

Go out and raise a little Hell

by Niki Klukas

This week on Friday, March 30, 2007, Neill House is hosting their largest charity event of the year. The event, titled Raise a Little Hell, begins at 4:30 at McConnell Hall at 19 Bailey Drive.

The goal of the day is to raise money for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Janik Petersen, incoming Neill House female social rep, explains, "We are pieing proctors and shaving heads in McConnell for the Canadian Cancer Society, the Neill House charity. The Neill House social committee is organizing the event."

House president Dustin Eisenhaur agrees: "The biggest parts of what we do with Raise a Little Hell are the pie your proctor and shave your head event in McConnell hall. We get as many proctors from the community as we can to come down and volunteer to get pied.

"They get auctioned off and we get a big crowd to come down. We set up a stage and have everyone bid on them."

It is easy for students to get involved, explains Petersen. "If you want to pie your proctor, all you have to do is bring money and we have an auction. And if you want to shave your head, you have to raise at least \$50."

She continues, "The pledge sheets are on the Neill House website at www.neillhouse.tk."

Though it's not certain just how many people they are expecting for the event, tonnes of people show up annually to see the goings-on at McConnell. Neill hopes to raise a substantial chunk of their goal, \$20,000 total, for the year. So far they have raised about \$12,000 of that.

"This is an annual tradition," says Petersen. "It has gone really well in the past. We've always raised a chunk of our charity goal on that day. This is the biggest event of our year."

To explain the traditional aspects of the event, Eisenhaur says, "It always brings in a lot of money, so primarily it is an event for the Canadian Cancer Society, and on top of that it is a tradition dating back to 1961."

In addition to proctors getting



Jonathan Hudon /The Brunswickan

pied, at least two women are shaving their heads. Laura Kaderly and Karen Nabuurs have already raised about \$1,200 in donations between the two of them.

As Eisenhaur explains, "there are two girls who are having their heads shaved and they've raised a tremendous amount of money so far. It's really incredible."

Kaderly says, "I just decided to do it in the fall. I thought it would be a really good way to raise some money and get involved."

She continues by explaining her inspiration.

"Jil Cormier [outgoing Student Union VP Student Services] did it last year and I was just so moved and inspired by what she did that I thought I'd like to do it too."

"I am excited," says Kaderly. "I have some plans for creative headwear. It will be a nice change I think,

especially for the summer."

"Jil started it last year, and Karen and I are doing it this year. Hopefully more girls will do it next year and raise a lot more money."

According to the Canadian Cancer Society, last year they raised \$127 million, more than \$43 million of which was used to fund research across Canada.

Though this is Neill House's biggest charity event, they do host others throughout the school year.

"We have a campus-wide coffee house in January. We have camping on the roof in February, and we have panhandling at the liquor store. Those are our four big ones," combined with Raise a Little Hell, explains Petersen.

Eisenhaur also mentions the annual couch-burning event for Raise a Little Hell taking place this year at 8 pm on this same upcoming Friday.

"We burn a couch in the DKT parking lot. So you can come down and take part in all the fun of this event and help raise some money."

He concludes by offering the event to the whole community: "Anyone who wants to raise \$50 can come down and shave their heads. This is one of our major fundraisers. It is tradition. It always goes well. Come on out and support the Canadian Cancer Society and have some fun."

Petersen agrees. "Everyone should come out and get involved and raise some money for Canadian Cancer Society."

Both Petersen and Eisenhaur urge students to come down to McConnell Hall at 4:30 this Friday to bid on any one of the proctors to pie and also watch the head shavings to help raise some money. The couch-burning at 8:00 will also be quite an entertaining event.

Parental contributions no longer part of N.B. loans

Change could widen gulf between rich and poor students, prof says

by William Wolfe-Wylie
CUP Atlantic Bureau Chief

SACKVILLE, N.B. (CUP) -- Students in New Brunswick no longer have to report their parents' income when applying for a student loan, but not everyone is singing the praises of more accessible student loans.

"We will also follow through on a day-one commitment by removing parental and spousal income from the assessment of New Brunswick student loans effective August 1, 2007," said Finance Minister Victor Boudreau in his 2007 budget speech last week.

"This initiative will cost the government an estimated \$7 million to implement in 2007-2008 and will help improve affordability and access to higher educational institutions for all New Brunswickers," he added.

But that's exactly what some observers are worried about. Dale Kirby, a professor of post-secondary education studies at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, fears that the change will only increase the divide between rich and poor students.

"I am skeptical of this claim," he wrote in an e-mail. "By removing parental [and] spousal income from the assessment of student loans amounts, the NB government will now be providing a greater public subsidy to those who can most afford to attend post-secondary education."

"This is neither equitable nor efficient."

Currently, parental contributions to students are calculated based on what is called the "discretionary income" of a family. A table compiled by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development allows a family to determine how much of their annual income is available to be spent on education. According to a report published by the New Brunswick Student Alliance in 2006, this amount is then deducted from what a student

is eligible to receive in the form of a provincial student loan.

"This means that the future of the student relies on the ability and/or desire of their parents to pay for their education, and hardly ensure that 'all qualified student have the opportunity to reach their educational potential,'" claimed the report.

"Denying someone access to a loan because of the choices made by their parents puts that individual at a noticeable disadvantage."

Colin Banks is the vice-president executive of the New Brunswick Student Alliance, a provincial student lobby group. He has mixed feelings on the announcement, believing that while it will certainly benefit some students, it will do nothing to address the overall issue of student debt.

"I'm really of two minds," he said. "It does nothing to solve the problem of student debt."

Providing the same benefits to all students regardless of their financial situation would benefit some way more than others, but not necessarily in the way the government is imagining.

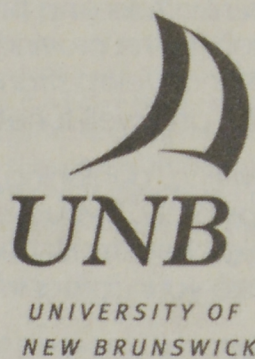
"It targets the middle class," Banks said.

Students from higher-income families, he argued, will now be able to apply for larger student loans and invest that money, placing them in an even more advantageous situation after they graduate. Meanwhile, he said, "they're taking away from the pool that could otherwise go to low-income students."

According to Banks, the \$7 million that was invested into this new program would have been better spent on targeted needs-based grants.

The elimination of parental and spousal contributions from student loan assessments is part of the Conservative government's package of promises in their fall election campaign. Accessibility of post-secondary education is one of a series of maneuvers designed to make the province more fiscally sustainable.

One dimension of that is the low skills training and literacy rate of the province. The 2007-08 budget is also boosting funding to adult literacy centres, the public education system, and local community centres.



The UNB community
is cordially invited to an
Open House
presenting the building design
and programs planned for

The Richard J. CURRIE CENTER

Tuesday, April 3, 2007
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Ballroom, Student Union Building
UNB Fredericton

Remarks: 12 Noon
Refreshments will be available

