

# Province charges York for Glendon oil spill

by Doug Saunders

An oil spill on the Glendon campus last year resulted in criminal charges against York University.

The university pleaded guilty to two charges under the Ontario Water Resources Act — one for allowing heating oil to leak from an underground storage tank into the Don River last February, and a second for failing to report the spill.

The charges, which came to trial Oct. 23,

were documented in a report on environmental offenses released last week by the Ontario environment ministry.

"Two people were walking along the river in the Glendon area, and they noticed an oily sheen on the river that smelled like fuel oil," said Pat Moran, crown counsel for the ministry.

They filed a complaint with the environment ministry. Investigators traced the leak through a nearby storm sewer to the Glendon tank.

The ministry used absorbent pads and booms to clean up the spill. At least five gallons of oil per day were collected this way, Moran said.

According to Harriet Lewis, York's legal counsel, the university pleaded guilty so charges would be dropped against a grounds employee.

The ministry began charging individuals as well as companies for environmental offenses last year. For the first time ever, the ministry jailed a businessman in June for polluting.

York's grounds department "took some steps to prevent further leaks but took no steps to notify the ministry and took no steps to clean up the leak," Moran said. The university also had no steps in place to deal with discharges into the environment.

Lewis said the tank has since been filled with concrete.

Campus environmentalists say they are not surprised by the university's negligence.

"From my experience, this doesn't surprise me one bit," said Collette Boileau, a member of the advocacy group Envision York.

"I've dealt with the president of the university and the board of governors and they don't show any interest in environmental issues. They just don't seem to think it's important."

York paid a total of \$6,500 in fines for the two charges.



The guy who runs the university and the guy who runs the student centre both say they own this hallway • photo by Tom Kim

## Turf war over colonnade

by Pat Micelli

Students say they risk losing control over one of the last recruiting areas for clubs on the Downsview campus.

Until this past spring, the Student Centre coordinated the use of a covered passageway on the south side of the building. But administration officials said the university's grounds department has final say over who uses the colonnade.

Rob Castle, manager of the Student Centre, said the administration took control of the colonnade against student recommendations. He said this ignores the 1988 agreement between the centre and the university requiring the two groups agree which portions of the centre are to remain under university control.

The colonnade is one of the few central locations where student clubs can set up information tables.

Jeff Zoeller, a vice president of the York Federation of Students, said the administration is trying to keep "tight control" over how students use space on campus.

But Beth Hopkins, a York vice president, said the administration wants the policy governing the use of the colonnade consistent for all buildings attached to it.

The colonnade links York Lanes, the Student Centre and Vari Hall, and runs along the fine arts buildings.

Students currently pay \$12.50 per course to fund the Student Centre, amounting to about 83 per cent of its total cost. The centre is run by a student-majority board and a full-time staff of 7 people, including Castle.

The original 1988 plans for the \$23 million centre did not include a

colonnade. However, in 1989 the university ordered Castle to add the passageway. York agreed to pay half of the additional estimated \$575,000 cost.

"If the university wants to pay for the second half of the colonnade, then they can have managerial control," Castle said.

"It just seems that, again, students are being screwed around with space on campus," said Zoeller.

The conflict over club table space has a precedent.

In the fall of 1989, the North York fire marshal evicted club tables from the Central Square hallways in the Ross building. Students protested after discovering the order was provoked by a York administrator's desire to place a hot dog stand in the same area.

Early this winter clubs were also ordered out of the Student Centre lobby after a surprise fire inspection.

The North York fire department gave the centre clearance to use the colonnade last fall, as long as clubs followed strict regulations.

The dispute began in March this year when York President Harry Arthurs ordered Castle to stop booking club tables in the colonnade.

In defiance of the order, clubs responded by booking their tables through the YFS instead.

"Broader issues are involved," Castle said. "If they do this, what's to stop them from saying the main lobby [of the Student Centre] is university space and should be controlled by university departments."

The Student Centre plans to continue booking club tables in the colonnade in September.

## Money-back drop deadline set back

by Dean J. Brown

York's Board of Governors is forcing students to drop courses faster if they want money back.

Students will now have to drop full-year courses before Oct. 31 and fall courses by Oct. 17 if they hope to receive any tuition refund.

"It sucks," said Cindy Reeves, one of two student representatives on the board.

"Students won't be able to decide if they're doing well in a course and drop it for financial reasons. It's going to be hard for students to make a decision," said Reeves last week.

Reeves and fellow student Caroline Winship are the only members who voted against the measure in May.

If students decide to drop courses later than the new dates, they will not receive any money whatsoever. In previous years the deadline was Feb. 8 for full-year courses, after which students could still receive 25 per cent of the fees back. Fall courses could also be dropped by Oct. 24, with 25 per cent refunded.

Winter courses have also been affected. The new deadline is now Feb. 6, compared to the previous date of Feb. 13.

REFUNDS: OLD AND NEW PERCENTAGES									
DATE	SEP 20	SEP 27	OCT 3	OCT 10	OCT 17	OCT 24	OCT 31	FEB 8	FEB 13
NEW Y	100	100	90	90	50	50	0	0	
OLD Y	100	100	75	75	50	50	50	...25	
NEW F	100	100	80	40	40	0	0		
OLD F	100	100	75	50	25	25	0		
DATE	JAN 9	JAN 16	JAN 23	JAN 30	FEB 6	FEB 13	FEB 20		
NEW W	100	100	80	40	40	0	0		
OLD W	100	100	50	50	50	25	0		
LEGEND	Y - FULL YEAR			F - FALL TERM			W - WINTER TERM		

The administration admits the changes were made to bring the university extra revenue.

"We'll probably lose money on the half courses, while we'll probably gain close to \$100,000 on the full-year courses," said Gene Densel, York's registrar.

Members of the York Federation of Students say they are angry about the changes and are pressing for reforms to help students adjust.

"I'm really angered and outraged at the way this was done, without any input from students," said Jeff Zoeller, a YFS vice president.

"It seems that the university is taking every opportunity to get more money out of students any way they can."

He said the changes will affect

students academically since most of them usually do not know how they are doing in a course before they have to decide whether to stay or drop.

"We're presently trying to put something through Senate to [make professors] inform the students by October on how they are doing in a course, but professors apparently don't listen to the Senate, and that's a problem," said Zoeller.

The registrar's office defends the Board of Governors decision, saying it is in line with other Canadian universities.

"Many other institutions will not give any money back at all after the first two weeks. We're hoping that students will seriously look at what courses they need and want before choosing them," said Densel.

## Conrad inspired student community



David Conrad at the centre of student action • photo by Joy Sculnick

by Laurie S. Alphonse

On April 13, 1992 the York University community said good-bye to one of its most dedicated and well-known student leaders.

David James Conrad died suddenly on April 9. He was 24.

At first glance, some people regarded David as frail and weak. He needed assistance performing routine tasks most of us take for granted and used an electric wheelchair to get around. Yet David, never a complainer, put skeptics to shame when he began at York five years ago.

Right from the start David felt the need to make York a better place, to work with Calumet College and help raise its profile in the larger community. He was eventually elected Calumet's representative to the York Federation of Students.

David always found time to remain an active member of the York community. He would have been vice president of the York Liberals this year.

## Security investigation pending

by Christine F. de Léon

An independent investigation of York Security is still in the planning stages, says Neil Edwards, a representative of the Black Secretariat.

The investigation was one of the demands accepted by the York administration after students occupied the university's presidential offices March 13. The occupation was in response to allegations of racism within the security force.

The Black Secretariat, a Toronto-

based community group, was selected to conduct an external review.

Edwards says he met with York vice president Bill Farr last on June 5. "We are in the very first stages of planning and as of yet a date has not been set for the investigation. It's still too early for that," he said.

Members of the Coalition Against Discrimination, who organized the protest, urged the Black Secretariat to launch a full investigation from scratch.

David was also involved in a variety of projects throughout Metro. He gave new meaning to the phrase "living life to its fullest."

Laurie Alphonse is vice president of ABLE York.