Zoomer Views

Fighting a losing battle

UPSET/ *"Outgoing" executive member hurls an "incoming" opinion.*

by Patricia Post-Smyth

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of the present CAMPUS executive but are strictly those of the frustrated author:

Last week was my first column in "Zoomer Views", and quite possibly my last. Not because I fear being re-elected to the executive because I stubbornly intend to be involved with mature student issues until the University sees its way clear to asking me to graduate and leave it alone BUT after the members of Continuing Adult Mature and Part-time University Students (which technically includes any student over the age of twenty-one or taking three or fewer courses) read my retraction I stand a very good chance of alienating some past members and scaring the heck out of any potential ones.

Before I jump headfirst into my diatribe let me first inform you that I am frustrated and fighting the "Welcome Back to UNB Flu". Nevertheless, I have been involved with this organization long enough to know that we (the executive of CAMPUS Zoomers) appear to be fighting a losing battle.

Last week I optimistically wrote "We realize that mature students seem to have less free time than traditional students but we also know that mature students usually are willing to fill that time with worthy activities like sitting on daycare committee..." Well, having just emerged from two straight weeks of Mature Orientation I take it all back. That information was based on my personally having witnessed a very few loyal Zoomers attending far too many meetings than their schedule would allow, sitting on bursary committees, representing mature students on the student union, pleading before Senate and the Board of Governors to improve the quality of student life for mature students, arranging barbecues and dances and mature orientations, skating parties, graduation brunches, welcome to UNB bashes, good-bye from UNB bashes and generally bashing their brains outs trying to figure out where all the Zoomers are!

We know you're out there. We've seen you in classrooms, jazz festivals, and Grog's and we also have the statistics from the Registrar's office to prove you are more than a figment of our collective imaginations. There are literally thousands of you. Part-time students in particular, what if I tell you that your six dollar per course fee goes directly into our bank account.

Although we advertise our socials and luncheons, the behind the scenes hard work goes unnoticed. It is not for accolades or awards that we keep plugging away, we don't receive a penny for any of it, but are we asking so much that a few more than fifty show up at orientation? I don't know. You tell me.

We are not just a group of party-animals having a good time on student's money. We take the responsibility of educating administration as to the specific needs of mature and part-time students very seriously. Consequently, when we do hold a celebration to share with you just how far we as adult students have really come in the last few years we are sorely disappointed when the same (I won't use the term "old faces") loyal supporters, many of whom are faculty members, show up. Did you know that we are one of the very few campuses in Canada that care enough to even offer an alternate orientation for adult learners? Did you also know that we are one of a very few universities that do not have a women's center or a childcare facility for students? Do you care?

Am I beginning to sound like an unappreciative caregiver or a tired politician urging you to vote and/or participate in student government? As soon as we recuperate from all this planning and organizing, and after the Atlantic conference of mature students leave our campus on Sunday, another project we are hosting and will probably have more representatives from around the Maritimes than from Fredericton, an annual general meeting will be called at which time elections will be held to elect a new executive. If you would like to know who will be representing you or would like to run for office yourself make an attempt to show up...otherwise things will probably run along at the same pace they have in the past, but if I have anything to say about it the social - orientation events will be cut in half. Instead the six or eight of us who remain will hold our own events in the Social Club or Pub and we'll have one for you. Maybe we should send out post cards with a picture of the Old Arts Building on it that says "Having a great time, wish you were here."

> Does my slightly slanted column make you a little angry?

Does my slightly slanted column make you a little angry? If yes, that's a good sign. There is still hope for you yet. Let me hear from you, I need a little renewed hope too. This column can also be used by any Zoomer to express an opinion about anything that you feel I may have rightly or wrongly accused you of. But by all means let me know. Even if its just leaving an anonymous message on the answering machine (keep it clean, please) Phone 453-3596. Or a note in the CAMPUS mailbox. Or a letter to the editor or a hint in lipstick on a bathroom mirror...

Let me know what you Zoomers really want! Otherwise you may have to suffer through another "pity party for Patti."

What is the sound of one Zoomer clapping?

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