

Times change but trash remains

by Portia Priegert

As one of the most active environmentalists on campus, Dennis Wighton is a resource the university can be proud of.

Though concerns over environmental issues are declining, Wighton, administrator of the genetics department, feels they are far from a passing fad.

The factors which triggered the ecological consciousness of the Sixties still interest him.

"I can't help thinking about the ethics of the problem," he says. "We all know a little piece of paper won't kill anybody, but what makes us realize the implications of our habits and wants to do something about them?"

"Although there has been a definite change in our thinking, and in that of governments and industry, the process is a long one."

"It can be frustrating to try and change things ... you need a lot of patience."

Wighton is co-ordinator of the Interdisciplinary Committee for Environmental Quality at the U of A. The group was formed in 1968 out of concern about the impact of the environmental actions of society.

The committee attempts to assist the community at large and to deal with environmental problems at the university.

One of its most valuable benefits is the "in-house education in systems thinking" which occurs when engineers, biologists and economists talk together.

The little LRT that could

by Portia Priegert

The quality of public transportation services will be significantly increased if the Light Rail Transit system (LRT) is extended to south Edmonton, says a city planning study.

The near-completed study, presented to the university community last Thursday, deals with the technical aspects of such an extension and will be considered by City Council in October.

Council's decision whether to go ahead with the LRT extension will be based in part on the findings of the study and will have a profound impact on the university. Three of the four proposed alternatives serve the

"Information was not as readily available when we started," says Wighton, "so we provided speakers, free courses and information." The committee still provides this service.

The committee did a number of environmental studies including the first comprehensive look at solid waste disposal and air pollution in Edmonton.

It was responsible for the paper recycling program now operating at the U of A. According to Wighton it's one of the best in the country and operates on a break-even basis, with the money paid for pick-up equalling the amount received from recycling.

"We also raised a few eyebrows" when the study of mercury pollution in the North Saskatchewan River revealed the university was one of the major culprits, he recalls.

Though there have been improvements on campus, Wighton says there is a lot left to do. "There are still too many pesticides used on the grounds, for instance," he says.

Wighton believes the university should be a leader in pollution control. "If we're not first in the community, who will be?"

"It was very simple in the Sixties to bang people over the head and get them moving. It seems so easy to criticize today; now you've got to suggest alternatives."

Alternative ideas come easily to Wighton however.

One idea led to the creation of Edmonton's award-winning bicycle trail system.

"I just thought of the idea one day," says Wighton, a regular bike rider.

Soon after, he started timing and mapping various routes around the city. One sympathetic alderman and a city feasibility study later, the trails were established.

Wighton is also active on several public advisory committees and is president of the Whale Society of Edmonton.

Above the desk in his naturally lighted office there are pictures of the whales he hopes to preserve. On the other wall are his insect collection and his "dirty" pictures—photos of local pollution.

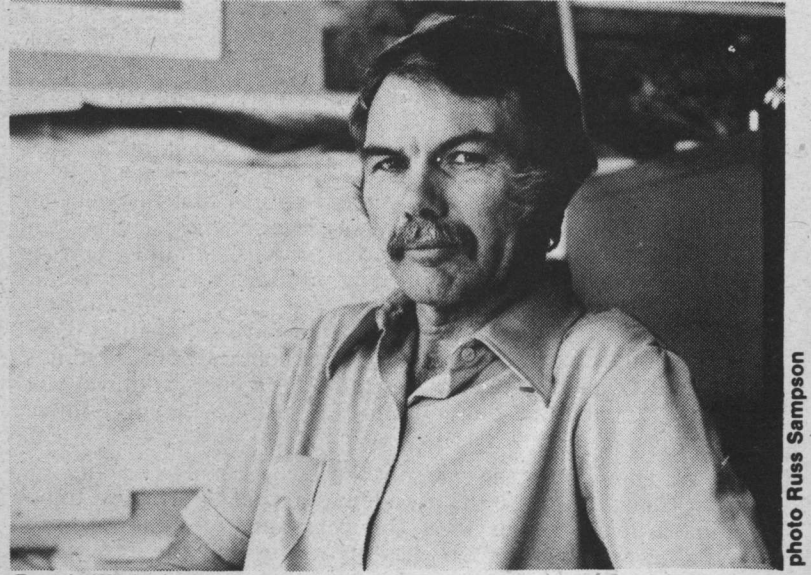
Several large filing cabinets house environmental files on everything from air pollution to zoo-ecology. The largest file is on the ethics of ecology.

"Anyone can come in and use the material," he says. "Often kids working on school projects drop by."

One drawer is full of information about the energy-conserving house the university is planning to build.

Once completed it will demonstrate the technology available for northern latitudes, he says.

But for Wighton, it's the individual's activities that deserve the most important consideration.



Dennis Wighton

photo Russ Sampson

The number of studies are almost causing their own problem," he says. "I once requested some information on solid waste for a project I was working on. I got it all right—31 cases of it. They certainly got rid of their solid waste problem, but did I ever have one of my own!"

Wighton eventually solved his problem by giving the publications to libraries and interested groups.

A trip to the dump would have been to far too simple a solution for a "total university employee" and environmentalist like Wighton.

Help for outsiders

by Peter Michalyszyn

The International Student Office is a busy place these days—providing services for over 1200 foreign students at the U of A.

The ISO (not to be confused with the International Student's Organization, a U of A club), is part of the Office of Student Affairs. The ISO provides services and programs for international students and refer students to other appropriate offices for specific problems.

International Student Advisor, Ruth Groberman, describes the ISO as a responsive office, reacting to the expressed needs of foreign students. Groberman also stresses that she and her staff are advisors, not counsellors, and that they are responsible for making international students aware of the cold hard facts of living in a foreign country.

The advisory and referral service keeps the ISO busy, but the office also prepares various publications. The 80-page *Information Handbook for International Students* is a comprehensive guide on how to do almost anything in Canada. Brochures are also sent to foreign students interested in going to the U of A.

The ISO is currently looking for a Programs Director to organize special activities for international students. One such program—International Student Orientation—was held August 28-September 1 this fall. It was a four-day series of informative seminars to orient new residents of Canada to an often totally different way of life. The orientation was assisted financially by the Students' Union, the Grad Students Association, and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Another interesting feature in the Office of Student Affairs is the Study and Travel Abroad Reference Room. The STARR contains an abundance of international journals and cross-cultural information. This facility is open to all U of A students, and contains information not available anywhere else.

While the ISO is primarily a service office, it recognizes the need for social events for international students who, as Groberman puts it, may never have a Canadian friend all the time they are in Canada. An International Centre would go a long way, Groberman says, in creating intercultural activities and understanding among all U of A students.

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PQ member to lecture

The deputy government house leader in the Quebec National Assembly, Jean-Francois Bertrand, will be the speaker at a Students' Union forum Friday.

Bertrand will give a short lecture on sovereignty association by a lengthy question and answer period.

The PQ member is on a Canadian speaking tour called "Entre Amis". He will give a lecture at Faculte Saint-Jean later in the day.

The forum will be held in the Meditation Room in SUB Friday at noon.

Students fight cuts

The executive of the Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) met over the weekend to discuss the next month's work on the anti-cutbacks campaign.

Executive officer Lake Sagaris outlined the points of concern in the campaign, including quotas, tuition fees, cutbacks and student aid.

The executive also discussed plans for the conference of college and technical school students which will take place this weekend at Mount Royal

College. The conference will discuss issues ranging from NUS on the various campuses to on-campus athletics.

Finally, the FAS executive arranged for Punam Khosla of the British Columbia Federation of students to replace Lake Sagaris for the two weeks Sagaris will be away. Sagaris is being sent by the Chilean community in Edmonton on a fact-finding expedition to discover the fate of the radical students imprisoned by the Chilean junta.

university. All four of the proposals call for an extension of the existing north-eastern line beneath Jasper Avenue to 109 Street and across the High Level Bridge.

The first alternative has branches to the university, Millwoods and Kaskitayo. The second and third alternatives call for a LRT system along the CPR corridor to the Calgary Trail and 51 Avenue with or without a branch to the university. The final alternative is a line to the university only.

John Toffelmire of the City of Edmonton's Planning Office said he has made no recommendation about the alternatives' feasibility. He stated only that the LRT should be extended along Jasper Avenue, but that there was "lots of uncertainty beyond that."

One of the major findings of the study was that costs would be significantly higher if CPR remained at its present location at the High Level Bridge. If CPR remains, the LRT line will have to run on either side of the CPR tracks, the bridge will have to be structurally reinforced and the branch to the university will have to be underground.

The estimated cost for the first alternative (with lines to Millwoods, Kaskitayo and the university), ranges from \$180 to \$250 million, depending whether CPR relocates or not.

The fourth alternative, a line to the university only, would cost from \$60 to \$91 million.

However, if the line extends only to the university, savings in travel time will not be large. The study concluded that the LRT must penetrate Millwoods to get significantly lesser travel time.

A moderate decrease in total transit operating costs and a decided decrease in bus operating costs and bus fleet size with the operation of a south LRT line were other main conclusions of the study.

It also found that 90% of transit users were in favour of some sort of south-bound extension.

Furthermore, 98% of the citizens directly affected by the LRT extension said they were in favor of it. Only a small percentage stressed that minimizing the cost of the extension should be the major consideration.

The study made a 20-year projection that suggested population growth would continue in suburban areas, but employment would remain concentrated in the central areas of the city—placing a greatly increased demand on the transportation system.

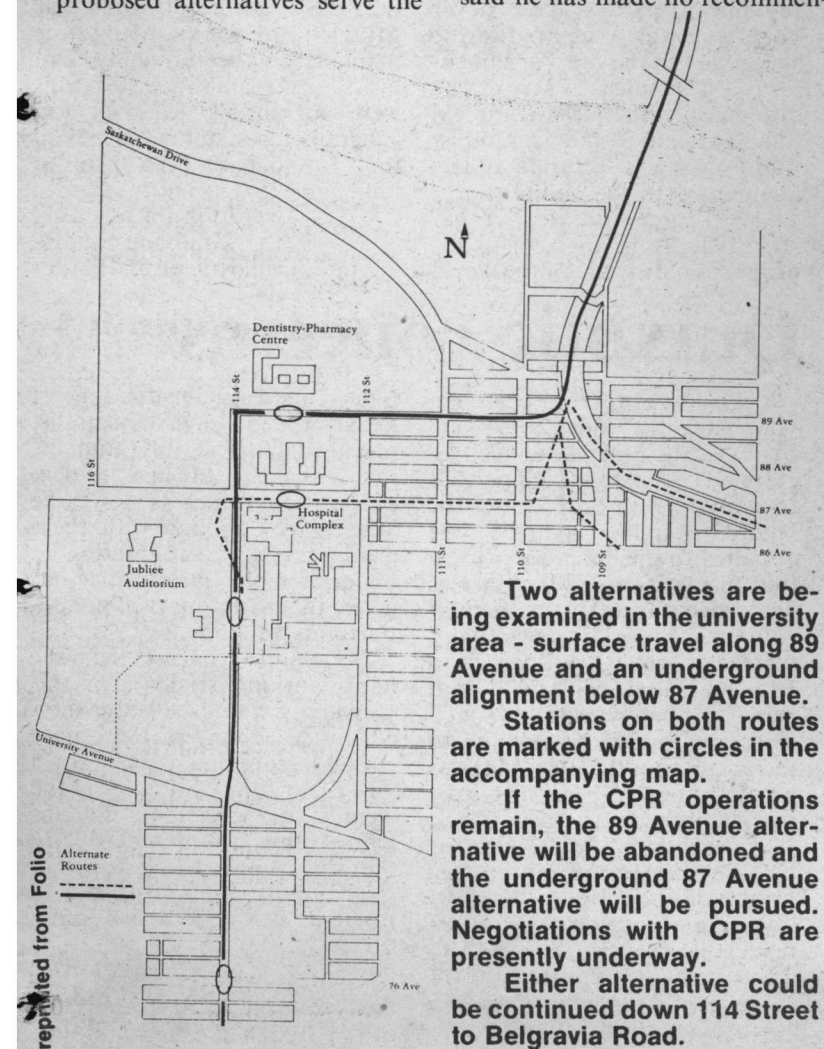
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Two alternatives are being examined in the university area - surface travel along 89 Avenue and an underground alignment below 87 Avenue.

Stations on both routes are marked with circles in the accompanying map.

If the CPR operations remain, the 89 Avenue alternative will be abandoned and the underground 87 Avenue alternative will be pursued. Negotiations with CPR are presently underway.

Either alternative could be continued down 114 Street to Belgravia Road.

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