

Grad house criticized for "opulence"

by Ralph English

The Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) and the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) are at odds over charges of fiscal irresponsibility.

In refurbishing the Graduate House reading room, DAGS spent \$6600 of its DSU grant. DSU treasurer Shawn Houlihan says the expenditure is unjustifiable during a period of restraint and renewal. In response, DAGS president Liz Bedell says of the

Grad House, "It's not a university, it's a business. A grad club."

Houlihan disagrees. "They have much more responsibility than a business has. Council doesn't provide money for businesses." But in Bedell's opinion the House is discharging its responsibility to meet the changing needs of the graduate community.

Among the items purchased for the reading room are: a \$949

love seat, four chairs ranging in price from \$519 to \$619, a \$175 snack table, as well as lamps and pictures.

To Houlihan, the reading room is opulent. "Just look at the room, it's disgusting," he says. In the midst of restraint and renewal Houlihan feels such expenditures are not only bad for the image of students, but irresponsible as well. In spending the grant in this way DAGS "has defeated the intentions of the student union" says Houlihan.

Houlihan says the expenditures differ from those listed by DAGS during the negotiation of the DSU grant for repairing and upgrading of the Grad House. Bedell says DAGS's list of needs was based on life expectancy estimates for the equipment. "It was not a shopping list," she says.

The terms of the grant/contract do not impose itemized accountability. In Bedell's view, disposition of the funds was at the discretion of DAGS.

DSU grants \$24,260 to DAGS annually. This can be viewed as a rebate on graduates' student union fees. DAGS then undertakes to fulfill the mandate of the student union in providing services to grad students.

Some DSU councillors are concerned DAGS's expenditure will make the student union grants policy appear inequitable. It would be extremely unlikely for councillors to approve such a furniture grant for any other society.

In a letter to Bedell, Houlihan expressed his disappointment with the DAGS decision and demanded "a reasonable explanation". He also threatened to tighten up accountability in future contracts with DAGS.

At the November 20 meeting

of student council, grad rep John Rhude gave notice of motion condemning the Houlihan letter as "high-handed, arrogant, and not becoming of the Treasurer of the Student Union." The motion will also call for an apology from Houlihan.

Bedell says more people are studying at the Grad House in recent years. Existing furniture has been rearranged and new furniture purchased to meet the increased need for seating.

Grad House manager Bob Bagg says the House is recognized by Revenue Canada as a non-profit business. He believes the current dispute arises from a misinterpretation of past agreements and the purpose of the Grad House.

Bedell says that purpose is to serve as a meeting place, "a home away from home," for grad students. She says the House should provide the broadest possible spectrum of different environments.

"It looks really nice," says graduate student Chris Ward. "I don't know if it's worth six thousand dollars," he added.

Bedell says the issue is "a tempest in a teapot. It's unfortunate that it ever came up."



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FM next September

CKDU wins referendum

by A.D. Wright

CKDU, Dal's radio station, is soon to become one of Halifax's radio stations as a student referendum held this week gave the station the green light to broadcast in FM stereo.

A 60.9% majority of students voted for CKDU to go FM, with 867 votes to 557 against.

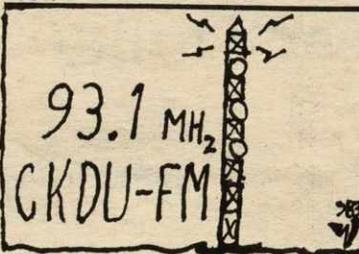
There was a 124 voter turnout and a lot of student interest in the proposal, which calls for a \$6.47 increase in full-time student fees.

The next step for the station is to submit an application for the FM license to the Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). This is expected to pass with no problems and approval will likely be given in March, 1984. The station will be on the air in September, 1984.

CKDU station manager Keith Tufts said, "This is just great. Halifax is going to have something its never had before—a genuine alternative media." Public affairs director Phil Doucette said that the vote was a vindication of higher education because students had proven that they were interested in more than merely commercial entertainment; they had a stake in their community.

CKDU will be 93.1 on the FM scale and be a 50 watt low power FM signal receivable on any FM radio in the Metro area, as well as being available over cable TV lines in the area.

This is the culmination of 11 years of effort to bring a student FM radio station to the Metro area, including two previous failed referendums, in 1974 and 1981.



Senate results

Senate election results in the 22-23 November vote are:

- David Milne313
- Hugh Paton263
- Michael Connor.....205
- Dan Theriault.....138

Boycott at Laurier

WATERLOO, ONT. (CUP) -- Catherine Riddell is boycotting the Wilfred Laurier Dining Hall, and wants a refund for the remainder of the full-year meal card fees all resident students have to pay.

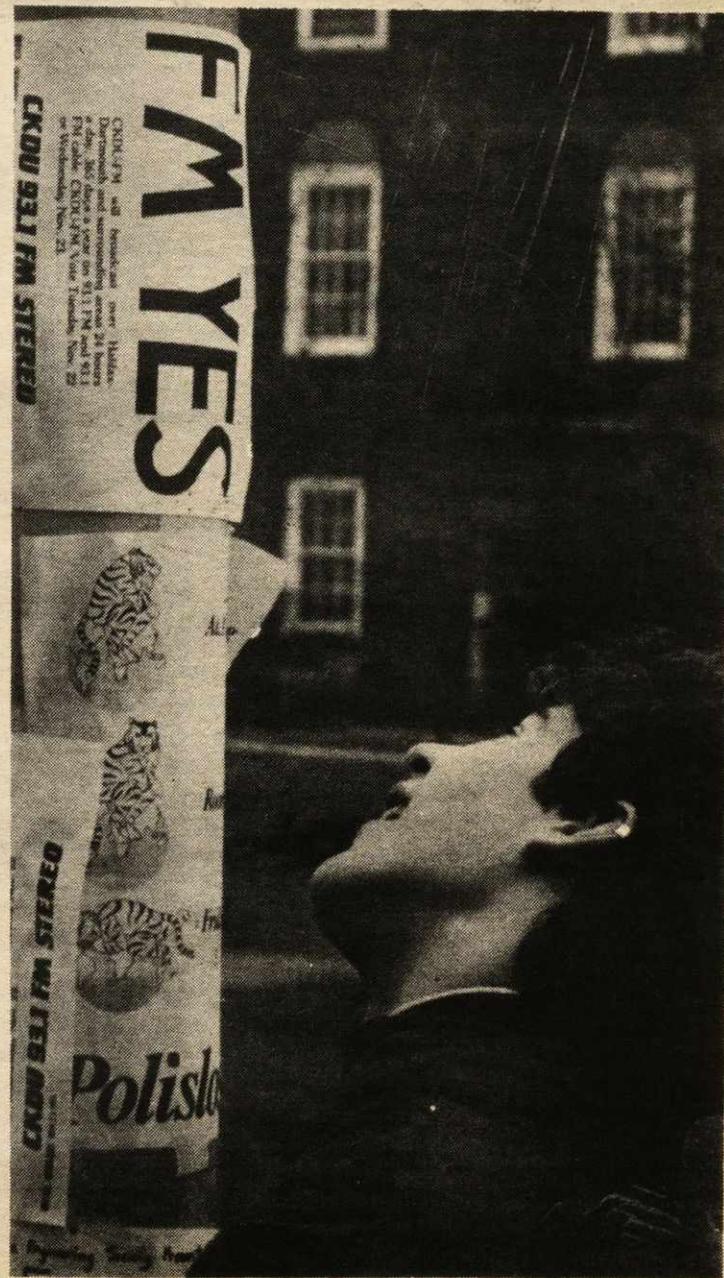
Riddell, a first year student, found a maple leaf in her spinach at one meal and has boycotted the dining hall since Nov. 3.

"I was eating my spinach and it was about two-thirds gone when

something in my mouth tasted funny," she said. She said it was a maple leaf that had turned a fall shade of rusty red.

Food services manager Millie Reiner said she couldn't believe a leaf could become mixed in with the spinach.

"It couldn't have been a very big maple leaf," she said, and maintained that the leaf was green, since "if it was coloured they would have noticed it."



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