

Comment

Comment is an opinion column open to members of the university community who wish to present an informed opinion on a topic of their selection.

Scavenger participants' enthusiasm stifled

by Rory Waite

I am a criminal. I have not yet been charged, and there is no Canada-wide warrant out for my arrest, yet. But I have committed a crime, and four of my fellow conspirators (sixteen were involved) were picked up and detained by the police for a length of time.

Charges against these accursed scum bent on destruction of Canadian civilization are still pending, so I am in hiding (1417 Henderson; come and get me).

What was the crime with which these four students were picked up for, the act with which it was feared they would undermine the very social fabric of our being (you ask)? Occupation of the houses of the duly elected legislature, perchance? Or was there possibly an attempt to place an explosive device under the hood of the Prime Minister's utilitarian Lincoln?

No, the plan was even more evil than any of the aforementioned anarchic schemes, for at 4:35 p.m. on Saturday, February 5, 1977, sixteen demons in human garb attempted to abscond with the Halifax Transit bus shelter previously residing at the intersection of Oxford Street and Coburg Road.

Their thirty-two feet managed to whisk the +600lb. shelter some fifty yards before two members of the Halifax constabulary physically blocked our path with their high-powered ebony and cream chariot-of-the-peace.

Within two minutes, four more knights of justice pealed up to the now-vacated bus shelter, their cruiser's pulsating red lights reflecting off the faces of the four culprits cornered in a blind alley.

The motive for the above attempted crime was the annual Dalhousie University scavenger hunt, an event that attracted all manner of devious scaliwags, the likes of which would please the admirer of a Fagen or Mac the Knife.

I believe that the hunt was a total success, despite the resulting strained relations with a certain ambulance crew, Halifax Transit, C.H.N.S. radio, and, of course, the Halifax Police Department.

For obvious reasons (community harmony) the later people are the ones to which our greatest apologies for being nefarious nasties should be directed; so if I may, I wish to apologize to the Halifax municipal constabulary from the entire student population of Dalhousie University for the mayhem arising out of the event.

We (the students) had no wish to declare war on the civilian population and/or the police department, but, in all fairness, the truth is that we had little choice.

The event is called a scavenger hunt and the only rule is that anything brought in for tally must be returnable. One simply had to show up at the S.U.B. with an object of unusual nature, have the object and group's name responsible for presenting it recorded, and it was to be returned.

A group of participants from the fourth floor of Henderson House was formed and several ideas were brought forth regarding unusual

objects for presentation and the methods necessary to obtain said objects. Several of the ideas were immediately discarded due to their obvious illegal unsavory nature, but there were some excellent suggestions which I, as one of the ringleaders, was to attempt to follow-up in order to ascertain their feasibility.

I contacted the two largest funeral parlours in the city regarding the renting or borrowing (with a deposit) of a hearse for an hour or so, with or without a casket, and was politely refused by one and hung up on by the other. Legally viable solution #1 down the tube.

We started with a constable in a patrol car, and worked our way up to a personal conversation with the chief of police regarding the possibility of a member of the Halifax mounted patrol appearing for a period at the S.U.B. We were refused because it would have taken the man off of his beat in Point Pleasant Park, but considering the number of officers called off their beats to chase Dal students that Saturday, the explanation seems a little inconsistent. Legal possibility #2 up in flames.

I could go on with attempts to get a snowblower from King's College; the consent of C.H.N.S. to "kidnap" a disc jockey off of the air (C.J.C.H. refused) and their last minute refusal to go through with the stunt; (they were eventually taken off the air by two squirt-gun wielding girls anyway, as the story goes). Also the attempt to use Bronsen House's bathtub-on-wheels to take the seals from the Life Science Centre to the judges' desk in the Green Room. The list goes on ad infinitum.

The attempted removal of the bus shelter was the result of the fact that it appeared to be one of the only 'legal' possibilities open to us. In short, no one gave us a chance.

All of these are cases where the proper channels were utilized, and in all cases we were not given what I would consider courteous consideration. (I would like to point out such exceptions such as THE Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, etc.) Now the community threatens to crack down on our expression of enthusiasm and 'youthful vigor'.

Well, the chemistry people will tell you that energy cannot be destroyed, only changed, and the prohibition proved that if there's a will there's a way, and if our overseas had given us a half-a-chance, this scavenger hunt would have been great fun for the city, not merely Dal.

For the first time this year, Dal spirit has openly manifested itself, as shown by the hundreds of people who suffered from frozen toes waiting to get into a dynamite Super SUB Night after the hunt.

It is truly too bad that the city hadn't let us share our enthusiasm in a reasonable, enjoyable (for all) manner, without using devious methods, but we DID TRY to play fair. Honest!

Rory Waite
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