

More letters

Tribute to Spence is a delight amid political mire

Myles Davis's tribute to Ev Spence, The Consummate Athlete (Excalibur, December 11), was indeed a delight.

It is quite refreshing to see that Excalibur will sometimes engage in the pursuit of simple and honest journalism. Moreover, the general tone of the editorial might suggest that the newspaper has at least temporarily recovered from the severe bout of intoxication which was seemingly induced by an excess of petty political enthusiasm.

Cecil O. Humphrey

A reader's thanks

In your December 4 issue of Excalibur, Agnes Kruchio wrote an article about me.

Her approach to writing, her sensitivity and respect are rare qualities to find in people who are "in the news". I would like to thank you — and, of course, her.

Noemi Lapzeson,
York University
Dance Department

Snow emergency

It's about time someone applauded the overwhelming efficiency of York's snow removal team.

I mean if a recent quarter inch flurry warranted drastic SNOW EMERGENCY conditions, I can hardly wait to see what happens during one of our more devastating half inch blizzards.

Janet Rainey

Nothing to lose

The past four years have seen a serious decline in the quality of education and quality of life on this campus. There are fewer full-time faculty teaching this year than there were five years ago. Meanwhile, enrollment has increased by more than 15 per cent.

The incomes of the faculty have fallen far behind the rate of inflation and are now at a level, approximately equal to that of senior school teachers. In fact, York faculty members are the lowest paid faculty in the entire province. Therefore, York has serious difficulty in being attractive to the best qualified teaching staff.

The administration claims that there is no need for a faculty union and that the formation of one would create an atmosphere of confrontation and antagonism that doesn't now exist. The opposite is the case.

Rather than oppose the government's cutbacks, the university administration has imposed wage settlements which did not even meet the rate of inflation; insisted that York operate on a balanced budget, thus exacerbating the budget squeeze; refused to allow a growth in the faculty, thus increasing class sizes.

It should be noted, as well, that the current president of York, H. Ian Macdonald, before coming to York, was deputy treasurer of the

province for years and was therefore personally involved in developing and implementing the government's cutback policy.

The establishment of a faculty union would enable faculty mem-

bers to bargain fairly for wages and working conditions. Decent wage increases would attract better teaching staff. It also means that faculty could press for reduced class sizes thus giving

students a better education.

Students have everything to gain and nothing to lose from YUFA becoming a union.

Support YUFA!
Dale Ritch,
President, CYSF

Harbinger's column

Alcohol (the chemical name is ethanol) has been known to civilization since the days of Noah, and is still the most widely used drug in the world. Most commercial alcohol products are produced naturally by the fermentation of fruits, vegetables and grains.

Alcohol acts as a depressant on the central nervous system, inhibiting the work of the cerebral cortex, the thinking part of the brain, and tends to give the drinker a feeling of relaxation and well-being. Further drinking increases the impairment of the thinking process and can result in excited and uncontrolled behavior, poor judgement and balance, and a dulled memory and concentration.

Alcohol affects a great many parts of the body, widening the blood vessels and producing a sensation of warmth. In actuality, this encourages the loss of body heat. So, drinking in cold weather for warmth is a very poor idea.

Heavy drinking dulls one's sense of appetite and increases the body's need for essential vitamins, especially B vitamins. Malnutrition is a frequent result of

heavy drinking. Alcohol also increases the secretion of mucus in the stomach and this, in turn, often leads to stomach inflammation. Alcohol increases the body's flow of urine and may damage the delicate lining of the kidneys.

Alcohol is named as a strong influence in the following disorders: loss of appetite, vitamin deficiencies, stomach inflammation, tumors, infections, inflammation of the nervous system, skin problems and sexual impotence. Drinkers also show higher death rates from diseases of the heart and liver, pneumonia, cancer of the lung and mouth, accidental death and suicide.

Continual heavy consumption is known as alcoholism. The major results of this condition are malnutrition, possible fatal cirrhosis of the liver (hardening of the liver due to inflammation of the tissue) and neuritis (damage to the central nervous system).

This damage often results in a condition called delirium tremens. The "D.T.'s" are characterized by anxiety, restlessness, paranoia and often frightening

hallucinations. These attacks can last from three to five days, severe D.T. has an eight per cent fatality rate.

This physical deterioration is usually accompanied by a parallel decline in the drinker's social life. Alcoholism is a major cause of unemployment and of family and marital breakup. Drinking is also a major cause of half of the automobile accidents in our society and half of the crimes of violence.

The lowering of the drinking age in Ontario has resulted in an increased consumption of alcohol by those in the 18-21 age group and adolescent alcoholism is rapidly becoming a serious social problem. It is expected that this age group's increased alcohol consumption will result in the earlier appearance of the physical disabilities associated with drinking. The impaired driving and personal injury rate of this age group has increased drastically — in some areas as much as fourfold.

The problem of adolescent alcoholism will demand a great deal of social concern in the years ahead.

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