

Gryphons' Lair – Issue 71  
December 2022

Issue 71 marks the final newsletter of 2022! Our athletes are hard at work partaking in optional workouts to prepare for the official start of off-season training in 2023. The event calendar is already filling up with upcoming camps for players, training activities, and community events – before you know it, we will be announcing the schedule for the 2023 season!

In Issue 70, we shared with our readers the list of seniors on our roster list, and we wanted to share with you a video that was created by our media team. Thank you, once again to our Seniors for everything you contributed to our program, both on and off the field – you will be missed!

Watch the Senior video [here](#).

Enjoy Issue 71 of the Gryphons' Lair!



**Trip to Ole Miss to visit Gryphon Legend – Tavius Robinson**

A few of our Gryphon alumni and staff members headed down to Mississippi to visit [Tavius Robinson](#).

Tavius joined the Gryphon roster in 2018 and played 2 seasons for the red, black and gold. When the 2020 Football season was cancelled, Tavius made the decision to accept an offer to play for Ole Miss as a Defensive End.

Guelph alumni Hugh Drennan, Brett McCallum, Matt Vine, Brian Cluff, and Mark Hammond, as well as our current equipment manager, Frank Tersigni, made the trip to see a game against Alabama. Check out this incredible [defensive play](#) by Tavius.

Great to see our Gryphon family staying connected!

Exciting times for Tavius, as he was invited to attend the NFLPA Collegiate Bowl on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The NFLPA Collegiate Bowl is the premier postseason all-star game for draft-eligible college players.

All the best, Tavius! Your Gryphon family will be cheering you on!



*Pictured left to right: Tavius, Ole Miss DL Coach Randall Joyner, Brian Cluff*



*Pictured from L to R: Matt Vine, Mark Hammond, Brett McCallum, Hugh Drennan, Frank Tersigni and Brian Cluff*

## **Gryphon Alumni Returns to Alma Mater for a Workout**

[Kian Schaffer-Baker](#) returned to the U of G to get a head-start on his off-season training and take advantage of the incredible High Performance Centre at the U of G. Great to have Kian back on campus and checking out our facilities!

It should also be noted that Kian had the opportunity to workout with the Jacksonville Jaguars earlier in the month.

Read the full article [here](#).

Big things ahead for Kian!



## **Guelph Gryphon Women's Flag Football Team**

Very proud of our Gryphon Football Players for being volunteer coaches for the Guelph Gryphon Women's Football Flag Football Team. The coaching squad includes: [Jake Bennett](#), [Anthony Hall](#), [Anakin Guthrie](#), [Kumail Khilji](#), [Siriman Harrison Bagayogo](#), [Riley O'Brien](#).

The Lang Innovation Team was a proud sponsor of the helmets the women wore in their conference play this season. Thanks, in part, to the helmets, there were no head injuries in the women's late-November tournament.

The women's team wrapped up their 2022 season in London in late November and had some great highlights from their season. It was fantastic having the team practice at Alumni Stadium, and we look forward to continuing to support Women Athletics.



*Celebrating after a big win!*

**OFSAA Bowl at Alumni Stadium**



The 2022 OFSAA Bowl was home to many athletes and coaches on November 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to all athletes who competed!



**QB Jake Helfrich supports Guelph Minor Football**

Shoutout to our QB, Jake Helfrich for spending some time with our Junior Gryphon Football Program! Always great to see our athletes supporting our community programs!



*Pictured: Jake Helfrich and 2 players from the Junior Gryphons*



## **OUA All-Stars**

Congratulations to the 3 Gryphon players who achieved OUA First-Team All Star Honours!

### **OFFENCE:**

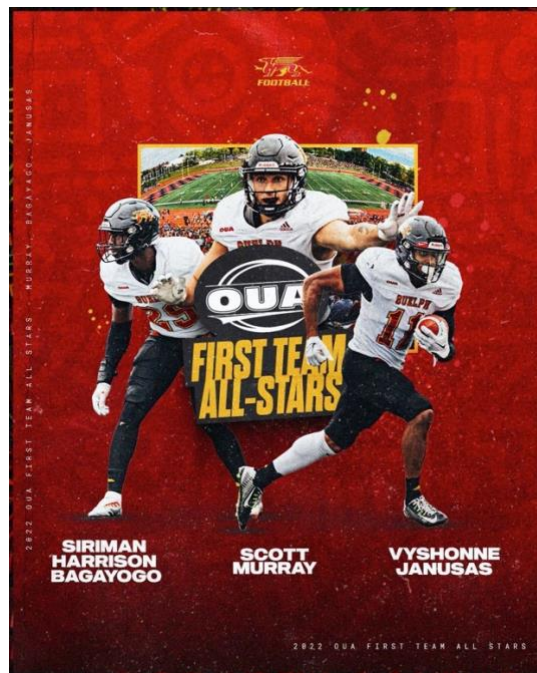
[Vyshonne Janusas](#) – Receiver

### **DEFENCE**

[Siriman-Harrison Bagayogo](#) - Cornerback

[Scott Murray](#) – Defensive End

Read the full press release [here](#).



## **U-Sports All-Canadian**

Two Gryphon athletes earned themselves a spot on the All-Canadian list!

Congratulations, Siriman Harrison Bagayogo for being named a First-Team USports All-Canadian!

And to Scott Murray, congratulations on being named a Second-Team USports All-Canadian

Read the full press release [here](#).





**OUA Rookie of the Year + All-Rookie Team**

Congratulations are in order for [Isaiah Smith](#)! Earning himself a spot on the [OUA All-Rookie Team](#), and being crowned the OUA Rookie of the Year (Norm Marshall Award) Read the full press release [here](#).



**D10 High School Championship**

Throughout the Fall 2022 Guelph High School Football Season, Alumni Stadium was home to the six local Guelph High School teams for their football matchups on Friday Nights.

It was great to see the community support from Guelph locals. We want to give a special congratulations to the Centennial Spartans for being crowned the District 10 High School Champions! Steve Viveiros, former Gryphon Running Backs coach, is a proud member of the Spartans' coaching staff.



*Centennial Spartans - Champions!*

### **Gryphons in the Grey Cup**

Great to see 4 Gryphon alumni a part of the 109<sup>th</sup> Grey Cup in Saskatchewan, Regina!

*Toronto Argos:*

[Royce Metchie](#) - Defensive Back

*Winnipeg Blue Bombers*

[Johnny Augustine](#) - Running Back

[Mike O'Shea](#) - Head Coach

[Kyle Walters](#) - General Manager

Although we were cheering for both teams, we must include a congratulatory message to Royce, and the entire Toronto Argonauts for taking home the victory!





**Stu and Kim Lang – 2022 USPORTS Mitchell Family Alumni of the Year**

Congratulations to Stu and Kim for being the recipients of the 2022 *USPORTS Mitchell Family Alumni of the Year Award*. A very well-deserved honour!

Thank you, Stu and Kim for your contributions and generosity to our Gryphon Football Program. You have made a significant impact for our student-athletes and all students and community members at the U of G.

Read the full article [here](#).



## Featured Player

*“When I met Vyshonne, it was evident that he was an athlete with the physical gifts to stand out. He was just a little raw and unpolished, but who wasn’t straight out of high school??? Seeing him step into a larger role this year has been exciting and I can’t wait to see what he has in store for the next couple of years for his university campaign. It will be interesting to see how much he continues to develop. He will go as far as he allows himself to go in the game.”*

- [Kiondre Smith](#) (Gryphon Alumni and Current CFL Wide Receiver for the Hamilton Ti-Cats)

When a current CFL player praises your talents, you know that you have a promising football career ahead of you.

This month’s Player Feature is #11, Gryphon Receiver [Vyshonne Janusas](#).

Vyshonne started his post-secondary football career at the University of Windsor, but unfortunately never got the chance to play for the Lancers as his first year was during 2020, when the season was cancelled due to COVID. He realized that he wanted to move out of Windsor (his hometown) and attend school elsewhere. His friend, and current Gryphon Football player [Kaine Stevenson](#), encouraged him to join the Gryphon roster.

The recruitment process got started, Vyshonne connected with Coach Mark Surya, and he officially committed in Spring 2021. What makes this recruitment story interesting, is that Vyshonne had only visited the campus on two previous occasions – in highschool! He came once for a track meet and the other for a football game against the Jr. Gryphons.

“I had heard such great things about the program and the facilities, so I knew that it was the right decision to transfer to the U of G.”

As there was no season in 2020, eligibility did not come into play, so Vyshonne was able to play during the 2021 season. A few days before Training Camp, he broke his arm and had to wear a cast for the entire duration of camp. Luckily, the healing process went pretty quickly, and he was able to get in the lineup for Week 1 against Western.

“I definitely noticed a change in speed from high school play to university. I did feel pretty comfortable on the field and didn’t feel to out of place. Heading into the 2022 season, I really noticed a change with returning to a full game schedule. Those two extra games at the end were pretty taxing on my body. My motivation for next year is that I need to maintain my energy for the entirety of the season and stay healthy for all eight games.”

Vyshonne battled the injury bug a little bit this season, resulting in his missing a game in the pre-season and Game 7 against Laurier. Even with only playing 7 games, his stats speak for themselves as he earned a spot on the OUA First Team All-Star list. Vyshonne tallied 30 catches for 428 yards in seven games and had an impressive 84-yard touchdown grab, the second-longest scoring reception of the OUA season.

“I am proud of the accomplishment, but I am more so geared towards the overall team success. It was a good feeling to be named an OUA First Team All-Star, but I am striving for better.”

Heading into the off-season training, Vyshonne is eager to get into a routine and take advantage on the structured programming and facilities.

“Coming from what I was doing back home in Windsor, I had no structured training. I know that being able to have a consistent workout schedule during the 2022 offseason got me set for this past season, so I am looking forward to getting a little bit stronger and faster heading into 2023. We are so fortunate to have a facility with that many squat racks and an incredible amount of high-quality equipment, it is top tier. Outside of the gym, I am most looking forward to getting a better knowledge of the game to the point where I won’t question anything. I want to be able to be put anywhere on the field and know exactly what I am doing.”

Outside of football, Vyshonne is studying Psychology within the Bachelor of Arts Program and is often one to be a part of our volunteer activities or community events.



This past season he helped with our Homecoming Ticket Giveaway and our Think Pink Fundraiser.

Thank you, Vyshonne for taking the time to chat with us! Looking forward to seeing what you accomplish in the 2023 season!





## ***Featured FOGF Member***

If you were at a Gryphon Football Game this past season and enjoyed some delicious food from the BBQ, you have FOGF member and Gryphon Football parent, Jay Lack to thank!

For this month's newsletter, we are excited to feature Jay.

The Lack family is very well known within the Gryphon Football Community. Andrea, Jay's wife, is the current Co-Chair of the Parents of Players (POP) Group, and their oldest son [Ben](#) played for the Gryphons' from 2017 – 2021. Their youngest son, [Sam](#), just finished his first season with the team. Check out the feature that we did on the Lack brothers in our [March 2022 newsletter](#).

You can find the Lack family at every Gryphon Football game, both home and away. Since Ben started playing for the Gryphons in 2017, Jay has never missed a game and he hopes to continue that streak for Sam's career.

There is a lot of Gryphon Pride within their family as Andrea is a proud U of G alumni, having graduated from the Bachelor of Science Program, majoring in Human Kinetics. It just so happened that Ben also graduated from that exact program in 2021. A big selling point for Ben to choose the U of G was the opportunity to experience the cadaver lab and knowing that it was going to be a part of his core curriculum was very important.

“During Ben’s recruitment process, the coaching staff helped us navigate the many parts of deciding to choose a university. The campus at the U of G speaks for itself. Being from Burlington, it was accessible for our family. The kids were ‘away’ but also I was able to head up there on a weeknight if I needed to. Overall, the school just ticked a lot of boxes for our entire family. The facilities as they exist today, didn’t exist when Ben arrived on campus. The pavilion was under construction, and the High Performance was still a pipe dream at that time. It was really exciting for Ben to know that he would ultimately have the opportunity to train at those facilities in his upper years.”

When asked about his reasoning for joining the FOGF program, Jay’s answer was that he was ecstatic to ‘get involved in the program in a different way.’

“When Ben was a part of the team, at least a couple of the years that he was receiving a scholarship, was sponsored by the FOGF. This program is all about involvement, when I get asked why I choose to spend so much of my time and energy with the team, I always say that I want to be involved and be a part of something. Selfishly, it’s also an amazing way to stay connected to my kids. During Ben’s first year. We got involved with the POP group, as it was a great way to meet other players’ parents. We are fortunate that geography allows us to be that involved. This a program that recruits nationally, so we are sensitive to the fact that not all parents have that opportunity to be at every game. But the beauty of the POP group is that we are all family and treat every player like they are our own kid.”

The Lack family got to continue their tradition of supporting the Gryphons, with Sam committing to the U of G in November of 2021, to start his freshman year in September 2022.

“Of course, we were going to support wherever Sam picked. The difference with Sam, was that he had already seen Ben’s experience as a Guelph player so had already eliminated other schools in his mind. To an extent, Sam knew what his experience could potentially look like as a Gryphon, just from seeing Ben go through the Guelph program and with Andrea and I being involved with POP. We had been on the road to see every other school in the conference, so we got a taste of what other game day experiences are like.”

You hear coaches and players say that football is the ultimate team game. The bonds that they form after playing together for 3, 4, and 5 years is something quite special.

“We’ve met people in this process, who will be friends for life. There is no better way to spend a Saturday”, according to Jay. A highlight of every season is the pig-roast that happens at the Homecoming game. An RV Trailer gets set-up in the parking lot, and members of the program stay up all night cooking to prepare for the tailgate.

“In 2019, we set up camp in the parking lot as we always do. I projected the CFL Friday night game and Gryphon Alumni, [Luke Korol](#) was playing for the Ti-Cats so it was really cool to be able to watch him play. Flash forward to this year, we did the same thing, and



two gryphon alumni were playing for the Ti-Casts, [Jared Beeksma](#) and [Kiondre Smith](#), and Luke was at the tailgate with us watching the game! A lot of the work this season was put into rebuilding the tailgate after the pandemic. I can appreciate of the work done in previous years from parents, and we were so happy to bring the tailgate back in full force this season. We had to re-build the volunteer group, many parents hadn't witnessed the tailgate due to the pandemic. Yes, we work hard – but you best believe that we play hard.”

One of Jay's favourite parts of becoming a gold FOGF member is the challenge coin. Each gold member receives a coin and they are to have it with them at all times. if another member challenges them and they do not have their coin, they owe that person a drink.

“I found it tough to always have my coin on me for game days, because I am navigating hot coals at the BBQ, but you better believe that I came up with a secret way to have it with me.”

For the fun of the game, we won't share Jay's secret method. If you see Jay at the upcoming Gryphon Gala or the FOGF Golf Tournament be sure to challenge him!

Thank you, Jay and to the entire Lack family for all the support you have provided to the Gryphon Football program over the last six years. Countdown is on until the 1<sup>st</sup> tailgate of the 2023 Football season!



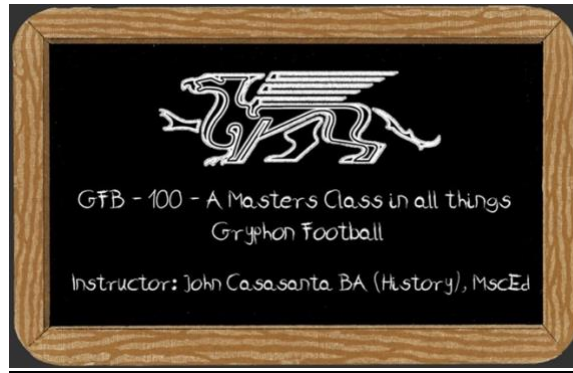
## ***Featured Alumnus***

We changed things up this month and chatted with Gryphon alumnus, Tavius Robinson via Zoom.

Watch the interview, [here](#).



## ***Mr. Casasanta's History Class***



Welcome to GFB – 100. Hello everyone as we continue to press forward in this class it is my hope that you have prepared yourselves for the upcoming mid-terms. I am your instructor John Casasanta, your resident Gryphon Football historian. I like to remind you that GFB -100 is a master's class where we delve into interesting and historical facts about all things Gryphon Football. Each month I have provided you with an interesting fact about the Gryphon Football program. I hope that up to this point you have found this class informative and educational. I look forward to sharing my monthly lesson with you all, so with no further ado let's begin.

This month's focus is the transition from the name "Redmen" to today's name "Gryphon."

Last month, I discussed the origin and meaning of the name Gryphon; this month I will discuss the process that got us to where we are today. Up until 1967, the mascot name for the University of Guelph was Redmen. But as we progressed throughout the 1960's the idea of using the term Redmen as a mascot didn't fit the bill. I wish I could tell you that the University was very progressive in their ideas regarding Indigenous stereotypes and that we were pioneers in the fight to recognize the importance of sensitivity towards such an important topic, but I cannot.

On Wednesday, January 18, 1967, the Athletic Advisory Council passed the following motion:

"That the University of Guelph nickname, 'Redmen' be changed and that a new name be established by the annual meeting (of the A.A.C.) to become effective September 1967. Such authority is provided in the constitution of the A.A.C.

In the discussion of the motion to change the nickname of the University of Guelph teams, the following relevant points were made. Of those intercollegiate teams with which the University of Guelph competes, both the Royal Military College at Kingston and McGill University at Montreal use the name 'Redmen' and have used it longer than the University of Guelph or its founding colleges. The historical association, if any, of the name 'Redmen' with this University or its precedents is not apparent. Also, the name 'Redmen' does not lend itself to women intercollegiate teams.



With that being said, the University had established the need to make this change and began the process to move forward with this new idea. The winds of change gust through the campus and the university had formed a committee and enlisted the on-campus paper, the Ontario, to pose the questions and conduct a survey of the student body.

The committee members were:

- Judy Beamish, 19667 Mac, Box 114 Creelman,
- John Hummel, 1968 O.V.C., Box 162,
- Gary Maw, 1968 O.A.C., Box 390,

Admin.

- Dr. J. R. Stevens, Physics Dept., Wellington College.

Within the survey the requirements were listed as such: *The name should be distinctive and lend itself to Incorporation in songs and cheers. Although a historical association might be desirable it is not necessary in view of the prime requirement for distinctiveness.*

It was pointed out that last summer's successful University of Guelph softball team used the name 'Gryphons', a name which appeared distinctive in press. With this side note added to the survey, it seemed that the university had made their decision but wanted to make sure the students had their say as well.

The results of the survey were as follows:

*The pending results indicate that 82.5% are against retaining the nickname 'Redmen' 84.4% desire a new crest and nickname. 71% are in favour of the nickname 'Gryphons' and 72% are in favour of adopting the crest shown on the questionnaire.*

The survey had more than filled the bill, producing not only a good cross-section of opinion regarding the four questions put forth, but also a wide variety of comments, both humorous and useful, suggesting new names and crests for consideration.

Suggestions ranged from MAVERICKS (M for Mac. A for Aggies, V for Vets) to the familiar 1968 Aggie nickname that is so easily adopted into our cheers - GONADS!

Here is a list of some prospective mascots suggested by the students in 1968 through the survey posted in the Ontario:

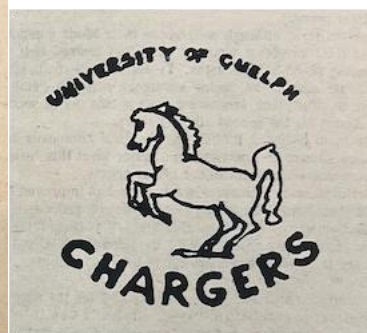
Black Knights; Golden Hawks; White Knights; Golden Gophers; Panthers; Razorbacks; Red Barons; Sodbusters; Golden Hawks; Tornadoes; Sabers; Gaels; Comets; Raiders; Pythons; Guelphons; Black Bombers; Goliaths; Black Bears; Crimson Tide; Chiefs; Guppies; Generals; Winged Demons; Flyers; Devils; Red Rebs; Satans; Golden Knights; Marauders; Hurons; Hurricanes; Vikings; Jets; Royals; Red Knights; Chargers; Chancellors; Aggies.

As we all know, W.F. Mitchell's first choice of the Gryphon was finally decided upon and what a fitting name it is. History revolves around processes, and I find the process of finding our identity to be a most interesting journey indeed. Who knows, we could have been the University of Guelph Gunners, or Knights, or Screaming Demons, or Satans, or my personal favourite, Guelphons!!!! Thank goodness the students here during this time made the right choice, the only choice frankly and now we can proudly state 'Once a Gryphon, always a Gryphon.'

I want to thank Patrick Sutherland for his time and contribution to this month's lesson. Patrick was gracious enough to allow me access to the Ontario's archives. I am excited to be able to share 72 years of history with you with the help of Patrick and the staff of the Ontario. I will take this time now to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years. I will see all of you in 2023. Class is dismissed.

**RESULTS OF GRYPHON QUESTIONNAIRE:**

	YES	NO	Spoiled
1. I would like to retain the name REDMEN	89	423	134
2. I would prefer a new name and/or crest	422	78	146
3. I like the nickname GRYPHONS	421	174	51
4. I like the crest as shown	419	164	63



February 23, 1967

## Sports Comments

The following comments were worth noting:

"I would like to see further alternatives in names and crests made public."

One female altered the first two questions to read:

1. I would hate to retain the name Redmen!
2. I would prefer no name, no crest, and no inter-collegiate teams at all!

You know there's more to college life than sex, honey!

One main criticism of the name Gryphon ran along these lines:

"Sounds soft."

"Too soft for cheers."

"What kind of school spirit could you get going at a sports event where the cheers have to involve the name "Gryphons" — you might as well call them the Guelph 'Buttercups'."

Modifications in the design of the crest were suggested.

"Incorporate the double G's into the crest."

"The double G's look out of place."

"The name "University of Guelph" as well as "Gryphons" should be included in the crest."

And then the odd hot-head got in her two cents worth:

"I don't like that silly name — no girl's inter-collegiate team would care to be known as a gryphon, let me assure you!"

It's just a name lady, not a disease!

"The drawing of the crest is very amateur and unfinished — oversimplified."

It must be remembered that this crest is only a rough sketch, and many details must be altered before the crest can be accepted.

One suggestion that certainly makes a lot of sense went like this:

"Let's use the university crest; after all, it is ours!"

"Since the University of Guelph crest does have a white horse in it, what's wrong with a white horse." "Chargers," "Knights," and "Stallions," although very common, would fit nicely with our university crest.





Guelph Gunners



Guelph Vikings



The Gryphons

# Training Talk

We recently started a high school training program in our High Performance Centre for athletes in the local area. This program is offered via the Gryphons Performance Academy and is a great way for high school athletes to get more familiar with the various types of fitness equipment.

Coach Kania and family welcomed a new addition recently, so training updates will resume in January. Congratulations to the Kania family on your new bundle of joy!





**#NextGryphon**

We are excited to be bringing back the Section of our newsletter to highlight the talented individuals that will be joining the 2023 Gryphon Roster.

We are thrilled to announce that Jake Tessier, from Welland, Ontario is joining the Gryphon roster, who is capable of playing many positions.

Welcome to the Gryphon Family, Jake!



**Gryphons Gone Pro**

This month's Gryphons Gone Pro feature is [Kosi Oneyka](#). He signed with the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 2022 and plays the position of Defensive Back. He played 8 games during the 2022 season and is 1 of 3 Gryphon alumni who plays for the Roughriders. Other Gryphon alumni teammates include [Kian Schaffer Baker](#) and [AJ Allen](#).



## ***Did You Know?***

Did you know that there is a student-athlete competition at the University of Guelph called the Gryphon Cup?

*The Gryphon Cup is an immersive program for all types of varsity athletes to engage in healthy competition for a good cause: self-improvement and community-building. The Cup provides an opportunity for students to compete outside their sport, and help themselves and the community through segmented monthly standings for earning points through a set of three challenges:*

- 1. Academic Engagement*
- 2. Gryphons Supporting Gryphons*
- 3. Community Initiative*

(Excerpt taken from the Guelph Gryphons website)

We are very proud of our players for attending the Men's Volleyball game on November 26<sup>th</sup>. They definitely got into the Gryphon spirit and brought the noise!



Photo Credit: Gar FitzGerald



Gryphon Gala – May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
FOGF Golf Tournament – July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023



Interested in becoming an FOGF Member? There are three different tiers to our memberships: Red, Black, and Gold. To find out more information about our memberships and what is involved in each level, please click [here](#). For questions about the membership, please contact Bill Brown at [brownw@uoguelph.ca](mailto:brownw@uoguelph.ca)



If you have any news or updates, we would be more than happy to share them in our upcoming newsletter. Please reach out to [brownw@uoguelph.ca](mailto:brownw@uoguelph.ca) for any celebrations, announcements, or bereavements that you would like us to share.