

# Housing crunch coast to coast

**OTTAWA (CUP)** — Rising rents, plunging vacancy rates and disappearing landlords have left students in some provinces searching endlessly for a place to call their own.

The housing crunch is particularly frustrating for students in Nova Scotia and Ontario. In Quebec, the situation is only marginally better.

Hundreds of Halifax's 19,000 post-secondary students, attending the city's seven colleges and universities, are competing intensely for the few places available. Spiralling rent has forced students into an even tighter low-income housing market than last year.

Student leaders in Halifax say the city's large number of post-secondary institutions, its geographic location and sudden influx of students this year have exacerbated the

problems facing those without a home.

"Everybody anticipated the enrolments would be going down but they haven't said Judy Guthrie, Students Union of Nova Scotia executive officer. "Residences are booked solid."

Guthrie said students who find accommodation outside the Halifax peninsula must take the bus for more than an hour to reach campus.

"Students may be able to find housing but often it's not conducive to studying because of transit problems. I know students who have to arrange their whole study schedule around catching the last bus at twelve."

In Ontario, students in several cities are vainly searching for a place to stay. Homeless students

attending the University of Guelph are being warned they must look long and hard for affordable housing and will likely pay higher rents this year.

Guelph's student housing office has frantically been trying to help students find lodgings since July. Along with the University of Ottawa, Guelph has appealed through the media to city residents to secure more accommodation.

Barbara Hodson, Guelph off-campus student housing director, blamed the housing shortage on higher interest rates and decrease in the number of houses being built.

Students in Ottawa are also finding the search for off-campus housing bleak. Stuck with landlords who refuse to rent to students, some students at Ottawa's three post-secondary institutions have banded together to fight for their rights as tenants. Ottawa has one of the lowest vacancy rates in the country, a mere 0.2 per cent.

In Sudbury, students are desperately trying to find on-campus housing but their prospects look grim. Most spots in Laurentian University's residences have been filled, students are scouring the city for cheap places to live. They must now cope with greedy landlords who realize students are in a bind.

In Montreal McGill students are encountering a market offering pricey condominiums but few low-income apartments. The city is slowly renovating its cheaper dwellings in the student ghetto and forcing more than 3,000 students to turn to more expensive spots far from campus.

"I just can't afford it," said Daniel Derosier, a part-time McGill student.

Montreal urban activist John Gardiner blamed the city for refusing to examine the social cost of

renovating low-income dwellings. He said McGill should have shouldered part of the burden by developing affordable housing for students.

## New bus routes

Edmonton Transit has added five additional weekday morning trips between Southgate Transit Centre and the University of Alberta.

Between 7:22 am and 9:02 am, there is additional service on Route 69 travelling directly from Southgate to the University. All local stops are being made, but the major assistance is to relieve crowding at Southgate Transit Centre on University-bound buses.

Edmonton Transit experienced increased morning loads to the University during early September, which may partly be caused by the closure of Stadium CarPark. Extra trips are added by Edmonton Transit when passenger loads exceed standards set by City Council.

The extra Route 69 trips leave Southgate Transit Centre at 7:22 am, 7:52, 8:25, 8:30 and at 9:02 am.

## "Solve a quest"

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of skill, chance, and wit. You may end up trying to solve a riddle in combat, but you do not have to touch another player to do so."

The game lasts all day Saturday and wraps up with "an authentic medieval feast Saturday night. The feast includes the meal itself, a medieval finger food banquet;

selection of king and queen; entertainment; plus the awarding of all the prizes," said Zielke.

The first prize is a trip for two to a real castle in Toronto - Castle Loma. There are also 14 other prizes in 14 categories, plus additional treasures on the site.

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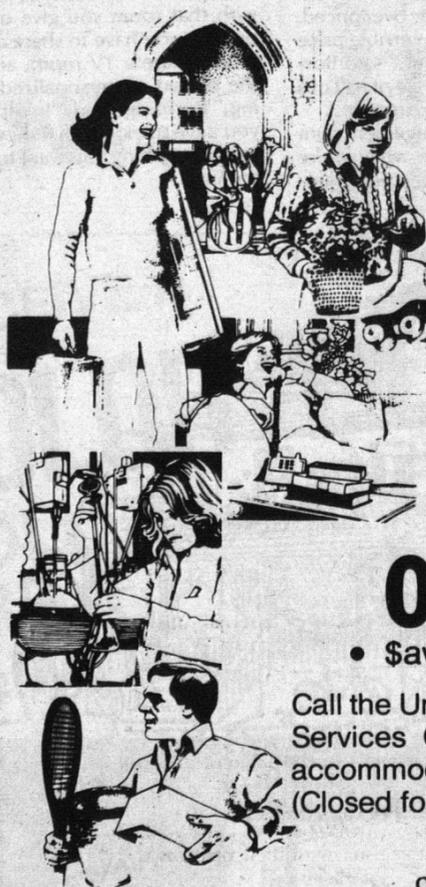
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