

# Rappell looks back

by Robert Drinkwater

"I tell ya, you never realize how short a year is," said Jefferson Rappell, reflecting on the past twelve months he spent as president of the Dalhousie Student Union.

Rappell said he started his term hoping to get more achieved for students by working with the university's Board of Governors rather than against it. He said the DSU tried to take a new approach on tuition fees when they met with the board over the summer and in early September.

"We were saying we got a mandate based on how we ran the election," Rappell said, "that students would accept a minimal fee increase for a better quality of education — that we wouldn't go with the same old 'freeze the fees' and get slapped with 10 per cent again."

Of course, students were slapped with an increase. On September 22, the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) released its report calling for a tuition increase of 10 per cent per year for the next three years.

Still, Rappell says working with the Board of Governors paid off. "Basically when the BAC report came out on September 22, it for all intents and purposes meant that tuition was going to go up. What we tried to do, and to a certain degree were successful in, and say, 'we can't re-invent the wheel, but we can make sure that it's not a given that this will

be the three-year plan."

"We sort of had to accept the first year because there was no other way we could fight that. But we managed to ensure that the other two years were not a given, and they're not right now," he added.

Rappell said he didn't regret the strategy, as he believed taking a more confrontational role with the board is unrealistic.

"We're not going to intimidate a Board of Governor into not putting tuition up. That's a fact of life. As much as we like to think we can, we're not going to. But what we can do is work with them, and if we get that sort of feeling, I think we can get somewhere."

Rappell said the soft-sell approach with the Board of Governors paid off in other ways. In particular, he cited the recent victory of getting the board

to direct Dalhousie president Howard Clark to allow a student to sit on the BAC. Rappell said it's a small victory, but added that victories for students on the board are few and far between.

"I think we're really starting the ball rolling. Students are a force to be reckoned with not because we're working against it, but because we're trying to work with the Board of Governors," said Rappell.

Rappell finishes his term on May 1, when he will clean out his desk to make way for president-elect Rod Macleod.

And what's next for Rappell?

"I've spent a lot of time in politics, and I wouldn't take back any time I spent doing it," he said, "but I think I'd like to take it easy this year — maybe get my academics up a little higher."

## Student admits false complaint

by Michelle Maruk

WINNIPEG (CUP) — Crying wolf can have harsh consequences.

A University of Manitoba student who filed a false report of sexual harassment against a professor has been expelled from the university for five years, according to a report from the university's discipline committee.

The student filed a complaint in an attempt to extort higher grades after unsuccessful grade appeals, the report says. Upon investigation the sexual harassment office found the complaint to be unsubstantiated. During the investigation the student indicated she would drop the charge if the professor would raise her grades.

According to Marilyn MacKenzie, the university's sexual harassment officer, false complaints are extremely rare and her office has only received

a handful since it opened nine years ago. She said the university's policy specifically outlines how false complaints are to be dealt with.

"It is not used very often and individuals who are only out to destroy someone may face disciplinary action," she said.

Megan Bowman, a member of the university's women's centre, said it is unfortunate that someone would abuse the system. She said she worries the attention the incident is getting will make it more difficult for students to come forward and file a complaint of sexual harassment.

"This incident puts the emphasis on women filing false rape and harassment charges. False complaints of this kind, as with any other crime, have been found to be very low."

An appeal in the student's case is pending.



Comedienne Cathy Jones.

DALPHOTO: MIKE DEVONPORT

## Women celebrate in variety

by Judy Reid

"It's probably been a while since I've felt so empowered," said May Ocean, one of about 500 women and a handful of men crowded into the McInnes Room to be entertained by female singers, actors, dancers and comedians.

Held on Tuesday, March 8, this is the first year that Dalhousie has had the honour of hosting the annual International Women's Day Celebration.

Verona Singer has attended all the Halifax IWD variety shows which began in 1991, and said this year's production was the best.

"What impressed me the most was the talent," she said and cited the Rose Vaughan Trio, Mary Walsh and Cathy Jones as some of her favourites.

Rose Vaughan of the Rose Vaughan Trio was nominated best female vocalist of the year in the east coast music awards. Of the three pieces performed, "Red River Blues" was a definite crowd pleaser. Performed a capella, the trio sang about the trials and tribulations of menstruation. "It all started with a white jump-suit," the audience was told.

Singer added that the variety show is the only International Women's Day event that has happened consistently in Halifax.

This year's variety show is the first that Linda Hamilton has attended.

"I was expecting just a few performers, longer performances and a lot more speeches about women's issues," she said. "I was really pleasantly surprised."

The two-hour show featured ten performances and it seems everyone

had a favourite.

"I really liked the mother and daughter," said Ocean, referring to Sandy Greenberg and her young daughter Lise Cormier. Greenberg sang and played her guitar accompanied by Cormier, whose head barely reached the top of her mother's guitar.

"Mommy, do you like climbing mountains?" bantered Cormier between verses.

"Sure do."

"Then here's a song just for you and everyone who likes mountains."

Perhaps the best received performances was by Mary Walsh. "What's this International Women's Day?" asked the award winning comedian from This Hour has 22 Minutes. "What are we? A bunch of ground hogs or something?" While Walsh proceeded to do a parody of "Hinterland Who's Who" featuring the woman, the audience laughed long and loud.

Entertainment was not the only focus of Tuesday night's event. Approximately twenty information booths lined the walls of the McInnes Room, sponsored by pro-women, youth, peace and political organizations. Among the organizations present were the Dalhousie Women's Centre, the Canadian Labour Congress, Tools for Peace, and Stepping Stone, an outreach program for women, youth and men in prostitution.

Last year, the IWD celebration contributed \$1,200 to Stepping Stone. This year proceeds will go to the Anti-Poverty Network. The only criteria for members is to have experienced poverty first hand. There is only one non-woman member in the group.

Other performers included the a

capella group Women Next Door, the harmonies of the Persisters, drama and song from the Voices Black Theatre Ensemble, singers and guitarists Emily Levy-Purdy and Evelyn Riggs, comedian Cathy Jones and dancer Annette Babooram.

It was suggested by a couple of audience members that in the future there be more performances by different cultural groups and a greater diversity in the music.



Sathysai Murty, Aparna Vankamamidi, and Myrathy Muhunthan — Indian classical dancers backstage at Indisa Night, 1994.

DALPHOTO: KENNETH KAM