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Dalhousie computer crimes under scrutiny

by Heather Roseveare

The Halifax RCMP are investigating a report from the Dalhousie Computer Centre that some students are misusing its software.

Constable Bruce Rogerson said "a variety of students" have gained access to files other than their own.

The use of such files constitutes theft pursuant to the Criminal Code of Canada.

Intab Ali, director of the Killam library computer centre, said "there is reason to believe that some people are using other people's numbers."

But one student said the situation may be more serious. The computer science student (name withheld) said she knew of classmates who had accessed foreign files and were providing time to outside sources for personal gain.

The centre already sells computer time to outside sources, the number

of which Mr. Ali is not willing to disclose. However, he did say external users which are necessary for financial stability of the centre, do not interfere with academic time. Furthermore, a \$200,000 upgrading of the system in November coupled with an extension in operating hours ensures a reasonable amount of time to students, he said.

Constable Rogerson and Mr. Ali agree that it is easy to obtain someone else's number (by looking over someone's shoulder or checking the garbage), but it is difficult to prove who is using what number and for what purpose. In addition, a lack of criminal legislation in the area makes charging a person almost impossible.

Last year, a local company was found guilty of using files accessed from Fisheries Canada, but was

only fined \$26, the cost of "stolen" computer time. The value of transferred information was not considered.

Claire de Grasse, president of the Computer Students' Association, said it is more likely that students "joke around" with the system (by sending messages to friends or playing games) rather than actually misuse the system.

She said the present time allotment of one half hour per booking is the best deterrent against system misuse.

Attorney General of Nova Scotia Harry How said legislation for computer crime is under active consideration by the federal government.

"There is a great potential for crime in this area," he said. "It lends itself to all sorts of abuses and that's already been shown."



Photo/Dal Photo

Computer crime is becoming more of a reality at Dal, but it doesn't take a shady-looking character to do it.

Super Societies

'83 generates controversy

by Iven MacKay

Reaction to Super Societies '83 has ranged from "too many screw ups" to "it was a good time."

A number of charges have been levelled against Super Societies. Some societies and residence council reps say event rules were inconsistent, the assassin contest had its rules changed in the middle of the week, judges were not present when they had to be at both the banner and noise contests, and they found it frustrating getting information on event locations. Other people disagree.

Super Societies chair Winston Brooks said he was "pleased" with the support of Super Societies. He said the events were well organized before carnival started, but admitted "some events were left up in the air."

"Everyone thinks it's screwed

up," said Sherriff Hall resident Joan Collins. She said her group, Bronson and 2nd floor Sherriff, saw no judge for the noise contest at the Dal-St. FX basketball game last Saturday. When asked Brooks she said she didn't know who the judge was. Commerce Society president Alan Creaser said there was a judge at the noise contest.

Brooks told Collins he was judging the banner contest, but she says he had arrived late in the second half. Some people had gone and not all the banners were there.

Residents had some difficulties in organizing teams for events because they were given short notice of where they were to be held. "It was frustrating," said Bronson House president Dave Weaver. However, other than the lack of notification, Weaver said he thought events were well organized.

Creaser said the Commerce

Society had no communication problems with Brooks. He said the reason they participated in every event was that they had their own society chair to organize and motivate participation. Their man, John Sieber, commented "If you wanted to participate badly enough you could get the information."

Nineteen societies registered this year, six more than Brooks had budgeted for. Winter Carnival chair Neal McCarney suggested the increase in the number of societies and a failure to allocate responsibilities made the Super Societies seem disorganized.

All participants agree on one point, though — they enjoyed themselves. "Super Societies is a great idea," said Cameron House president Gary Thornø. "It just didn't seem as much fun as last year."

Domus Legis scrimps to pay off debt

by Samantha Brenner

In an age of growing deficits, Dalhousie's beleaguered law fraternity is bucking the trend.

Due to efforts on the part of the executive, a novel repayment scheme and members volunteering their services, the law fraternity has reduced its \$10,200 debt to the Student Union by nearly two-thirds since last April.

When this year's Domus Legis executive took office, they were faced with an outstanding debt for rent in arrears and bar services, and the society's house in a shambles.

Domus bar manager Mark Coffin attributes the mess to two factors: a lack of control by last year's executive over bar operations and the Student Union's Bar Services allowing the debt to accumulate without demanding payment until the problem was too large to handle. He referred to last year's executive as "little more than a glorified dance committee."

Student Union treasurer Shawn Houlihan cited administrative error as the reason the debt was allowed to reach such a large amount. Under the new repayment plan, Domus pays an additional 15 per cent on purchases of alcohol from Bar Services, which then goes toward Domus' debt with the student union. Volunteer bartenders have allowed Domus to cut its operating costs, freeing up more

money to offset the debt.

The plan is proving successful. Domus Legis Society president Julia Cornish predicts the society will be operating in the black by April.

Revenues were down at Domus last year because attendance had dropped off. Cornish felt a large part of the problem was the condition of the house. Volunteers painted and cleaned during the summer in an attempt to create a pleasant environment where members could fraternize.

Co-operation from the student union played a large part in improvements to the house. Director of Housing John Graham arranged the loan of four tables and partial payment for instalment of a new floor.

Another problem was members did not feel they were getting value for their money. This year's executive runs dances and special events as a service, charging no admission to society members. Domus has also purchased a television and a ping pong table, and updated its stereo system. All profits now go back into improving the house.

Today over half of the law students are members of the Domus Legis Society. House manager Stephen McGregor attributes success to offering members value for their money and running the club like a business.