

Igniting change

Supplementary garbage pickup programs on College Hill in order to prevent abundant cases of arson

HILARY PAIGE SMITH
THE BRUNSWICKAN

The discarded couches of College Hill can rest their poor, upholstered hearts. The arson rate is going down.

In previous years, Orientation Week has been greeted by the volume of arson-related crimes, notably those on Graham Ave. properties. While students are moving in and summer residents are moving out, objects such as mattresses and couches that are no longer needed tend to get left out on the curb. This action, unknown or unimportant to residents, is prohibited by New Brunswick law. Communities adjacent to the universities are already subject to some student partying and all it encompasses. The last thing they need is the eyesore of garbage left to fester on the streets.

"There was the supplementary waste pick-up program that was carried out at the end of the last academic year and the beginning of this year," says Jon O'Kane, Vice President External of the Student Union. "The way that's structured is there is actually an independent contractor who essentially patrols the streets looking for garbage and if there is something large like a couch or something that is out on the street he'll pick it up and take it with him to the trash."

This program, though it has reduced the number of arson-related incidents on College Hill from eleven incidents last Orientation Week to just one this year, requires no effort on the part of the community, says O'Kane.

"That is not the best way of facilitating that program," he says. "There are other aspects to it

that you want the community to get involved in and make it more community driven.

"We're trying to facilitate a used goods pick up and sale that will replace the supplementary pick up. That is going to happen this April during and after exams. We're going to work with a community partner who will help us with the transport of any used goods that are left behind.

"Instead of just leaving it out on the streets where somebody might just walk by, take it or light it on fire, or whatever they want, the charity organization will help us pick that up and deliver to a central location, ideally on campus, where we're going to have almost a flea market of unwanted goods and all of the proceeds and unwanted goods are going to be donated to the partner that initially helped us transport the goods."

The current supplementary garbage pick-up program is funded not only by UNB and St. Thomas University, but also by the city. A partnership, called the Mayors Working Group on Community and University Relations, has representatives from both Student Unions, as well as members of the city. For the future program, the community partners will take care of pick-up and the Student Unions will take charge of the sale.

This program, though born from laziness and poor housekeeping, appears to be working. O'Kane is optimistic that results will continue to be positive.

"Even starting off this year, the police and fire department, their initial reports are quite optimistic in the sense that measurements and indicators from last year compared to this year are much better. That's even for numbers of people on the streets and people they've had to stop and essentially enforce some rules on. Those numbers have all gone down. Accounts of arson have also gone down, hopefully correlated to the supplementary pick-up program. Overall the year is starting on a very good note."

With the supplementary pick-up resuming in its new form in April 2009, O'Kane is hopeful the program will continue to ignite change.



Parking spaces become scarce as UNB makes way for the building of the Currie Center. The building will be 139,150 square feet and will cost 50 million dollars.

A tale of parking, or lack thereof

HILARY PAIGE SMITH
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Students who drive to campus do not have to spend time poring over bus schedules and digging for bus fare. Unfortunately, as UNB's latest project undergoes construction they may have to spend more time hovering for an available parking space.

Construction for the Richard J. Currie Center began this July and is the largest single capital building project in Fredericton history. The building will be 139,150 square feet and will cost \$50 million. Despite the building's key role in the coming years with the Faculty of Kinesiology, right now it is costing student drivers 50 parking spots at

the Lady Beaverbrook Gym.

Reg Jerrett, Director of Security and Traffic for UNB, says that "The Currie Center is an exciting project for UNB and the larger community. The sacrifices that are being made from a parking perspective are temporary, but the long term benefits that the Currie Center will provide and the state of the art complex that will result make it all worthwhile."

Though benefits are in the near future, it does not change the frustration and complications that arise while students are driving aimlessly, wasting ever more expensive gasoline and making themselves late for class as they hunt for vacant white lines.

Jerrett, as well as the powers that be at the university, is aware that the Currie Center's building poses a problem for students with vehicles and commends them for

the "support and understanding they have shown during these exciting times for UNB and the larger community."

Measures are also being taken by the city to lessen some of the problems caused by construction. "The city is expected to have University Ave. open to traffic by the end of September and this will allow vehicles access to the parking lot next to the Lady Beaverbrook Gym. This will alleviate some of the parking issues at the gym as people could park there and walk to the gym."

As to whether or not the lack of parking will create problems in the winter months, Jerrett believes that the problems will not be greater than in previous years and certainly not concentrated near the construction area, "the majority of the fender benders that we do have occur in the parking lot at the Student Union building. That

facility has not changed any. You're still going to get the same number of vehicles trying to park there."

The university has roughly 3000 parking spots in total, 450 of which are designated solely for student use.

In addition to that there are 1600 parking spots which are designated for general use where students with parking permits are allowed. Over the span of a university year there is an average of 1400 parking permits sold.

According to basic mathematics, there should be ample parking space for students. However, some places are more convenient than others and getting to class on time may require a little less hitting of a snooze button and a little more trudging up College Hill. If students get sore walking, at least the Currie Center will soon be churning out some of the future physiotherapists of Canada.

Who let the dogs out?

SARAH RATCHFORD
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Residents of Fredericton who walk their dogs on the city's sports fields have another thing coming.

The City has made a bylaw amendment to ban dogs from all sports fields, public swimming areas, and playgrounds.

Councillor David Kelly, chair of the City's Community Services Committee, says "We just don't want people bringing their animals out on the areas where children are playing."

Spectators are still free to bring their dogs to events they are attending at the fields and parks.

"It's important that the public knows it's only the fields themselves" that dogs are not permitted to be on, he says.

Areas that the city wishes to be kept canine-free will be clearly labelled with signage.

Fredericton dog owners expressed mixed views on the subject.

"As long as you pick up after your dog it's fine, and I always do," says dog-owner Mahin Rahnmemon.

She says she usually walks her dog on the field at Fredericton High School unless people are actually playing sports on it at the time.

Even though she is responsible and makes sure to pick up after her dog Nell, she is being penalized by those who are not quite as conscientious.

Nell himself remained stonily silent on the subject, refusing to provide comment.

In spite of the difficulties created

by the bylaw, Communications representative for the city Wayne Knorr says the move was necessary.

He says that since feces and urine of animals can carry diseases such as ringworm which can be transferred over to humans, children should be protected from coming in contact with it.

Corey Elois is also a dog-owner in the area. While on the one hand he understands the reasoning behind the bylaw, he is concerned about the decrease in green space caused by it.

Elois usually walks his dog Charlie in Odell Park, but he also plays Frisbee with him at a local soccer field, an option which is now closed to him.

Like Rahnmemon, Elois also makes a habit of cleaning up after his pet.

"It's your pet; it's part of your family," he says.

A good observation, considering the fact that today, many people choose to have dogs in lieu of children.

"There are only so many spaces open where you can let your dog run," says Elois.

Kelly said the safety of the city's children makes up "150% why" the city made the bylaw amendment.



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

Polls open Oct. 12

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damage to the integrity of the Student Union, and "where there's the ability to hold a byelection, not holding one can damage the Student Union's integrity," he said at council.

"The core issue is democracy," said Ouellette, "which the Student Union has tried to preserve."

O'Kane himself said he was fully supportive of the byelection. He remained optimistic throughout the meeting, stating that he plans to run for the position.

"I will continue to carry out the mandate until I can hopefully fulfill the position after the byelection," he said at council.

Renaissance College Representative Matt Abbott expressed much concern regarding the resignation of his classmate Tim Ross.

Abbott said at council that "not being able to be VP External because of academic pressures is concerning."

Students at Renaissance College, an interdisciplinary leadership college at UNB, must do an international internship after their second year. Abbott said students should not be prevented from participation in SU activities because of that.

Abbott, too, stated he was in favour of VP External being up for election. He says, however, that he does want O'Kane to run.

Student Union President Bethany Vail expressed mixed views on the subject.

When Tim Ross resigned, it fell

on Vail's shoulders to ensure that the position of VP External was filled as soon as possible.

The position is an extremely important one to the union, as the person who fills it functions as the face of UNB in the community.

Vail was transparent in her support for O'Kane.

"From a personal standpoint, I would love if we could simply ratify VP O'Kane tonight," said Vail at Council.

Part of the VP External's job description is to present the Student Union's standpoint on the upcoming federal election. Running in the by-election will "chew up a lot of his time," said Vail - time that he could be spending doing his job as VP.

In spite of this sentiment, Vail admitted that Griffith brought up important points regarding democracy.

She maintained a diplomatic attitude throughout the meeting, and stated that "really, I do believe in democracy, and I believe that students have a right" to elect their representatives.

Thus, the motion for a byelection, including for the position of VP External, was carried unanimously, with O'Kane having recorded his abstention.

Nominations for the byelection begin on Friday Sept. 19, and close on Sept. 26 at 4 p.m. Following this there will be a candidate meeting, after which campaigning can begin.

Polls will open on Oct. 12 at 12:01 a.m. and close on Oct. 17 at 11:59 p.m.

Corrections

Jordan Graham was VP External of the UNB Student Union in 2007-08. Incorrect information appeared on page A1 of the Sept. 10 issue of The Brunswickan.

Red Bull is an independent company and not a subsidiary of Coca-Cola. Incorrect information appeared on page A5 of the Sept. 10 issue of The Brunswickan.

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