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Shelter loses staff, stays open

NEWS DEPARTMENT
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Interpersonal employee conflicts within the Fredericton Homeless Men's Shelter led to a temporary closure last Tuesday.

The shelter is open 23 hours a day, seven days a week. It closes between roughly 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. each day so that clients may eat lunch at the nearby Fredericton Community Kitchen.

Conflict began with the termination of one employee on the morning of Jan. 27, shortly followed by the resignation of a part-time employee.

Brian Duplisses, the Executive Director of the shelter, says the establishment closed earlier than normal for lunch on this day for safety reasons.

About half of the shelter's clients were in the building at the time and were asked to leave temporarily to return after lunch.

The remaining employees at this time agreed to work longer shifts in order to better accommodate their clients. Another employee resigned the following day. Duplisses says the shelter worked to make sure its daily operations were not hindered.

The shelter has been housing 40 clients every night for the past few weeks, he says. A security company has come forward to provide assistance and the director noted that they have been "quite generous" with the shelter.

The number of volunteers at the shelter has also increased considerably. Duplisses says that members of the board of directors for the shelter have pitched in, as well as some of the employees of Grace House, Fredericton's women's shelter, to help with some administrative duties. He also included that some of the shelter's clients are helping out.

"It's been really heartwarming, the number of clients (who've helped out). Many of the clients help around

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Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

Premier Shawn Graham gave the 2009 State of the Province address on Thursday, Jan. 29. He says last year's Action Plan on PSE is still in full swing, with accessibility and affordability at the forefront.

Moving forward with the Action Plan

SARAH RATCHFORD
THE BRUNSWICKAN

The world's economic situation is hitting home, said Premier Shawn Graham at the State of the Province speech last week.

Graham delivered the annual State of the Province speech on Thursday, Jan. 29. He addressed the public from UNB's Aiken Centre.

Graham zeroed in on a number of factors relating to the current state of affairs here in New Brunswick. The present economic situation stands at the forefront of his concerns.

"As the [Finance] minister has stated, the province is facing a large deficit in 2009-

2010. That said, our government remains firmly committed to fiscal responsibility, and it is our intent to return to balanced budgets as quickly as the state of the economy allows us to do so," he promised.

The Premier also discussed last year's Action Plan for Post-Secondary Education. The plan, released last June, included a number of efforts the provincial government hopes to pursue to enhance the affordability and accessibility of PSE in the province.

Graham explained that a Forum of University Presidents and College Executive Directors has been established. This goal of this group is to "collaborate on improved student accessibility, the development of a provincial credit transfer system, improved research and graduate studies, increased foreign student recruitment, and improved applied learning and training.

"We are addressing affordability by developing strategies to help students better finance their education and reduce their debt loads," the premier said.

Graham also stated that universities and community colleges will benefit from \$160 million in capital investments over the next two years.

Community colleges are in a time of great influx, he said.

"By April 2010, the community college system will be autonomous from government, with two independent structures respecting linguistic duality in our educational system," Graham said.

In 2008-09, 440 new community college seats were established. An additional

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Federal budget to help UNB

SARAH RATCHFORD
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Along with \$60 million in provincial funding bestowed last fall to New Brunswick universities, the federal government announced last week that an additional \$2 billion has been allocated Canadian post-secondary education institutions for the maintenance of infrastructure.

From that \$2 billion, \$1.4 billion has been devoted to universities, with the rest going to colleges. The money is to be spent over two years.

This is good news for UNB, where current deferred maintenance costs are estimated at \$135 million.

"The provincial money needs to be spent by 2011," says Dan Murray, VP Finance at UNB.

The same goes for the federal dollars, he believes, but he's still unsure.

Murray says that not as much is known about the federal funding as provincial, "because we haven't been receiving criteria. We're assuming it'll be similar criteria to the provincial and go towards the same kind of upgrades and improvements."

The provincial funding, he says, cannot be used to create new buildings, but must be used for maintenance and upkeep of existing infrastructure.

Murray hopes that UNB will receive close to \$50 million from the two sources over the next two years to tackle its maintenance projects.

Plans are already in the works for the funding to upgrade UNB's growing deferred maintenance list.

"There's some stuff that's pretty hardcore infrastructure renewal," he says. Projects cited include fixing electrical problems, roofs, windows,

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SAT
FEB
7TH

SATURDAY

STUDENTS WORKING FOR STUDENTS SINCE 1970
Social Club

DJ BLY
LIME 2



Pitcher of Draft \$6.50 - Liquor Pitcher \$6.50 - Large Nachos \$6.50
Prices increase by \$1.00 every hour. Special Starts at 9:00pm