



LAURA CHAPMAN
1987-88 FOOD SERVICE OMBUDSMAN

APPOINTMENT

Food Service Ombudsman, York Campus

At the 1 October 1987 meeting of the University Food and Beverage Services Committee (UFBSC), Miss Laura Chapman was selected as the 1987-88 Food Service Ombudsman for the York Campus. This resident student position is responsible to the UFBSC and provides an open and impartial channel for communication on food service matters between the UFBSC and the York University community.

Miss Chapman can be reached at 739-1815. Her mailing address is Room 938, Bethune Residence.

*Office of the Manager,
Food Services Operations
November 4, 1987*

YEAR END REPORT OF THE FOOD SERVICE YORK CAMPUS OMBUDSMAN

"The office of the Ombudsman provides an open, impartial, and easily accessible channel for communication between the University Food and Beverage Services Committee (UFBSC) and the York University community. Through this office, information is passed on, opinions are expressed and recommendations and suggestions are forwarded on to the appropriate committee, caterer, or administrator to act upon."

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

The second half of my term as Food Service Ombudsman proved to be much less active than the first half. During the second term I received no complaints from neither the users nor the caterers. However, I was fully aware that the problems which plagued the first term also persisted through the second term, which was directly linked to the tendering process which was taking place.

As everyone by now, probably knows, the contracts formerly held by Rill Food Services in Complex I and II were awarded to Beaver Foods for the upcoming year and could possibly be extended thereafter. While the tendering process was taking place Rill Foods were reluctant to make any changes to their food services.

Also in the second term it was decided by UFBSC (University Food and Beverage Services Committee) that the facility known as Marky's II would be tendered for next year, however at the time of this report no final decision has been made on who would cater in that facility.

Whether these changes in the caterers was made for the better or the worse remains to be seen. Many users had mixed feelings about the decision made by UFBSC and some felt that the physical structure of the serveries creates many of the problems. Hopefully Beaver will be better able to serve the diverse needs of the users here at York.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CATERER

My relationship with the caterer, namely Rill Foods, has been one in which a high degree of valuable rapport was established. I found the management very concerned about and helpful in identifying problem areas and resolving them. In contrast to the staff whom I encountered many problems in dealing with. I found the staff cautious and sometimes rude when dealing with them on an informal basis.

On several occasions the caterer and myself were able to resolve problems which pertained to service in the serveries, however other problems presented more difficult a task requiring much more time to satisfactorily rectify, and granted the relationship which existed between the caterer and myself we could have made substantial improvements in the food services.

Now that there will be an entirely new management team running the serveries it will take some time to establish a relationship with the caterer. The new Food Service Ombudsman will hopefully realize the importance of establishing a good relationship with the caterer and will strive to achieve this early in their term.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER BODIES ON CAMPUS

Many of the bodies which exist on this campus consider me to be either a pawn of the administration or a friend of the caterer, this assumption enforces the feeling that nothing will or can be done regarding food services or for that matter anything else on campus. This feeling is clearly not the case what is required is the backing of these bodies towards an improved food service structure here at York.

Early in the second half of my term I contacted both our campus newspaper, *Excalibur*, and our radio station, Radio York, requesting that they interview me about my position and duties. Unfortunately, neither the newspaper nor the radio station felt that my role was important enough to be brought to the attention of the members of the York community. I was most annoyed at our media's passive attitude regarding matters which directly affected each and every member of the York community. This laissez-faire attitude of our media underscores the problems encountered with an uninformed student body. I think that the on-campus media should pay particular attention to issues that are of paramount importance to the community rather than other trivial issues.

I was also disappointed to see that the various student governments did not utilize me in taking their stance on food services, however this does not mean that I did not attempt to inform some of the student governments of my duties.

PRESENT CONCERNS

Since we have just recently changed caterers I have no present problems or concerns with the new caterer other than a concern that they will be better able to satisfy or at least attempt to satisfy the needs of the users. I hope to see improved service, quality and pricing in the future, but only time will tell if these desires are to be fulfilled.

Another area in which I have expressed a concern throughout my term and will continue to do deals with the insect problem. At the beginning of the year the cafeterias were almost overrun by cockroaches and the situation took many months to correct. The presence of the disgusting pests persisted throughout the year, however it was suppressed. I hope that next year will not begin on such a bad note. In the second term a new bug control system was installed, its effectiveness remains to be seen. If there are definite improvements in these areas that I have indicated I should think that York's food services will be the envy of many other universities.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Although this year began late and under adverse circumstances many improvements were made in our food services. However, other problems probably existed of which I am unaware because users were reluctant to contact me or else they were unaware that my position even existed. I hope that in the future the role of the Food Service Ombudsman is given the attention that it deserves and the exposure it requires. Next year will present a new challenge for the new Food Service Ombudsman and I do hope that whoever that person is that they will attempt to achieve the best possible food services for the users of York University. I would like to thank the members of the community for giving me the opportunity to be able to provide an invaluable service to them in the past year.

KELLY J. RAMSAY

Food Service Ombudsman, York University, May 4, 1987