

Treasurer runs again

by Richard Samuel

Dalhousie Student Union Treasurer John Murphy says he may re-apply for an unprecedented second term. When asked whether this carefully circulated rumour was accurate Murphy replied, "It's an intriguing possibility".

"Although no-one has ever run for office twice before, this is not the most appealing factor. It's been a tremendous learning experience."

John Murphy said he approached president-elect Dick Matthews about the possibility of his reapplication. Matthews replied "do what you want to do". When approached by **the Gazette**, Matthews declined to comment.

Murphy will only return if his MBA advisor agrees that the workload in that program would allow him enough time to competently undertake his duties as treasurer.

Murphy's interest in a second term has been stimulated by his desire to "complete some of the projects outstanding". One of these projects is the possibility of a full-time advertising person who would solicit advertising and sponsors for Student Union endeavors. Advertising

solicitation has "previously been done on an ad hoc basis and not that well—with the exception of Matt Adamson of **the Gazette**". "The extra revenue created would allow for greater diversity for Student Union publications and CKDU and also provide a broader economic base for all projects".

Money currently directed towards these areas won't be enough. "The question of whether we can afford to hire a full-time ad person has been replaced with the question of whether we can afford not to."

Eight people have applied, and three are now under consideration by Council with the assistance of Gregg Silver of Communication Graphics. Murphy said "Council is looking for someone demonstrating a proven interest in advertising, design and layout".

Another project initiated by Murphy is the computerization of office procedure to save some of the time needed for the "time consuming procedure of writing and processing cheques by the accountant. With the loss of our full-time secretary in November the burden of the workload has been transferred to the treasurer, accountant

and part-time staff. Computerization would not only free up time for those concerned but also simplify and make immediate our accounting situation".

Confident with the experience of a successful year under his belt, Murphy feels his effectiveness in the position has increased. The turmoil of the Dalhousie cleaners dispute with the Dal Administration placed the Student Council and Murphy under pressure from all sides. "In retrospect the decision by Council of neutrality was handled well for all parties concerned—strikers, students and administration. Neutrality kept the SUB open when any other position would have meant the closing of the building. That would have been utterly useless: salaried workers such as myself would have continued to have been paid while hourly workers would have been denied employment." The Dalhousie administration threatened to cut off power to the SUB if Council voted to support the strike.

Summing up this year Murphy said, "I enjoyed the work and the people and next year's Council looks pretty exciting".



Dal Photo / Grandy

Murphy - back for more?

Literacy tests a reality by '81

by Danièle Gauvin

English Qualifying Examinations could be part of admissions procedure for first year students by 1981, according to Professor Sinclair-Faulkner, chairman of the ad hoc Committee on Students' Proficiency in the English Language.

The Committee's report has been under study by various Faculty Councils since November, but it is expected to receive approval—at least in substance—later this week. "The report aims to change the curriculum at Dalhousie so that it will satisfactorily prepare and evaluate students to meet the writing level requirements of a university graduate," Sinclair-Faulkner

explained.

The test, should it be approved, will be used experimentally for three to five years to determine whether those who demonstrate inadequate literacy levels at admission improve sufficiently to graduate with adequate skills. "It will serve as a placement guide; students who need to practise their writing skills will be channeled into writing workshops and encouraged to choose courses which demand a variety of written work," Sinclair-Faulkner said. He added the tests will only be used as a screening device, to accept or deny admission, if it is found that students who have insufficient skills at the beginning of their uni-

versity education fail to improve and meet the university's standards by graduation.

At the moment, three faculty members are helping students improve their writing skills through a writing workshop. The workshop is not used by all departments or professors and it is understaffed, according to Sinclair-Faulkner. An expansion of the writing workshop is a key recommendation of the Committee's report. Until a few weeks ago, all first year students were required to take a writing course, but were not required to pass. Now students must pass their writing class.

British Columbia already has literacy tests for its university applicants and the Canadian Association of Chairmen of English Departments has a working group which aims to implement literacy tests across the country. "We are very interested in their work since we hope the

test will be used across Canada. In the near future, we hope to involve Maritime universities or at least Nova Scotia," Professor Sinclair-Faulkner explained.

It is not expected foreign students whose mother tongue is not English will be affected by the test. Even if the test is ever used as a screen for admission, those who speak more than one language have a better basic grasp of grammar than those who use only one language without thinking about its structures Sinclair-Faulkner said.

The Committee has been working on its report for two years, as a result of faculty's grave concern about the level of work presented in their classes and the frequently doubtful mastery of written English demonstrated by graduating students.

The Committee used a novel approach to deal with the problem, said Sinclair-Faulkner. Other universities

tested their students to judge average levels of literacy. Dalhousie tested faculty members to find out what levels of written work they found acceptable. The Committee found that standards varied among individuals but that most professors were worried about the quality of the work being passed in to them.

The Committee had three alternatives. Remedial programs were found to be too costly and not efficient enough to undo twelve years of bad habits. Rejection of students whose literacy levels were insufficient for graduation through tests administered during their studies raised too many prospects of losing a third of the graduating class 'en route'. Finally, some form of admission test for high school students was felt to be the fairest way to deal with the problem. "It's a manageable and necessary task and well worth the extra dollars in the long run," Sinclair-Faulkner concluded.

Books censored

by Alan Adams

An ad hoc Criteria Committee has been formed by Red Herring Co-Operative Books to decide on the censorship of books for the store. The decision to establish the committee was made at a general meeting of Red Herring on Monday.

The committee will decide if the philosophy of books are of racist or sexist nature. The committee is to decide on the working definition of these terms.

Denis Zachernuk, Secretary for the Board of Red Herring, explained that the decision was "very crucial" adding he was "deeply disturbed by it." Zachernuk described the committee as "inoperable", it can't be made to work. "There are too many different

kinds of groups, people patronizing Red Herring to merit the decision. Some people will be offended," he added.

Board member Marc LePage agreed with Zachernuk saying "it will be very difficult negotiating all through that. It is an unending issue."

Georgina Chambers, a member of the Criteria Committee, said that there have been problems in the past that warrant such a committee. "We are opposed to censorship" said Chambers, adding, "we are not opposed to having a selective criteria for a bookstore that espouses certain goals and principles." She thinks that there will be many problems with the selection of books but added it "is better to have everything out in the open."

Scholarships increase

"Foreign graduate students on scholarships can expect an increase in funds to offset rising tuition costs next year", said Ken Leffek, Dean of Graduate Studies.

"The president assured me a \$750 increase would be set aside to offset cases of real hardship in areas where we need foreign students", said Leffek. He explained that the areas involved are those like African Studies where a proper portion of the students are needed to ensure a quality education. "Each year the

department attempts to raise the basic level of scholarships to keep with inflation", he added.

Leffek explained that foreign students make up 20% of the 500 plus graduate students at Dal, and only 15% are enrolled on a full-time basis. He said that even if his program offsets the increase there would likely be a small decrease in the number of students.

Leffek said Graduate Studies "don't have any major development plans afoot right

now. We're probably coming to the end of any major development for the next number of years." Leffek explained that a Masters in Fishery Management has been approved by the MPHEC for Dalhousie. "But it costs money to implement this and we don't have the money at present."

Leffek said that Dalhousie doesn't have any argument they can put forth to the government to get them to reverse their funding decision. "I'd sooner that they had not done it", he concluded.