

Task Force Report

Leisure, recreation — no solutions

by Don Retson
 "According to our information, students are unhappy with the current trend in leisure and recreation. Our survey showed that 86 per cent of the students approached were not satisfied with the facilities, programs, and leadership provided by the Student Union.

This was a general question and no attempt was made to break down these three areas. Another 72 percent found the over-all social life of the university to be lacking."

In a previous article in the

Gazette dealing with recommendations of the Task Force On The Quality of Student Life, the overall lack of communications was seen as the major stumbling block in creating a sense of community at Dalhousie. In many ways, Chapter 2 of the Task Force dealing with Leisure and Recreation is merely a continuation of this observation.

One of the main problems cited by the Task Force in these areas is the difficulty of those in positions of authority to effectively gauge the wants and desires of students. Before any

changes in format and/or variety of leisure and recreation can even be considered by such people, students must make it clear where their preferences lie. And while it is imperative that students become more vocal if any changes are to come about, "the responsibility for searching out opinion is on the shoulders of the leaders."

The fact that no response was obtained from either the Co-ordinator of Men's and Women's Athletics or the Cultural Co-ordinator for Dalhousie, although both were

asked, demonstrates a total lack of concern and responsibility of many people in such high positions.

On leisure, the Task Force complained that too much emphasis has traditionally been placed on turning a profit. In the future, the Task Force suggested that finances not be the major criteria for assessing events, as profit-making operations "are not always the operations which satisfy the consumer." With the "belt-tightening" policy of the provincial government in regards to student loans, many students simply cannot afford to pay the exorbitant prices of many SUB events.

The Task Force seemed quite concerned about the matter of alcoholic beverages being served at most social functions.

"We suggest that if it is necessary to draw people to events by serving liquor at cheap prices, then the type and content of events is incorrect."

Not only has the Task Force done some unnecessary moralizing, but it fails to answer its own question: what are 'correct' events? What this moralizing amounts to is a blatant disregard for the preferences of a vast majority of students — obviously students do want a bar.

Something the Task Force should have concerned itself with but did not, is the great number of first year students who are turned away from

many SUB events for being under-age. It hardly seems fair that these students pay the same student fee as all other students, yet are forbidden access to most functions that their money is sponsoring.

In the area of athletics at Dal, the Task Force reported "there is a considerable ill-feeling among students concerning current opportunities for physical recreation. Most people feel the university has long neglected this phase of recreation and places too much emphasis at the inter-varsity level."

This observation is most true and with this in mind, the GAZETTE is publishing a list of recreational facilities open for individual participation.

While the recommendations put forward by the Task Force in the chapter on Leisure and Recreation are fairly progressive in comparison with the other 41 recommendations, it is unfortunate that topics of such significance were taken lightly as they were. Of the many pages that contain the observations and recommendations on the quality of student life, the Task Force devoted only five pages to leisure and recreation and its obvious shortcomings. The two recommendations the report did not make are, unfortunately, indicative of the whole report — we found the problem, now you find the solution.

Board of Governors

Not a Number Game

by Wilma Broeren

If it hadn't been for student representation on the Board of Governors, Fenwick Towers would never have been acquired. This from John Graham and Brian Smith, two student representatives on the Board of Governors, which in Brian Smith's words is "the ultimate authority in the university community."

Of the forty Board members, the students have four representatives. The other two student members are John Holancin and Bill Henderson. Only one student Brian Smith, sits on the Executive Committee of the Board. This however is the first year a student has been allowed to sit on the Executive.

Smith and Graham were questioned recently on what they felt to be the role of the Board, on their role on the Board and finally on whether they felt there should be more students on the Board which has final approval of all matters pertaining to the university.

Graham expressed the view that the Board "translates programs, people and physical surroundings into dollars and cents" which is not done at the faculty or Senate level. Smith expanded on the Board by saying we "don't want to call it

a rubber stamp," but added this would be unfair without qualification. It has an important role to play, he said, depending on the information the members of the board have and the kind of members which are on the board. He felt many of the members work very hard and are sincerely interested in doing something effective. Both Graham and Smith were adamant that the majority of the members of the Board do not function as a bloc against the students.

John Graham imparted that as a student representative on the board he "provides continuity as there is a student turnover," and "acts in students interests." Smith replied that he "represents the interests of the people I directly represent," that is the students. Do these two men along with the other two members, adequately represent the diversified interests of the students?

Both Smith and Graham felt their presence on the Board as student representatives led to the acquisition of Fenwick Towers. They also felt they played an important role in preventing a significant increase in tuition fees.

When asked if they would favor more students on the

Board, both were opposed. "Numbers are not as important as quality" was the view expressed by John Graham. He pointed out, as did Smith, that students have more representatives than the administration which is represented by Dr. Hicks only. The alumni has nine representatives, the United Church of Canada has one representative and the other members are drawn from the community. But it is the students who are affected by the decisions of the board as well as the faculty which has not even one representative.

Smith followed much the same line as Graham saying that "effectiveness is not found in numbers." There would be a need for more students on the Board only if the present representatives were not effective. More students on the Board would lead to a bloc being formed which would be "adverse to the university community as a whole."

Unfortunately we were unable to speak with John Holancin as he is presently out of town, and we were unable to reach Bill Henderson. However if Henderson has any comments, we would appreciate hearing from him.



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