

# perspectives



## Features

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### McMaster ALTITUDE Adventure Education and Teambuilding Specialists

By Tamara Monster



ALTITUDE's fifty-foot Alpine Tower is the first of its kind in Canada.

Tucked away in the eastern corner of campus, behind Ivor Wynne, you may have seen a curious grouping of structures looming large in one corner, including a very tall (fifty foot) 'alpine tower'. These curious apparatuses are the property of McMaster's Athletics and Recreation department. A program named ALTITUDE (Achieving Leadership Through Integrating Teamwork Unity Dedication and Empowerment) uses the tower and accompanying structures to promote leadership and team development with groups. Titles Bookstore, Continuing Education and University Advancement are all departments on campus which have

been involved recently with ALTITUDE's programs. ALTITUDE's programs are created with the goal of helping participants develop respect for themselves and their team members. With this important emphasis on respect, communication and team effort, participants can also expect to walk away with increased awareness of fostering more effective communication strategies, deeper

The most impressive piece of ALTITUDE equipment is the Alpine Tower. This fifty foot tower is the first of its kind in Canada. If the thought of climbing and belaying from a tower, complete with ropes, pulleys and safety hat makes you cringe, there is really no need to fear (or assume that ALTITUDE is not a good program choice)!

At the base of the tower and close to ground level, there are specific "low rope" group activities', and a nearby 10 acre field and oval patch of grass allocated for group initiatives that are intended to reinforce team building and leadership development. According to Wayne Terryberry, Program Co-ordinator for ALTITUDE, a group can also go to an off campus location, and participate in completely different activities than the ones organized around the tower and ropes. When I surveyed the alpine tower and viewed photos of the giant swing on the ALTITUDE website, it made me imagine the area as an inviting playground: as adults, how often do we get the chance to freely "play" and have fun on recreation equipment of the nature that is generally the domain of children?

Wayne and the ALTITUDE staff work with groups to design customized programs suitable to the needs and goals of everyone. Wayne emphasized the importance of *(continued on next page)*



On the Alpine Tower

designing a day of adventure and self-discovery with consideration given to: the group's goals, their dynamics, and the comfort level of individuals participating. All programs are run on a "challenge by choice philosophy", meaning that activities have a wide range of choice built into them. Participants are *encouraged* to step outside their comfort zone, but no one will ever be *forced* to do a specific activity if they choose not to. With ALTITUDE's supportive and highly trained facilitators close by, there is no doubt many people may feel inspired to try something that didn't think they were capable of before! By applying the principles of "adventure education", it seems to me that the experience must ultimately be more enriching than what we could find within a confining classroom or lecture hall. At the end of the day, "debriefing" is a necessary aspect to the group's success. Debriefing is the process of reflecting on the events of the day with respect to goals. What did you learn about yourself? About your group? Did we function effectively? What was learned during the process? Summarizing and reflecting is an important conclusion to the day's events.

To book a program for your group, or for pricing information, ALTITUDE can be contacted by phone at 905-525-9140 ext 23879 or by email at [altitud@mcmaster.ca](mailto:altitud@mcmaster.ca).

The ALTITUDE website is: <http://www.athrec.mcmaster.ca/altitude/index.htm>

ALTITUDE requires a minimum of 12 participants for a program, and can accommodate groups of up to 250. Alpine Tower programs are limited to 24 participants at a time, however, larger groups can be accommodated by splitting climbing time up during the day.

If your group is interested in ALTITUDE, you will be asked for:

- The date you would like your program to be run
- The number of participants in your group
- The type of program you're interested in
- A completed group composition form (see the [ALTITUDE website](#) to download it)
- Your contact information (name, phone number, fax number, email, and address)

## McMaster's United Way Campaign Gears Up!

*By Susan Mitchell*

McMaster University has long been the largest corporate donor for the Hamilton/Burlington United Way campaign. Last year, the campaign goal for the University was \$160,000 and we exceeded our target. The campaign is co-chaired by Lisa Boniface, Manager, Career Services and Louis Schmidt, Associate Professor in the department of Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour.

"We were very gratified to exceed our target through the generous support of the community" said Boniface. This year's target has been set at \$180,000. Louis Schmidt believes that this goal is realistic. "McMaster is a generous community and we are planning substantially more robust marketing and communication efforts to achieve the target", said Schmidt.

While the majority of campaign contributions come through individual employee donations, traditionally there has been many campus or departmental activities that also contribute. Bake sales, the annual 'Mitten' campaign run by Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour and many other department campaigns are run each year in support of the campaign.

The Hamilton/Burlington campaign will hold its official launch on September 15th, at noon in Gore Park. McMaster's campaign will hold its 'Kick-off' event with the annual Walk/Run event on Friday, October 20. More details will be released shortly on the [2006 McMaster United Way campaign](#).



## Editorial

It's September once again and the start of a new school year. For some students it's a new life away from home. For some employees it's their first experience of the organized start-of-term chaos. For Perspectives, it's a new issue. What's new for you?

Last year for me, it was a humour story about a new beginning gone wrong that won the Perspectives humour contest. It led me to discover some amazing, new friends and as a result I joined the Perspectives Editorial Board. But, you don't have to win the humour contest in this issue to become a member. If you're looking for something different, looking to meet new people or just looking to write and have a free lunch, you should meet with us. If you are interested in joining or would like more information contact [working@mcmaster.ca](mailto:working@mcmaster.ca).

Personally, I haven't figured out yet "what's new" for me this new school year. I'm hoping that it is meeting you as a new member of the Perspectives team.

Madeline Barr

## Employee Health & Wellness

### Tips for Healthy Living

*By Liz Way*

Almost everyone wants a balanced lifestyle. But it's hard to know how to get there. And balance isn't just about the mix of time you spend in and out of work, but, the environment at work too. It all starts with you! Everyone at McMaster can contribute to making the workplace a healthier place. And the Healthy Workplace Group wants to help you make it happen.

Raise your awareness of how to **Make a Difference in Your Workplace** – this year's theme for Canada's Healthy Workplace Week (October 23rd to 27th). Come out to a variety of free interactive sessions starting with the *Health for Life* kick off on Monday October 23rd where you can create your own health profile and find out if you're at risk for some of the most prevalent illnesses including diabetes, heart disease, lung disease and obesity. Your *Health Check* will also include BMI and general physical fitness assessments along with blood typing and a "Check Up from the Neck Up".

Throughout the rest of the week, you'll be able to participate in activities related to physical fitness, nutrition, balance and having fun!

McMaster's Healthy Workplace initiative isn't just about this national week long celebration. Programs are offered on a monthly themed basis all year long. Visit our [Healthy Workplace website](#) for information on current events or see the new monthly Human Resources Event Calendar poster.

One step to getting some balance is working in a healthy environment. We'd like to know what that means for you.

Right now, the Group is in the planning stages for 2007. There are some exciting programs and events being planned – now is the time to have your say.

# Humour

## Dinner Party Disasters

*By Rosalind Clarke*

I would hazard a guess that my friends and family anticipate my dinner invitations with a sense of foreboding. I could also entitle my entry "The Tempting Tortuous Trio" or "How Hungry are You?" In trying to impress the in-laws to be, I felt I had prepared a simple no-fail meal. The problem came only in the plate preparation. My over zealousness prompted me to over heat the plates...okay, I broiled them. When placed upon the rather hot plates the peas seemed to acquire a mind of their own. They popped and sizzled and literally leapt off the plate. Of course, I did caution them: "Oh, by the way, the plates are hot" (no kidding).

Several couples, including ourselves used to get together several times a year for what we called "A Diner's Club." Each couple would host an evening having previously selected a country whose food would be represented. Having a British background, I decided to have Roast Beef and Yorkshire Puddings. I figured, how tough could it be to pour some batter into hot oil and cook at a high temperature. I was short an inconsiderable amount (I thought) of batter. Without realizing the consequences, I placed the pan into a searing 450 degree oven. Within minutes the oven was belching acrid smoke. The fire alarm alerted the neighbourhood as we battled our way to the front door. One guest had to be guided since her contacts had been smoked out. When the smoke cleared and the contacts were securely in place, dinner was quite delicious.

On another occasion, I invited my sister and her family to sample my tantalizing stuffed zucchini. The recipe, handed down from my Mother-in-law was a specialty in our home. The day was decidedly hot so the decision was made to cook it on the barbecue. I simply forgot that the dish was Pyrex and the barbecue temperature could not be controlled. Anxiously we awaited, the enticing fragrance filling the air. I opened the lid to check my prize recipe and I was met with a thunderous bang not unlike a gunshot. The Pyrex dish exploded into millions of tiny shards of glass. My neighbour hit the ground fearing enemy attack. I was met with unsolicited acupuncture, little shards of glass protruding from my limbs. I was not hurt, only my pride. The Pyrex pan and prize zucchini were history and I think my neighbour is still undergoing shock therapy!

I figure, the next time company is coming... I'll order out.

## Announcing Our New Humour Contest

*Why did the student cross the road? No, that's no good. There was one time when I accidentally... Nah. A funny thing happened at work the other day... ..and I didn't know my boss was behind me.*

*What? You think you can do better? Show us!*

Write a piece for our Humour section and you could win a prize and have your article published in the next Perspectives newsletter. Write about something funny related to work or work function.

### **The rules are simple:**

Keep it clean.

Keep the participant anonymous.

Keep it short. No longer than one page.

If your entry is chosen you will win a \$50 Mac Express food card and bragging rights that your article was published.

Submit your entry to <http://www.mcmasterperspectives.ca/submissions.php> or email [working@mcmaster.ca](mailto:working@mcmaster.ca)

# Retrospectives

## Meet me at the Buttery!

Campus Fun in the Fifties

By Marlene Monster



1951 Marmor Women's Reception

McMaster University was a Baptist-sponsored institution until becoming public in 1957. Baptists, at least the more conservative churchgoers, frowned upon some "fun". Dancing, except for square dancing, and card games were a no. And consuming alcohol was definitely taboo. Furthermore, George P. Gilmour, President throughout the fifties, ruled the campus with an iron fist. For example, classes were scheduled around the 15 minute morning chapel service. Religious Studies was a required course, and Dr. Gilmour even wrote the text, "The Memoirs Called Gospels."

Since Mac was a small community then, most students knew each other by sight, if not by name. Like students today, they got together in the small cafeteria/coffee shop known as the Buttery, located in the basement of the Faculty Club. A huge, new building called the

Drill Hall could be used for Formals, banquets and large gatherings such as exams. In fact, a male student had to come dressed in suit and tie to write an exam. No fun in the spring!

The 1958 Marmor, school yearbook, shows photos of 27 clubs, as well as music groups, drama, sports and more. Students joined one or several of these and organized their own social fun. Sometimes they invited guest speakers. One popular guest was Jazz musician, Oscar Peterson, from Toronto.

When students wanted to drink, they headed down the road to Paddy Greene's Tavern, across from Westdale High School. This local hang-out was definitely the fun place to be. For more formal dining and dancing, they chose the Brant Inn, Burlington, or Prudhommes, east of Hamilton.

## Fun Stuff

New to this issue is the Fun Stuff section. Here, we will post fun activities, puzzles, and contests. This month's fun stuff section features Sudoku puzzles. For those of you who are unfamiliar with Sudoku puzzles, to complete it, you must enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row, column and 3x3 square must contain one of each digit (therefore, every row, column and 3x3 square cannot have the same digit twice).

Sudoku puzzles range in difficulty. We've included 4 puzzles for you to try that range in difficulty from easy to very difficult. Take your pick, or do all four! Solutions for each puzzle are located on the second page of each PDF (don't cheat though!)

- [Easy](#)
- [Medium](#)
- [Difficult](#)
- [Very Difficult](#)