

# ALUMNI network

THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY ALUMNI MAGAZINE • SPRING 2008

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## TRU Alumni Association Board Co-Chairs

This issue of the Alumni Network magazine focuses on the artists, performers and producers that have graduated from Thompson Rivers University and are out in the world making a living through their craft. Artists throughout history have been society's cultural conscience. Through their craft these individuals are creating their own history. Graduate Allan Corbishley is helping the Kamloops community realize its own creative potential through his Living Arts program. Graduate Sylvia Coates records people's lives and stories through her video production

company. Project X and Saucy Fops are two talented performing groups that entertain, inform and educate through their stage performances.

Our board would like to thank and recognize TRU's President and Vice Chancellor, Dr. Roger Barnsley. We are grateful for his vision and leadership which has transformed TRU from a university college to a university.

Sincerely

*D. McBain*  
*Norma Watts*



Darlene McBain  
UT '95  
Board Co-Chair



Norma Watts  
BSN '95  
Board Co-Chair

## TRU President & Vice-Chancellor

Thompson Rivers University has strived to create one of Canada's most comprehensive universities. TRU recognizes the important social and culture contributions we can make to our community. Course and program development at TRU has been focused on creating a learning environment that includes fine arts and culture. Our academic programs now include the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, a Major in Theatre and a Minor in Visual Arts in the Bachelor of Arts degree, and a Bachelor of Design degree that offers credit recognition and prior learning through our Open Learning division.

By being located in one of the most culturally vibrant regions of the province it has become virtually



impossible to separate the two entities of community and university. The many live theatre productions, musical performances, art shows and exhibitions that fill the cultural calendar on campus have firmly established TRU as both contributor and benefactor in our thriving arts and cultural scene.

In this edition of Network Magazine you will learn more about how the involvement of TRU faculty, staff, students and alumni in the arts has benefited individuals and communities and has enabled our students to develop lifelong appreciation for the arts in which ever way they chose to express themselves.

*Roger H. Barnsley*

Roger H. Barnsley  
President and Vice-Chancellor

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Top left: David Balser as Will Shakespeare; Bottom left: Sherry Bennett in *As You Like It*; Above: Allison Tennent as Jackie

# Project X: Theatre with a Twist

by Nicholas Allan

Like archaeologists, Samantha McDonald and Derek Rein, directors and founders of Project X Theatre Company, brush the dust off of classical plays, to interpret them in a modern context. With a twist, they bring new life to Shakespeare. “I like finding out what the play means, finding clues, taking a script and diving into it,” said McDonald. “The script is the map and you have to find your way through it.”

Project X’s first show in 2004 was ‘The Laramie Project’, produced with the Gay and Lesbian Society of Kamloops as the kick off to the first official pride week in the city. The play is about the beating and death of Mathew Shepard who was a victim of a hate crime. From that, Project X’s mandate was to produce theatre in a non-traditional

way, Rein describes it as “offering something left of mainstream.”

McDonald and Rein want to produce works that are challenging and shows that people aren’t used to. “I’m not a funny person at all, so it’s drama hands down for me, I’m a crier,” McDonald said, describing her preferred theatre genre. For Rein, he likes to explore sociological aspects of human nature, tackling subject matter that is shied away from, “I like the dark side,” he confessed.

X Fest, the theatre company’s summer festival production, features mainly Shakespearian plays. According to Rein, the festival came about in 2004 out of the pair’s love of Shakespeare, and the Kamloops Cultural Strategic Plan.

“There’s nothing else like the festival outside of Vancouver in BC. People like to be outside and see theatre,” Rein said, relating some of the feedback they’ve received about the productions staged in the city’s parks. “We’ve been told it brings a big city feel to Kamloops. We get lots of passing tourism traffic in the summer, and we feel it’s slightly lacking in the cultural department in the summertime.”

X Fest 2008 will feature ‘A Mid Summer’s Night Dream’, “our most traditional Shakespeare we’ve done to date,” said Rein, “but with some Project X twists,” that for now remain a secret. A past Project X twist involved actors rapping Hamlet.

“For people who love and loathe it, the festival is for everyone,”

Rein enthused. This year's summer production will also feature the 'Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged'. Three actors will do all the Shakespeare canon in 97 minutes. "It's a funny and fresh way of looking at Shakespeare," said McDonald. The festival will be from July 24–August 9.

Both Rein and McDonald attended TRU, and they maintain the connection. "We have a long list of current students and alumni we use in our shows," said Rein. He agrees with McDonald that Kamloops is a very safe environment for students to properly learn the trade. "We have an advantage; not everything is looked at under a microscope. It's a huge opportunity for an actor to be in a professional show because it's not as critical an audience like Vancouver or Calgary and we've been lucky to have a continuous stream of young, talented artists."

"The flipside of our mandate is to enrich the creative level of young artists in the Kamloops community, so that they can get practical experience without having to go away," McDonald added. "It's good to have a theatre program at TRU, not just actors but theatre technicians too."

"I walked into the Sagebrush Theatre for a class, and I was done," McDonald said, describing the fluke that changed her career path from corporate law. Although her BA is from UVic she considers herself lucky to have gotten her start with UCC's technical theatre program. "In about one year, there were five main stage productions that taught us about everything; lighting, stage, sound, and costumes. I was like a kid in a candy store. Theatre is the right fit for me, I've been telling stories since I was a little kid playing with dolls and doll houses."

The most amazing moment in McDonald's career so far has been as a director. "In the rehearsal for the show 'In On It', an actor was



having difficulty getting into an angry emotion. We had to work with him to bring that out and we made it happen," she said.

Rein knew he wanted to be involved with theatre since he played the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland* in Grade 7, "I acted and didn't want to do anything other than acting. It was Jim Hoffman, a TRU theatre professor who showed me different ways to look at theatre," said Rein about his evolution from actor to director. "There is something about a vision of yours coming to life that is very empowering and very satisfying."

In that sense, Rein's most rewarding moment has been the root of it all, "The genesis of Project X, was 'The Laramie Project'," he said proudly. "It was a huge confidence builder, and we all overcame some insecurities and challenges. It made me realize what I want to do."

Project X brought 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Elizabeth Rex' to life in full Shakespearean Elizabethan regalia and costumes for the TRU Foundation Gala's themed, fundraiser Shakespeare in Love, on February 9, 2007. Over two hundred and ninety people attended and in excess of \$70,000 was raised towards student scholarships and bursaries.



*Top: Rachel Robillard and Ben Dextraze in the Glass Menagerie;*

*Middle: L to R – David Balser as Will Shakespeare, Desiree Maher-Schley as Lady Henslowe, Danielle Dunn-Morris as Queen Elizabeth and Ryan Egan as Ned Lowenscroft;*

*Bottom: Rob Landers as Orlando, Harmony Maher as Amee and Devon Stonehocker as Rosalind in As You Like It, X Fest 2007*





*Circling from top left:  
Cayman Duncan, Dusan Magdolen, Gizella  
Guzzo, Terri Runnalls, Stephen Sawka*

# Saucy Fops not Flops

*by Nicholas Allan*

Back in 2001, Cayman Duncan, a new graduate from Thompson Rivers University's theatre program, found he wasn't getting work. Since no one was lined up to pitch him parts for plays, he co-founded the local Kamloops theatre group the Saucy Fops with fellow TRU theatre graduate, Terri Runnalls. "I was tired of waiting around for someone else to decide to let us into the show," he said. "We're allowed to do a lot [artistically] more because we could create it from scratch," Duncan said.

Their first performance was in the small coffee shop Elements, now Cowboy Coffee on Victoria Street in downtown Kamloops.

"The show was pretty raw," said Duncan laughing. "Any screw up is hilarious in retrospect. Because it's live theatre, it's the one and only time it will be done that way. Each show is unique. If you manage to get through it, it's not nearly as traumatizing."

Based on their coffee house success, the sketch comedy troupe was invited to play at Heroes Bar, on the TRU campus. They have since played at the Kamloops Pavilion theatre, and toured the fringe festival circuit. "It's hard to build from scratch but very rewarding when it's coming from a blank page. To think that you built that from the bottom up is very rewarding," he said.

The Saucy Fops' fringe circuit tour spans from Victoria, to Edmonton, and to Winnipeg. On the road the company's name is becoming known, unlike most other troupes that are recognized by the play they are performing. "[Our name] it's unique. It's stuck in people's minds."

The road trips spawn comedic ideas, simple observations are expanded into two-minute scenes, and those grow into full shows. "Comedies are great because you get a sense of an instant reaction."

Duncan has been expanding his acting repertoire with writing. His newest show is a musical, taking tracks from various artists and writing a play around the songs.

And the group has tackled bigger topics, like their recent production of 'Audible', a drama based on hearing loss. "On the road, people told us they had the condition that was featured in 'Audible'. It's fun to entertain the masses with comedy but to make a connection on a dramatic level was another step and an eye opening experience," he said.

They haven't run out of ideas yet. "As soon as inspiration strikes, that's as soon as they [new shows] appear, The Fops have an untitled show scheduled for next fall at the Pavilion.

Visit  
[www.saucyfops.com](http://www.saucyfops.com)



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# Kamloops Community Craving the Arts

by Nicholas Allan

The Kamloops community is craving cultural arts, and Alan Corbishley is filling its soul. A TRU 2006 Distinguished Alumni award recipient for accomplishments in arts and culture, and an accomplished baritone, Corbishley is also the director and founder of the Living Arts, a new community program with the mandate to involve and integrate all local art organizations into a stronger cultural centre for Kamloops.

"Kamloops is equipped already with a very healthy gallery, theatre company and orchestra," said Corbishley. "I am not interested in competing, that makes my job that much more challenging – to present events and performances that are complimentary rather than one-up-man-ship. We want to be able to support our colleagues by filling in gaps and help broaden perspectives while still offering intriguing and very high quality events."



Alan Corbishley in the production of "Albert Herring", Santa Barbara, California

For further details about the Living Arts program check out [www.bclivingarts.ca](http://www.bclivingarts.ca)

Corbishley started the Living Arts to help people realize their own creative potential within Kamloops. "I was constantly confronted with the statement 'oh I so admire what you do. I just don't have a creative bone in my body!' by various people. I just don't believe that."

"What about all those amazing improvisations in the kitchen or that garden, which certainly didn't design itself with so much colour," he asks, emphasizing his theory that art can be made up of the everyday hobbies.

On a more personal level, Living Arts honours his recently deceased mother and Kamloops resident, Barbara Corbishley. Barbara was involved with the Kamloops Symphony, as well as other local art organizations. "That is the main reason it began, and with the inspiration instilled by my late mother, I felt it a worthy and a valid argument to pursue." His mother passed away from cancer two-and-a-half years ago. Alan came back to Kamloops from an opera tour in Europe to pay his respects. "I was overcome by the generosity and kindness given back to her after all her years of selfless energies invested in her friends, communities and organizations she believed in," he said. The Kamloops Symphony named their largest fundraiser, Barb's Used Book and Music Sale, in her honour. The semi-annual event brings thousands of dollars to the Kamloops Symphony Orchestra. "That inspires me," said Alan. "One person can make a difference and so I believe that the Living Arts can also, but it will take some time to see what sort of effect it will have."

The 2008 winter session kicked off with pianist Rena Sharon and soprano Phoebe MacRae. The session also included "to Armstrong and Bach," presented by the Kamloops Jazz Society and Living Arts. This spring there will be a cooking course hosted by the TRU Culinary Arts Department, and a wine tasting with Claude Royer.



# Tricia Sellmer: Inspiration from love and roses

By Nicholas Allan

Artist Tricia Sellmer's secret garden of inspiration is roses. In her 10 piece series, "River Watch", every rose and every painting has deeper meaning that is especially personal.

Everything about the roses in the paintings is a narrative about Sellmer and her mother's personal life. Her mother had progressive Alzheimer's disease, "I would hold her in bed everyday and ask, 'Mother, what are you thinking?'" she recalled about those difficult days. "I'm going to be your memory bank," and in essence, the paintings in this series are her mother's memories, each rose representing what she told Sellmer she was thinking about.

The last one in the series, 'Shall we gather at the river?' is both a centre piece and a cross roads for Sellmer,

it features "... orchards, rivers and tears. I put so much effort and emotion into this thing. It left me physically exhausted."

Sellmer's unique signature, her "thumb print," she calls it, is using straight acrylic paint. "It takes six months to dry." Even more interesting, are the distinctive tools she used to paint the "River Watch" series.

Using the stems of long-stemmed roses for quills, Sellmer would dip a stem in the paint and draw contour lines. Each

time she dipped into the ink she would need a new stem. "Dip-draw-dip-draw-look-dip-draw; when you're done you're out of ink," she said. The spent quills were put on display with the artwork.

Sellmer's exhibitions, '99 Ways To See A Dying Rose' and 'I Never Promised a Rose Garden' were two galleries of beautiful paintings featuring roses. The first drawing in '99 Ways to See a Dying Rose' is etched into Tricia's mother's gravestone.



Artist Tricia Sellmer

## Creating Tomorrow

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Curtis Bogetti and Jamie Lee Shebelski in Western Canada Theatre's production of *The Secret Garden*  
Photo by Murray Mitchell

# On Barnsley's Watch

by Diana Skoglund

As he prepares to leave Thompson Rivers University later this year after ten years at the helm, President Roger Barnsley will be honoured and remembered as the man who convinced a provincial government of the need for a university in Kamloops. He will also be the first person to tell you that he didn't do it alone, but it was his leadership that made it happen.

His departure in late August will mark the end of an era of change for the institution. On Barnsley's watch we have witnessed and embraced the transformation from university-college to what is now the fourth largest provincial university, which is also one of, if not the most, comprehensive universities in the nation.

His administration has overseen the most ambitious capital spending program in the history of the Kamloops and Williams Lake campuses. In addition, the Barnsley era has seen the acquisition of the former BC Open University as part of the university initiative, major growth in the scope of international activities, including the implementation of Study Abroad and the addition of master degree programs. TRU today offers students almost 200 different certificate, diploma and degree options.

"When I assumed the presidency of Thompson Rivers University I was familiar with the institution and its reputation for comprehensiveness," Dr. Barnsley recalled about his arrival in Kamloops in 1998. He had spent the year prior to his appointment as president on sabbatical from St. Mary's University in Halifax at

the University of British Columbia. There, he had several discussions with other Canadian university administrators about the depth of programming being offered at the university college.

"When I arrived here the Campus Activity Centre (built in 1993) was then being hailed as the model for innovative expansion, the new Trades and Technology Centre had been recently built and the former trades space in Old Main was being completely renovated. That was quite unusual as these projects were being completed during those years when other institutions in the province hadn't been able to realize big capital improvements."

Barnsley also discovered that the culture of entrepreneurial growth was part of many activities on campus, not just major capital ventures.

"I'd go up to the trade building and see that the trade guys had gone out into the field and found a large dilapidated piece of forestry equipment, dragged it back to the shop, reconditioned it, sold it and made a few thousand bucks to reinvest in equipment or tools for their programs.

"The leadership at the university before me had set the tone of dynamism, entrepreneurship; building a culture at the institution that remains self-reliant with a focus on improving, that is our university's hidden jewel," said Barnsley.

It was that spirit that led the faculty in Culinary Arts to create a restaurant that is the only culinary school restaurant recognized as one the 150 best places to eat in

Canada and the faculty throughout the institution to establish research programs. "That is the kind of innovation that you don't find in all institutions and it excited me when I realized it was so prevalent throughout the university," said Barnsley.

"The quality of the faculty we have, even prior to us becoming a university has been very satisfying," he added. "TRU's developed strong scholarship and good community outreach and remained incredibly teaching focused, that's the core of our university. And out of that we've been able to develop a really strong research profile."

"Success breeds success... and it's that dynamism of growth that is embedded in the culture here that has created TRU World and it is why our international programs are so far ahead of other institutions."

He credits the collaborative relationships between TRU World, the School of Business and the English as a Second Language department in Student Development for the growing internationalization of campus. Which along with TRU's Study Abroad program he sees as tremendous opportunity for students.

With so many developments and changes at TRU in the past 10 years, the academic psychologist cum university administrator is reluctant to select highlights. He does concede that when he looks back over the last few years there have been some amazing events. "We've had Prime Minister Paul Martin, Stephen Harper, Premier Campbell, Romeo Dallaire and Stephen Lewis," he said naming a few of TRU's most prominent guests.



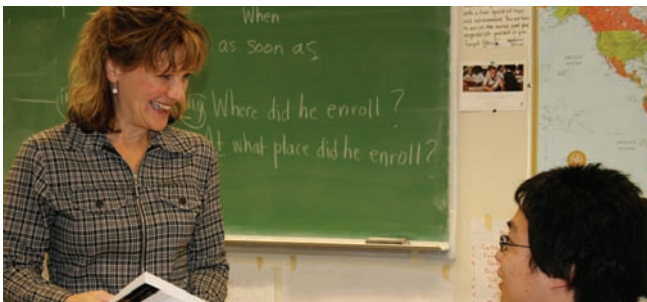
“With someone like Stephen Lewis, it has been very rewarding to see the impact on the community and its consciousness,” Barnsley said reflecting on the CanGo Grannies, the group of Kamloops grandmothers that sparked a nationwide movement of similar groups supporting the Stephen Lewis Foundation after attending the President’s Lecture in 2004. Across the country there are 100s of similar groups raising money for the thousands of HIV AIDS orphans in Africa.

“You know,” Barnsley said, loosely pressing the finger tips from each of his hands together, “at the end of the day I am fortunate to have been leading the university through such an amazing time, and I feel that I’m leaving it at a good stage for the next person to come in.

*“Things have been fine on my watch.”*



*Dr. Roger Barnsley in front of an untitled painting by student artist Jack Byette*



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# Don Lawrence: Underwater camera making waves

by Nicholas Allan

A snapshot of Visual and Performing Arts Chair Donald Lawrence's narrow office shows it cluttered with cameras. If a picture is worth 1000 words, then each camera is a volume of stories, especially Lawrence's homemade, barnacle-covered, aluminum underwater pinhole camera.

While kayaking off the coast of Salt Spring Island, BC, Lawrence was inspired to put together his long standing interests of pinhole cameras, the ocean and kayaking.

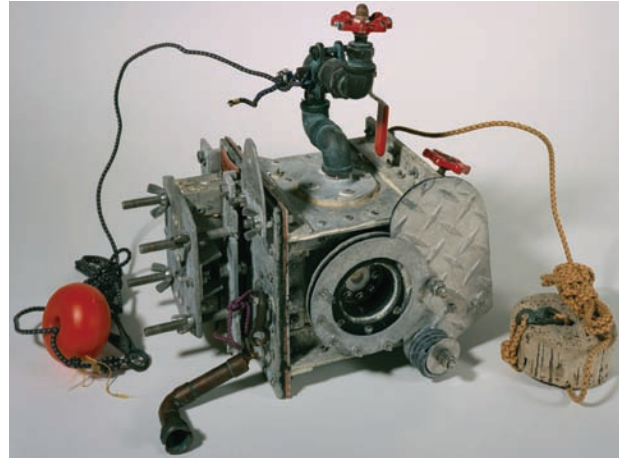
His idea for a pinhole camera that could rest on the ocean floor and capture the movement of marine life needed to be more than the typical pinhole camera that made simply from a cardboard box, pierced with a small hole allowing light to enter from an image inside.

Lawrence's water-tight pinhole camera resembles a metal-covered CD player. Four over-sized wing nuts unlock a metal plate that opens up a slim slot where the film is loaded. Ropes are attached to the top and side of the camera. One rope allows Lawrence to lower the contraption

into the water via his kayak. The other rope operates the shutter. "I have an inclination to take a simple idea and complicate it," Lawrence said.

Embracing aspects of chance occurrence, and with a one in 10 success rate, Lawrence never knows if he gets a good shot. "Sometimes it [the camera] might fill up with water, other times it might be facing the wrong way," he said. On average, from exposure of the film to the printing of the photo in a dark "room", it takes six hours to see the results of a single photograph.

Once he lets the camera settle on the ocean floor, Lawrence said "I paddle away for five minutes or so and when I figure the exposure is done I paddle back. Pinhole cameras give poetry that is largely accidental; that chance



*Underwater Pinhole Camera, B/W Model III, 2002 aluminum and mixed media construction h14" x w11" x d9"*

gives it a stronger work that I have less control over," said Lawrence as he pointed to an enlarged photo of a starfish blurrily moving a limb. "Capturing movement over time is typical of pinhole photography. It doesn't freeze time like a conventional or digital [camera] typically does," he said.

Lawrence's ongoing work since 1998 include his *Kayak Journals*, and cyanotypes (an early photographic printing process) made in Ferryland, during a 2002 road trip to Newfoundland, of an ocean wreck. In 2005 he followed up by building a full-size reconstruction of what remains of the ship as a walk-in diorama for Vancouver's Contemporary Art Gallery. Lawrence's 2006 exhibition in the Victoria Art Gallery was based on Fiddle Reef, the former site of BC's smallest lighthouse. He plans to continue that theme and build a life-size collapsible lighthouse.



*Underwater Pinhole Photography Project 1998 showing: "Kayak/Darkroom" and "Underwater Pinhole Photographs"*



# Wesley Eccleston: Teaching a crash course in communication

by Nicholas Allan

Some jump out of airplanes while others hurl themselves off bridges, but Wesley Eccleston is a thrill seeker of a different breed. He seeks the adrenaline rush that can only be achieved by teaching and live stage performances.

“There is a natural high and a sense of accomplishment after a performance,” said the Thompson Rivers University theatre instructor, and alumnus. “There are many things that only a show can teach you. It’s akin to people who climb cliffs or hurl themselves down mountains.

Compared to other post-secondary schools where a student may only get one shot a year at a play, students at TRU can be involved in four productions a year. “Students come back years later and talk about the

individual attention that they received here,” he said. For Eccleston, it’s about helping students realize their dreams, teaching them the art of acting, and calming their nerves. “It’s difficult, but inspiring and liberating.”

Eccleston enjoys working with students that are straight out of high school, helping them become better actors, and communicators in life, offering them a crash course in theatrical communication. He’s also involved with the Community Arts Council of Kamloops where he advocates for emerging artists who need start up money to pursue a career in theatre and other arts.

Because TRU productions are not economically driven, the shows can consist of more provoking material, something that Eccleston

is particularly proud of because provocative material can be exciting to produce and Kamloops does not experience it very often. The Actor Workshop Theatre’s spring production of ‘Beaver’, directed by Eccleston, is a good example. He describes it as a coming of age tragic comedy set in Timmins, Ontario, with a family grappling with a sister’s suicide and an upcoming wedding. The language and subject matter is strong.

Eccleston graduated from Westsyde Secondary in 1993. His undergraduate degree is in general arts from UCC. He went on to the University of Alberta for a Master degree in theatre and returning to Kamloops and to teach at TRU in 2000. He co-founded the local theatre production company Three Men of Sin, and has worked with almost every theatrical group in town. He was also an artist in residence through the Arts Smarts program.

Commenting on balancing his career as an educator and artist Eccleston said, “Although the marking gets to you, I am blessed to be able to play, share and make-believe all day long. Who can complain about that?”



*Wesley Eccleston discussing a scene with students Stacey Weir-Gory and Scott Livingstone.*

# Life with Three Ears and a Camera

by Nicholas Allan

A filmmaker, Syliva Coates loves her craft because she's required to listen with three ears; by what people tell her, the unspoken—often emotional language between the words, and the essence of the person.

"Finding that little hole that opens up, capturing a bond of trust with the person in a short time is what makes it real – that's the third ear," Coates explained.

She followed up her B.Ed. from UBC with a two year Fine Arts diploma from TRU in 1997. "It [the program] opened up many new doors and possibilities," she said.

After producing a memorial movie for her late brother-in-law she fell in love with film making, "Film was right for me from the beginning because I know what my talents are and film incorporates them all – interviewing, editing, script writing, music."

"Art school taught me self-motivation," said Coates, who started out making video family histories, producing 30 minute family histories, complete with interviews, old photos, and music to complete a family album. She taught herself how to operate a video camera and learned editing

software. Now she's starting to write original music to put into the films. "You need the right music for the right person. The music is the heart beat, and like a conductor, moves the story along," she said.

"The films can change families' lives; instead of 25 photo albums, they have a cohesive story," said Coates about the

affect her productions have had. "People say it brings their families together." During the Barriere/McClure Fires in 2003 Coates created a video for a family at Paul Lake before they had to evacuate. "The video was all the family had time to take before they left."

Besides her family history work Coates has produced films for mediation in law, on-line media advertising, and for the CANGO Grannies' fundraising effort for the Stephen Lewis Foundation, entitled "the Chair Affair". The film, featuring local artists in the Kamloops community, was featured at a film festival in the US.

"Each movie is like a brand new canvas. There is no formula and they feel like art when they are complete," said Coates who has produced the Distinguished Alumni Awards videos for the last four years, and has received rave reviews from audiences and recipients alike. "As diversified as these extraordinary people are, they are bonded by film, family and friends. It's not about what they've done, so much as who they are and what drives them."

Sylvia Coates can be contacted at  
*slcoates@telus.net*  
for film enquiries



*Sylvia at work in her studio*



# Alex Walton's colourful zoo

by Nicholas Allan

Alex Walton's portfolio contains a menagerie of very colourful characters. He is a children's book illustrator, and so far a few of his illustrations have had a purpose beyond entertainment. The Misadventures of Ori-tang condemns poaching of the endangered orangutan, while the book Snow White World concentrates on the plight of polar bears and global warming. His works have hit international acclaim and endorsement from Sharon Stone for Snow White World.

His upcoming illustrations feature an obsessive compulsive, workaholic chipmunk who tries to find love. Walton graduated from Thompson Rivers University in 2002 with a degree in Natural Resource Management. When he entered university he was taking fine art courses but found it wasn't for him. "Fine art seemed really serious, it can be stuffy," he said. Add the stigma many students face of "getting a real job," and that's when he transferred out of fine arts into resource management. Now he combines the two.

"I thought it was a good mix because of my natural resource management background," he said about the art's deeper meaning. "I get to combine my degree and art," he said.

"I enjoy sitting at my desk and have an idea come together and figure out how best to solve a colour problem or design the character," he said speaking about the challenges of his craft that he enjoys.



*"It's nice to wake up, drink a cup of coffee, listen to the radio and spend time alone just working. It gives me great satisfaction."*



Walton's illustrations can be viewed at  
[www.waltonillustrations.com](http://www.waltonillustrations.com)

# The TRU Advancement Team Line up

by Diana Skoglund

As the Vice President of Advancement, Christopher Seguin heads up the new team that brings together the alumni, foundation and the marketing and communications functions of Thompson Rivers University.

His arrival to TRU in July was a homecoming of sorts for the Kam High grad who attended SFU on a football scholarship. Since last summer he's been getting familiar with the people that make up the advancement team.

"It's been a pleasure to meet and hire such amazing individuals with such a breadth of experience and abundance of passion," Seguin said. "With this team there will be great opportunities to share knowledge and allow for individual growth. It is a rare and wonderful thing when you find this kind of team chemistry so easily.

"I know that this will be an environment of excitement, trust and shared success."

Offices of advancement are systematic, integrated method of managing relationships in order to increase an educational institution's support from its key outside

constituents, including alumni and friends, government policy makers, the media, members of the community and philanthropic entities of all types. It is a common model for universities in Canada and the US of similar size to TRU.



TRU Advancement Team: Shelley Jones, Sylvie Veilleux, Karen Gamracy, Christopher Seguin, Livia Costantino and Josh Keller

## TRU Advancement Team

### **Josh Keller** *Director, Marketing and Communications*

He has been fielding the calls at TRU for over 20 years. As the former director of media and team administration for the BC Lions, Keller is familiar with changes coaches make to lineups. He's in a unique position. Not only does he have a key role in the advancement team and the institution's next step as a provincial university, he's already been through all its previous manifestations, college and university college.

It is not just his archival knowledge of the institution that makes him one of the advancement's team most valuable players. Keller's public relation skills are legendary in post-secondary advancement circles. He'll bring his support team of nine media, web,

design and recruitment specialists to the table, adding to the synergy that will project TRU into the future.

"By bringing these various resources together we can create new opportunities to advance the image and reputation of the institution. In doing so we will enhance the entire spectrum of TRU activities – from recruitment through to research and alumni and their giving back to the institution."

### **Karen Gamracy** *Development Officer*

This Michigan State University business admin grad has been building scholarship and bursary funds with the Foundation for TRU students for nearly seven years.

Before she signed on to organize galas, golf tournaments and major

fund raising campaigns with the Foundation, Gamracy provided those same event organizing and fundraising services to local non-profit groups, beginning with her position as fundraising coordinator for the BC Summer Games in 1993. For her part, she is looking forward to the change and likes what she sees happening already. "We are getting more support with some of the administrative work that the Foundation did. Moving forward I'll be able to concentrate on the big picture and work hands on with programs like Athletics or on larger capital campaigns and," she added "have time to work closely with our advisory board and our great volunteers that help us make everything happen."



## Livia Costantino

*Executive Assistant*

She's new to TRU but not to her role as an administrative assistant in fund management, government, non-profit and private industries. Along with the excitement of a new position Costantino so far has had good impressions of friendly and helpful colleagues and the level of professionalism she has encountered. Although she is an alumnus (Business Admin 1991) and had been living and working in Kamloops since then, Costantino was floored by just how TRU had grown. "Kamloops has become a real university town," she said from her ground floor office in the Clock Tower. "Everybody is stoked about the advancement office and coming together as a team, and I'm excited to be a part of that."

## Sylvie Veilleux

*Prospect Research Technician*

Don't let her dry job title deceive you. Veilleux started as a work-study

student with the Foundation in 1994 while she was working on her Events and Convention Management Diploma. Bringing years of event coordination, administration and database management to her new role, she is the advancement office's ear on the ground. "I will still be helping with events and working with volunteers, but my main focus will be researching opportunities to build relationships between the campus, the community, the region and beyond."

## Shelley Jones

*Donation Processor*

After six plus years of being the one-person accounting division of the Foundation office Shelley Jones is looking forward to having some of the university's support services support her work as well. "With our expansion into national and international fundraising initiatives it will be nice to collaborate with other divisions and have some of the expertise of the finance department

and its technology behind us."

Echoing others in the lineup, Jones says that by being able to focus on a primary role, in her case donor stewardship, creating an advancement office is the logical next step following the creation of a new provincial university.

A couple of more key draft choices will be added to the advancement line-up by the beginning of April. The Alumni Officer, Event Coordinator and Secretary position still have to be posted and House 9 will need to undergo renovations so that advancement's physical space will reflect the integration of the staff.

The players are nearly set, and as Seguin describes it, "Advancement is about team success, and we are bringing our team together so TRU can take the next step and open doors to create the relationships we need to develop across Canada and around the world, in support of every aspect of this amazing university."

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# Change is afoot in House 9

## A message from the Alumni Association Board of Directors

The TRU Alumni Association is a non profit society founded in 1990 by a group of alumni. The original board members wanted to serve the university by building relationships with graduates. For eighteen years the association has sponsored programs, events and services for alumni. Today as we move toward a new relationship with TRU, we will continue to seek better ways to serve you, our members.

On March 31, 2008 the Alumni Association will cease operation as an independent organization and the responsibility for alumni affairs will be transferred internally to the new Advancement Department of TRU. The Alumni Association Board will no longer supervise the day to day operation of the office but will continue as an advisory board to the

Advancement Department. The staff of the Alumni Association will be replaced by an Alumni Officer within the Advancement Department.

The board will continue to oversee the editorial content and production of the Alumni Network magazine. The Distinguished Alumni Awards presentation and dinner held annually in October, will still be our signature event. Your continued support of alumni affinity programs, the annual golf tournament and the benefits card program will be essential to help sustain the board and our initiatives. The revenue raised helps us provide many services to you; our members.



*Denise Harper and Nancy Plett*

As we move forward we will continue to serve you by improving the opportunities that assist in your success and recognize your accomplishments.

### Alumni Staff

*Executive Director, Nancy Plett and Alumni Relations Officer, Denise Harper* have chosen not to make the transition into the Advancement Department.

In the summer of 2002 Nancy Plett arrived bringing with her many years of skills and experience in the public relations and event planning industry. She developed a strong strategic plan with the board, conducted research with alumni, and initiated events and programs on campus which earned the respect of the campus community and the alumni associations throughout the province. Nancy took the association's Network Newsletter and developed it into the magazine it is today.

In 2006 Denise Harper joined that staff of the Alumni Association, bringing her passion and commitment to education after serving as a local school trustee for nine years and a further six years on the Alumni Association board. Enthusiasm was the driving force of this alumna in her role as Alumni Relations Officer as she worked with students, staff and faculty on campus to raise awareness of the services and programs of the association.

The Alumni Association Board wishes to thank Nancy and Denise for the years of hard work and dedication to the association.



*2007–2008 Board of Directors ~ Back row: Susan McIntyre, Nick Rinaldi, Vanessa Holte, Rob Cupello, Jarrod Goddard, Dwayne Geiger, Mary Ellen Grant, Amy Tucker. Front row: Brian Christianson, Darlene McBain, Norma Watts, Mike Koehn, Karl de Bruijn Missing from photo: Brian Callander and Butch Bagabuyo*



## TRU Athletics

# Thompson Rivers wins right to host first CIS Championship

by Jon Shephard

Thompson Rivers University athletics, specifically the men's volleyball program received some outstanding news when Canadian Inter-university Sport announced that it has selected the university to host the 2010 CIS men's volleyball National Championship.

It's the first time the tournament has graced the courts of British Columbia since UBC hosted in 1983.

Hosting the CIS men's volleyball championship will showcase the top Canadian university student-athletes in the interior region of BC, giving younger athletes a goal to aspire toward. As High Performance Director of Volleyball BC, Steve Manuel, said, "Over 20 years have passed since a men's CIS volleyball championship was hosted in BC. I believe that this is one factor for the recent decline in the number of boys playing volleyball, particularly in British Columbia's interior region. A key component in the development of a sport at the youth level is to host high-profile events."

"I am very excited about hosting the 2010 men's national volleyball championships, and it is great for TRU and the city of Kamloops," says TRU Director of Athletics, Ken Olynyk. "With the new facility, the Tournament Capital Centre, and the support of TRU and the city of Kamloops, I know this will be a benchmark championship."

Although TRU has never hosted a CIS championship, this is not an unfamiliar role for either the university or the City of Kamloops. Besides the new first-class Tournament Capital Centre facilities, TRU has a long and distinguished history of hosting high quality events in the BCCAA and the CCAA. In addition, the City of Kamloops is known for its enthusiastic volunteer base and supportive businesses when hosting regional, provincial, national, and international events.

"As a member of the CIS I believe it is important for us to support our own organization and one way in which we can do that is to bid to host the national championships," said Olynyk.

"This is definitely a boost for men's volleyball, not only in Kamloops but also the interior of BC," said TRU WolfPack assistant men's volleyball coach Chad Grimm.

"Kamloops has always been a great host to large sporting events such as this, and I look forward to having men's volleyball play a starring role in an event of this calibre. Hosting this event will help increase participation in boy's volleyball in our area. It will also benefit our recruiting for the future and act as motivation for our current players to reach the elite level it will take to compete for a medal in 2010 in front of our home fans," Grimm said.

"Our team should be a veteran team in 2010 and a team that will take a serious run at being national champions," added Olynyk.



*Wolfpack Men's Volleyball team huddle*

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*"As a member of the CIS I believe it is important for us to support our own organization and one way in which we can do that is to bid to host the national championships," said Olynyk.*

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# Where Are They Now?

## Dana Novak

*Bachelor of Fine Arts 2005*

She earned her Fine Arts diploma in 2003, BA in 2004 and her BFA in 2005.



After working as a freelance photographer and as Research Assistant at TRU she was one of 15 students selected from 150 applicants for the new Masters program offered by the Emily Carr College of Art.

While the Masters program has been demanding Dana says she felt fully prepared to face the challenge by the instructors at TRU. Dana

credits Photography Instructor Eileen Leier and Visual and Performing Arts Chair Donald Lawrence as having a huge influence on her. "They opened many opportunities" she said, which set her up on her journey.



Dana defends her Master's thesis the first part of March and will participate in the grad show in late April. She is excited by "Making Artistic Inquiry Visible" a six week artist residency at the Banff Centre of Arts in May and June. She hopes the outcome will position art as a form of research. Finally, Dana's greatest dream is to teach.

We invite you to visit Dana's website at [www.dashnovak.com](http://www.dashnovak.com) to see more of her work.

## Desiree Maher-Schley

*Bachelor of Education 1999*

I graduated from UCC in 1999 with B.Ed. I have since worked in the Kamloops/Thompson School District as a teacher. I have also done some theatre with The Three Men of Sin, and most recently with Project X in summer of 2006. I am currently working on my M.Ed. degree from Simon Fraser University with a focus on education in the fine arts.

Fond memories of TRU: being cured of visual art phobia by the amazing Evelyn Vipond-Schmid; visiting Heroes with my MUCH younger classmates who were very welcoming and nurturing to this elder; the delicious food put out by the students in the Culinary Arts programme; free parking on the dirt dead-end road that has since become the street past Walmart; dozing off during lectures in the poorly ventilated Old Main.

On a personal note I remarried in 2005, an old flame from Salmon Arm named Rick Schley. Sadly, I lost a son in 2005, but oddly enough, gained 3 grandchildren in 2006-07.

## Dusan Magdolen

*Bachelor of Arts (Theatre Major) & Bachelor of Business Administration (Marketing major) 2007*

Soon after graduation I took a small 10-day trip to New York City where my girlfriend and I saw 12 theatrical productions. At the end of that summer I was fortunate enough to get invited on a month long excursion with the local theatre group Saucy Fops, to the Saskatchewan and Edmonton Fringe tours. It was my first Fringe experience and one I will never forget. As soon as we returned to Kamloops I started in my new position as Communications Director (Combining Theatre and Marketing) at Western Canada Theatre, started rehearsals on Saucy Fops' next production "Orchestrated" and BC Living Arts' "Satie de Paris" for which I wrote the dialogue. It was a busy fall. Things have slowed down, but as we begin 2008, I am very excited to be working in my field of study and looking forward to the future.

I have fond memories of our Greenroom at TRU. The Greenroom is a little room with coaches



and chairs adjacent to our new Actor's Workshop Theatre, where students in the Theatre program often hang out. The things that have been said and laughed at in that room must never see the light of day. We had a blast.

## Kaitlynn Dewhirst

*Bachelor of Arts 2006*

I graduated with a double major in Sociology and Theatre. I really enjoyed my time at TRU, having fantastic professors and making great friendships. While at TRU I was one of the founding members of a theatre club, TRUDAT. After graduation some fellow Alumni and I created a children's theatre camp, Curtain Call. It was a great success!



In the summer of 2006, I started researching the Kamloops food recovery system. I learned that when large commercial trucks carrying food were involved in accidents their cargo normally ended up in the landfill. I formed a non-profit society, K.D. Recovery Services. In December 2006, I got my first call and was able to recover a large shipment of frozen turkeys (one thousand) and deliver them to the Vancouver Food Bank. A success!

In spring 2007 I took an Assistant English Teaching position, and have been living and working in Uji, Japan for six months. The people in Uji are genuinely interested in what life in Kamloops and Canada is like and the students are great.

What does the future hold for me? I have renewed my contract with the Board of Education, so I will be in Japan for one more year. When I return to Canada I hope to attend law school, with my ultimate goal to work internationally in a humanitarian field.



### Paul Horn

*Bachelor of Arts  
(General Studies) 2005*

It was my second time around at university as I was changing career directions, moving toward teaching instead of community social services.

Since graduating, I was elected to Mission city council and have worked as a career educator at Riverside Trades and Training Centre for the Mission School District. I am currently enrolled in (and loving) UCFV's inaugural Teacher Education Program (i.e. certification for elementary school teachers). I will complete that program in May 2008. When time allows, I play lacrosse, ride my motorcycle and am working on a book of photography and poetry.

Being an Open Learning graduate of TRU, I was thrilled at the way the school kept me connected. I found my courses to be first-rate and was given plenty of opportunity to innovate in my projects. It was a great fit for a mature student like me.

My fondest memory of TRU was convocation, with my family and brand new son there to see me cross the stage. I never realized how much that moment would mean to me, but it turned out to be a thrill.



### Tamme Fossett

*Fine Arts Diploma 2007*

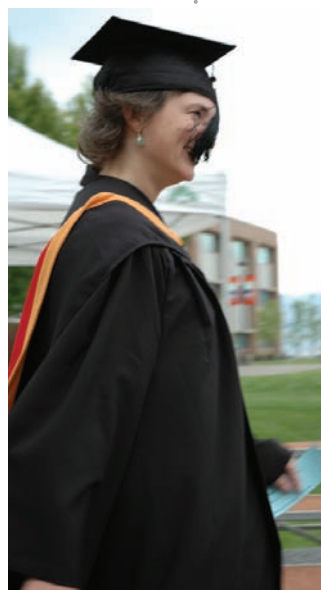
I attended the Emily Carr College of Art in Vancouver from 1978–81 completing two years of the Fine Art program. In 1983 I received a diploma in Commercial Art and Printing from Cariboo College and a diploma of Fine Arts last year.

Between 1990 and 1994 I operated a cottage industry, painting “wearable” art sold through Art in the Park, the Kamloops Art Gallery boutique and various local shops. I have been a member of the Kamloops Life Drawing Studio since 2003.

While completing my Bachelor of Fine Arts at TRU.

I have enjoyed the wealth of resources (including a fully equipped ceramic studio, drawing and painting studios, B&W and colour photography darkrooms, woodworking and welding shops) offered to the Visual Arts students. I will be graduating this year and will, together with my classmates, be exhibiting our work at the 2008 Fourth Year Graduating Show from April 18th to May 2nd.

My future plans include continuing to explore and develop my art. I am happily married and continue living in Kamloops.



### Carmen Segger

*Bachelor of Fine Arts 2006*

I came to TRU with a diploma in Graphic Design from the University College of the Fraser Valley and left in 2006 with my Bachelor of Fine Arts. My mediums are acrylics and sculpture.

Since graduation I have been involved in three different group shows and have been actively involved with the Arnica Artist Run Centre in Kamloops. During the summer of 2007 TRU professor Dr. Uli Scheck and I co-curated SHAG (Sex Humour Art Gender) at the Arnica Centre. SHAG included artist works from Vancouver, Ontario, California and Pennsylvania as well as from local artists. It was a huge success.

In September 2007 my 7 x 13 foot mobile entitled “Going Mobile” was part of the TAP – Tranquille Art Project curated by TRU alumna Stephanie Farrell.

Between creating, I work part-time at the Kamloops Art Gallery assisting on installations and doing décor for a local Events Coordinator. In 2007 I also

had the pleasure of dancing with Sangoma Pauline and Roots of Rhythm and took part in three performances. Recently, I took an Artist Statement Workshop by Don Lawrence and Dr. Will Garrett-Petts, perfect timing as I am refocusing on my own art practice applying for artist residencies and solo shows. The Sagebrush Theatre generously exhibits work of local artists and I hope to have some of my work on display there in the near future.

All friends, fellow grads and alumni please visit my new website at [www.carmensegger.com](http://www.carmensegger.com)

I have fond memories of welding until the wee hours and will always treasure the friends I made at TRU.

# Where Are They Now?

## Craig Willms

*Diploma of Fine Arts 2002*

Following graduation from TRU I transferred to Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) and graduated with a BFA in 2004.

I spent two years teaching English in Japan. Although I didn't get the chance to exhibit my art work in galleries, I did complete a couple of public art projects. I also pitched from the mound in the Tokyo Dome, home of the revered Yomiuri Giants.

I returned to Canada in the fall of 2006 and spent 2007 pursuing exhibitions and became president of Arnica Artist Run Centre in Kamloops.

I exhibited in the Undiscovered show for emerging artists at the Kamloops Art Gallery from October through December 2007. My work, titled "How to Throw a Knuckle Ball," involved bronze sculpture and the construction of a full size pitching mound and home plate. Viewers were invited to step up and throw baseballs the length of the gallery.

In April 2008, I am showing two works at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia as part of a group show titled "Arena, the Art of Hockey." My art

practice is influenced a lot by sports and its role in culture. For the Arena show I am taking a critical look at Canada and its relationship with the National Hockey League.

I will curate and participate in the exhibition "Come Draw On Our Walls" at Arnica in February 2008, featuring local artists with art based on comic books and manga.

Currently, I am plotting ways to return to Japan to study the ways of sumo and building dohyo, the traditional sumo ring.



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★ **The deadline for nominations** › Friday, June 20, 2008 at 4pm

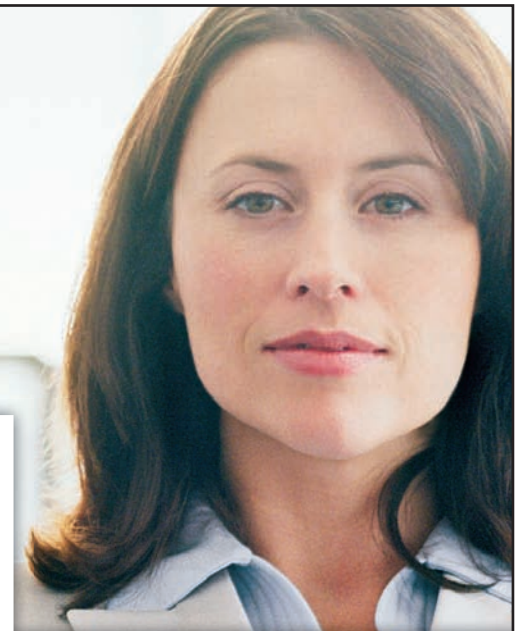
Please print a nomination package from [www.trualumni.ca](http://www.trualumni.ca) or contact the TRU Alumni office for a package at 250.828.5498 and return it to the TRU Alumni Association office.

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