SPECTRUM

UNBSU CRO makes pitch against student apathy for elections '96



In the last few SU elections UNB has been hit by the apathy bug *file photo*

by David Gourlay
UNBSU CRO

As Chief Returning Officer for the 1996 Student Union (SU) General Elections, I am encouraging students to take this opportunity to vote in next week's elections. Traditionally, 20% of the student population votes, allowing candidates to win office without even coming close to a majority. Student apathy toward candidates and the process signifies a wasted opportunity to exercise direct participatory democracy.

Candidates deserve the attention of the student community because the successful ones will implement a vision and plan which will attempt to respond to the issues which directly affect the students. The UNBSU is an accountable institution which represents our views within the university community and externally to provincial and national constituencies. The budget of the SU is financed through student fees and it is imperative that the executive which will be elected over the course of the next two weeks is representative of the interests of the student community. The issues which affect us directly as student, tuition levels brought on by budget cuts, student loan programs, debt and deficit strategies, health and environmental issues,– will be represented by those we elect.

While it is my responsibility to ensure that the campaign structure is as open and accessible as possible, students must empower themselves and contribute to the process by voting next week based on informed decisions. Across the country, year after year, students in numerous university campuses ignore the posters on the wall, the noisy debates and other familiar signs of an election campaign. Dismissing these acts is easy to do, because after all, what does a Student Union really do which will directly affect my life? We need to emphasize the mutual benefits of healthy participation from a broad range of student interests in the political affairs of the university.

The media age has referred to our generation as "Generation X," the generation which is consumed by negativism and cynicism toward our society and its democratic culture. I believe we can either accept this by sitting back, complaining, whining and allowing these attitudes to grow and develop, or we can demonstrate leadership and attack these flaws through active participation in employing democratic values and institutions, regardless of the level. We must make a difference, and the ballot box at the UNB campus is a productive start.

Students take time to familiarize yourselves with the issues and the candidate's positions so that your vote is constructive and then come out on the voting days to express your opinion on the issues. The polls are open on March 29, April 1 and 2. We must embrace this democratic process. It is the most significant governing tool our society has. It is the strongest voice we have as students...make it count!

The Grad ZONE

by Dennis Woo
GSA

The GSA will be holding a general meeting, Monday, March 25 at 1:00 pm in room H301 of Head Hall. The agenda is the following: GSA UPDATE, Upcoming GSA events, Constitutional Changes, Grad House, By-Laws and GSA Fee.

The GSA update is to inform the membership on the status of the UNB GSA, what we have done so far this year and what we are planning to do before the term is over. This will include a report on the Transition to Employment Conference, information on the upcoming Mixer and the Student Research Conference.

The GSA Executive would like to make/recommend a few more minor constitutional changes regarding the GSA Structure, Executive Meetings, and the budget.

The GSA Executive also wishes to present proposed By-Law changes which it is currently considering. These would compliment the constitutional changes, should they go through, and strengthen the organization.

The recommended changes may be viewed by the membership and are available for viewing at the GSA office. (For next week only, we will also be having office hours from 11:30 to 12:30 on Monday).

The Grad House Committee has been hard at work, and will present the options it has looked at and the recommendation it is making. Since 1986, the GSA has been putting aside a portion of its student fees for the purpose of creating a graduate house/lounge at UNB. Three years ago, a House Committee was formed to discuss options for this graduate house/lounge and to submit a proposal to the university regarding this facility. To date, three options have been studied:

acquiring or building a house on or near campus, acquiring space in the SUB expansion, and establishing a graduate residence on campus.

For reasons that were developed last week in *The Brunswickan*, we have chosen to focus on the graduate residence option. We must make a decision very soon concerning the when, how and what.

The Transition to Employment Workshop on March 16 was a smashing success. A summary will be given at the general meeting and short discussion concerning future workshops will be heard.

On March 28, 1996, the GSA will be holding the first ever Inter-Departmental Mixer, open to all full-time graduate students and their guests. The event will take place in the Blue Lounge at the SUB, from 8pm to 1am. Scheduled is an evening of fun, games, and music. Tickets are available from your Faculty Rep, so come out and don't be shy! Space is limited, snacks will be provided, and refreshments will be available. Tickets will also be available at the door, but it is first come, first serve.

Finally, we'd like to remind you that the 4th Annual Conference on Student Research is being held on the 16th and 17th of April at the Wu Conference Centre, and that there will be lots of exciting presentations. Contact the GSA at gsa@unb.ca or 453-4700 for more information.

Sincerely, GSA

WOMYN SAY

Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size.

Virgina Woolf (1882-1941)

Blood n' Thunder

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The United States would like Taiwan to be free to pursue its own economic, religious and political system, which are at odds with those of the mainland China, but it has done everything not to give the same kind of freedom to Cuba. Why? Because Cuba does not have the same economic system that the United States does. Is it not double-talk? But it can be justified in the *national interest* of the United States. So, old age is not the reason behind Mr. Jesse Helms'' outbursts.

As for Mr. Dole, he is a veteran of armed struggles for his country, whether his country was right or wrong. However, he is right in questioning the degree of sex and violence that should be allowed in the homes and hearts of the young and old alike.

Although I did not hear from Mr. Clinton, I heard from some of those to whom I had sent copies in Europe, and within about three weeks of my letter, the United States did take some decisive action in Bosnia, that led to the Dayton conference and a semblance of peace. It is conceivable that Mr. Clinton did read my letter. I hope that Mr. Helms reads yours. Did you put the right postage?

P.S. May I suggest that you title your editorials. It can be helpful.

Matin Yaqzan

Police should help old ladies instead of bustin' us for pot

Dear Editor

I am writing this letter in response to the "Drug Bust" (as the press calls it) regarding four young University students from St. Thomas.

The four students involved are going to school in order to build a better future for themselves. Unfortunately, the end result of this fiasco is that the students involved have been stripped of pursuing their academic careers and their future to it's full extent.

How can a "consensual crime" (one that does not harm the person or property of another) be treated in such a harsh manner? Is it that police have nothing better to do than set up petty busts such as this that involve students attending University, smoking a little pot?

Police have enough work to keep themselves busy by directing traffic, controlling violent crime, and helping lost children and little old ladies find their way home. As long as they do this, they will be respected friends of the community. However, once they start clamping down on moral issues that involve consensual crimes, they are nothing more than armed clergymen.

Exactly who is being served and who is being protected in regards to this useless case? How much government money is going to be wasted by filing charges against four students who came to University in order to learn?

-Think about it- even though it's not your future that is at stake.

Sincerely,
Travis Watters
Somewhere in cybersp@ce

Sick people suck or some people are just (sic)k II

Dear Editor

I'm really tired of people taking advantage of situations. For example: getting out of midterms, exams, term papers, etc. with flimsy excuses, just to buy some time. There are too many people doing this, and at the risk of sounding like a pre-schooler, it's plainly not fair.

I know people, very intelligent people, who make up excuses to get out of writing tests. Really lame excuses. The ridiculous part is that the professors and the Registrar buy these lame excuses and then the students get out of writing their exams. This gives them a little extra time to study, then, of course, they do better than they would have. Sometimes they even do better than the people who studied hard and wrote the exam when they were supposed to. I think that students should take responsibility if they're not doing work. If they're not prepared for a midterm or an exam, tough. Write it and do bad. Nobody should have an extra advantage over anyone else.

Unless you are legitimately sick, dying or bed-ridden, then you should do your work. If you're just some lazy ass who thinks you can beat the system, then I'd just like to say that eventually this will catch up with you.

In the faculty that I'm in, there are many students applying to get into medicine and other health-sciences fields. I just think that it's my responsibility to warn the public in general that these liars and cheats are the ones getting into these fields because they have the falsely earned marks to do so. This angers me. I know for sure that I wouldn't want a liar for a doctor. And if these students continue to lie in medical school for marks, what will they do in the real world, when a patient is on the operating table? "Oops, I didn't write that exam, I can't help you..." This is a sad situation, and if anyone knows of anyone doing this, then they should report them to the Registrar because honest people who work hard for their marks shouldn't have to compete with students like this.

Nellie Elhawary
Somewhere in cybersp@ce