

cross-canada briefs

Trent President quits after strike

BY M-J MILLOY

PETERBOROUGH, ON. (CUP) — After a bitter three-week strike, three top administrators at Trent University are gone — but the deep divisions created in the past months remain.

Trent president Leonard Connolly has announced he will be leaving his job before the end of his term. The acting dean and the vice-president academic resigned before the New Year.

The latest resignation comes after a year of tense relations between the administration and the three unions that represent the school's faculty and staff. Those problems culminated in a three week strike by full-time faculty in November after the administration broke off talks during mediation.

The two sides reached an agreement in early December, in a settlement that was viewed as a victory for the faculty. But hard feelings remain for many about the strike and the way it was handled by the administration.

Although Connolly cited "personal and professional" reasons for his premature exit, many believe it was inevitable in the bitter aftermath of the strike.

"Don't even mention that name to me," said one staff member, in an informal interview. "His administration didn't treat any of us fairly this year. I just hope those resignations shake something up in those offices...we sure could use a change."

Lawyer asks Martlet to retract editorial

VICTORIA (CUP) — A local lawyer is threatening to sue the University of Victoria's student newspaper over printed comments that members of his Canadian Free Speech League are "extremist thugs."

Doug Christie has given the *Martlet* a 30-day deadline to apologize for editorial comments made in its Nov. 7 edition.

The *Martlet* ran the editorial denouncing Christie's group for using the Victoria Public Library as a "venue to spread hate."

In a letter addressed to the *Martlet*, Christie wrote, "I am giving you an opportunity within the next 30 days to write a retraction of those remarks and an apology for any suggestions that myself and the persons in attendance on behalf of the Canadian Free Speech League were engaged in the promotion of hatred."

After consulting with legal counsel, *Martlet* Managing Editor Jess Howard and Editor-in-Chief Andrew Lupton have decided against running an apology, saying the comments fall within the boundaries of fair comment.

"Our defence in this issue is truth and fair comment. The meeting in question was hosted by Christie's Free Speech League and attended by people who've promoted hate and published racist views in the past," said Lupton.

These people include Doug Collins, who suggested Holocaust deaths were exaggerated in a column he wrote in the *North Shore News*.

Another attendee was Tony McAleer, who operated a telephone chat line that carried hate messages until a human rights tribunal pulled the plug.

Christie's client list includes Ernst Zundel, who in 1985 was found guilty of willfully causing harm to racial harmony after publishing a booklet that claimed the Holocaust was a Jewish hoax.

The Victoria lawyer has defended other holocaust deniers such as Malcom Ross, whose books allege the Nazi slaughter of Jews during the Second World War was exaggerated.

"I find that ironic that on one hand, Christie claims to be such a staunch defender of free speech, then calls for a retraction when a journalist writes something he doesn't like," Lupton said.

Watts beating convictions upheld

BY GAZETTE STAFF

The convictions of five men in the beating of Dalhousie student Darren Watts were upheld yesterday. However, the judicial split decision of the Court of Appeal— 2 to 1 — left the door open for further appeals.

Cyril Smith, Spencer Dixon, Stacey Skinner, Herman McQuaid, and Guy Robart were

convicted of endangering the life of Darren Watts. The assault occurred outside the Phi Kappa Pi fraternity house in September 1994. The severe beating left Watts in a coma from which he has since recovered.

Damon Cole, who had also been convicted in the attack, is scheduled to be retried January 20th.

Sneaky smoker likely cause of SUB fire

BY GINA STACK

Careless smoking is the most likely cause of a small fire that broke out in the Student Union Building last Friday morning.

"According to the fire inspector, the evidence points to careless smoking," said Bill Louch of the Dalhousie Safety Office.

"Someone, or some people are using the storage room to sneak a smoke."

At 10:20 a.m., a small fire broke out in a storage room off the McInnes room, located on the second floor of the Student Union Building (SUB).

Alarms were sounded and the building was evacuated within a four minute period.

Firefighters from the University Avenue fire station responded to the alarms.

The SUB's sprinkler system had extinguished most of the fire before firefighters arrived.

"The sprinkler and monitoring system worked perfectly," said Louch. "There was not much damage, but the floor in the McInnes room has suffered a bit of water damage."

Louch said that it was lucky that the sprinkler system was able to quickly contain the fire. "It had the potential of being a serious fire," he said. "The store room has lots of flammable material in it."

Since the door to the storage room is kept unlocked, Louch says that it is highly unlikely that the person, or persons, responsible for the fire will be caught.

As a result of the fire, Louch will be meeting with the management of the SUB and the university administration to discuss measures to be taken to prevent another fire.

There are two problems Louch wishes to address immediately.

"Refuse in the (storage) room provided fuel for the fire," said Louch. "I want to minimize the accumulation of flammable refuse. Second, I want to address the smoking material that caused the fire."

Louch said that use of the isolated storage room for smoking is most likely the result of a policy that bans smoking from the SUB.

"It is unfortunate that as smoking restrictions get tighter and

tighter people will take advantage and sneak off in corners to smoke, and end up putting others' lives at risk," added Louch.

Dalhousie Student Union vice-president academic/external Chris Lydon identified another potential problem in the SUB. He said that according to one student, the fire alarm could not be heard properly in the Corner Pocket.

"A friend of mine who was in the Corner Pocket at the time described the fire alarm as sounding like something loudly banging on a pipe," said Lydon.

Students did not evacuate this area of the building until the floor marshal instructed them to leave.

Lydon identified two other areas in the building from which the alarm cannot be heard. He said that the back of the bookstore and the DSU president's office are both quiet spots.

Despite these three quiet areas, Lydon said that the DSU has no plan to rectify the situation.

"The people in the Corner Pocket were the last out, but the floor marshal had them out in less than four minutes," he said.

HAH group is here

BY MONICA GILLIS

After four months of no gay, lesbian or bisexual representation on the Dalhousie Campus, Humans Against Homophobia have returned to campus.

Lisa Verge and Daniel Clairmont started up Humans Against Homophobia (HAH) this year after finding that there was no group of its kind on campus.

"I remember hearing about it last year but I had no time," said Verge.

Last fall she inquired about joining the group at the offices of the Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group (NSPIRG). When she found out that no such group existed, Verge left her name and number for anyone who wanted to contact her about starting up such a group again.

After trying to get information about last year's Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Association of Dalhousie (B-GLAD), Daniel Clairmont was lead to the NSPIRG office where he was given Lisa's number.

"I wasn't really interested in HAH but I found myself going back for more information," Clairmont said.

HAH is a working group of NSPIRG and has been active since 1993. Its membership is open to people of any sexual orientation.

The group has taken an active role in fighting homophobic stereotypes. Its goal is to educate the public about misconceptions of homosexuality.

One of HAH's greater accomplishments was its role in petitioning a Nova Scotia after he made homophobic remarks in one of his

decisions. The matter was resolved with a promise that court judges would become educated about homophobia and what it means to be homosexual.

This year's HAH group, which contains mostly fresh faces (only one member from last year has returned), is hoping to continue playing an active role in the community. In addition to looking at more ways to educate the public the group is hoping to set up an online counselling service to help people involved in homophobic situations.

HAH would also like to tackle the age old problem of the Red Cross screening process which openly discriminates against members of the gay community.

To date, HAH is just getting organized, but Clairmont said that "hopefully it will be a success."

Denied

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numbers and see where they came from," said Murphy.

Cartmill, a member of B&F, said that he was expecting to have a committee meeting last Friday but it was cancelled at the last minute.

"I didn't want the budget to go through council without the changes," said Cartmill.

The changes his amendment proposed reflected his concerns with the budget that included some problematic patterns and a few questionable figures. He also was critical of the way in which the numbers were being handled.

"I had to have my say," said Cartmill.

Murphy attributes the lateness of the budget to his own misinter-

pretation of the constitution and takes full responsibility. He submitted his budget to councillors by December 15 but the constitution requires the treasurer to submit the budget to council by that date.

Daniel Clark, a Senate representative, was defeated in his attempt to have his crucial issues motion passed in principle. The motion would have had to be passed at the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Union. Certain meetings would be declared "crucial issues" meetings under the proposal, requiring the attendance of 80 per cent of the council plus one councillor. Currently, for any meeting to take place, 50 per cent plus one of the councillors must be present.

The motion was deemed not to be harmful by the Constitution and Policy Committee but they did find it to be redundant.

Clark said that realistically,

it's too late to revise and revisit his motion before the AGM in February.

"For now, it's dead," said Clark, adding that he did get positive feedback that would encourage him to continue working on the motion.

He also commented that he believed there were several reasons why his motion was defeated. Among them, that council might be a bit reticent to make such a big change in a year when the DSU is trying to re-establish its credibility.

"Others don't want to be forced to have to go to a council meeting...and because nobody ever bothers to watchdog attendance, they get away with it," said Clark.

Vice-president academic/external Chris Lydon said his motivation for supporting Clark's motion was to get debate started on the issue of councillor attendance.