

Gateway accepted into news exchange

by Greg Neiman

The following is a background introduction to a report regarding the 38th national conference of Canadian University Press. Gateway's delegates, Loreen Lennon and Greg Neiman, attended the seven day conference at McGill University, Montreal.

In the next issue, a detailed report of changes in CUP's structure together with a report on other changes and discussions regarding student press will be made. But first a short prologue explaining CUP and its structure must be made.

With the beginning of the next publication year CUP will offer its readers a more unified, cohesive coverage of national education and social-oriented issues.

Generally speaking, it was slow to start, but it ended with a unified agreement to begin upgrading the news and feature services through increased staff size and better fiscal planning.

Gateway's relevant history with regards to CUP began with an ending in 1971. That year, Gateway's membership in the organization was revoked, because its hiring policies contravened CUP's by-laws.

The editor elected by the staff was not ratified by our

student council which later hired its own. CUP saw this as council control of a newspaper's editorial policy and transferred membership to Gateway's new rival, Poundmaker. The new paper claimed to be the official SU newspaper, (being composed of Gateway's disgruntled ex-staff) and held membership as such until it became a community newspaper, later to fold completely.

Gateway floundered for a number of years under the loss, during which time it built up its continuity and credibility and once more was of a mind to be a CUP member. Prospective membership was granted in January of last year, full membership at this conference.

What Gateway gains as a member of CUP is an entry into a collective union of student newspapers representing every university in Canada, as well as about 10% of the colleges, institutes, and schools in post secondary Canada. (Efforts are being made to increase that percentage). Total readership is upwards of about 300,000.

Membership allows us to partake in a nation-wide news exchange through the national office in Ottawa. Member papers file their stories to



Ottawa, which prints them in a twice weekly news and feature service mailed special delivery back to its members, or through a limited (but expanding) telex net, for those who can afford it.

Included with this is the opportunity to join another

collective, Youthstream, which is an exclusive advertising network administered by Cameron Consultants of London, which sells ads based on the large cumulative readership of its members. The survival of many CUP papers depends heavily on Youthstream advertising.

CUP as an organization is divided into four parts. These parts are called the Atlantic (ARCUP), Quebec (CUPBEC), Ontario (ORCUP), and Western

(WRCUP) regions. Each region elects its own executive and hires fieldworkers to assist member papers in upgrading their journalistic quality and efficiency.

Fees for all of this are set up on a sliding scale such that large papers help subsidize smaller ones.

Each year national conferences are held to arrange the business of the collective, to elect its national executive and to discuss improvements of the organization.

This year, a multi-year plan was discussed and accepted to solve several problems the membership felt were hurting CUP. The news service was felt to lack depth, it contained too few features, and was often slow. (The mail strike didn't help either.)

The multi-year plan reaffirmed CUP's goals politically, and altered the structure of the national office to ease the heavy workload on staff. These items will be discussed in the next issue, together with a detailed explanation of the discussion that arose, and the reasons for expansions which will result in increased fees to the members.

A general comment from the delegates from the Gateway are that we are pleased with the changes we decided on and are proud to have been accepted into the organization. Improvements are definitely on the way, and we intend to be part of them.

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Exam blues blasted

NEA, WASHINGTON, D.C. - Standardized tests are "like a lock on the mind, a guard at the factory gate," says the executive director of the National Education Association, noting that "the only real beneficiaries, aside from the test marketers themselves, are insecure school managers striving for comfort in their relations with school boards, legislators, and governors."

Terry Herndon, in a speech delivered at a Commonwealth Club luncheon in San Francisco, said the tests follow the technical/industrial model in which teachers are treated like assembly-line foremen and students are treated like cars.

"It's time to get the children out of the factory and back into the classroom where they belong," the former Michigan teacher declared.

Herndon explained he was talking about such things as college board tests, achievement tests given to elementary and secondary school children, graduate record exams, and the so-called IQ tests - in fact, any

test that compares performance to predetermined norms and is administered in identical form to large numbers of students.

The speaker said that current public dissatisfaction with the schools - including test scores - relates to the public mood which tends increasingly toward fear, cynicism, and frustration.

It is the concern for quality education that has caused the NEA to call for a moratorium on standardized testing. Declaring that "standardized testing must go," he offered the following reasons:

- Education is a very complex process - entirely too complex for the most involved standardized test to measure. For example, in Michigan it was found that 45 separate factors or objectives were required just to describe math skills.

- People disagree on the goals of education. Some parents want job preparation; some college acceptance; others mere custodial care or something else. Yet standardized tests take for granted that everybody places equal value on whatever skill is being tested.

- Testing fosters big brotherism. "The assumption behind the tests," Herndon explained, "is that kids don't know what is good for them; parents don't know what is good for their children, and even teachers can't be trusted. Such testing works against parent-teacher decision making and toward control by outside authorities."

- Testing encourages conformity at the expense of creativity. The only child to benefit is the absolutely average child - with testmakers defining average. Tests can dictate what a child must learn, obligate a teacher to concentrate on certain subjects at the risk of his or her job.

- Standardized tests fail to do what is claimed for them.

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University of Calgary radio station, which is on the air twelve hours a day. The intention is to begin operation on a small scale. No advertising will be accepted, thereby eliminating any possible financial returns, but student service announcements will be aired. This is to be a prime function of the radio, for as vp services Terry Sharon explains, "We (council) feel that there is a need to increase communication between various student groups on campus, to give wider advertising to their activities."

Gene Borys seconded Sharon's statement, adding that "Music is secondary."