

MUGWUMP JOURNAL



by Kim Doyle

Have you ever noticed that when you get in your car on a cold day or night, it is always the passenger's window that clears first? Or how about when the temperature is -25 degrees celsius, and you get in your car to go home and the car doesn't start to get warm till you arrive in your drive way? I guess this defeats the purpose of trying to avoid the cold and stay warm. Guess what? You should have walked, you probably would have been warmer. (Besides I could use the parking spot during the day.)

I was talking to Rod Cumberland the other day and, as usual, he reminded me that UNB's Woodsmen are number 1 in Canada. Well Rod, I thought I would give you a break and at the same time spare everyone else, by announcing your fabulous news in MugWump. But then again, I wouldn't want to take away your glory. (Or was that your pick-up line?)

Has anyone been down to the bank on Campus lately? Well I have. I went in mid-afternoon when supposedly it would be slow. Well as you have guessed, it was slow - service slow that is. There were two poor ladies working away, always cheerful, serving the 22 customers in line, while the other ladies were working away doing their paper work. Anyways the irony is that by the time a third teller got opened up, there was no line. Isn't that always what happens.

Bill Traer just informed me that there is a new sport in Australia. It's called Midget Hurling. It's like a rodeo, they draw for a midget, and the person who tosses the midget the furthest is the winner. It seems that there is always alot of public out cry. But... the midgets seem to like it; they get paid enough.

There was a darn nice turnout for the **Flock of Seagulls** Wednesday night. The music was good, that's probably why they are successful. It sure isn't because of their manners. I'm sure those of you who had the misfortune to run into them, know what I mean. We're wondering who died and made them god.

The Trees were a great success last Friday. Too bad it wasn't the same in Shediac. I guess their MAC broke down. I guess, it's hard to get music when you have the disk but no computer.

ROAD TRIP.....Convoy, a couple hundred fanatics go on the road to an unsuspecting Mt. Allison, to partake in Varsity Mania next week. Mt. A. beware.

Here is a good question, ever wonder what would happen if they opened all the locks in the Panama Canal? (Nope, me either).



Mutants for Nukes

OPINION...

As kids we used to sing a song that began with these words. The remainder of the lyrics, admittedly, degenerated considerably, a product of some puerile imagination. The song came to mind as I sat pondering on New Year's Eve. While it brought, momentarily, a nostalgia chuckle about a past sense of humour, my thoughts became more fixed on the first few words. What state of mind, and appreciation for one's work, would be conducive to cause such a thing.

Few would deny that one must work to "earn one's keep", so to speak. But what is work? The tenor of the general conversational question, "And what do you do?", seems to indicate what society considers work to be. It is that for which one is paid, and, for the most part, done between the hours of 9 and 5. The extent to which these are fulfilled or met appears, in the main, to be the criteria by which to measure full "contributing" members of society. More striking is that the importance and validity attached to what one does is often measured in monetary form, that is, by the salary one receives.

One can appreciate, therefore, why students often gain the impression that, because they are on an academic journey, they are not yet really considered as fully "contributing". Not the journey, but only what comes after it, is frequently intimated as the "real world". To what extent does this not create an eagerness to graduate, or a reluctance to pursue further studies?

The elderly and the (legitimately) unemployed often suffer from similar, if not more acute, mental anguish. If relegated to a position outside of, even a drain upon, mainstream economic activity, then the accompanying depression is hardly surprising. Also hardly surprising is that some homemakers are accorded equal economic, and therefore social, recognition.

I feel we have, to a large extent, lost a proper understanding of work by viewing it in a narrowly defined manner, and we have thereby impoverished ourselves. That is brought to bear in an article, entitled "Greed thriving on Campus", which reports on a recent study done by a Higher Education Research Institute of the University of California at Los Angeles. In an examination of Freshman goals, it was found that in 1987, 71% attended university "to make more money". That figure stood at 44% in 1967. Only 39% felt that developing a meaningful philosophy of life was a very important or essential goal, down dramatically from 83% who felt that way in 1967. Such is a telling tale of our secular, profit motivated society. And, what role then does the university play in this? Does it conform to the pressures of this society by becoming the means by which individuals can attain this specific end, thereby measuring their personal advancement and progress in terms of a minimization of the spiritual and a maximization of the economic?

Few of us would wish to do without the comforts and conveniences brought about by technological innovation, and competition in the "market place", the driving force of the capitalistic system, has played a large part in that. But when profit and a high salary becomes the sole motive for study, work and life, both the individual and society become impoverished. If work becomes merely a means to this narrowly defined end, then one in effect prostitutes oneself. And, is it not ironic that increased wealth can also bring with it increased poverty? It is not money, but the love of money which is the root of all evil, and when only high financially-rewarded occupations are awarded most social recognition then we severely, and to our detriment, limit what is important activity.

That, of course, is the crux of the issue. What in this life is important? Our highly individualistic society has made clear its emphasis. But its "spin-offs" have been "latch-key" children, high-stress, and "Thank Goodness Its Friday" syndrome, and consumption based leisure and recreation. The first two are considered to be the "price we pay", the third a relief, and the last a compensation.

In all of this some things come to mind. Perhaps we ought to be talking about vocation, rather than merely work. What we do between the hours of 9 and 5 ought to have meaning also outside of them. One's whole life should be seen as working towards something valuable, wholesome and constructive, and that ought to be based on the legitimate benefit rendered to humankind, rather than solely the individual. Here the "think globally, act locally" notion becomes crucial. One must also seek an area suited for one's talents and abilities. At the same time, of course, a suitable monetary return can be expected. But that ought to be measured more in the order of sustaining and maintaining oneself, and one's dependents, as the case may be.

Whistling is indicative of a heart-felt contentment. Contentment will not arise from any one-sided emphasis. Music is good for the soul, and today there is an abundance of it. Music arises freely from the soul when contentment and peace abide within it. When it does not, music needs to be pumped into it, often at high volume. Isn't it ironic that one hears so few people whistling today. On the other hand, Walkman's seem to proliferate.

By John Valk
Campus Ministry