

University News Beat

by Department of Information and Publications

Emergency Services
Centre — 3333

Information York

A place to complain to

Got a complaint, or a suggestion? Want to let off steam? Information York (in Central Square, opposite the Post Office) also serves as a complaint bureau.

If you want to criticize something or if you merely have a suggestion on how to improve a particular campus service or facility, you should write it down, and the people who run Information York will make sure it gets to the right place.

They will follow-up on it if a response isn't forthcoming within ten days. Information York can't solve problems, but it can make sure that complaints or suggestions get to the persons or departments responsible and can press for a reply.

This feature of Information York began last January after it was realized that there was no central

place on campus where students could direct grievances or criticisms. Since York is a large community, people sometimes don't know who's responsible for something.

So far the departmental staffs and administrators at York have been cooperative with the service. Many replies have been quite lengthy and detailed. Often action has been initiated within a day or two of receipt of a complaint to make alterations or improvements.

Most times complaints have to do with practical matters: lamps are burnt out, something's not working, the hours of operation of some facilities aren't meeting the demand.

Earlier this month one student complained because a certain elevator had been out of order for several days. The Department of Physical Plant reported back that the root of the problem lay in the fact that the repair parts weren't available locally. The Department pointed out that "under normal circumstances, elevators are repaired within a matter of hours and one can normally expect even a difficult problem to be corrected within a day or two."

The problem wasn't one of neglect, but was due to the unusual nature of the malfunction. Communication is part of the purpose behind the complaint service.

If you have a complaint you should go to Information York and request a complaint form. Forms are used so that the original can be sent to the appropriate office and a copy kept for follow-up.

All complaints or suggestions should be hand-written or typed on

this form. Full particulars and details should be given.

With regard to academic matters a student may be advised to go in person to see a faculty advisor. If after seeing an advisor the student still can't get his problem resolved, Information York will then advise him to put the problem in writing.

Most times the complaint bureau simply opens the lines of communication. All that it may take to improve a situation is to make somebody aware that it exists.

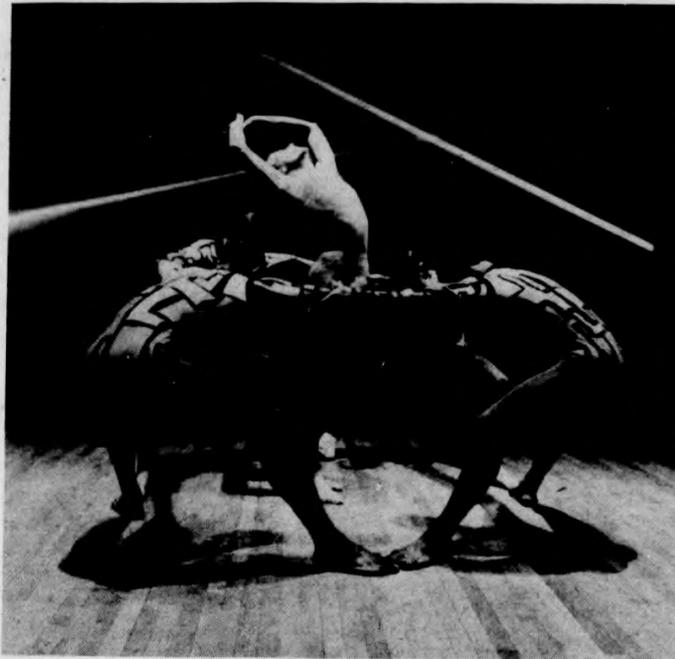
Information York is staffed by volunteers from various offices and departments around campus. If the person manning the booth at a certain time doesn't know who should be contacted about a particular problem, he or she at least knows somebody who would know.

Last year somebody complained because the windows on one of the York buses were so dirty that you couldn't see out of them. They were washed.

A few weeks ago somebody suggested that there should be more directional signs in the College complex.

Departments sometimes end their replies by thanking the person for bringing the matter to their attention; and judging by their subsequent actions, this isn't just a polite response.

Not everything can be solved. But sometimes knowing what the difficulties or reasons are from the other end can help.



Modern dance troupe at York

The world-renowned Murray Louis Dance Company is making its Toronto debut at Burton Auditorium on Monday, December 9 wrapping up the pre-Christmas offerings of this year's Performing Arts Series.

The members of this New York-based modern dance troupe delight in the body in motion, and dance with an exuberant energy not found in other companies.

Louis, who created the style, not only dances, but choreographs as well. He has a warm, humorous feeling for life — which prompted critic Clive

Barnes of New York Times to designate him "one of the best technicians in modern dance".

The modern archetypical choreography of Laura Dean and Dance Company will follow on Thursday, January 16; and a concert by Vancouver's Anna Wyman Dance Theatre winds up the dance series on Monday, February 24.

Performances begin at 8:30 p.m. Tickets to these and all the Performing Arts Series shows can be purchased at the Burton Box Office, Monday to Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (667-2370).



Making a complaint

Foster parents needed

The Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services is looking for people who would be willing to act as foster parents for kids who have had some sort of trouble with the law.

The kids range in age from 12 to 18 and are either on probation or have come from training schools. In most cases they need to be put in other homes while their own homes get rebuilt. In some cases they don't

even have a home to go back to.

None of them has been involved with serious crime. Offences range from breaking and entering to simply running away from home.

All of them are physically healthy. The Ministry pays the foster parents seven dollars a day to cover room and board and basic needs. It also covers OHIP and dental bills.

It also provides guidance and round-the-clock back up help, if needed. The probation officer assigned usually likes to keep a low profile; and instead of making set, routine checks (which could interfere with the family life), prefers dropping by on an informal basis.

The government is closing down several training schools. Studies have indicated that it sometimes does a delinquent more harm than good in disrupting his life and taking him away from his environment.

One of the difficulties with the foster parent programme is trying to find enough homes in the Downsview-North York part of the city for kids coming from the area. As a result, many of these kids are being sent to homes downtown or in other parts of the city.

Since the one thing the kid often needs most is a sense of stability, it would be better if he or she could stay on familiar ground and continue going to the same school.

Any faculty or staff members who have an extra room and want to reach out a hand should look into the programme.

Anyone interested can call George McKenzie, a probation and after care officer, at 248-3055.

The challenge of being single

Last September more than 70 people responded to Dr. Sy Silverberg's invitation to talk about programmes for singles that would meet the needs of those who were tired of phony courtship games and looking for more meaningful interpersonal relationships. As a result of the suggestions and ideas discussed at this get-together, the Education and Growth Opportunities Programme (EGO) of the Centre for Continuing Education will include in its second term offerings a new course, "Awareness for Singles".

The programme, scheduled to begin in January, will be a series of eight weekly three-hour sessions (Monday evenings), designed to explore the problems of individuals

who are not currently involved in one-to-one, intimate relationships (those who are divorced, separated, widowed, or who never married). The group will be composed of an equal number of males and females and each week sub-groups of 8 will be formed so that each participant will have an opportunity to share feelings and ideas with every other member.

Topics that will be explored include: being alone versus being lonely; autonomy versus dependence; sexuality; and, feeling OK in a couple-oriented society. Barb and Sy Silverberg, plus other members of the EGO Faculty, will be the facilitators for the programme. The fee is \$80.00 and it is expected that

the programme will fill rapidly.

In May, EGO has arranged for Marie Edwards, author of *The Challenge of Being Single*, to conduct a weekend workshop designed for singles who want to explore the positive and challenging aspects of being single and who want to find new and creative ways of dealing with the special problems and frustrations of the single state.

Both courses are open to anyone who's at the point where they know that there must be more to life than "sex and the single girl" and would like to share their experiences and learn from others. Contact the EGO Programme at the Centre (667-3276) for more information.

Federal bicultural development programme

York is involved with the Bicultural Development Programme. Run by the federal government, the purpose of the programme is to give French-speaking and English-speaking federal employees a chance to learn more about one another's language and culture.

It gives the employees the equivalent of a sabbatical year. They are free to take any kinds of courses at one of three universities in the language opposite to their mother tongue.

Candidates are chosen from the senior levels of both the civil service and the crown corporations.

The government owns some houses in Agincourt, and each year several French-speaking families come to Toronto to live for twelve

months. The programme runs from July to July, and is now in its eighth year of operation.

When the families first arrive they go through some initial language training and orientation sessions, according to their needs.

The three universities involved in the programme are Laval, York and the University of Toronto. This year there are ten French-speaking civil servants in Toronto with their families. Three of them are at the University of Toronto, and the rest are at York.

While they are free to take anything they want, the participants usually end up taking courses directly related to their careers, often in the area of administrative studies. This year one of them is taking first year Faculty of Arts courses.

The participants can take courses

either on a credit or non-credit basis. As well as taking courses, they are expected to involve themselves and their families in the social and cultural activities of whichever city they go to.

Apart from helping to implement the government's policy on bilingualism, the programme has broader benefits. The participants don't just come from Ottawa. Some of the French-speaking ones come from Quebec City and Montreal, and since they're all from senior levels they can help make government more understanding and receptive to the differences between the two principal cultures.

Professor Henry Best of York, of Atkinson's Department of History has been one of the leading organizers of the programme.

Events register

If you're planning something let us know about it. In order to minimize the scheduling of simultaneous events, the Department of Information and Publications keeps an Events Register.

As soon as you decide to hold some kind of function, you should give the Department a call in case a potentially competitive activity has already been planned for the same time.

By listing the event ahead of time you will also be assured of getting automatic coverage in the appropriate issues of the Daily Bulletin.

This service can only work with the cooperation of the community. As soon as you decide to hold a meeting, conference, special lecture or seminar or some kind of entertainment, give Rob Barlow of the Department a call at 667-3441.