

# Gay club denied coverage

By ELEANOR BROWN

The management of Halifax's only gay bar has gone out of province to find a company which would insure the discotheque after local agents cancelled its policy.

Rumours, owned and operated by the Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE), was given 15 days' notice January 2. The policy was scheduled to run out July 1.

"We have no idea what the problem was — they (the brokers) won't talk to us," says GAE chair J.J. Lyon.

Stephen Thompson, Bell and Grant consultants, agents for Commercial Union Insurance, says the company prepared a list of necessary changes for the bar. "I don't know if they carried out any of the recommendations."

"It had nothing to do with the gay part of it," Thompson adds. "There was some unco-operation. . . I don't think they were very upset we cancelled until

they found out how hard it was to get that coverage."

Lyon says the club received a call October 31 about checking electrical wiring. He suspects the visiting insurance adjuster objected to the positioning of the club's fuse box a few feet away from the dance floor. According to Lyon, the body heat generated some nights can cause a short circuit. He says a fan aimed directly at the box deals with the situation, though.

Another potential problem was the staff's use of mace, an irritant usually sprayed into an assailant's eyes.

Lyon says the police knew of the measure and hadn't objected. Regardless, mace will no longer be available to bouncers for protection.

GAE couldn't find another company in the Atlantic prepared to insure the bar. Lyon eventually found an agent representing a company in Montreal which specializes in insuring clubs. He

wouldn't release its name in order to protect the agent.

Rumours and Radcliffe Hall, a GAE-run community centre, are covered by one policy. They fall under the 'assembly space' insurance category. Special risks include fire safety and third-person liability — for example, a drunken patron involved in a car accident could sue the bartender for serving her/him one drink too many.

According to Thompson, third person liability has forced insurance companies to increase rates by astronomical amounts in the past 12 months. Municipalities and school boards were the hardest hit, he said.

"But things have settled down. From my vantage point, I don't think there's a problem today. From a general liability situation, things have eased in the past 12 months."

GAE chair Lyon says Rumours' new policy gives it less coverage and is more expensive.



Over 200 students take part in a collective anatomy experiment on a python covered with whipped cream last Monday. Almost \$100 was raised for charity. Photo by Russ Adams/Dal Photo

# DSA petitions BOG for jobs

By MARK DEWOLF

The Dalhousie Staff Association, representing 750 non-academic employees, has delivered copies of a petition to individual members of the board of Governors of Dalhousie University.

The D.S.A. has been without a contract for over 6 months and is about to enter into conciliations. The petition asks that the board of Governors instruct its negotiators to "deal constructively and expeditiously with the D.S.A.'s proposals."

Signed by 568 D.S.A. members, the petition emphasizes the need

for improvements — particularly in the area of job security. A one million dollar "time and motion" study conducted by *Ritchie and Associates*, a California based consultant firm, has resulted in the loss of over 60 non-academic staff positions despite guarantees from the Dalhousie Administration that no one would be laid off as a result of the study.

Delphine du Toit, Executive Director of the Dalhousie Staff Association, says that job security has increasingly been a problem for them. "Over the last five years we've had a number of layoffs, starting in 1982 when 10

employees were laid off," she says. "D.S.A. members have been steadily losing positions, each year since then."

Ms. du Toit is concerned that many of the layoffs "aren't well reasoned out." She cites apparent flaws in the Board of Governors decision making process that, in a number of instances, have led to cancelling layoff orders at the last minute, when it became apparent that the position they had planned to do away with was invaluable.

Other concerns cited in the petition are work jurisdiction, wages, and educational opportunities.

# Feds slash surreptitiously

OTTAWA(CUP) Student politicians, community groups, and opposition critics have been quick to criticize the federal government for slashing \$30 million from the budget of the annual Challenge Summer Employment Program.

But the junior minister responsible for youth insists Challenge '87 has not lost a penny from last year's budget.

Jean Charest, who will be speaking at an open forum tonight at the Rebecca Cohn, says the Conservative government has committed \$180 million to this year's summer employment program, the same amount as last year.

New Democratic MP and youth critic Howard McCurdy says the government put aside \$210 million for last year's program, including \$30 million spent on the national census.

"This seems to be a case of a government incapable of telling the truth," says McCurdy, adding that half of the 125,000 temporary census jobs were given to students. "You would think this government would cover its posterior and not tell fibs."

In Nova Scotia, the Students Union of Nova Scotia is fighting for the provincial government to increase their outlay for summer employment to 1984 levels. In that year, the Nova Scotia government spent over \$14 million on summer employment programs; last year, the figure dropped to less than \$6 million.

Barney Savage, chair of SUNS, says the federal government's shift of emphasis to subsidizing private sector employment programs has hurt youth in the Atlantic provinces. "Private Sector emphasis is fine, but they must compensate for areas where there is little private industry," says Savage.

In Ontario, the Save Our Summer coalition was formed hastily last year following announcement of Challenge '86 funding priorities, which set a precedent by granting 30 percent to the private sector for wage subsidies. Previous summer employment programs were geared entirely towards the needs of public and non-profit sector organizations.

Challenge '87 has the same funding arrangement as last year,

which Roger Hollander, the coordinator of Save Our Summer, found "extremely disappointing"

The Challenge program provides a 100 percent wage subsidy for non-profit groups and a 50 percent subsidy for private business.

Charest says the program's shift to private industry over the past two years is justified because jobs created through non-profit groups and volunteer organizations do not last as long or pay as much as private sector jobs. He concedes that the "calibre" of jobs in the private sector was not very high, but "obviously, any experience is good experience."

More than two million people will be looking for work this summer, says the minister. He says last summer was "one of the best ever" with the unemployment rate for returning students dropping to a post-recession low of 13.3 percent.

Canadian Federation of Students researcher Anna Marie Turcotte says the drop was due mostly to economic recovery in central Canada. She says the CFS is lobbying for increased funding for economically depressed areas.

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