

# Word on the Street

National book fair hits Halifax

BY JANET FRENCH

Spring Garden Road was teeming with curious folk this past Sunday, during the fifth annual *Word on the Street*. The extravaganza is devoted to the promotion of published works and literacy.

*Word on the Street* describes itself as a national celebration of

authors, which is not surprising since the event occurs synchronously in Vancouver, Calgary, Ottawa, Toronto, and here in Halifax. However, the fair featured many local flavors, with many booths devoted exclusively to Maritime and Newfoundland publications.

At first glance the event appears to be a giant book, magazine and newspaper sale. The topics are as broad as can be, with exhibits from the Gothic/Fantasy field Trip Society; sex and feminism literature from Venus Envy; and some cunning, satirical wit from an organization called "Living Single." However, many organizations ran live reading sessions, often by authors or celebrity guest readers. One of my favorite sessions was Global's Cindy Day reading Dr. Seuss' *Horton Hears a Who*.

Additionally, the festival placed emphasis on children's activities and the promotion of literacy. A giant literacy tent boasted a wealth of displays from local pro-literacy organizations.

For children, there was live reading, face painting, games, and musical and theatrical entertainment at the "Kidstage."

The most impressive aspect of *Word on the Street* was the degree of community involvement. Featuring over 140 exhibits, the fair had impressive diversity, with something to interest everyone. A large proportion of your favorite local bookstores were represented, along with a great showing from local media of all forms.

Judging by the sizable crowds, the verdict is that *Word on the Street* continues to be a success.

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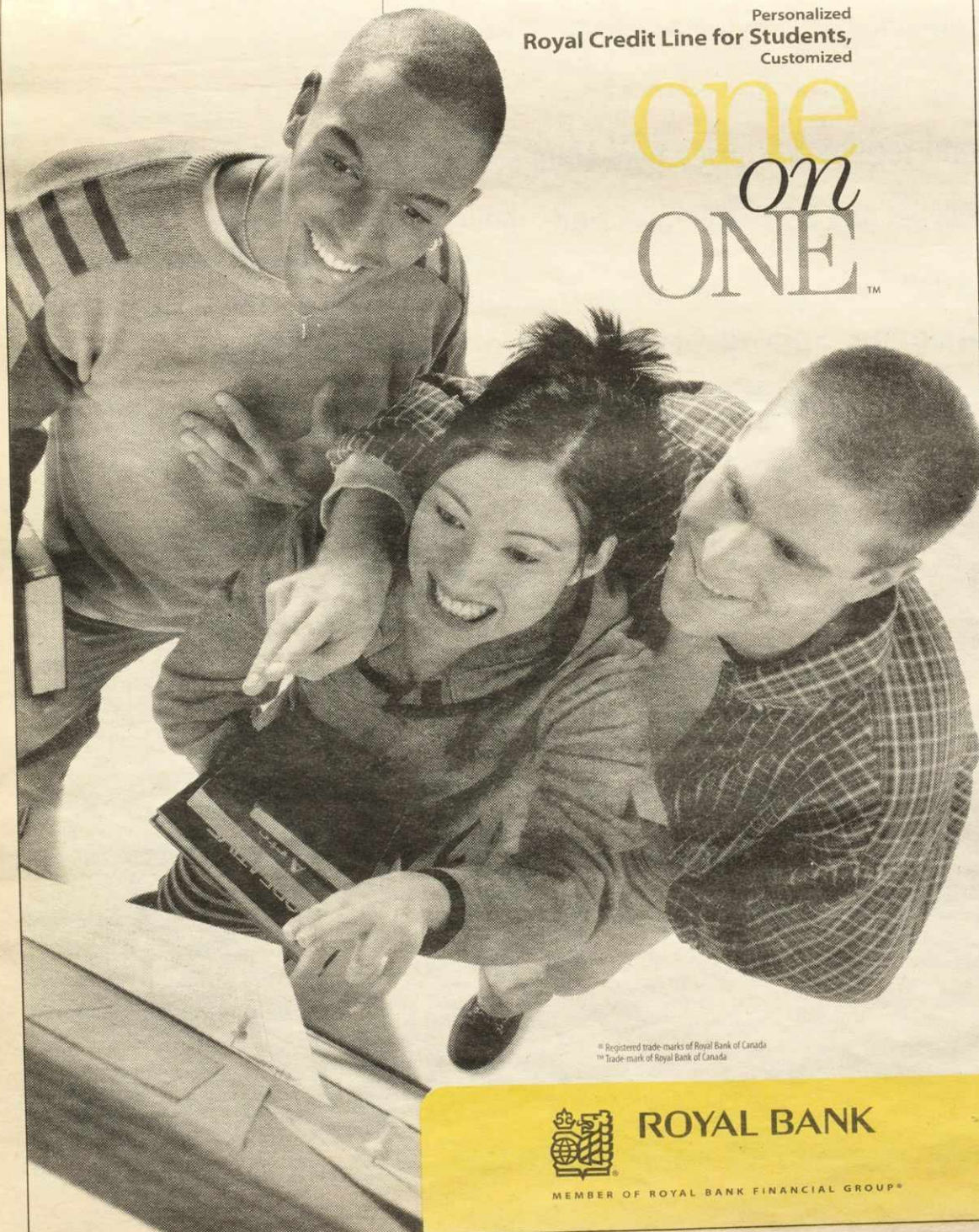
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## C.J. Alexanders good food, good fun

BY VANESSA OWEN

As I enter C.J. Alexanders the first thing I notice is the privacy. Each table is a booth, so one never has to sit in the middle of a crowded room.

My dining companion and I are seated quickly and asked, typically, about our choice of refreshments. The waitress is friendly and efficient. My guest decides on a Strawberry Colada, (\$4.50) and I choose a Tropical Smoothy, (\$4.25). They are both made with fresh fruit and fruit juice and are refreshing and tasty.

The meal starts with the crab and spinach dip (\$7.87). It was presented in a sourdough bowl and came with fresh pasta chips for dunking. Although the dip seemed slightly watery, the flavor was enticing with a rich blend of crab, spinach and cajun mayo.

My guest chose the Honey pecan chicken (\$11.89). He had a choice of garlic mashed potato, baked potato or steak fries.

I ordered the Smoky-BBQ baby back ribs (\$8.99 for C.J.'s rack and \$12.99 for Alexander's).

Both dishes had their good

points and bad points. My guest's chicken was juicy and delicious. 2 breasts brushed with a lovely pecan and apple glaze, flame broiled to perfection. The mashed potatoes were to his liking, but I found them to be rather bland. The veggies, an assortment of carrots, broccoli and cauliflower were under-cooked and luke-warm.

My ribs were tender and the meat was falling off of the bones. They were smothered in a smoky BBQ sauce, just as I had been promised.

For dessert, we decided on the Strawberry Daiquiri Cheesecake, (4.75). It laid claim to being the biggest cheesecake in town, and when the towering mass arrived I was a quick believer. It was topped with C.J.'s special blend of cream cheese, sour cream and strawberry purée. The cake was moist and rich, and I was in heaven.

In the end, the bill came to \$61 dollars. Not bad, but not something I could afford every week. We were both pleased and content from our meal. Aside from a few flaws, C.J.'s is a great place for a relatively inexpensive meal and lots of fun.



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