

COMMENTS & LETTERS

eic@unb.ca • October 31, 2007

Hollow Candidates for All Hallows' Eve

ROUSING THE RABBLES

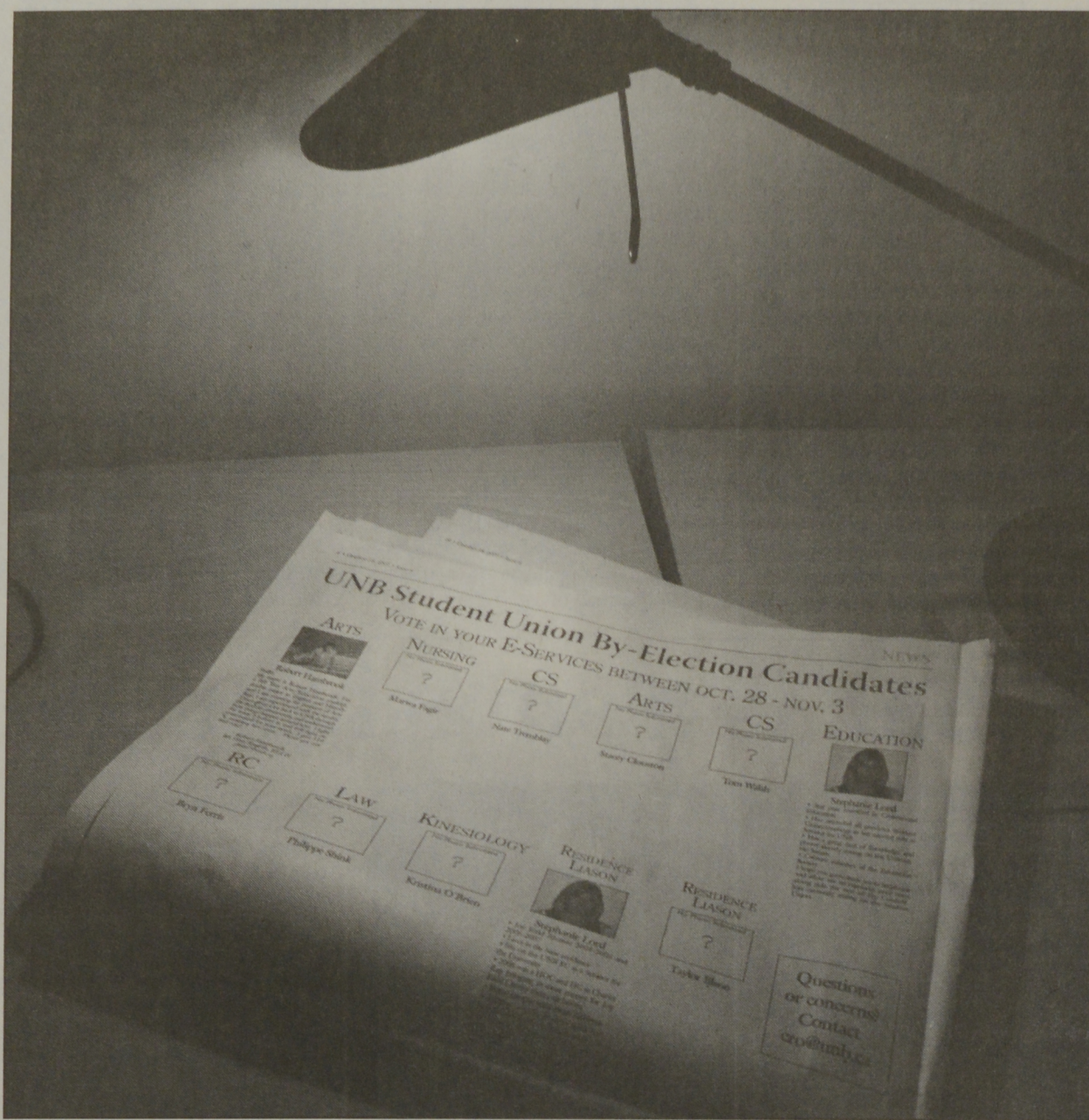
by
Nick Ouellette

Well folks the day is finally here—Halloween—and I'm sure that we've all been thinking about the great costumes we are going to wear tonight, but please, let's pry ourselves away from the celebration of Pagan rituals for just a minute and take note of another event happening right now on campus. I'm willing to bet that few of us even know about it, but by-election season in the Student Union is upon us.

Now I have to say, I have been waiting for this for months. Normally we would see candidates debate issues and put their reputations on the line as they bring policy platforms to students across campus. For those of us waiting for a federal election, this is as close it gets for now so we'll have to make do.

Last year the Union completely botched not one but two elections in different semesters. The results were thrown out altogether in the fall and the guy running the show in the winter term resigned amid questions of his competence, so we had to start it all over again. I know, it sounds pretty embarrassing for what should be the bastion of democratic exercise on campus—and it was. Actually, it was pathetic.

The third time was a charm, though, and in March we finally saw a full slate of candidates get elected. Then last month the Union spent some time getting its act together in order to avoid the same kind of mess this year, because last year left a lot to be desired. Enter a few resignations by those elected last March, and suddenly this week's by-election held great promise for those of



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us hoping the Union would find some fresh faces and new ideas.

Unfortunately, I doubt we will find either this week. Take a look at last week's Brunswickan—page 4 to be exact—and you'll see what I mean. It's the bi-annual SU candidates layout, and either eight of the ten candidates dressed up early as ghosts for Halloween, or they are simply too lazy. I'm going with the latter.

First, let's clear up something. The

Brunswickan allows candidates to have their picture taken and to submit a biography statement, both of which are published the week before voting opens. It provides candidates with an equal platform to get their name out in the community and tell voters a little bit about who they are and what they stand for. Of course, the only way this works is if the candidates actually take the time to make a stand by showing up for the photographer and writing

the biography statement.

Apparently, only two of this week's candidates were able to accomplish this. You have to wonder why, though, because the photographs were taken in the SUB at the centre of campus and in the word limit for this year's biography statements was just 75. I find it hard to believe that the eight "no show" candidates were too busy to take the 10 minutes needed to do what any respectable candidate should—say why

they are running.

The "too busy" theory is just a little bit too farfetched, but if they really didn't have the time, you have to question whether they have the time to commit to the Student Union. At the risk of repeating myself, I prefer the much more plausible theory: laziness.

That might seem a little harsh, but stop and think for a minute. Sure, we could elect these people, fill the vacant seats on Council, and feel good about the fact that we have representation from all the different faculties and residence too. But how effective would that be when these candidates couldn't be bothered to take advantage of a campaign tool that costs nothing and has the widest distribution on campus? Would they be just as absent in their duties as Councilors? Would the coordinators of Council meetings, who have real duties to attend to as executives of the Student Union, have to waste their time trying to track down these people to see if they could attend meetings only to discover that they are ultimately "no shows" again?

I'm not convinced that the answer to either of those questions is no. In fact, I am much more convinced that none of these candidates should find support in the student population at UNB and that they each deserve a No vote.

So when you log in to your e-Services elections portal this week, vote No to Marwa Fagir for Nursing rep. Don't vote for either Nate Tremblay or Tom Walsh for CS rep. Avoid Stacey Clouston for Arts rep and Bryn Ferris for RC rep. In Law, vote No to Phillippe Shink. In Kinesiology, tick off the No box next to Kristina O'Brien's name. And, if you live in residence, don't vote for Taylor Elson in the Residence Liaison race.

They may have gotten themselves on the ballot, but each of these candidates said No to telling you, through the Brunswickan, what they stand for. Without any real reason for doing so, should we simply roll over, acquiesce, and say Yes to any of them?

Nick Ouellette has served on the UNB Student Union Council and the UNB Board of Governors, and now serves on the UNB Fredericton Senate and as an Assistant Don in UNB's Residence Community.

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This thanksgiving, Turkey might strike back!

by Kumaran Thillainadarajah

Dear Editor:

Tensions in Northern Iraq grow, as its fowl feathered friends to the north, threaten to launch a preemptive strike on supposed terrorist elements in

Northern Iraq. Now sure, the supposed terrorist group in question is the PKK, (a well known group that both the European Union and U.S consider awful and terrible in everyway) and sure they have launched over 200 attacks in turkey with casualties estimated at thirty seven thousand since 1984. But is that enough reason to invade the less then sovereign state of Iraq?

It was quite the sensation when the Americans did it the first time, but now its just getting old and with rumors that Iran may be gazing rather creepily over

at its neighbors to the east. It's about time that America, the moral authority on invading smaller nations, stepped in and put an end to this invading craze that is literally taking over the Middle East. The white house has made it clear to Turkey that it is not to lay a feather on the PKK in Iraq.

This situation seems somewhat of a bit of a contradiction, considering this is the same American administration that invaded Iraq to fight the imminent terrorist threat on the U.S. This is also the same American administration that gave approval to Israel to use any force it deemed necessary to defend itself from neighboring regions that were deemed to be harboring terrorists. Who can forget Lebanon last summer; where thousands of civilians were killed and tens of thousands were left homeless, thanks to Israel and America's approval. Anyone can see that these situations have nothing in common, except EVERYTHING.

It should also be pointed out that the Bush Administration said any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime. And that since America is currently occupying Iraq. It is in effect playing host to the PKK in the north and should be considered a hostile regime and be prepared to be invaded by itself.

Perhaps it's about time that we put an end to these double standards on nations, and agree that's what's good for the goose is good for the gander or the turkey as the case may be. Let Turkey and Iran or any other nations interested in boosting energy revenues, I mean fighting terrorism to come on down to Iraq and duke it out in this nation that seemingly has not suffered enough already.

Top 100 Canadian Albums is just fine without chart-toppers

by Nicole Hunt
the Charlatan (Carleton University)

OTTAWA (CUP) --The minute Bob Mersereau's The Top 100 Canadian Albums hit bookshelves, arguments about what did or did not make the cut began.

Some criticized the list as a stock playlist of rock radio stations. Others decried the ranking of Alanis Morissette's Jagged Little Pill or Arcade Fire's Funeral (ranked sixth and ninth, respectively), or whether it was necessary to have eight Neil Young albums in the top 50 (the answer is yes).

Instead of bickering over whether Alanis deserves to be ahead of Rush, let's celebrate something we can all agree on: the big Canadian musicians who weren't even on this list.

That's right, nine-time Juno winners Nickelback are nowhere to be seen. And it's not because the list only features old artists.

True, 36 of the entries were released in the 1970s, but 24 are from the 1990s and 10 are from this decade. Arcade Fire, Feist, k.d. lang, k-os and The Sadies all made the list with 2004 releases, the same year Nickelback won Junos for Group of the Year and Fan's Choice.

Why didn't they make the list? According to the 600 journalists, DJs, musicians and retailers polled, they just haven't produced a great album.

And yet, their three major album releases along with their eight singles have all gone number one in Canada.

While there are others, Nickelback is a perfect example of a Canadian band achieving domestic success because it has a major label pushing clichéd, accessible music that sounds like a safe choice for stations looking to meet their Canadian content requirements.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission requires 35 per cent of the music played between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. be Canadian. At about 12 songs an hour, that's 50 Canadian songs per day.

Most of the new artists featured in Mersereau's book are not popular radio choices. Feist, The Joel Plaskett Emergency, The Weakerthans and Constantines all have dedicated fan bases in Canada, but are considered indie fare. By which I mean, your grandmother and your eight-year-old cousin probably haven't heard of them.

On the other hand, Canadian artists who have remained at the top of the charts, such as Céline Dion, Avril Lavigne, Nelly Furtado and of course, Nickelback are conspicuously absent.

Is it possible the 600 people polled were all middle-aged white men who spend their days listening to Neil Young's Harvest (the number one album) on repeat, and wouldn't know good new music if it knocked over their bottle of Rogaine?

It's possible. Could it be that the thousands of Canadians who purchased a Simple Plan album have just failed to understand what good music is?

Could be. But what's more probable is the commission's restrictions on the 35 per cent of what broadcasters get to air has forged the success of mediocre talents with little to offer besides vague teen angst and catchy melodies.

And so, Mersereau's biggest achievement isn't having chosen the best Canadian album to put on the list, but having kept the regulated filler off of it.

Dr. Richard E. Lee
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(2 buildings past Harvey's Hamburgers)
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4. Other than normal writing instruments (such as pens, pencils, rulers and erasers), candidates must have the explicit permission of the examiner to use or have access to any examination aid such as textbooks, notebooks, tables, formulae, memoranda, other electronic or mechanical aids and the like. UNB does not permit the use of personal communication devices during exams (unless the candidates have the explicit permission of the examiner)—in particular, devices that could potentially be used to communicate with others while writing an exam or play back prerecorded video, sound or text during an exam. Such devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, pagers, text messaging devices, personal recording devices, PDAs, personal computers including laptops, certain types of calculators and electronic translators.
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