

editorial

Let's do it right

This term saw the reinstatement of a privilege lost to the student body five years ago, double stamping at student events. This is intended to allow members of the student body, who are underage, to attend events in the university community where alcohol is to be served. One of the most notable aspects of the recent Extravaganza was the presence of an inordinately large number of underage, non-students, ranging downward in age to fourteen and less. While these children were supposedly the personal guests of students, in the vast majority of cases this was a mere fallacy, as they had simply solicited students at the door to sign them in.

While the attendance of these children was no doubt financially gratifying for Campus Services Limited, it also showed incredible shortsightedness and recklessness on their part. For this type of event advertising to the community at large was sheer folly. In allowing the attendance of these children at their event CSL has seriously jeopardised the continuance of the doublestamp system for student events, and maybe more importantly for them, CSL's own long term profit.

A long memory will serve us well to remind us of what contributed to lose us the double stamp system last time. Two events in particular stand out. A young man, not a student and not old enough to drink attended an Ache 'n' Wake, got drunk, drove home and didn't get there. A young woman from the high school went drinking at a residence bar. When she got home mummy and daddy were waiting up for their precious child. When asked where she had got the alcohol she told them, being a dutiful child. The next day daddy let the Administration, Liquor Licensing Board and alcohol and Drug Dependency Council know he wasn't happy about this. The two events did not happen in isolation, there were myriad others. These occasions involving underage non-students served to focus community attention upon us, and our drinking and social habits. The community brought pressure to bear on the administration. It was this external censure that contributed greatly to the end of double stamping and residence bars, on this campus.

So what can we do? It's simple really. In order to be signed in to a campus event where alcohol is available, guests must have proof they are nineteen, or a current university I.D. from another university. The double stamping system was reinstated for the benefit of members of the student body. Let's not lose this privilege because the abuses of local high-school kids once again focusing community pressure on us.

Time is of the essence

An independent University Ombudsman has been long awaited; the main stumbling block for almost a decade now has been, who will pay?

Before making hasty decisions, we must define what the ombudsman's role should be. The best proposal made so far was in the Report on the Office of the Ombudsman, prepared last year by a senate student services subcommittee. The committee, chaired by Financial Advisor Sue Wiesner, recommended the ombudsman should cover both Fredericton and Saint John campuses, and possibly Saint Thomas University as well. Moreover, the ombudsman should consider cases from all sectors of the university community including faculty, staff, students and others. To be effective, the committee strongly advocated the position be full time.

The committee studied the ombudsman position at many other universities in arriving at its proposal. The role of recommending policy changes was considered very important. The ombudsman at the University of Toronto, for instance, produces an annual report with statistics, case summaries and recommendations. The recommendations stimulate various sectors of the university into action which may otherwise have never come about. A similar reporting function was suggested for a UNB(STU) ombudsman.

The key factor in determining the effectiveness of an ombudsman is that he or she be trusted and respected by all parties. To accomplish this the following considerations must be made: There must be a quality person (this requires a reasonable salary as well as effective selection procedures); the ombudsman must be independent (he must report to various campus bodies and not to any individual), and he must have wide investigative powers. The Report on the Office of the Ombudsman covers most of these issues and, if implemented, would provide the campus with what it needs.

The only thing missing from the report was a specific method of allocating funding contributions. It is time to decide this now.

President Downey has indicated his opposition to paying the full cost of such a position out of the university budget. This position is both understandable due to economic times, and also wise if the ombudsman is not to become dominated by the administration.

The costs must obviously be shared by various parties. The UNB Student Union is in no position to pay even as much as thirty percent of the cost as general Student Union Fees have not risen in well over a decade. The Saint Thomas and UNBSJ Student Unions, if anything, are in a worse situation and have smaller student populations. Other groups who may be willing to pay a smaller part of the cost are the AUNBT and other campus unions, companies such as Beaver Foods and Modern Building Cleaners who have a large volume of campus business and thus will benefit from recommendations, and also the Alumni.

A reasonable allocation of costs may be as follows (assuming a total annual cost of \$60,000: University of New Brunswick (both campuses combined)—\$25,000 plus office space and shared secretarial services with some group on campus; UNB Student Union—\$15,000 plus availability of secretarial services; STU Student Union—\$3000.00; UNBSJ Student Union—\$3000.00; Unions—\$5000.00; Companies—\$5000.00 Alumni and others—\$4000.00.

With the costs spread out in a manner similar to this, no group's budget would be over-burdened and the ombudsman would be truly regarded as representing everybody.

An ombudsman is of great importance to the campus. It is time all parties sat down without any preconceived notions and arrived at a compromise. With the current Dean of Students leaving, the time is ripe for the Dean of Students' job description to be re-written so he no longer has the conflict of interest inherent in both administering and resolving conflicts with administration. (He presently does double-duty as ombudsman and director of student services) At the same time, obviously, a new position must be set up.

Time is of the essence, we only have several months before a new Dean of Students is appointed, with the probable result that the ombudsman question will be placed on the back-burner for another five-years.



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journal

BY MIKE MACKINNON

I would like to open this week's column by requesting you keep your submissions to upcomin' to a minimum length. This column is for everyone and submissions that are a page long makes it somewhat difficult to include all submissions. We dislike cutting notices but in many cases we have no choice. In future, if the submission is too long it will not go in, in an effort to be fair to all.

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Saint Thomas University may soon be losing its student paper, the *Aquinian* (see story page three). The Student Union of Saint Thomas passed a motion that will cut off funding for the paper. In order for them to continue publishing they will have to raise the money through advertising and raffles.

This is a ludicrous proposition. The *Aquinian* brings in no where near the advertising the *Brunswickan* does and we ourselves cannot publish solely from the money we raise from advertising. I cannot understand why the Student Union would want to cut funding for the paper. A student newspaper is an essential part of the service the student union provides for the students and to effectively cease its publication is to shirk their responsibility.

The idea of running raffles is a little hard to swallow. Most people are aware of just how much money can be raised from raffles, certainly not enough to continue to publish the paper on a bi-weekly basis. It is sad to see the imminent demise of the *Aquinian*. Students of Saint Thomas should get out and show support for the paper.

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While on the topic of the *Aquinian*, I would like to take this opportunity to correct a slight misconception in the story on CUP in the last issue. While they may be the first college paper in New Brunswick to join the organization in recent years, they most certainly were not the actual first joiner. The honour, dubious though it may be, belongs to us. In fact, the *Brunswickan* was one of the founding members and continued to be a member until 1977. At that point we decided to drop out of the organization as they were no longer beneficial to us.

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Finally, at long last, the cafeteria has a non-smoking section. It is located next to the patio. I am glad to see there is an area where I can go to eat without having to suffer from lack of consideration shown by some smokers. There is nothing more disgusting than having smoke drifting into your face while eating lunch.

Not that this idea of making a non-smoking section is fool proof. One day last week I strolled by and noticed a number of people sitting there and puffing away.

Beaver Foods has also decided to keep the cafeteria food service open until 11:00 at night. I am glad to see this decision come about as there are a number of people who use that service.

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