw-bale structures look like.
- Consult with a professional builder; even if you're planning to do the construction work yourself. This way you can pass your plans by someone and have access to a consultant while you're building.
- Talk to a straw-bale organization, like the OSBBC. There are others in the United States as well.
- Approach the project like you would if you were building any other home.
- Speak to your municipality before you make any concrete plans. Make sure you can get a permit and make sure your municipality is comfortable with the idea of you building a straw-bale structure. Your building inspector is there to help ensure that what you're building is safe.

Courtesy Anita Carr, Ontario Straw Bale Building Coalition ([www.strawbalebuilding.ca/](http://www.strawbalebuilding.ca/)).

More information on page 30.

# Favourite son returns home

## Alex Baumann relocating to Canada for high-profile job

Olympic champion Alex Baumann's highly-anticipated return to Canada graced the pages of national newspapers and filled the airwaves of national television and radio organizations. Arguably Laurentian's most famous alumnus, Baumann has decided to pick up and leave the sunny clime of Australia and return to his home country to brave the icy winters.

His goal (and his challenge): to try to get a little more "gold" out of Canadian athletes.

The magazine spoke to Baumann about what made him decide to take on such a big job.

BY LAURA E. YOUNG

**O**n the tiled deck of Laurentian University's Olympic Gold Pool, Alex Baumann and coach Jeno Tihanyi plotted their race strategy. They would never openly predict victory. Instead, they devised ways for Baumann to swim to win. If Baumann swam certain times for each leg of the grueling individual medley, then he was likely to win the gold.

The plan worked. At the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, Baumann was Canada's flag bearer in the opening ceremony. In the pool, he dominated the 200 and 400-metre individual medley, winning two gold medals in world record time and garnering Canada's first swimming golds since 1912. The Laurentian student was acclaimed Canada's best swimmer ever and collected more hardware including the Officer of the Order of Canada and the 1984 Canadian male athlete of the year.

And now, that pedigree, coupled with the years he spent honing his leadership skills in high-performance sport at the Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS) in Australia, are coming home to serve Canadian athletes.

In late September, to acclaim befitting hockey stars, Baumann, 42, was named executive director for the Road to Excellence program for the Olympics with the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC).

Baumann has been welcomed home to repair Canada's mediocre results at the Summer Olympics. The Road to Excellence seeks to improve Canada's results, aiming for a top-16 finish at the 2008 Games in Beijing and a top-12 finish at the 2012 Games in London, as well as top-five finishes in the 2008 and 2012 Paralympics.

Baumann will develop and implement the Road to Excellence business, strategic and operating plans and, perhaps most critically, recommend the most effective way to allocate resources. The Road to Excellence for summer sports is a \$58.8 million program, but Baumann will be searching for more federal and provincial government money. Then there is the matter of priorities. "There's no egalitarianism in high-performance sport. Ultimately, we're here to get results and provide opportunities for athletes to stand on the podium."

While he expects the media may grant him a honeymoon, he has no illusions about his job. "Hard decisions are going to be made. I've never believed in consensus decision making. I believe in getting all the information and making the decisions we have to."

The Canadian Olympic Committee began courting Baumann last December. Coming back to Canada is "a very difficult decision which is why it took so long to decide." Baumann and his family had long discussions. "Ultimately we decided this is a position where I can make a difference," Baumann says.

He holds dual Australian/Canadian citizenship, and his wife, Tracy, and their children Ashton, 13, and Tabitha, 11 are Australian. Canada hasn't always been kind to its sports heroes. Stating marketing priorities, Science North in his hometown of Sudbury removed his name from the science centre's roadside sign. A floundering Canadian sports system denied him positions. In one case, he wasn't even told he was not short listed.

In Australia, he kept busy. Australia had a dismal performance at the 1976 Olympics and began restructuring





Baumann takes questions from the media at the news conference announcing his return.

SUPPLIED BY COC

its sport system. It wasn't until the 1990s that any results were seen, he says. By the 2004 Olympics, even the state of Queensland was beating Canada in the medal count. QAS athletes alone claimed 17 medals – including seven golds – for Australia at the 2004 Athens Olympics. Australia finished fourth overall with 17 gold, 16 silver and 10 bronze medals. By comparison Canada (which has a greater population), was 21<sup>st</sup> overall with three gold, six silver and three bronze medals.

But eventually, it seemed to Baumann that the culture was shifting in Canada. He spoke to Canadian swimmers at

## "I DO BELIEVE IT'S A FAIRLY SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE. I DO LIKE A CHALLENGE."

the 2005 World Aquatic Championships in Montreal. The swimmers later went on to perform better than they had at the 2004 Olympics. He observed how the Canadian sports structure seemed to be moving forward with more collaboration between sport funding partners. He saw more interest in excellence, accountability and performance led by the COC.

In making its overtures to Baumann, the COC sent its top officials, CEO Chris Rudge and Dr. Roger Jackson, a 1964 Olympic rowing champion, three-time Olympian and the author of the Own the Podium business plan. More phone calls and talks followed over the winter months.

For Baumann, the turning point came this past June in Banff when he spoke at a winter Olympic symposium. He enjoyed the "very innovating" conference, discovering a thoroughly positive attitude among the Canadians and a desire to try and achieve the best – something he believes is a philosophy for life. That conference was a key moment, he recalls. He slipped back into Sudbury for a visit and a swim in the university pool. "I came back to Australia and had a think," he says.

Back in Canada, the media and sports fans were literally hailing the return of an Olympic hero. In late September, the Globe and Mail leaked the news a day early. A media frenzy greeted his arrival. "I've been away for 15 years. People forget what you've achieved. I was quite surprised," he says, reflecting on the welcome he received.

Still, expectations must be managed, he says. "It will be a team effort. It will be a long road. It will be a very big job. Just to get results in one or two years, it won't happen."

Although Australians and Canadians are similar in many ways, the sharing of values stops at the way Australians are mad for sport. "Government sees sport as an investment rather than an expense," Baumann says. In addition, the issue of sports facilities will challenge Baumann. Unlike in Australia, Canadian provinces have not adequately maintained facilities for community and high performance use, he says.

There are other issues, too, such as performing on the day at the Olympics, an area where Canadians have often struggled. At the 2000 Sydney Games, 400-metre runner Cathy Freeman of Australia raced the Olympic final carrying

the weight of her nation's expectations en route to her brilliant gold medal run.

Reflecting on Freeman's ability to perform, despite the suffocating pressure, Baumann – who knows firsthand about pressure and distractions – speaks of the confidence athletes need in themselves. He saw that in Canadian athletes at the Torino Olympics but being confident begins long before the athletes compete at the Olympics, he says.

"In the daily training environment [there must be services] the athletes need. There has to be some service delivery and research to ensure we are leading edge. Support services are critical in training."

His "number one priority" is ensuring that the coaching and technical leadership are in place. "You need the best people to have the best technical expertise."

Baumann's coach, Tihanyi, says in an e-mail Baumann's new job has been evolving for a long time and has finally come together "with appropriate levels of commitment.

"This job meets Alex's dream of making a significant contribution to Canada's sporting system," Tihanyi says. "I am certain Alex will make a great difference with his leadership as long as he is given the promised level of support."

As he ponders reacquainting himself with a Canadian winter, Baumann is happy the family has already bought a home in central Ottawa. It's helping ease the transition from Australia that they don't have to house-hunt in winter. They are looking at ways to ensure they continue to see Tracy's family regularly. "The kids are resilient. They'll adapt quite well. They'll miss the surf. I'm fortunate I have a very supportive family." L

*Laura Young is a nationally-published sports writer based in Sudbury.*



SUPPLIED BY COC

(HE SHOOTS...)

# HE SCORES A GREAT JOB

Graduate Ryan Belec is moving up the ranks of management in one of the most powerful and well-known hockey league in the world: the NHL.

Belec first returned home to glory, and a throng of people, at Sudbury's city hall when he brought home the Stanley Cup. Now he has even more responsibility with his beloved organization, the Tampa Bay Lightning. Journalist **Laura E. Young** finds out what it all means.

The latest children's hockey story by Canadian author Mike Leonetti focuses on hockey hero Gordie Howe. The book tells how a youngster learns that, while some boys do make it to play in the NHL, most do not and how there are other roles to play that are just as important.

This story could easily be told about Ryan Belec and how the Sudbury native grew into a hockey manager with his name on the Stanley Cup – a rare feat for anyone involved with hockey. Belec, who graduated from Laurentian University's sports administration program in 2000, is the assistant to the general manager of the Tampa Bay Lightning, the 2003-04 Stanley Cup champions. This past August, Belec's hockey to-do list grew even longer when he was named the vice-president of hockey operations for the Johnstown Chiefs of the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL), one of two farm teams in the Lightning organization.

Belec oversees all hockey operations for the ECHL team as he deals with everything from booking hotels to the delicate issue of signing players to contracts while keeping an eye on the league's salary cap. "It's much less complex than the NHL, although they still have regulations in place to stop teams from cheating and taking advantage," he says. Belec also oversees the Chiefs' player acquisitions, scouting, contract negotiations and direct-line supervision of the general manager and head coach in Johnstown.



This is a long way from the Nickel Centre Minor League in Sudbury where Belec started and finished his own, brief hockey career. He can't recall his position or his team. "For some reason I lost interest [in hockey] at a young age." Years later he fell in love with hockey again and, instead of being a player, "realized I could combine hockey with a career."

He found that combination by first looking into his love of organizing sports groups. At Lasalle Secondary, he was president of the athletic council and worked behind the scenes "which has ultimately helped me now." He managed the boys and girls hockey teams at Lasalle and served as their athletic trainer. He thought he'd end up as a trainer but always liked the business of sport, he adds.

As part of his SPAD program, Belec spent his placement with Tampa in his fourth year in 1999. He liked the Lightning's management although Tampa was definitely not a Stanley Cup contender. In his first season, Tampa finished with 19 wins in 82 games and was the second-worst team in the league.

Still, he could see that Tampa was pointed in the right direction, he says. "Management was more than qualified to turn it around. It happened a heck of a lot quicker than I thought." By 2004, Belec was hoisting the Stanley Cup for fans in Sudbury. Each member of the team was allowed to have the Cup for 24 hours. "It felt like it went by in 20 minutes," he recalls.

But it likely seems a lifetime ago that Tampa won the Cup

as Belec's busy life involves commuting between his homes in Tampa and Johnstown. Belec's new job demands he spend most of his time in Johnstown as well as continuing as assistant to the Lightning general manager, and managing and directing the Traverse City Rookie Camp and the Lightning's conditioning and tryout camp. Still, his Tampa tasks can be done from afar, Belec says on his cellphone, after a discussion about how the Internet service in his hotel had crashed, preventing him from checking the build-up of e-mail in his laptop.

"Ryan Belec is a very bright and knowledgeable hockey administrator," Jay Feaster, Tampa's executive vice-president and general manager says in a press release. Feaster credits Belec's progress over the last seven years. "He has managed our Traverse City Rookie Camp and our conditioning and tryout camp with the expertise and efficiency of a seasoned pro."

"Johnstown is an extremely important component in our development process, and having Ryan manage and oversee our interests in Johnstown demonstrates its importance to us."

Belec has immersed himself in the Johnstown operation for the past year and has spent considerable time studying with and learning from a host of people including former Philadelphia Flyer and Lightning director of player personnel Bill Barber, assistant general manager Claude Loiselle and chief scout Jake Goertzen.

The Johnstown Chiefs play in the Cambria County War Memorial Arena in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, famous to hockey trivia nuts for the fact that most of the hockey scenes in the cult-classic film *Slapshot* were filmed in the arena.

In reality, Belec delivers serious news, both good and bad to players who have dreamed of being professional hockey players. Tampa has two farm teams: Springfield of the American Hockey League and the Johnstown Chiefs. If players don't make the Lightning line up, they try for Springfield. If they don't reach the AHL crew, then they could be assigned to the ECHL. Belec shares in the group meeting with players who will be signed or rejected. "We try to be brutally honest so the players know what they have to work on; so they learn from the experience of working with us."

At the ECHL level, there are many aspects of the game players have to improve upon, Belec says. The NHL's new rules have changed the game. "It's a great game now for the fans," Belec says.

As for recruiting, he says teams are still looking for skilled players. "If you can find a skilled player with size [that's good]. We're more willing to draft and sign players who are smaller, but we're [still] looking for the best overall package."

In the end, Belec is delighted with the package hockey has offered him. He has found the industry in which he'd like to work for the rest of his days, he says, and he wants to stay with Tampa. He may have to move one day, he believes. He would like to be a general manager with an NHL club but he says, "I'm not in any rush. I don't have a timeline. This team has treated me extremely well. I've learned a great deal here." ■

# PULLING OUT THE CRYSTAL BALL: GETTING THE LOWDOWN ON THE FUTURE OF LAURENTIAN

BY CRAIG GILBERT

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE DUPONT (AND SUPPLIED)

The 50th anniversary of Laurentian University is fast approaching, and the campus has never seen so much change. Laurentian University Magazine sat down with some of the movers and shakers on campus to find out what other changes Laurentian could undergo over the next decade.

## DENIS MAYER ASSOCIATE VICE-PRESIDENT, STUDENT AFFAIRS

### How do you see Laurentian University changing in five or 10 years?

“A lot of learning is moving online. We have over 950 courses online now, and many of our services are as well. Where students currently go to the learning commons for peer tutoring, writing assistance or to talk to an advisor, eventually I’d like to see those services move online. The technology is there to move us to a ‘virtual campus.’

“We also want to develop more partnerships with other post-secondary institutions and expand even further our research environment.

“As an example, we have an exceptional arrangement with several colleges with our nursing program and with Georgian College for a variety of undergraduate programs at Barrie and Orillia. Other examples include our collaborations with the Mitchener Institute and Lakehead University in health-related programs. By joining resources and expertise, we are able to do more for northern Ontario residents.”

### How will a ‘virtual campus’ affect the physical campus?

“On campus, we are gradually converting our classrooms to multi-media classrooms and in distance education, we are adding online elements to courses as they are being revised and when new course developments are initiated.

“This type of learning environment enables us to connect with students for course delivery and support services asynchronously and in real-time.

“The utilization of these technologies is gradually changing the traditional teaching environment.

“This generation of students has always had computer technology while growing up and they expect it in higher education. Consequently, we have seen a constant growth in the number of courses using an information management system (Web CT) for both on campus and distance education.”

## HARLEY D'ENTREMONT VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC, FRANCOPHONE AFFAIRS

### What would you like to see happen at Laurentian in the next decade?

“I would like to see more complete degree programs offered in French, especially in the science disciplines. Currently, there are some programs that students can take up to second year in French, but have to complete in English-language classes. That would be the main thrust.”

### What else are you doing to improve the learning experience for francophone students?

“We are also trying to add more programs that are completely in French, including graduate studies. Our two newest PhD programs have French components, but we would like to have





From left to right: Denis Mayer, Harley d'Entremont, Judith Woodsworth and Sheila Hardy.

more. Once that happens, we will have to put more emphasis on recruiting francophone students, which of course will help us to attract funding to develop more programs. It's a bit of a chicken-and-egg scenario."

#### JUDITH WOODSWORTH PRESIDENT, LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY

**With (approximately) 8,800 students, Laurentian's enrolment has almost doubled since 2001. How has this helped the university?**

"The larger enrolment has helped us to balance the budget and even generate some small surpluses, which we poured directly back into campus improvements, such as the learning commons.

"The growth has actually presented us with a new challenge as we're now bursting at the seams. So, we have entered into a new 'building phase' on campus. We have a new faculty of education building, the new residence is complete and we need a new space for our physical education building."

**How would you like to see the university's continued growth unfold in the next five to 10 years?**

"In the next five years, I'd like to see us build adequate space for our students. Not just new space, but more appropriate, high-tech space that will give us the capability to extend our reach even further."

"In 2010, we celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we're already starting to plan fun and academic activities. I'm also working on having a commemorative stamp issued."

#### SHEILA HARDY DIRECTOR, ACADEMIC, NATIVE AFFAIRS

**How do you see Laurentian evolving over the next decade?**

"I would like to see more growth in the native education sector. I would estimate we have about 600 native students now. I would like to see that double in the next five or 10 years. I also see native students in a variety of programs. I want their presence felt in a variety of disciplines."

**How do you see the campus changing?**

"We need a physical space for our native students, faculty and staff, an Indigenous Learning and Sharing Centre with links to academic, research and support centre and a strong cultural element."

**What are the next steps in developing such a facility?**

"The first step for the university was to create a director to focus on academic research. Now we need a concentrated effort to move the vision (of a native resource centre) into manageable steps and move it into reality." □

# ANTHRAX

## STUDY LOOKING TO SAVE LIVES

BY KEVIN ROCHE

**LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY SCIENTISTS** are working on a project that could help save people and some animal species from dying from anthrax infections.

The scientists are trying to design a method to shut down the “anthrax lethal factor,” the protein the anthrax bacterium produces that causes people and animals to die.

“We would like to design compounds that inactivate this enzyme so it does not have these lethal effects,” says Dr. Stefan Siemann, a new faculty member at Laurentian who is working in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. “We want to find molecules to annihilate the normal function of the lethal factor and stop it from working.”

Currently, treating anthrax infections involves large doses of oral and intravenous antibiotics, including the commonly used penicillin. The infection is rare in humans, but is more frequent in animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, camels and antelopes.

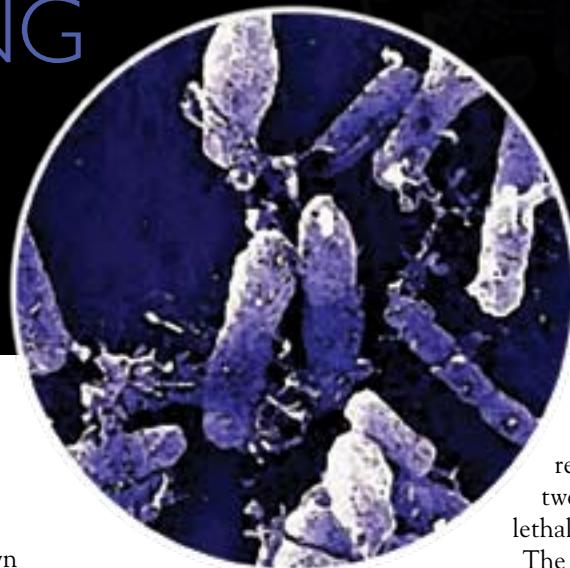
Still the threat of someone trying to use anthrax in some type of attack has been the subject of many news stories in

the years since the 9-11 terrorist attacks in the United States. Much of the scare can be related to an incident in late 2001, when a number of people in the U.S. received mail tainted with anthrax and five of those people died. No one has ever been arrested in connection with the tainted letters.

These are the kinds of deaths that Siemann is trying to prevent through his research. Together with his research team, Siemann says he has been working on illuminating a specific



Professor Stephan Siemann



relationship between the anthrax lethal factor and zinc.

The toxic protein produced by anthrax bacteria

that is responsible for death has been identified as a metallo-protein, meaning that much like the way blood requires iron to function, anthrax lethal factor requires zinc.

Anthrax commonly enters the body in the form of tiny airborne spores. Once inside someone, these spores attach themselves to specific parts of the body and begin to synthesize and excrete the anthrax lethal factor, which in turn is responsible for killing the person.

If scientists can block the action of the lethal factor, then the spread of anthrax infections will not be deadly to humans. “If you can do that, you can stop anthrax,” Siemann explains.

“Once anthrax spores enter into the body, the anthrax bacterium is produced. This bacterium then begins to secrete anthrax lethal factor into the system,” he says, “and we know that the lethal factor becomes toxic by disrupting vital signalling functions inside the cell.”

Even though he’s made some headway, Siemann’s study still requires more work, and his team continues to explore what the exact role of zinc is and its involvement in facilitating the reaction.

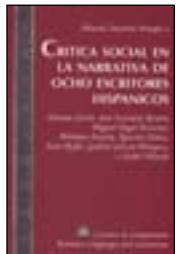
“There are a lot of zinc proteins, and we would like to understand how they work. The more you know, the better the knowledge, and then we can apply this to other areas.”

Siemann has been working on this project since April 2005 and his research will become a topic of discussion once he releases his findings in a publication in the coming months.

*Kevin Roche is a writer for the SPARK (Students Promoting Awareness of Research Knowledge) program at Laurentian University. This program was initiated by NSERC in 1999.*

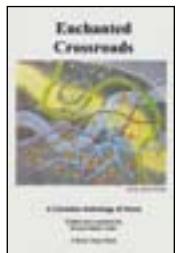
# New Books

by Laurentian professors and alumni



## **CRITICA SOCIAL EN LA NARRATIVA DE OCHO ESCRITORES HISPANICOS (2006), Manuel Antonio**

**Arango L.** This book depicts the writers as witnesses to their respective time periods. They reflect the reality of their times with their different narrative styles and illuminate the historical social conscience of Latin American countries.



## **ENCHANTED CROSSROADS: A CANADIAN ANTHOLOGY OF VERSE (2006), edited/compiled by Norma West Linder and illustrated by Sudbury artist and Laurentian graduate David Chirko. (2006)**

For more information, go to [www.theontariopoetrysociety.ca](http://www.theontariopoetrysociety.ca).



## **GRAMMY'S GRAMMAR AT A GLANCE (self-published, 2006) by Austin V. Burns (BA 1974) and Claire E. Burns (BA 1974); illustrations by Samantha Burns.**

This reference manual is a resource book for literacy. The authors have defined and analyzed the eight parts of speech, illustrated their different functions in sentences and demonstrated how the words form grammatical constructions – phrases, clauses, and finally, sentences. For more information, e-mail [grambook@vianet.ca](mailto:grambook@vianet.ca).



## **LES MORTS NE SONT PAS MORTS (Prix du Salon du livre de Toronto), (Prise de Parole, 2006) by Melchior Mbonimpa.**

In this novel, Terama, an immigrant and lawyer who is well-integrated in Canadian society, must confront his past. On a night like all other nights, the unexpected happens: the voice of Tongo, his father, is heard from beyond the grave. For more information, e-mail [prisedeparole@bellnet.ca](mailto:prisedeparole@bellnet.ca).



## **PENSER LA SANTÉ DES FEMMES DANS LA DIVERSITÉ (Prise de Parole, 2006), sous la direction de Christiane Bernier et Renée St-Onge.**

Each of the eight articles compiled in Penser la santé des femmes dans la diversité presents research based on real women's lives and experiences, and powerful social and political analyses. A result of a symposium held at Laurentian University in 2004, the articles deal with practices in the health field, the impact of new social and medical politics on women, and raise issues related to the health of francophone women living in a minority environment. For more information, e-mail [prisedeparole@bellnet.ca](mailto:prisedeparole@bellnet.ca).

## **NEW FACULTY AND ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS**

As of this summer, the following faculty appointments have been made.

**Dr. Brian Aitken** is the new chair of the Joint Department of Religious Studies and the chair of the Huntington University Religious Studies Department. He is also chair of the ethics program.

**Dr. Robert Hall** is the new chair of the Department of Music.

**Sheila Hardy** is the first director of academic (native affairs), and is responsible for promoting and assisting with the development of native academic programming across various disciplines, as well as developing a native education centre.

**Dr. Shannon Hengen** is the new chair of the Department of English.

**Dr. Diana Iuele-Colilli** is the new chair of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures.

**Dr. Susanne Luhmann** is the new chair of Women's Studies.

**Dr. Ian MacLennan** is the new director of Theatre Arts.

**Dr. Kevin McCormick** has been appointed president of Huntington University.

**Norm O'Reilly** is the new director of the School of Sports Administration.

**Dr. Kalpdrum Passi** is the new chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science.

**Dr. Birgit Pianosi** is the new chair of the Gerontology Department at Huntington University.

**Dr. Michael Yeo** is the new chair of the UC Joint Department of Philosophy.

# GETTING INVOLVED

BY DAVID WHITE, BPHE 1983  
PRESIDENT OF THE LUAA



**RECENTLY, I HAD** lunch with a colleague of mine who is also a graduate of Laurentian University. When I told my friend I'm the new president of the Laurentian University Alumni Association, his eyes rolled and he said, "Oh No! The only time I hear from the university is when they are asking for money."

Since this is something I hear on a regular basis, I feel it's important to let you know the purpose of the alumni association

and the Alumni Relations Office. Our only mandate is to raise friends – the task of raising funds is left to staff in the university's Development Office.

We do, however, offer programs that provide discounts to alumni on life insurance, home and auto insurance, mortgages, credit card services and alumni wine. Although we receive funds from these programs, we direct 100 per cent of the money to improving services and programs for our 35,000 alumni. These funds also allow us to support a number of student groups each year – something we are very proud to do.

I am proud to say the LUAA board recently established a bursary to help current undergraduate students, and these funds come from individual board members themselves. On a personal note, I continue to support this bursary and other worthy projects at Laurentian, and I choose to donate because I had a tremendous experience at Laurentian, and I want my children and others who go to Laurentian to have a good experience as well. Since it costs almost \$5,000 in tuition to attend university, I know my donations make a difference. Most of our alumni chapters have also established bursaries to support Laurentian students from their own regions.

On a final note, if you have the ability to donate, please do. Laurentian is a much finer institution today than it was when I was a student and in a large part, it is because of alumni like us. The Laurentian alumni association belongs to us, and it only works if you get involved through an alumni chapter or by recommending Laurentian to others. We all make a difference in our own ways.

We want to keep you connected to Laurentian through the magazine, our e-newsletter, our online community ([www.lualumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.lualumni.laurentian.ca)) and events put on across the country. Please know your voice does matter, and feel free to contact the Alumni Relations Office if you have any questions or would like to get involved.

## Laurentian University Alumni Association Board of Directors

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**Alumni Officer:** Julie Ceming, B.Comm. 2000, BEd 2002 (on leave)

**Alumni Officer:** Navada Sargent, B.Comm. 2002

**Secretary:** Emy-Anne Adam

Phone: 705-675-4818

Fax: 705-671-3825

E-mail: [alumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:alumni@laurentian.ca)

Web: [www.lualumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.lualumni.laurentian.ca)

Your alumni association continues to work on your behalf and we appreciate any feedback you can offer on our programs and services. Please send us an e-mail at [alumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:alumni@laurentian.ca) with your suggestions.

# CHAPTER NEWS

## NEW CHAPTER LAUNCHED IN TIMMINS

After a number of years, the Timmins Alumni Chapter has been revived thanks to the efforts of Louis Clausi (BA 1985) and Mélanie Bidal-Mainville (BA 1999).

This past September, this new chapter organized its first event – Laurentian University Basketball for Bursaries Charity Event – featuring the Voyageurs Basketball team and the James Toyota All-Star Team in Timmins. A special thanks to the Voyageur Basketball team who also donated their talent towards a youth basketball camp for Timmins and area boys and girls. Funds raised from Basketball for Bursaries will go towards the Timmins Alumni Bursary.



## SEND-OFF EVENTS HELD ACROSS THE PROVINCE

A number of Laurentian alumni chapters were busy this August hosting send-off parties across Ontario in Sudbury, Barrie, Timmins, Toronto and Ottawa. The annual events help “send off” students who are leaving home to attend first year at Laurentian. Students get to meet Laurentian President Dr. Judith Woodsworth and alumni who have already experienced university life.

## EVENTS PLANNED

**Christmas party planned for Sudbury alum** – Join alumni and friends for the Sudbury Alumni Chapter’s annual Christmas gathering at Peddler’s Pub on Wednesday, December 13, 2006 from 5 to 8 p.m. For information, please go to [www.lualumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.lualumni.laurentian.ca)

**Ski day planned for Huronia Alumni Chapter** – Stay tuned for the Huronia Regional Alumni Chapter’s first Laurentian alumni ski day in 2007. As details are not yet finalized, please go to [www.lualumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.lualumni.laurentian.ca) for updates on this and other chapter events.



## REACHING ALUMNI CHAPTERS

Sudbury Alumni Chapter

President, Dean Jacklin, BPHE 1992

[sudburychapter@laurentian.ca](mailto:sudburychapter@laurentian.ca)

Ottawa Alumni Chapter

President, Renée Leduc, B.Comm. 1996

[ottawachapter@laurentian.ca](mailto:ottawachapter@laurentian.ca)

Toronto Alumni Chapter

President, Joseph Bowman, BSL 1991

[torontochapter@laurentian.ca](mailto:torontochapter@laurentian.ca)

Huronia Alumni Chapter

President, Kyle Clarke, BPHE 2000

[huroniachapter@laurentian.ca](mailto:huroniachapter@laurentian.ca)

Laurentian@Georgian Alumni Chapter

President, TBA

[georgianchapter@laurentian.ca](mailto:georgianchapter@laurentian.ca)

On-Campus Alumni Chapter

President, Daniel Robidoux, BA 1997

[oncampuschapter@laurentian.ca](mailto:oncampuschapter@laurentian.ca)

Timmins Alumni Chapter

President, Louis Clausi, BA 1985

[timminschapter@laurentian.ca](mailto:timminschapter@laurentian.ca)

## NEW INDUCTEES TO THE ALUMNI VOYAGEUR HALL OF FAME



Congratulations to the 2006 inductees to the Alumni Voyageur Hall of Fame. The following people have dedicated themselves to athletic excellence and representing Laurentian University:

**Female Athlete** – Angie MacDonald (BPHE 1980),  
Women's Basketball

**Male Athlete** – Craymer Forth (BPHE 1982, MA 1985),  
Men's Soccer

**Team** – Men's 1978-1979 Soccer Team which includes Garry Howe (BPHE 1981, MA 1983, B.Ed. 1989), David Lafraniere (B.Comm. 1981), Adriano Simonato, (BA 1993), Nickholas Evangelopoulos (BA 1980), Oscar Albuquerque (BA 1979),

Carlo Greco (BA 1981), Craymer Forth (BPHE 1982, MA 1985), Robert Uggioni (B.Comm. 1981), Gerardo Martellacci (BA 1982) Ivan Pen, Winston Hackett, Walter Michelutti (BA 1981), Adriano Garbuio (B.Comm. 1981), John Polyzois, Jim Direnzo, Abbas Novinrouzegar, Nick Contini (B.Eng. 1979), David Sutherland (BPHE 1980), Andre Mrozewski (BPHE 1981), coach Greg Zorbas (BPHE 1973, MA 1977), assistant coach German Sanchez, manager Robert Laderoute (BPHE 1980) and athletic therapist Wendy Hampson.

Nominations are welcome for the 2007 Alumni Voyageur Hall of Fame. To view the selection criteria, go to <http://laurentian.ca/alumni/english/events/hof.html>.

## SUDBURY GOLF TOURNEY RESULTS

The annual President's Golf Tournament – a partnership between the Sudbury Alumni Chapter, the LUAA and Laurentian Athletics – raised more than \$15,000 for student bursaries, which is about the same amount that was raised last year.

A special thank you to our gold-level sponsors (Follett, Molson and Coca-Cola) and our silver-level sponsors (ANO Architects, CMA Ontario, Grand & Toy Muirheads, Toll Cross Securities Inc. and Gatien HR Law).

Hats off to the winning foursome (from left to right): John Querney (B.Com. 1984), Dr. Tom Urban, Bill Querney, Paul Schweyer (BA 1998) who receive the President's Cup from Dr. Judith Woodsworth (centre).



# Reunion news



## Upcoming Reunions

**Model Parliament reunion** - Former Laurentian students who have participated in the Model Parliament over the past 15 years, are being invited to take over the House of Commons on January 12, 2007 for a special alumni Model Parliament. A banquet is also scheduled for that evening to commemorate the years of lively debate. For information: Liam McGill, BA 2003, at liammc@hotmail.com .

**Nursing 1983 reunion** - Attention Nursing 1983 graduates: Karen (Priest) Lacelle, Cindy (Levac) Lamarche and Kim (McFadden) Sheppard are hard at work planning your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion for 2008.

**Native Human Services reunion, "Returning Home: Celebrating our Past, Present and Future Graduates 1988-2008"** - 2008 will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Laurentian University's Native Human Services. Prepare to celebrate this milestone anniversary.

## Phys Ed '76 Reunion

Graduates from the Physical Education class of 1976 spent a weekend reminiscing about the “good old days” this past September at the Tim Hortons Camp in Parry Sound. To celebrate this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Human Kinetics Department and the Laurentian University Alumni Association sponsored a special class composite, which will hang on the wall near the Human Kinetics Department. Members of the 1976 class also received a copy of the composite.

**Université Canadienne en France reunion** - 2007 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Laurentian University's former program l'Université Canadienne en France. Plan to join former UCF-ers for a reunion to reminisce about your time spent on Mont Leuze.

**L'Orignal Déchaîné reunion** - Come celebrate “20 ans dans l'étang” from May 4 to 5, 2007. Laurentian University's French language student newspaper l'Orignal Déchaîné will be hosting a weekend celebration to commemorate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**SPAD alumni reunion** - SPAD alumni are invited to a 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala to be held in Toronto in September 2007.

Stay tuned for more details on the above reunions. If you are interested in helping plan these events or getting more information, please contact Alumni Relations at [alumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:alumni@laurentian.ca) or at 705-675-4818.

## Winner announced

Congratulations to Luc Beaudoin, BA 2006, who won the iPod sponsored by the Laurentian University Alumni Association at the spring 2006 convocation ceremonies.

Luc won the prize after signing up for an Online Community account. The Online Community lets you connect with old friends and keeps you up-to-date on alumni discount programs.



# ALUMNI SURVEY

## RESULTS RELEASED

Many thanks to our alumni who completed the 2006 alumni survey that was included in the winter issue of the magazine.

The Laurentian University Alumni Association board is reviewing the data collected in the survey and the feedback will help the board re-shape the association and continue to offer programs and services that meet the needs of our 35,000 alumni. To view the survey results, go online to [www.lualumni.laurentian.ca](http://www.lualumni.laurentian.ca).



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Laurentian has alumni all over Canada and the world. These are the latest statistics on where Laurentian University alumni are living as of September 29, 2006.

Location	Number of alumni for whom we have accurate addresses
Ontario	20,842
Québec	403
British Columbia	334
Alberta	289
Manitoba	78
Nova Scotia	68
Saskatchewan	62
New Brunswick	48
Newfoundland & Labrador	27
Prince Edward Island	20
Northwest Territories	13
Yukon	8
Nunavut	2
USA	226
Other	238
<b>Total # of alumni</b>	<b>34,426</b>

## Historically speaking... Looking for past alumni association participants

As Laurentian University approaches its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2010, the alumni office has been busy documenting the history of the alumni association so that we can have accurate records about the foundation of our association.

Our records indicate the first alumni association president, Les McDonald (BA 1968) was elected in 1976. If you were ever part of the LUAA, we would appreciate hearing from you. Please e-mail us at [alumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:alumni@laurentian.ca) or call us at 705-675-4818.

# ALUMNI | UPDATES

## 1960s

**Geology reunion of 1968** graduating class took place the weekend of June 24, 2006 in Sudbury with a visit to Laurentian University and former professors. Five graduates and their wives participated, and the reunion was hosted by Don Runions and his wife Ruth. The graduating class has remained friends and tries to have a reunion every 3 to 4 years.

From left to right: Don Runions, Nelson Stroud, Professor James Davies, Norman Dorff, Emile Mailloux and Lorne Luhta. Missing are Roger Tyne and Daniel Rota. (Photo courtesy of Emile Mailloux)



## 1970s

**Helen (Szewello) Allen, HBSW 1973** was appointed to a new position as dean, School of Community and Liberal Studies at Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, effective August 8, 2006. She no longer lives in Kamloops, but now resides in Acton, Ontario. She would most certainly welcome correspondence from any former classmates at helen.allen@sheridanc.on.ca.

**Austin V. Burns, BA 1974**, worked in heavy industry doing various maintenance jobs; for most of his career, he repaired mobile mechanical equipment. He retired in 1992.

**Claire E. Burns, BA 1974, MA Ed 1979**, taught all elementary grades from junior kindergarten to grade 8, having most of her teaching years with primary students. She retired in 1993. For the past seven years, Claire and Austin have been busy writing their book Grammy's Grammar at a Glance.

## 1980s

**Lynda Cullain, BA Social Work 1986**, is manager, Protection Services, Children's Aid Society, Districts Sudbury, Manitoulin.

**Clarence "Woody" Woudsma, BA Geography 1987**, completed his PhD at McMaster University in 1995 and was on faculty at the University of Calgary until 2004. He then traded "mountains" for "lakes," taking up his current position in the School of Planning at the University of Waterloo where he enjoys life as university researcher and teacher. He resides in Woodstock, Ontario with Carole Ann and their three young children (ages 2, 4, and 6) and spends vacation time in the Sudbury/North Bay area. If you'd like to touch base, send a note to cwoudsma@uwaterloo.ca .

## 1990s

**Dineke Hartling, B.Sc.N 1995**, has been living in Phoenix, Arizona for the past three years. She was also in Calgary, Alberta for four years and Vancouver, British Columbia for two years. She is married and has two kids, Brianna, 7 and Justin, 6. She is currently a manager of a 24-bed critical care department for a new hospital (Banner Estella). Any former nursing students looking for a job, call her at 623-327-5101. She hopes everyone is happy and healthy!

**Beverley (Bev) S. Boyce, BA 1999**. After graduating through distance education courses with a BA (concentration in native studies and religious studies), she has continued to live in Belleville, her hometown. In addition to working part time for W&R Greenleys Booksellers, she recently qualified as a lifeguard through the National Lifeguarding Association. Although 70 years of age (as of September 16, 2006), she is employed as a lifeguard and swimming instructor at the Belleville YMCA. She may be one of the oldest lifeguards in Canada. She says best wishes and thanks to her former professors.

**Monique Doolittle-Romas, B.Comm. 1986**, is now the executive director of the Canadian AIDS Society, which is a coalition of more than 125 community-based HIV/AIDS organizations across Canada and is dedicated to monitoring, improving and enriching the response to HIV/AIDS at all levels of society. She joined the Canadian AIDS Society in July of 2006. She has been married to George Romas for 10 years. They live in Ottawa and she completed an MPA at Queen's University in 2000.

**Rodney Cox, BA Law and Justice 1990,** recently moved to the Milton, Ontario area. He was a police officer with the North Bay Police, 1990-2006, and is now with the Guelph Police Service. He is engaged to Debra Huston.

**Alain Daoust, BA History 1996.** I have been working at Radio-Canada, the French CBC Radio, since January 2000. After a six-year stint at the Sudbury station, where I've been associate producer for shows, producer of the newsroom and a journalist, I am moving on to the Toronto French newsroom where new challenges await. Thankfully, my wife Shirley Moore (who has worked at CBC Radio and is now editor of the Laurentian University alumni magazine) whom I married on May 25, 2002, will be there with me in the Queen City for this new and exciting adventure.

## LET US KNOW HOW YOU'RE DOING AND YOU COULD WIN

Send us an update on yourself and you could win some cool Laurentian stuff. Just fax us at 705-675-4840 (and address to Editor, Laurentian University Magazine) or write us at [magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca). Keep it to about 100 words. We'll enter your name into a draw and you could win big.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNER OF OUR LAST DRAW:

Claire E. Burns (BA 1974)



# President's Ball

Saturday, March 3, 2007  
Bryston's on the Park, Copper Cliff  
Tickets: \$125 (includes dinner, live band and silent auction)

Call (705) 675-4818 or e-mail [alumni@laurentian.ca](mailto:alumni@laurentian.ca) to reserve your ticket.

Proceeds from the Presidents' Ball to benefit the Sudbury Alumni Chapter Bursary.



**Laurentian Alumni**  
**Anciens Laurentienne**

*Students First - Alumni Forever*



A previous Model Parliament (January 2003).

# REUNITING FOR POLITICAL GAIN

## Model Parliament reunion to attract well-known alumni

BY CRAIG GILBERT

In the early 1990s, seeing a parliamentarian cross the floor in the House of Commons was practically unheard of.

So naturally when Laurentian University's first and only Rhodes Scholar, Aaron Marsaw, and his comrades in the annual Model Parliament in Ottawa tried just that, they were stopped by organizers who wanted to preserve the realism built into the exercise.

From his office in the Department of Justice in Ottawa just weeks ago, Marsaw says that with the high-profile defections of Belinda Stronach (who crossed over from the Conservatives to be a Liberal) and David Emerson (former Liberal who is now Conservative minister of International Trade), an organizer would probably have his or her hands full trying to tell a third-year political science student that he or she couldn't do the same.

There is now precedent for such a move, according to Laurentian alumna Deirdra McCracken, who won last year's The Next Great Prime Minister contest on CTV. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in science politique in 2004, and served on the government side at the Model Parliament in 2002 and 2003. As party

whip in 2002, she watched two MPs who weren't representing Quebec leave the government to join the Bloc Québécois. As deputy prime minister in 2003, she says with a laugh that she threatened to do the same.

There will be plenty of floors to cross, hands to shake and stories to tell at the Model Parliament reunion to be held in Ottawa on January 12. Organizer Liam McGill, a Laurentian student from 1999 to 2003, says his alma mater is one of only a handful of schools in Canada that hold a Model Parliament, and only Laurentian and Queen's University actually use the House of Commons on Parliament Hill. Laurentian typically sends 85 to 120 students a year, and for the reunion, McGill has about 50 people signed up as of publication time. Both McCracken and Marsaw plan to attend.

Being a Rhodes Scholar places Marsaw in the company of giants such as former President Bill Clinton and Liberal party leadership hopeful Bob Rae. Marsaw has participated in no fewer than four Model Parliaments, including an alumni version of the exercise put on for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Model Parliament simulation is organized around a typical day in Parliament, with students assuming the roles and responsibilities of MPs and senators. Before the simulation, students assign

themselves party allegiances, ridings and portfolios. Just for fun, parties are sometimes invented.

"I think we created a separatist party and tried to cross the floor for the fun of it," says Marsaw who served as ministers of Justice, Foreign Affairs and Indian and Northern Affairs.

"It was a great experience in how Parliament operates: the life of a bill, the role of the Speaker, etc. Not all, but many of us today work in government or law."

Marsaw says Rand Dyck, a Laurentian professor specializing in federal and provincial politics in Canada, stands out among his many memories of the Model Parliament.

"He made the learning of the parliamentary system lots of fun," Marsaw says. "He brought his passion for parliamentary politics to the organizing and running of the Model Parliament. Every year he was inspired."

"I wouldn't be alone in saying he was the inspiration for me to get involved and stay involved in the student political movement. He is very down to earth and makes his area of expertise accessible to anyone that wants to learn."

For more information or to sign up to attend, contact McGill at 613-946-0246. ■

## GRADS IN THE NEWS

**MARCEL DESJARDINS**

**(B.Comm., SPAD 1993)** has been hired as the new general manager for the Ticats after Rob Katz stepped down this summer. Desjardins, 40, joins the Ticats after an eight-year stint with the Montreal Alouettes. He spent the last five seasons as the club's assistant general manager, under one of the CFL's best general managers, Jim Popp. Desjardins also worked in the CFL's head office in Toronto supervising league transactions. (CP)

**MICHAEL PIGOZZO (B.Comm.**

**1998)** has joined Wallbridge Mining as CFO. He is a member of the Society of Management Accountants of Ontario and has a CMA designation. Pigozzo was formerly a senior financial accountant/stock options & ESPP administrator with an enterprise content management software vendor. Wallbridge Mining Company Limited explores for and develops nickel, copper and platinum group element deposits. Its principal properties are located in the Sudbury Basin. (news release)

**PAUL GOULET (BA 1984)**

is the new vice-president and general manager of Ontera. Goulet joined Ontario Northland in 2004 as chief information officer with Ontera. In his new role, Goulet will be responsible for overseeing operations at Ontera, Ontario Northland's telecommunications services division. Prior to joining the company, he held several positions with Deloitte Consulting Outsourcing (formerly Deloitte & Touche Outsourcing) in Washington, D.C. and principal consultant with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP in Washington, D.C. and Toronto. (news release)

**DR. MARK TREMBLAY (BPHE**

**1986)** is currently the senior scientific adviser on health measurement at Statistics Canada and is leading the development and implementation of the Canadian Health Measures Survey, the first survey of its kind ever performed in Canada. He is a fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine, a fellow of the North American Association for the Study of Obesity, an adjunct professor with the Canadian Research Institute for

Social Policy and is currently the chair of Active Healthy Kids Canada.

Tremblay has published extensively in the areas of childhood obesity, physical activity measurement, exercise physiology and exercise endocrinology. (Globe and Mail)

**SARAH KATHLEEN TOPP (BA**

**History, 2001)** has joined Hodgson Russ LLP law firm's corporate and securities practice group in the Toronto office. Topp assists clients with a wide

**SPAD Grad has new role with Tampa Bay Lightning**

**RYAN BELEC (SPAD 2000),** who is the assistant to the general manager for the Tampa Bay Lightning, has been named vice-president of hockey operations for the ECHL's Johnstown Chiefs.

Belec, 29, will continue to serve as assistant to the general manager by managing and directing the Traverse City Rookie Camp and the Lightning's Conditioning and Tryout Camp.

Belec, who is from Sudbury, joined the Lightning in 1999 and became a member of the organization's Hockey Operations Department in 2000.

For the full story, turn to our feature on Belec earlier in the magazine.

(tampabaylightning.com)

range of matters including take-over bids, initial public offerings, mergers, re-organizations, and other corporate and commercial transactions. Topp has also received a J.D. cum laude from Michigan State University College of Law and an LL.B. from the University of Ottawa. She is admitted to practice in New York and is a licensed foreign legal consultant in Ontario. (news release)

When Kristin Thor graduated with an honours degree in anthropology last spring, she donated the \$2,500 bursary she earned to the program that means so much to her. The top student from Walkerton, Ontario gave the bursary to the anthropology department at Laurentian.

BY CARRIE IVARDI

"Laurentian University is so fabulous with their scholarships," says Thor, a mature student who worked as an accountant for many years. "They had sent me a letter to inform me of the bursary, but at this stage in my life, I don't need scholarship money. I did a lot of volunteer work in the lab, and I thought, that's where this money should go, where students get real practical experience, things like faunal preparation, de-fleshing (animal) skeletons. I think it's such a plus that Laurentian has these hands-on courses."

Thor became interested in studying anthropology as a little girl. "In 1962, my grandparents, who owned a cottage resort in Honey Harbour, found a number of artifacts on their property," says Thor. "We had a family excavation, and as a result, we had a collection of artifacts."

About five years ago, Thor met Dr. Patrick Julig, the chair of anthropology at Laurentian, at a meeting to discuss the artifacts in her possession. Julig says the artifacts included mainly stone tools and some copper artifacts as well.

"There were some organic remains on the artifacts, and Kristin sent them away to be carbon dated," says Julig. "They were determined to be about 2,000 years old."

Thor's first step towards earning her anthropology degree was to take the introductory courses through Laurentian by distance education. After that, she had a decision to make and to discuss with her husband.

"I went away for a year to school in Sudbury, but first I did the field school the summer before," she says. The intent was to complete the degree that year, but Thor chose to do a thesis on the artifacts from her grandparents' property, so she stayed in Sudbury for a second year.

# SUPPORTING ANTHROPOLOGY:

Grad "gives back" using her own bursary



Graduate Kristin Thor presents a cheque to university president Dr. Judith Woodsworth and anthropology chair Dr. Patrick Julig.

This past summer, Thor was a teacher's assistant at a field school in Midland, but she admits that she has no definite plans to make use of her anthropology degree in the near future.

something into the record about my family artifacts."

"Thor was a great student and lots of fun," says Julig. "Hers is a great story about someone who really enjoyed herself in the

**"They had sent me a letter to inform me of the bursary, but at this stage in my life, I don't need scholarship money."**

"I'm sad to not be going back (to school)," she says. "I will look for work opportunities related to what I was doing. A lot of archeological information is not published – maybe I will do that, to put

program." The money Thor donated will likely go towards buying a new microscope or another piece of equipment for the lab, he says. ■

IN

## MEMORIAM

# ADVANTAGES TO LIVING IN A STRAW-BALE HOME



Alumnus Pierre Harrison and his partner Susanne Leffler are building a straw-bale home, pictured above. For more on this story, go to page 8.

### The experts say there are several advantages to building straw-bale homes, including the following.

- With a properly insulated roof, a straw-bale home has an R-factor of R35 to R50 (according to the U.S. Department of Energy, April 1995, "House of Straw") compared to R14 insulating value in traditional "stick frame" homes of 2x6 construction. This saves on heat.
- The high R-factor also means the house is cool in the summer.
- Straw-bale homes allow for greater artistic designs (for example, rounded walls).
- Straw homes use a renewable agricultural by-product.
- The homes can be made with conventional foundations.
- Straw-bale homes are low maintenance. The final coat of plaster can be mixed with a die to provide colour. As such, the owner may never have to paint it.
- Building with straw provides more income for farm families.
- The walls are fire resistant, and a typical straw-bale wall with plaster receives the same commercial fire rating as a concrete building.
- The elements of the home can be recyclable and are able to break down in the environment.

Adapted from Green Planet Homes' website, an alternative home building company based in Canada ([www.greenplanethomes.ca/about\\_strawbale.htm](http://www.greenplanethomes.ca/about_strawbale.htm)) and courtesy of Anita Carr, Ontario Straw Bale Building Coalition.

**Antonioni, Brent Edward** - BA (1975), B.Ed. (1977) in January 2006.

**Freeman, Judith D.** - B.Sc.N. (2004), on September 16, 2006.

**Howorth, Michael Joseph** - social work professor (1973-77), on November 4, 2006 in Cobourg.

**Lavoie, Thérèse, Rose-Marie** - BA (1991), on August 23, 2006 in Lindsay.

**Michaud, Lucien S.J.** - registrar for Laurentian University and the University of Sudbury (1959-1964) and president of the University of Sudbury (1976-1982), on August 11, 2006 in St. Jérôme, Québec

**Organ, Dr. Barbara** - professor of religious studies on August 6, 2006 in Chatham, Ontario.



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Dr. Emily Faries, a professor in the Department of Native Studies at Laurentian and an alumna, has been giving something back to the Cree Nation for 10 years.

On a plot of land about an hour east of Timmins, which she purchased many years ago, she has hosted traditional ceremonies that help heal wounds wrought on her people for generations. The gatherings are now held throughout the year.

"We are taught to share," said Faries of the Moose Cree Nation (James Bay area) into which she was born. "I've been fortunate, because of my education, to make money and a large part of it goes back to my community."

Faries said she initially purchased the 157 acres of land, which is in a farming area and has a small pond, to have a quiet place to write her thesis. She kept it, not sure of what to do with it in the long-term.

"Eventually, I met my husband, who had the same sort of dream as me (he's Cree as well). So we started having these ceremonies. It's all really sacred." The ceremonies are held with the guidance of elders.

Faries said the ceremonies are not powwows, which are public events. They are very spiritual, and help people to connect with the Creator. In the Aboriginal culture, explained Faries, it is God's law that "we live in harmony with all of creation. We have a sacred responsibility to take care of the land."

The ceremonies take place over seven days and involve fasting. "We provide accommodation for our resource people (medicine people and teachers). We have built tent frames with stoves in them for warmth, but mostly everyone camps out, and some people are starting to build their own tent frames

**"We have a sacred responsibility to take care of the land."**

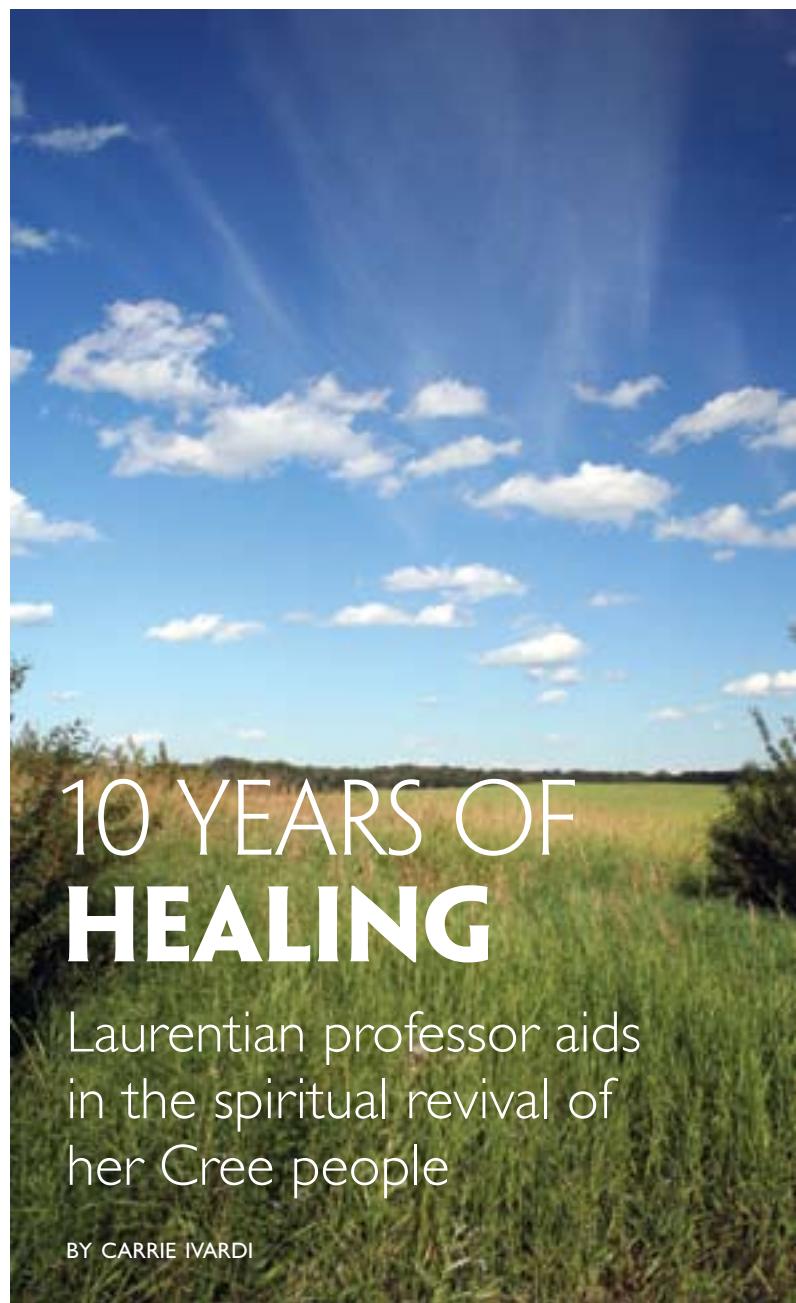
which are more permanent," said Faries. There are more than 200 people of all ages who attend the gatherings, from babies to grandparents.

"It's all positive, and when kids get that when they're young, it helps them their whole lives. I know it has helped me," said Faries.

She said it has been very important for her to host these ceremonies because her people have been in such disarray since governments first began taking away Aboriginal rights.

"We didn't decide to leave our spirituality, to become Christians," said Faries. "But because there was so much European influence, the government attacked our spirituality first to make us weak; they outlawed these ceremonies."

Throughout the persecution and oppression of native peoples in Canada, Faries said that there were still ceremonies taking place underground. In this way, the spirituality has survived to a certain degree. There were many obstacles such as



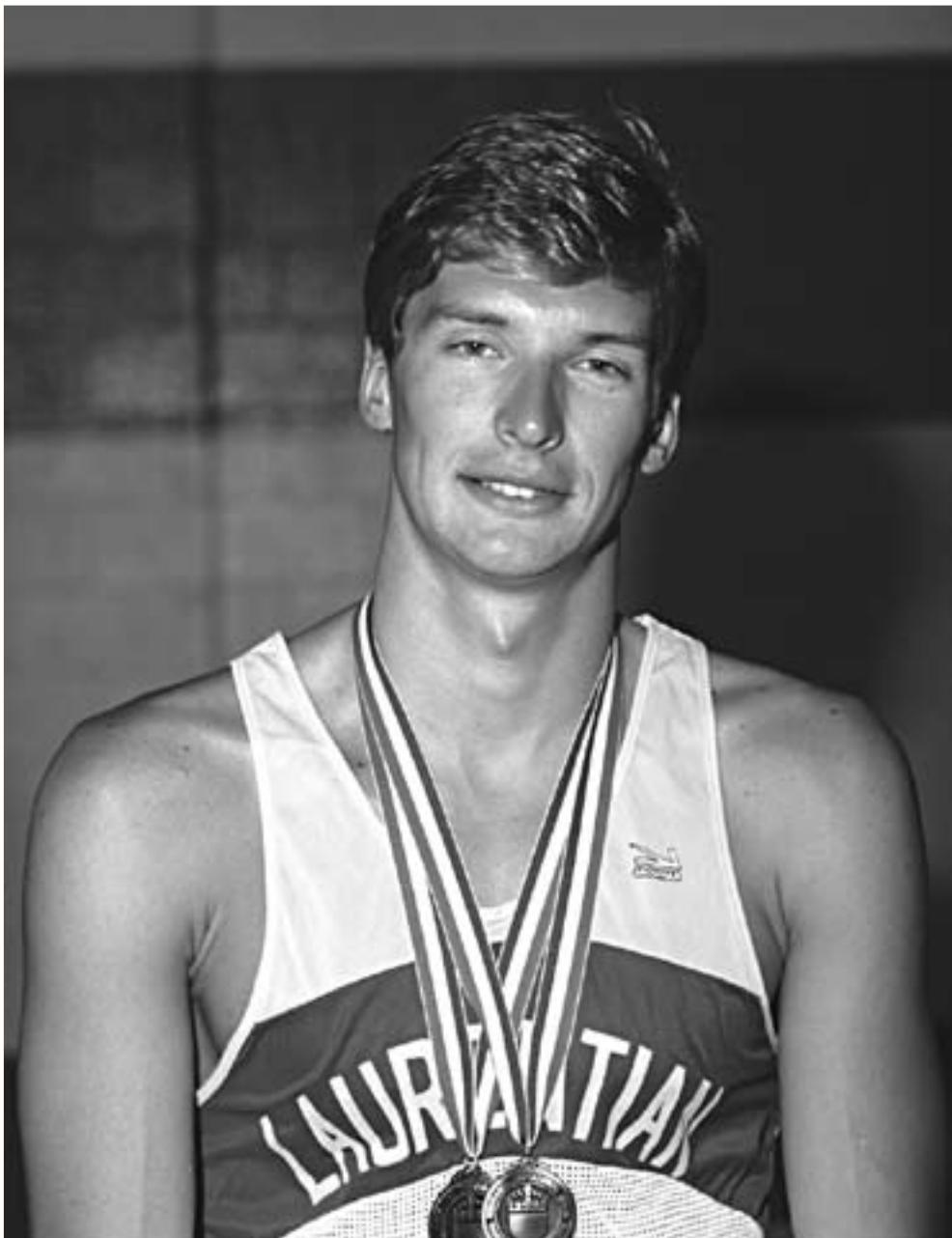
residential schools and many other government policies.

"Now it's a relearning," said Faries. She said that every native person has been affected by the oppression.

"My way (of dealing with that) is by providing a place of healing, done by our own people," said Faries. "I bring in those people who were doing it underground. My husband and I pay travel, honorariums, we pay for the place including the taxes on the land, because it's not on reserve land. We pay for it all, and that's my way of contributing back, because that's what I've been taught." L

One of Laurentian's most famous alumni, Alex Baumann, in the early 1980s with just two of the dozens of medals he won during his career swimming for Canada and Laurentian.

**To learn more about his return to Canada, go to page 12.**



circa **1980**



# Alumni Updates

Take a few minutes to update us on what is going on in your life. We'll print it in the Notebook section of the next *Laurentian University Magazine*. You can send us a photo as well.

Fax to: (705) 675-4840; mail to Laurentian University, University Advancement, 935 Ramsey Lake Road, Sudbury ON, P3E 2C6; or email [magazine@laurentian.ca](mailto:magazine@laurentian.ca).

Your update (up to 100 words):

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Full name: \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden name: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree: \_\_\_\_\_ Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Print? Yes  No

**Help us keep your address information up-to-date as well (only for alumni records; not for printing in the magazine):**

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