

MUGWUMP

by Barry Allen

Well, well, well, it looks like our fearless SUB Director Kim "Rambo" Norris has gotten himself in trouble over the ENBICON convention. Ever try to move a convention to three different floors on these successive days. At least when Kim screws up, he does it well.

Media Bowl 19, tomorrow. Prepare to eat turf CHSR

Student apathy and the March the other day. . .oh, never mind, most students are too busy to worry about increasing tuition costs or do something about it.

But then again, the president, being pleased that only 30 students show up for a march. There's something wrong with that kind of logic.

Nice of the SU to change last weeks locations of the Wednesday night movie. Looks like they forgot to put up posters telling everyone.

Nice to see cream dispensers in the cafeteria Saves all that plastic from those little containers. Everyone was to do their part in recycling. Now if Beaver Foods would just clean them a bit more often.

Hmm. . .The Social Club seems to be a hot topic this week, and the Student Union still isn't saying anything, though they've got those take over the CHSC shirts ready to go. How much have they spent on this so far? T-Shirts, Buttons, etc.

Varsity-Mania makes the news again. It always happens when someone tries to do something positive and some fool screws up. It's the attitude of a few idiots that can jeopardize a program like that. Smarten up.

Those amazing Reds and their hurting superstar Eric Davis have made believers out of many and should Oakland in the first two games. I bet the bookies are really hurting now.

It's really sickening at the amount of WDEF viruses on this campus. Everyday people bring infected disks into the office. People are so stupid. So today is anti-virus day. Disinfect your computer today.

OPINION

The opinions found in Opinion are not necessarily the views of the Brunswickan

Meters a must

by Joe Savoie

When I returned to Fredericton this September, I was surprised to find that meters had not yet been installed in the taxicabs of this city, nor did it look that they would be for some time. The arguments against meters surprised me, and reflect an obvious self-interest on every bodies part. I can only led to believe from all that I have seen that the people of this city are under the impression that taxis are a necessity and a right.

While taxis are an integral part of the transportation network, they are still a luxury. Passengers are paying for the convenience of solitary travel from point A to point B, all one would hope in a relatively quick manner. Because of this, taxi fare structures must reflect to cost of doing business - in as fair and equitable manner as possible. Costs of doing business must be covered, and the driver of the taxi must earn a living.

Meters provide that equitability. They provide the owner/operator/driver of the taxi with a basis to predict income, and provide the passenger with a knowledge of how much his/her trip will cost. In this way, everybody knows what to expect. My recent experiences with taxis in Fredericton have shown me that the system is not functioning in an equitable manner. Fares are inconsistent, and are often exploitive of the situation or nature of the trip being made.

What is even more important is the social and financial position of the drivers themselves. I refer not to those who drive simply to supplement some other income, but to those who gain their livelihood from the profession. For the most part, they rank very low on the social ladder, and are poorly paid. This is shown in that most taxi companies in Fredericton must guarantee minimum wage in order to attract drivers. Because of this low pay, and lack of social status, the taxi industry often attracts those who are not the type to provide the friendly, efficient service that taxi passengers expect.

The UNB and STU Student Unions have been leading the fight against meters, and for further discounts. Both organizations espouse pay equity, but in their quest for lower taxi fares they have ignored the people whose incomes are being affected. It must be remembered that the taxi fare includes not only the drivers income, but also the huge cost of equipping, maintaining and operating a taxi. Often there is little left for the driver.

It is for these reasons that meters must be installed in taxicabs, and fares must rise (not fall). It is the only way of ensuring that the taxi you get into is mechanically sound, physically attractive, and that the driver is making an honest living that reflects the nature of his/her work.

If the people of Fredericton, both students and others, are looking for an inexpensive ride, I would suggest they pressure City hall for reform to Fredericton Transit. This service already costs the city over two million dollars per year (over three dollars per carried passenger), and is not being adequately used.