

THE GAZETTE

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Grad House on the slaughtering block

Popular gathering place may not survive the month of November

BY LILLI JU

The Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students may decide to close the doors of the Grad House to save the organization from bankruptcy.

At the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) annual general meeting on Tuesday night, members were presented with a report on the "Graduate House Assessment" by the DAGS Graduate House Committee.

"DAGS is in a state of transition," opens the report.

"Each and every activity the DAGS participates in will now have to be justified in order to ensure that student money is being spent responsibly and in the best interest of the students who allocate their fees to DAGS."

The Grad House, located at the corner of University Avenue and LeMarchant Street, is a popular gathering place for students and faculty, and is DAGS's single largest activity. DAGS has been facing numerous problems from the Grad House including financial losses, wage, labour and contract disputes. They are also facing an outstanding lawsuit with a former bar manager.

The report addresses the concerns regarding the continuing operation of the Grad House, suggesting that "running a full-service bar is a large undertaking requiring more effort than the average student association is capable of providing."

A motion calling for the Grad House closure was defeated at Tuesday's Annual General Meeting,

so that the issue could be discussed at an emergency general meeting for all graduate students scheduled for Tuesday, November 18. At that meeting, members will make a final decision regarding closing the Grad House, or exploring other options.

Four options were presented in the report. The first option is to continue at status quo — the "do nothing" approach. However, this option is simply not sound due to financial obstacles and the time demands on the DAGS council members, who could be spending their time doing other DAGS business.

"There's a real danger of bankruptcy given [DAGS's] current financial position," states the report.

The second option is to shut down all operations at the Grad House and relinquish possession of

the house to its owner, Dalhousie University. This would directly address the financial concerns of DAGS, but would take away a valuable meeting place for students.

Running the Grad House in a reduced capacity was presented as a third option. This could mean

fewer hours of operation, reduced or no staff, and using the space primarily for meeting places for graduate student groups and activities, rather than a business operation. Although this option is considered a compromise that

continued on page 3...

Gay voice returns to campus

BY BEN MACLEAN

After remaining defunct and dormant for over a year, the Bisexual Gay Lesbian Association of Dalhousie has firmly reestablished itself as an active, ambitious force on campus.

Founded in 1972, the Bisexual Gay Lesbian Association of Dalhousie (BGLAD) is working "to provide a safe, supportive atmosphere for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals on campus and in the community at large," says Pam Greaves, BGLAD vice-president.

Such a goal would not be possible had it not been for the efforts of people like Jason Delaurentis, the group's president, who helped BGLAD rise from the ashes of what he calls "others' wrongdoings".

"Unfortunately for the previous BGLAD executive, their commitment and dedication were questionable," Delaurentis said.

"Fiscal irresponsibility and the belief that they were not accountable to anyone, even the [Dalhousie Student Union], ultimately led to BGLAD's downfall."

With meetings basically nonexistent and the society's presence failing, "BGLAD had to once again regain the trust of the university community.

"The fact that a BGLAD Council seat existed yet remained vacant last year also disturbed me. It motivated me to change an unfortunate situation."

Delaurentis stresses the cooperation of the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) in the rebuilding of the society.

"What is fortunate, is that there exist a DSU executive that are 'gay-positive' and strongly supportive of BGLAD."

After a summer of restructuring and fundraising overseen by Delaurentis, BGLAD appears to be back on its feet. With its executive now elected, committees have been formed to review the society's constitution, plan social events, and educate the wider community about the group.

"It is important that BGLAD collectively takes a diverse approach in its objectives," Delaurentis said.

At meetings held twice monthly on Thursdays in the Student Union Building (SUB), attendance has been encouraging, with an average of 30 people participating.

"Anyone who is 'gay-positive' and willing to conduct themselves in a 'gay-positive' manner is welcome," Greaves said.

Of those who have attended so far, response has been quite positive, with members describing the atmosphere as "laid-back" and

"congenial". This fits with the participants' hopes for BGLAD. When asked what they wanted from the society, most said they were looking to "meet people".

"When I first arrived at Dal, I felt like I was the only gay person on campus," said one first-year student. "BGLAD has helped me build a support network. I can express myself to people who know what I'm going through."

Planned discussions for upcoming meetings include homophobia, religious issues, "coming out" and safer sex.

In keeping with its social support mandate, BGLAD is also filling the calendar with a variety of events.

continued on page 3...

Petition supported in ignorance

BY JENNIFER LAMONT

Residence students are prime targets in an effort to get more signatures on a tuition petition being circulated on the Dalhousie campus by the Canadian Alliance of Students Associations.

Dalhousie's Student Union (DSU) vice-president academic/external Kevin Lacey took petitions to the dining halls in Shirreff and Howe Halls in an attempt to meet a goal of 1,500 signatures from Dalhousie.

By approaching students while

they waited to enter the dining halls, Lacey managed to gather about 600 signatures.

According to some residents, asking people if they would sign the petition while they were waiting in line did not give students enough time to understand what they were signing. However, Lacey says that he explained to the people he approached that the petition "calls on government to bring reforms that will reduce student debt and make it easier to pay back loans."

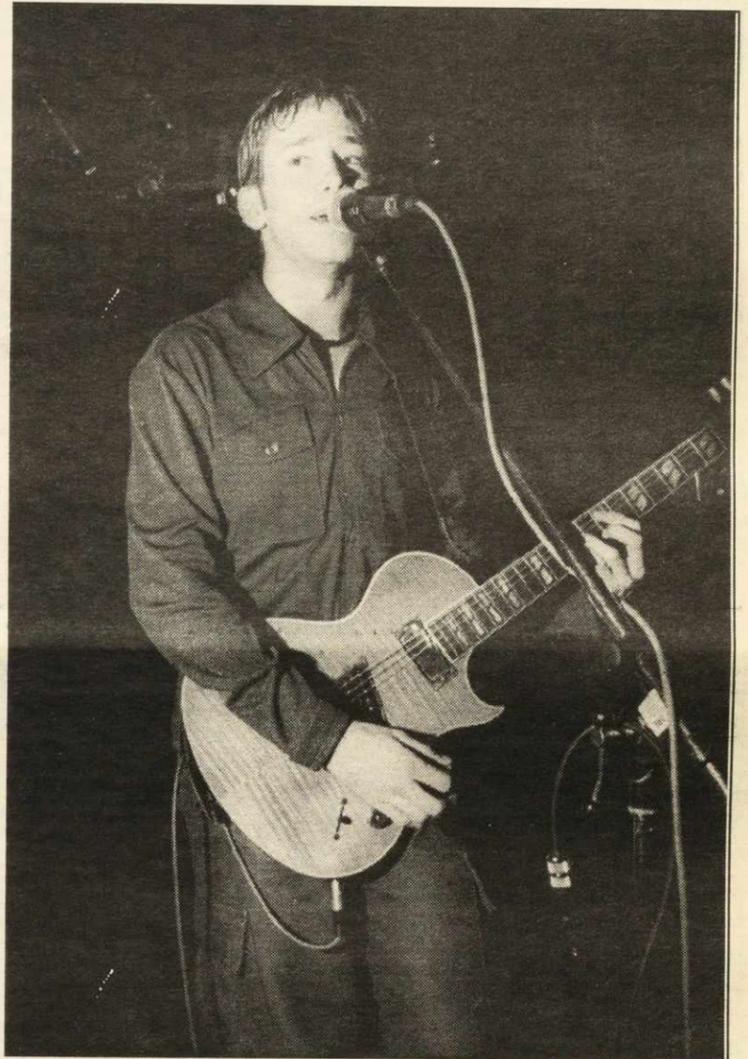
Christine Christensen lives in Sheriff Hall. She signed the

petition, but says that though she knows that the petition is to help improve student loans, she was a little unsure.

"I still don't know what CASA [The Canadian Alliance of Students Associations] is," said Christensen. "The whole setup was very influential... everyone was signing."

"No one refused to sign the petition" Lacey said. And he admits that of the people who signed the petition from residence, most did not know what CASA was.

continued on page 3...



Shaun Verault leads Wide Mouth Mason at the Grawood. See story page 13. Photo by Ryan Lash

Pre-packaged ponderance

"If one is a greyhound, why try to look like a pekingese?"

— Dame Edith Sitwell

NATIONAL NEWS

Reform party members and the Marxist-Leninist party have formed an odd political alliance in BC, page 5.

More CIAU football players have been suspended for steroid use, page 5.

FOCUS

Professor profile: Dr. James Clark, the very funny and very popular psychology prof, page 8.

SPORTS

Hockey Tigers claw away at Axemen, quit pussy-footing around, pounce on first place, jump out of the gate with a roar, maul Acadia and earn their stripes, page 16.

ARTS & CULTURE

Wide Mouth Mason, Dayna Manning play the Graywood, page 13.

Grace Babies sit down with the Gazette to chew the fat, page 12.

CD reviews for Wyclef, the Ghandarvas, Chumbawamba, and Delerium, page 14.

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Jim Campbell's barren: a fragile eco-system threatened by corporate greed, page 10.

Oceans 97: a conference about oceanography and maritime industry, page 10.

Research is showing that diet pills are doing more harm than good, page 10.