

# SAFAGRAM

## President's Message

By Doug Spurgeon



The summer break will soon be here. For those who are leaving for the summer, have a safe and enjoyable break.

Next year will see some new faces in the ACIFA Executive. At the ACIFA AGM in Jasper this year, three new individuals were voted into the ACIFA Executive. David Hyttenrauch (Mt. Royal) was elected as President, Gerry Cross (Mt. Royal) was elected as External Vice President, and I was elected as Vice President, Negotiations.

Returning in the role of Executive Vice President is Mike Durbeniuk from Medicine Hat. All positions will commence a two-year term starting July 1, 2010.

Keeping with ACIFA, SAFA is hosting next year's conference in Lake Louise. Next year's theme will be "all roads lead to learning." Any member who would like to help or has ideas, please contact Tracy Fawcett. Tracy will be heading up the planning and volunteer committees. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Bargaining will wrap up the end of June for the summer, resuming again in the fall. While our Collective Agreement will expire June 30, this does not mean we will be without a contract. The current terms of the Collective Agreement will remain in effect until it becomes superseded by another, either ratified or arbitrated. The hope for bargaining is to get a ratified agreement. Talks have not hit any major roadblocks that would force us into arbitration, which can and most likely would be a lengthy process. The hope is that a memorandum of agreement can be reached in the fall to present to the membership for a ratification vote. The last time the agreement was arbitrated it was an 18-month wait for the hearing and decision. If there is a chance to get a ratified agreement by adding some extra months into the next Academic Year for bargaining, it is much better to have talks continue rather than having them stop while we wait for the arbitration process to be completed. As always, keep your ideas and suggestions coming in as they assist the bargaining team in the negotiations of the next contract.

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SAFAGRAM editorial policy, as approved by the SAFA Executive on June 14, 1995, is as follows:

1. The Editorial Board has the final say as to what is included or deleted from the newsletter.
2. Editorial Board decisions about newsletter material must be agreed to by consensus.
3. The newsletter will include a disclaimer stating that the views expressed in its content do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Board or SAFA.
4. All material included in the newsletter must
  - be signed by the author when submitted to the editors, but anonymity may be requested and granted for printing.
  - be based on "reasoned argument" if personal criticism is used.
  - not involve name-calling.
  - not include sexist, racist, or homophobic comments.
  - be related to SAIT, although this will be interpreted broadly.

**The views expressed in SAFAGRAM do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Board or SAFA.**

## Library Report



By Dave Weber

### Library Liaisons Springing Forward to Connect with Academic Departments SAIT Wide

Throughout the fall and winter semesters, staff and faculty are so busy that often the lines of communication can get blurred. The SAIT Library always wants to help faculty and students to achieve academic success. To this end, the Library Liaison system provides a communication link between the Library and its clientele. A specific area of communication is the resource base provided by the Library Liaison Service. All areas of Library service are included in the communications process not just "collections" or resources like books or e-resources. Assigned Library staff work with SAIT staff associated with a particular School, program, or service area on campus to identify Library resources and services/facilities. We believe that awareness of Library services and resources contribute to the overall success and experience of students and faculty.

Currently, Library liaison staff are working very hard meeting with every academic department to ensure that the partnership between the Library and faculty remains strong. Communication with faculty helps Library staff to

- Better appreciate their instructional needs
- Identify and select learning resources that support SAIT schools and departments
- Share information about Library services to further facilitate Library use

Conversely, the Library encourages their Liaison Department Representatives to

- Make independent recommendations for Library acquisitions of material
- Share relevant program informational documents such as advisory committee meeting minutes with their Library Liaison representatives
- Help us to identify and eliminate outdated learning resources

The relationship that the SAIT Library has established with their academic departments is important, and we want to support our faculty and students by ensuring that the resources and services that we provide will continue to meet their academic goals. ♦

## Self-Care

By Marta Edgar, Student Counselling Services

Summer vacations are coming for most staff and students; this is the time to take a break and do something different from your daily tasks. After a year of hard work, it is a chance to engage in full-time self-care for a while. The workaholics may have to resist ideas of completing repairs or projects while on vacation. You may need something more memorable than a tidy garage to sustain you during the coming year of work.

It is not necessary to spend a lot of money or arrange an impressive outing in order to benefit from a break. Extra sleep, visiting people you love, and indulging in hobbies restores the necessary balance. On the other hand, activities which may not seem restful could provide the deepest rejuvenation by adding another dimension to your life: it may be

trekking in the mountains or volunteering for a cause which you care deeply about.

Perhaps this is the time to act on long-held dreams. It is easy to dismiss them and think, "I will do this some day, when I retire, when the children grow up, when I have more money." This way, many dreams are never realized while duties and commitments take over. If it is difficult to decide whether your dream is worth pursuing, imagine yourself at the end of your life. Would you regret never having done this? How would you feel to have it accomplished? Like my friend, who this year completed his trip of a lifetime, upon return you may discover a renewed sense of commitment to the most mundane tasks.

Enjoy your summer! ♦



## Microsoft Office Specialist Testing Program at SAIT

At the recent Canada Skills competition, Emily Daubert from the SAIT School of Business AIM program won gold at the provincial competition and silver at the national competition in the IT Software Applications category. She was accompanied to competitions by her instructors/coaches, Janine Violini and Karyn Mart.

The AIM program also participated in the Microsoft Worldwide competition as part of the Microsoft Office Specialist certification program. Janine and the AIM faculty have spearheaded the inclusion of the official Microsoft Office Specialist testing centre at SAIT allowing 28 of the AIM students, so far, to become certified in Word, Excel, or PowerPoint. Among them,

Emily Daubert has scored very high on the Word exam placing her in a competitive position for the Microsoft Worldwide competition, which closes June 30.

The Microsoft Office Specialist test is an online test with task-based questions to be completed. At the world competition, actual task time is calculated electronically and only the judges see the real scores. Everyone at the world competition will likely score 100 percent on the tasks, so time will be the determining factor for competitive placement.

The winner of the top Canadian score in each category will travel to Salt Lake City in August to compete for a world title. Winners of the world titles receive \$6,500 U.S. in scholarships

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## Collective Bargaining Continues



By Sean O'Flynn

**Other College Settlements Update.** NAIT and NASA have settled a three-year collective agreement with membership voting 78 percent in favour of the Memorandum of Agreement. Settlement highlights include the following:

- increase in wage 0 percent in the first year with a \$1000 cash payment
- increase in wage 2 percent in the second year
- increase in wage 3 percent in the third year
- movement to a drug card benefits system
- increase in vision care
- increase in professional development
- improved method for assigning workload and accounting for hours

The NAIT settlement represents two parties working together to create a mutually acceptable agreement for the benefit of all stakeholders. Grande Prairie is the only other college to settle thus far, and their wage settlement was unique in that they implemented a grid that had been negotiated in the previous contract as a starting point for this round of negotiations. As for the other 13 Colleges (including the two new universities), they continue to bargain with the hope of reaching fair agreements.

**SAIT Negotiations Update.** While settlements in the Province of Alberta serve as a guide, at SAIT we have unique concerns that are being brought to the bargaining table. SAFA is making every effort to settle at the table in order to best serve your needs, but should management be unwilling to satisfactorily address your concerns, it is likely that arbitration will be the next step. For now we are trying to be optimistic that SAIT is ready to address your concerns in a meaningful way, but only time will tell if our good discussions at the bargaining table will result in true progress for your total compensation and working conditions. The last collective agreement, which was settled at the table, broke a concerning trend of settling collective agreements at arbitration. Settling issues that are important to both parties in arbitration should be seen as a last resort, as I believe arbitration won't help to foster a positive labour relations climate at SAIT and is unlikely to fully address your concerns. However, if the decision to proceed to arbitration is taken, this means that the first option of working with SAIT has failed. For now, we continue to have open, honest discussions with management. In the end, it is hoped that both SAIT and SAFA can agree that faculty have a vital role in making SAIT a premier polytechnic. ♦

## Faculty Showcase of Excellence

By Moira MacLoughlin

Centre for Instructional Technology and Development (CITD)

Faculty Development Services, CITD, welcomes Gary Rattray to the team. Gary previously worked in the School of Construction and is now the Apprenticeship and Trades Facilitator. His contact number is 774-4818.

Richard Rush, Director of CITD, commented on the *Faculty Showcase of Excellence*, May 10 to 13. "The atmosphere is exciting this week as the buzz surrounding Faculty Showcase 2010 is well underway... we have over 1000 registrations for the workshops and keynotes this year. Continued kudos to the Faculty Development Services (FDS) team for organizing this successful event."

The two keynote speakers, Mark Bullen, "Digital Generation Learners: What Do We Really Know About Them?" and George Siemens, "Implications of Media and Technology Use Patterns Among Today's Learners," spoke to the theme of *Not Gens & Net Gens* to over 272 attendees. Throughout the four-day event, over 1,019 faculty attended the Showcase events.

The caliber and breadth of the presentations made this the best showcase to date. The questions and discussions in the noon hour "conversational cafes," stimulated networking and new ideas. Gary Rattray, promoted the showcase poster exhib-

it in the foyer of FDS. The exhibit included posters created by the School of Transportation, Manufacturing and Automation, and the School of Construction, Apprenticeship (Gas Fitting and Sheet Metal). The posters highlighted instructor creativity in different learning techniques in the trades and apprenticeship; for example, the manufacturing of a copper mini Calgary Tower (one metre tall) developed for World Skills; a Weldasaurus, created by an M&A welding instructor as a gift to a retiring instructor; and a hand-fabricated, fully functional, chopper motorcycle named "The Journeyman." The posters also illustrated the manufacturing of a one-of-a-kind teardrop trailer by SAIT's RV Excellence Centre in Edmonton in conjunction with the RV Dealers Association of Alberta.

The Showcase 2010 was a sharing of knowledge and "connectivism," and is Marjorie Contenti's crowning achievement as a member of the FDS team. Marjorie returns to CALS, as her two-year secondment ends to share with her colleagues a rich knowledge of faculty development strategies. We will miss her.

Finally, a big thank you to our SAIT Faculty for their support through presentation, participation, and overall enthusiasm. ♦



## Skills Canada Competitions

A total of 61 students from SAIT competed in the 2010 Provincial Skills Canada Competitions (Post Secondary) held in Edmonton and Calgary from May 14 to 16. The students represented 23 designated skills. Thirty-eight medals (14 Gold, 15 Silver, and 9 Bronze) were won by the SAIT team.

The 14 SAIT competitors, who earned first place in their skill category at the Provincial level, competed in the 2010 National Skills Competition, held in Windsor, Ontario from May 20 to 23. Each first-place student also received a \$500 scholarship, which was a legacy from World Skills Calgary 2009. This scholarship will allow the students to further their studies in skilled trades.

The National Skills Competitions included more than 500 competitors in the skilled trades and technologies. From the group of 14 provincial winners from SAIT, three students won the right to go to the World Skills Competition, which will be held in London, England, in 2011. The winning students at the national competition won another \$500 scholarship from the World Skills legacy fund.

The following is a list of the 14 SAIT students who won gold medals at the Provincial Skills Competition:

Event	Student
Auto Body Repair	Nigel Renschler
Brick Masonry	Douglas Veldman
Cabinet Making	David Willihnganz
Carpentry	Spencer Hammill
CNC Machining	Luke Moore
Electrical Wiring	Timothy Mikyla Twa
Graphic Design	Gabriel Laurel
IT Network Support	Shivam Aggarwal
IT Software Applications	Emily Daubert
Offset Printing	Justine Bratbert
Painting & Decorating	Joseph Blair
Plumbing	Robert Dimaria
Precision Machining	Matthew Hebert
Restaurant Service	Haley Londale

The following 3 gold winners, who represented SAIT as part of Team Alberta at the National Skills Competition, are now part of Team Canada for the 2011 World Skills Competition:

Event	Student
Autobody Repair	Nigel Renschler
CNC Machining	Luke Moore
Electrical Wiring	Timothy Mikyla Twa did not win gold but from those who were eligible for World Skills competition, he had the top score in his category and was therefore named to Team Canada.
<b>Special Mention</b>	
Precision Machining	Matthew Hebert won gold but unfortunately there is no World Skills competition for Precision Machining.

Congratulations to all the SAIT participants and to the instructors who encouraged and prepared their students for the competitions. The SAIT community is proud of all the students' accomplishments and look forward to further success at the World Skills Competition in 2011. ♦

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and "other great prizes." Competitions are in Word and Excel only, and last year 56 competitors from 35 countries participated. Canada has never won at the world level. Watch the September issue of SAFAGRAM for an update!

The Microsoft Office Specialist testing centre is open to SAIT staff and students only. For more information, contact Janine at [janine.violini@sait.ca](mailto:janine.violini@sait.ca) regarding schedules and costs. ♦

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** If you don't submit your claims by a certain date, do you lose your Health Spending Account (HSA) funds?

**A:** All salaried SAIT employees who are presently working and who are covered under the Extended Health Care plan are eligible for reimbursement of certain additional health-related expenses. Expenses must be claimed on or before June 30 of each benefit year to be paid from that year's balance. Be aware that your unused account balance will be zeroed out on June 30 of each year. Unclaimed expenses may carry forward for one additional benefit year, but are ineligible for reimbursement after 24 months of the date the expense was incurred. Check the information on mysait under Employee Resources for all the details of what is covered and how to make a claim.

*We are looking for volunteers to help out on the SAFAGRAM Editorial Board for the next school term. If you can spare a few hours a month or for more information, please contact Kathie Dann in the SAFA office at 8321.*

## My Ride to Conquer Cancer

By Dawn Kuechle, MacPhail School of Energy

The Ride to Conquer Cancer benefits the Alberta Cancer Foundation and is a cycling journey along the Canadian Rockies which takes place on June 26 and June 27. I am embarking on this journey because of two people in my life.

Last year, my Dad was informed that his cancer had returned after being under control for three years. He started chemotherapy treatments in September, and on January 5, 2010, he awoke to discover that he was unable to walk. He immediately had surgery to remove a tumor which was pinching his spine. He is now back in Drumheller. Physiotherapy rehabilitation treatments are ongoing, and he continues to be in great spirits.

The second person I am doing the ride for was a colleague of mine Gary Vander Ploeg. At the end of the 2009 teaching year, we all said our well wishes for the summer and went our separate ways. In September, Gary did not return to work as he was diagnosed with cancer during the summer. Gary passed away in December 2009.

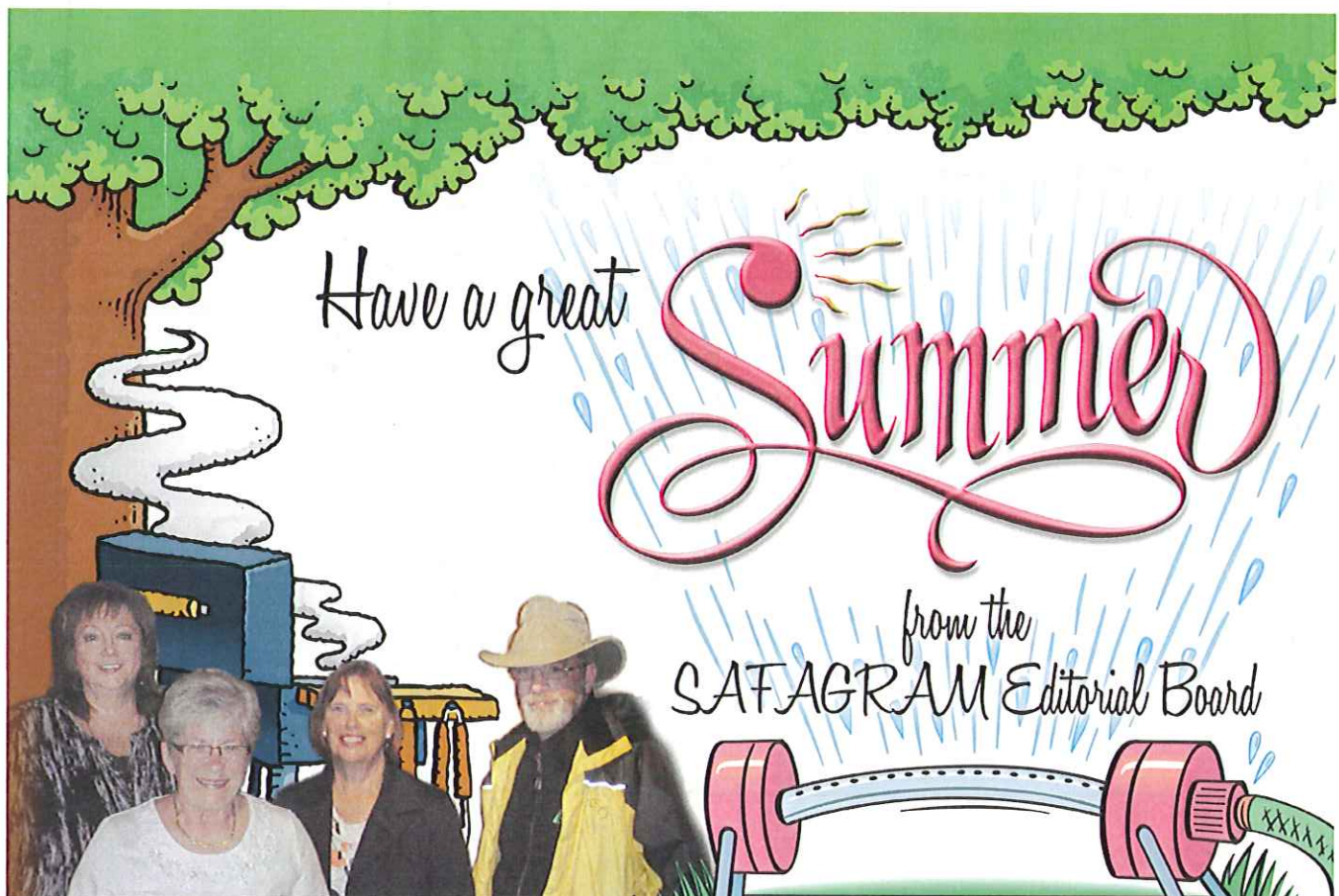
My goal is to raise \$10,000. If you would like more information or want to support the Ride to Conquer Cancer, please visit the Ride to Conquer Cancer Calgary site to find my personal page. For information about my head-shaving event on June 12, please see the Personal Notices on SAITNOW. ♦♦

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The end of June will also mark the time in which we should have received the Statement of Defence from SAIT in regard to the Charter Challenge on "freedom of association." Until the statement is filed, we will not know exactly what stance SAIT will take over this issue. Recently under "freedom of association," the farm workers of Quebec now join their counterparts in Ontario in having won the right to unionize. As details of this unfold, I will let everyone know what has been happening.

We are still looking to fill vacant positions on Faculty Council. We require two more representatives, one for Construction and one for Hospitality and Tourism. The SAFA Executive also has a vacant position for a Division IV (Librarians, Educational Counsellors and CITD) Representative. Any interested member from these areas is encouraged to submit his/her name to the SAFA office. If members are not from these divisions/departments, they may still submit their names if they are willing to represent those areas.

In closing, I would again like to wish everyone a safe, relaxing vacation. ♦♦



## Program Planning at a Glance

- OK, I'm here to work on my course outlines – must finish course outlines ...
- Well, maybe I'll just check my e-mail first ... might be important
- Oh, hey, this one's got a 'YouTube' link ... better check it out
- Wow, that's cool – I'm gonna re-post this on Facebook.
- Might as well update my status while I'm here ...
- Hmmm ... somebody threw a wet hedgehog at me ...
- Really should update my privacy settings ...
- Better Google that and see what the Blogosphere recommends.
- Arrgh! Broken Link!  
Maybe I'll file a helpline request
- No ... Gotta work on my course outlines ...
- Hey! Another e-mail!

**... and so it goes.**

