

# Emergency housing for women starts this fall

Samantha Brennan

A growing number of Halifax women find themselves and their children not only homeless but also ignored by a society which provides emergency housing

only for their male counterparts.

The Women's emergency housing coalition and the Association for women's residential facilities plan to open facilities for women this fall.

"We are trying to set up a shelter that will parallel what the Salvation Army has to offer for men," said funding coordinator Margaret Fekeshazy.

The group has leased a historic

home from the city of Halifax. Partial funding is being provided by all three levels of government for the project, while heritage societies are contributing to restoring the building. The house at 2421 Brunswick Street will be equipped to accommodate 10 women, however will take as many as 17, the number allowed by the fire marshal.

The Women's emergency housing coalition is gearing their program to single mothers, the group hardest hit by the tight housing situation in the city. Over 70 per cent of phone calls for housing from women are from single women with children.

Research shows social services in Halifax are inadequate to meet the needs of homeless women, said program coordinator Janet Hull. While places like the YWCA

have limited facilities for women, there is nothing available for women with children.

Hull expects the majority of women arriving at the shelter will have some form of government assistance, but she will also try to accommodate those who do not qualify for aid. One such group will be the unwed teenage mothers affected by recent changes to the social services act, who are no longer eligible for benefits.

"For those who come with no support the staff of the shelter will do the best we can for them," said Hull. "If there isn't anything out there we'll try to provide it."

The two groups can be contacted at: 422-8291 - Women's emergency housing coalition; 423-4443 - Association for women's residential facilities.

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# SUNS shines over the summer

by C. Ricketts

While most university students relaxed away from academia over the summer, SUNS didn't shine at the beach.

SUNS (Students' Union of Nova Scotia) instead tasted the proverbial limelight by making student concerns public and making headway in having the powers-that-be begin to address problems with the student aid and the provincial summer job creation programs.

"Students have been hearing about us. We're in the news nearly every week," said Atul Sharma, SUNS chair. "We've been accomplishing things."

The organization, comprised of nearly all post-secondary students in the province, became more visible at the March from the provincial government of a 25 per cent reduction in its summer employment program. Meetings with Development Minister Roland Thornhill which carried into late June led to the provincial government's expansion of the program midway through the summer.

"We're pleased the government was able to create an additional 656 jobs" said Sharma. "Although this is a long way from solving the problem, SUNS shares responsibility (for this) in a large way."

By July SUNS had the province agreed to monthly meetings between the student organization and the Ministry of Education. "We hope to be able to follow up on the progress made this summer," said Sharma. He added he hoped early meetings with the Minister of Development and continued regular contact with the Ministry of Education will yield the greatest benefits for students.

As summer ripened, SUNS turned its attention to the status of the provincial student aid program, and met with limited success. "SUNS is relieved that the province has accepted our arguments regarding the scholarship exemptions, the 15 mile rule and the parental income formula differential" states an August 11 SUNS press release.

Last year's requirement to deduct scholarships of over \$500 from assessed need were dropped. The parental income differential, a figure added to total family income intended to reflect parental ability to support a student, was reduced by \$2000. A living allowance, pre-

viously denied any student classified as "dependent" and whose family lived within a 15 mile radius of the institution attended became available to students whose families live outside a 5 mile radius of the campus.

But despite progress in these two areas there are many areas which have yet to be addressed. Dalhousie Student Union president Tim Hill said accessibility to a higher education is a main concern. "Projected enrolments are up," he said. "But you can't just look at the people who walk in during September - more and more people are dropping out for reasons other than academic ones."

Last spring record numbers of students at Dalhousie applied to the university for emergency funds. Despite its exhausted financial position, the Board of Governors, the university's financial decision-making body, added \$50,000 to the fund midway through the year.

Sharma said another concern was the lack of planning on the part of both the provincial and federal governments with regards

to education. "Education requires long term planning," he said. "Academic programs take three years to develop before they are implemented". Capital expenses require a firm long-term commitment if buildings and equipment are to be made available to support programs, added Sharma.

In August 1982 the province made cuts of over four million dollars to post-secondary education, without warning or consultation. This year, funding levels were announced in June, two months into Dalhousie's fiscal year.

Sharma also said a lack of planning for education is evident in the shift from an equal financial burden carried between the federal and provincial governments to the present situation where the federal government pays more. "This is a major shift in the philosophy of the program" said Sharma. "One that should not take place without discussion."

Constitutionally, education is a provincial responsibility.

# NS still frustrated with CFS

by Rick Janson  
Canadian University Press

Peter Kavanagh displays a poster-calendar put out recently by the Canadian Federation of Students. He likes it. It's colourful, full of good drawings, and has plenty of useful information. The only problem is that he has only one poster for the 25,000 Nova Scotia students he represents.

Student leaders in this province are frustrated with their national student organization. For the last two years they have attempted to change it to be more responsive to their needs, but sense no-one is listening.

Kavanagh, executive officer of the Student's Union of Nova Scotia, says that "Participation in CFS depends on how schools can interact. If Nova Scotia schools can't interact then there won't be a Nova Scotia presence in CFS."

Atul Sharma, SUNS chair, says that the future of CFS in Nova Scotia will be decided at Dalhousie University. If Dalhousie pulls out of CFS the three remaining CFS members in the province will follow, he says.

"We do need people at the

federal level addressing the problems of Nova Scotia students," he said. "I don't think CFS is adequately doing that."

Both Kavanagh and Sharma are against a pull-out referendum however, and are determined to continue the fight to change the organization from within.

Complaints about CFS are common here. Some say the organization is too bureaucratic, undemocratic and unresponsive to change from the membership. Others claim the organization is dominated by unelected staff members. Almost all agree that CFS-Services are inadequate.

Last year SUNS members voted to call on CFS-Services to change its priorities from existing non-essential services to services oriented toward student need, such as a national health insurance scheme. This call has been repeated with little tangible effect.

Dalhousie student union president Tim Hill would like to see a pull-out referendum early this fall, however the matter has yet to be decided by student council.

Roger Lewis, student union

# Registration mix-up

Students who were informed on Tuesday Sept. 6 that the first term's tuition fee was due in full to register for classes on Sept. 12 because they had not pre-registered with a \$50 deposit by August 31 may now register, as in past years, with a \$50 deposit,

with the balance of the first term's fees due Sept. 28.

New regulations which were to have taken effect this year were not made explicit, and to avoid undue problems, the administration has reverted to the old payment scheme.

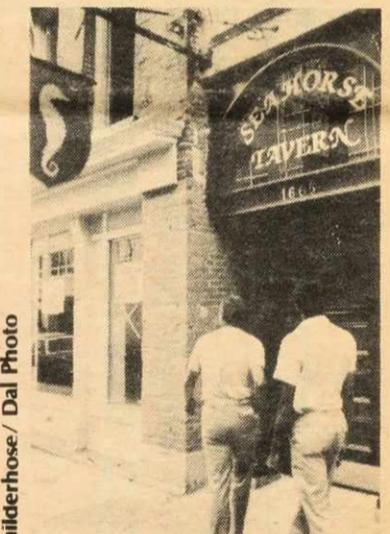
# Seahorse "bars" gays

by Glenn Walton

Halifax gay rights activists claim the city's oldest tavern---the Seahorse---is cracking down on gay patrons.

The Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE) says the tavern is using new Nova Scotia liquor ID checks to bar gays from the premises.

Former employees claim they were given



Childerhose / Dal Photo  
The Seahorse Tavern

instructions by the management to harass gays. One waiter was fired after refusing to comply with the policy.

Seahorse owner Wilfrid Keith denies the tavern discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation.

Manager Bruce McDonald said "What is all this talk about straight and gay? We're just trying to get rid of the sleaze." The Seahorse was expanded and renovated this summer in the hope of attracting a larger share of the burgeoning Halifax night life.

A sit-in involving 25 straight and gay people was staged August 8. The GAE says that a picket of the bar is likely in the near future. It reports considerable support from the non-gay Seahorse patrons, some of whom are boycotting the tavern.

A letter of complaint has been sent to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, although sexual orientation is not covered under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act.