

Railroad rudeness

Okay, you've had a long month at school, just finished two exams and a term paper and all you want to do is go home.

You want to see your family, visit with friends and just relax. But first you have to deal with a long train ride, which can have its benefits — that's usually when I catch up on a few hours of sleep or do some reading — but first you have to deal with the ever-so-rude and disgruntled train workers, who treat students like crap.

I've gone home twice this year and both times I've almost not made the trip because of the attitudes of conductors, ticket salesmen and baggage collectors.

What is with all their rudeness?

They seem to have it out for students, always trying to make things more difficult than they really have to be. For my last trip, I reserved a seat — which you'd think would assure me a

ticket — but think again. The day before I left they told me my ticket had been cancelled, which would have left me stranded at school for Thanksgiving.

So I politely asked if there were any other seats available.

Editorial

The man at the ticket booth told me quite rudely, "probably not, it is Thanksgiving you know".

Like I didn't know that.

I asked him to check, so he looked through the computers for about seven minutes, complaining the whole time, then finally sold me a ticket. He did, however, warn me that the next time I should be a little more organized and get my priorities straight.

Checking my luggage, that was another problem. It seems like everything is a problem with the train. They suggest you

be there forty-five minutes before your departure. Coming back to Halifax I arrived forty-three and a half minutes before my departure, and the guy almost didn't take my stuff. I asked him what I was supposed to do with two bags, a book bag and a box, and after many huffs and puffs he ever so nicely took my bags, and checked them.

Maybe this is just me ventilating about my bad trip home, but it just seems that railway workers have a little too much attitude. Especially when dealing with students.

Which seems rather odd because in Halifax, students make up half, if not more, of their patrons — especially during the Holidays.

They seem to think all students are going to be rude and inconsiderate. Maybe railway employees need some sensitivity training — or maybe just a simple attitude adjustment.

BRIANNE JOHNSTON

Letters

Bev Myers room

To the editor,

October 31st, 1997, was more than just Halloween for one Dalhousie Student Union employee. It was her last day of working for the DSU. Bev Myers worked for the DSU, first as a receptionist, and later as head of the accounting department, for 28 years! Bev retired last week and the DSU has lost a valuable asset as a result.

The DSU had a retirement reception for Bev, and many of the people with whom Bev had worked with over the years. Many past DSU executives and many past full-time employees dropped by to say hello. Room 224-226 is now the "Bev Myers Room", as we renamed this room 'in recognition of her hard work and dedication to the DSU'.

The DSU invited the Gazette to stop by and perhaps write a story on Bev, as she has been serving the students of Dalhousie longer than most of us have been alive. However, I guess the Gazette felt that we, the students of Dalhousie, would not be interested in learning about someone who was hired before the SUB was built.

Well, she was interested in students for 28 years. She enjoyed working with us, and should be commended instead of ignored.

Bev, we, the students of Dalhousie will miss your contribution to student life. Have a wonderful retirement, and thank you for 28 years of hard work.

BRIDGETTE MCCAIG
Executive Vice President - DSU

Going postal

To the editor,

I would like to offer an explanation for the opinion piece I wrote in last week's Gazette. It took you several weeks to publish the article, and you did it to coincide with the recent resurgence in the postal dispute. However, the article I wrote was in reference to the mini-strike held in Halifax about four weeks ago.

I stand behind my article and the opinions I make within it; I simply feel that it should be made clear what I was referring to. I fully accept the possibility that this most recent dispute between the postal workers and Canada Post may be based on far deeper issues, and it was not my intention to comment on them.

I still assert with one hundred per cent force that the Halifax strike was motivated by greed and selfishness, but I do not wish to comment on the current dispute.

D.R. CLARK

Lest we forget...

With Remembrance Day passing us by, thoughts of those who gave their lives in a just cause should be in our hearts. Unfortunately, this is often not the case. It is clearly evidenced by the poppies I have seen cast off and trodden into the mud around campus. How can we let such a thing pass unprotested?

First of all, I would like to say that I hate war and that I'm not trying to glorify it in any way, shape, or form; which is all the more reason to honour those men whose heroism has set the stage for an age of peace that we can at the very least now see on the horizon.

We are forgetting, and if they

could, these brave men would be weeping from beneath their earthen graves. Our senses are dulling in this modern age to the horror of what war is, and thus the value of peace may lose its lustre.

Who now among the youth of our country can imagine what the horror of war is? I can't. My imagination can only conjure vague shadows of what lying in a trench with the blood of your fellows spilling over you would be like. And I am glad that I can only see this far, for to see more is pure insanity. Yet I am glad too that this much vision is given to me, so that lessons of the past need not be unlearned, or relearned.

50,000 British soldiers died every week during World War I. Take a moment and let your mind digest that. There is a line in John McCrae's poem: "If ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders Fields." That is exactly what we are doing — breaking faith. The next time you see a poppy trodden in the mud, think about that.

PATRICK GAUDIO
TA woes

To the Editor:

Your November 6 article on the possible strike of TAs and part-timers states that Dalhousie President Tom Traves believes that through negotiations "most financial issues have been resolved" between the university and CUPE 3912. He is also directly quoted as stating: "I see no reason why we cannot come to an agreement. A strike is not imminent."

As a member of the CUPE 3912 Bargaining Committee I wish to make clear that these statements are not true. President Traves is badly misinformed if he believes these things. No financial issues have been resolved. In June and early July, in conciliation talks, Dalhousie made a wage offer for TAs and part-timers which was rejected by the CUPE bargaining committee. We indicated that this offer, containing small increases over three years for part-time faculty and a wage cut for many categories of teaching assistants, was totally unacceptable, and we could not consider recommending our members accept it. The lawyer representing Dalhousie then stated that this was the university's final offer, and that there was no point in further discussion. Subsequent to this, the provincial conciliation officer made his report that he could not reconcile the two sides, which places the Dalhousie TAs and part-timers in a legal strike position for the next six months. We have since had no communication from Dalhousie.

If the situation remains unchanged the bargaining committee shall in the coming term put the matter to a vote of our membership, recommending rejection of the Dalhousie offer and calling for a strike vote. We welcome any new offer Dalhousie's administration might make, but it would have to be substantially better than the last offer for us to change our stand. We have no desire to strike if it can be avoided, but feel that the position Dalhousie has taken leaves TAs and part-timers no choice unless they wish to remain permanently the worst paid academic workers in Canada.

MIKE EARLE
Secretary-Treasurer
CUPE 3912

OH SWEETIE, I DO WISH YOU WOULD WRITE MORE OFTEN...



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All submissions must be typed double-spaced on paper, e-mailed, or on a Mac or IBM 3 1/2 inch disk, in a WP version not greater than Word 6.0 or equivalent. The deadline is Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

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