

# Toughs teach students to drink like fish

by Hospodar L'Etranger

Vice-President Academic Peter Meekison announced Monday, on behalf of the General Faculties Council, a new test to be implemented in the new year.

"Following all the controversy about the WCT we decided to reassess the priorities of the university and determine why most students come to the U of A. What we discovered came as something of a surprise, but we figured what the hell, it's our mandate," he said.

The new test is to be known as the Drinking Competency Test and is designed to judge the students' fitness for the adult world of three-martini lunches, high pressure sales and general alcoholism."

Meekison also stated that to avoid further controversy, the administration is currently seeking qualified tutors from the private sector to teach students the finer points of alcohol consumption.

"We have to recognize that, as academics, we are not the best available intoxication instructors," Meekison admitted.

Getaway correspondent Hospodar L'Etranger was among those students selected by the administration to conduct a survey of the city's finer drinking establishments and to recruit potential tutors. This is his report.

"We started the evening at the Cecil Hotel on Jasper and 104 Street. Following the recommendations given to us before accepting this assignment, we ate a large pasta dinner prior to pursuing the bliss of barley pop.

The Cecil had a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere. Smoke hung thinly in the air, obscuring next to nothing. The pool tables were vacant, as most of the patrons were more involved in their drinking and the NFL football game on TV.

Because we were novices in the finer points of liquor indulgence, we solicited advice from the manager of the hotel to help us find a likely candidate for a tutor. Within three minutes we struck gold.

The manager introduced us to Elmer (he discarded his last name sometime in the early seventies) who proved an amiable and helpful soul. Elmer suggested that we had erred in preparing for a drinking bout by eating first. He said that the best way to develop a tolerance for alcohol is to stop eating for three days, consuming only 120 proof vodka.

Elmer also helped us to perfect the drunken leer, especially effective as an intimidation technique in boardrooms around the nation.

By way of apprenticeship, which helped him develop his own techniques, Elmer served in the armed forces in the middle fifties and was employed in the Arctic for several years. He said that he studied under some of the great masters in that early period of his career and that he would be more than happy to impart some of his knowledge to "those poor university pukes who think that



The boys show Gateway staffers Hospodar and Idi the finer subtle techniques behind standing three sheets to the wind.

education is reality."

From the Cecil, we moved on to the Commercial on Whyte and 103 Street. The ambiance of this bar was much the same as the Cecil except that the patrons were noticeably friendlier. It came to our attention that the decorator who designed the Cecil also must have done the Commercial, as there was the same vomit-resistant rug on the floor and terry towel tablecloths on all the tables.

There was live music in the Commercial as opposed to the NFL football game in the Cecil, but nobody was paying much attention, so the band was getting as hammered as the patrons.

We checked with the staff behind the bar for possible candidates and they introduced us to four of the kindest gentlemen we can remember meeting since puberty. Fred, Del,

Reg and George made us feel as welcome as leeches on Sylvester Stallone's pectorals. They made sure to teach us some of the lesser known techniques of drinking practiced in such exotic locations as Venezuela, Hong Kong, Resolute Bay and Cambodia.

Both Del and Frank, like Elmer, had served their country in the navy in Korea. And both men, like Elmer, had worked north of the 60th parallel on numerous occasions.

However, all four gentlemen were pleased as punch to see a "handful of young pups" desirous of beer consumption improvement. In fact, they put up money of their own to finance our practice session.

Fred reminisced about his brother-in-law, a chemistry professor at the U of A who used to avail himself of the makings of "real hard drink" — ethanol. Fred once drank six ounces at a gulp and said that he was sick until

midnight the following day.

Del related stories of the time he spent in Venezuela on the rigs. One of the biggest culture shocks he said he experienced was the Venezuelan practice of selling their women to foreigners. For keeps.

These men acquainted us with such obscure techniques as the Libyan jug suck, the three finger inhalation and the late night, moonlight, power nap and face plant. They also offered to teach remedial courses at the U of A.

When it came time to go, we made a date for the Commercial on the occasion of Del's sixtieth birthday in 1988, with grateful thanks in our hearts and tears in our eyes.

I tell you, when it comes time for me to stand up to the bar for the Drinking Competency Test, I know I've got nothing to worry about.

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