

The Dalhousie Gazette since 1868

Gazette



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Mark Your Calendars – Upcoming Events

Fall Fest is Fast Approaching:

Wednesday, October 21

The DSU's Fall Fest Presents; Yuk Yuks Bluenose Comedy Tour featuring Mark Little, Mark Walker, and Peter Anthony @ the Grawood

Thursday, October 22

The DSU's Fall Fest Presents; How to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse Seminar @ the Grawood

The DSU's Fall Fest Presents; Live performances by Dan Mangan and Will Currie & The Country French (both groups also performing at the Halifax Pop Explosion) @ the T-Room

Friday, October 23

The DSU's Fall Fest Presents; Molson Canadian Rocks live big ticket performance @ the Grawood

The DSU's Fall Fest Presents; Fall Fest Trivia Night @ the T-Room

Saturday, October 24

UFC 104 (FREE) @ the Grawood

Wednesday, October 28

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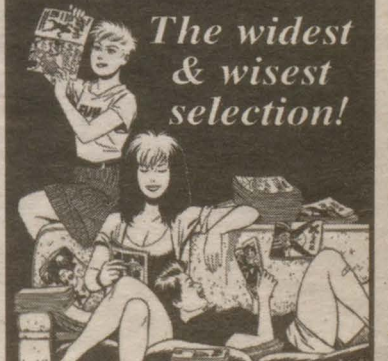
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Joshua Boyter Editor in Chief
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Letter from the Editor

HALIFAX'S 19-PLUS TUNE IS GETTING OLD

Joshua Boyter
Editor in Chief

It is hard to go downtown in Halifax without hearing live music ooze from every concrete crack. It's harder still for anyone under 19 to enjoy this music.

After four years in this city, I have seen my fair share of concerts – often from behind a lens. Concerts form a pulsating backbone we all ride and dance. But this tune is often an exclusive one. Live mu-

sic is mostly secluded inside Halifax bars where teenage music lovers can't listen. And there is a definite lack of all age venues.

By not catering to these underage patrons, the music scene loses a key demographic. These listeners are the future of our scene. If we don't nurture them with strong venues and strong acts, we may lose dedicated music audiences forever. While many can purchase CDs or play MP3s and experience the music within their homes, it does little justice compared to seeing a

live band. Pumping adrenaline and jostling sweaty bodies are part of the experience.

Music bridges gaps between people, but we often split them up again through a division of age. All-ages venues are extremely important for many teenagers. Music is a form of escape, and it builds camaraderie among patrons. It forms an integral part of the teen years – often defining them. Halifax's lack of all-ages spaces is an insurmountable wall that stifles the drive of a young listener.

It is up to the city, venue owners and

concert promoters to develop new all-ages spaces. These spaces need not be large, but they should be inclusive. It is important that these all-ages venues do not alienate older patrons. We can no longer afford to split the scene between young and old. We have to make a concerted effort to bridge the divide. By denoting more concerts as all-ages and making music festivals – such as The Pop Explosion – even more accessible to a younger demographic, we can build a stronger music scene here in Halifax.

In the near future, I hope to see the city support a new all ages venue other than The Pavilion and The Rock Garden. It's important that we continue to invest in the young culture of our city. All-ages venues offer a platform for people to enter the scene, learn from the older music lovers in attendance and build strong musical senses. We need to cultivate the drive of younger generations, or the scene may well become stale and irrelevant.

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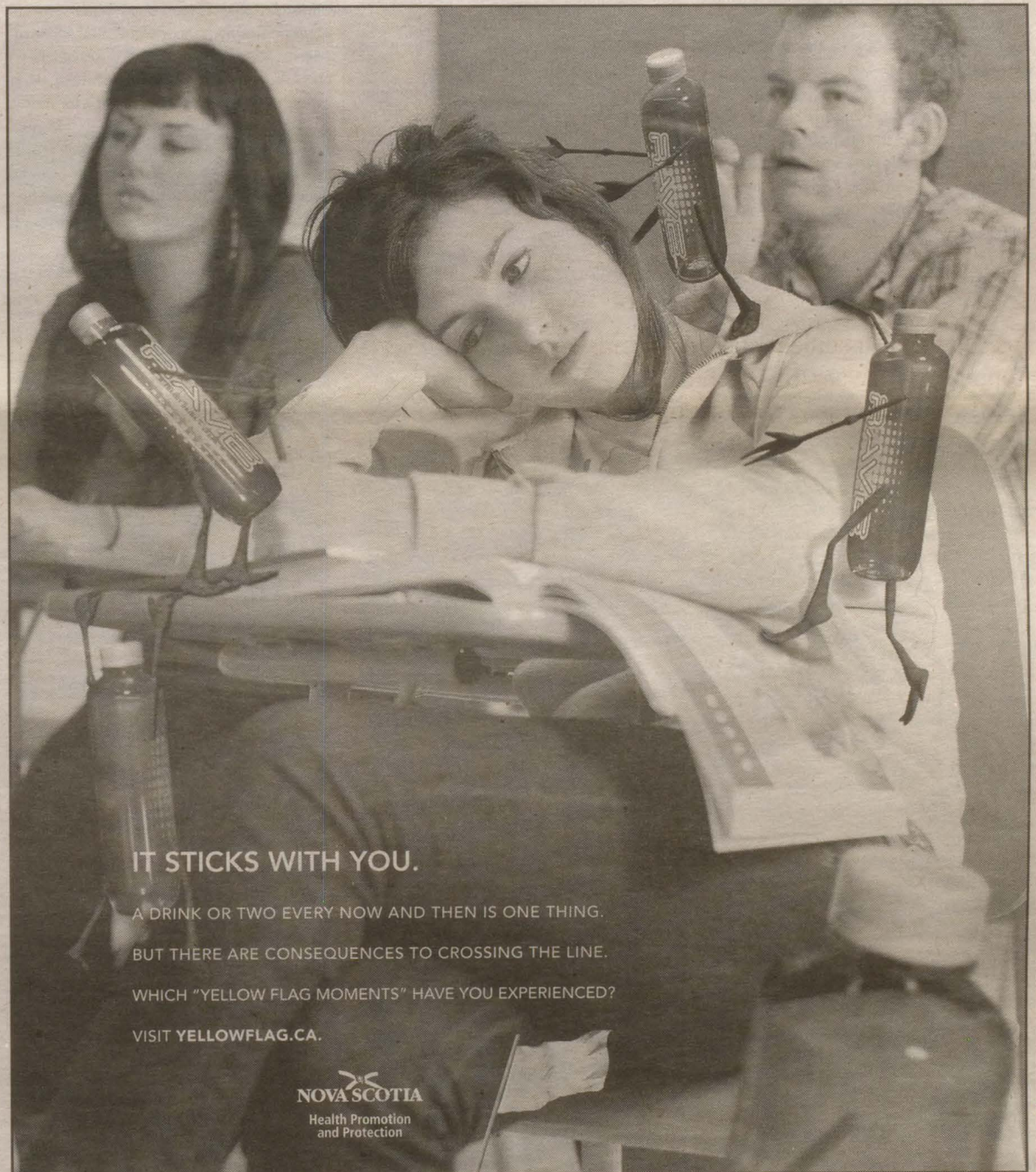
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News

News

Gazette News covers Dalhousie and the greater Halifax community. Contributions are welcome! Email Bethany or Lucy at news@dalgazette.com



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Music money to dry up

Changes to the Canadian Music Fund might damage Halifax music scene

Joshua Brown
News Contributor

The Canadian Music Fund will be infused with new cash come April 2010. But it will also be pruned of the Canadian Musical Diversity program.

The restructuring, announced in July, will include an extra \$9.85 million a year, bumping the fund's budget to \$27.6 million until 2014. But it eliminates funding to the Canadian Musical Diversity program. This program has helped pay for the production and distribution of specialized non-commercial music, like jazz, folk and classical.

The Government of Canada said the changes will protect the financial stability and digital shift of Canada's arts and culture sector.

Eligible recipients are Canadian artists, ensembles or bands, independent record producers, incorporated record companies and record distribution companies.

Heritage Canada said the changes will make more money available to commercial artists with international recognition.

The money will help increase the visibility of Canadian music on the Internet and in international markets, James Moore, minister of Canadian heritage and official languages said in July, when he announced the decision.

"The music industry generates billions of dollars' worth of economic activity every year. Our government is proud to offer greater stability in these uncertain economic times by stabilizing resources dedicated to Canadian music, while helping maintain thousands of jobs," Moore said.

But local industry leaders are not confident that the changes will be for the best.

"The council is supposed to take care of people that are valuable to the culture, hugely valuable, like classical and jazz," said Kasia Morrison, communications director at JazzEast, the non-profit group that organizes the Atlantic Jazz Festival.

"By removing money for specialized records, they've given up whatsoever on any kind of way for local musicians to get their music out."

Nova Scotia is well known for its diverse music industry. Contemporary folk artists in the province still borrow liberally from Celtic and Scottish musical traditions.

The province has produced major commercial artists such as the Rita McNeil, the Rankin Family and Joel Plaskett. The large student population and concentration of bars in Halifax also supports a vibrant independent scene.

"It's probably one of the most important fundamental programs we have in Canada for Music," said Ken MacKay, president of the Atlantic Federation of Musicians, about the Diversity Fund.

"If you're a growing band, you go for anything you can get, and a lot of those bands could use that money when they're trying to make a name for themselves," said MacKay.

Moore said the changes to the fund were made in consultation with musicians and producers.

But Adam Fine, the former executive director of JazzEast, said the musicians he knows were in unanimous opposition to cutting the program.

"I can't imagine any musician would be in support of that decision," he said.

Fine doesn't think the cuts will end any careers but said it will make things harder for independent musicians.

"Budgets are going to be considerably smaller," Fine said. "You're not going to see people spending \$10,000 on a record."

"You're going to see musicians taking more risks on themselves," he said. "Musicians always have ways of getting projects made."

Halifax musician Paul Cram has applied for and received money from the program.

"I can't apply any more," he says. "I usually apply to make records."

His group, the Paul Cram Quintet, made a record in 2001 and played the Jazz Agosto Festival in Lisbon. They also toured Canada.

"Without that record that would have been rather difficult," he says.

"That particular program is very valuable in terms of creating a Canadian profile abroad."

Music from and for the heart

How Dr. Ron Stewart's passion shapes the Music-in-Medicine program

Hayley Paquette
News Contributor

Music or medicine: why not both? Dalhousie University has integrated these two seemingly opposite paths into Music-in-Medicine.

The program has evolved under a man who has accomplished more in his lifetime than most could hope for. Officer of the Order of Canada. Former Nova Scotia health minister. Cape Breton-born piper. Not to mention the plethora of awards and acknowledgements of achievement. Dr. Ronald Stewart's CV reads a life of accomplishment, dedication to community and a passion for music.

What really drives Stewart is his ability to teach medicine through music.

"Music does have a certain element we can use for teaching purposes and for purposes that we believe are important to the understanding and practice of medicine," says Stewart.

As an example of music's role in medicine, Stewart tells the story of the invention of the stethoscope. A musician, R.T.H. Laënnec, created the tool and later became the first pulmonary physician.

"We now do not attempt to teach facts. Instead we teach where to go to get facts, and how to problem solve, because with constant advancements in knowledge and technology the facts are always changing," says Stewart.

Although the humanities have always been a part of medical education, they have only been drawn to the forefront of medicine over the past couple decades.

"With the advancements of technology (physicians) are facing ethical challenges that were not in existence back in the 1950s and 1960s," says Stewart. "For instance, reproductive technologies, euthanasia and artificially prolonging lives."

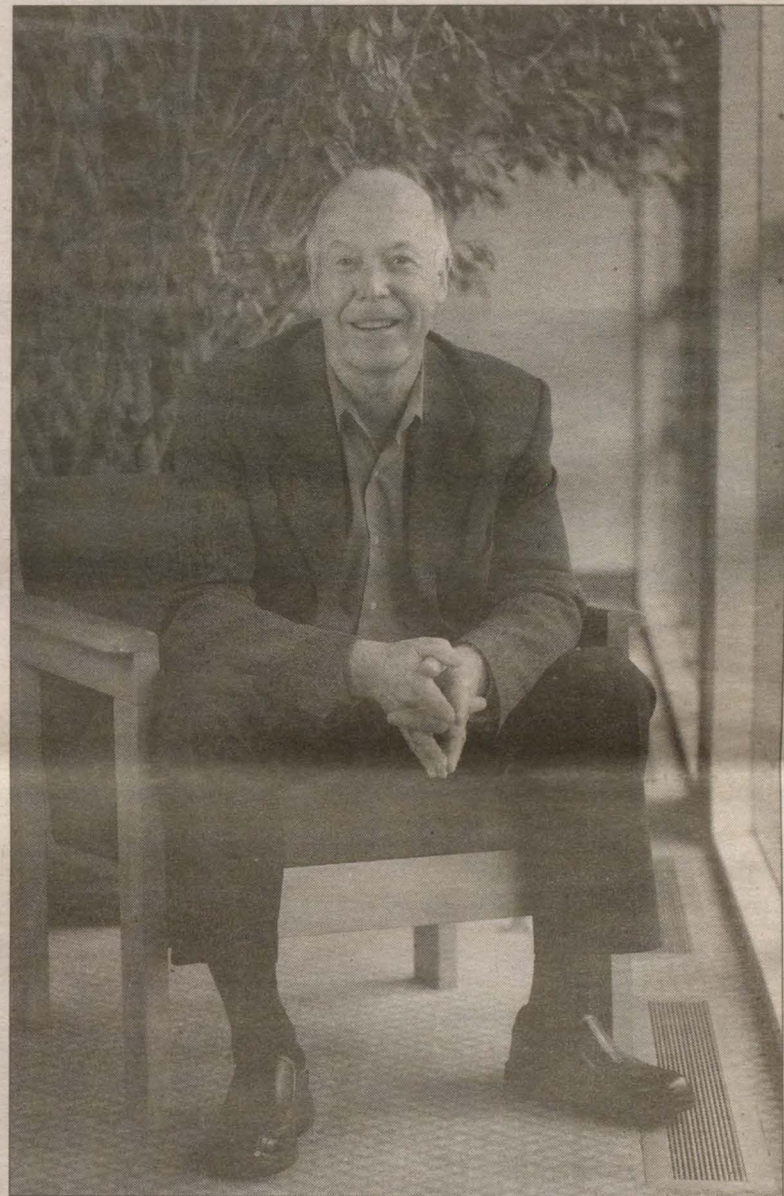
Understanding a deeper region of ethics is essential to the practice of medicine today, Stewart says.

"We want students to learn about their own emotions and how to express them. It is important for a physician to be able to express themselves; the appropriate touch, look and communication."

The program helps medical students develop the expression and observation skills crucial to the practice of medicine. Choral singing is proven to decrease stress levels, providing a release from the demands in professional education.

Music is inherent in medical practice, he adds.

"When (physicians) examine people, they are listening quite often to musical sounds. They listen to the heart sounds, which are musical sounds produced by vibrations."



Dr. Ronald Stewart has been a medical pioneer, a politician and a physician, but his current passion is Music-in-Medicine. | Photo by Abram Gutschler

The Music-in-Medicine program involves a more active relationship between students and faculty members. It's also tailored to the participants of that particular year.

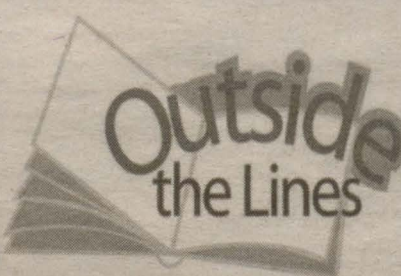
"If there are students who play a certain instrument or have a certain talent or interest, we try to incorporate that into the program" says Stewart.

The program is home to the male a cappella group the TestosterTones, the chamber choir The Ultrasounds, the Dalhousie Medical School Chorale and even a Celtic band that jams in the University Club.

It has an enrollment of about 150 medical students, mostly first- and second-year.

But about 90 per cent of the medical students still have some sort of association with the program. This includes direct and indirect participation, like attending a concert. Faculty members, physicians and alumni are also involved, making the program a big hit in the realms of the medical school.

"People who have a broader outlook of themselves and life in general will practice better observation abilities, and medicine is very much being able to subtly see the signs that might indicate that something is going wrong," he says. "But mainly it's the ability to empathize and reach out to people, which is fostered by the humanities."



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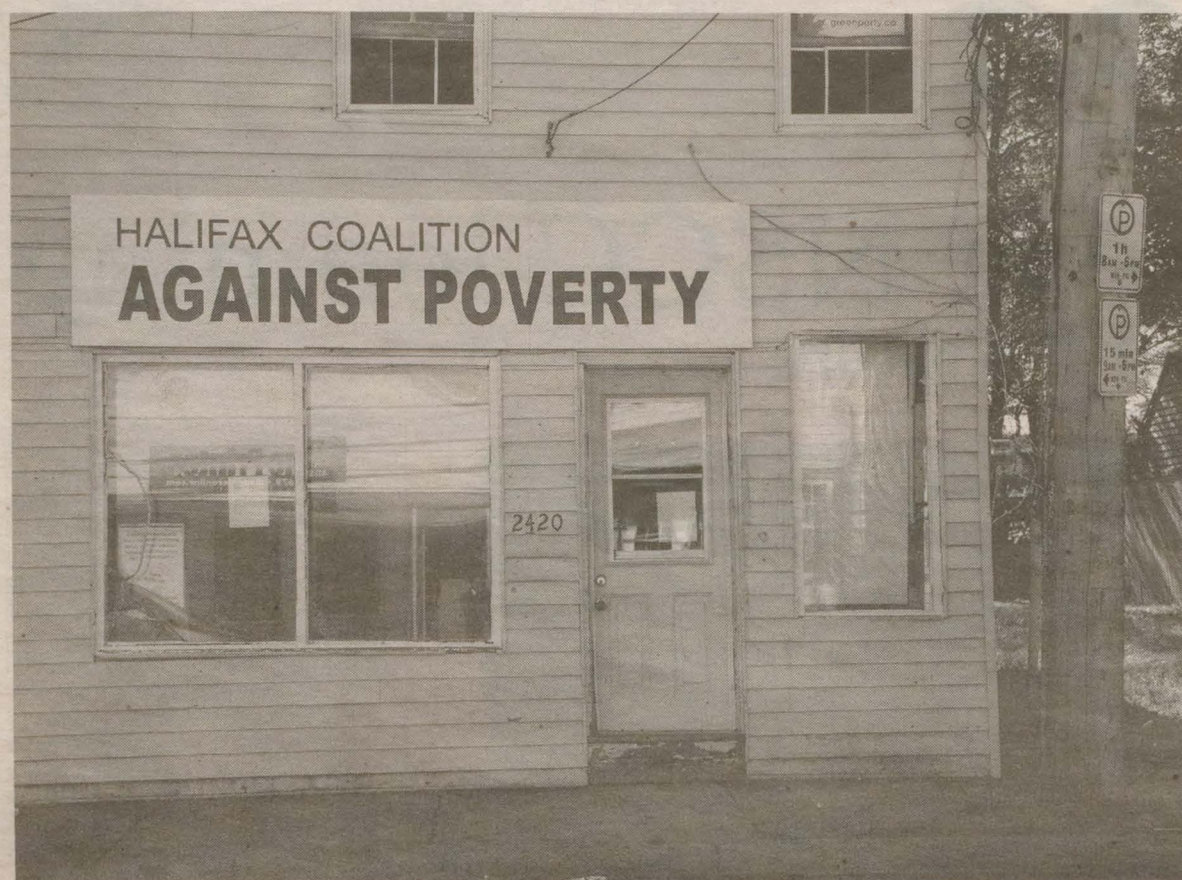
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Picket signs and office supplies were left behind when HCAP was evicted this summer. |Photo by Pau Balite

HCAP shifts location, philosophy Halifax Coalition Against Poverty gets re-organized

Lucy Scholey
News Editor

The familiar sign with the bold words "Halifax Coalition Against Poverty" is still attached above the street-level office front at 2420 Agricola St.

But now, red curtains are drawn across the large storm window. A peek through window on the door reveals a few boxes, a desk, a computer chair and a couple of picket signs, one with the words "We Unite 2 Protest & Fight 4 Human Rights."

This is what is left of the old anti-poverty organization, also called HCAP.

The non-profit political and advocacy group has changed over the past year, says HCAP advocacy coordinator Susan LeFort. Several long-standing members have resigned.

Last summer, HCAP moved out of their office into a place above The Printer, right across the street. They had received an eviction notice from the landlord of the cold, mouldy building. For many members, that move was the last straw to a tiring re-organization process, LeFort says.

"That particular incident really made a lot of people stressed out and depressed," she says. "(They said), 'Fine, we just won't have HCAP anymore because, you know what, I just can't put up with this bullshit anymore.'"

Jill Ratcliffe, one of HCAP's founding members, says she left partly because the group strayed from its initial focus.

The group formed in 2001 as the Halifax Anti-Poverty Initiative before changing to HCAP in 2004. It has held direct-action political campaigns on issues like social assistance and rent control. Over time, the group started providing advocacy services for landlord-tenant and social assistance disputes.

But Ratcliffe says this shift towards advocacy work detracted from the more straight-forward direct action approach. "We realized that our action didn't match

our political philosophy," she says, adding that she still supports HCAP. But it just isn't "in line with anything I want to be doing politically."

Ratcliffe says she also drifted from the group because she's adopted other projects. Other members left for similar reasons.

Without anyone left to run the organization, LeFort planned to open an office for advocacy services. But she received between 35 and 40 e-mails and phone calls asking her to keep HCAP running. So she searched for a new location.

To get to LeFort's office now, you have to climb 20 cement stairs and a walk to the end of a hallway past several offices. A sign with the letters "HCAP" stencilled on coloured paper is taped to the door.

LeFort took on administrative duties when the move happened. She's been managing the office and financials, but says what she really enjoys is the advocacy work.

James, a former member who has had run-ins with the police and doesn't want his last name used, says advocacy is important, but he would like to see a different angle.

"I could do advocacy work 24-7 until the day I die, but there's always going to be more people who need better housing, more money in order to feed themselves, buy medicine, take care of themselves," he says.

"Advocacy work just won't get that. It's a real band-aid solution to what we view or associate as economic or political problems."

James was a member for a couple of years, but has not participated since last December. He says "underlying tensions" were present in the organization before the eviction notice.

Last winter, HCAP occupied the Department of Community Services during a protest to maintain government funding for Pendleton Place, an emergency shelter. Both James and LeFort say this put the organization at bad terms with the department. In turn, this made advocacy work more difficult.

"People saw a pretty big disconnect between doing service work ... and being a political organization," James says.

LeFort says she understands the tension between advocacy and activism.

"I think that if you're choosing to do advocacy and then ... you are also turning around and doing the office occupation of the Department of Community Services, there's a conflict there," she says.

She hopes the group can put more focus on solving individual issues as they arise.

"I've always believed political action comes from the human condition and not from political ideologies," she says.

"When you're talking about grassroots, you have to deal with it individually."

First, she needs to find a meeting place for the first HCAP general meeting at the end of this month.

In the past, you could walk by the old location and see anywhere from five to 30 people inside, bundled up in winter coats, hats and mittens, with visible breath. They might have been making picket signs or debating the details of a protest. The 2420 Agricola St. office hosted regular meetings, but was only heated enough to keep the pipes running.

The new location is heated, but too small for a meeting place. The room is almost as empty as the old location is now. Two computers, each perched on its own desk, sit on either side of the room. A legless table rests on milk cartons next to a black filing cabinet.

The website has not changed over the past year. But neither has the phone number, so people can still contact the organization.

Six people have taken an interest in volunteering for administrative work says LeFort. She also hopes to secure more funding and work with the Department of Community Services to make amends.

"It's a kind of re-group, so we can re-establish ourselves as an organization and move forward."

Switching schools will be easier in Atlantic Canada Universities and colleges sign agreement that will help students

Sarah Ratchford
CUP Atlantic Bureau Chief

FREDERICTON (CUP) — Post-secondary institutions in the Atlantic region have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to make the process of transferring schools easier within the region, by creating more official transfer agreements between and among Atlantic schools.

Peter Halpin, executive director of the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU), says the agreement is meant to formalize the process of transfers between community colleges and universities.

The MOU was developed so that students would not have to repeat former learning experiences. According to the document, the agreement also provides students with "the opportunity to complete and/or further their post-secondary training in the Atlantic region to the greatest degree possible."

Twenty-two institutions across all four Atlantic provinces have signed the agreement.

"The purpose was to, in an official and public way, make clear that the working relationship between community colleges and universities is open to collaboration and co-operation," says Halpin.

Halpin says it is important that the public, and especially students in Atlantic Canada, understand the agreement.

"This is very much about students. It's designed so that students have mobility within our region to transfer between the respective institutions."

The agreement, which came into effect as of June 1, 2009, has been an ongoing process.

Halpin says it took time to set out the principles of the agreement in a collaborative fashion. Details surrounding the actual trans-

fers will differ from school to school.

"Every university has its own policies and qualifying standards," Halpin explains.

He says that agreements already exist between schools like the University of Prince Edward Island and Holland College, and that the MOU will be a "recognition of programs and the flow of students back and forth."

The MOU will honour existing longstanding agreements.

Patsy MacDonald is the college registrar for all 13 Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) campuses. Her job is to help with the consistency of policy across the campuses, as well as to work within the different schools.

"It's nice to have this written in an MOU. I think there's been a lot of cooperation between universities and colleges without the agreement in place, (so) this will just aid students to transfer more 'seamlessly,'" she says.

When asked if the MOU has had an impact on registration thus far, MacDonald responded that it's still too early to tell, but that "there's optimism."

"I think what we're looking for is looking that students don't have to repeat learning. They can take when they've achieved at university and bring it to college and vice versa."

MacDonald says that both universities and colleges in the Atlantic region are planning to work harder to make the transition from school to school easier on students.

She says this will broaden the possibilities for a thorough education in the Atlantic provinces.

"From a regional point of view, it's in the interest of our region to ensure seamless integration between community colleges and universities," says Halpin.

AUCC calls for more federal money One and a half billion dollars, for a start

Emma Godmere
CUP Ottawa Bureau Chief

OTTAWA (CUP) — The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) has presented a briefing to the House of Commons standing committee on finance in hopes that millions of dollars will be set aside for government granting agencies, international student recruitment strategies, and Aboriginal student support in next year's federal budget.

On Oct. 8, Paul Davidson, President and CEO of the AUCC, spoke to committee members in a follow-up report to their pre-budget recommendations from this past August.

"Now that short-term stimulus efforts have helped Canada emerge from the recession, Canada must continue to invest in generating knowledge," read Davidson's speaking notes from Oct. 8. "Our population is aging. We must be more productive so that proportionally fewer workers can support our society."

In their pre-budget submissions sent to the finance committee on Aug. 14, the AUCC outlined three recommendations, which included investments in research through federal granting agencies, financial support for Aboriginal students, and funding for an international student recruitment strategy.

"This is part of the Budget 2010 process," noted AUCC VP National Affairs André Dulude. The Oct. 8 briefing "was really to present the three requests — we were asked to go in with three priorities, three (requests)."

Each of the three requests included a five-year plan to direct the funding. In terms of research support, the AUCC has proposed investing \$400 million each year for the first two years, starting in 2010,

and subsequently investing \$250 million per year in the three following years.

"We would seek an increase of \$1.5 billion in total in first the core programs of the three granting councils," Dulude explained. "They had a budget reduction last year of five per cent, so we're hoping that this year the government will come up with an increase for direct and institutional costs, as well as more investments into post-doctoral fellows."

The AUCC has also proposed a pilot project fund to help universities promote completion of secondary school in Aboriginal communities, with the ideal plan of funneling \$65 million into the fund for the first year, and \$55 million in each of the four years thereafter. The AUCC's international recruitment strategy involves investing \$20 million per year for five years to promote Canadian universities abroad.

"I must say that all parties were extremely receptive yesterday," Dulude said about the Oct. 8 committee presentation. He further explained that the AUCC will continue to work with the government for the next month and a half to provide cost breakdowns for each of the three requests, followed by further consultations with the university and political communities, resulting in a formal submission to the Minister of Finance by late November.

The biggest federal investment in post-secondary education of late has been the \$2 billion from January's federal budget that was earmarked for the Knowledge Infrastructure Program. The program has already helped kick off nearly 400 construction projects at campuses across the country, according to the government's Sept. 28 economic update.

The AUCC is expected to release a report card on the impact of the Knowledge Infrastructure Program in the coming weeks.

Features

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Tim Mitchell Features Editor
features@dalgazette.com

Teachers' strike at NSCC looming Frustrated students fear for the future

Tim Mitchell
Features Editor

With the imminent threat of a teacher's strike at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), one student, Eric Lortie, is concerned for his educational future.

"My feelings towards the strike probably mirror that of most students. We're all a mix of apprehensive, angry and upset. No one who takes their education seriously thinks it's a good thing," says Lortie, a first-year information technology student at NSCC.

There are more than 25,000 NSCC students at 13 campuses across Nova Scotia who would be affected by the strike.

"I have mixed feelings as to how it's been handled by the administration and staff. I've probably been harder and less supporting of the faculty than I should, but that's because a strike vote is, to my mind, them saying, 'We are more important than the students.' Although, from their point of view, they are."

There are 760 faculty members and 165 support staff at NSCC who could take to the picket lines on Oct. 20 if an agreement can't be made with the administration at the community college.

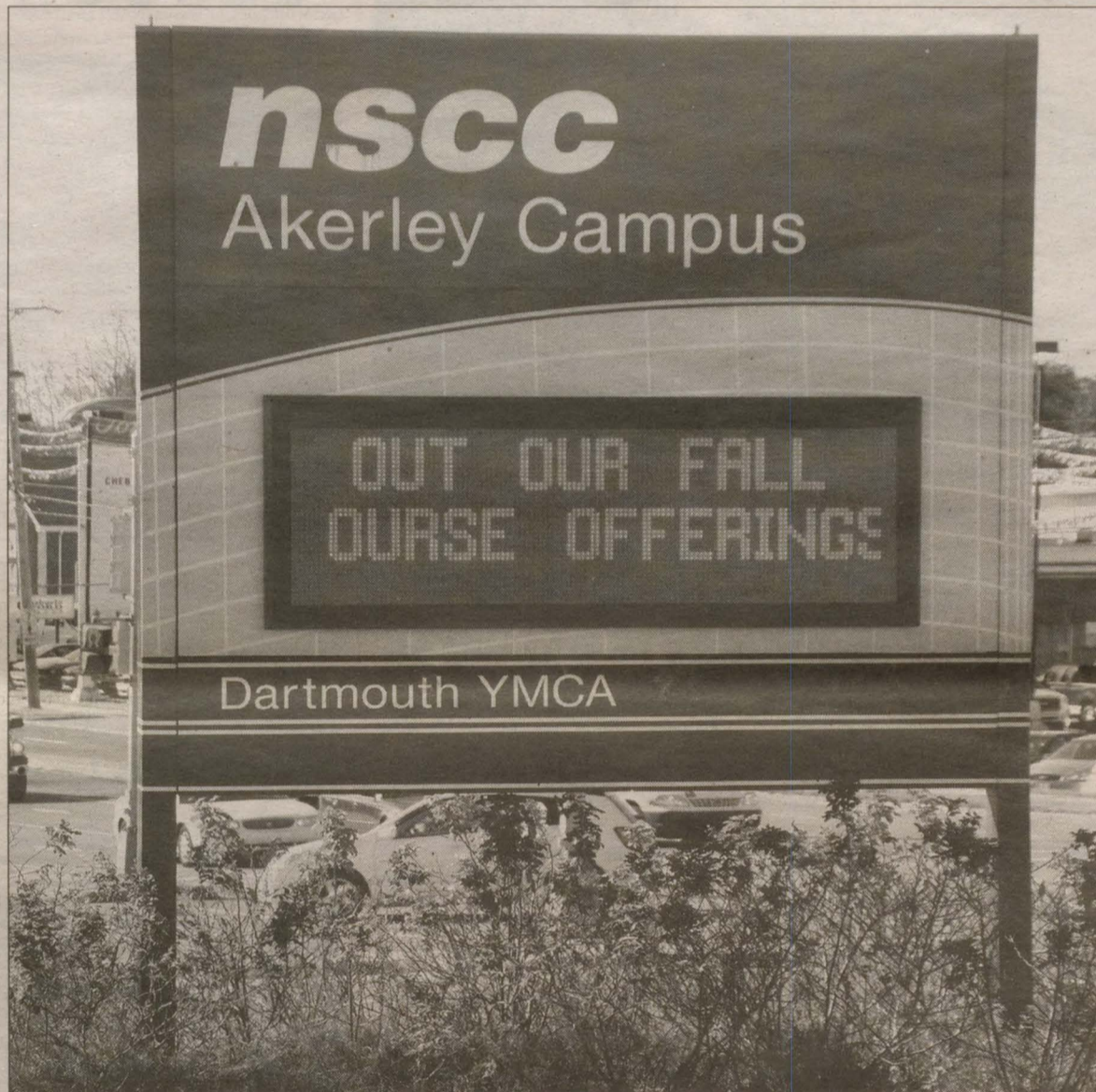
The teachers want more money. The school's administration says they don't have any for them, but the province might. The province isn't saying much of anything yet. Meanwhile, students across the province are standing on the sidelines, waiting to see if they can keep going to class.

NSCC and the Nova Scotia Teacher's Union (NSTU) have been at the bargaining table for 16 months trying to negotiate wages, and teachers have been left without a contract since Aug. 31. They want a 29 per cent wage increase for two years, and improved health benefits. It would be the same deal that public school teachers in Nova Scotia received last year.

Negotiations reached a stalemate in June, and as a result, on Sept. 22, more than 90 per cent of union members voted in favour of a strike. They have been in a legal position to strike since Sept. 25. There is, however, still a chance that the strike can be averted. If so, classes can resume as usual after Sept. 20.

Alexis Allen, President of NSTU speaks for the teachers and support staff for the community college. She has given an ultimatum to the administration and the province: agree to binding arbitration, or the strike is on.

"We're asking that the minister (of education) and the community college agree to binding arbitration, and



Come Oct. 20, NSCC may be as dysfunctional as this sign. | Photo by Pau Balite

we call the strike off," says Allen.

If the college and the department of education agree to enter into binding arbitration with the teacher's union, it means that an independent third party would settle the dispute, and all three parties would have to live with what was decided.

"It has never been our intent to disrupt the education of 25,000 students and impact the economic viability of the Nova Scotia Community College," says Allen. "We just want a fair and equitable settlement for our members, however that can be achieved."

But the administration at NSCC says

that there is not enough money in the budget to afford what the faculty is asking for.

"They feel it's a fairness principle," says Gina Brown, director of communications and marketing for NSCC. "But we have a finite amount of money in terms of our mandate, so that's where we are."

She says the community college administration will consider entering into binding arbitration.

"Our goal is to avoid a strike, it's as simple as that. So we're willing to look at all options. We are willing to look at binding arbitration, but there's one thing that we all have

to keep in mind with binding arbitration, is that it will require the consent of three parties. That's NSTU, NSCC and the government. If an arbitrator is assigned, we all have to accept the outcome of the arbitration. If that's the case we all have to live with the outcome and that means that the government might have to provide more resources to meet that outcome, whatever it is."

The community college is looking to the provincial government for funding assistance.

"We have a finite amount of money from the government and that's what we've got to work with. We just don't have any room there.

We have to work within our fiscal means."

The provincial government is trying to stay out of negotiations, but Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter has stated that they will consider entering into binding arbitration.

"With anytime there's potential for a strike, we're concerned," says Dan Harrison, media spokesperson for the Department of Education. "That's why we're encouraging both sides to get together and try to reach an agreement. We have a lot of respect for the collective bargaining process and this is a process that we shouldn't be subjecting ourselves in."

The province has a \$54 million reserve set aside in the budget for anticipated wage increases of public servants, but Harrison couldn't say if the government would consider using some of the funds to help teachers.

If the strike does happen, the community college administration says it has a contingency plan for students. Even though classes would be suspended, some resources would still be made available.

"We will keep the campuses open wherever possible, and the things that would be open would be libraries, learning commons, computer labs, cafeterias, book stores, centres for student success, and some classrooms wherever possible. But there would be no classes held, so what we're going to do is encourage students to keep working away at their work. They won't have any faculty involved, but they can join study groups and work on assignments and things like that. So we're going to do everything we can to help maintain some place for them to go if they require that, but it's not obligatory - it's a service to them," says Brown.

It is too soon to tell if the administration would have to refund students' tuition in the event of a prolonged strike, but all parties involved hope that it won't have to come to that.

"We would really love to avoid a strike," says Brown. "I mean we've got 25,000 learners that we're trying to help receive an education so that's our big focus."

When it comes right down to it, no one wants a strike. Teachers and support staff would be left without students, the community college campuses would be left unproductive and the province could lose a significant portion of its educated workforce. If all parties can meet in the middle and come to an agreement soon, then a strike can be avoided, and students like Eric Lortie can keep going to class.

"This whole ordeal seems unnecessary," says Lortie. "They're debating teachers' salaries as if it were a significant amount of money, when compared to how much this will cost us (the students) in other ways."



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OCT. 16, 2009

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Opinions

Mind the age gap

Organizing all-ages events still a challenge in Halifax

Kaley Kennedy
Opinions Editor

When I was 15, my life was school, work and shows. My friends, the music I listened to, the people I dated – everything about growing up revolved around those three things. I don't mean to get all sentimental or anything, but going to concerts as a young teen changed my life.

Even though I grew up in a different province, I doubt my experience is much different from other show-goers. Finding a sense of belonging is important for young people, and music – like religion, politics and sports – is one way that people gather together.

"It is really important to support the all ages scene, and make sure we help people in high school and junior high feel like they are a part of the broader music scene," says Wayne Mason, executive director of The Halifax Pop Explosion, who started going to shows in Halifax when he was 15.

Despite the clear benefits of supporting young people who play in bands and attend shows – not only does it do a lot for the culture of the city, it also helps build supportive communities for youth – organizing all ages events continues to be a struggle.

For this year's Pop Explosion, about 10 of the about 40 shows are open to all ages. In the past, the festival has even included an all-ages pass specifically aimed at under-aged music lovers who were looking for a deal. It's not available this year.

"We have a lot parents call to ask, 'is it safe?' And it is!" Mason says of all-ages shows. "The kind of teens that want to go see a punk band or a hip-hop show often look forward to those types of shows for months in advance."

Mason says that while booking all ages shows has never been particularly easy in Halifax, it's become more difficult since the Alcohol and Gaming Authority took away all ages shows in licensed venues two years ago.

"In Ontario, they are able to do all-ages shows in a bar, so you have a PA and a stage and you can use it twice in a day; once for an all ages show, once later in the bar show," Mason explains.

Under current liquor laws in Nova Scotia, under-age young people cannot enter most licensed establishments. Even where exceptions exist, they can only be there with a parent or guardian, and have to leave by 9 p.m.

By making it almost impossible for bars to hold events that underage folks can attend, bands looking to play shows that are open to the under 19 crowd have limited options.

That's not to say that there aren't spaces to have all-ages shows.

Concert venues like the Rebecca Cohn and the Halifax Forum are good spaces to hold larger events that will attract a bigger crowd, but the costs of these venues have them reserved for more mainstream artists. All ages shows are also commonly held in churches and church halls, an option that while technically open, is often expensive.



Despite the demand for all-ages spaces, The Pavilion is Halifax's only dedicated under-19 venue.

Photo by Abram Gutscher

The Pavilion, that concrete box you may or may not have noticed in the South Commons, is the city's only dedicated all-ages venue. It's standard to see large groups of young people hanging out there on the weekend, and if you're walking by, it's hard to miss the sound of punk and metal bands often emanating from the space.

Unfortunately, the city's concentration on cost recovery makes it difficult for the venue to stay afloat. In 2003, the Pavilion was forced to close because it didn't have enough power outlets and no visible civic number. As a result of these small infractions, the space was closed for about two years.

In many cities, including this one, house shows have often served as an alternative to bar shows. While not everyone's got a home that's suitable for shows, nor are backyard shows an all-season option here in Canada, house shows can provide a cheap and viable alternative option to the available venues.

Sadly, the police are cracking down on noise complaints, leaving house shows a risky option for many. When the cops are shutting down house shows at 5 p.m. that have been discussed with local neighbours, it becomes clear that they're not interested in letting the house show scene grow.

For me, what's hardest about the current strategy of ghettoizing all ages shows to a small set of venues makes it more difficult for there to be mixing of people who are of age and folks who aren't. People under 19 go to all-ages shows,

while people who are over 19 go to bar shows.

There are so many ways that the city and the province could improve the conditions for building music scenes that cross the age of 19 divide. The government could provide grants and incentives for small business owners and community centres to hold all ages concerts, or to hold open mic nights, or to provide subsidized practice spaces. It could let all-ages shows happen in bars, and it could extend wet/dry privileges beyond special events and universities.

At the end of the day, these measures could help defray the main challenge when putting on shows: the price. Since organizers can only rely on the cover price at the door to recover costs, tickets for all ages shows are often higher than bar shows, and at 15, your allowance or part-time job probably doesn't leave you with the cash to regularly afford the \$10 to \$20 or more ticket price.

Sadly, it seems that the city and province would prefer to focus their health and safety strategy on banning smoking from every public space and having the police stake out the skate park on the Halifax Commons for helmet infractions.

Supporting more projects that strive to build a stronger music community, that bridge the divide between those of us who are of age and our under-age friends, might also lead to healthier, happier young people, who have more support to make it through the growing pains of adolescence.

Going public

Levied societies serve the greater good

Emily Davidson
Opinions Contributor

These days, the university doesn't seem like the great public institution it's cracked up to be. For the most part we, as students, don't have a say in what we learn or how we learn it. Beyond making choices between course offerings, you have little control over what is taught in the classroom and what research is conducted. Students aren't involved in setting the curriculum, deciding how their work will be evaluated or determining who will teach at the university.

What is even more troubling is the fact that Dalhousie's decision-makers are catering to private interests. While students are shut out of the conversation, the administration and the government are allowing big business to roll on in. Naming rights in exchange for corporate sponsorship of new infrastructure developments and directed comported funding to develop marketable research are just two examples of how big business speaks on our campus.

If we don't like the conversation, or the powers who control it, students have the power to change it. Collectively, students have more power, not only to pressure the Dal administration to listen to student voices, but also to create the kind of university students want to see.

Students can make change on campus that extends into the broader community by collectively pooling our resources to make our own independent media, research and services. For example, student-supported, levied societies like the Dalhousie Women's Centre, DalOUT and the Student Accessibility Fund exist to further collective goals of a diverse campus free from discrimination.

The Gazette is an example that is close to home. This fine paper you are reading is funded by students based on the premise that student issues need more attention than is possible in a standard daily, where students are just one of a plethora of special interest groups.

Similarly, the Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group (NSPIRG) challenges the corporatizing of the university by creating a resource for activities that support social justice over private gain. If you aren't familiar with the mandate of NSPIRG, the acronym may seem a little oblique. The group is so named because it supports local independent research that is a benefit to the public interest.

Starting in the 1970s, students all across North America formed campus-based PIRGs to research social problems facing young people and their communities and to come up with more sustainable and just solutions. PIRGs use research and education to share some of the power vested in the university with the broader community.

Despite how you feel during midterms and exams, students have lives outside of school.

Many students are also workers, parents, and persons with disabilities. Many students are impacted by racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of oppression. Climbing tuition fees mean many students are struggling to buy groceries. Others turn to the military because it's the only way they can get an education.

Most PIRGs fulfill their mandate through funding research and other public education projects with money that is pooled together from students at a particular school or in a particular region. In NSPIRG's case, a \$2 levy from each student per term provides the bulk of the money in the organization's budget.

Fees collected to run various societies at Dal are democratically decided and can be democratically repealed as well. After a levy is secured by a referendum, societies are assured consistent funding. Consistent funding means a society can spend student dollars to uphold the mandate of the organization and provide services to students without having to constantly justify the existence of the society to potential funders.

Paying these fees allows students membership in the organization. And what makes membership fees different than tuition fees? When you are member you have a direct say in how your money is spent.

Structures are in place to ensure students can get involved, access information about the societies and can hold elected executives or board members and staff accountable. These structures are also there so students can direct the work of the organizations and institutions they are members of.

Maybe you think that NSPIRG should take up a new campaign or start a new working group, but you don't know where to start. Annual general meetings provide a great space to talk about what NSPIRG could do for an upcoming year.

NSPIRG also offers students the option of opting out of the society, a practice that Dalhousie students mandated, when they democratically voted to fund NSPIRG through a levy.

If you're super set on getting back your \$4, come by during our opt-out period. But before you do, take a minute to think about what can happen when we work together. Feedback and concerns are taken seriously by our board and staff and we are happy to discuss any issues and concerns with members.

Dalhousie isn't an island after all, and while most of us won't be students forever, we'll be citizens for life.

The fall opt-out period runs from Tuesday, Oct. 14, 2009 until Monday, Nov. 2, 2009 at the NSPIRG office in room 314 of the Dalhousie Student Union Building.

Emily Davidson is a board member with NSPIRG.



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Opinions

Canadian students should welcome, not ignore their international peers

David Kumagai
Opinions Columnist

Besides healthcare, the cultural mosaic is perhaps Canada's most celebrated concept. Universities nationwide, including Dalhousie, embrace this concept in their approach toward international students. But, as many students from abroad realize, entrenched tolerance doesn't equate to effusive friendliness.

Despite official multiculturalism, or perhaps because of it, international students studying in Canada are often unofficially segregated from Canadian students.

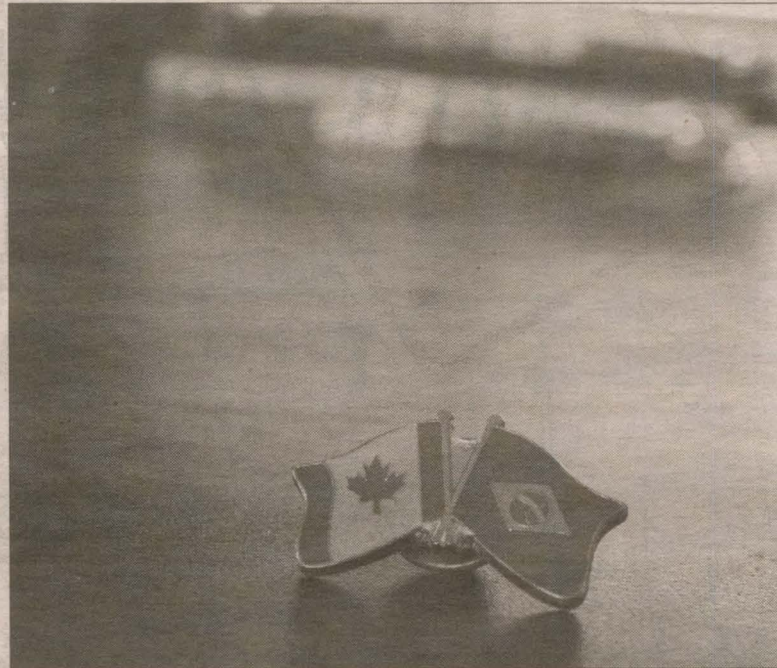
The university does what it can to make the transition easier. The staff, usually working adults – not other likeminded 20-something students – can only do so much to enable a healthy integration into Haligonian culture. They can layout the welcome mat and offer help with red tape; after that, it's up to other students. This, friends, is where I think we could use a lesson in some Rush Hour-esque camaraderie.

For Canadian students, it's an overlooked opportunity and an underappreciated privilege to show international students a good Canadian time. The university won't, and probably can't, teach appropriate Dome attire or advertise the next retro night at the Paragon. That's where your friendly neighbourhood domestic student should be able to offer some advice.

Canadians seem to focus on making international students feel comfortable instead of welcome. We don't stare, but we don't greet either. The emphasis on comfort comes at the expense of making international students a more valued part of the institution and a welcomed addition to our social circles.

We herald the fact that international students can study here and retain as many cultural practices as possible as Canada's defining appeal. How much are both Canadian and international students losing by adopting this so-called "Canadian way" (namely, the encouragement of international students to do their own thing) in a university setting, where the sharing of ideas and experiences is essential to everyone's learning?

The great thing about most Canadian universities is that you don't have to go on an exchange to hear perspectives of people fresh from Germany, the Caribbean, China or the Middle East – they are all over campus. We are too willing to disregard the



Reach out to your international classmates. | Photo by Abram Gutscher

problems with watching international students come here, find each other and recreate their home experiences in isolation.

Travelling to a foreign country is an awkward and challenging experience, but that's a large part of the appeal and the benefit. It's tough, dreadful at times, but it's character building.

We should help international students embrace the awkwardness of being in a new country. We should support them through it, rather than simply passively relying on the tolerance built on our common support of a near 30-year-old document.

The idea of a cultural mosaic, ingrained in this generation since primary school, makes it easy for Canadian students to stand pat while international students form their own cliques, societies and clubs, then spend the rest of their experiences segregated in many ways from Canadian students.

When I was overseas, people were constantly reaching out to me, inviting me to their homes and eagerly taking my hand in friendship. Many people had upsetting ulterior motives, but a lot of people were just being friendly to an awkward Asian guy out of his element.

They showed me how things were done in their country, scolded me for inappro-

priate behaviour and encouraged me to enjoy their way of life. They lacked a charter, but nearly compensated in charisma.

Interacting with foreign peers is my favourite part of travelling, and it's a shame people coming here rarely get the sort of embrace Canadians get in other parts of the world.

Tolerance is no substitute for hospitality.

Indoctrinated with the infallibility of the cultural mosaic, we are over eager to let international students go their own way, do their own thing, on their own. While the ideology is in place to enable international students to recreate their lifestyles, that doesn't mean we should sit back and neglect genuine engagement with our international peers.

Multiculturalism is an invaluable aspect of the Canadian way, but its value is lost when it leads to isolated communities. Dalhousie seems to be a microcosm of this Canadian paradox, one that can be overcome by an outreached hand.

David Kumagai writes for *The Gazette* on international student issues. He is a third-year journalism student at the University of King's College.

It smells like an election up in Ottawa

Ben Wedge
Staff Contributor

Depending on who you are, the smell of a pending election ranges from the smell of coffee brewing as the sun rises up on a bright new day for the Conservative Party to the smell of rotten eggs as fall downpours continue to rain on the Liberal Party.

Ironically, it is Ignatieff who seems to want the election most.

Canada's political situation is shifting. Mere months ago, the Conservatives and Liberals were in a near dead-heat in the polls. Now, the Conservatives are kissing 40 per cent in numerous polls, and the Liberals are well below 30.

What's worse for the Liberals is that their support has collapsed virtually everywhere. Conservatives are at 46 per cent in Ontario, and even have the lead by a few points in the GTA. Once past Sudbury and heading west, Conservatives enjoy a not-too-shabby 54 per cent support. Some signs are pointing to a majority for Stephen Harper.

The good news may not be over for Harper, however. The polls coming out this week, for the most part, were completed before Oct. 3, the night Harper stepped on stage at the National Arts Centre to play "With a Little Help From My Friends" with cellist Yo Yo Ma.

Harper showed off his piano skills, and sang much of the song by himself. The positive reaction to the videos circulating on YouTube has been nothing short of extraordinary. Much of the popular press has had nothing negative to say either, with mostly resounding support for Harper's move at the fundraising gala.

The move hasn't placated some voters, who are still up in arms about the supposed funding cuts to the arts. The budget for the CBC went up 19 per cent between 2006 and 2008, despite losing the contract to cover the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.

Even the 800 staff members who were expected to be laid off are being kept.

Other funding cuts, for festivals, tours, etc., had their funding shifted to departments such as Tourism and Heritage. The rest of the "cuts" were cancelled, in favour of cuts in other departments.

Harper needs to tighten the purse strings of government soon, in order to prevent us from getting too close to a Trudeau-style tax-and-spend government. The sooner the recession is truly over, the sooner the books will be back in the black. Hopefully it doesn't take as long as the most pessimistic predictions say.

The Harper government also committed \$2 billion for post-secondary education facilities alone. Dalhousie and King's have received almost \$30 million to fix the Life Sciences Centre and do some work on the air systems over at King's. Nova Scotia has received a decent chunk of change to keep shovels in the ground.

While Harper's post-secondary education platform could be bolstered, most student journalists are overlooking his achievements.

This government introduced the first national system of needs-based grants. That program will give students from low-income families as much as \$2000 this year to help pay the cost of their education.

Some of the Conservative government's tax breaks also target students. The lack of GST on textbooks saved many students at least \$20 this semester, not much, but still enough for a night out for many. For students who don't have access to the U-Pass, there's also a GST rebate on transit passes. With GST being the only tax we pay (well, HST in Nova Scotia), the drop from 7 to 5 per cent has been a help to students.

An election this fall could be a dream come true for Harper with the sweet smell of victory on the horizon.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: The hole in our health care

To label the shortage of services for those with mental health problem as "the hole in our mental health system" is a kindness. I think the holes are more like craters. Services to the general public are under-funded, understaffed and are inconsistently available.

I have never met Holly Huntley. I wish I had. Her passionate advocacy speaks clearly through her writing. But it is like the two of us are looking at some figure-ground picture and agreeing on some things, but seeing different perceptions. Is it a vase? Is it a woman?

I do know Holly's boss, Stan Kutcher, who was interviewed for the article. Stan has collaborated with the Counselling Centre. Staff members here have spent hours volunteering our time to help with the writing and the editing of the Transitions book Holly refers to.

I'm glad Holly feels so passionate about the value of the booklet. Counselling Centre staff members have also written publications for which there are insuf-

ficient funds to distribute to all students.

Our centre's staff members consult with various other services when it would be helpful to serve our students better. Having good relationships with our mental health colleagues throughout Metro is essential. Although there are holes and shortages in the mental health system, many people are working hard together to provide the best care possible. You would be shocked to learn about the number of unsung heroes in our systems that have jumped over holes, refused to acknowledge holes, or have personally filled in holes.

Like Holly, Stan is also a passionate advocate for mental health consumers. I have heard him speak at numerous fundraisers and admire his work and his personal style. Sometimes it is difficult to understand a system at first glance. Whether you are looking at us as a system with holes or a system with people stretching to provide the best services for you, please know we want to be helpful.

-- Jeanette Hung, Career Counselling services Coordinator, Counselling Services

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: Reading required to inspire minds

Public Services staff members at Dalhousie Libraries are observing a significantly elevated expectation that we will hold copies of textbooks and prescribed readings in our collections and/or on Reserve. Tough economic times, a shortage of summer jobs and the burden of student loans certainly make it understandable that students are reluctant to pay upwards of \$150 for a single textbook.

We appreciate Glenn Blake's comment that the library "does not have the budget to be buying books for each class." Indeed it is our policy not to purchase textbooks, for a variety of reasons. Our collections budget is

dedicated to acquiring new print and electronic books and journals, databases, reference materials, media, etc. to support courses at Dalhousie. It would be inappropriate for us to provide access to the recycled, repackaged knowledge published in textbooks, which must be updated annually at considerable cost.

To improve the situation for students, we actively encourage faculty to put copies of textbooks on Reserve. Our subject librarians contact their departments to ensure they are taking maximum advantage of our Reserve services, and the Circulation Departments send out reminder emails to faculty in July concerning their Reserve lists. We also encourage regular faculty members to avail themselves whenever possible of the elec-

tronic resources, e-books and e-journals the Libraries have acquired, and to incorporate access to these in their course outlines and the Dalhousie course management system.

We sympathize with students regarding the high cost of textbooks, but are hopeful, from our own experience with the purchase of electronic materials, that costs will begin to fall in the next while as textbook publishers transition to new electronic book formats accessible on the web or through a variety of new e-book readers. With the great success of iTunes, can eBooks be far behind?

-- William Maes, University Librarian

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Question: What is your fantasy celebrity threesome?



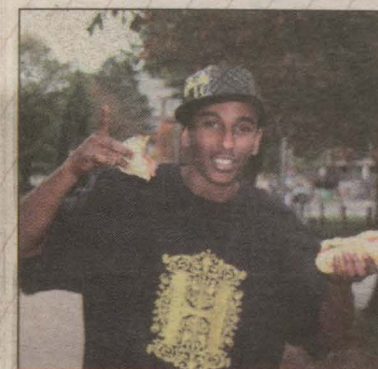
Peter Kelly.

Alli Chert,
4th year political science student



The floor on drink prices.

Matt Davidson,
political science masters student



The police station.

Duwait Feshayi,
1st year business student



Theodore Tugboat: It creeps me out.

Sarah Gilled,
King's foundation year student



The clock tower, and local time, specifically.

Early Hutton,
1st year bachelor of arts student



Dartmouth.

Stephen Lavigne,
2nd year commerce student



High tuition fees.

Ahhmed Nizam,
4th year biochemistry student



I'd rather have Halifax blow me.

Matt Ritchie

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Arts

Gazette Arts covers cultural happenings in the Halifax community. You heard it here first. Email Laura or Matt at arts@dalgazette.com to contribute.



Laura Dawe Arts Editor
arts@dalgazette.com



Night by night guide to The Halifax Pop Explosion

Laura Dawe, Arts Editor
Nicholas Robins, Arts Contributor

Let's explode together! With so many shows in only five days, your Arts Editor and culture vulture artist Nicholas Robins have waded through swampy hangover brains to provide you with some insight to help plan your week. Everyone already knows Girl Talk is not only going to rule, he is also totally sold out. Let's take a look together at the bands that are worth seeing that you may or may not have already watched feature films about.

Tuesday, Oct. 20 at The Paragon
Crystal Antlers, Red Mass, Dinosaur Bones, A History Of

Ignite the Explosion at a show headlined by a band of dudes with a terribly clichéd hipster band name! Crystal Antlers puts on a wow-the-crowd, high-energy show that defies defining. They are kind of like Man Man with a little less carnival. One of the two percussionists does crazy, standing-up shit with cymbals, a tambourine and hand drums. Live shows sound a lot more surfy hard rock bangin' than their smoother recordings. Red Mass is actually just a confusing mass of a million writhing Montrealers. Dinosaur Bones are "melodic indie rock." A History Of is "math rock."

Wednesday, Oct. 21 at Coconut Grove
Bruce Peninsula, Valleys, TGTGG, York Redoubt

This show wins the Wednesday award not because I love bands with a million beaming members, not because I love gang-vocals and not because I love squeaky girl voices on top of dreamy guitar landscapes. Because I don't, really. What I do love, however, is York Redoubt. And I love them a lot. It might be somehow festival-defeating to recommend a local band when there's all kinds of out-of-towners to experience for the very first time, but I cannot stop listening the song "Guilloteens" and I would pay whatever they're asking to see it live. And I will pay that much again two days later.

Thursday, Oct. 22

Thursday is the day. If you want to traverse the city and drop a trillion dollars and have your mind blown mega open with joy and talent and music juice, you could break this night in two just as it will break your mouth. In two. A smiling two.

St. Matthews at 8 p.m.
Herman Dune, Julie Doiron

Family fun! Bring your nephew! Your kid sister! Your grandma! This all-ages show is all-people friendly. The members of Herman Dune are two Parisian brothers who comprise a sweet (as in saccharine) band of international acclaim. Their senses of humor pair well with sentimental song writing. You should look up the video for "I Wish That I Could See You Soon" if you're having an ennui-filled midterm downer day.

Julie Doiron just keeps putting out better and better records, putting on better and better shows, getting prettier and prettier and inspiring her crowds to drink tea, ride bikes and play their guitars dirty.

The Paragon Theatre, 9 p.m.
Cadence Weapon, Think About Life, Old Folks Home, Jenocide

Think About Life is the band name that Crystal Antlers wishes it were. Everything about these guys is so awesome and legit. You may recognize red haired Graham Van Peltz because you have a crush on him in his other band, Miracle Fortress. Think About Life are blowing up right now. Up and out of Montreal a la Arcade Fire and Wolf Parade. You may never get to see them again at this low price. And, to ice that tall cake with some sweet beats, Greg Napier of Special Noise will be drumming with them. Cadence Weapon has some of the most original rap flow in Canada and is also Edmonton's current poet laureate. Jenocide is a stone fox electro babe killer.

Friday Oct 23 at the Toothy Moose
Pterodactyl, Surfer Blood, Play Guitar, Tomcat Combat

Pterodactyl are a three-piece art rock band from Brooklyn with a really bright Myspace page. They are like the exciting, stripped-down younger brother of Animal Collective. Surfer Blood are a low-fi four-piece pop-punk band from Florida who, presumably, will try to compete with Pterodactyl for most badass, energetic, live show. Do they sound like the Beach Boys? Who doesn't these days! Play Guitar, from Montreal, are loud and great and you will probably recognize Christian Simmons from when he used to rule the Halifax indie scene in bands like The Burdocks, the Hold and Radarfame. Their tight licks know how to make a crowd jerk around.

Saturday, Oct. 24
St. David's Church, 12 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Ninth Annual Halifax Zine Fair

This free event is always so life affirming and fun! Grab a coffee at the market or at Steve-o-

Renos and wander through the arts and minds of those you know and don't yet know. In addition to charming, handcrafted literature, you will have the opportunity to peruse and potentially purchase records, cassettes, magazines, postcards, handmade stamps, probably some

cute crafty things, comics and all manner of stuff that's really nutritious for your brain.
St. Matthew's Church, 9 p.m.
Jenn Grant, Timber Timbre

Timber Timbre is really into this haunted theme. His music is what the Ghost Bees put

on at dinner parties. It's the type of album that sounds like Halifax, even though the band is from Toronto. A rainy Atlantic Sunday is primed for this Devendra Banhart, somber Randy Newman. He's good. You should go see him. You already know you love Jenn Grant.

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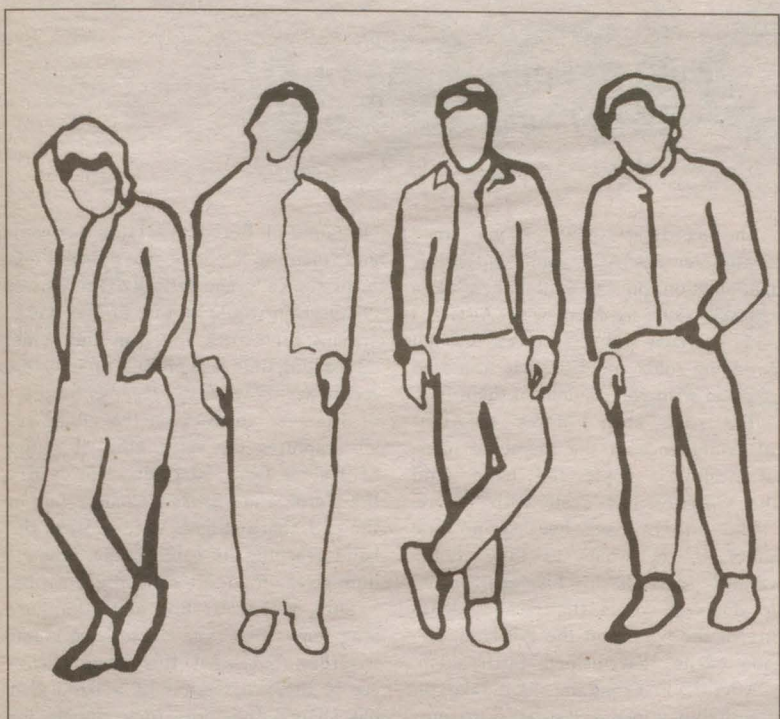
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The Danks are the new faces of The Midnight Society. | Illustration by Emily Davidson

Are you afraid of comparisons to seminal garage rock bands?

PEI's The Danks bring their Strokes influenced melodies to Halifax

Erica Eades
Staff Contributor

While en route to a gig in Sault Ste. Marie, front-man Brohan Moore took time to speak by phone with *The Gazette* about his indie band The Danks, their experiences on the road, and their newly released album, *Are You Afraid of The Danks?*

Hailing from Charlottetown, Moore has a laidback and friendly personality. He began by apologizing for being so tired. "Sorry," he said. "It's really early right now - it's like, 12:30 (in the afternoon)." Granted, his exhaustion seemed justified considering that the band has spent the past week playing shows in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario. The previous night had also been less than ideal.

"We had a horrible night in Thunder Bay," Moore says. "All the hotels around were full, and we ended up staying next to this couple who were fighting all night - so we didn't get very much sleep. It's just something to laugh about now though."

Moore is The Danks' lead vocalist. His fellow members include Alec O'Hanley (guitar and keyboards), Andrew MacDonald (bass) and Phil MacIsaac (drums). Reviewers often compare their sound to that of The Strokes, and, according to Moore, this is not entirely coincidental. He says, "They were definitely influential to us. I was in grade ten when (The Strokes' first album) *Is This It* came out. I wanted to do what they were doing."

Writing in *Soundproof Magazine*, reviewer David Ball calls their sound "edgy Britpop mixed with a not so subtle nod to the champions of NYC's post-punk revival, The Strokes," and describes the latest album as "unbelievably catchy power-pop."

"Andrew MacDonald's chugging bass underscores simplistic arrangements," Ball writes. "But the snaking melodies and aggressive guitars never bury Brohan Moore's raspy vocals or his sleepy delivery. The album starts

out like a house on fire and never lets up."

The group is also often compared to fellow Charlottetown-based rockers, Two Hours Traffic. The two bands not only share similar musical styles, they also share two members. O'Hanley and MacDonald are involved with both bands simultaneously, which creates a close association between The Danks and Two Hours Traffic.

Moore hopes listeners will recognize that they do have their own unique sound. "I mean, there's bound to be some similarities," he says. "I guess we all have similar taste. We're doing our own thing though. We have a distinct sound and we're trying to be original."

That said, Moore cites bands such as The Buzzcocks, The Unicorns, and The Ramones as being highly influential in discovering their personal sound. This gives the band a harder edge than their counterparts Two Hours Traffic.

The band released their first full-length album in June 2009. The title, *Are You Afraid of The Danks?*, is a direct reference to the popular television show from the early 1990s, *Are You Afraid of the Dark?*, which the band members grew up watching.

As Moore describes, the witty album name came entirely by fluke and 1990s nostalgia. "Last year for Christmas, Liam Corcoran (of Two Hours Traffic) got me the DVD boxed set of *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* We were all joking about how we should name our album *Are You Afraid of the Danks?* - and it just kind of stuck."

Moore says he writes the core of a number of their songs, while O'Hanley helps with the structure. Everyone else adds their own part. As for what inspires them to write, Moore says, "We aim to make good music in general. I guess our inspiration for this album was just to make an all around good record."

That and The Midnight Society.

The Danks will be taking the stage at Cocomut Grove on Oct. 23, along with Smothered in Hugs, Mardeen and Two Hours Traffic, as part of the Halifax Pop Explosion.

Ohbijou's orchestration to hit St. Matthew's Church

Amy Donovan
Arts Contributor

Toronto's Ohbijou sounds kind of like Broken Social Scene, only not broken. Listening to the band's new album, *Beacons*, it's not hard to tell they've got it all together. Their sound is smooth and unique, with songs flowing effortlessly into one another to make something that's relaxing, mellow and anything but atonal.

Casey Mecija, the band's lead singer, says *Beacons* is less sparse than Ohbijou's debut album, the poetically named *Swift Feet for Troubling Times* - and more mature. "We tried to really work on feeling the arrangements more and experimenting with different sounds."

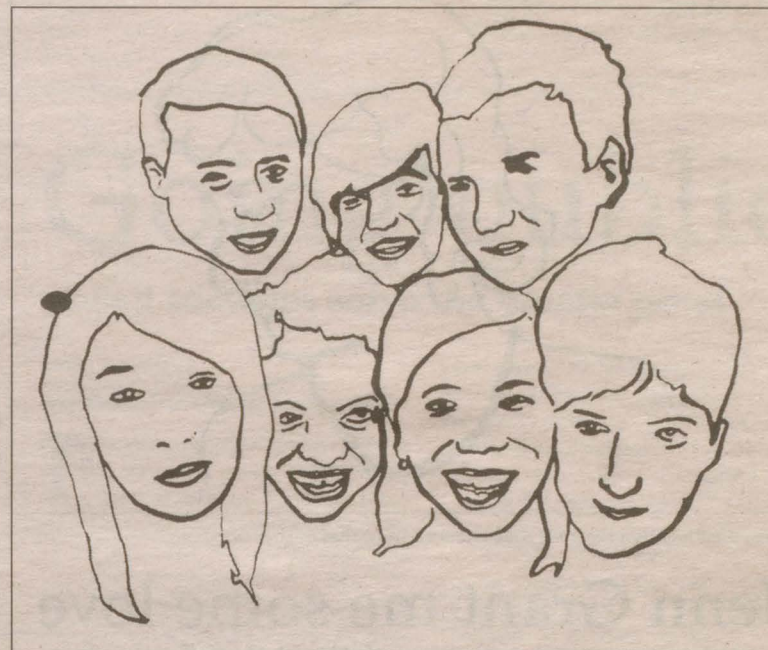
Though Ohbijou's sound may no longer be sparse, the songs are tastefully sparing both in arrangement and in lyrics - not an easy thing to accomplish when you've got a six-piece band. And when the band, fresh off their first European tour, hits Halifax during next week's Pop Explosion, they'll have seven players.

Mecija says the Ohbijou members' main aim is to be creative with their arrangements. They've got access to a lot of different instruments and like to make the most of it. It's probably going to work as an advantage that their Pop Explosion show takes place in the atmospheric safe haven of St. Matthew's United Church.

Mecija says Halifax can expect "a performance with a lot of musical dynamics and enthusiasm." "We're really happy to be there and we're playing with our best friends, The Acorn, so I think it'll be a really great show."

When asked what she is looking forward to in Halifax? Well, for one thing, The Pop Explosion - they've never played it before. Otherwise, lobster.

The band has been together for five years, but it all started with Mecija writing songs in her bedroom. She got her sister and her friends involved, but now the songwriting process still starts out the same. The difference is that



Ohbijou discuss band dynamics and charity. | Illustration by Emily Davidson

now, after finishing a piece, she brings it to the band, adding layer upon layer of instruments until "it becomes an entirely different song."

As if releasing a new album and embarking on a tour of Europe wasn't enough, this spring Mecija also has another musical project up her sleeve, this one in benefit of the Daily Bread Food Bank of Toronto. Her speech quickens a little bit when she talks about it. You can tell she's proud - she practically oozes enthusiasm while discussing the subject.

"Myself and our drummer James have this project called Friends in Bellwoods, it's a compilation that we created of all of our friends in music."

So far the compilation has raised over \$10,000. Mecija wants to get the word out to try to raise as much money as possible.

"This is the second edition of the compilation and it has people like Final Fantasy, Timber Timbre ... just a really amazing com-

pilation of friends that we're inspired by."

Those friends are also a source of inspiration for Ohbijou's creative process, though Mecija says it's hard to say who the group's musical influences are, since it has so many members.

Wherever it comes from, the music that ends up on Ohbijou's records sounds almost like their name - reverberating melancholy that meets somewhere between new age indie and old world sophistication.

So where'd the name come from?

It was "sort of like a term of endearment," says Mecija. "It just was very spontaneous and it came out just like sighing, I guess, and when I thought about it I was like, 'Wow, that sounds nice.'"

Ohbijou will do more than just sound nice as the band take the stage with The Acorn at St. Matthew's United Church on Friday, Oct. 23.

A spoon full of Rich Aucoin

Just in time for The Pop Explosion

Emma Teitel
Arts Contributor

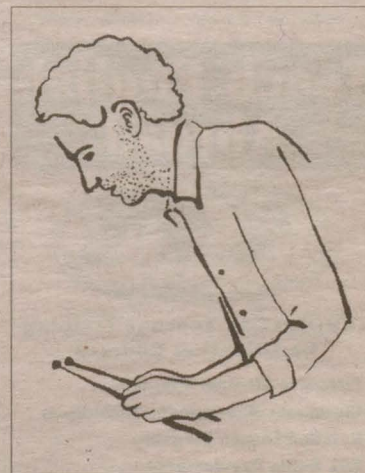
Good things can come from learning the recorder. Take Halifax's very own Rich Aucoin.

"I was forced to play it in school, as I guess we're all forced to do, and I really liked it." Fortunately though, not too much. The 26-year-old DJ and former Dalhousie student usually mixes up to 30 instruments in his average song, formulating that feel-good electro-pop sound, or "Beach Boys on crack."

Aucoin's got a thing for Brian Wilson. And it's a good thing. After all, what could be more endorphin inspiring than vocals and melodies with Beach Boy greatness backed up by a raging dance beat? Maybe babies and unicorns, but I'd take Aucoin anyway. He's downright dreamy.

And on Oct. 24, he'll play The Pop Explosion (for the third time no less), opening for Girl Talk at St. Antonio's. It's something he's really excited about for obvious reasons (he's been a fan of the main act for quite a while).

Plus, "The bar is right down the street from my house," he said. "Maybe I'll have a little after party."



A xylophone is one of the many instruments Aucoin can play. | Emily Davidson

If you've been to a Rich Aucoin show you know he can throw a party. His first album *Personal Publication* was written in sync to Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (not the Jim Carey one) and his live performances include moving cartoon backdrops and free falling balloons. Like a children's birthday party with

liquor. He admits though, that sometimes his exceptional performances can backfire.

On one of his four cross-Canada tours, Aucoin stopped in Vancouver to perform at a sushi restaurant by day, and what he calls "Vancouver's Gus' Pub" by night. The venue is called Hoko's. All was well until a special segment in Aucoin's show, in which he ditches his spot on the stage and exits the building through the front door to leave the crowd in suspense before smashing re-entering through the back door.

"The only problem (was) that Hoko himself was supposed to meet me in the back to open the door."

So Aucoin ran around the block to Hoko's back door. No Hoko. Instead he was greeted by "a whole whack of crack heads."

Aucoin probably won't be darting out the St. Antonio's door on Oct. 24, but his interior performance should be excellent and theatrical enough. What's more, it's bound to make you smile, because Aucoin has no pretensions about his music. He simply wants you have a good time. Maybe I should have written this article two weeks ago for the mental health issue. Screw drugs, therapy and self help books. Just get yourself some Rich Aucoin.

Arts



Jenn Grant looks less like a war bride in real life. | Illustration by Emily Davidson

Jenn Grant me some love

Local song spinner to play show at Pop Explosion

Sagan Pope
Arts Contributor

On tour now with her band, Jenn Grant, 29-year-old Halifax based singer-songwriter, is hitting the stage for the Halifax Pop Explosion at St. Matthew's Church on Saturday, Oct. 24.

Having successful concerts, exploring new cities, and experiencing new things are all Grants' favourite aspects of being on tour.

"New places, new people but then being able to come home and play," says Grant. "We're really, excited for the Halifax show."

Only in Halifax for one day, Grant will head back to the United States for four more shows before performing in Toronto at the end of November. Grant's tour is a showcase for her new album, *Echoes*, which was released this spring.

Six Shooter Records, a Toronto based record label company whose slogan, "life's too short to listen to shitty music," made it possible for Grant and her band to record *Echoes* at National Treasures Recording Studio at Pucks Farm in the country-side of Ontario — only a 25 minute drive from Toronto.

Grant describes her time on the farm as being a "pretty organic experience" where she was removed from society for a couple of weeks while writing and recording her newest album.

"Six Shooter wanted to make sure we recorded somewhere that was conducive to being happy and writing," says Grant. "And having a good time."

Though her lyrics are unique and she wears her heart on her sleeve, Grant collaborates with her band members Kinley Dowling (violin, viola and vocals), Sean MacGillivray (bass guitar and vocals) and Dave Christensen (bass clarinet and keyboard) to create their soft and sweet but upbeat indie melodies.

"They always put their own touch to songs," says Grant about recording with her band.

Six Shooter Records discovered Grant and signed her two years ago. However, Grant has been performing professionally since the age of 23. She started playing at venues in Halifax where she found the music scene to be very supportive and a growing community.

"I thought everyone was great," says Grant about the music scene in Halifax. "And I fell in love with the music scene right from the start."

Although Grant has only been playing professionally for six years, she started her music career early; she has been playing guitar and singing since the age of eight. Grant's father played the piano and many of her relatives play music as well. So growing up, Grant was always surrounded by a love for music.

"It's just something I like to do."

Built to Spill

There is No Enemy

Matthew Ritchie
Assistant Arts Editor

Grade: B

The first Built to Spill album in three years will come as quite a surprise to fans of the group. This may be the most clear and concise sounding record of the band's entire career, and that is actually a good thing.

The Boise, Idaho band built a strong following in the American Indie Rock scene of the 1990s by creating records that sounded equal parts Neil Young and Dinosaur Jr. With their new album, *There is No Enemy*, the band shows some of their most mature songwriting to date. This album isn't so much *Rust Never Sleeps* as it is *Harvest* and *Harvest Moon*.

The record starts off with a sonic punch to your sternum. After some synthesizer manipulation, Built to Spill launch into a J Mascis-esque freak-out with "Aisle 13". Doug Martsch and co. screech through shredding solos and riffs that sound so easy you wish you thought of them first.

The song also features the lyrical prominence of the theme of mental health, a topic the band (and The Gazette) has dealt with before.

"No one can see because no one wants to, see what's in their mind," warbles Martsch in his characteristic doubled vocals that are a signature of the band and the Portland, Oregon scene that helped birth them.

After the first song the album takes on an entirely new focus as it switches to country riffs and acoustic songwriting that is becoming the band's forte as they get old-

er. "Good ol' Boredom", "Life's a Dream" and "Planting Seeds" evoke pastoral textures sonically and lyrically. The closest comparison would be that of The Weathers roots rock and Iron and Wine.

For long time fans of Built to Spill, this record will have mixed feelings for a lot of listeners. No track on this album really captures the same kind of sound or feeling from past hits like "Carry the Zero" and "Broken Chairs". But in the end, that's alright. With most of the band reaching its early forties, this album gives off a more calmed down vibe.

Sure, you won't find any 20-minute long forays in Crazy Horse style guitar wizardry, but what this album delivers is the progression of a band that has shaped the indie rock climate for nearly two decades. You can't fault them for trying something a little different.

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Monsters of Folk - Self titled

Matthew Ritchie
Assistant Arts Editor

Grade: B-

A few months ago when it was announced that a new record would be coming out from Jim James, Mike Mogis, Conor Oberst and M. Ward under the moniker Monsters of Folk, most people saw the band as a Traveling Wilburys of the indie generation. This was concerning, because if you've ever listened to the Traveling Wilburys, most of their records sound pretty disjointed and chaotic.

That being said, there is still hope. Do you like My Morning Jacket? Do you like Bright Eyes? Do you like whatever it is that M. Ward

does? Well, this record is perfect for you.

Each singer takes his own spot behind the mic for a variety of songs, all under the main production of Mogis. Each singer has his own unique style, whether it is Oberst's heart wrenching drawl or the angelic tones of the bear of a man that is Jim James. However, all songwriter's voices are weighted in a roots-rock background, giving the tones a cohesive sound. This adds a lot of variety to the record, but at certain times what the record really needs is structure.

Written and recorded from 2004 to 2009, this wide gap of time is evident all across the album due to its non-cohesive sound. Some instrumentation feels rushed and confusing. A good example of this is Mogis' slide guitar on "Baby Boomer", a country stomping track that sounds great, but falls flat when Mogis' redundant

slide kicks in. The riff is so simple, but isn't catchy, draining the life out of the M. Ward song.

There are a few glorious surprises on this record. Opening track "Dear God (Sincerely M.O.F)" uses an electronic drum beat and Jim James' atmospheric-reverb soaked drawl to its advantage, giving the track an eerie sonic texture much like later years Flaming Lips. Each songwriter takes a turn on vocals shaping what is essentially an R&B track into a spiritual psychedelic soundscape.

If only the rest of the album was as experimental as the opener.

For fans of all of these artists, this album will sound great. If you're looking for something that sounds just like My Morning Jacket or just like Bright Eyes, this album may sound like a group of ideas as opposed to ideas in motion.

Capitalism: A Love Story

Rebecca Spence
Staff Contributor

Grade: B-

Michael Moore: You either love him or you hate him. Personally, I'm a fan of his, and especially of his Oscar-winning *Bowling for Columbine*. But *Capitalism: A Love Story* left me in this weird, unpleasant gray area. I can't remember the last time I saw a film so poignant, yet so ludicrous at the same time.

Moore's problem is that he can't resist being the star of his own movie. *Capitalism's* lowest points are undoubtedly when Moore is on-screen. From circling Goldman Sachs Insurance

with bright, yellow police tape, to arguing with the building's security guards when he pathetically attempts to make a citizen's arrest, Moore's antics appeal only to the lowest common denominator. I realize that he is trying to make a point while providing entertainment, but his shenanigans only serve to weaken his position.

Moore is at his best when he stays out of the film and just lets the simple tragedy of his subjects make his point.

Evicted families with nowhere to go and bankrupt retirees only scratch the surface of Moore's look at the capitalist system from a human perspective. When he digs deeper, it is chilling to learn about companies like WalMart taking out life insurance policies, called "dead peasant" clauses, out on its workers in hopes that they

will die - proving the average American worker to be worth more dead to a CEO than alive.

That being said, like all of Moore's films, *Capitalism* is purely one-sided propaganda. Moore never offers any counterpoints that might undermine his argument, much of which is strung together by a series of assumptions and speculations presented as fact. Ultimately, though, Moore demonstrates why he is a filmmaker and not a politician. His movie is rich with emotional fervor that aims to rile up the public and give power to the proletariat. Unfortunately, considering the state of the American economy, I doubt the majority of the proletariat will even have the funds to pay to see the movie. Now, if Moore distributed his movie under a "pay what you can" philosophy, this review might be a whole other love story.

Whip It's a predictable but fun story

Emma Tietel
Arts Contributor

Grade: A-

Contrary to popular belief, *Whip It* is not Juno on roller-skates. Where Diablo Cody's Ellen Page would probably say something adorably ironic in the face of death, or some would say worse - teen pregnancy, Drew Barrymore's Ellen would spare us the verbal diarrhea and simply kick some ass.

That is, once her skates are on. For about the first twenty minutes of the film before this fateful moment, you wonder if Page's character, Bliss Cavendar, is a more stolid and less funny Juno: bored with no bite.

Granted, her life could use some colour. She lives in dreary Bodeen Texas with an officious pageant mom (Marcia Gay Harden) and a benign beer-bellied dad (Daniel Stern) who can't be bothered to subdue his overbearing wife. Bliss' sole refuge is a part time job she shares with her only friend Pash (Alia Shawkat) at a swine themed roadside restaurant. Here

they trade trials, tease their Mexican manager whom they tenderly refer to as "Birdman" and serve the town special: a pulled pork sandwich the size of your head. Bliss is not happy.

So, she and mom, and (to her annoyance) her little sister - who meets with flying colours all her mother's pageant demands to which Bliss only acquiesces - take to the road for a little shopping in Austin. It's in a second hand clothing store that doubles as a head shop (her mother comments on the "lovely vases") that we realize Bliss won't be bored forever, when a bevy of derby girls roll in bearing breasts, midriffs and glossy pamphlets.

She instantly falls in love with the sport, which to my knowledge involves girls in short skirts skating around a track. Four of these, two from each team, are trying to pass as many opposing players as possible, sometimes taking each other by the arm and whipping one another forward (hence the movie's namesake).

So Bliss puts on her old skates and tries out for Austin's worst team, The Hurl Scouts, whose roster includes director Drew Barrymore as "Smashley Simpson" and rapper Eve as "Rosa Sparks".

Bliss makes the team, meets a cute boy in a rock band and adopts the alias "Babe Ruthless". And, she pushes the bitchy girl at school off a banister. Things are looking up.

It's refreshing to see Ellen Page develop into a grittier version of the character she always plays. Not only does it give her a humility we haven't seen before, but it also hints that maybe she didn't emerge from the womb taking mildly ironic jabs at people. This could be attributed to Barrymore, who is hilarious in her role as a blood-thirsty stoner on skates, but who has also proven herself to be a competent and intelligent director. The movie's tender moments are so because they don't slip into melodrama. Every girlish grievance (and there are many) is met with tears but never without a laugh.

Whip It is a story we've all heard before: Teen outcast with but one friend in the world finds inner strength in an alternative niche, and in doing so, finds herself. Replace the Roller derby with step dance or rocket science, and not much changes. Same story, different extracurricular activity. But predictability isn't always a bad thing. Knowing what's going to happen can be fun. And *Whip It* is a whole lot of fun.



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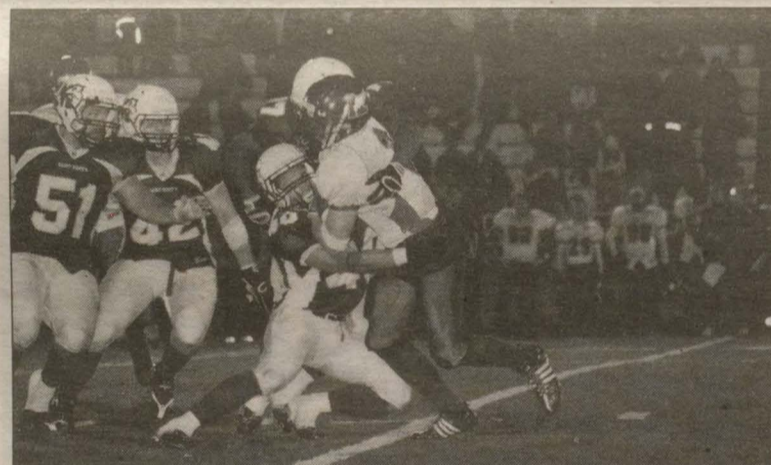
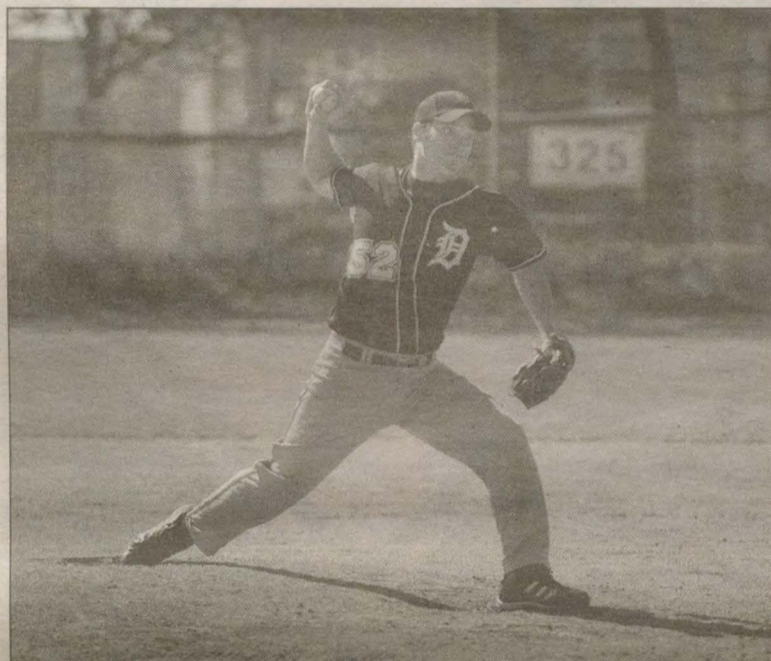
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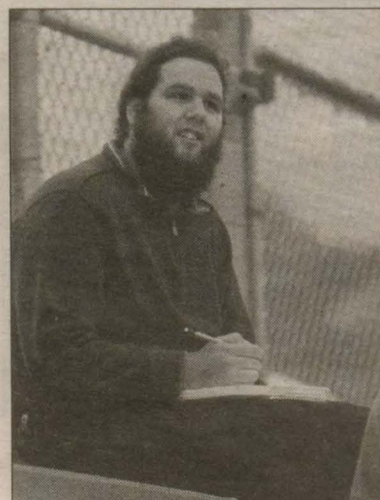
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BASEBALL TIGERS STRUGGLE



SMU beat Mount Allison 48-23 at home. | Photo by Ilyana Chua

Tigers post four shut-outs in six games



Dylan Matthias is a third-year journalism student at King's College. He has covered soccer for *The Gazette* for the past two years. He wrote seven stories for the soccer-themed section this week.

The end of an era?

Dalhousie bids a fond farewell to Doc Halladay

Joe Wolfond
Sports Contributor

Eleven years ago, I had the privilege of attending the last game of the Blue Jays' 1998 season. My Jays were a respectable 87-74, and though their last-ditch playoff push had come up short, there was cause for celebration.

It was the best season our franchise had enjoyed since winning it all in 1993. Roger Clemens had all but wrapped up his second Cy Young award in two years with the club, and we'd even scrapped our way into postseason contention with a franchise-best 11-game win streak in the season's final month. 40,000 came out to the SkyDome that afternoon to show their appreciation for what had been an inspiring campaign.

With the faint glimmer of playoff hope now squashed, the Jays took the opportunity to give one of their young upstart pitchers some big league reps. I was outraged; Clemens was on four days rest and it was his turn in the rotation. He had been dominant all year long, led our club back to respectability, and here he was being robbed of a chance to personally close the books on the season and — in all likelihood — his career in Toronto. Instead we sent a 21-year-old unknown by the name of Roy Halladay to the hill, with one unremarkable major league start under his belt.

After four innings, I'd forgotten all about Roger Clemens. I looked up at the scoreboard after every pitch, just to make sure, and there I saw the two zeroes side by side in Detroit's line — no runs, no hits.

Here's the amazing thing about a no-hitter in baseball: it's feasible enough that you have a hope of seeing one anytime you tune in to a game, but rare enough that witnessing one is still unbelievably special. I had always wanted to see a no-hitter; every game I went to I thought about it. I'd keep my fingers crossed until I saw that zero in the second column turn to a one. Sometimes it happened on the first pitch of the game, saving me a mountain of stress and obsessive-compulsive glances at the scoreboard every five seconds.

That day, Roy Halladay spared me none of the anxiety. Heading into the top of the ninth, the Jays were up 2-0 and the Tigers still hadn't registered a hit. What made it even more impressive was that he hadn't even walked anybody. Only a Felipe Crespo error had cost young Roy a chance at a perfect game.

Nobody in attendance knew what the hell was going on. Who was Roy Halladay? What business did a pup making his second career start have flirting with perfection? The stadium was hushed, everyone sucking in their breaths, waiting to exhale and claim their own small piece of history, or waiting, perhaps, for it all to come crumbling down.

Then Roy quickly retired the first two batters in the ninth, and 40,000 weary fans allowed

themselves to dream. The place erupted. Everyone rose to their feet — just one out standing between them and the ultimate spectacle, between Halladay and immortality. Cautious optimism was replaced by supreme confidence.

I guess it would make it more interesting if I said I felt some indeterminate sense of foreboding when Bobby Higginson stepped to the plate as a pinch-hitter, that somehow I knew something wasn't quite right or that I should have seen it coming. Retrospection usually works like that anyway. But I remember thinking beyond a doubt that Higgs would make the last out of that game, right up until the moment his first-pitch drive cleared the left field wall. Then I just felt sick to my stomach. One swing had crushed my hopes and drained the life out of the entire building. When Halladay retired his 27th batter on the very next pitch, completing a masterful one-hit, no-walk, 94-pitch gem, I didn't even notice. It felt like we had already lost.

That missed opportunity doesn't irk me so much anymore. I've come to see the poetry in the act of falling just shy of perfection. Maybe I'm just deluding myself because it's all I can do at this point, but I like the fact that that game left something on the table. And I like thinking that maybe, just maybe, that near miss gave Roy the fuel he needed to come back with a vengeance and give himself a chance to finish what he couldn't the first time around. Of course, he hasn't been able to do so yet, but it's hard to complain about the way the script has played out.

Things got off to a rocky start (in 2000 he was 4-7 with a 10.64 ERA, the highest of any pitcher to ever pitch more than 60 innings in a season) but soon Roy found his groove, and just two years after that disastrous 2000 campaign, he was an all-star. The next year he won the Cy Young. By then he was "Doc" Halladay, and baseball people were calling him that without even flinching, despite it being the great Dwight Gooden's old moniker.

Doc's last eight major league seasons have been as good as any pitcher's in baseball. From 2002 to 2009 he amassed a record of 130-59, with a 3.13 ERA and an incredible 46 complete games, easily the most in the majors during that stretch. He was an all-star in all but one of those seasons, and finished in the top five in Cy Young voting five times. But it isn't those numbers that stand out. What stands out is the fact that I've felt compelled to monitor every pitch of every game that Doc's been on the mound for, because there has never been a player I've enjoyed watching more; that when he's pitching, I don't mind watching our batters go down in order because I hate watching him stew and cool off in the dugout; that even during his most dazzling performances, even when he's pitching with a huge lead, you'll still see him cursing at himself over seemingly inconsequential mistakes. In his tenure with the Blue Jays, Doc has exemplified professionalism. His competitive fire has

burned through eleven middling seasons without ever getting a taste of the big dance, and yet he has never publicly complained about management or ownership. He has shown immense loyalty to the Blue Jays' organization, and even amidst a torrent of trade rumours this summer, he quietly put together yet another Cy Young-worthy campaign. Doc has never demanded anything less than perfection from himself every day he's taken the hill in a Jays uniform. I still like to attribute that in some part — however small — to that September afternoon in 1998 when perfection narrowly eluded him.

Now Doc might be on his way out of Toronto. With his contract expiring at the end of next season, it seems inevitable that the Jays will try to move him and get some valuable assets in return while they still can. And the one thought that pervades all the feelings of anger, sadness, and uncertainty that this impending situation has evoked, is a wish that we could have done more for him. Doc never said he wanted out of Toronto; all he ever asked for was a chance to win; to play in the postseason. We never gave him that. I don't know that anything could or should have been done differently — we play in the toughest division in baseball, making the playoffs is a tall order — but I can't help thinking that Doc deserved better. Now we'll never get a chance to see the best hurler in franchise history throw a pitch in a Jays uniform when it matters most. I don't feel cheated so much as I feel like Doc got cheated. The enduring memories of the best to ever play the game are forged in the playoffs. Doc can't claim any vintage performances on the game's biggest stage, nor does he have a signature moment that people can associate him with. Instead, I tell all my friends about the time I watched Doc almost pitch a no-hitter in his second career start.

If this is in fact the end of Halladay's Blue Jays career, he certainly bid us farewell in style. He posted four complete games in his final six starts, including a one-hit shutout against the Yankees and a six-hit shutout against the Mariners in his last game at home. Then of course there was the game in Boston, billed as Doc's last start as a Jay. I watched him take a no-hitter into the bottom of the sixth inning, the whole time thinking to myself how wonderfully poetic it would be if Doc could just take care of that unfinished business in his last appearance as a member of our club. In the end, he scattered three singles over nine innings in a 12-0 win. Not quite the storybook ending I had hoped for, but not far from it.

Doc has a lot of years left in him, and somewhere, somehow, he'll leave his mark on the MLB. Whether he'll avenge the death of his no-no of 11 years ago is another question. But no matter what uniform he ends up wearing next year, or 10 years from now, I'll be pulling for him the whole way.

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Women's hockey season preview

Connor Dalton
Sports Contributor

Hockey season might just be starting, but coach Lesley Jordan is already excited about how her team is shaping up. Jordan, who is going into her eighth year as head coach of the Dalhousie women's hockey team, is hoping for great things in 2009-10. Finishing the pre-season with a 2-1 record, she has reason to be optimistic.

"We've shown we can be competitive in the league this year," says Jordan.

After finishing fourth in their division last year, the coaching staff set out to strengthen their team during the off-season. Jordan feels they got what they wanted, and her team is now a more complete group.

"We've gained a lot of experience in some of our older players," says Jordan. "We've also added some speed and skill with our first-year players."

The team welcomes seven rookies for the 2009-10 season, with five forwards and two defence added to last year's group. These first-years

make the Tigers a much deeper team – exactly what Jordan wanted after last year's campaign.

"That's going to be the biggest thing up front, having that added depth," says Jordan. "We can put anybody in any situation."

Last year, the Tigers lost 4-1 in the AUS championship semi-finals to eventual winners Universite de Moncton. They will try to use that experience when they open up their season at home against the St. Thomas Tommies on Oct. 17. There might be some new faces on the ice that night, but the basic approach hasn't changed one bit.

"We have the same sort of philosophy going into every year," says Jordan. "Three things: we want them to play hard, play smart and play together."

Helping the Tigers this year will be the experience of their head coach. Jordan is in Hockey Canada's coaching pool and has benefited greatly from her time coaching at the National level. At both the U-18 and U-22 levels, Jordan has coached in a wide variety of roles. She has worked as both a goaltend-

ing coach and a video-coach. Exposure to this elite level of hockey is something she feels has improved her coaching at Dalhousie.

"The players and coaches are top notch," says Jordan. "You get to work with a wide variety of coaches and players so you get so many different points of view."

The Tigers women's hockey team will need all of that coaching expertise to do well in what looks to be a very competitive division this year. With all seven teams getting stronger during the summer months, the Tigers won't have any easy games during their season.

The seven teams in the division will be playing for two berths into the National championship. There is an extra spot because it is being held at St. Francis Xavier this year, one of the AUS universities. This is guaranteed to be extra motivation for Jordan and her players and whatever happens, it should mean a very close race at the top of the league.

"Any of the seven right now are in the running for that other berth," says Jordan.

Baseball Tigers hunt for postseason

Zachary Wilson
Sports Contributor

After a more than disappointing 2008 campaign, this year's version of the Dalhousie men's baseball team has taken to the field with a fresh outlook. A handful of veterans and a new coach combined with seven new players, including a two time national champion, has team president and starting third baseman Will Stymiest salivating.

"In recent years we've put together clubs that had what it took to bring home a title. This year is no different. It's a little presumptuous to say that we're going to win it all this early in the season but I have faith in the guys in our clubhouse," says Stymiest.

Despite a team full of veterans and massive expectations, last year's club fell short in the CIBA (Canadian Intercollegiate Baseball Association) to the UNB Cougars, who later repeated as National Champions. The Tigers have not won a National Championship since 1996.

Dalhousie opened the season with back-to-back double headers. They split a set with the University of Cape Breton two Saturdays ago. The following day they fell just short in a 10-9 loss to the defending National champs UNB before being rained out in the second half of the two-game series.

Despite a rough opening week, new coach Dr. Phil Mintern likes what he sees. "I'm already impressed with our

group," he says. "Pitching and defence are the heart of any solid baseball team, and I've been impressed with both."

He sees no cause for concern this early in the season, for as he puts it, "the first few games are a real 'feeling-out' process."

Mintern knows what it takes to bring home a championship. He was a member of the 1996 team and believes that this year's squad has the makings of a real contender.

"I think we are well put together to be a big player in the Atlantic Division. I can see this team gelling really quickly, and playing some very entertaining baseball leading up to the playoffs, where I hope to see big things happen."

Stymiest knows the importance of this season. As a fourth-year student who plans to attend medical school next year, he realizes that there is not a lot of time left.

"For a lot of these guys, this is their last kick at the can and I don't think that any of them want to leave university without being able to say that they brought home a National Championship."

The Atlantic Conference is arguably the toughest in the country. Fan support is one of the many problems facing the Dalhousie squad. On some occasions the bleachers are completely empty.

As Coach Mintern notes, "Our guys would love to see the black and gold fans come out to support us. Knowing your school is behind you always brings out the best in an athlete."



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MEET THE TIGERS!

MEN'S HOCKEY - PATRICK SWEENEY, #97, Centre
Hometown: Nepean, ON
Degree/Major: BCOMM/Accounting
Favourite pre-game meal: Chicken and pasta
Favourite pump-up song: You're Gonna Go Far Kid
Lucky superstition: Pre-game nap after pre-game meal
Favourite sports heroes: Steve Yzerman and Tiger Woods

WOMEN'S HOCKEY - KAITLYN MCNUTT, #22, Defence
Hometown: Ottawa, ON
Degree/Major: Chemical Engineering, Co-op Program
Favourite pre-game meal: Grilled chicken on a tossed salad
Favourite pump-up song: Eye of the Tiger
Lucky superstition: Put on my hockey equipment in the same order for every game
Favourite sports hero: Hayley Wickenheiser



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THE SEXTANT

DALHOUSIE'S OFFICIAL ENGINEERING NEWSPAPER

THE STORY BEHIND THE IRON RING

Anonymous

The Iron Ring

For those of us studying engineering, the iron ring often has more significance than walking across the stage at graduation. Why is this? Many believe it's because engineers are cocky, pompous and self-righteous and that this ring we are given is just a way to rub our intelligence into everyone's face. Well, that's not the case. And if that is the case for some, it's time they got a wake-up call.

The iron ring and The Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer were designed to assist engineers, young and old, to recognize the importance of their work and remind them of the impact they can have on people's lives.

After a discussion by seven past presidents of the Engineering Institute of Canada, it was decided that an organization be formed to bring engineers closer together. In the early to mid 1920s Rudyard Kipling was approached by Herbert Haultain to write an obligation and ceremony for the binding of all engineers.

The Ritual of the Calling of the Engineer is a secret ceremony. Only designated engineers are able to attend; the public, including parents of graduating engineers, are not able to attend. Because of that, and that I have never yet attended myself, the ceremony can't be discussed, but the intention of the ceremony can be better understood: The ceremony is intended to direct new engineers and give them a better understanding of the importance and social significance of the profession they are entering. The Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer also reminds experienced engineers of their responsibility in supporting and offering guidance to the new engineers. It is at this ceremony that the iron ring is awarded.

The iron ring, which is, in fact, not made of iron at all, but stainless steel, is worn on the pinky finger of the working hand; if you are left handed, the ring is worn on your left hand and if you are right handed, the ring is worn on your right hand. The ring is merely a symbol and serves as a constant re-

minder of the professional obligations of an engineer. It is not a glamorous piece of jewelry, but a small representation of integrity, responsibility and social impact.

The ring is not, and was not ever, made from the Quebec bridge, however, the story truly emphasizes the potential impact engineers can hold. The Quebec bridge collapsed twice, killing a total of 85 people, before it was properly erected in 1917. The failure is believed to be on account of errors in judgment of the bridge's engineers.

When an engineer retires or passes away, they are to return their ring to their local 'camp' or provincial engineering organization. The rings are not to be kept by mourning family members as they are a professional symbol, not a personal possession.

The engineering students at Dalhousie are awarded their iron rings at The Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer during National Engineering Week in March. Students are awarded their ring in the

year in which they finish their studies. Many students, including myself, finish classes in December, so get their rings the previous March, but don't actually graduate until May, over a year later.

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WRITE FOR THE SEXTANT!

*Anna West
Editor in Chief*

The Sextant is looking to get some more interest. We are always looking for more writers! Articles can be written on any topic and be any length. There have been articles pertaining to engineering and the goings-on on Sexton campus, advertising for events, political pieces, comical submissions, editorials, you name it! Articles range are usually average a page in length, but this as this is an average, there are both some shorter and some longer. Articles can be emailed to sex-tant@dal.ca and writers get paid \$25 an article!

If you're not a writer, we have some open positions as well. Copy editor re-

views articles before publishing, layout/design are pretty self explanatory, people are needed for publicity and advertising. If you are interested in any of the above or have a suggestion for a position not listed, email sex-tant@dal.ca. Come January the position of Editor in Chief (me) will also be open.

If you are a photographer, a regular trivia-goer at the T-Room or a poet, we want to hear from you! It has been suggested to have a pick of the week, and so you will see this to the right.

If you have any questions, concerns or articles, email sex-tant@dal.ca.



Picture taken in Mabou, Cape Breton. Anonymous



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Thursday October • Live Music!
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CO-OP CORNER

Important Dates:

- Round I continues until October 21, 2009
- Interviews for Round I continue until October 22, 2009

Things to Remember:

- The co-op website offers many tips and is very informative. The website is: <http://www.engandcompcoop.dal.ca>



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