



Photo: Tim Hellum

Poor Mikey: no one understands him.

## A Nickel for Getty

by Bill Doskoch

SU President Mike Nickel will be attending the Progressive Conservative leadership convention — as a delegate supporting Don Getty. "I could hide this but I'm not," Nickel said. "A lot of people seem to think that because I'm a Tory it's evil but as long as it was (an) NDP or Communist (convention) it would be OK."

"I'm going as Mike Nickel, I'm not using my title at all. I'm a Political Science major who's interested in politics."

It was a conflict of interest though, argued VP Academic Caroline Nevin. "He is one of two student representatives lobbying the provincial government. When he approaches them, they won't be making a distinction between Mike Nickel, SU president and Mike Nickel, Don Getty delegate."

"When the External Affairs Board discusses how to lobby the provincial government, there will be inherent difficulties when our president has declared his support for one of the candidates," said VP External Gayle Morris.

The political affiliations of other executive members are as follows:

- Caroline Nevin: is presently not a member of any political party.
- Gayle Morris: Is a member of the Alberta Liberal party but is not actively involved with them.
- Rob Splane: Is an active member of the provincial Progressive Conservative party and "might be" attending the leadership convention but not as a delegate.
- Scott Richardson: Is not presently a member of any provincial political party.

### Organization needs volunteers

## Student Help starts a new year

by Audrey Djuwita

Do you like helping people? Can you keep secrets? Do you have some experience on surviving the university life? Are you a good listener? Can you be objective? If you answer yes to all the questions above, then you are just the person Student Help is looking for.

"We will be recruiting new volunteers again in January," said Bob Driver, the Student Help director.

Student Help is a volunteer organization staffed by students that provide informal and confidential service to all U of A students.

It offers help from academic worries such as student loans, exam referrals, grievance procedures and change of registration to personal crisis.

Help also maintains files of typists and tutors. It even keeps students up to date on the activities on campus and around the city.

"We help thousands of students annually, both in giving out information and personal problems," Driver said.

"What we do is basically peer counselling; we don't want to tell students what to do. Instead, we help them to explore the alternatives and students arrive at their own solutions," he explained.

"As a fellow student, we can empathize and relate to many of the problems that the students have," said Dorothy King, a Student Help volunteer.

King, entering her second year as a Student Helper, expressed her satisfaction in helping other students: "Probably it sounds selfish, but it feels good that you have helped someone just by listening and being there for him."

Driver cited that although a lot of the volunteers are psychology or sociology students, Help has a good cross section of volunteers.

"We don't require any background in psychology or sociology, for people who are interested in becoming volunteers. Training is provided by professionals in the field of crisis intervention and human relations.

"The training is in the evening, 2 seminars of 3 hours and one weekend retreat," he said.

The training is mandatory for all Helpers.

"During the training, we develop close friendships with fellow volunteers. It forms a good support system," said King.

Both Driver and King believe that their experience as Student Helpers develop their communication and listening skills as well as the ability to handle stress.

"At times, it is quite difficult dealing with other people's pressures. On the other hand, if you could help them feel better, you feel good."

"It's only natural that sometimes I get upset when a student I am helping is going through a bad time, but we have a positive outlook and hope that the person will pull through," King said.

In helping other students, the Student Helpers maintain a strict confidentiality.

"A Student Helper can be dismissed on the ground of breaking confidentiality," Driver stressed.

Students are free to drop in or phone in for help.

"It doesn't have to be something serious. You can just pop in for a

chat or share a joke," Driver said.

"We usually have a male and a female volunteer in the office and students are free to ask help from any or both of them. We also have a "Quiet Room" if privacy is requested," King said.

King denied that female volunteers are more sympathetic.

"The guys here are just as understanding. It all depends on the people and Student Help is really lucky in having people who have these special skills."

Volunteers are required to come in for a minimum of 4 hours per week.

If you are interested in becoming a Student Helper or if you need any form of assistance, please drop in by room 250 SUB or call 432-4266 from 8 a.m. - 11 p.m. weekdays, and from 5 to 11 p.m. weekends. (Temporary hours until September 27 are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.)

## Students MUGged

by Gary Kirk

Mature students having trouble re-adjusting to school life can find two sources of help: the Mature Undergraduate Students (MUGS) Association and Mature Student Advisor Maxine Crooks.

"When I first started, I had to ask the guy sitting next to me how to write a multiple choice exam," said Shirley Hammond, MUGS president.

"I felt lost and insecure. Without the club I probably wouldn't have come back, but everyone assured me that they had felt the same way but that things would get better — and they did. Now I love university!"

MUGS holds Brown Bag Lunches each Tuesday and Wednesday in the Heritage Lounge from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

"They're a time when mature students can get together and talk about different problems and share experiences," said MUGS member Kim Cassidy, 30.

"We function primarily as a support group rather than a social club. For example, I have a handicapped child as do several other members. The advice we share in our discussions is a great aid to the unique problems we encounter. As well, we talk about any topic that may come to mind and

generally widen our horizons."

In addition to the Brown Bag Lunches, frequent socials and an annual graduates' banquet are held.

At the Brown Bags, students can also meet with counsellors from Student Counselling, as well as Mature Students Advisor and Program Coordinator, Maxine Crooks.

According to Crooks, students returning to school after spending time in the work force or raising a family, typically experience difficulty fitting into the university environment, are uncertain about their academic skills, and may feel inferior to the young students with whom they are competing.

"Also, because many of them have families and other responsibilities outside of school, time is a major hassle," she said.

"My job is to help the transition back into school as smooth as possible. I can tell them which forms to fill out, how to receive financial assistance, or advise them which options are available in their program."

A How to Study seminar is held at the beginning of the year and Crooks also has a variety of resources and study tips for those who might need them.

Ms. Crooks can be contacted at 432-4145 or in Athabasca 300.

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