

by Julie Green

Cold January was warmed to unseasonable temperatures by gusts of rhetoric about the writing competence of university students and students' voting rights in the federal election.

The debate in GFC about the literacy (or lack thereof) of university students heated up with the release of the Writing Competence Committee's (WCC) report. The committee reported that over 50 per cent of the 406 university students tested had an "inadequate" command of English. The fire flared when an addition to the report later in January showed that achievement in English 30 was not a reliable measure of the language skills of freshmen. WCC chairman Pat Hayes then attempted to convince GFC that the WCC tests were valid and that a remedial program should be established.

The Students' Union boat people arrived one blustery day in early



# JANUARY

## The beat goes on . . .

January from a refugee camp in Hong Kong. Tran Thien Lac and his sisters Thien Dinh and Thien Di hoped to be reunited with their sister Tran Thien Huot, who has lived in Edmonton for several years. The SU-sponsored boat people fund had garnered \$5600 to help support the family.

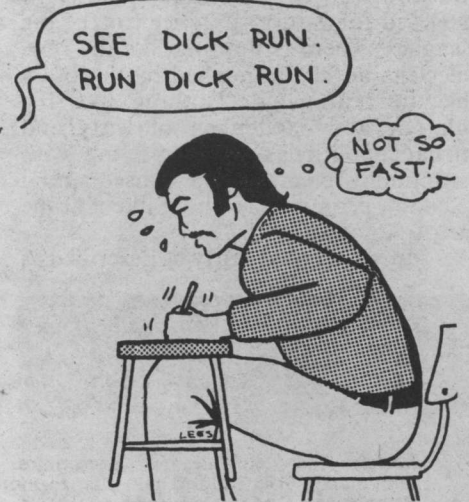
A federal election during a school term — a relative oddity — also created concern about whether students were eligible to vote. Only students who were "financially independent" from their parents could register to vote, returning officers ruled. In addition, confusion about whether students living in residence were part of Edmonton constituencies complicated the situation. SU president Dean Olmstead urged students to damn the torpedoes and vote anyway.

The U of A beat out Montreal as the Canadian entry in the competition

for the World Student Games in January. The games, expected to attract 300 athletes from 85 countries, required a commitment to build housing, tennis, and fieldhouse complexes and renovations to other sporting facilities. World Student Games officials will decide on the site of the 1983 games later this summer.

Disturbing ripples of racism prompted a nation-wide protest of CTV's W5 program, *The Campus Giveaway*. The program, which claimed that international students were robbing Canadian students of enrolment in professional faculties, was protested nationwide, and 300 students marched to CTV's Edmonton affiliate, CFRN, one bitterly cold January day to demand a retraction.

Only in Alberta! "Mr. Gateway" received a form letter from the federal Progressive Conservative party



About 50 per cent of incoming students have an "unsatisfactory" command of English.

soliciting financial support for Joe Clark's election campaign. Although *Gateway* editor Gordon Turtle said he was flattered "to rate with the Tories", he couldn't find an extra penny for the cause.

In another election, two slates and a number of independent candidates filed papers to run in the university's Students' Union elections. The slates, headed by Nolan Astley and Scott Thorkelson, heralded a new age of complacent conservatism, and the campaign, which at first looked like a non-campaign, stalled on the starting line.

And finally, as a sure sign of mid-winter boredom, the annual abortion debate made an appearance on the *Gateway's* editorial pages. Is the fetus human? Is abortion murder? Only your conscience — and the 50 or so letter writers who wrote in with the last word — know for sure.



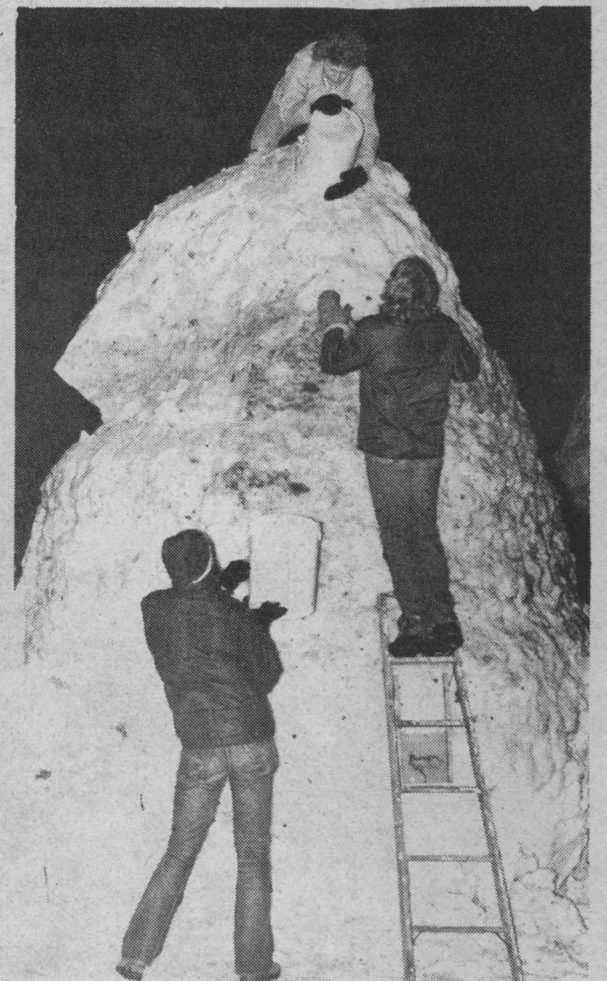
Disneyland characters delighted those who attended their 25th anniversary celebration January 9.



The SU executive rattled their chains but the engineers who bound them up weren't around to hear them. They were out enjoying other Engineer Week events.



Edmonton joined the protest against the W-5 program which claimed that Canadian campuses are overpopulated by international students.



Have you ever wondered how the ice sculptures were formed by res's King Louis and Engineer Week celebrants?