

York Women's Centre volunteers persevere despite lack of support from administration

By MEIYIN YAP

The lack of administration support is partially due to the stigmas Victorian costume recently marched about with a sign stating "Votes For Women." Between parrying wisecracks and weaving her way through the crowds, Beth Walden and a few other members of the York Women's Centre distributed flyers concerning the Centre's activities.

The York Women's Centre is a service that provides students with referrals, resource material, a support group for single mothers and a drop-in facility. Students in Women's Studies use the centre as a constant source of reference. The Centre's programme offers self-defence courses, film sessions and lecture series.

As a support network, the Women's Centre offers a place where women can drop in to drink a cup of coffee and relax, study, read or simply converse with their peers. The informal, male-restricted atmosphere allows women to discuss issues which they might feel inhibited to discuss elsewhere. The no-male policy at the drop-in centre was implemented in order to create a safe environment from harassment and

sexism for women. According to Catherine Lake, Director of Women's Affairs for the Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF), "Some women are here to discuss problems at work, class or home... this 'woman's space' reduces any constraints that they might feel in discussing these problems. However, males are welcome to attend some of our programs and use our referral service."

Currently, the centre is run by a collective of volunteers. Although the centre's history is over 10 years old, its very existence still depends on the type of student government in power. Some Women's Centres in Canada have managed to establish a permanent funding system which enables them to maintain their autonomy.

Guelph University's Women's Centre is granted a budget from \$12,000 to \$14,000 yearly that was won through a referendum. The York Women's Centre has received \$1,000 from CYSF toward finding a co-ordinator for their centre through the Ontario work-study program. The only college council that has responded to the Centre's appeal for funding is Atkinson

which has donated \$500. The Masters of Atkinson and Winters have also donated \$50 and \$100 respectively.

Last year, the Women's Centre approached the Provost, Thomas Meininger, about funding. Meininger, a member of the Policy Committee of York University, could not offer any financial aid, claiming that his office was short of money. This year, according to college sources who asked to remain anonymous, the Provost has taken approximately 30 percent of each College Master's budget for central services. The Women's Centre has yet to receive any funds from the Provost.

As a service, the Women's Centre should receive a fixed allocation of funds from the university. A report entitled "Equity for Women" made a recommendation that CYSF and College Councils allocate five percent of their budgets yearly to support the Women's Centres and Glendon and York. Recommendations from the July 1985 report, which was prepared for the president of York University by Johanna H. Stuckey, Advisor to the President on the Status of Women and her advisory board, have not been responded to.

The lack of administrative support is partially due to the stigmas attached to Women's Centres in general. Although York's Women's Centre has a program which caters to the needs of different groups, its Lesbian-positive attitude has led to its being viewed solely as a club for Lesbians. According to volunteers, the attitudes of the Administration and of each new CYSF council determine the funding for the Women's Centre, which fluctuates from year to year. As a result of this instability, the services offered by the Centre also vary.

Other student organizations such as Excalibur Publications, York Campus Radio CJRY and the Community and Legal Aid Services Programme receive operating grants annually in the amount of \$1, \$1 and \$1.50 per student member respectively. In order to receive this type of funding from the university, a referendum for the Women's Centre would have to be held.

The lack of funding and the discrepancies in the views of the Administration about the Centre's standing have hampered the Centre's quest toward a more permanent type of funding.

Pubs and coffee shops sacrifice profit for service

By LESLIE BARTON

Paulette Peirol's Opinion column (*Excalibur*, Sept. 11) started to address the issue of why student-run pubs and coffeeshops are able to provide the York community with "more readily digestible" cuisine at more "equitable prices." Mr. Crandles, Manager of Housing and Food Services, offers one set of simplified and questionable explanations for this discrepancy. As current manager of one of the campus coffeeshops and past manager of one of the campus pubs, I would like to see the real reasons for this disparity brought to the attention of the York community.

Crandles is reported as having said that college pubs and coffeeshops manage to keep their prices more equitable by paying less in overhead costs, not being open as many hours, and making most of their profit on alcohol sales. Addressing these rationalizations in reverse order will help to clarify their inconsistencies.

All alcohol purchase for sale in University pubs must be bought through the University's Beverage Department. A 20 percent surcharge on the cost of alcohol purchased is paid directly to the University to offset the cost of administration of

the beverage department. As alcohol costs are escalating several times a year, pubs are being forced to turn to food sales as the only way to make a reasonable margin on the goods sold. I would have thought that Crandles would have noticed the trend in this direction in recent years.

Crandles also claims that campus cafeterias are open for more hours than campus pubs. Campus pubs and coffeeshops are for the majority open from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. in during the week, and varied hours on weekends. I can't see how cafeterias could possibly be open for more hours than the pubs.

Perhaps the lower overhead costs to which Crandles refers are the minimal wages which are paid to the employees of the student-run pubs/coffeeshops. In order to keep prices low for their fellow students, the employees of these establishments work for absurdly low monetary rewards, eschewing this in favour of the work experience and social benefit that they can derive from the job.

Although the student operations do not pay as high a surcharge to the university on gross sales as the caterers do, they are also not party to the extra privileges which the caterers' contracts provide, such as accepting

scrip, and the right to exclusively cater university functions (except for college orientation). Student-run operations do not receive subsidization for the yearly renovations which are required to maintain adequate facilities, let alone to "solve logistical problems" or work on their "image."

The University has also recently decided to administrate certain required services, such as pest control, for the campus businesses. Formerly, pubs and coffeeshops hired their own pest controllers. Now, they must pay the University's increased fee for such necessities.

How then do student-run food and beverage operations manage to provide more equitable services than the catering operations? In addition to the lower staff costs, student-run services can survive on an absurdly low profit margin because they are not motivated by making a profit. Of every dollar spent at a campus cafeteria, a certain percentage is allowed to go off campus into the pocket of the owner of the business. With the student-run operations any profits which remain at the end of the year are either funnelled back into the business, or into the hands of the student governments, to be channelled back into student colleges

and even academic activities.

Peirol's suggestion that the students' only solution is to live off bagels and chili in protest of the cafeteria prices is a good one but for the wrong reason. It is unquestionably in the students' best interest to support the student-run pubs and coffeeshops as what little profit margin is generated from their purchases will inevitably work its way back into their own pockets, either through employment opportunities or student-funded activities.

However, this does not solve the problem for residence students who are not given the freedom of choosing where they are to spend their (subsidized?) meal plan. These students have a right to be concerned that the prices that they are paying for subsidized food in the residence cafeterias are not equitable with the prices that they could pay in student-run operations.

Every year students ask the same questions but become frustrated before satisfactory solutions are reached to the problem of finding suitable and equitable food and beverage services on this campus.

Leslie Barton is manager of The Ainger Coffeeshop in Calumet College.

CALCULATORS

SPECIAL STUDENT DISCOUNT
20-30% OFF
MANUFACTURER'S LIST PRICE



AUDIO 'N' BUSINESS SYSTEMS Ltd.
Authorized Dealer for

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

Canon
SHARP
CASIO



AUDIO 'N' BUSINESS SYSTEMS Ltd.

307 Lesmill Road
Don Mills, Ontario M3B 2V1
Tel: (416) 449-4141

1 traffic light west of Don Mills
north off York Mills

PREPARE FOR:

LSAT GMAT
MCAT SAT
GRE DAT

SPEEDREADING

ADVANCED
MEDICAL
BOARDS

KAPLAN
STANLEY H. KAPLAN EDUCATIONAL CENTER
OF CANADA LTD.

(416) 967-4733

\$7 HOUR

Part-time positions
available immediately earning
SEVEN DOLLARS per hour salary.

- Working with others on a fund-raising project for 'Disabled Sports'.
- You choose two or three work periods per week.
- No experience necessary - we train.

For an interview call:
Mr. McDonald: 731-7811

BACK TO
SCHOOL
SALE

CALCULATORS

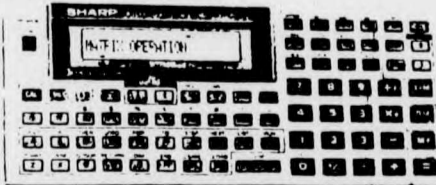
UP TO 50% off

SHARP

NEW FOR 1987
REPLACEMENT OF
EVER POPULAR PC-1401

\$139.99

PC-1403
POCKET COMPUTER
★8K RAM
★59 Scientific Functions
★Matrix Operation

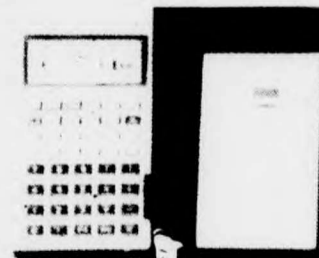


SHARP

EL-5103
"Most Popular Programmable"

- ★Alpha Numeric Scrolling Display
- ★63 Scientific Functions
- ★80 Programming Steps

\$54.99



Downtown Electronics

356 Yonge St. — (2 BLOCKS N. OF DUNDAS)

HOURS: Mon.-Sat. 10-6
Friday 10-9

595-1790

"Your Calculator Specialist"