

Hats off to 2008 grads Food for the woman's soul



The University of New Brunswick's newest graduates are seen lining up in the quad on Thursday, Oct. 23 to prepare for the fall convocation ceremony. The Brunswickan congratulates these new alumni and wishes them success in future endeavours.

HILARY PAIGE SMITH
THE BRUNSWICKAN

On Oct. 24 and 25, women from all walks of life gathered for the 19th annual "Nurturing Ourselves" conference on women's health and well-being.

The conference was born from the ideas of Penny Erikson, a former Dean of UNB's Faculty of Nursing, and Marilyn Noble, from the Centre for Extended Learning. The aim of the conference is to promote women's health and well-being, as well as provide an escape from day-to-day life.

This year's conference theme was "She who laughs...lasts" and the theme was highlighted with a presentation by Meg Stoper, a Canadian comedienne and registered nurse. She has shared the stage with the likes of Ray Romano and Ellen Degeneres. Her presentation topic was "Humour is one size fits all." The comedy theme continued throughout the weekend with a comedic act by presenters, Granny G and Beulah, two senior citizens who provide a light-hearted and insightful perspective on aging and feminism.

Saturday was full of enriching workshops covering every topic from journaling and self-expression, to a class called "All That Jazz," exploring the benefits of exercise through jazz dancing.

Jennifer Phillips, chair of the Nurturing Ourselves Conference Planning Committee, explains the goals of the workshops, "The underlying theme is tools for life. So when they come, every workshop is interactive and they walk away with some sort of tool. It might be a tool to have a positive attitude or it might be a tool on how to identify a healthy or unhealthy relationship. There is a lot of variety and different things, but the intent is that women go home with tools that they can use in their day-to-day lives."

Phillips feels that the workshops are beneficial to women who attend because they teach necessary life skills and focus on the self.

"The day is about nurturing, so it is about taking care of yourself. We have all sorts of workshops and events and activities for women to take care of themselves in body, mind, spirit, emotions, everything," Phillips says.

The conference room was lined with booths promoting products for health, beauty and happiness. Mary Kay beauty, Xocai "Ultimate Antioxidant" Health Chocolate, Green cleaning products and Westminster Books

all had representation. There were also booths selling locally made jewelry, organizational services and international cooking tips.

The conference, though it seeks to promote health and well-being, also seeks to change women's minds about issues that directly affect them. Phillips says that it is not always easy for women to break from their belief systems and the ideals they have been taught through society and their families. She notes that women, as they grow older and others, as they attend the conference learn to shed their beliefs and come into themselves.

"There are a number of workshops that we run that enable women to see that maybe they might do something a little different with their lives. They might take on a different role, or a different attitude out of coming and those can be transformational types of workshops."

The conference room was filled to the brim with women. There were women absorbing the atmosphere alone, there were women laughing and posing for photographs with friends and there were many volunteers, attending to guests and setting up for their next workshops.

Regardless of who they were, or where they came from, women at the conference bonded together, nurturing themselves.

rUNBuddies: Going beyond run day

CAMERON MITCHELL
THE BRUNSWICKAN

In Atlantic Canada one in eight women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year, and for rUNBuddies captain Nicola Cassidy that number is far too high. That is why the UNB Human Resources employee started rUNBuddies along with Computer Science faculty employee Heather Smith three years ago. Since then, the rUNBuddies have raised \$323,000 for breast cancer research and awareness.

The team works on more than just the Run for the Cure day - it's a year-round affair.

"The rUNBuddies is a team made up of faculty, staff, families and friends of UNB. It was just a way to bring together all the little teams that were at UNB and make one big team that would give us a central place where we could organize all the events," Cassidy explained. "We never in our wildest dreams thought it'd be so successful."

The rUNBuddies bring a sense of community to UNB. They bring students, staff, and the community together, all working towards finding a cure for breast cancer.

Every year, one of the team's biggest fundraisers is the CIBC Run for the Cure. This year, Cassidy organized the rUNBuddies participation in the event by herself because Smith has since graduated.

The Run for the Cure took place on October 5, and the rUNBuddies raised \$25,000 for breast cancer research. Several students participated, including students from the Lady Dunn and Neville/Jones residence, as well as the entire Women's basketball team.

"It's just phenomenal the people that you see on run day. It's a sea of pink everywhere, and it's really an emotional event," Cassidy continued. "And this year in particular was special for me because this will be my last year as team captain."

"From the fundraising aspect alone it's an absolutely incredible event and it's an incredible experience. But one of my main goals has been to create

awareness," Cassidy said.

The rUNBuddies also took home the CIBC Corporate Spirit Team Award for the third straight year at this year's Run for the Cure. The rUNBuddies have won the award every year that they've been in existence.

"(The Corporate Spirit Team Award) is an award for the team that raises the most amount of money at their run site, and we've been very fortunate to have won that award for the last three years," Cassidy beamed. "As you can tell, I'm really proud of the team!"

The rUNBuddies also raise money with everything from bake sales and golf events, to truly unique events like the Running of the Ducks. In this event, several numbered rubber ducks race down a water runway. People purchase a numbered duck and the winning duck gamers the recipient a prize. This year, Lady Dunn took over this event, which took place on Saturday, Oct. 4 in conjunction with Run for the Cure.

"We also participated with the Women's basketball team for a Think Pink basketball game. That was last December and we're actually going to be doing it again this

January," Cassidy explained. This event is a national initiative by the women's coaches to raise money for breast cancer. "It's quite amazing to see all the teams dressed in pink, and the coaches all dressed in pink! And all the money raised all goes to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation."

For the past three years, the rUNBuddies have been an integral part of the UNB campus and the Fredericton community. But with her time at UNB coming to an end, and her desire to focus on the Fredericton Run Committee, Cassidy will be stepping down as team captain next year.

With all of the positive things that the rUNBuddies do throughout the Fredericton community, Cassidy hopes that someone will step up and take over next year. "I hope that someone will pick up the torch and run with it," Nicola said.

After another successful year at the Run for a Cure, the rUNBuddies have once again demonstrated their unwavering support for breast cancer research and awareness. More information can be found at rUNBuddies.unbf.ca.

NB Nurses negotiating for job improvements

SARAH RATCHFORD
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Patients seeking care during New Brunswick's flu season of the winter months may have a harder time than usual this year.

At last week's annual general meeting (AGM) of the New Brunswick Nurses' Union, members representing the province's 6200 unionized nurses gave its negotiating committee specific instructions.

The committee will return to the negotiating table Nov. 4 in an attempt to find an agreement for members of the Union working in hospitals as well as both public and community mental health.

If discussions do not prove satisfactory to the nurses, a strike vote will be held.

At the Union's annual meeting in Moncton, the negotiations committee was given a mandate to make improvements on two main issues.

The Union feels that improvements are needed in compensation for nurses working shifts and weekends, and that a commitment is needed from the Department of Health for "a funded partnership agreement to address the retention and recruitment issues faced by nurses," said a recent press release.

If a strike does occur, nurses on picket duty will be supported by a percentage of designated nurses' salaries. Over 200 union leaders at the AGM approved this system as an emergency resolution.

Nurses have been fighting for certain matters of the workplace for quite some time.

"Nurses are tired of working short

handed, overtime, and double shifts. By rejecting the latest tentative agreement they are sending a clear signal that work life and workload issues must be addressed, enabling nurses to provide quality care that patients need and deserve. Only more registered nurses will resolve our working conditions," said Marilyn Quinn, president of the Nurses' Union, in the press release.

"In order to achieve a tentative agreement which will be ratified by members, I need to be assured by government that concrete action will be taken immediately. Our nurses need to know that relief is in sight," she continued.

As nursing is quite an important profession in maintaining the health of the population at large, the government seems to be willing to work something out which will be beneficial to all parties.

Sarah Ketchenson of the New Brunswick office of Human Resources said that the government is "very focused on getting back to the table on Nov. 4. We're seeking a resolution acceptable to both parties."

When asked whether she felt a strike to be likely or not, Ketchenson said that it won't be known "until we do the work and see where we're at. All we can do is go in with an open mind and see what the union has to say."

Meeting financial requirements is more difficult for anyone these days, and Ketchenson makes reference to this in saying that "since we're in challenging economic times, we are faced with the challenge of meeting the nurses' needs while remaining financially responsible."

Results of the Nov. 4 discussions will be made available after that date.

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