

focus on dal

Volunteer fair today

by Karen Stille

Did you find a good job this summer — one that related to your academic field and/or personal interests? Or were you forced to settle for a mediocre, low-paying, unchallenging position because you lacked the skills and/or experience necessary for a more desirable position? Perhaps this school year you should think about volunteering somewhere in the community during your free time. Volunteer work is completely rewarding because: a) it looks great on your résumé, b) you can learn new skills and gain experience in your academic field, c) you can meet new people, and d) it feels good to do something worthwhile with your spare time.

The Dalhousie Student Volunteer Bureau will be hosting their fourth "Make a change" Volunteer Fair on Thursday, September 22. Between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., representatives from over 50 non-profit organizations will be on hand in the Green Room of the SUB to explain what volunteer opportunities are available within their organizations.

Face it. A university education does not guarantee you a decent job. We all need additional work experience and volunteering is a great way to gain that experience.

The Student Volunteer Bureau, funded by Dalhousie University, is entering its third year of operation this fall. The main purpose of the

bureau is to assist and encourage students, as well as to provide community organizations with a link to a valuable source of volunteers. They have information on over 200 organizations that deal with women's issues, literacy, health, senior citizens, the environment, entertainment, legal services, coaching/sports,

business and much more. They also have information about volunteering overseas and a resource library.

If you are unable to attend the fair, or would like more information about volunteering opportunities, visit the Student Volunteer Bureau office on the fourth floor of the SUB, or call 494-1561.

NSPIRG's AGM

by Sandra MacDonald

Ever wonder about the rising cost of food? Do you think it's time to turn the tide on hetero-fascism? Do you get the sneaking suspicion that Juan Valdez is nothing more than a mythical figure? Are you preoccupied with garbage? Environmental degradation? Composting? Do you think it's absurd that one segment of our society leaves a second home empty during the winter months while another segment is shelterless?

If you have mulled over one or more of these questions in your mind and are uncertain as to how to proceed, go to the annual general meeting of NSPIRG (Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group) or stop by their office in room 310A, SUB. It is a student-funded and mainly student-

directed non-profit organization which pours its energy into environmental and social justice issues — a regular breeding ground for activists. If none of these groups focuses on a burning issue you would like to work on, you can propose a new working group. In the past working groups have published magazines, organized workshops, and lobbied governmental bodies.

All students are welcome to come to NSPIRG's musical-celebration-meet-and-greet-annual-general-meeting on Monday, September 26, 6 p.m. in the Green Room of the Dalhousie Student Union Building. It is an opportunity to find out more about NSPIRG, and to meet members of various members of the working groups. The meeting will include music and food for thought and bellies!

A Stranger

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forty-eight hours). When I finally get to the hotel, I'm too tired to think, never mind unpack—not to mention my jet-lag—and I fall into bed for a well-deserved sleep.

So that was my first few hours in Canada. I can't help but compare Canada to "back home". Strangely enough, Halifax is not all that different from my home-town, Lima: it's a small enough town, where almost everything is within walking distance; it's a closed enough community for the people to be quite familiar and friendly with each other. However, the locals in Halifax seem to have an edge about them, probably the result of living in such a large country. In that respect, Cyprus is quite different, as it has a population of 'only' 700,000 and it takes about three hours to go from one end of the island to the other.

Through the International Students Centre, the Gazette and my

own insecurities, I've met a lot of people and made a few friends, who appear to be relatively indifferent to my complaints and moaning.

When I first arrived, I felt like an alien in that I looked different, I acted different, I spoke with a different accent and used different expressions. I was in a strange land on the other side of the bloody planet, and it was all I could do not to blurt out "Beep! Take-me-to-your-leader!"

But as time goes by, I find that it's not too bad here. I even find myself — Shock! Horror! — actually fitting in. I think it's going to be a good year, both socially and academically (not necessarily in that order), although people seem to take great pleasure in telling me about the sub-arctic temperatures I'm going to have to suffer during the winter months...

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