

alumnUS

Selkirk College Alumni Association Newsletter

Fall 2007



After 15 years of sculpting snow around the world, Class of '76 KSA grad Peter Vogelaar is making his living sculpting snow, ice and sand. Here he stands beside a 10' tall T-Rex sculpted of sand and water at the 2007 Edmonton Exhibition. The backdrop is an enlarged print of one of Peter's watercolours. To see a gallery of the team's work in snow , sand and ice , go to www.amazingsand.com

...and I quote

"Fisheries work right out of college. Now I am a mental health social worker. You never know what the future entails."

Heather Cooke 1998-1999, 2000, 2008 CE, RWF

"My time at Selkirk College was truly a transformational one. The skills I learned at Selkirk College were invaluable, as were some of the friendships established in those years."

David Knapp 1994-1996 Tourism, Golf and Hospitality

"The tuition was \$15.00 a month, including most supplies! Unbelievable! It was one of the best periods of my life!"

Chris Freyta 1970-1973 Kootenay School of the Arts, Clay

As I begin my second year as the Selkirk College Alumni Association coordinator, I realize how important our regional college is to the folks who have attended over the past forty-one years.

I have met and chatted with many students and alumni, all with their own stories to tell of how Selkirk College changed their lives. Some spoke of their relationships with their instructors, others of the friends they made. They revealed how the work they did at Selkirk College either prepared them for a great career or was a stepping stone for further studies.



This issue of the alumnUS profiles alumni members from the Contemporary Music Program and a chartered student. Their stories and memories opened my eyes to the importance of their experiences while attending Selkirk College.

You will also read about events and new initiatives the college is involved in, such as the opening of the Mir Centre for Peace.

If you were an athlete during your days at Selkirk, you will be happy to hear that varsity sports are back with the Selkirk Saints golf, volleyball, and hockey teams involved in league play this season. We have included some photos from the past so see if you can spot yourself!

I hope you enjoy reading the fall issue of alumnUS.

Sincerely,
Pat Henman

Alumni Coordinator and Editor
Selkirk College Alumni Association

12th Annual Golf Operations and Management Alumni Tournament

As I walk onto the fairway of the Balfour Golf Course on a beautiful fall Saturday morning, Mitch Regiec, who has been an instructor in the Golf Operations and Management Program for eleven years, greets me with a big smile.

Mitch has been part of the tournament reunion since he began teaching at Selkirk College, and I am the unofficial photographer for the event and a little nervous. But Mitch makes me feel totally comfortable in my new-found profession, so I relax and enjoy the day.

As the morning turns into afternoon, all twelve teams show up at our pit stop behind the clubhouse, have a refreshment, a little chat, and get their picture taken. I am impressed with how much fun everyone is having, even me.

As the teams move on to the next hole, I get a chance to ask Mitch about the history of the event. He tells me that another instructor, Wayne Schweitzer, along with Wayne Vienneau, a graduate and advocate of the program, were among the original coordinators twelve years ago.

"It was initiated by some of our students, who were required to plan an event as part of one of their courses," Wayne Schweitzer tells me. "They asked if they could plan a golf tournament like the one that a previous class had done for the college Foundation. The instructor at that time agreed, but stated it could not compete with Selkirk's other tournament. As planning progressed, they decided to make it an alumni event and hold it on an annual basis for former students and invited guests."

This year's reunion chairperson, Lorene MacGregor, is thrilled with being part of this amazing group of people. Lorene is a second-year student about to embark on her third career. She is excited about the challenge of making her way in the world of golf management



Winning team: Corey "The Kid" Brown, Nash Silzer, Wayne "The Blade" Schweitzer, Doug McMullin "Mucker"

"The bottom line is the people." Lorene says. "The instructors are there to guide you, but you have to put yourself out there and get the job. There's no better way to start than by networking with like-minded folks at your program reunion."

The day's event ends with a delicious meal served at the golf course and prepared by Randy Davis, the dining room manager who just happens to be a cooking instructor at Selkirk College.

The dinner speeches are emotional and uplifting. Jeff Palson, class of 2002, delivers a heartfelt address to his fellow alumni. He would like to see the event continue and is willing to help coordinate.

"As for next year, I think the most important thing is that there is a legacy that needs to live on among the alumni of the Golf Club Management and Operations Program," Jeff says. "We look forward annually to the opportunity to reconvene with classmates, instructors, and peers to share memories, network, and think about the business as a whole. If I have it my way, we'll find a way to hold an alumni event every year."

The tournament ends with prizes and awards for the top teams and individuals.

Many thanks go out to GPS (Global Positioning Systems). Without their generous sponsorship of \$5000, the event would not have been such a success.

Tourney results:

Champions:
Nash Silzer, Corey Brown,
Wayne Schweitzer,
Doug McMullin.

Closest to the pin (one shot): Lorene MacGregor.

Closest to the pin (two shots): Steve Chivers,
Richard Creally, Jeff Palson.

Longest drive (men):
Jeff Palson

Longest drive (women):
Heather Campbell.

Putting contest:
Jason McArthur.

If you want to be part of next year's event please contact alumni@selkirk.ca.

Message from the President

When I arrived at Selkirk College and began my role as President, I was struck by the fact that we are BC's oldest community college, have graduated thousands of students and yet we didn't have an alumni association.



At the same time, I could see the continuing connection between various programs, such as aviation, nursing and golf, and their graduates. I sensed a very strong desire on the part of many to maintain their association with the college.

Since then, it has remained a desire of mine that one day Selkirk would have an alumni association. That day has arrived. Thanks in large part to the work of our new Alumni Coordinator, Pat Henman, and with support from employees throughout the college, we now have an association, and more than 500 of you have registered as members!

By joining the Selkirk College Alumni Association, you have shown your desire to stay connected and informed. I know that Pat and her supporters will do their very best to keep you connected to your college. I know that we are inspired by having you remain as one of us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marilyn Luscombe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marilyn Luscombe

A stylized logo consisting of the letters "FYI" in a bold, red, handwritten font. The letters are slanted and have a slightly irregular, artistic feel.

Last year, the Castlegar and Nelson campuses of Selkirk College had two different student councils that worked separately from each other. As of May 1st, 2007, the student societies of the Nelson and Castlegar Selkirk campuses amalgamated to form the Selkirk College Students' Union (SCSU), as a result of a campus-wide referendum. This means that all the students in all Nelson and Castlegar campuses are members of the CFS and now have access to a variety of services and campaigns.



Noel Wentworth moved to Nelson in 1994, after his friend Steve Springer told him about the Music Program at Selkirk College. Noel had been looking into studying music, or least he'd been "talking about it."

Noel grew up in a family of musicians. His parents ran a music store in Kelowna, where Noel learned to play guitar. His first choice was to study guitar at Selkirk but he switched to a vocal major. "I was doing so much singing I decided I wanted to develop that," he said.

Lora Wentworth (nee Strom) grew up not far from Nelson and Castlegar, over in the Crawford Bay area. She attended Selkirk College from 1992 to 1995. During that time Lora wasn't completely sure what she was going to end up studying. She began with university transfer courses, but ended up in Nelson at Tenth Street playing keyboards.

It must have been fate: the two met, had a great time in school and decided to get married. Two children later, they run their own music school, Wentworth Music, which is housed in the same building where Noel's parents ran their music store and where Noel's first music memories were made.

When asked to describe her fondest memory of studying music at Selkirk College, Lora took several moments to reply. "There are so many," she says. "Grad recitals were amazing. Some of the best were faculty performances or opening for Paul Jensen—playing keyboard for him. I've said so many times to Noel—those three years were a blast. If I could do it all again, I would."

Noel agreed, "Staying and working late and networking... a lot of networking has helped in later life." He went on to describe his relationship with one of his instructors. "Gilles Parenteau really inspired me. We basically took the concepts he was teaching in his ensemble classes and applied them to what we are teaching in Kelowna right now."

Noel and Lora have both recommended the Selkirk College Contemporary Music Program to up-and-coming musicians who want to pursue post-secondary studies. They feel very comfortable describing Selkirk as a top professional music program.

With children and business filling a lot of their time, they do not perform as much as they used to, but they are contributing to their community using their music talents to raise funds for local charities. For example, Noel's Beatles Tribute show filled an 800-seat theatre in Kelowna, with all profit going to charity.

"The community has really embraced the project," he said.

These two grads loved their time at Selkirk College. "Some of the best times of my life," Noel said. "I am still mentally trying to process what I learned there."

Lora added, "It got me so excited about music. Teachers become your mentors. You look up to them. They gave me confidence. Now when I meet them and chat, they are my peers."

For Noel and Lora, their life would not have the same meaning if they had not attended Selkirk College. They did, and the rest is history.

2007 great gala

On November 24th, Selkirk College celebrated its 18th annual Gala in the style of the Great Gatsby—hot jazz, decadent food and the best-dressed folks in the Kootenays! Mary Hall was elegantly lit up and adorned with finery, including the cutest tuxedo napkins ever to be placed on a dinner table.

Over \$13,000 was raised in support of Selkirk College student programs, scholarships and bursaries. Community members and college staff, along with municipal government members and heads of corporations, drank champagne with the Selkirk College Board of Governors and danced the night away to the big band sound of Playmor Junction.

Retailers and individuals from throughout the West Kootenays generously donated all the items for the silent auction. Were it not for their generous support, the event would not have been such a singular success.

So thank you to all who came to support and enjoy the talents of the many students in the Selkirk College Cooking Program, Contemporary Music Program and the Resort and Hotel Management Program!



Selkirk College's Louise Krohn, VP Human Resource Planning and Development, enjoys a gala evening with acting mayor of Nelson Marg Stacey and husband Greg.



From right to left- "Remote Man", "ITV" & "Flatscreen Jack"
Shona Rae, 2001 KSA graduate and Madwoman Extraordinaire, left for Philadelphia on November 5th for the "31st Annual Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Fair". Shona is one of 24 Canadian artists who are travelling to the show with the support of the Crafts Council of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Quebec Crafts Council. Good Luck Shona!

Visit her website at www.shonarae.com

The Saints are Back!

The Selkirk Saints date back to the 1960s, and athletics has been an integral part of campus life since then. In 1970 Selkirk College became a founding member of the British Columbia Colleges Athletic Association (BCCAA), and the Saints participated in organized league play for over 20 more years. Throughout that time, the Saints won a number of provincial and conference titles. Well, the Saints are back playing golf, volleyball and hockey. Come on out and support the teams.

For more information on the schedule and how you can support our varsity teams, visit selkirk.ca/saints and get in the game!



Do you recognize these Saints from the 1984 Women's Volleyball Team?

Coach: Ray LeMoigne
Top Row: Gloria Johnson, Arlene Lobay, Wanda Klovance, Connie McGougan. Bottom Row: Corine Muto, Karen Anderson, Brenda Clark.

Norm Wolfe: Selkirk College Chartered Student

Norm Wolfe is a twenty-two year employee of School District 20. He works as a child youth care worker at Stanley Humphries School. Pat Henman sat down with him in October of 2007 at the Selkirk College Castlegar Campus.

How does it feel to be the first at something? The first at anything?

Not long ago, I had the chance to meet a man who was one of the first students to attend Selkirk College in the mid-1960s. To long-time alumnus Norm Wolfe, looking back on it, the feeling was incredible.

Norm recalled the first year Selkirk College opened its doors to the public. He was standing at the threshold of the very first community college in British Columbia. It was 1966, and Norm moved from Kaslo to Castlegar so he could take university transfer courses at the newly conceived post-secondary institution.

One of his instructors was Dr. Gordon Campbell, who, in Norm's opinion, was one of the main reasons Selkirk College existed. "I had a tremendous amount of respect for him," Norm said. "The college was small and new and he was a visionary who brought the vision to reality. He was our keynote speaker at the 35th reunion of chartered students."

At the time, the Selkirk College facilities were nothing more than the original bunk houses of the Celgar Pulp Mill. Norm said that to get from one class to another, or to lunch in the cafeteria, "You had to run out in the rain or the snow or slug through mud to get to the next bunker."

In one particular bunkhouse the original student newspaper was born, and Norm was part of the team who developed it.

The Blurb was put together by a group of students every Thursday night after hours, when the door should have been locked. Mysteriously though, the door was left open, the secretary desk drawer was unlocked and everything would be ready for the students, who worked diligently through the night, typing and illustrating the paper for Friday's distribution.

Incidentally, you can still find archived copies of The Blurb in the Castlegar college library.

It was evident how important being a pioneer of Selkirk College was for Norm Wolfe. His eyes welled up with emotion as he remembered moments of being with his classmates, or playing pranks on the students of Notre Dame University in Nelson.

One night, Norm recalled, the students from Selkirk College stole the Notre Dame sign, set up an outhouse in the Castlegar campus student lounge and hung the sign on the door for all to see. These pranks happened all the time, and in a competitive spirit, they kept student life exciting.



I asked Norm what it was like to be part of the original trek to the new campus site, where we were conducting this interview. Again, his passion was visible as he remembered touching the original pole, carrying it to the new site, the march through town. He remembered the feeling that the whole town of Castlegar watching them make history as they traveled through the streets. After forty-one years, he was thrilled to learn that the college was still thriving and continues to grow.

Today, Selkirk College has eight campuses and learning centres throughout the West Kootenays. Norm recognized the achievements of the College, yet he wanted to preserve the history, the parts played by the original pioneers. So much of the history of Selkirk lies in the people who began the journey.

Norm mentioned the Sinixt First Nation and the Doukhobors. These people are all part of Selkirk College's history, not just the students and instructors who crossed two rivers in January 1967.

Norm wants the community not to forget the foundation the college was built on, and as a result, he encourages any past student of Selkirk College who would like to contribute memorabilia to a display that celebrates Selkirk's heritage to please contact alumni@selkirk.ca

Mir Centre for Peace

Many people in the Kootenays and beyond have heard stories of the Mir Centre for Peace at Selkirk College and are asking questions. Is it an historic building, an ideal of social justice and healing, a program of humanistic and environmental studies, a philosophy, a community project?

In fact, the Mir Centre is all of these things.

The spectacular natural setting of the Mir Centre—on a bluff overlooking the Kootenay and Columbia rivers just a few minutes away from the main doors of Selkirk College—has become a magnet for diverse peoples seeking new paths to social justice and peace.

The historic Doukhobor communal home, which is at the heart of the Mir Centre grounds, has been renovated with careful attention to detail and tradition. It also has been upgraded into a state-of-the-art educational facility for the study of peace and social justice.

A magnificent First Nations open-air arbor/meeting place and a traditional smoke house were constructed nearby. These buildings, which have attracted thousands of visitors in the few years since they were built, honour the region's first peoples and create an outdoor physical space where reconciliation and healing between people may occur.

With a combination of innovative programming in Peace Studies, public lecture series, symposia, conferences and public events, the Mir Centre began its mission—understanding and building cultures of peace—on the afternoon of September 21, 2007, when hundreds of people from across Canada gathered within sight of two magnificent international rivers.



Selkirk College and Students Contribute \$220 Million Annually to Regional Economy

A government-sponsored study conducted for B.C. colleges by CCbenefits Inc. reported yesterday that the B.C. economy receives about \$7.7 billion in income each year due to B.C. colleges and their past students.

Selkirk College was one of 13 colleges and institutes included in the study, and in a break down of the provincial findings, CCbenefits Inc. reported that Selkirk College's total regional impact amounted to more than \$220 million annually.

"We've always known that Selkirk College has had a tremendous impact on the lives of our students and on the communities in which we serve," said Marilyn Luscombe, president of Selkirk College.

Selkirk College is one of the ten largest organizations in the region, employing over 550 people on a full- and part-time basis and providing educational experiences to over 11,000 full- and part-time students annually.

More than \$190 million of the total regional economic impact is the result of past student productivity, which is a measure of higher student income and

associated multiplier effects due to greater productivity.

As a result of Selkirk College's operations, the regional economy receives approximately \$25.6 million in labour and non-labour income each year, while student spending accounts for almost \$4.8 million per year.

The college is supported by the province's taxpayers to the tune of approximately \$26.5 million during the year. However, the "taxpayer benefits," which consist of higher student incomes and avoided costs

to government in terms of health, welfare, crime and unemployment, total more than \$78 million per year.

From a taxpayer perspective and from a student

perspective, a Selkirk College education is a very attractive investment. The region benefits from the college's commercial activity and even more from the skills, higher productivity and cost savings graduates take with them once they leave college.

CCbenefits Inc., a firm based in Moscow, Idaho, utilized a model which it has developed and used successfully in studying over 700 institutions in the U.S. and Canada.

More than \$190 million of the total regional economic impact is the result of past student productivity

The Selkirk College alumniUS newsletter invites you to send in your stories and memories of Selkirk College. If you would like to help gather information or write an article for the alumniUS contact Pat Henman at alumni@selkirk.ca