

EDITORIAL

SUB expansion: Is the commitment there?

by Allan Carter

It is not surprising that a recent Student Union survey discovered that the majority of seven hundred UNB and St. Thomas students favoured an expansion of the Student Union Building (see story page 1). Very few would argue against the obvious. It is quite apparent that the Student Union building cannot accommodate all the organizations which it should. Further, many people feel that, in the long run, housing all the student services under one roof would cut down on operating costs, not to mention the fact that it would also make it much more convenient for students. Many groups which are primarily in existence for students are discovering that they will need more space if the services which students find beneficial are to grow and expand.

Students also see a need for new facilities in an expanded SUB, such as more lounge space, group study rooms, quiet study areas, a used bookstore, and a larger cafeteria. There is also an urgent need to make the building more accessible to those who are physically challenged. Accessibility is a very serious problem and it is, unfortunately, a problem which the university will be hesitant to deal with until the expansion of the SUB begins. Student Union president Eric Burchill also points out in a news article that a facility is needed that is larger than the cafeteria, yet smaller than the Aitken Centre. The Aitken Centre is rarely a good spot for concerts

due to its acoustics and the cafeteria in many situations has serious space limitations.

The suggestions of what could be added to an expanded SUB are endless and it appears students generally support the idea in theory. However, it is evident that a Student Union referendum will have to be held on the subject in order to conclude whether or not students favour the idea financially. The money has to come from somewhere and since the building is primarily used by students a large sum has to come from us. The Student Union has plans to hold a referendum during the elections in March. Yet while the UNB Student Union has made efforts to support the idea of an expanded SUB, little has been said by the STU Student Union, the UNB Graduate Student Association and CAMPUS. Surely, each of these groups has a vested interest in an expanded SUB. But each group also has to weigh the pros and cons of supporting such an idea - particularly the STU Student Union since it is questionable whether or not students at STU see the SUB as their centre. Both their student newspaper and their student Union are located in the SUB, yet their cafeteria and classrooms are on the STU campus. Recently, the STU Student Union has indicated that SUB expansion is not an issue of high priority although they see the benefits of expanding the SUB. Thus, perhaps STU may find it necessary to hold a referendum as well.

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Both the GSA and CAMPUS have been directly involved in the planning for the development of a day care centre on campus, yet neither have publicly said where they stand on SUB expansion. In fact, while the UNB Student Union believes both organizations are probably in favour of SUB expansion and will want to be part of it, very few, if any, formal discussions have been held. In fact, both seats for the GSA and CAMPUS on the SUB Expansion Advisory Committee are presently empty. Obviously, a referendum among members of both these groups would be unrealistic. Thus, the executive of these groups will have to seriously evaluate their positions in SUB expansion - and quickly.

Presently, the SUB expansion committee is planning to have a conceptual plan for an expanded SUB completed within the next few weeks. Let's hope that a final commitment from the Unions, the GSA, CAMPUS and the university administration will quickly follow these plans.

Partying in a tough decade

by Allan Carter

According to a recent article in the *Globe and Mail*, charity balls and formals are taking a back seat as university life enters a "tough decade". There is no doubt that university life is becoming tougher, at least financially. Further, students at UNB are certainly not immune to what is occurring at other universities across Canada. As tuition rates increase and students loans become increasingly harder to attain, more and more students are keeping a close eye on where they spend their money. Yet, at the same time, it seems that social events being

held at UNB are becoming increasingly twofold. Not only do students have a chance to relax and have a good time, but in many cases the money raised at these events is given to charities and non-profit organizations.

These types of events and socials have become mainstream in the UNB residence system. For instance, Bridge's "Polar Dip", Lady Dunn's "24-hour Dance-Till-You're-Dunn-Athon", and the Jones House "Mud Dive" are a few of the events held in the residence system at UNB which financially benefit the Transition House in Fredericton, the Fredericton Food Bank, the Special Olympics, The Red Cross, and Big

Brothers-Big Sisters. Further, the student response to the Christmas match program this year was very impressive with 17 student families being paired with other students and student organizations.

Thus, while students at UNB may be experiencing tougher times, the overall support for non-profit organizations, beneficial programs and charities is overwhelming. Students are able to have a good time for a relatively cheap price tag and a worthy organization benefits from their fun. Interesting arrangement, isn't it?

Supplement notice

The Brunswickan is planning to have two supplements this term. One will be the yearly women's supplement which will be published the week before the March break. The other will be a residence supplement which will be published about the middle of March. If anyone has any submissions or ideas for these two supplements please drop them off at the Bruns office in rm 35 in the SUB or submit them to the Wimmin's Collective or the Residence Representative board.



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brunswickan

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The Brunswickan, in its 126th year of publication, is Canada's oldest official student publication. The Brunswickan is generally published every Friday during the school year by Brunswickan Publishing Inc with a circulation of 10,000. Membership is open to all University of New Brunswick Fredericton students, but all members of the university community are encouraged to contribute.

The opinions contained in this newspaper are those of the individual writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Brunswickan.

The Brunswickan, while being an open forum for the viewpoints and opinions of all UNB students, may refuse any submission that is judged to be racist, sexist, libellous, or containing attacks of a strictly personal nature. The Brunswickan reserves the right to edit for brevity. Letters generally shouldn't exceed 300 words in length and must contain your signature, student number and phone number, or it will NOT be printed.

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The Brunswickan is printed with flair by Maritime Web in Moncton, and impeccably delivered by Tiny.

Subscription rates are \$25 per year. Second class mail is in effect #8120

National advertising rates are available from Campus Plus at (416) 362-6468.

The Brunswickan
Student Union Building
University of New Brunswick
P.O. Box 4400
E3B 5A3
Phone: (506) 453-4983
Fax: (506) 453-4958