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INTROSPECTION

AWARD-WINNING SCHOOL OF ART GRAD PLUMBS HER MEMORY FOR CREATIVE INSPIRATION

BY JEREMY BROOKS [BA/98]

When Erika Dueck [BFA(Hons)/13] cranks her internal monologue to full blast, good things follow.

The 29-year-old, who’s currently enrolled in her first year of the master of landscape architecture program at the University of Guelph, recalls one such soliloquy on the drive to her hometown of Niverville, Man., from the University of Manitoba during her final year of art school: it spawned her year-end sculpture assignment and some national acclaim along the way. This past summer Dueck’s project, The Ephemeral Mind, won the $10,000 national prize through BMO Financial Group’s 1st Art! Invitational Student Art Competition.

The sculpture explored Dueck’s ideas around how the mind and memories function. Within the piece’s textured white exterior, which was lit from within and appeared suspended in air like a cartoon thought bubble, Dueck created windows into the mind, which she imagined as a large filing room, a place one must frequent if memories were to survive. It also revealed her unique memory retrieval technique, “memory cleaning”, whereby she retells stories to herself aloud, revisiting them to help keep them alive and accessible.

“I don’t have an iPod,” says Dueck. “I don’t listen to music when I walk around. If I’m bored, I’ll tell myself a story. Those stories can be from my past. That’s how I do my memory cleaning. I really do think that has helped me sort through things that are currently happening and even with my art practice and thinking about ideas. I just talk through those ideas; even by myself.”

While her academic pursuits have shifted from art to landscape architecture, Dueck sees the latter as another medium to explore her deep fascination with people: “How you structure a space can, I think, affect how people move through it,” says Dueck. “Maybe their behavior is being modified by the landscape?”

As for her art, Dueck has been commissioned to do a piece for a corporate collection and will participate in Montreal’s Paper Art Fair (Papier 14) this spring. When asked if The Ephemeral Mind was a one-and-done piece, Dueck cited her interests in psychology and memory loss in people with Alzheimer’s disease as possible inspirations, suggesting there is more to be explored.

“One of the things I have been thinking about is memory loss,” she says. “What does that look like, let’s say, for someone who has Alzheimer’s? They have this whole life of memories, and slowly those areas are becoming darkened. They’re still within their mind but they can no longer access them.”
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UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS: CONCUSSIONS IN CONTACT SPORTS

A hit from behind gave Scottie Douglas a concussion and put his aspiring hockey career on ice; but not his love of the game. A look at his road to recovery, the U of M researchers who helped him along the way, and how they’re working to protect young athletes in contact sports.

DON’T SIT, CLIMB! DON’T LOOK, TOUCH!

Fresh air, adventure and five senses working overtime are the magic ingredients of the outdoor classroom movement.

THE CHEMIST’S CONSCIENCE

Scott Cairns on what it’s like to win the Nobel Peace Price in the theatre of war.

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Perspectives on play and a conversation about bullying

10 ROOTING OUR FUTURE IN THE PAST

A look at the winning Visionary (re)Generation design submission, which hearkens back to traditional land use.

24 BUSINESS CLASS TRAVEL

Business is borderless; so too is business school at the U of M thanks to the Arni C. Thorsteinson Exchange Program.

30 AN AWESOME FOURSOME

Meet the 2013 Alumni Student Scholarship winners who demonstrate, once again, the diversity and talent of the U of M student body.
A HOMECOMING TRADITION
THE BISON'S FOOTBALL GAME

Flip the page for more Homecoming 2013 highlights
Our alumni are serious about play, and for good reason: an active lifestyle contributes greatly to our quality of life. In this edition of On Manitoba, we explore play from a variety of perspectives.

In our cover story, we examine the dangerous side of play. Recent headlines chronicling the tragic effect of head injuries involving professional football and hockey players are focusing new attention on concussions in sport. While the impact on elite athletes is troubling unto itself, the effect on children playing contact sports may be even more concerning.

University of Manitoba alumnus Jeff Leiter is the director of research at Pan Am Clinic. His recent survey of children playing hockey indicates that more than 100 students missed 10 days of activities as a result of concussion symptoms. This research has moved Leiter to work towards creating a nationally recognized centre to treat concussions at the orthopedic and sports medicine clinic in Winnipeg.

We also share the story of innovator and alumnus Ron Blatz, who is breaking down barriers at Discovery Children’s Centre, a Winnipeg daycare centre. He believes that children will live happier, healthier lives if they are allowed to get their hands dirty—literally. By creating dedicated spaces that encourage children to spend more time outdoors, he’s leading the way in Manitoba towards adopting an outdoor teaching model inspired by the forest schools movement in Europe.

Complementing Ron Blatz’s efforts are a duo of landscape architects. Professors Dietmar Straub and Anna Thurmayr from the Faculty of Architecture created Folly Forest, an innovative outdoor space for play at Strathcona School using repurposed materials from the demolition site at Canad Inns Stadium.

While some work to enhance play environments for our children, others are dedicated to eradicating a staple of the playground experience: bullying. No longer confined to the schoolyard, bullying is also a workplace hazard that seems virtually inescapable due to the immediacy and invasiveness of social media and the Internet.

This edition features a continued discussion around one of our award-winning Visionary Conversations events held earlier this fall. Brian Bowman, an attorney and alumnus, discusses the legal ramifications of bullying; while Professor Sandy Hershcovis from the Asper School of Business addresses workplace implications of this issue.

For those whose play involves instruments, we introduce you to members of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra—including alumna Merrily Peters—who will live out the dream of many musicians when they play New York’s venerable Carnegie Hall on May 8, 2014.

We’re excited to share these stories and many more in this edition of On Manitoba. We’re also proud to let you know that between issues, you can also connect with your alma mater through our new mobile-friendly news site, UM Today, at news.umanitoba.ca.
HOME COMING 2013
IN THEIR OWN WORDS:
Selected tweets from Homecoming 2013 guests

@UManAlumni 24-28 Sep
This Saturday’s football game is going to be epic #gobisons #umhomecoming

@colleenosaurus3 24-28 Sep
Reunited with @Kimmy_Rampersad who choreographed a number for our musical theatre ensemble at @umanitoba @FacultyofMusic Gosh she’s fabulous.

@DeborahGYoung 24-28 Sep
Thank you to our #umhomecoming #umanitoba teams for making Saturday night a memorable and successful event.

@MeghanRows 24-28 Sep
#Humbled and blown away! Forever grateful for my time at @umanitoba!

@dianeroussin007 24-28 Sep
This country can be better and stronger for everyone. Belonging is based on acceptance. We can be friends. ~ Ovide Mercredi #umhomecoming

@Rebecca Kunzman 24-28 Sep
Can’t wait for tonight’s #umhomecoming Leadership Speaker Series! Looking forward to hearing @BrianBowmanWpg

@JamesBWilson_ 24-28 Sep
Beautiful evening at @umanitoba #umhomecoming. Honoured to be an alumnus.

@AndreaDi_Ubaldo 24-28 Sep
Campus Tour! Learning neat things about the U of M #umhomecoming

@um_medicine 24-28 Sep
Dr. Bruce Martin is pumped to take med alumni on a tour. Lots has changed since the 50s and 60s!
In Harmony With the Land

FORT GARRY CAMPUS/SOUTHWOOD LANDS’ FUTURE INSPIRED BY THE PAST

In the end, harmony with nature trumped dazzling executions of built forms when Arpent—the design submission by a team of Toronto and Winnipeg-based firms—won the U of M’s Visionary (re)Generation Open International Design Competition.

More than 45 teams from across the globe participated in the contest, which challenged some of the world’s top urban planners and landscape architects to shape the university’s nearly 300-hectare campus, as well as almost 50 additional hectares of adjacent land (comprising the former Southwood Golf Course) into a mixed-use community of residential, retail and recreational spaces.

Landscape architect Janet Rosenberg, founder of Toronto-based Janet Rosenberg & Studio—part of the winning Arpent group—explained how the proximity of campus to Winnipeg’s mighty river system helped inspire their design.

“Canada was built on this great river system,” says Rosenberg. “We don’t experience these great rivers that are so important; there’s so much history that’s entwined into them.” The name Arpent is derived from an old French term describing how settlers divided land into long narrow river lots.

But as fellow project member George Cibinel [BES/77], president of Winnipeg-based Cibinel Architects Ltd, explains, the submission’s nod to the past isn’t limited to one example; it’s about showcasing the relationship between people and land over time.

“This respect for the landscape is looking back at ideas, rather than implanting western design ideas,” explains Cibinel, whose firm also designed the U of M’s Active Living Centre and the Faculty of Pharmacy’s home: Apotex Centre. Cibinel cited Indigenous peoples as inspiration because they “developed their communities in harmony with the natural environment.”

The remnant trees lining the one-time fairways of Southwood provide an example of how Arpent rolls existing landscape into the design, according to Cibinel.

“There’s this tremendous resource of these tree bands to nestle up walkways and buildings into this protective band of vegetation that [. . . ] moderates the climate so that it’s more pleasant to be outside and walk between buildings,” he says.

When pressed to reveal the part of the design he’d like to see become the pilot for the development phase, Cibinel pointed to the river.

“[On the river, close to the stadium] is the sweet spot because it connects everything,” says Cibinel. “It connects the campus to the river and we can bring the water taxis [from The Forks] all the way down there. There are bike paths, it connects to the stadium, it connects down into the academic campus and northward to the Southwood area that’s being developed. So it would be a great place to develop a circulation route that culminates cars, bikes, boats . . . and then imagine you’ll have [riverside] cafes, bars.”

Cibinel hopes to see his former campus drop its “commuter” tag and evolve into a community—like Osborne Village—that packages something for everyone; and the kind of environment where learning is no longer restricted to the classroom.

“And I think the university is really pushing that,” says Cibinel. “That’s what’s really exciting to me, that they’re actually doing it. To be a part of that is just huge.”
Selected views from the winning submission Arpent illustrate how existing landscape can drive the creation of a campus community for all to enjoy.
In late October, the university bid ‘adieu’ to The Bulletin, its newspaper for the past seven decades, and launched its mobile-friendly, feature-rich successor: UM Today.

Offering a mix of feature-length profiles, quick-hit news and the In Focus series that features a trio of stories around a related subject, UM Today places the university at the fingertips of its alumni and friends, no matter where in the world they are. With the added bonus of social media integration and the ability for readers to comment on stories or submit story ideas, UM Today further deepens the reader experience by offering a two-way exchange of ideas. Check it out at: news.umanitoba.ca

GALLERY ACQUIRES POWERFUL WORKS OF ART FROM ALUMNUS

Robert Houle [BA/72], a contemporary Anishnabe Saulteaux artist and member of Sandy Bay First Nation whose artwork was recently acquired by the School of Art Gallery, says it is appropriate his works “are coming home” to Manitoba.

Houle’s work comprised the first solo exhibition at the School of Art Gallery in September of 2012—Robert Houle: enuhmo andūhyaun (the road home). Those 24 drawings and three paintings were part of a larger project by Houle, the Sandy Bay Residential School Series. One year later—thanks to the York Wilson Endowment Award from the Canada Council for the Arts—the gallery acquired the entire suite of artworks.

As a child, Houle was taken from his family and placed in the Sandy Bay Indian Residential School. It took him almost 50 years to gather the strength to process this trauma. Set on a course to work through his troubling memories and recollections, over the period of one month, Houle used oil sticks to create the images—both haunting and troubling—that documented his experiences, but more importantly provided testament to his survival, and his extraordinary capacity to overcome.
DISCOVERY BY U OF M RESEARCH TEAM COULD HELP SLOW PROGRESSION OF LOU GEHRIG’S DISEASE

In a November submission to the journal *PLOS Genetics*, a team of researchers at the U of M revealed both the genetic mutation that appears to cause amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, as well as results of experiments they performed that could yield a treatment that slows its progression.

Roughly 80 per cent of ALS sufferers die within two to five years after diagnosis.

At the heart of the discovery is a genetic mutation, which disrupts the auto-regulation function of what is known as TLS protein. In healthy cells, TLS protein production has a built-in mechanism whereby some of it travels back to the nucleus of the cell telling it to halt further production. But according to U of M Prof. Geoff Hicks [BSc(Maj)/85, PhD/91] (pictured above)—who led the graduate students and fellows from the Manitoba Institute of Cell Biology and the university’s Regenerative Medicine Program responsible for the finding—in people with ALS, that process gets blocked, creating a “runaway train” effect and too much protein within the cell. That build up, says Hicks, disrupts normal cell function and causes cell death of the motor neuron; the latter creating the gradual loss of function in the arms, legs and eventually the throat and diaphragm of people with ALS.

The experiments Hicks and colleagues conducted in the lab have applicability beyond ALS treatment as similar TLS protein mutations that trigger its development also play a role in cancer.
THINK OUTSIDE

THE CLASSROOM

Why educators and architects are calling classrooms ‘cages’ and swapping structured curriculum for campfires

BY KATIE CHALMERS-BROOKS
With winter’s cold upon us, many Manitobans might feel the urge to fire up Netflix and hibernate. But what if we took a cue from the growing number of kids—from toddler to school-age—who are learning early in life to embrace being outside no matter the weather?

Discovery Children’s Centre in Winnipeg’s St. James neighborhood used to ban their kids from playing in the puddles; now they gear them up in full-body rain suits and let them loose. Here, kids navigate boulders, climb trees, and dig in sand at least two-and-a-half-feet deep that a couple of times a year gets turned into a massive mud puddle. The kids are encouraged to get dirty and these children, as young as two, are invited to venture in waist-deep to celebrate International Mud Day. “Cleanliness is a bit lower on our priority list than the great exposure and learning when they get to do things like that,” explains Ron Blatz [ExtEd/89], the center’s executive director.

One of the first in the city to adopt this more natural approach to play, Blatz worked bare-bones open grass and chain link fence into a “nature playscape” with trees, hills, stumps, driftwood and garden boxes growing vegetables and prairie crops like flax and canola. The pre-school kids at Discovery spend about 20 per cent of their time outside—roughly four times the Canadian average.

The long-time early childhood educator says it was a conference eight years ago that transformed his approach. Guest speaker Jim Greenman (author of Caring Spaces, Learning Spaces: Children’s Environments that Work) asked everyone to close their eyes and envision their favorite place as a kid. Then he went around the room, asking each participant to reveal their cherished locations. At the edge of the lake, in the woods, by the creek, in the tree fort—not one was indoors.

“He said, ‘OK, how many of you are going out of your way to make those kinds of places available to the children your work with?’ And I was just stunned by the fact that not one person raised their hand,” recalls Blatz, who grew up a farm boy in tiny Kane, Man., and took great joy in playing in the hay stacks. “Not one of us was making the effort, nor had I even thought of bringing in hay bales to our property. I just didn’t. That impacted me . . . I thought ok, that needs to change.”

The movement to bring back outdoor play is booming, he says. “It’s growing faster than you can imagine.” Blatz fears classrooms are too cage-like and insists kids’ behaviour and development thrive when there are no walls to hold them back. A look at the outdoor classroom trend emerging in Canada suggests he’s not alone.

Students enrolled in Forest Schools—a concept born in Europe—can spend the entire day learning in the woods or in a park, their instructors deriving their curriculum from nature. Forest School Canada lists a dozen “forest and nature-based programs” across the country, from Maplewood Forest School in Guelph to the Fresh Air Learning program in Vancouver. The funding for schoolyards announced this month by government officials in Manitoba included the addition of an outdoor classroom at La Barriere Crossings School.

This past year more than a dozen kids from Blatz’s centre—along with three other daycares—took part in a pilot forest school at Fort Whyte Alive. Blatz also wants to develop his own forest in the field adjacent to the centre, complete with marsh, meadows, fruit trees, and features like a cookhouse. He’s been seeking permission to transform the land—used during the evenings for three months a year for soccer—into a year-round natural wonderland for the 300-plus kids in his and the adjacent daycare, along with other neighborhood kids. Blatz says it can still be an uphill battle to convince others about how important it is that children develop a love for the outdoors—and a desire to take protect it—early on.

“We know if they don’t learn to love nature they probably won’t be motivated to take care of this planet when they become adults. So we’ve got a task in front of us to get them to fall in love with nature, give them lots of great outdoor experiences,” he says. “We’re not going to lecture them about recycling. They need first-hand experience.”

A few years ago, a Discovery staff member came up with an idea to spend an entire two weeks outside, rain or shine. Their parents drop them off and pick them up at outdoor tents; staff members even drag the cots outside for nap time. Portable diaper and hand-washing stations are set up so the youngest ones—babies under age two—can spend a portion of the day outside too.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34
As technology transforms both the means—and the makeup—of the modern day bully, what are lawmakers, educators and communities doing to protect us?

BY SARAH RICHARDS
Fifty years ago, the solution to being bullied was advertised on the back page of comic books. Beach bully kicks sand in skinny guy’s face; skinny guy sends away for fitness book; skinny guy—now bursting with muscle—returns to beach to throttle the thug and receive adulation from swooning females. All for the price of a 10-cent, mail-order exercise regimen.

Today, that approach seems ludicrously naïve.

Because of the Internet, bullying now stretches beyond one’s school or work place and into their homes and private lives. Brian Bowman [BA(Adv)/96], a partner at Winnipeg-based Pitblado Law, says modern bullying involves such a different dynamic that it can be difficult to comprehend for people from older generations.

“In today’s world, the playground is a virtual playground, that’s where the conversations are happening,” says Bowman, who specializes in privacy, access to information and social media law. “If children remove themselves from social media, in many cases they’re stigmatized for not being part of their peers’ conversations; if they remain in the forum, then they can be subjected to cyberbullying.”

In order to shed further understanding on this widespread social problem, the University of Manitoba dedicated its Oct. 30 Visionary Conversations event to the issue. The evening explored the question: Are we a society of bullies?

Associate professor Sandy Hershcovis, the head of business administration at the Asper School of Business, contrasted two types of harassment during the discussion. She described the most severe one—bullying—as sustained, unambiguous psychological mistreatment conducted by someone who typically has more power than the victim. Incivility, on the other hand, consists of low-intensity rude or discourteous behaviour; the intent to harm is ambiguous.

Many people don’t realize that incivility can be more prevalent and serious because of its ambiguity, says Hershcovis.

“A high estimate is that 15 per cent of people report bullying at work in a given year,” says Hershcovis, who studies workplace aggression. “In contrast, close to 100 per cent of people report both experiencing and witnessing workplace incivility.”

Interestingly, there are several predictors when it comes to harassment at the job, according to Hershcovis. Stressful workplaces where employees feel insecure, poorly paid, overworked or mistreated are more likely to have bullies. Harassers are more likely to lack control and be narcissistic, vengeful, anxious and prone to anger. Victims of bullying are more likely to be negative, anxious and low-performing employees.

Unfortunately, there is no easy solution to dealing with an office tormentor.

“My own yet-to-be-published research shows that regardless of whether a victim confronts the perpetrator or avoids the perpetrator, it doesn’t stop the mistreatment,” says Hershcovis, who hopes to present her results this year. “However, targets seem to feel better and are more likely to forgive and try to reconcile with the perpetrator after they confront them, but not if they avoid them.”

Unlike employees, who may wonder about the benefits of speaking out, children should be encouraged to tell someone if they’re being intimidated.

“When it comes to children, quite often parents don’t know there’s a problem until it’s a really big problem; until in some cases, it’s too late,” says Bowman, who has represented several bullying victims who have attempted suicide.

That means it’s important to have honest, open conversations with your kids so they feel comfortable speaking to you about anything they may be suffering or witnessing. Bowman also recommends reaching out to a bullied child’s teacher, guidance counsellor or school principal for help.

Of course, that’s not always enough in the most extreme cases. Contacting law enforcement or a lawyer may also be necessary.

In light of this, several laws have been proposed and passed to catch up with cyberbullying. After the April 2013 death of 17-year-old bullying victim Rehtaeh Parsons, Nova Scotia legislators created the Cyber-Safety Act. Among other things, it holds parents of a cyberbully liable for any damages awarded to the victim. This November, Canada’s Department of Justice proposed making it a criminal offence to distribute intimate images of someone without his or her consent.
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“The new federal cyberbullying law is a good step towards building a comprehensive regime to better protect people of all ages from online bullying,” says Bowman. He believes additional laws are needed to protect people from online privacy violations that aren’t necessarily of a sexual nature. Critics, however, are concerned about the effects cyberbullying legislation could have on civil liberties.

Beyond such debates, Bowman says parents can help protect their children by teaching them ‘netiquette’, monitoring their online activities and teaching them about the importance of personal privacy.

“The best thing you can do is just make sure your children are aware of the risks if, for instance, they were to get into ‘sexting,’” explains Bowman. “Those images are permanent.”

Ron Weston [PBCertEd/98], the chief superintendent of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division, believes one of the best ways to combat bullying among children is by seeing it as an issue for more than just kids and school administrators. Weston leads the team behind the school division’s anti-bullying campaign. The 12-year-old Cool to Care program features a community meeting and bullying survey every other year. Both activities are meant to help root out the core issues that lead to harassment at school.

“It’s an issue for the community,” says Weston.

An online poll of more than 18,000 adults in 24 countries found roughly one-fourth of respondents knew a young person who’d been a cyberbullying victim. The 2011 Reuters and Ipsos research firm poll found cyberbullying varied by culture and geographic location. Respondents most likely to have kids being cyberbullied were in India (32 per cent); Canada came in fourth (18 per cent), ahead of the U.S. (15 per cent). Parents in Italy (three per cent), Russia (five per cent) and France (five per cent) were least likely to report their child being cyberbullied.

Numerous states in the U.S. have passed laws regarding bullying and cyberbullying. In Arkansas, cyberbullying that furthers severe, repeated or hostile behaviour towards an individual is punishable with up to 90 days of prison. After the death of 18-year-old Tyler Clementi, who committed suicide after his roommate used a webcam to spy on him while he was with another man, New Jersey passed one of the toughest bullying laws in the country. Principals must begin investigating a bullying incident within one day.

Rather than take the legal enforcement approach, Finland has developed what’s called the ‘KiVa’ anti-bullying program. Along with preventative exercises, bullying incidents are handled through individual and group discussions between a school’s anti-bullying team and the students involved.

Earlier last year, a group of New Zealand boys were found to have posted the names of inebriated girls with whom they’d had sex to a Facebook page called ‘Roast Busters.’ The news provoked widespread outrage across the country. In November, the Parliament of New Zealand proposed a bill to punish cyberbullies with a fine or up to three months in jail for sending or posting online with the goal of causing emotional distress to the recipient. Inciting a person online to kill him or herself would be punishable with up to three years of prison.

A French senator has proposed to make cyberbullying punishable by up to two years in prison and a $43,000 fine; the punishment would increase to up to three years and $65,000 if the harassment involved acts of homophobia, sexism, racism or a person under the age of 15.
During 14 years of playing hockey, Scottie Douglas experienced two concussions. But it was a crowning hit one October evening that decisively ended his career in the North American Hockey League.

Years of breathing in hockey like an addiction ceased in 2012, heralded by a simple sentence near the end of a game report on the Wichita Falls Wildcats website: *Scott Douglas’s season is over due to the concussion he suffered on October 26 in Kenai River.*

Douglas was hit from behind, roughly three feet from the boards while playing against the NAHL Brown Bears in Alaska.

“All I remember is being mid-air thinking, I gotta duck my head,” says the 19-year-old Winnipegger.

There wasn’t much time for that. He landed headfirst into the boards and lay unconscious on the ice for several minutes.

At the hospital, he was diagnosed with a concussion and prescribed Oxycontin for neck pain.

The Wildcats lost 9-3. Meanwhile, the story of Douglas’s concussion was far from over; it drifted on for months.

“I didn’t know that depression and insomnia would become factors,” says Douglas. “My sleeping patterns turned from going to bed at 10 p.m. and waking at 6 a.m., to after the concussion staying awake till 4 a.m., and sleeping till 4 p.m. I’d sleep all day.”

Unable to play, Douglas moved back to Winnipeg. He tried working a construction job that January, but after one shift, woke up vomiting in the middle of the night. His mother, Christine Cockerill, says the experience affected everyone in the house.

“Having an adult who is unemployable and not going to school is a stressor on the family,” says Cockerill. “You think of them every single moment.”

Finally, Douglas was able to hook up with Jeff Leiter [BPE/98, MSc/01, PhD/09], a scientist interested in concussions at the Pan Am Clinic Foundation. Today, Douglas has recovered but has been cautioned against playing competitive hockey again. One more concussion could cause him serious cognitive problems, doctors have told him.

“If anything, it’s just so frustrating,” he says. “Kind of like, why did it have to happen to me type of thing?”

For years, we’ve turned a blind eye to the health implications of sports like mixed martial arts and boxing. With such obvious violent contact, it has been easy to argue these athletes know and accept the fact that they court brain damage each time they compete.

In the past decade, however, many of the sports we assumed were safe for our heads have begun to reveal otherwise. Hardly a week goes by without word of a pro athlete being out with a concussion capturing news headlines. The sports involved run the gamut, from football to soccer to wrestling.

The Sydney Crosbys make the biggest news, as do the darker stories about retired players whose lives end abruptly, either through suicide or some other tragedy. Take the trio of NHL enforcer Derek Boogaard and NFL legends Junior Seau and Mike Webster—were the dysfunctional lives of these former stars caused by their inability to adjust to everyday life? How did their brain damage caused by repeated head trauma contribute to their deaths? And in light of all of this, should we be letting our kids play these sports?

For Leiter, who’s an assistant professor in the University of Manitoba’s departments of Surgery, Human Anatomy and Cell Science and the executive director of the Pan Am Clinic Foundation, the questions keep coming.
“The one good thing about concussion research is there’s so much that is unknown that I think a lot of groups are working together to find some answers to the problem,” says Leiter.

Leiter became interested in concussions after playing hockey both for the U of M and the Central Hockey League. He himself has had concussions, and saw the effects they had on others in the 1990s.

“I had a few friends that actually had to stop playing because of concussions,” says Leiter, who is also the Albrechtsen Research Chair at the Pan Am Clinic. “We probably didn’t give it near as much attention as we do now.”

Last year, Leiter conducted several surveys of football and hockey players in Manitoba on the issue of concussions. He and his Pan Am Clinic colleagues believe more athletes will be seeking treatment for concussions in the years to come, and they want to have a comprehensive concussion treatment clinic ready for it. They’re particularly concerned about youth and amateur athletes—the vast majority of whom, unlike the pros, don’t have team doctors waiting along the sidelines, ready to intervene.

Leiter and his colleagues’ timing is opportune. The issue of sports and concussions has come to prominence over the last five years for a couple of reasons, according to Anthony Phillips, the scientific director of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research’s Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction.

“One is it has an enormous economic impact at both the individual and societal levels,” says Phillips. “And secondly, what we thought were incidental, minor injuries on the brain can actually have potentially long-term effects on brain health. Especially if there are reoccurring (concussion) episodes during one’s development. We’re now realizing that just because you regain consciousness and go about your business, it doesn’t mean there aren’t lasting consequences.”

Concussions are a mild traumatic brain injury caused by a blow to the head or body. They affect people differently, and can be hard to detect because the symptoms can be subtle and delayed. Fortunately, most people do not suffer for months like Douglas did.

“In the vast majority of cases, patients with concussions will return to their neurological baseline within one to two weeks,” says neurosurgeon Michael Ellis [BSc(Hons)/03, BSc(Med)/07, MD/07], the clinical director of Pan Am’s concussion program.

Leiter is still crunching data, but the initial results of one of his hockey surveys indicates that of the players who responded and reported suffering a concussion, the most common symptoms were headaches, dizziness, the sensation of having had their ‘bell rung’ and poor concentration. Sixty-eight per cent of players who said they’d experienced a concussion missed school or work because of it, and more than 13 per cent missed 10 or more consecutive days of regular activity. (Leiter says the study may be biased toward those who have had concussions because of a low response rate.)

One of the big dangers of concussions is that the more an individual receives in his or her lifetime, the more serious health effects that individual is likely to suffer later on.

“There have been suggestions that concussions can be related to Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s and dementia,” says Leiter, who’s planning a study of data over a multi-year period to see how many people diagnosed with concussions were linked to those illnesses.

Still, many aspects of concussions aren’t fully understood, like why women and children are more prone to getting them.

There is also concern about chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a disease previously known as dementia pugilistica when it was believed to only affect boxers. CTE has been found in the brains of deceased NFL players and is linked to behavioural and cognitive problems like aggression and memory loss. Boston University researchers found one of the earliest cases of CTE ever in the brain of a deceased 18-year-old athlete who played sports and suffered multiple concussions from high school football.

“Where we have to be somewhat careful with that research is that it’s retrospective, which isn’t the highest level of evidence,” cautions Leiter.

While scientists race to improve the research, the court cases are already flying. Last August, the NFL settled a $765-million lawsuit with its retired football players over concussion-related head injuries.
Then, in November, 10 former NHL players filed a lawsuit against the league alleging it hasn’t done enough to protect players from brain trauma. Among other things, the suit claims the NHL knew or should have known that players who sustain “repetitive concussive events, sub-concussive events and/or brain injuries are at significantly greater risk for chronic neuro-cognitive illness and disabilities.”

A lot has changed in sport that may have contributed to an increase in concussions. Ask any old timer who played pro football or hockey and they’ll tell you that players today are bigger, faster and stronger. Even their equipment is more formidable.

“When I played, there was no guard on the helmet,” says Winnipegger Norman Hill [MD/52, MSc/56], who spent seven years in the CFL.

Hill played for the Calgary Stampeders in the 1948 Grey Cup before switching to the Blue Bombers.

“It’s all very well to have a face mask to protect your teeth and nose, but the helmet, instead of becoming something to protect against head injuries, became a weapon,” says Hill.

Even though Hill was studying to become a neurosurgeon while he played football, he says he never thought about how concussions could affect his brain. He believes that even today, players don’t think they’ll get hurt.

“There is a tendency to absolutely deny there’s anything wrong, for various reasons,” says Hill.

The reasons he gives for continuing to play with a concussion back then are the same ones leagues are working to render extinct today: a game too important to sit out, or players worried that time off would be detrimental to their careers and pay cheques.

Jamie Macoun knows about those pressures. A retired defenseman who played in the NHL from 1982 to 1999, he’s working with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) to promote better prevention, diagnosis and treatment of concussions in children. Back when he played for the Calgary Flames, shoulder pads were flimsier and no one discussed getting whacked in the head.

“One thing we never talked about was brain problems,” says Macoun. “It was just always part of the game. I kind of joked that you could bleed out of your nose and ears, yet two shifts later you’re back out there playing.”

That attitude has started to change over the past 10 years. Both pro and amateur sports leagues have begun to modify their practices and rules with the hopes of reducing and better managing concussions.

At the U of M, athletes from the football, hockey and soccer teams all receive baseline cognitive testing at the start of the year at the Bison Athletic Therapy Centre. ImPACT concussion testing takes 20 minutes to complete and it’s available for community groups like amateur hockey teams as well.

“If a baseline test is done, it can provide information on how the concussion has affected the brain’s function when done as a comparison to the baseline,” says Tracey Nyczai [BPE/91], the director of the Bison Athletic Therapy Centre. “This can be used along with other tools to help guide a safe return to play for athletes and return to recreation and daily function for non-athletes.”

Nyczai says even if an athlete hasn’t received the baseline testing, normative data can be used to compare his or her post-concussion test results.

The NHL, CFL, NFL and NBA now all conduct baseline cognitive testing on players in the pre-season in order to better recognize concussions later on.

Last year, Hockey Canada banned body checking for boys under the age of 13 (there is no checking in female hockey). And the NFL has undertaken a variety of changes to who can be tackled and how, while the NHL created Rule 48, which outlawed all hits to the head beginning in the 2011-12 season.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

GAME-DAY PREP

You don’t have to be directly struck in the head or lose consciousness to get a concussion.

Symptoms of a concussion vary from headache and dizziness to ringing in the ears, fatigue, concentration problems, sensitivity to light and noise and depression. Young children may communicate signs of a concussion through listlessness, irritability, loss of balance or disinterest in favourite toys.

A player with a suspected concussion should be pulled from play and evaluated by someone who is educated in concussion awareness. If you’re not sure, air on the side of caution: go to the hospital emergency room.

If you have any symptoms or signs of a concussion, do not play sports or conduct physical activities.

Concussion treatment is still somewhat controversial according to neurosurgeon Michael Ellis. “The recommendations for physical and cognitive rest are supported by expert opinion. But we don’t have great scientific data to support that it’s necessarily the best thing for all concussion patients.”

Emerging treatments include vestibular rehabilitation therapy, which is exercises aimed at improving a person’s balance and eye movements, and submaximal aerobic exercise, which involves measured amounts of activity to exercise a patient without causing their symptoms to flare up.

Hockey Canada offers a concussion awareness app for smart phones. You can find it at hockeycanada.ca

Additional information from thinkfirst.ca and mayoclinic.com
Successful businesses bridge borders, cross cultures and explore ideas and opportunities in all corners of the globe. It makes sense, then, that tomorrow’s business leaders be encouraged to spread their wings and experience this as part of their education. And since 2005, almost 100 Asper School of Business students have done so by participating in the Arni C. Thorsteinson Exchange Program.

While the focus of the program is business education, young people also get to explore another country, in this case Israel, often for the first time. This year, Israeli students from partner institution Ben Gurion University of the Negev came first to Winnipeg for two weeks in May to talk business and experience the city.

“I found Winnipeg to be a very warm—how ironic—and family-oriented city,” says Noy Lewit, a third-year student from Ben Gurion University of the Negev. “I liked the U of M campus a lot and thought it was beautiful. I liked the idea of the underground tunnels and I could really imagine how on winter days one would circle the whole building twice just to avoid stepping outside into the cold.”

While Lewit’s highlights included trips to see Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet and the Royal Canadian Mint, she says the chance to learn about Canadian business and etiquette was vital.

“Israelis are a lot less formal, more casual and more direct when interacting with others . . . I think Canadians are better taught how to approach and network, what to say to whom and when,” Lewit says. “I think this influences how we do business.”

U of M students also gained valuable acumen during their two weeks in Israel. As part of her experience, Reyna Oliva, one of 16 Asper student participants from 2012, worked with peers to assess the business model of a Canadian fast-food company and determine the best course to achieve a similar success in Israel.
We researched fast food trends in Israel, made modifications to our product to make it more appealing to our demographics and determined the cost of those changes. When we arrived in Israel, we tested the market,” Olivares says. “We went to various fast food places and determined the best option would be to make our restaurant more of a lounge/sports bar, as culturally, people gathered to watch sports.”

Bringing learning out of the traditional classroom and into the business environment is exactly the goal, says Lori Shapiro. She is director of The Gerald Schwartz & Heather Reisman Foundation, which created and funds the program in honour of Thorsteinson [BComm/71], a long-time friend of Schwartz [BComm/62, LLB/66].

“Given the global focus of business today, any experience students can gain outside of Canada will help them succeed,” Shapiro says, and adds the participants climb a steep learning curve within the four weeks of the program. “I personally meet with the students before they go to Israel and then again after they return. The knowledge that they accumulate and absorb in such a short time is incredible.”

Shapiro says Israel is a perfect fit, thanks to its reputation for innovation in high tech and entrepreneurial ventures. In fact, it has more startup businesses per capita than any country in the world. And they’re successful, with a full 65 per cent lasting more than five years.

Jaysa Nachtigall, an Asper student who took part in the 2013 exchange, was impressed by Israel’s juxtaposition of ancient and modern.

“The amazing mix of old world culture with new technology and thriving business was unparalleled. Jerusalem, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Tiberius, the beaches and the religious sites were some of the most majestic places I have ever seen,” Nachtigall says. “But the real impact for me was the culture of innovation combined with rich history. It was exciting to talk about business, current global topics and to work together on a project. Because despite living across the world from one another, we found that we were all very much alike.”

Nachtigall’s group met with the CEO of a fledgling company called Parko, which developed a smartphone app that locates nearby parking spots for drivers. They discussed the challenges the CEO faced in building his team and launching his venture.

All three participants say the exchange program created life-long friendships and opened their eyes to the similarities that can exist between different cultures. Beyond that, each believes the trip has also affected their future career trajectory.

“I am double-majoring in management and sociology-anthropology. Now I know I find international marketing to be much more interesting because of all the different cultural and behavioural differences it entails, just like this program did. Beyond widening my circle of international friends and potential business-partners . . . I was able to share Israel with others,” Lewit says. “Only after I passed all the stages of getting into the program did I find out what an amazing opportunity I had landed.”
The smell hit Scott Cairns [BSc(Maj)/01] hard when he walked into a make-shift hospital in a dark basement in Damascus, Syria, within days of the world’s worst chemical attack in a quarter century.

“It smelled like humans, fear, death,” Cairns says. The U of M chemistry alumnus and former Winnipegger led a team of chemical inspectors summoned by the United Nations to find out if the missiles launched Aug. 21, into Damascus’s East and West Ghouta neighborhoods carried a nerve agent, the latest blow in a civil war that’s killed more than 100,000 people so far.

Cairns and his team entered rebel territory to interview witnesses and gather evidence—hair, blood and urine samples that would later confirm the bombs contained sarin, a deadly chemical originally developed as a pesticide.

Graphic images and videos had gone viral showing rows of dead children—a little girl in her Hello Kitty pajamas, a preschool boy in his jean shorts—and grown men convulsing and suffocating. Among the survivors: a boy not older than seven who Cairns met at another improvised hospital. The child’s neighbours found him, the only one alive from a family of 12.

“We had the unenviable task of interviewing him. You’re there to do a job and you have very limited amount of time so you are trying to struggle with your emotions,” says Cairns, 42. “You have to be impartial and ask him questions and do your investigation meanwhile trying to suppress just the tragedy of everything that has gone on.”

Cairns was about a kilometre away when the sarin-filled missiles hit, far enough that he didn’t experience symptoms but close enough to see the blast. A poor sleeper, he was often up at night and from his downtown Four Seasons hotel would watch the routine explosions off in the distance in the suburbs. He likely witnessed the chemical attack that killed 1,400 but didn’t know it at the time.

It wasn’t until morning when the world realized what had happened. To reach the victims believed to be bombed by their own government it took several days of negotiating between the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Syrian regime, and between Cairns’ team and rebel leaders, often through Skype from his hotel room. They had to arrange for a cease fire in these rebel-held regions attacked daily by government forces.

“There are so many armed opposition groups so you don’t really know who you’re talking to or if they’re the biggest bully on the block,” Cairns says. “We just had to find the biggest one and hopefully they would be able to keep all the other ones in line while you’re in there.”

An AK-47-toting sniper attacked their convoy on the government side of a no-man’s land en route to Ghouta. The bullets blasted their armed Land Cruisers, forcing them to limp away. Within an hour they were back, driving full speed ahead and racing along the bombed out and debris-filled road. When they arrived at the first hospital, their vehicles were swarmed by people including truckloads of armed rebels live-streaming their every move with mobile phones. “The hardest part was getting out of your relatively safe armoured vehicle into this sea of people,” Cairns says.

He feared the rebels would kidnap them as a tactic to stop bombings from President Bashar al-Assad’s regime. “Once we left a neighbourhood, the government would just pound them, attack them overnight.”

The investigation continues but al-Assad has not accepted responsibility for the chemical weapons attack. Following Cairns’s report and out of fear of a military strike by the United States, the regime agreed to join the international treaty and surrender the country’s chemical warfare. Cairns was given the formidable job of then leading a team to find and disable this massive arsenal.

They arrived back in Syria in October and in one month of 19-hour days scoured warehouses, air bases, military camps and hideaways built into the sides of mountains, putting deadly chemicals under safeguards and shutting down the country’s ability to make more. Now controversy brews about how to dispose of these chemicals. It’s up to Syria to find a partner in another country equipped with a specialized facility built for...
START SPREADING THE NEWS

When violist-alumna Merrily Peters and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra take Manhattan, they want you to share this opportunity of a lifetime with them.

In a city of landmarks, Carnegie Hall surely makes the list of famous New York City buildings. Since its opening in 1891, this midtown Manhattan concert venue has hosted the best musicians across generations and genres; and next May, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) will fill its hallowed halls with the sounds of music.

Six orchestras from across North America were selected (via public online voting) to perform at Carnegie Hall during the annual Spring for Music (S4M) Festival. Submissions were judged for their imagination and boldness and the WSO ran away with the competition with 3,059 votes—1,000 more than the second-place program.

Merrily Peters [BMus(Perf)/86] has played viola in the WSO for more than 20 years. During that time, most of the company’s touring has been within Manitoba’s own borders. Not surprisingly then, Peters says heading to the Big Apple is a big deal.

But Carnegie Hall’s renown doesn’t have her nervous though. Peters says she and her fellow musicians will prepare for the May 8 performance as though it were just another day at the office, relying on the same teamwork that propels them to success during other shows.

“We listen to each other,” says Peters. “You’re only as strong as your weakest link. We’re perfectionists by nature. We ourselves want to be at 110 per cent.”

And while she is excited to use the spare time she has between festival performances to take in some other New York sights and sounds—Central Park and the Statue of Liberty being on her wish list—another highlight would be if she could scan the festival audience for familiar Winnipeg faces.

“That would be huge,” she says. “Even playing in Winnipeg, when I know one or two people in the audience that makes a difference to me. If we went to New York and knew a 1,000 people were in the audience . . . ”

To that end, the WSO and CAA Manitoba are offering a special travel package dubbed “Manitoba to Manhattan” that includes round trip airfare, invites to a gala event and the WSO’s performance, as well as other opportunities to mix and mingle with the musicians. Details can be found online at: caamanitoba.com/wso.

BY JEREMY BROOKS [BA/98]
FAB
FOUR
THIS AWESOME FOURSOME: AN ATHLETE, A RESEARCHER, A VOLUNTEER AND MUSICIAN

are just a few of the many exemplary students you’ll find at the U of M. The Alumni Association
is proud to recognize their commitments in the classroom—and beyond.

Meet your 2013 Alumni Association Scholarship Award Winners:

**DUAA KANAN**
**FACULTY OF SCIENCE (FOURTH YEAR)**
**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD**

A self-described “visionary”, Duaa Kanan somehow found enough spare time during the second year of her Faculty of Science studies—she is majoring in microbiology with a double minor in biological sciences and chemistry—to establish the Manitoba chapter of the international tutoring-for-donations program Students Offering Support (SOS). Since then, Kanan says Manitoba SOS (manitoba.soscampus.com) has heeded the ‘distress calls’ of more than 350 of her peers in various science courses, and raised more than $5,000 to help build educational programs in Latin America. Last spring, Kanan’s commitment to volunteerism was recognized with a Volunteer Service Award (Youth Leadership category) from Volunteer Manitoba. Kanan hopes to become a physician-scientist, combining her interests in medicine and research.

**BEN SELLICK**
**FACULTY OF MUSIC (THIRD YEAR)**
**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD**

Ben Sellick says the comic strip character he most relates to is Snoopy from *Peanuts*. “He has a love of sleep, a rich fantasy life, and an enjoyment of bouncy dancing,” jokes Sellick. Currently working on degrees in music and film—with the hopes of one day scoring the latter—Sellick’s own life has already provided him unique experiences that verge on surreal: he once shared a train compartment with the late Orson Welles’s German diction coach. “He had wonderful stories about Welles’s cigar-smoking, mood-swinging, exceptionally fascinating life.” Upon graduation he hopes to spend a summer travelling the Mediterranean in a sailboat. He can always earn a buck along the way with a clever form of busking: ‘playing’ O’ Canada using only loon calls.

**TRACY DE BOER**
**MA/13**
**FACULTY OF MEDICINE, PHD (SECOND YEAR)**
**GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD**

Tracy De Boer didn’t move from Leduc, AB, to Winnipeg on the false promise of a balmy prairie winter; it was her interest in Dr. Maria Medved’s research in narrative methods in psychology. Today, Medved supervises De Boer’s clinical investigations within the Language, Health, and Illness Research Group. Outside of university, De Boer cites baking and ice-skating as two of her favourite pastimes, the latter stemming from her previous experience in competitive ice dancing (as a junior competitor, De Boer and her partner earned a bronze medal at a national championship). The jump from Alberta to Manitoba is not the only travel De Boer has enjoyed recently: two summers ago, she biked through Eastern Europe, from Prague to Berlin.

**JOE CALI GIURI**
**BA(GEO)//13**
**BISONS STUDENT ATHLETE AWARD**

Currently taking courses through Extended Education and with an undergraduate degree already to his credit, fourth-year net minder for the Bisons men’s hockey team, Joe Caligiuri, hopes law school will be the next chapter in his educational journey. The Winnipeg native is pretty clear on what the long-term goal is from there. “To practice law and still be involved in the game of hockey in some capacity,” says Caligiuri. Prior to joining the Herd, Caligiuri played junior hockey for the Dauphin Kings, an experience that netted him one of the most memorable seasons of his life (2009-10) when the team won their league and were finalists in a national tournament.

**COMPiled by Jeremy Brooks [BA/98]**
Fans, of course, have been passionately debating these changes; some researchers have begun analyzing them. A study last July by St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto found, for instance, that Rule 48 did not reduce concussion rates in the NHL.

Faculty of Medicine Professor Peter MacDonald [BSc/83, MD/83], an orthopedic surgeon at the Pan Am Clinic and team physician for the Blue Bombers and Winnipeg Jets, believes more rule changes are coming to contact sports. The only question to him is whether they will fundamentally alter the games.

“I think when you have people in the public eye like pro athletes who are well known coming down with these symptoms—especially later in life, walking around losing their memory or developing early dementia—it’s a bit of a shocker to see,” says MacDonald. “It’s no longer being swept under the carpet. Even the leagues are recognizing this and taking concrete steps to make it safer.”

Safer, but still able to satiate fans, many of whom tune in or show up to see the rocking hits. And that, in part, is what makes the issue of concussions and sports so complicated—how to balance player safety with making money. Macoun says hockey should be a clean, hard-hitting game; players, at times, will get hurt. But he also believes the sort of cheap hits on opponents that have caused concussions or career-ending injuries in the past should bring a 10-game suspension, followed by a 40-game suspension for a second offense.

“I guarantee you the ownerships will be saying, ‘We’re never signing a guy like that again,’” says Macoun. “That power has been there with the ownership group for 10 decades.”

GAME OVER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Represent fellow graduates from your alma mater by serving on the University of Manitoba Board of Governors. Three of the 23 positions on the Board of Governors are elected by alumni.

Nominations are accepted annually. Complete nomination and voting information is available at: umanitoba.ca/alumni

Nominations close Friday, February 7, 2014 at 3 PM (CST).
Currently, punishing players with two-game suspensions is like taking a taxicab to work, he says. “It’s just the cost of doing business.”

There are growing signs, however, that not everyone likes this cost of business, at least when it comes to their own children. The biggest youth football program in the United States suffered a 9.5 per cent drop between 2010 and 2012. Pop Warner’s chief medical officer told TV sports network ESPN that concerns over head injuries was the main cause. Owners, commissioners and scientists may be saying more research is needed to better understand brain injuries in sports, but some football parents have already decided that wait is not worth the risk.

Leiter says allowing your child to play a sport like football is a personal, family decision. But he believes some people are overlooking the many benefits sports provide. “It’s easy just to come out and say, Well, no one should play contact sports,” says Leiter. “But I think we know our kids’ passion for sports and playing and being with a team. Just because concussions are getting more attention doesn’t mean they should be stopped from playing. We’re being progressive and hopefully preventative, and minimizing the number of concussions.”

He says educating parents, kids and coaches about recognizing and treating concussions is key, and Macoun agrees. “The overall fact is that sports give you so much back,” says Macoun. “You definitely don’t want to be sitting and watching an Xbox all day long.”

As for Douglas, he’s back on the ice—this time teaching youth hockey. He plans on going back to school to study business now that a hockey career is no longer an option.

He says people are surprised that he’s not angry over what happened. If anything, he’s still hoping that doctors next year will tell him he can play competitive hockey again. “I am still in denial,” he says. “I still want to play.”

“It’s no longer being swept under the carpet. Even the leagues are recognizing this and taking concrete steps to make it safer.”

PETER MACDONALD
The idea caught on and now schools and daycares across the country take part in this Winnipeg-born challenge, from Sault Ste. Marie to Vancouver Island, and including 33 in Manitoba. A Grade 5 teacher in Winnipeg told Blatz the more her students were outside, the more they wanted to be outside and the more creative her teaching became.

Over the years a mentality emerged of being overly cautious in childcare, Blatz explains, and it drove kids indoors. But a lot of risk is perceived, he insists. “There is risk in living but we think that kids can learn to be risk managers. And we can learn these lessons early if we let them.”

The teacher at Strathcona School in Winnipeg’s North End wanted to know from U of M’s Dietmar Straub, the landscape architect behind their new outdoor space, what exactly were those large slabs of wood for? Were they benches? Tables?

Straub had strategically positioned the wood—pieces he’d salvaged from the city’s demolished stadium—outside the elementary school but was less concise in their purpose. At the time he told her: “I don’t know; you will see.”

Turns out they make good balance beams.

German-born Straub describes himself as someone who believes in children’s creativity. The landscape architecture professor works and designs at the forefront of the return of unstructured outdoor play.

Instead of building conventional play structures, Straub builds hills.

Perched atop of this lookout point, kids feel like heroes, he says. They see beyond that fence that keeps them in their school or daycare zone.

Instead of installing swing sets, he installs random, intriguing objects to exercise the imagination. Two massive metal cauldrons some six-feet in diameter sit overturned at Strathcona School, salvaged from a scrap yard outside of Winnipeg. What are they for?

“I think the kids will be able to figure it out,” he says. “It’s what I call creating opportunities.”

They’re located opposite the school’s aging asphalt pad, where Straub busted up star-shaped pieces in order to plant trees. Kids exiting the school now walk through what he calls “The Folly Forest.”

Straub does these low-budget projects pro bono with his wife Anna Thurmayr, who is also a landscape architect assistant professor at U of M, as well as his business partner in the firm Straub + Thurmayr Landschaftsarchitekten. This inner-city project recently won the pair one of the most prestigious awards in German architecture—the Deutscher Landschaftsarchitektur Preis 2013—and in Canada, a National Citation at the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects Awards of Excellence.

They’ve contributed to the design of outdoor spaces across the globe, but Straub says it’s these small-scale, homegrown projects that he loves most since they give him a chance to add “character” and “atmosphere” to childhood.

He grew up in a village of 1,200 in southern Germany and with his brother and sister would explore the family farm with its chickens and geese, and play in the nearby orchards and vineyards.

When Straub, Thurmayr and their two young kids moved to Winnipeg six years ago he was shocked to discover daycares operating out of basements.

In Europe, school administrators have long encouraged kids to learn outdoors. Germany is home to hundreds of forest kindergartens (called Waldkindergartens). “Right from the beginning they are allowed to use fire and knives. There, it’s part of the pedagogical process,” he says.

Straub’s parents—a toolmaker and a stay-at-home mom—gave him the freedom as a kid to discover.

“It was so great. There was so much freedom. We were always allowed to take risks,” he says. “And that was super inspiring.”

The father of two says he “creates freedom for children.”

Allowing for risk is a key ingredient in his landscape design, which isn’t always an easy sell in an era of helicopter parents. Straub’s view: to keep preschool kids from falling down a hill and hurting themselves, teach them how to climb.

“If you go to absolute safety, you are very close to very sterile spaces,” he says. “I always try to open this discussion: How much risk are we willing to take?”

“Cleanliness is a bit lower on our priority list than the great exposure and learning when they get to do things like that.”

Ron Blatz on the merits of outdoor play that encourages kids to get their hands (and bodies!) dirty.
this purpose, explains Cairns, and the OPCW will supervise the destruction.

The Syria mission was the first that the chemical weapons watchdog had done in an active war zone and the first under such intense media scrutiny and time constraints. Cairns and the team were inspecting north of Damascus in the city of Homs where an offensive attack was underway when a UN press officer told them their organization had won the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize. “You could hear the rockets and you could hear the gunfire. It was a bit strange to win a peace prize when you’re in a place where peace is explicitly absent,” he says. “It was quite surreal.”

A month later, he’s back in Winnipeg to visit his parents, returning to the city where this Burlington, Ont.-native spent many of his formative years. From his dad, a retired Air Force radar technician, he adopted the adage ‘don’t sweat the small stuff’ as well as his love of science. Having moved as a kid more than a dozen times from one military base to the next, Cairns says one constant in their home was an abundance of science fiction books. A curiosity about mixing chemicals and finding out what you’d get—“mad science stuff,” he says—eventually led Cairns to study chemistry at the U of M. “This is super nerdy, I was president of the Chemistry Club. We had our meetings in the basement of the Parker Building,” he says.

Some of his former classmates were among those writing on Cairns’s Facebook wall after news broke about the success of the Syria mission. Back then, he aspired to simply “work in a lab somewhere”—which he did, at the Department of National Defence in Suffield, Alta. Not your average lab, chemists there made nerve agents like sarin, VX and mustard gas to test for new antidotes. Cairns got to know the OPCW officers who regularly inspected the facility and joined the organization in 2008.

Soft-spoken Cairns, described by his Netherland colleagues as the quintessential polite Canadian, says the Syria mission has in many ways altered his perspective. “You drive from a completely bombed-out war zone where a chemical attack has occurred and in a few minutes you’re back in your luxury hotel, still with the dirt on your boots, standing in an opulent lobby. So the juxtaposition is quite intense,” he says. “It’s changed some of the priorities in life, perhaps triggering a sense of purpose, thinking what do I want to more of and what I would like to do less of.”

What he wants to do more of is help create change, moving what he calls esoteric political ideas into functioning solutions that will benefit real people. “(The mission to Syria) was probably the highlight of my life, it was also a deeply disturbing part. And perhaps they were meant to go together.”

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ON MANITOBA

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We welcome your news and photographs. Images MUST BE 300 dpi and in jpeg or tiff format. E-mail jeremy_brooks@umanitoba.ca. Deadline for our Spring 2014 issue is February 3, 2014.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH NANA

Brown, Margaret nee: (Herriot) [BScHEc/50, CertEd/75, MSc/82] explored the Fort Garry campus recently with five of her 25 grand and great-grandchildren, searching for their stone bricks on the walkway in front of the Human Ecology building (formerly Home Economics). Their names are inscribed on the stone bricks in the area for 1950 grads—the year their Grandma/Nana graduated. Pictured with Margaret, from left: Cassidy, Theodore, Abigail, Lauren and Davide.

I remember especially . . . languid sunny days the beginning of the year, when I experienced a friendly camaraderie with fellow students, intent on pursuing excellence in their forthcoming studies. Those truly were halcyon days!

Levinson, Benjamin Bryce [BArch/66] recently published his book, Small Town Architect, available at the University of Manitoba Faculty of Architecture library, and for sale through the ‘Print On Demand’ global catalogue at McNally Robinson Booksellers. Levinson is a Life Member of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and holds a Lifetime Membership Certificate from the Architectural Institute of British Columbia.

Goren, Dr. Stephen [DMD/79] received the Barnabas Day Award for Distinguished Service from the Ontario Dental Association, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the profession of dentistry. Since 1980, Goren has had a dental practice in Toronto’s Cabbagetown neighbourhood, with a focus on helping the less fortunate members of his community.

Thompson, Mary Ethelyn (Lyn) [BScHEc/51] published her third book, an historic novel, Bella, A Woman of Courage 1863 - 1953. In the late 1800s Bella hurdles problems as a colonial in South America until tragedy strikes, forcing her to take her three little boys to Boston as a penniless widow where she makes her way in business despite the fact that men deterred women in business in the early 1900s. FIND LINKPublisher - Word Alive Press, Winnipeg.

Kubala (Brook) Margaret Ann [BID/59] left a design career in 1998 to write. Her first book, In His Way and His Time, is the story of how she was gradually healed from schizophrenia. Endorsed by a Christian psychiatrist, the book is a balance of scientific/psychiatric and spiritual wisdom learned during her illness. It gives hope and insights to sufferers and their families.

The book is available online on Amazon and Barnes and Nobles.

Tettevi, Delasi [BN/12] has self-published her first book, titled God’s Bondservant. Inspired by the lives of four extraordinary women in the annals of biblical history—Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba and Mary—Delasi explores the concept of submission and dying to self and sin and taking up our crosses daily to follow Jesus. Books are available online on Amazon and Barnes and Nobles.

Swinden, Richard [BA/67] produced and directed a 44-minute documentary for the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia, Chapter of Deacons. You can watch the documentary on Swinden’s youtube channel: http://youtu.be/7nBXQPKqHrM. After graduating from the U of M with his BA, Swiden went on to Queen’s University where he pursued film studies. While there, he wrote, directed and produced his first experimental film: www.nfb.ca/film/one_two_many_world/. He currently lives and works in Victoria, B.C., as a freelance writer, producer, director and business developer.

“I remember especially . . . languid sunny days the beginning of the year, when I experienced a friendly camaraderie with fellow students, intent on pursuing excellence in their forthcoming studies. Those truly were halcyon days!”
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Gibson, Jo-Anne  
[BMus(MusEd)/83, CertEd/84, MEd/93]  
received the Angela Thacker Memorial Award from the Canadian Library Association. This award honours teacher-librarians who have made contributions to the profession through publications, productions or professional development activities that deal with topics relevant to teacher-librarianship and/or information literacy. Gibson is currently a teacher-librarian with the Pembina School Division at Acadia Junior High in Winnipeg, Man.

Barish, Earl J.  
[BComm/63] was Awarded the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Medal in February 2013. It was presented to him by B’nai Brith Canada for his commitment to volunteer work in Canada.

Lu, Steven  
[BA/78, MA/83] past-president of the Graduate Students Association (1982), has been appointed executive director, project finance, at Sky Solar Group’s headquarters in Hong Kong. The company focuses on the development, financing and investment of solar power generation projects globally including in Canada, the U.S., Latin America, Japan, as well as parts of Europe and Africa.

Pankiw (Hrenchuk) Mary  
[BA/65, BEd/69, MEd/72] was elected president, for the year 2013-2014, of Alpha Omega Alumnae, and the representative to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Manitoba Provincial Council. A Ukrainian women’s non-profit organization of University graduates, Alpha Omega Alumnae was started by a group of University of Manitoba Alumnae in 1958. Their aim was to “support cultural activities in a non-political and non-religious milieu.”

Nielson, Kevin  
[BSc(Pharm)/03] completed his doctor of pharmacy degree summa cum laude from the University of Florida on Aug 10, 2013. He was the recipient of the Outstanding Graduating Student Award, in recognition of exemplary performance in all aspects of the program. Criteria include, but are not limited to, distinguished scholarship, leadership, professionalism, and service. This is considered the program’s highest award.

Simons Dr. F. Estelle  
[BSc/65, MD/69] was inducted into the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS). Fellows of the CAHS are elected by their peers based on their demonstrated leadership, creativity, distinctive competencies and commitment to advancing academic health sciences. Membership is considered one of the highest honours for the Canadian health sciences. For more than three decades Simons—a professor of pediatrics and child health in the Faculty of Medicine and a research scientist at the Manitoba Institute of Child Health—has worked tirelessly to improve the health of patients suffering from allergic diseases, including asthma and anaphylaxis. Her world-leading research on anaphylaxis has made her the “go to” authority on the subject.

Tretiak, Alex  
[Bsc(Hons)/68, CertEd/73, MSc/75] published his third non-fiction book, Sometimes a Paradise: CUSO in Africa. It describes the two-year adventure (1968-1970) of Alex and Marjorie Tretiak in Tanzania, and includes historical and current events. It is illustrated with 240 photographs. Available at McNally Robinson in Winnipeg and Tergesen’s in Gimli.

Mikuska, Vince  
[BFA/85] was recently named the new national Para-swimming performance coach by Swimming Canada. In this role, Mikuska works closely with Para-swimming National Coach Craig McCord to further strengthen Canada’s chances of reaching the podium at Paralympic Games and World Championships. Mikuska has hands-on experience at major international games, including as coach of the 1996 and 2000 Paralympian and former world-record holder Bob Penner.

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The Alumni Association Inc. of the University of Manitoba extends their condolences to the family and friends of the following alumni:

1930-39

Archibald, Dr. A. Marguerite [MD/37] Sept. 6, 2013
Smith, Margaret P. [BA/37] Aug. 24, 2013

1940-49

Cook, George D. [BArch/49] June 22, 2013
Faintuch, Bernice [BScHEc/43] June 15, 2013
Friesen, Dr. William J. [MD/43] Sept. 25, 2013
Glenn, Clayton H. [BSc(EE)/43] Sept. 26, 2013
Kinahan, John Wm. [BSc(CE)/49] July 26, 2013
Meyers, George [DipPharm/40] June 20, 2013
Muldrew, James A. [BSc(Hons)/49, MSc/52] June 22, 2013
Nordal (Staples), Marguerite L. [BSHCEC/47, Cert Ed/70] June 27, 2013
Seed, Margaret D. [DipID/42] Aug. 15, 2013

1950-59

Brown, John Cameron (Cam) [BSA/52, MSc/55] Aug. 2, 2013
Derksen, Dr. Cornelius [MD/57] Oct. 3, 2013
Elliott, Donald D. [BSc(CE)/55] Aug. 29, 2013
Esler, Anne Marie [BA/59] July 17, 2013
Fulford, Dr. Phillip J. [BSc(ME)/57] Aug. 31, 2013
Fulton, Harvey Bruce [BSc/55] July 7, 2013
Harris, Arthur R. [BSc(Pharm)/52] June 20, 2013
Lepp, Jacob H. [BSc(ME)/50] Sept. 11, 2013
McDonald, Dr. Lyle T. [MD/51] July 6, 2013
Mckay, John K. [BS/56, BA/57, LLB/56, MSc/59] Aug. 6, 2013
Moorhouse, Dr. John A. [MD/50, MSc/55] Aug. 16, 2013
Penwarden (Macdonald), Iris [BA/53, BSc/55] June 5, 2013
Peturson, Anne M. [BSc/56] June 25, 2013
Reichert, Donald K. [BFA/56] Sept. 8, 2013
Reid, Donald Harvey [BComm(Hons)/50] Aug. 7, 2013
Sayveau (Jessup), Mary L. [BPed/57, BEd/72] Sept. 26, 2013
Screase, Frank Ross [BSc(CE)/55] July 20, 2013
Standing, Dr. Harold K. [BS/50, MD/58] June 18, 2013
Tone, Albert V. [BSW/51] Sept. 19, 2013

1960-69

Andrusiak, Nick G. [BSc/62, Cert Ed/64, BEd/67] July 9, 2013
Arnold (Fogel), Cheryl [TC/68] June 4, 2013
Bachmann, Karol [BEd/64, MA/68] July 10, 2013
Balcaen (Heppner), Maria Regina [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Bartel, Margaret [CertNurs(T&S)/64] June 22, 2013
Carruthers, George C. [BA/65] Sept. 5, 2013
Farr, John R [BSc/63, BEd/72] Sept. 28, 2013
Frohlich, Dr. Norman [BSc(CE)/62] June 22, 2013
Gagnon, Gilles R. [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Gagnon, Gilles R. [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Gaglon, Gilles R. [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Gagnon, Gilles R. [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Gagnon, Gilles R. [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Gagnon, Gilles R. [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Gagnon, Gilles R. [BA(LatPh)/65, Cert Ed/70, BEd/80] July 7, 2013
Kowalchuk, Rev. Morris M.  

Kroeger, Ernest A.  

Leonhard, Sharon L.  
[BSc(Hons)/69] June 29, 2013

Low, Dr. Donald Edward  
[BSc/68, MD/72, BSc(Med)/72] Sept. 19, 2013

Miller, Olga E.  
[BA/63, BEd/64] Aug. 22, 2013

Morrison, Brian M.  
[BSc(CE)/67, MSc/69] July 30, 2013

Olson, Frances T.  

Pengilley, Cameron G.  

Samlalsingh, David E.  
[BA(Hons)/64, Cert Ed/67, BEd/74] July 29, 2013

Schoettle, Robert E.  

Sheps, Sam B.  
[BA/67, BA(Hons)/68, LLB/74] Sept. 5, 2013

Stasiuk, Dan  
[BA/61, BEd/67] Sept. 27, 2013

Stewart, Dr. Dana  

Stewart, Hugh I.  

Tooley, John A. (Jock)  

Wood, Dr. David John  
[MD/66] Sept. 17, 2013

1970-79

Alvestad, Dennis M.  
[BA/72] Sept. 26, 2013

Bachmeyer, Heimo Ludwig  
[Cert Ed/79] July 9, 2013

Bahuaud, Hector F.  
[BA/70, BEd/71] June 11, 2013

Barnard, Barbara Joyce  
[BN/70, BEd/74, MEd/79] July 5, 2013

Birch, Jean  
[BPed/73, BA/74, BEd/74] June 29, 2013

Blake, Kathleen Dorothy  

Brennand, Robert W.  

Comack, Gary J.  
[Assoc Ed/73, BEd/76] July 20, 2013

Dawydruk, Thomas N.  
[BSc/75] Aug. 25, 2013

Demers, Gilbert Paul Lawrence  
[BA/72, Cert Ed/73, BEd/75, Men Ed/98] Sept. 29, 2013

Didkowski, Mary L.  
[BA/73, BEd/73, BPed/73] June 25, 2013

Fields, Glenn A.  
[BA(Hons)/70] July 18, 2013

Gorber, Ronald W.  
[Cert Ed/72] July 17, 2013

Henders, William Albert  

Jarvis, Joan D.  
[BFA(Hons)/75] July 2013

Kaye, Katherine Marie  
[Cert Ed/70] July 30, 2013

Kroeker, Mary Klassen  

Kuhn, Lloyd D.L.  
[BSc(ME)/70] Sept. 3, 2013

Labun, Richard J.  
[BComm(Hons)/74] July 30, 2013

Leonard, Dennis Harry  
[BA/72, BEd/78] Aug. 19, 2013

Lobay, Thomas P.  
[BArch/70] Sept. 9, 2013

McFadyen, Kirby Ewan  
[BComm(Hons)/74] June 10, 2013

Muchin, John  

Pearn, Kenneth J.  
[BA(Hons)/70, Cert Ed/72] Aug. 6, 2013

Raske, Thomas  
[BSc/73] Sept. 12, 2013

Rogers, Garth A.  
[BA/70] June 24, 2013

Saiko, Evelyne Laura  
[BEd/77] Sept. 4, 2013

Sanderson, Gregory H.  
[BA/72, LLB/76] July 25, 2013

Sherbo, Janice G.  

Shepherd, Susan Clare  

Zahn, Michael L.  
[BSc(ME)/84] June 13, 2013

1980-89

Averbach, Reesa Henny  
[BA/80] Sept. 5, 2013

Besko, Timothy Robin  
[BComm(Hons)/89, MBA/94] Sept. 21, 2013

Deitz, Jeffrey Gordon  
[BP/80, Cert Ed/81, PB CertEd/96] July 12, 2013

Ferraton, Imelda Marie  

Filmon Carvey, Allison Joy  
[BEd/86] Sept. 25, 2013

Gray, Curtis E.  
[Cert Bus/87] Sept. 5, 2013

Kennedy, Emile Millian  
[BSW/87] Sept. 23, 2013

Kroeger, Helene  

Levi, Caroline Rachel  
[BA/82] June 19, 2013

Lukas, Dr. Susan  
[DipDHyg/80, BA/82, DMD/88] Aug. 9, 2013

Mitterndorfer, Charles W.  

Penn, Irmgard A. (Irama)  
[BA/80, Cert Ed/81, MED/87] July 30, 2013

Prokipchuk, Raymond E.  
[BComm(Hons)/82] June 11, 2013

Samborski, Mary Mae  

1990-99

Dandurand, Joseph Trevor Brian  
[BA/97, BComm(Hons)/01, MBA/06] Aug. 6, 2013

De Delley, Shawn Dennis  
[CA/99] Sept. 6, 2013

Gobeil, Anita  

Hochheim, Dr. Klaus Peter Udo  
[MA/95, PhD/03] Sept. 9, 2013

Mackenzie, Susan Marie  

Patmore, Gladys Sarah  

Pfaffner, Michael Steven Richard  
[BSc(Maj)/91] July 19, 2013

2000-09

Gibson (Nicol), Lisa Michelle  
[BSc(Pharm)/04] July 24, 2013

McDonald, Geraldine Beverley  
[ExtEd/06] June 20, 2013

Porteous, Sherry Lee  

Watson, Matthew James  

Whiteway, Brian Ronald  
Klaus Hochheim was a good and dear friend of mine. He was also a work colleague for the better part of 30 years when we jointly started a scientific consulting company. Klaus worked in my group as a senior scientist, dedicated to understanding the role of sea ice in our changing climate. He was a specialist in how Hudson Bay sea ice conditions are changing and how this change affected various components of the Hudson Bay System, including: shipping at the Port of Churchill, changes in polar bear habitats, effects of hydroelectric regulation on freshwater input to sea ice formation, and how this affects algae growth beneath sea ice in spring. His work provided policy makers with scientific information as to how Hudson Bay is changing and what the relative impacts of hydroelectric regulation and climate change have on the system.

Intellectually Klaus had a well-developed sense of what it means to be a scientist. He retained the curiosity of his childhood and this drove his scientific passion. Simply stated—he wanted to know how things work. He was adept at using various environmental technologies in his work; these allowed him to look at sea ice at the smallest scale (e.g. the microstructure of the brine pockets in sea ice) right up through the various scales to hemispheric (e.g. how sea ice in Hudson Bay responded to changing global weather patterns). Klaus was also personally very committed to aspects of social justice and he felt that science was an absolute requirement to make honest and equitable policy decisions affecting people. He was concerned that climate change disproportionately affects the poor of our planet and he died trying to provide the world with scientific data needed to make choices about our collective future. I will miss my friend very much; the world will miss his science, as our ability to clearly see our collective future has just gotten a little dimmer with his passing.
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