

OBAMA-NATION

The Cord reports on Barack Obama's Inauguration ... **PAGE 14**

RIGHT REFEREEING

Positive changes made to women's hockey officiating ... **PAGE 21**

INTER-NETWORKING

Profiling a variety of alternative online social networks available to Canadians ... **PAGES 16-17**

Volume 49 Issue 20

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2009

www.cordweekly.com

Sue sexes up Waterloo

Laurier got its very own 'sexy time' when Sue Johanson, famed carnal connoisseuse, returned to the Theatre Auditorium last Wednesday night

CARLY LEWIS
STAFF WRITER

Whispers of "she's so adorable" flew around Laurier's Theatre Auditorium last Monday night as Sue Johanson took the stage - but her presentation was anything but cute.

The 78-year-old "sexpert" spent almost two hours talking to Laurier students about her self-proclaimed favourite subject: sex.

Invited back for an encore visit to Laurier (she was last here in the winter of 2008) by the Laurier Student Alumni Association (LSA), Johanson was just as comfortable as ever when it came to discussing masturbation, faking orgasms and the art of fellatio.

The LSA started off the evening by presenting a \$1,500 cheque to Planned Parenthood - an organization that Johanson was once a part of - and to whom some of the proceeds of Johanson's visit were donated. In fact, Johanson began her career as the grandmother guru of all things sex when she opened To-

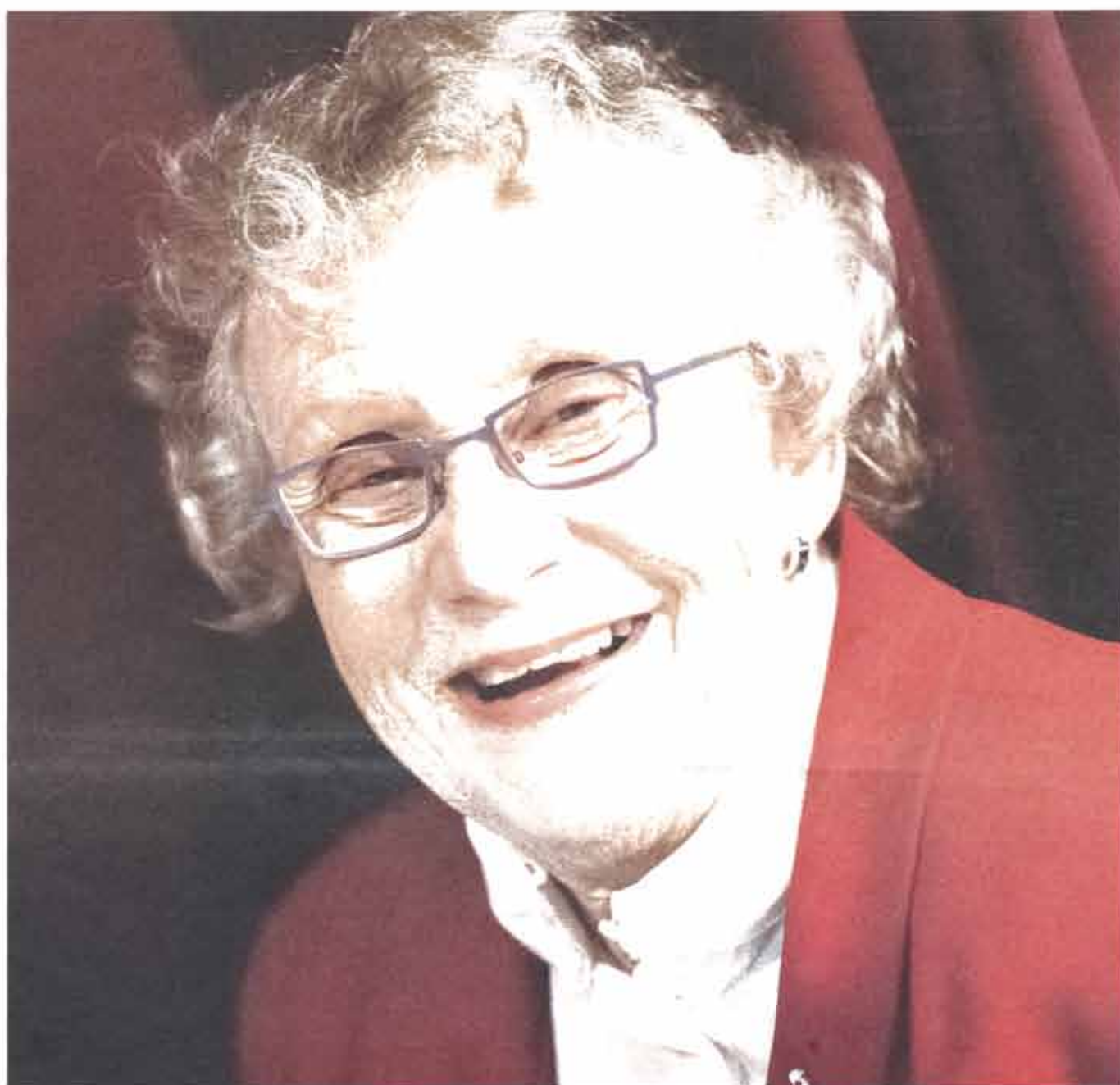
ronto's first free birth control clinic back in the '70s. She is a registered nurse, and attributes a great deal of her sexual comfort level to this experience.

Johanson says she also gained this comfort through many aspects of her life: "By being married. By having kids. By being a nurse. By running a clinic and by just learning so much about it and realizing that there's really nothing to be embarrassed about."

"And age," continued Johanson. "Age has a lot to do with it. You can't embarrass me now." That's a good thing, since Johanson made it clear very early on in her presentation that when it comes to sex, "talking about it is far more difficult than doing it."

Johanson has plenty of experience talking about sex on *The Sunday Night Sex Show*, *Talk Sex With Sue* - the most successful sexuality phone-in show in television history - and her radio talk show on Toronto's classic rock station Q107.

- SEE SEX, PAGE 10



YUSUF #10WA

SENIOR CITIZEN - Popular sex expert Sue Johanson last visited Laurier in January 2008.

BlackBerry pilot project for MBAs

Smartphone device may become integrated into business and economics program at Laurier

LINDA GIVETASH
STAFF WRITER

Wilfrid Laurier University's School of Business and Economics has launched an initiative to provide over 100 incoming MBA students in fall 2009 with a BlackBerry and data plan through Rogers Wireless integrated into the academic program.

The initiative is completely unrelated to Jim Basillie being presented with Laurier's 21st Outstanding Business Leader award. Rather, it was inspired by a program at Mexico's Tecnológico de Monterrey launched in August 2008 at its Santa Fe and Mexico City campuses.

The program at Monterrey in-

corporated the use of BlackBerry Pearls into various first-year programs with the help of Grupo Iusacell, the third largest mobile operator in Mexico.

Tec de Monterrey moved 30 percent of their curriculum onto the BlackBerry, as well as integrating administrative functions such as course selection.

"We're going to get as much of the content for the course materials downloaded to format that works on the BlackBerry and then start to enhance that," explained Ginny Dybenko, dean of the Laurier School of Business and Economics.

- SEE BLACKBERRY, PAGE 5



ALEX HAYTER

Board nominations re-opened

WLUSU Board of Directors nominations set to close Wednesday at noon

REBECCA VASLUIANU
NEWS EDITOR

Nominations closed today at noon for the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union (WLUSU) Board of Directors (BOD) after they were re-opened for seven days last Wednesday due to a shortfall in nominees.

The decision was announced at last Wednesday's All Candidates Meeting by Elections Appeals

Committee Chair Asif Bacchus. At the time, the necessary 15 director applications had been submitted; two, however, were handed in late.

According to Chief Returning Officer (CRO) Jayne Thompson, the late applicants took the issue to the elections appeals committee.

"The appeals committee decided not to hear their appeals just because we had already made the decision that if it's late then it's

late," said Thompson.

With only 13 valid nominations packages submitted, nominations were re-opened as per BOD policy, which states that if fewer than 15 people hand in nominations packages by the deadline, nominations would be re-opened for seven days during which candidates for the position would not be allowed to campaign.

- SEE BOARD, PAGE 2

THE CORD WEEKLY

The tie that binds since 1926

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I had to suck really hard to get it to come up then it went straight to the back of my throat."

- Special Projects Editor Laura Carlson, explaining the challenge presented by the bubbles in her bubble tea.

WORD OF THE WEEK

Gloaming - Twilight; dusk.

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COLOPHON

The Cord Weekly is the official student newspaper of the Wilfrid Laurier University community.

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Preamble to The Cord Constitution

The Cord will keep faith with its readers by presenting news and expressions of opinions comprehensively, accurately and fairly.

The Cord believes in a balanced and impartial presentation of all relevant facts in a news report, and of all substantial opinions in a matter of controversy.

The staff of *The Cord* shall uphold all commonly held ethical conventions of journalism. When an error of omission or of commission has occurred, that error shall be acknowledged promptly.

When statements are made that are critical of an individual, or an organization, we shall give those affected the opportunity to reply at the earliest time possible.

Ethical journalism requires impartiality, and consequently conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest will be avoided by all staff.

The only limits of any newspaper are those of the world around it, and so *The Cord* will attempt to cover its world with a special focus on Wilfrid Laurier University, and the community of Kitchener-Waterloo, and with a special ear to the concerns of the students of Wilfrid Laurier University. Ultimately, *The Cord* will be bound by neither philosophy, nor geography in its mandate.

The Cord has an obligation to foster freedom of the press and freedom of speech. This obligation is best fulfilled when debate and dissent are encouraged, both in the internal workings of the paper, and through *The Cord's* contact with the student body.

The Cord will always attempt to do what is right, with fear of neither repercussions, nor retaliation. The purpose of the student press is to act as an agent of social awareness, and so shall conduct the affairs of our newspaper.



ALEX HAYTER

ALL CANDIDATES - Election information was presented last week.

Nominations close today

Candidates will only have one week to campaign due to newly introduced elections policy

-FROM BOARD, COVER

The policy in question was drafted by this year's Elections Policy Review Committee (EPRC) under the BOD that was chaired by Michael Lockhart.

According to Lockhart, the policy was in response to the events during WLUSU elections in 2007. Due to a shortfall in Board candidates, the nominees who applied by the deadline were acclaimed and a Special General Meeting was held to elect the remaining Board members.

"IT ALMOST SEEMED LIKE [GETTING 100 SIGNATURES] WAS ANOTHER HOOP FOR THEM TO JUMP THROUGH."

- Saad Aslam, WLUSU director

Lockhart explains that there were fundamental problems with this outcome, stating, "When we looked at that type of situation in the committee we wanted either a fully acclaimed Board of 15 or a fully elected Board of 15. From where I stood there was a bit of a question of legitimacy if you had some members of the Board who were acclaimed and some were elected."

As a result, nominations were extended by exactly seven days, allowing BOD candidates to begin campaigning today until the Annual General Meeting - election day - on February 5.

Lockhart suggests that this policy created by the EPRC to extend nominations may have been too "rigid," as the weeklong extension resulted in candidates having a limited time to campaign.

The issue of timelines was raised during Friday's meeting of the current BOD, during which directors voted to keep Board elections on the same day as the rest, allowing candidates just over a week to campaign - less than the traditional two-week period.

As well, the BOD voted in favour of keeping the Brantford Open Forum planned for yesterday on its original date. As a result, individuals who handed in their nominations packages for the BOD or had any intention of doing so by today's deadline were allowed to go to the

forum but were not recognized as official candidates.

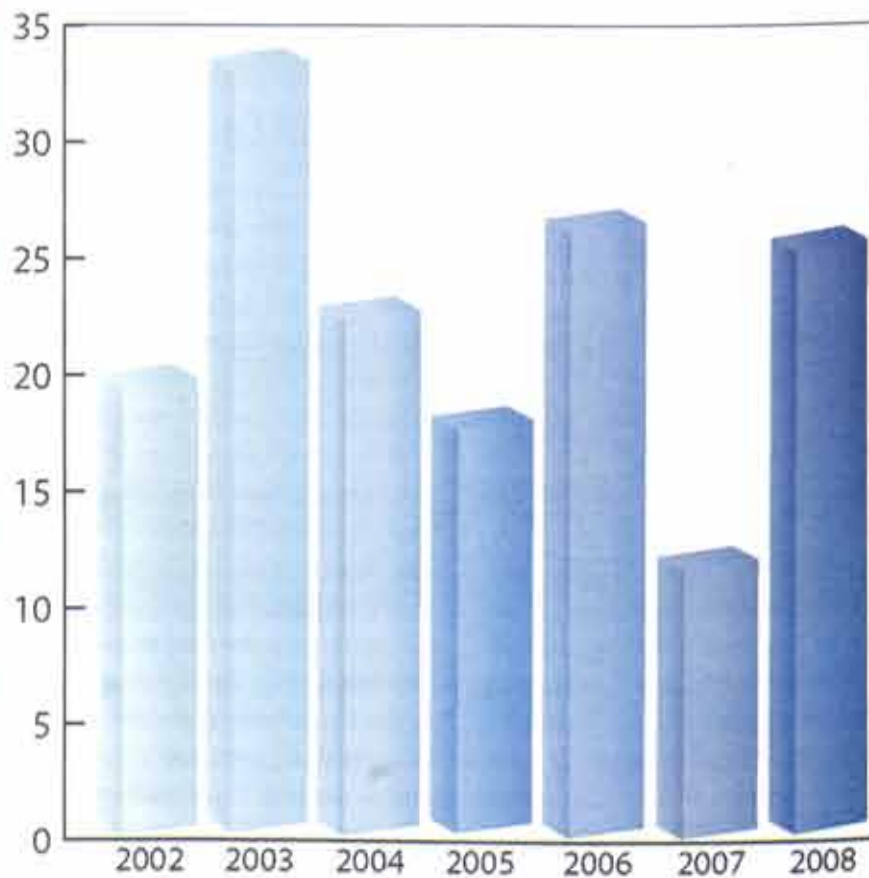
At Friday's meeting, Director Saad Aslam suggested a possible cause for the shortfall in nominees.

Aslam explained that after speaking to several students, he became aware that the EPRC's new policy asking BOD nominees to collect 100 signatures instead of the previous amount of 25 acted as a roadblock for several applicants.

"It almost seemed like it was another hoop for them to jump through that was almost useless for them because they weren't even campaigning on their ideas; they were just gathering student numbers and student signatures of people," said Aslam. "I know of at least two people who it hindered."

According to Bacchus, the Board will likely re-examine this issue in its post-election policy review committee designed to take a second look at the policies created by the EPRC after they have been instituted in an election.

Number of Wilfrid Laurier Students' Union Board of Directors candidates by year since 2002



SYDNEY HELLAND

VOCAL CORD

Are you voting in WLUSU elections?



"I haven't thought about it actually, I'm not sure."

– Courtney Pollice
Third-year sociology & psychology



"No, I don't think so. I've never voted before."

– LJ Gagnon
Fourth-year kinesiology



"Yes, because I believe students should have a voice in the union."

– Melody Cheung
Fourth-year science



"No, I'm not voting. It takes a lot of time."

– Zohair Siraj
First-year business



"Yes, even though I'm leaving I still care about what happens at Laurier."

– Christine Ball
Fourth-year psych

Four candidates in running for Students' Union president

REBECCA VASLUIANU
NEWS EDITOR

Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union (WLUSU) elections will see the largest number of presidential candidates in several years with four applicants vying for the position.

With nominees Jon Champagne, Chris Johnston, Vadim Levin and Laura Sheridan in the running, students will be able to choose between a wide array of candidates – each coming from a unique background and experience – when they hit the polls on February 5.

"By having four different candidates you really get to hear four unique voices and a mixture of philosophies about the campus and the best way WLUSU can serve its students," said presidential candidate Levin, a fifth-year psychology major involved with Laurier Athletics, Residence Life and various campus clubs.

Fellow candidate Champagne echoed his sentiment, stating "the more people involved in the process the better."

With three years of experience on the BOD he describes his background as relating to the "high-level, over-arching policy level side of things."

"I think that is a real strength of mine," said Champagne, who is in fourth-year business. "Knowing how a BOD works, knowing how policy works, I think it really lends itself to the role of president."

Sheridan, a fifth-year communications student, comes from a similar background as acting VP: Student Activities. As part of management, she believes her experience will help her if she is elected president.

"From my management experience this year, I've worked directly with Colin [LeFevre] so obviously I understand the job of a president," she stated, also explaining that she has assumed various other roles on campus, such as being a Laurier Ambassador.

"I've really been able to see the great things about the Students' Union from my experiences as a volunteer and staff member but also I bring forward experiences that are not just students' union-based," she continued.

While candidates Levin and Johnston have not had experience with WLUSU policy directly as the other two candidates have, they both agree that this will not hold them back in the race.

"I've got a lot of different friends different than the WLUSU corporate everyone sees, so I think I'll be able to bring the new ideas onto the table to see where WLUSU needs to go," said Johnston, a fifth-year communications student who names his major involvements as the Laurier Christian Fellowship and Foot Patrol.

Levin holds a similar view, explaining that while he believes he is looked on as an "outsider" to WLUSU at times, he is able to

bring forth the perspective of students who are really involved, and will be able to represent those who do not feel connected with the Students' Union.

"I've sort of had the experience of relating to both students and talking to students who are in both positions," he said.

Elections have come in the midst of mass restructuring within the Students' Union, through which WLUSU has seen large amounts of internal reform.

Sheridan, a fifth-year candidate who currently holds the title of VP: Student Activities at the Students' Union told *The Cord* she is keen to continue on a path of reform if elected.

"Throughout my time as a VP, I've really seen that change is possible. The changes that I helped bring to the Student Activities department, it would be an honor to expand that to a larger platform and work at changing the Students' Union as a whole because it's something that I know is possible and it's something that I know I have the skills to do."

Sheridan notes her biggest area of focus as "breaking down barriers, real or perceived, that have been associated with WLUSU in the past."

Levin also explained he sees the coming year as a great opportunity to take the change that has already been implemented and expand it.

"Next year will be a perfect opportunity to re-examine how the

Students' Union supports students and how it really represents students," stated Levin. "I think my biggest thing is really re-examining how WLUSU can help all students," he added.

Champagne believes his background will allow him to create concrete change, as he is able to create an informed action plan.

"I believe a lot in my platform," he stated. "I offer a lot of real tangible solutions to students' problems," he continued, explaining that his platform and website are organized to outline specific student concerns and describe his course of action to address each one.

Johnston also expressed his confidence in his campaign's structure to speak to student concerns, calling it "Student FIBRES," an acronym meant to address a wide array of campus issues.

He states one of the main goals of his campaign as making an effort to reach "places that aren't represented as well on campus and give those people a voice."

At the Annual General Meeting on February 5, students will also elect one student for the Board of Governors (BOG), for which Saad Aslam, Kory Jeffrey and Sean Mui-Tummers are in the running.

As well, Justin Glover, Christopher Oberle, Kory Jeffrey and Sean Mui-Tummers will be competing for two elected positions on WLU Senate.

Brantford open forum sparks debate

JEREMY TREMBLAY
NEWS EDITOR

Despite the fact that the deadline for nominations to sit on the Board of Directors was extended to today at noon, the Brantford campus open forum took place yesterday afternoon.

According to Jayne Thomas, Chief Returning Officer for the Wilfrid Laurier Students' Union (WLUSU), it was impossible to re-schedule the open forum because of "timelines and logistics."

Potential director nominees were still invited to attend the forum and were given specific guidelines regarding what was and was not permissible.

They were forbidden from actively campaigning before and after the open forum, and could not say that they had submitted their nominations packages.

"They just can't vocally say 'I'm intending to run for Board of Directors.... That would be considered campaigning because it's alerting the Brantford students to the fact that they could be voting for those people ... and because it's outside

of the campaign period it's sort of going the route of soliciting a vote," Thomas explained.

She added that potential directors caught campaigning would be subject to "automatic disqualification that can be appealed."

Presidential candidates – whose nomination process ended last Wednesday and who were free to campaign – took the opportunity to speak out about their platforms.

The main topic of the discussion between presidential candidates became WLUSU Brantford's autonomy: whether or not the Brantford campus could stand alone as its own student union.

Jon Champagne brought up the idea of autonomy for Brantford, suggesting that Brantford could elect its own president and board a year in the future.

Vadim Levin, Chris Johnston and Laura Sheridan said they hoped autonomy would be possible, but that the Brantford campus was not yet ready for the change largely for financial reasons.

With files from Steve Macdonald, The Sputnik

CORD/ONLINE

> cordweekly.com
> News



Healthcare and financial hardship; PC MPs speak on campus

Morgan Alan reports on a lecture by Progressive Conservative health and finance critics.

Students won't face expenses

FROM BLACKBERRY, COVER

Enhancements will include multimedia, tests and hopefully LO-RIS access.

The purpose of the program is to incorporate social networking and new technology into the classroom. Dybenko said, "We'd like to see and examine how that learning habits informally and try to take the best of that kind of interactions socially back into the traditional classroom and start to influence how we teach and how people learn."

Professors only heard about the initiative with last Wednesday's press release, meaning the inclusion of specific course materials into the program is still being determined. Dybenko hopes to "challenge everybody to try to figure out new and exciting ways we can use the technology."

Currently the school has purchased the BlackBerries at an exceptional rate.

"If we can see that this really works, then we're going to have to seek some longterm funding mechanism," said Dybenko.

This will include tapping into the PRISM fund, which is supported through student tuition, or adjusting the tuition itself. However, this is all dependent on the success of the pilot year.

Data connectivity will also be provided by WLU; however, if students prefer to upgrade the package, they must do so of their own accord.

The recently released budget

cuts for the university will not be affecting the project.

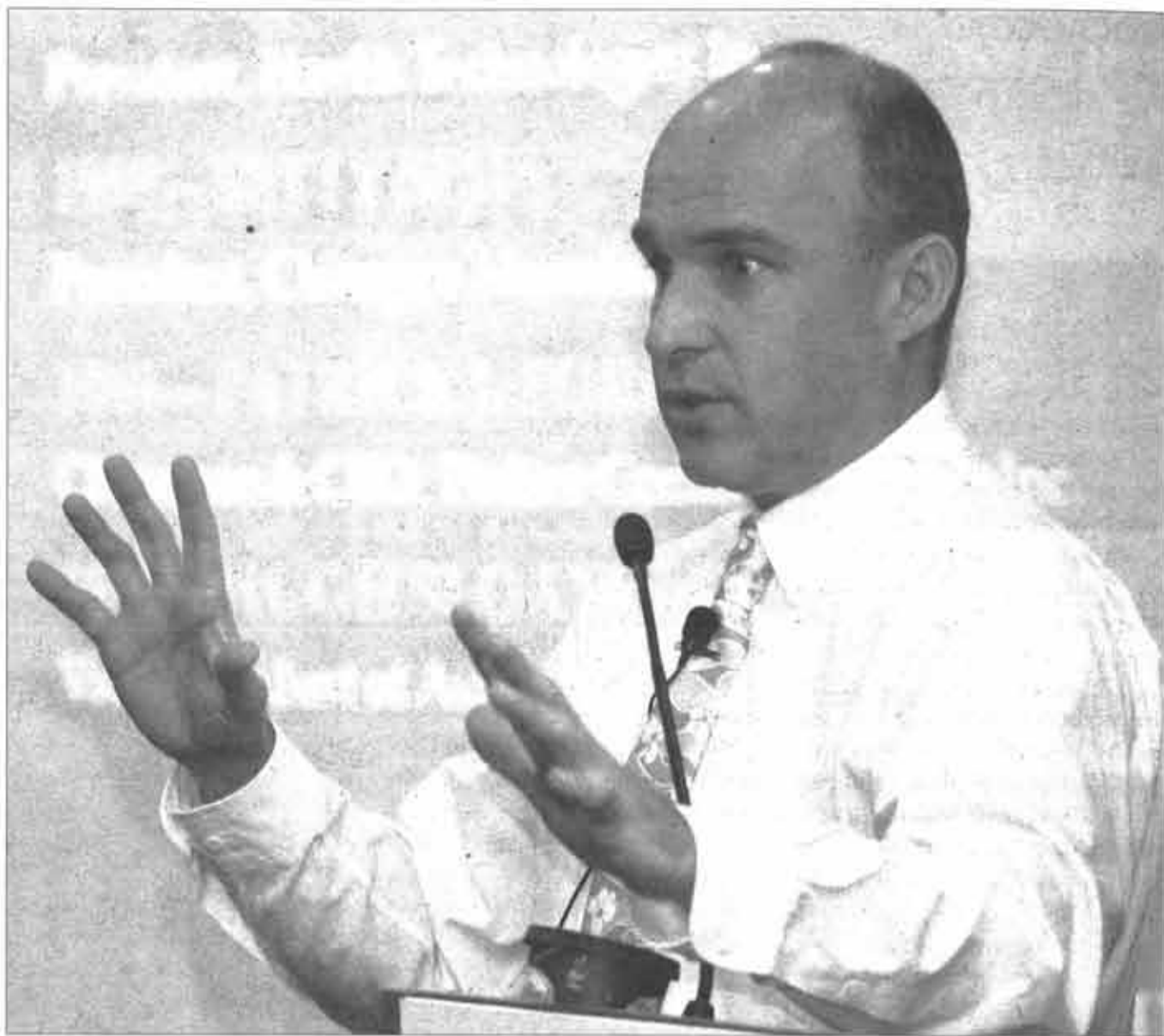
Although costs for the program will not be put to students, there will not be a large expense for the university. The costs are being funded by the Centre for Excellence in Business in Education (CEBE), which has been supported by a private donor since September 2008.

Some concerns have arisen due to the dependence on WLU's servers for this program to work. The current web server on campus supports 3G technologies; however, what is accessible to view on the mobile technology is limited.

The WebCT server, which is currently an option for supporting the new MBA program, is the same that crashed in November of the fall semester. "If we can't get WebCT at a mission critical level ... then we can't advance in that area," Dybenko explained as the reason behind requests made for Student Life Levy funding to support an upgrade of the server's infrastructure including added mirroring.

Further upgrades or alternative options for the server have yet to be determined. "It's still very much under discussion," explained Carl Langford, manager of network operations.

If the project proves to be a success, long-term planning into WLU's supportive technology as well as funding will have to be determined to ensure its continuation.



RYAN STEWART

AWARD WINNER - Research In Motion co-CEO Jim Balsillie was celebrated as Laurier's 21st "Outstanding business leader of the year" at a luncheon last Thursday.

Jim Balsillie named "Laurier Outstanding Business Leader"

Balsillie tells business students the value of personal narrative in success

MADHAVI GANJU
STAFF WRITER

"I'm the quaint jock from Peterborough who never quits ... that's how I see myself. That's my personal narrative," said Jim Balsillie, co-CEO of Blackberry manufacturer Research In Motion, to students gathered in the Senate and Board Chambers last Thursday.

The speech preceded a luncheon at the Waterloo Inn, where Balsillie was presented with the 21st Laurier Outstanding Business Leader Award from Ginny Dybenko, the dean of business and economics at Laurier.

In his talk, Balsillie stressed the value of possessing a personal narrative of one's own.

"Whenever you meet opportunities in life and most particularly

challenges, you go back to that narrative," he said. "It is very important to shape that personal narrative of yourself."

Balsillie described himself as a tradesman's son from Peterborough who was exceptionally good at math.

He explained that the peer groups with which one is affiliated are another ingredient for success.

According to Balsillie, the group of people one associates with is very important as "the aspirations of the peer group really matter ... and that just becomes the norm."

When asked what his next ambition is, Balsillie replied saying that he still has many ambitions; "I'm a little out there sometimes... I don't want to be one of those great could've, would've, should've ... [businessmen]."

Balsillie completed his MBA at the Harvard Business School and has been the co-CEO at RIM since 1992. In 2002, he founded The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI).

Among other contributions, Balsillie donated \$50 million in 2007 to found the Balsillie School of International Affairs in Waterloo.

Hundreds of students as well as faculty from the School of Business and Economics turned out for the talk, which began around 10 a.m. and lasted approximately an hour.

During the first half, he gave some words of wisdom and explained his beliefs about attaining success.

The remaining time was left open to questions from the audience. At the very end, two students each won a Blackberry in a draw.



RYAN STEWART

\$100 million fine may await RIM CEOs

Ontario Securities Commission seek record penalty due to stock controversy

Last Thursday, the same day that Jim Balsillie received Laurier's Outstanding Business Leader Award, it was announced that the Ontario Securities Commission (OSC) will seek up to \$100 million from both Balsillie and Mike Lazaridis, co-CEOs of Research In Motion Ltd.

The *Globe and Mail* reported that OSC staff are in discussion with lawyers representing the RIM CEOs. The penalty stems from an investigation that began in 2006 ex-

amining stock option accounting.

The *Globe* reports that the OSC is looking to Balsillie to pay the bulk of the fine and temporarily leave his seat on RIM's board of directors.

At \$100 million, the full fine would be the highest ever paid by an individual to the OSC. The current record is \$23 million, which former Laidlaw CEO Michael De-Groote paid to settle insider trading allegations in 1993.

A 2007 investigation by a RIM

board committee found that over 40 percent of stock options dating as far back as 1996 given to RIM employees were backdated.

In total, both Balsillie and Lazaridis profited by about \$1.6 million each; both repaid the company for their gains following the committee's report in 2007.

They also paid RIM an additional \$5 million each to cover the costs of investigation and financial restatement. As part of a settlement in a

class-action lawsuit related to the backdating, paid RIM an additional \$2.5 million.

RIM notified the OSC and US Securities and Exchange Commission of its findings before releasing its report to the public. At the same time it released its review, several American companies - including Apple Inc. and Dell Inc. - were under examination by the US Securities and Exchange Commission. It signalled that companies coming forward voluntarily would be treated more favourably.

The OSC's last director of en-

forcement, Mike Watson, left the position in September and has yet to be replaced. Its chief litigator also left recently.

According to the *Globe*, these vacancies have left two lawyers "who are not normally in the spotlight" overseeing the RIM settlement.

Locally, businesspeople and academics have sided with Balsillie, suggesting that the OSC's record fine is out of place and inappropriate given the current economy.

- Compiled by Jeremy Tremblay

Business applications down across Ontario

JEREMY TREMBLAY
NEWS EDITOR

Applications to Laurier's BBA program are down 13 percent this year, measuring slightly below a drop in applications to undergraduate business programs across Ontario, which are down 9 percent.

At Laurier, Dean of Business Ginny Dybenko suspects that the drop in applications is because of stricter requirements for applicants.

"We require English and math to be part of [the six entrance average marks] and we've never done that before," she explained, pointing out that in the past "we let students self-select which courses they were going to put into that entrance average."

The decision to make the changes was made to try to stem the fail-

ure rate in first-year business.

Dybenko explained that statistical analysis determined "if we included this math and English mark, the success rate of the first-year students to get to second year was much, much higher.

"We hate," she added, "to put a student in a place where they just can't succeed."

Dybenko was less sure about why applications to business were down provincially, explaining that she had not previously heard the statistic.

"Off the top of my head I'm surprised, actually. Certainly when I was at the university fair one student after another came up and said they wanted accounting and they wanted marketing.... I didn't see any kind of shift from the previous year."

The change in application numbers for Fall 2008 and Fall 2009

+1 %
to Ontario universities

-3 %
to Laurier Waterloo

+2 %
to Laurier Brantford

At Laurier:
+21 %
to BSc Science

+8 %
to the faculty of music

-3 %
to the faculty of arts

-3 %
to honours economics

-4 %
to applied economics

-8 %
to BA Science

-13 %
to BBA

Total applications to Laurier down

Science, music up while other faculties fall

JEREMY TREMBLAY
NEWS EDITOR

Despite slight growth in the number of applications to undergraduate programs at Ontario universities, the number of applicants to undergraduate programs at Laurier's Waterloo campus was down this year.

Graduating high school students' applications to the Ontario University Application Centre were due last Thursday. Numbers released indicate that the number of total applications grew by 1.1 percent this year.

Applications to Laurier's Waterloo campus were down by 3 percent, while Brantford campus applications were up 2 percent.

At the January 20 university Senate meeting, Acting VP: Academic

Leo Groarke explained that the slight decline in applications isn't problematic, as the number of applicants has continued to exceed targeted enrollment.

Another figure that stood out was applications to the faculty of science, which were up 21 percent. Groarke explained that a new program in health science is being introduced this fall.

According to the Council of Ontario Universities, 84,300 applications were received in total. In 2000, only 59,197 applications were filed.

The only year with a larger number of applicants to Ontario universities was 2003, when 102,618 applications were filed.

That year marked the elimination of Grade 13 (which had been renamed Ontario Academic Credit) in Ontario.

YORK U STRIKE

York strike ongoing; legislated end in sight

TORONTO — *The Globe and Mail* reports that 5,000 York University students resumed classes on Monday following the teaching assistant and contract faculty's rejection of administration's most recent offer.

York's part-time faculty, represented by CUPE Local 3903, have been on strike since November 6. According to *The Globe and Mail*, the strike is "now the longest in York's history, a past that includes three of the five longest university strikes in Canadian history."

The decision, made by York's Senate Executive, applies to stu-

dents from four different areas of study; specifically to those requiring internship placements to complete their program or necessary accreditation exams.

With only 5,000 of York's 50,000 students returning to class, many students accused York President Mamdouh Shoukri of privileging certain programs over others.

According to the CBC, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty is working on back-to-work legislation, which would allow all students to return to class.

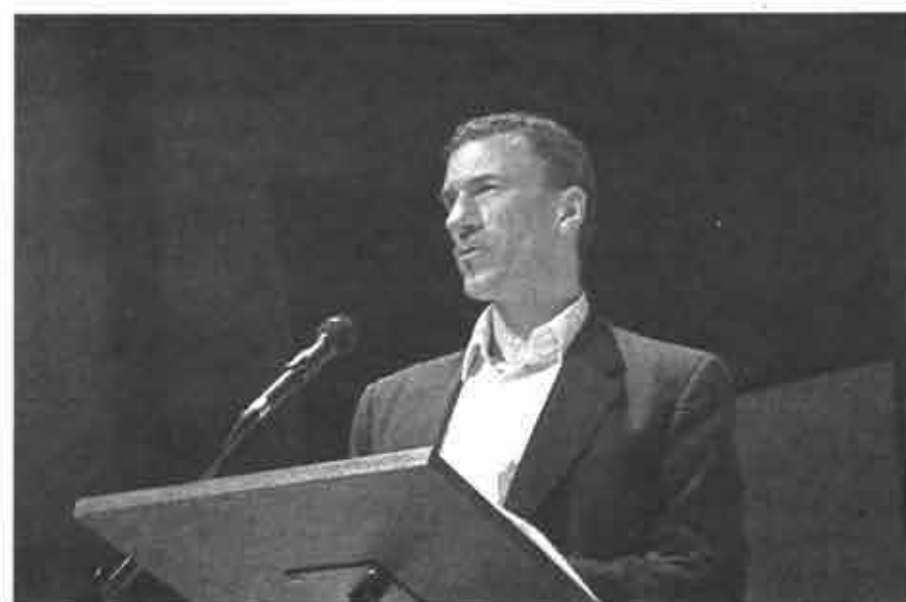
Once the legislation is approved, employees must return to work or face a possible \$2,000-per-day fine. The legislation is expected to pass late this week.

-Compiled by Taryn Orwen-Parrish

York union threatens to sue government

TORONTO — The union representing striking teaching assistants and contract faculty at York University are threatening the provincial government with legal action if it does not manage to restart talks between the two groups before forcing strikers back to work according to *The Globe and Mail*.

The group's lawyers will be instructed to take "any and all legal action," Ontario president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees Sid Ryan said at a news conference yesterday, according to the *Globe*.



MORGAN ALAN

DEBATE - Dr. Christopher diCarlo debated against the theistic view.

"Stare into the abyss and say, 'so what?'"

Professors debate importance of religion and faith

MORGAN ALAN
STAFF WRITER

Last night at the Theatre Auditorium, Campus for Christ hosted one in a series of "Ultimate Questions" forums in a debate entitled "Does God Matter?"

Dr. Michael Horner, philosophy professor at the University of Toronto, represented the theistic view. The opposition was voiced by Dr. Christopher diCarlo, professor in critical thinking at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology.

Debate was focused not primarily on the existence or role of God, but on the repercussions of the existence or non-existence of a higher power.

"The idea of God matters to some because they believe such a being has actual existence, not merely historical or anthropological importance. They believe God's existence gives considerable meaning or depth to their lives," said diCarlo.

"Such a concept of God does not matter to me in the least ... such gods have never had any actual existence other than as ideas in the human mind," he added.

Horner countered that "living a meaningful life becomes extremely problematic if there is no such thing as God.... Core concepts of intrinsic significance have no place in a uni-

verse without God."

Naturalism and atheism "cannot account for inherent human value, or for higher purposes," he added.

The origin of ethical standards, as either divine or having human basis, was a recurring bone of contention between the professors.

"You will find the same values in humanistic and atheist philosophy on how you should behave as you will in theistic philosophy," said diCarlo.

Horner argued that such standards "are not something that we subjectively invent as an individual or in our culture."

Absolute good and evil arose as a topic of contention, with Horner arguing that morality cannot exist without God.

"If you are confident that experimenting of Jews, oppressing blacks, raping little girls or torturing babies for sport is wrong, then you must give up [atheism]," said Horner.

"Is it absolutely wrong to rape children? I have no idea. I just think it's bad," diCarlo countered.

"Why do we need an objective truth given to us by a supposed God to change anything?" he added.

The debate series continues today at 3:30 p.m. in the Senate and Board Chamber, with a debate concerning "Is There Scientific Evidence for the Existence of God?"

The union is looking to a 2007 decision by the Supreme Court of Canada where the court restricted the British Columbia government's ability to impose back-to-work legislation on striking healthcare workers as precedent.

The union is disputing the fact that negotiations are deadlocked, saying that it is willing to return to the table while York's management is not.

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty has stated he is confident in the legitimacy of the proposed back-to-work legislation, indicating that mediator Reg Pearson had declared negotiations deadlocked.

-Compiled by Jeremy Tremblay

Class-action lawsuit filed against York

TORONTO — Law firm Juroviesky and Ricci LLP, which has Toronto and New York offices, announced the filing of a class-action lawsuit against York University alleging violations of statute and common law duties against students this past Sunday.

The suit is asking for refunds of tuition and other fees paid to York for direct and indirect damages sustained by both full- and part-time students registered in fall 2008.

-Compiled by Jeremy Tremblay and

Students' union platforms

Make an informed decision on February 5 by reading through candidates' platforms here

President & CEO candidates



Jon Champagne

WLUSU plays an incredibly important role in our everyday lives and shapes our overall university experience. As a three time WLUSU Director, former Chair of the Board and current student Governor I have the necessary experience to bring change and knowhow to the job of WLUSU President. As students we have many concerns of which a few I will address as WLUSU President:

- A lack of available study space on campus is a big issue for all students no matter what year or faculty you are in. This is probably the single biggest issue facing students on a rapidly growing campus. As President I will increase the amount of study space by expanding the 24hr lounge and help alleviate some of these pressures.

- With Laurier's poor environmental record I will set up a sustainability office so we can improve this record and have a permanent commitment to greening our campus.

- As President I will work with the University to enable WLUSU volunteers to receive academic credit for various positions.

- The current underage policy for the Turret is unfair and not inclusive to fee paying WLUSU members under the age of 19. As President I will reconsider this policy and make changes to have a more inclusive WLUSU.

This is just a summarized version of my platform and I encourage everyone to visit www.VoteChampagne.com to see the full version. Remember, Election Day is February 5th so make sure you get out and vote!



Chris Johnston

Student FIBRES.

Laurier has always been a school that has had a great community spirit about it but as the school continues to grow we need to ensure this doesn't disappear.

Finance: I want to create more student jobs. This is going to be done with the creation of a juice bar in the Turret. This will effectively give added space to study in both the Turret and in the Hawks Nest. There will be a \$1000 bursary given to an outstanding WLUSU volunteer to encourage Laurier's volunteer culture, and two \$500 bursaries given to encourage environmental initiatives on campus. Interests: As president I will ensure our clubs are following the guidelines given, are reachable by the general student body, and are adequately attended to.

Brantford: I will work with Greyhound and WLU's administration to develop a strategy that makes Waterloo Campus more accessible to Brantford students. Relations: I have been working on creative ways to make the Presidential position more accessible for students to voice their concerns and suggestions. Enrichment: I will introduce Winter Jam. A daylong event before fall exams start that will have intramural teams competing between the two campus', and a battle of the bands pitting the best of Brantford against the best of Waterloo as the opener for a giant concert in the AC. Studies: Along with opening up study space on the 4th floor FNCC I will call on the University to increase the number of plugs in the concourse, along with needed renovations



Vadim Levin

Without a doubt the Students' Union has much to be proud of as one of the most accomplished student-governed bodies in the country. Focused on continued success, I commit to improving relationships with external groups and organizations across and between our campuses. I will work to support groups that share our goal of providing for the needs of all students through co-operative programming, collaboration, creative problem solving, and building efficient support networks. By reevaluating our resources, the Union will address campus space issues and provide alternative study environments. I will also focus on new initiatives to extend support and assistance to volunteers who spend long hours on campus and dedicate their energy. Moreover, appreciation of volunteers and their unique role is essential. While restructuring challenges may require financial flexibility, effects on the student body can be significantly minimized by strengthening old and seeking new partnerships with various university organizations. Moreover, I will strive to foster innovative and unconventional thinking to continue creatively improving the Wilfrid Laurier University student experience. While there is great potential to expand the Union's ability to enrich this experience, there is similar potential for increasing diverse student participation with the aim of integrating all experiences into the heart of our organization. Through our actions, we will acknowledge the importance of our university's diversity, inclusivity, and sustainability. Accordingly, the next few years for the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union will not be labeled simply as restructuring years, but rather years of commitment to continued development.



Laura Sheridan

Your WLUSU President needs to be driven, experienced and focused on bringing you the university experience that you deserve. My platform is reflective of these characteristics and is designed to reach out to every single student on our campus. As Laurier continues to expand, an emphasis must be placed on *Responsible Growth* to ensure future sustainability. WLUSU must be proactive and transparent with all finances as every student has the right to know how their student fees are spent. Amongst impending university-wide budget cuts, your Students' Union must make every effort to ensure that you are impacted as minimally as possible by altering WLUSU services. Your Laurier should be a *Respectful Community* and a finalized and supported set of Diversity Policies will provide a foundation for this. Cooperation between WLUSU and large student groups such as LSPIRG, the Diversity Office, Residence Life and Student Publications will break down barriers while providing opportunities for effective partnerships. All WLUSU communication must flow two-ways; with effective branding and promotion going out (printed and online materials, quarterly updates) and most importantly, the Students' Union must always be accessible for any student to provide input (surveys, focus groups). As WLUSU President, I would act as a *Responsive Leader* advocating for all students on campus while remaining dedicated to ensuring that every student can impact their Students' Union. It is time for WLUSU to reach out to all Laurier students. This is Your Experience. Your Voice. Your Laurier. For more information, please visit www.votesheridan.com.

Senate candidates



Justin Glover

My name is Justin Glover and I am running for WLU Senate. Having only a few seats available each year, the Senate offers the unique experience to be involved in making academic policy for both the Waterloo and Brantford campuses. As a Senator, I plan to begin a summer accessibility survey of all workspace available on both WLU Campuses. WHAT space? WHO can access this space? WHEN? WHERE? AND HOW? When completed, the survey will provide the student body with answers to these questions, as well as a "Study Styles" comparison between quiet and social students and where the best spot is for you. For more info on the Summer Accessibility Survey visit my Facebook Group: Justin Glover for WLU SENATE.



Christopher Oberle

Hi, my name is Christopher Oberle. I am currently in my second year History and Political Science. I am currently involved in various campus clubs including: Badminton Club, Laurier Young Liberals, Quiz Bowl, and the History Students Association. The Senate is an extremely important part of WLU, being concerned with all academic issues. I want to ensure that Senate programs and regulations are in the best interests of students. If elected to the WLU Senate I will work on your behalf to ensure that student concerns are heard regarding academics at Laurier. On February 5th vote Christopher Oberle for WLU Senate.



Kory Jeffrey

My platform is based on experience, understanding and responsible representation. I have experience representing students as a rep on the FOA Council and the Petitions Committee, where I've helped bring relevant student concerns, such as turnitin.com, to the foreground. I work part-time in the President's Office, where I've gained an understanding of governance structure and how to effectively voice student concerns. In a climate of economic uncertainty there comes a great opportunity for change and a solemn responsibility for the future. I will ensure that students are first in mind when tough decisions are made given the economic realities of today. If elected to the WLU BOG or Senate, I will commit myself to responsibly representing the best interests of the student body.



Sean Mui-Tummers

Seeking election after a difficult campaign loss for Board of Governors in the last elections, I sought ways to gain both knowledge and experience for the position. A spot on the Senate Finance Committee, a position connecting both the Board of Governors and Senate allowed myself to begin learning and understanding the commitments required for success. I found that the positions I hope to be elected for, Board of Governors and Senate are those which I could benefit students on the most; to push for student interests where student representation is limited yet vital. Consider Sean Mui-Tummers to be your voice and your vote for Board of Governors and Senate on Election Day - February 5th.



Saad Aslam

After 3 years at WLU I believe I have amassed an extensive amount of experience in student government. I have been fortunate enough to have been on the WLU Senate, WLUSU BOD and work intricately with external lobby groups CASA and OUSA. As only one voice on the BOG I will not make grandiose, unattainable promises. However, I can promise that I will always be an informed, accessible, active and vocal Governor if elected. On February 5th ensure that you vote for an experienced, hard-working candidate that always puts students first. Vote Saad Aslam!



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LSPiRG candidates (acclaimed) - Annual General Meeting to take place on January 29



Morgan Alan

As a director of LSPiRG, I will work to engage Laurier's students and foster in them a sense of social community, with an emphasis on the role of first year students. As a first year student myself, I believe that it is of utmost importance for LSPiRG to engage one of Laurier's fastest growing and most sizable group of students. I will prioritize student consciousness of the important role LSPiRG plays on campus, and student involvement within the organization itself, for example, the expansion of LSPiRG O-Week. I believe my multi-faceted experience as a volunteer within LSPiRG itself, WLUSU, Student Publications and the Office for Student Diversity will allow for a fresh but experienced face on your Board of Directors.



Graham Engel

As incumbent director, my aspiration for the proceeding term would be to help craft our anti-oppression policy, to help form an official training module for incoming directors, and to help review and revise our PIRG's policies in order to become more effective and efficient. As well, this year will see an increased focus on community outreach, as well my willingness to be present at a set place and time to field questions directed at PIRG.



Andrea Hall

LSPiRG is incredibly valuable to the Laurier community but I've found that many students either haven't heard of LSPiRG or don't fully understand what it does and why. As a Director I would try to bring about a greater awareness of LSPiRG's purpose amongst Laurier students, the main component of LSPiRG's membership. Specifically I would target first years, through coordination with Res Life, that ensures immediately upon arriving at Laurier students would be given the opportunity to find out more about this organization, which they pay to be a part of. This would get all students to reflect on LSPiRG's values, and produce tangible results; if more students are aware of LSPiRG's mission there is a greater pool of ideas and volunteers to draw from.



Kate Klein

As a new director on the LSPiRG board, much of what I have to contribute comes from coordinating the Women's Centre. I have an extensive amount of knowledge of consensus decision-making theory and process, and a passion for power-sharing, community-oriented goal-setting and anti-oppressive practice and process. I will contribute a perspective that advocates for a healthy balance between theory and action, as well as a strong critical analysis of gender inequalities and heterosexism based on personal experience. I am committed to improvement (self- and organizational), and am never afraid to ask critical questions and push discussion deeper. I also have strong ties with the Office for Student Diversity and parts of WLUSU, which would facilitate LSPiRG's process of reaching out to the broader Laurier community.



Adam Lewis

My name is Adam Lewis and I am running for the LSPiRG BOD. I have long been involved in various aspects of PIRG, from volunteering at the Global Citizenship Conference to the Events Committee and my current position as the LSPiRG Administrative Assistant. My experience has allowed me to gain insight into the organization and contribute on a variety of levels. Given that I have been involved with the volunteer and staff aspects of LSPiRG, I am keenly interested in looking at the board side of the organization and further growing of LSPiRG. My experience within the organization and my dedication to social change makes me an ideal candidate for this position. I look forward to making LSPiRG an even greater force for social change.



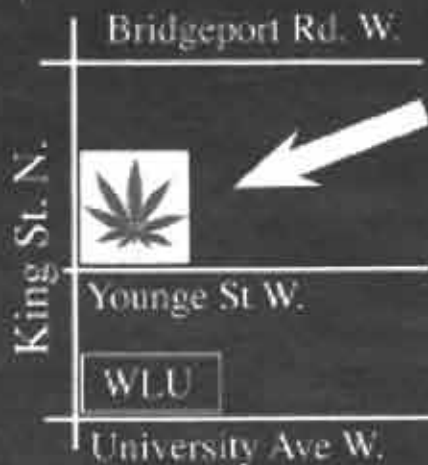
Mark Vandendungen

I have been involved with LSPiRG in various forms such as being a general volunteer and being involved with working groups since 2006. I originally started my experience with LSPiRG by getting involved in the development of Peace For All International. Currently, I am the Technical Logistics Executive for the working group Global Citizenship Conference. I am highly effective at being innovative, speaking my mind and getting things done. I will take my position seriously and try to direct the organization to the right direction and environment for creating social justice. Experience, effectiveness and direction are the qualities that I believe will lead to an effective board member for LSPiRG.

For WLUSU Board of Directors platforms, head to CordWeekly.com on January 29 or pick up *The Cord Weekly* on February 4.

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Sex with Sue sizzles at WLU

Sue Johanson speaks at Laurier to a packed house, giving students a graphic sexual education

— FROM **SEX**, COVER

She has now retired from television and radio in hopes of spending more time at her cottage and touring North American universities.

"I did high schools for a long time, and I have to admit, I got tired of pussy-footing around controversial issues; homosexuality, masturbation; pussy-footing around birth control, that kind of thing. The poor teacher was embarrassed, what did she know about G-spot orgasm?"

Johanson feels that there is a lack of proper sex education in elementary and high schools. "They teach you anatomy and physiology — the relentless search for fallopian tubes."

This "pussy-footing" is precisely the reason why Johanson says she prefers speaking with university students.

"University students are different. Now you're adults, you're away from parents, and your parents are terribly concerned about you, so they are overjoyed that you are getting this kind of explicit information that they weren't able to give you. The whole dynamic has changed."

Perhaps not as much as Johanson believes, as one of the questions on the Dear Sue cards passed around during the presentation asked, "Have you ever been suffocated by testicles?" to which Johanson responded, "Can't say I have."

[SUE WAS ASKED] "HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SUFFOCATED BY TESTICLES?" TO WHICH JOHANSON RESPONDED, "CAN'T SAY I HAVE."

According to Johanson, the ideal way to learn about sexuality is through one's parents as they grow up, but she realizes that this is easier said than done — and that's where she comes in. "What have I got to lose? Kids look at me making a complete fool of myself, and they figure: 'If she can do it, why can't we at least talk about it? Why are we so uptight?'"

Being uptight did come up again, but not with regards to her student audience. "I'm really concerned about bum sex," said Johanson, who in recent years has been criticized for her lack of attention on issues outside the sphere of heterosexuality.

When asked about her issue with anal sex, she said: "I don't have a problem with it, I really don't, provided that you know what you're doing before you get involved, and then you can make a decision."

"But if you don't have information, then you can't make a rational decision, and that's where kids

get into trouble because they don't know the risks that are involved."

Referring to anal sex as "fudge packing" (a phrase which evoked an uncomfortably lengthy roar of laughter from the WLU crowd), Johanson commented on her awareness that her presentation could be more inclusive: "It's just much easier to say he and she, and that's a problem."

"I've had complaints about it from the LGBTQ population," she said. "If you really think about it, the sexual activity between gay males and between lesbians is not all that different than hetero. It's really not all that different, so it's a political thing."

Johanson did at least justify her nervousness of anal sex by explaining some physical factors that make it so-called "high-risk behaviour."

"The mucus membrane of the vagina is very strong. The anus is paper-thin, so it can tear, and a tear is a dangerous thing."

She did have advice for sexual partners for whom anal sex is either the only, or the preferred, option: "If you're going to do it, use a condom with lots and lots of lube."

A permanent resident of Toronto, Johanson often spends time with the city's Yonge St. area prostitutes, from whom she learned how to put a condom on with her mouth; an impressive tactic to say the least.

"Females have become more assertive, and females are starting to have more expectations from a sexual relationship," said Johanson, commenting on what's changed the most in the world of sexuality since the '70s.

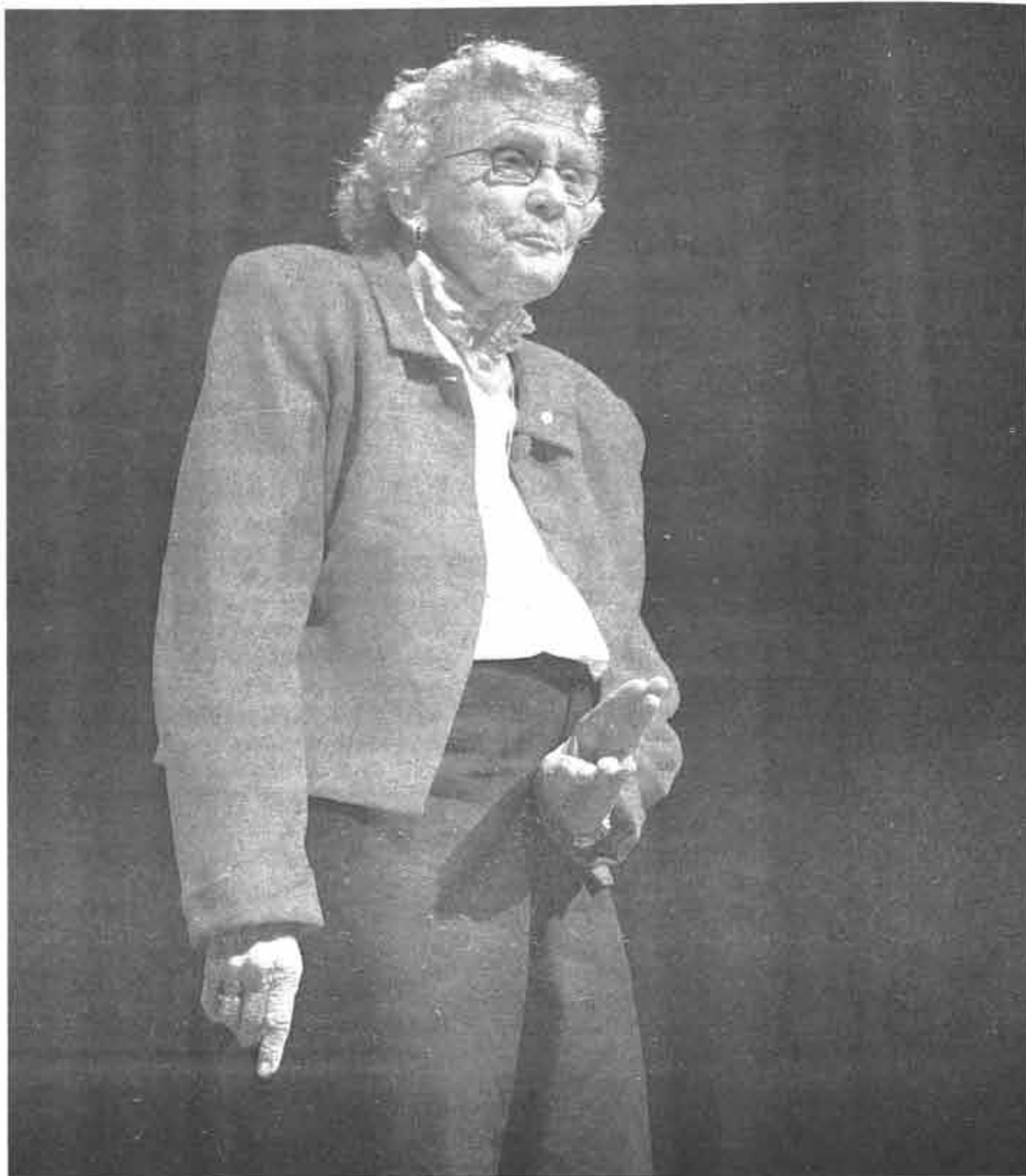
Garnering applause from the female population on Monday night, Johanson told the audience that "the most amazing organ is the clitoris."

Perhaps appealing to her vegan fanbase, she announced that vegetarians do in fact taste better, and to her male audience: "Don't ignore the paraneum!" Offering some more advice to the university population as a whole, Johanson touched briefly on masturbation, saying jokingly: "I finally found a use for Beanie Babies."

Johanson left students with her number one rule: "Relax and enjoy."

If Johanson sticks to her promise of making her show more inclusive, just about everyone will be able to take something away from her vast knowledge of sexuality and highly engaging presentation style.

"For me, what is beyond the pale is necrophilia, sex with a dead guy and bestiality," she said to *The Cord*. "But other than that I have no problems with any aspect of it, none whatsoever. Just use a condom."



YUSUF KIDWA

FOOLING AROUND - Sue Johanson presents the truth about sex, holding nothing back from the audience.

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SHEENA ARCHIE

CRACKBERRY - Smartphones like the iPhone and BlackBerry keep the user constantly up-to-date.

Getting high on tech

As smartphones rapidly gain popularity on campus, they begin to take a hold on the interests and time of students who own them

KASSANDRA MELNYK
CORD STUDENT LIFE

We saw their enticing commercials swarming the televisions around

Christmas, labelling them the must-have gift of Christmas 2008 and the future of communication in 2009. So-called "Smartphones" have been compared to addictive

drugs because users are becoming so dependent on their devices that some cannot go five minutes without interacting with them.

A study conducted by Rutgers

University in 2006 predicted the massive effects of this (then new) technology and the hold it would have over users.

In the 2006 release "Employers, Beware: 'Techno Addicts' May be More Liability than Boon" (Rutgers-Camden Research), Gayle Porter, an associate professor of management at Rutgers University School of Business, states that, "Addiction to technology can [be damaging] to the mental health of the worker."

MUCH LIKE CHEMICAL ADDICTIONS, ADDICTIONS TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY SHOULD BE TREATED WITH THE SAME SEVERITY.

Much like chemical addictions, addictions to technology should be treated with the same severity because the effects are equally detrimental to the overall health of a person.

Obsessive-compulsive tendencies are evoked as people feel the need to check their e-mail numerous times in one sitting, or feel obligated to read and reply to e-mails when they hear their Smartphone make a sound.

This constant disruption of daily life causes a person to become dependent upon their chosen communication device, which essentially becomes one of their primary forms of interaction.

Even US President Barack Obama has noted that he is hooked to his BlackBerry. It seems he will be forced to quit cold-turkey in order to avoid the security risk this

form of communication poses for a president.

Obama's not taking this lying down - in a recent interview with CNBC, he joked, "They're going to pry it out of my hands."

The lack of human interaction is something that has increased greatly in this technologically savvy era. While it can be argued that technology connects us, it undoubtedly also isolates us from one another.

We begin to lack that personal connection with one another and our devices act as substitutes for real human interaction. Devices such as Smartphones make it possible for people to never interact with another human being and the ability to text

even allows for people to communicate without voice. This is highly problematic.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, which has locations all across Canada, does not consider the Smartphone to be a problem within itself, but instead notes that the issue may lay in the susceptibility of the person to become addicted and whether or not the issue lies within their own personal compulsions.

While there is help available for addictions to video gaming and television, there is nothing specifically being done for addictions to mobile devices. Should Smartphone devices include a disclaimer regarding the possibility of addiction?

Regarding this issue neither RIM nor Apple's media representative could be reached for comment.

SMARTPHONE REHAB

Arguably everything must be done and used within moderation, but if you suspect you may be addicted to your Smartphone, here are a few indicators.

1. You cannot go five minutes without checking your inbox.
2. You have more than five e-mail accounts.
3. You respond to messages on your device in the middle of the night.
4. When your inbox says "no new messages," you hit the refresh button just to make sure.
5. You check e-mail constantly to prove you're "always on top of things," and can respond instantly.

Celebrating the Chinese New Year

The Chinese Student Association brings a taste of the Orient to Laurier

LINDA GIVETASH
STAFF WRITER

The Chinese Student Association (CSA) at Wilfrid Laurier University hosted a food fair in the Hall of Fame beginning on Tuesday, celebrating the Chinese New Year with a selection of authentic food for tasting.

Although the event was a celebration for the new Year of the Ox, it was also held in hopes of promoting Chinese culture to Laurier students.

The selection of food included spring rolls, fried noodles, radish cakes, fried dumplings, fish balls, meat balls and Chinese rice cakes. Several vegetarian options were available to interest all students.

While some of the food was made

by club members themselves, the event this year was also sponsored by Kim Seng Restaurant located at 11 Westwood Drive in Kitchener. Lillian Teng, PR member for the CSA, said, "It allows the school society to get a taste of Chinese food, because we don't have much here," especially of the more authentic, traditional variety.

Funds raised mostly support the event itself. Additional profits go to support the club's events which allow members to build relationships and a sense of community.

This year, the CSA planned a basketball tournament, singing competition and dinner in celebration of the New Year.

"We're trying to have more gatherings for our Chinese [students] and have our own culture," ex-

plained President Dominic Cheng.

While building their own sense of community, the CSA also reaches out to the broader WLU population. Cheng said, "Our main goal is to promote our Chinese culture to the community and let them know more about us."

Like all clubs on campus, the CSA is a great place to build friendships. Teng explained she joined the club because, "I thought it was a really good way to get to know people."

To be more inclusive, the club does allow non-members to attend their events, which depending on the nature of the event may entail a small fee.

If you are interested in buying Chinese food, the fair will be available Wednesday, January 28, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



SHEENA ARCHIE

CHOW DOWN - The food fair continues today in the Concourse.

Discussing global citizenship

Dr. Judy Rebick opened the conference with her keynote speech on activism, setting the tone for the remainder of the weekend

HEATHER MACDONALD
INTERNATIONAL EDITOR

Dr. Judy Rebick opened the Global Citizenship Conference (GCC) in the Theatre Auditorium at Laurier on Friday night with her keynote speech addressing a global responsibility to create a changed society through activism.

The keynote marked the start of the third annual meeting of members of the Kitchener-Waterloo community all taking part in a conference theme entitled "Turning Ideas into Actions."

Among numerous current events that Rebick touched on, she mainly spoke of the Israeli-Hamas conflict in the Middle East and the United States' new president, Barack Obama.

Rebick spoke of a recent protest at the Israeli Consulate in Toronto that she and seven other Canadian Jewish women organized. After occupying the consulate earlier this month, Rebick and the other women were arrested. Rebick explained that this encouraged other small groups around the world to hold their own demonstrations, allowing

the Palestinians to "feel support."

As a Jewish woman standing up against Israel, Rebick felt she was able to portray an example of stepping out of one's comfort zone in order to change the stereotypes we have created in this society. She said, "If we stay in our groups - in a place where we feel safe - we can't change things."

A man that many people now think of when they hear the word "change" is President Obama. Rebick stated clearly, "Obama is African-American; he is black!" and because he is now the president of "a

country based on slavery," she feels that the impact of his presidency is "phenomenal."

Rebick said that Obama has encouraged activism. She said, "Every black kid in the United States now thinks they can do whatever they want to do.... It's not exactly true, but the only way people get oppressed is ... when they believe that if they fight back, nothing will change." She continued, "if you think that you can be whoever you want to be, then you're going to fight to break down barriers."

Closing her speech, Rebick em-

phasized the need for activism again, suggesting to the audience, "Step outside your comfort zone and try and see the world from another perspective; try and walk in someone else's shoes.... We have to understand that we have to act to change things."

Dr. Judy Rebick is a well-known political activist, a self-proclaimed feminist, a Canadian journalist, founder of rabble.ca and author of *Transforming Power: From the Personal to the Political*, her new book that is set to hit shelves in March.

Two information sessions on Saturday morning suggested practical solutions to global issues

HENJI MILIUS
STAFF WRITER

This year's Global Citizenship Conference (GCC) at WLU challenged its participants to raise their level of engagement with each other by discussing, sharing and debating ideas about problems facing our community and the world at large.

Prior to panel discussions and various workshops, two information sessions were held to bring awareness and accountability to what global citizenship means, the responsibilities this concept bestows upon members of a community and how to move from problems to solutions and therefore practically impact the local and the global challenges confronting us.

During the introduction session, Dr. Loren King, Mrs. Jean Robertson and Dr. Alex Latta offered their definitions of the term "citizen" and its relations to the global perspective. They said that a global citizen is an individual who applies tolerance, virtue and cohesion on local and global contexts to improve the responsibilities of one community to the other.

Each panellist used their distinctive academic background to

shed some light on this definition by providing a number of different theoretical aspects. Building on each other's views, the speakers illustrated the meaning of this conference's theme through the perspective of the citizen living in a global reality.

The second session focused on major systemic issues that ranged from military to environmental to medical fields. "Carelessness in armed conflicts, space security and nuclear weapons can have devastating consequences on the human life," said John Siebert from Project Ploughshare. These issues can prevent peace and harmony from prevailing in this emerging global reality, threatening the global economy, fostering hatred and disrupting diplomatic engagement.

Permaculture, presented by Brad Peterson, is a conceptual design that creates stable ecosystems that sustain a profitable and productive environment. By providing solutions and alternatives to urban pollution and the destruction of natural landscapes, permaculture marries business ideas with ecological sustainability.

The issue of vaccinations was also brought up. According to his



SYDNEY HELLAND

ARTSY ACTIVISTS - Conference attendees created paintings in an open art space throughout the weekend.

research throughout a medical and neurological career, Dr. Andrew J. Moulden said that vaccines can cause micro-vascular strokes.

When administered to children,

these vaccines can provoke brain injuries such as autism-spectrum, sudden death, learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders.

Some believe that part of this

problem could be solved if the medical system, based on modern medicine and prescription drugs, was not controlled by for-profit corporations.

Last weekend, panels and workshops created opportunities for conference attendees to engage in discussion on current events

ALANNA WALLACE
STAFF WRITER

The theme of this year's third annual Global Citizenship Conference (GCC) was global and local involvement. Saturday's panels, speakers and workshops were centred around the growing need for both local and global activism.

Intimate panels and workshops provided an engaging atmosphere where discussion could be facilitated. Not-for-profit organization Project Empathy's AIDS in Botswana workshop provided a forum for discussion regarding HIV education in Canada as well as around the world. Other workshops - including one

about permaculture - spoke of environmental sustainability, among other important global issues.

Enhancing the conference's theme of activism and civil involvement was the panel on "inside and outside the system," which featured political science graduate Sean Goebey, Laurier political science professor Robert Leone and Dan Kellar of Anti-War at Laurier (AW@L).

The three panellists maintained an engaging discussion regarding activism outside of the system as a catalyst for change inside of the system. "[Change] will influence what happens inside the system ... by people that introduce reorgan-

ization from the outside," stated Kellar.

Goebey warned those who wished to evoke change on campus of the complexities of a four-year term as students and the resulting "short life-span" of campus activism being the result. With Leone's advice to have legitimate leadership in order to "convince people to engage in social change," discussion often led to current world events like the new Obama presidency.

For those activists in the crowd, Leone appealed to them by insisting that they be able to "stick [their] necks out for something [they] believe in." Adding to the advice for those who wish to change aspects

of the system, including discussion regarding Wilfrid Laurier University, Goebey warned activists not to alienate their own supporters while gathering followers.

Saturday's "From Problems to Solutions" panels were well-received and engaging for many delegates, and provided a transition for Sunday's theme of local activism.

Attended by all delegates, the first session on Sunday complemented those of the previous day. Waterloo Mayor Brenda Halloran stated that global issues like domestic violence, climate change and homelessness were also important local issues in need of examining. Local activists Joe Mancini, Benton Leong

and Dave Steffler agreed. All four speakers highlighted projects in the Kitchener-Waterloo region that had both global and local components.

"There is a global sense in all of you," Leong said of the many delegates in attendance, "Start locally but think globally."

From a global awareness of the issues that groups like Project Ploughshares, Global Aware and Project Empathy presented, to the national discussions regarding Aboriginal rights, water issues and even healthcare conspiracy theories, the GCC covered a number of issues important to every Laurier student that cares about activism at any level.



SYDNEY HELLAND

BEYOND BARLOW - Keynote encouraged a lifelong dedication to water.

Maude Barlow promoted a global water movement at the GCC on Sunday

HEATHER MACDONALD
INTERNATIONAL EDITOR

This year's Global Citizenship Conference ended with a topic that is familiar to many in the Grand River area: water.

Closing keynote speaker Maude Barlow focused her speech on the global water crisis, an issue that is becoming more prominent around the world. As the newly appointed first Senior Advisor on Water to the President of the United Nations General Assembly, Barlow is an expert on the subject and used the conference as an opportunity to educate and encourage those in attendance.

Barlow's speech was ridden with statistics that intended to explain the "totally failed experiment" that we have been "living under" in the last 30 years. In the midst of her 20-city tour across Ontario, she's been able to promote a new global water movement.

Although Ontarians may struggle with the exploitation of single-use water bottles and the idea that we will never run out of water, numerous communities around the world are currently dealing with serious health-related issues stemming from their water systems.

When Barlow visited Bolivia, she attended a celebration for the first public water system being turned on in one small community. She

recalled looking down a very steep hill to the area where women had to trek in order to fetch their water. One lady at the celebration explained that, every year, women hemorrhage and die due to physical stress.

During the question-and-answer period, Barlow spoke of an area in Kenya while describing the dangerous result of the capitalist nature of water management. She described a lake there as being the "most exquisite place in the world" because of the beautiful blue colour of the water and its attraction to many forms of wildlife, including one of the largest populations of hippopotami in Africa.

The lake is also ideal for growing roses and other vegetation, but it is surrounded by mansions owned by those involved in that particular agriculture business. Beyond the mansions, Barlow explained that local workers were living in "dire conditions, leading to poor sanitation that is leaking into the lake. Barlow said that it is believed the lake will be dead within a few years "because of the rose agriculture business from Europe."

She described the poverty found in South Africa as a situation in which "for every block of shanties, there is a pipe and a tap," but between the pipe and the tap is a water-cleaner that members of the community have to pay for. Barlow

repeated that these people felt this form of obtaining clean water was unacceptable. They felt that water "cannot be both a human right and something [they] had to pay for" and so they took it to court and won.

Barlow reiterated that these water-related issues are being fought by some of the poorest people in the world. She said that now "countries are forcing their government to treat their water as a human right, not a commodity."

"Rather than water being a source of conflict," Barlow said in closing, "it can be a way for people to come together and talk about how to live with each other in peace."

During the question-and-answer period after Barlow's speech, Laurier student Bryn Ossington asked for suggestions on how to secure water as a human right. Barlow's first thought was that "we have to take more of a commitment." She had said earlier that those concerned with water issues should "be married" to their tap to ensure that what's coming out of it is something everyone cares about.

Barlow's second thought was a quote from her 95-year-old friend that garnered some laughs and closed with the theme of the conference. He said, "The fight for social justice is like taking a bath; you [have to] do it every day or you stink."

Divisions in society lead to violence

Our society needs to reassess the meaning of terrorism, according to Karim

PAULA MILLAR
STAFF WRITER

Heroes, villains and victims have always been essential ingredients in everything from fairy tales to video games. Also enduring is an individual's conceptual association of heroes and victims with the self, and the villainous character with that of some other.

Interestingly, this universally accepted "them" and "us" mentality is rarely scrutinized but widely adopted by the mainstream press. Dr. Karim H. Karim, director of the Carleton School of Journalism and Communication, argues that this divorce between self and the other is to blame for the violence we see in the world today.

Friday evening, Karim gave a provocative lecture sponsored by the Canadian International Council (CIC), Laurier's Communication Studies Department and the International Migration Research Centre. The talk, entitled "Self and the Other in a Time of Terror: Myth, Media and Muslims," reinforced the idea that just as "violence is an ever-perpetual characteristic of society," and those with power "determine the structures of hierarchy," the fundamental notion placed on self and other works effectively to "pit the Western self against the Muslim other."

The war on terror, according to Karim, has become "an ideological

war about terrorism being carried out through the media," where fall-out from the battle to attach meaning to an act of terror has become more damaging than the act itself. Ultimately, Dr. Karim believes, "Mass media is to blame for drawing on myth to inform the public on terrorism."

If the mainstream media is to blame for misinforming the masses, Karim said that society must reassess what terrorism is and who terrorists are. He explained, "Terrorism" is a word manipulated by ideological sources to serve itself. This means, the United States believe a terrorist is any individual who opposes the USA, yet Hamas would define a terrorist as any individual who opposes Hamas.

Karim argued that "media portrayals ideologically construct what role [any group is] playing." While the hero may be the homeland security agents, and the citizens are the victims, the "villain is the other who conducts terrorism."

Discourse is the issue at hand. As Karim points out, "Self" cannot see 'other' as anything other than a terrorist. Also problematic is that self's brutalization of the other is seen merely as legitimate violence." Ongoing hostilities between Israelis and Hamas serve as only the most contemporary example of this issue.

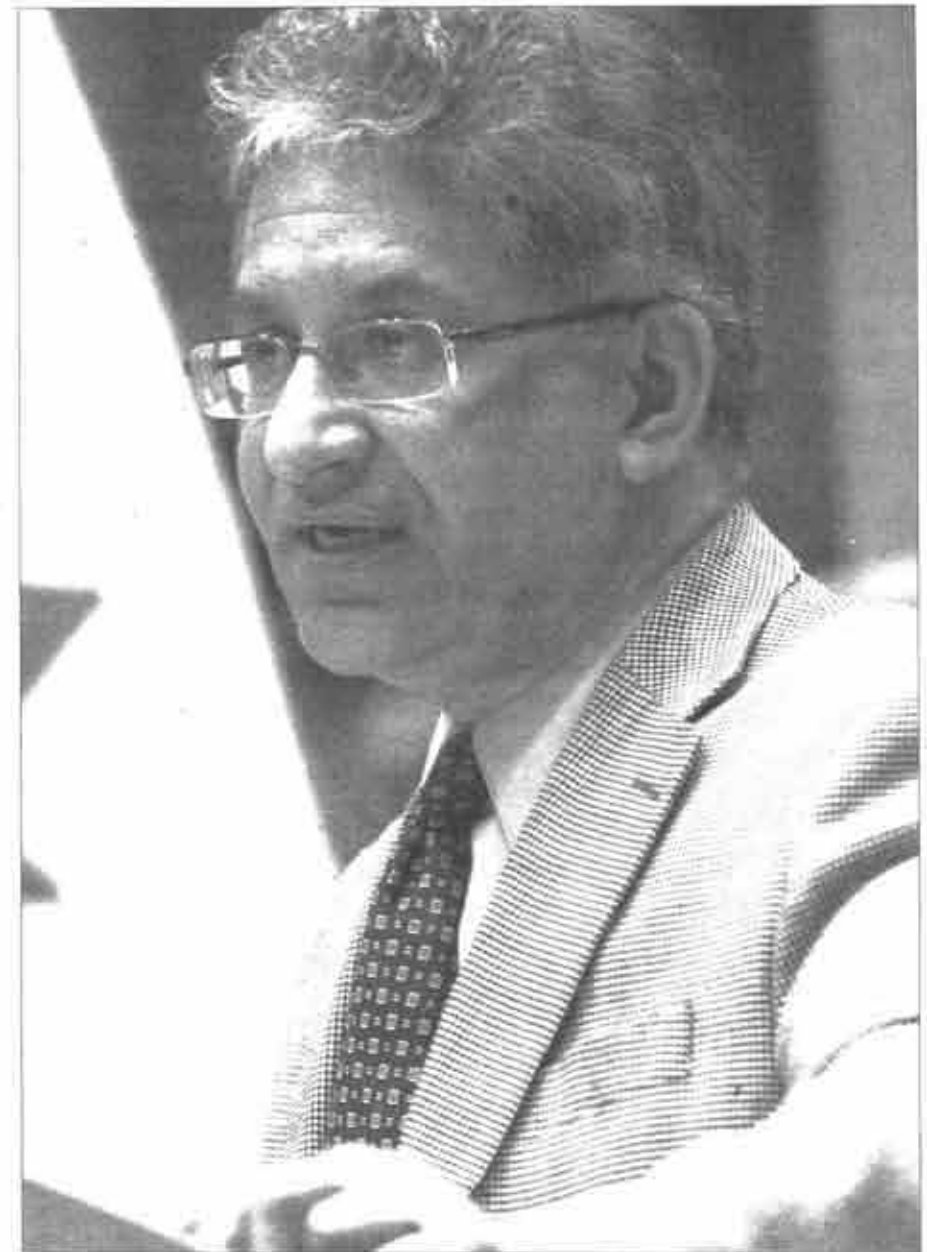
While Eastern Europe was once seen as "the other evil" of the West-

ern world, Islam has undeniably filled the void of a "post-cold-war 'other'" and Karim argued that "media discourse is at fault." In particular, Dr. Karim rejects the "use of Islam and Muslim to describe terrorism ... as [all Muslims] are invariably connected to terrorism by the use of these words." Overall, he believes the continual media portrayal of Muslims as the primary "other" of the West solidifies that community as the enemy.

"The self and other are not as polarized in reality as they are drawn out to be," said Karim. However, resistance to the complete union of self and other is upheld by societal elites. Karim believes that a healthy society would come to terms with all forms of violence in its midst. Karim maintains the only solution is to "transcend the binary framework."

In order to understand the contemporary war on terror, it is important to understand how individuals conceptualize "self," "other" and "violence." Ultimately, self and other exist at a fundamentally unconscious level and are fuelled by deep myth.

While many wonder why this situation regarding journalistic objectivity has not been dealt with, Karim explains that "unless you are very prominent in the journalistic field you must follow rules of mainstream or your work will not be used."



YUSUF KIDWAI

MEDIA TO BLAME - Karim spoke to a group about his desire for unity.

By prefacing his lecture with a disclaimer, Karim acknowledged that his critique of the mainstream media may be offensive to some. At the same time, he offered few suggestions, opting instead for a more philosophical approach.

Ultimately, Karim said the global community must arrive at an "enough is enough" realization. Only at this time will a true "meeting of minds" take place, allowing a consensus to be reached.



GETTY IMAGES

Ashley Doodnauth of *The Cord Weekly* visited Washington for the inauguration of the 44th American president, Barack Obama

ASHLEY DOODNAUTH
IJ GRANT RECIPIENT

WASHINGTON - With a record turnout for one of the most momentous occasions of the 21st century, Barack Obama's January 20 inauguration on Capitol Hill was such a grandiose affair that it seems it will not be rivalled by any other president-elect for years to come.

According to CNN, the estimated attendance of the inauguration on that cold January morning was 1.8 million, not to mention the millions more that watched on television from around the world.

In 2005, George W. Bush had 400,000 people in attendance; Bill Clinton had 800,000 present in 1993.

Although many had been gathered long before the sun rose over the Capitol, the cold did not persuade the throngs of people that enveloped the National Mall and Washington Monument to move an inch before they heard the swearing-in of America's first African-American president.

At 12:00 a.m. on January 20, patrons were already lining up outside the gates at Independence Street and 4th Street to secure a good vantage point. Once the gates were opened at 5:00 a.m. people sprinted to the front of the gated area to get a view of the Jumbotron and the Capitol in the distance.

The feelings in the crowd were mostly positive as spectators anxiously awaited the ceremonies; however, standing out in the cold for over ten hours did wear on people's good nature.

Regardless of cold weather, American flags were waved high and proud as the inauguration day commenced at 10:00 a.m.

By around 11:00 a.m., the collective sentiment was focused on one man. "Obama! Obama! Obama!" shouted the masses, as they waited to see the man of the hour. When

not chanting his name, the crowd became eerily quiet, perhaps taking in the significance of the event they were about to witness - or perhaps because they were cold.

As the speaker announced George W. Bush, "boos" erupted from the crowd across the National Mall. One man from the mass of people exclaimed, "Everybody, take off your shoes!" in reference to Bush's last appearance in Iraq, when a native journalist pelted the then-president with his shoe.

Silence fell upon the crowd once more as Barack Obama took centre stage to be sworn in as the president of the United States. Obama was heard through the massive speakers stumbling over the words - clearly the excitement had gotten to him too. It was reported that he took the oath again on Wednesday to get it perfect.

Despite this, the crowd roared with exhilaration after his final words, "So help me God."

WHEN NOT CHANTING OBAMA'S NAME, THE CROWD BECAME EERILY QUIET, PERHAPS TAKING IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVENT THEY WERE ABOUT TO WITNESS - OR PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY WERE COLD.

Soon after, it was time for Obama to take the stage and deliver his inaugural speech. The crowd became hushed as Obama began to speak - he warned of America being in the "midst of crisis" and outlined the current challenges facing the country, while assuring that "the challenges will be met."

Obama's 20-minute inaugural speech was a call to action for the American people not to despair in the face of difficulty, but to rise up and work harder.

Leaving the grounds and attempting to get anywhere in a

hurry was an impossible task as law enforcement had barricaded the streets to make way for the presidential parade route. Some say that getting in was easier than getting out of the National Mall, as patrons were forced to jump over barriers in order to find their way home.

However, some were less than enamoured with the inaugural proceedings. Andres Maduro, 22, a native Panamanian studying at Cornell University, said that he is disgusted with how people treat Obama as a "semi-deity," saying, "We haven't advanced much from the Roman Ages where the emperors were gods." Still, Maduro looks forward to seeing what Obama can do for his mother country, Panama, saying that they have high expectations of what Obama will do for foreign trade.

The pre-inaugural celebration was held a few days before at the Lincoln Memorial. Performances by Bono, Bruce Springsteen and Stevie Wonder excited the crowd as thousands sang and danced together.

There was no shortage of people at this event either. When the concert was over, a sea of people took to the streets, making it hard to navigate the surroundings. This was an obvious precursor to what would take place a couple days later at the inauguration.

The University Presidential Inaugural Conference (UPIC) had 5,000 attendees at the inauguration and held a four-day convention complete with speeches from politicians and political strategists.

Luke Russert, NBC news correspondent and son of the late broadcast journalist Tim Russert, was on hand to deliver a motivating speech to the UPIC, making it clear that the

youth vote was instrumental in Barack Obama's election. He stressed the importance of networking through media such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter to make political voices heard as well as felt.

Former Secretary of State of the Bush Administration General Colin Powell, who endorsed Obama later in his campaign, also spoke about the importance of transformational leadership and how he sees this quality in Barack Obama.

He recalled the moment he heard the results of the election on November 4, telling his captive audience that he had to sit down when he heard the good news, saying to himself at the time, "By God, we did it." Powell explained plainly that it meant so much to him for "a black man to get it."

He recalled his childhood in New York's south Bronx, knowing he was a second-class citizen. Powell touched on the issue of unity in America, making reference to his experiences in the army, where he was told, "We don't care if you're black or white: you're green now!" To Powell, there is the same sentiment in America; once you move there, you are American. You migrate there to live the American dream and you believe in certain ideals.

Powell also commented on the different types of leadership that other presidents have exhibited. Under the Clinton administration, Powell said that there was plenty of discussion and consultation, commenting that Bill Clinton loved to talk. In comparison, George W. Bush made judgements with "feelings and instincts," differing from previous presidents. It was because of these differences that Powell stepped down.

James Carville and Mary Matalin also spoke to the UPIC about their different viewpoints of the election. Matalin, a Republican strategist and former presidential advisor,

said that Barack Obama "represents the digital age" and that this is "a new era we can all take pride in." Her husband, Democratic strategist Carville, tried to put Obama's election in perspective. "What were the odds of a man with a black father, being raised by his grandmother in Hawaii, to become president?" Carville went on to say that Obama's election is history in the making.

Former Vice President Al Gore was also on hand to speak to the UPIC. He drew comparisons between Obama and JFK, both having taken office in a generation of change. "This inauguration is proof that democracy can lift our spirits and let us realize what we can be," Gore commented.

He went on to address the issue of American oil dependence and its role in America being drawn into conflicts abroad. Gore concluded with the sentiments that this inauguration is "the most vivid example of American will."

Isabella Skrzypczak, a student at St. Edwards University in Austin, Texas, reflected on the election of Barack Obama and what it means to the USA. "Coming from Texas, I never thought a minority could be elected because of the racism I had witnessed there so often," she said.

"Because of the social inequalities in American society, I was convinced that it could never happen."

One of the many people standing out on inauguration day to witness history, Skrzypczak summed up what makes Obama so special to her: "People are drawn to him because they can identify with him; he has a talent to speak directly to you."

Now all eyes are on Obama's first 100 days in office, as he tends to the financial crisis and foreign affairs.

History will continue to be made as the American public looks to Obama to achieve all it has hoped for.

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Virtual socializing

In a world turning more toward online interaction, *The Cord* investigates social networks that benefit Canadians

KARI PRITCHARD
FEATURES EDITOR

We live in the age of the Internet; it cannot be denied. Many of us probably have more Facebook friends than real-life friends, but it's time to investigate other social networking sites outside of the realm of the overly popular. As online social networking becomes more popular, take some time to expand your horizons and test the waters of some new and different socially inclined sites.

Brainify.com

Brainify.com is an online social networking site that focuses on academics. Founded by University of British Columbia computer science professor Murray Goldberg, "Brainify is meant to be effectively a global community for university and college students," he described.

"We want people to be able to share [resources] somewhere and we want them to do it on a global basis, not just within their classroom," and in a way where everybody can benefit, said Goldberg of his newly created website.

Goldberg is also the founder of the well-known online network WebCT and used his experiences with this network to help tailor Brainify.com.

"Midway through WebCT it was starting to occur to me that the walls built by course management systems were fairly high and built right around the classroom," said Goldberg. This limited communication to students taking the same courses.

Brainify relies predominantly on social bookmarking and the sharing of online resources and allows any student, professor or administrator with a university or college e-mail address to join the online community.

Through the creation of course- or topic-specific groups on Brainify, members can add different bookmarks to each group to help build up the academic resources.

When creating Brainify, Goldberg was also conscious of what people would contribute to the site, about the quality of bookmarks posted

and the answers given to community members' questions.

"Based on the reaction of the rest of the community to the members' contributions ... you get reputation points," which are used to calculate and maintain a user's reputation, explained Goldberg.

Not only does one's reputation help the community decide which people know what they talking about, but it also helps if Brainify.com is sold.

"These kind of social sites, they're very chicken and egg-y in the sense that they're not very interesting until you have a lot of people there," said Goldberg, "and people don't come until they're kind of interesting."

That is why Goldberg has decided that if Brainify is ever to be sold, 30 percent of the proceeds will go to the people who help build up Brainify before there is a lot of content.

If you're enrolled in a hard course or want to meet some people across Canada in your major, check out Brainify.com to gain some more knowledge and potentially help out others in the process.

Cherrypeel.com

Having nothing to do with either cherries or peels, this online site was created to help introduce the musically keen to new bands, while also creating a space for sprouting musicians to be heard.

Although there is no mainstream music in earshot, which may be a negative for some people, the website more importantly helps introduce different bands and music.

With bands creating music ranging from pop to out-there experimental, the easy-to-navigate subheadings like "genre filter," "new" or "top" help you find music you might be interested in.

When it comes to the inspiration for Cherrypeel.com, founder Andrew Stern said that with new forms of accessible technology, "Bands are recording without the need of a record label as well as they can distribute it, so all they really needed was someone to get the fans."

Through word-of-mouth and blogging, the originally Toronto-based website has expanded to encompass bands from all over Canada.

tracks for users to listen to, com

decide what is good or bad for the and the listeners more freedom.

"The idea is that someone can

career from writing, recording an

out the need to get signed into a

and they can gain success on the

OPEN TO ANYBODY, BAND TRACKS FOR USERS TO LISTEN TO AND RATE, ALLOWING US TO DECIDE WHAT IS GOOD OR BAD FOR THEM

Cherrypeel also has "featured" try and pick artists that represent Stern, "ones that we can see our reporting our mission of sharing m

Through Cherrypeel, users can tastes, get out the word about new working and bring the power back about new, upcoming artists out

Loonlounge.com

Loon Lounge is a Canadian-based has a unique quality of connect countries around the world that

Started by immigration attorney attempting to "provide a venue networking that's becoming pop

marketing and communications man Although the Canadian govern

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Loon Lounge is a place whe around the world can meet and Canada.

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Through online interaction be grating here, Hunter has noted to most people are finding out living."

With features like profiles, blo Lounge makes it easier for thos contacts and gain information ab

Although the website focuses

The Cord investigates some benefit Canadians

As the site is open to anybody, bands are free to upload for users to listen to, comment on and rate, allowing users to decide what is good or bad for themselves. This gives both the bands and the listeners more freedom. The idea is that someone can now go through the whole music process from writing, recording and distributing their own song without the need to get signed into a poor contract with a record label, they can gain success on their own terms," said Stern.

ON TO ANYBODY, BANDS ARE FREE TO UPLOAD TRACKS FOR USERS TO LISTEN TO, COMMENT ON AND RATE, ALLOWING USERS TO DECIDE WHAT IS GOOD OR BAD FOR THEMSELVES.

Cherrypeel also has "featured" artists for users to check out. "We pick artists that represent the cherrypeel community," said Stern. "ones that we can see our users like, ones that are also supporting our mission of sharing music openly." Through Cherrypeel, users can meet others with similar musical tastes, get out the word about new music quicker through social networking and bring the power back to the people to spread the word about new, upcoming artists outside of the mainstream realm.

loonlounge.com

Loon Lounge is a Canadian-based social networking website that has a unique quality of connecting those in Canada to people in other countries around the world that are interested in immigrating here. Created by immigration attorney David Cohen, Loon Lounge is attempting to "provide a venue for people using the trendy, social networking that's becoming popular," said Natalie Hunter, the marketing and communications manager at Loon Lounge. Although the Canadian government does provide a lot of immigration services through service agencies and organizations, "there is only so much that the government can do and governments cannot provide the same level of social support systems that real people and real relationships can provide," said Hunter. That's where Loon Lounge comes in. Loon Lounge is a place where both Canadians and people all over the world can meet and talk about what it's like to live in Canada.

Since Loon Lounge has only recently been open to Canadians, Loon Lounge's reopening has provided some positive feedback. Although online interaction between Canadians and those immigrating here, Hunter has noted that the "things that are appealing to most people are finding out about work in Canada and cost of living." With features like profiles, blogs, forums and communities, Loon Lounge makes it easier for those immigrating to Canada to make contacts and gain information about the land we call home. Although the website focuses predominantly on facilitating the

immigration process, Canadians can still make contacts around the world.

Interested in learning more about a particular country? Look it up on Loon Lounge and try to make a new friend. While you may be able to help them learn about Canada, they can help you learn more about their home.

"There's an obvious link even in rhetoric when people are speaking about immigrants, it's sort of an us and them thing and in reality that's not it," said Hunter. "In reality people that are in the process of coming to Canada are your future neighbours."

If you're interested in networking on an international level, check out Loon Lounge to make some social contacts from all over the globe.

Academia.edu

Although this academically oriented social networking site may not be specifically targeted to Canadians, many students and other Canadians can gain valuable knowledge from it.

"It's kind of like Facebook, but for academics," said founder and CEO of Academia Richard Price.

Academia is a social space where users can create profiles to share papers, conference dates and research interests, aiming to "create a big hub of researchers and academics from around the world [so] that you can quickly see who has the same research interests as you and you can get a really quick overview of what's going on in your field," said Price.

Although Academia can be navigated by non-users, the ability to make a profile is currently only available to graduates and above.

But undergraduates fear not. "We will actually later on allow undergraduates to sign up," said Price. "[Undergrads will] be asked to say what courses they're taking and which professors are teaching them and so on."

Canada is only one of roughly seventy-eight countries involved with Academia, gaining popularity through word-of-mouth and creating a well-rounded source of research interests and departments for students to look through.

As academics join and post papers, students can search through research interests pertinent to their classes and can discover relevant sources for their work much like other academic sites.

What makes Academia unique is its easy navigation features. Users can search by school, department or research interest and bring up a abundance of resources for eager learners to choose from.

With Academia, Price is aiming to make information for students and academics available with one click of a mouse, yet admits that they're still some distance away from their end goal. "But if you had every researcher listed with an active profile, that sort of thing becomes possible," said Price - and it's a task that Academia has begun to tackle.

Whether you're looking for a source to use in a paper or searching for inspiration for a thesis, Academia is a website helping students to accomplish either task.



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875 Highland Rd. W.
(519) 741-1099

Fairview Park Mall
2960 Kingway Dr., Unit C3
(519) 748-0484

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Lynden Park Mall
84 Lynden Rd.
(519) 770-0389

Canada Trust Square
43 King George Rd.
(519) 758-1811

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge Centre Mall
355 Hespeler Rd., Unit 175
(519) 622-9749

South Cambridge Shopping Centre
200 Franklin Blvd. S., Unit 40
(519) 620-8564

Crossroads Plaza
415 Hespeler Rd., Unit 4
(519) 624-5047

STRATFORD

211 Ontario St., Unit 2
(519) 271-1581

WATERLOO

Conestoga Mall
550 King St. N., Unit 5G
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Super Bowl XLIII - One for the ages

Cord Sports looks in-depth at this year's Super Bowl contenders, making predictions about the outcome of the game. From oldie Kurt to the fearsome Big Ben, the game promises to be a battle between age and experience.



Kurt Warner

Age **37**

Seasons in league
11

4583
Regular-season passing yards

96.9
QB rating

30/14
Regular-season touchdowns/interceptions

66.3%
Playoff completion percentage

26
Times sacked in regular season



Ben Roethlisberger

Age **26**

Seasons in league
5

3301
Regular-season passing yards

80.1
QB rating

17/15
Regular-season touchdowns/interceptions

55.9%
Playoff completion percentage

42
Times sacked in regular season

STATS COMPILED BY CHRIS BALUSCHAK

Fitzgerald drawing heady comparisons

TREVOR SCHIEDEL
STAFF WRITER

As Larry Fitzgerald dominated the NFC Championship game and willed the Arizona Cardinals to a Super Bowl XLIII berth, a thought began generating and a question was being asked. Is Larry Fitzgerald going to be the best wide receiver to ever play in the NFL?

Easy now; let's hold up for a second. There is no way we can compare Fitzgerald to the great wide receivers of all time yet.

Fitzgerald has only been in the league for five years and to compare him to wide receivers such as Isaac Bruce, Tim Brown, Marvin Harrison and — arguably the best football player ever — Jerry Rice, is just not realistic. These men have been consistently dominant at the position for their entire careers and rank in the top five in NFL history in career receptions and receiving yards.

But it would be smart to stress the word "yet."

What Fitzgerald has done this post-season has been nothing short of godly. In three games, he has broken the post-season receiving record with 419 yards and he still has the Super Bowl to play.

We are witnessing the greatest playoff

receiving performance of all time and, with a win on Sunday and another solid performance by Fitzgerald, his 2009 post-season could go down as one of the best by any player ever.

At 25 years old, Fitzgerald has so much left in his career. If these playoff performances evolve into a game-in, game-out regularity, he will without a doubt be amongst the all-time greats in the NFL record books.

The great thing about Fitzgerald is that he separates himself from other modern-day wide receivers in more than just yards and touchdowns. In an era of prima donnas, trouble-making and locker-room-killing wide receivers such as Terrell Owens, Keyshawn Johnson, Randy Moss and Chad Johnson, Fitzgerald is a team-first player who leads by example.

He lets his play do the talking, not his mouth.

So while we watch Larry Fitzgerald battle the number-one defence in the NFL on Sunday, realize we may be witnessing a future Hall of Famer in the biggest game of his career. However, we should all try to avoid the comparisons. It is unfair to the all-time greats to make such comparisons yet.

But once again, it would be smart to stress the word "yet."

Cardinals coaches may be looking for revenge against the Steelers

TREVOR SCHIEDEL
STAFF WRITER

One of the more underrated stories surrounding Super Bowl XLIII is the battle between Pittsburgh Steelers head coach Mike Tomlin and Arizona Cardinals coaches Ken Whisenhunt and Russ Grimm.

It was about two years ago when all three men were finalists interviewing for the Steelers head coaching job. Many figured Whisenhunt or Grimm to be the likely choice since they had both been coaching with the Steelers for six and seven years, respectively.

However, Tomlin wowed Steelers owner Dan Rooney and surprisingly won the job. Whisenhunt landed the Cardinals head coaching job and immediately hired Russ Grimm to be assistant head and offensive line coach in Arizona.

As second-year coaches heading into 2008, both teams had high hopes, but different expectations.

The Steelers were thinking Super Bowl or bust while the Cardinals were just looking to make the playoffs for the first time since 1998 and the second time since being moved to Arizona in 1988.

The Steelers proceeded to do what many thought they would, while the Cardinals went on to "shock the world."

Whisenhunt and Tomlin led their re-

spective teams into Tampa Bay with even more than the Super Bowl at stake. Whisenhunt has a chance for redemption and surely wants to prove that the Steelers could have been even better with him at the helm.

Tomlin, who inherited a team one year removed from a championship, wants to prove his success is not only the product of a great team and that he can be the difference between winning and winning a Super Bowl.

Although Tomlin has the edge as the Steelers are the clear favourite in the game, it would be foolish to count out Whisenhunt, Grimm and the Cardinals.

After all, they have been counted out all post-season and Whisenhunt has his team thriving in the "us against the world" attitude. There is no doubt this attitude will continue during Super Bowl week.

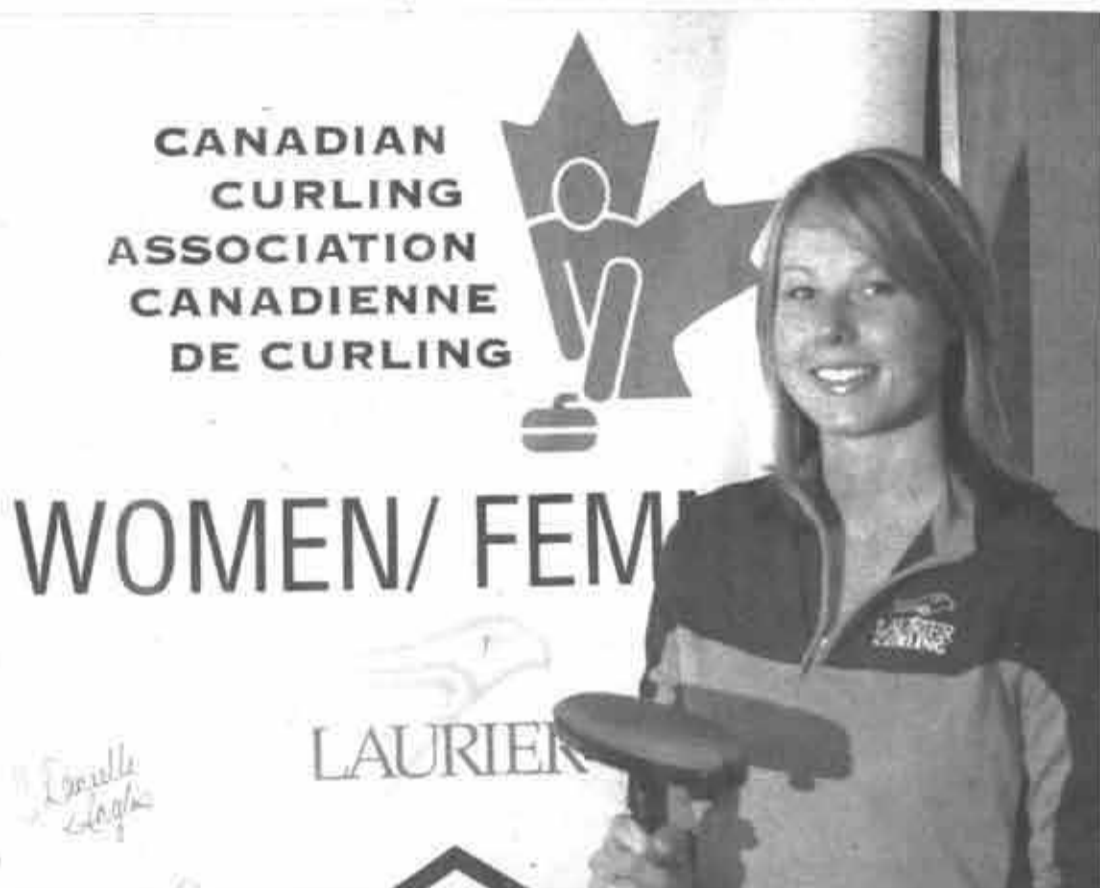
And let's not forget, between Whisenhunt and Grimm there is a lot of knowledge of the Steelers' schemes and techniques, especially since these two men were catalysts in implementing them.

This game will not prove who the better coach is or who should have been hired. No game really can.

It will, however, go a long way in measuring success and potentially creating a legacy.



The Sportlight | Matt Mapletoft and Hollie Nicole



RYAN STEWART

CRAZY CURLERS - From left, skip of the men's team Matt Mapletoft and skip of the women's squad Hollie Nicol.

GOLDEN HAWK UPDATE

Week of January 27-February 1, 2009

RECENT SCORES

01.21.09
M Basketball 63 - McMaster 71
W Basketball 67 - McMaster 52

01.22.09
M Hockey 0 - Waterloo 3

01.25.09
W Volleyball 3 - Guelph 1
M Volleyball 3 - Guelph 1

01.24.09
M Basketball 68 - Western 99
W Basketball 69 - Western 57
W Volleyball 0 - McMaster
M Volleyball 0 - McMaster
W Hockey 3 - Waterloo
M Hockey 4 - Western

01.25.09
W Hockey 8 - Waterloo 0

UPCOMING HOME GAMES

01.29.09
M Hockey vs Western
Sunlife Financial Arena, 7:30 p.m.

01.30.09
M Hockey vs Windsor
Sunlife Financial Arena, 7:30 p.m.

01.31.09
W Volleyball vs Waterloo
Athletic Complex, 2:00 p.m.
W Hockey vs Waterloo
Sunlife Financial Arena, 7:30 p.m.
M Volleyball vs Waterloo
Athletic Complex, 2:00 p.m.
M Volleyball Autograph Day
Athletic Complex

LAURIER BOOKSTORE ATHLETES OF THE WEEK

Kate Harrison
Men's Basketball
Whitney Rich
Swimming

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ANDREA MILLET STAFF WRITER

While only in his second year at Laurier, political science student Matt Mapletoft has shown great skill and leadership and is currently the skip of the Golden Hawks men's curling team.

After ten years of practicing, Matt's hard work is paying off as he prepares to travel with the other Hawks curlers to China to serve as a young and talented representative of Canada.

It was Mapletoft's parents who sparked his interest in curling. His father was also a curler, and with a rink close to his house growing up it was no surprise that he excelled at the sport.

He played several sports throughout his youth such as hockey, soccer and even a year of lacrosse.

After a broken knee left him unable to continue with hockey, Mapletoft turned his focus to curling. It was a sport that he both enjoyed and was good at, and it allowed him to play despite his injury.

Mapletoft first saw the results

of his hard work in high school, when his team placed second in a provincial championship.

When he came to Laurier in his first year, Mapletoft assisted his new team in taking the national title.

Now, Matt will be heading to China next month with his fellow Hawks where he will have the opportunity to wear red and white as a representative of Canada, both on and off the ice.

"It's pretty wicked," Mapletoft said in anticipation of the trip. "Not something I expected coming in first year; to win a national championship with Laurier."

While Mapletoft and his teammates have become very close, practicing for China and building relationships with the rookies on this year's team, he has not lost his focus.

With the pressure to do well competing for Canada, as well as the pressures of adjusting to a new team for this season and keeping up with school work, he is doing well learning the difficult balancing act a student athlete must maintain.

ANDREA MILLET STAFF WRITER

Fourth-year kinesiology student Hollie Nicol grew up in Markham and began curling when she was ten.

With her dad as coach and mentor, Nicol developed her skills over the last decade, now standing as the skip for the Golden Hawks.

She will be representing Canada in international competition in China next month.

"My dad has been really helpful because he's always been my coach," she said. "He's always supported me, both my parents have."

In high school, Nicol kept active playing soccer and volleyball, as well as participating in track and field and cross-country, but it was in curling that she found the most success.

Landing opportunities to travel all over Canada as well as to Germany and Switzerland. It was hard to resist the sport for which she had so much talent.

When she came to Laurier four years ago, Nicol joined the curling team and has since been a strong

member and leader. While still enjoying other sports, such as intramural volleyball, it is in the curling arena where she spends most of her time.

After securing gold at the national championships last year, Nicol will be travelling to China with her Hawk teammates to represent Canada in competition.

"They had the Canadian national anthem playing, and I was just looking at the flag being like, I get to represent Canada, this is so cool! It just gave me the chills," said Nicol reflecting on last year's championships.

"Hopefully that anthem will be playing for us."

After graduation, Nicol is looking ahead to her future and considering law school as the next step.

While the time commitment to her school work there will be great, she doesn't plan on giving up curling.

"It's something you can play until you're older. I played with a woman who was eighty years old last week," Nicol says of the sport. "I definitely want to keep it."

CORD/ONLINE

> cordweekly.com
> Sports

Golden Hawks Basketball

Check out CordWeekly.com for coverage of this past weekend's men's and women's games.

Lady Hawks heating up

JUSTIN FAUTEUX
STAFF WRITER

After getting blown out by Windsor last weekend, the Wilfrid Laurier Golden Hawks women's basketball team looked more like a team on the rise this week, with a pair of wins; 67-52 over the McMaster Marauders and 69-57 against the Western Mustangs.

Men fall to Mustangs

TIEJA MACLAUGHLIN
STAFF WRITER

The Wilfrid Laurier men's basketball team tipped off against the Western Mustangs Saturday afternoon at the Athletic Complex, and after coming out strong in the first half, the Golden Hawks fell short in the second, losing the game 99-68.

Holy Puck!

NHL BLOG

Check out CordWeekly.com for continuing coverage and opinions regarding the NHL season and the drama surrounding it. This week's topics include "When will the cup return to Canada?" and conclusions from the all-star weekend.

Changes coming to hockey officiating

After controversial officiating caused concerns among the Laurier hockey community, steps were taken to lodge a complaint and demand changes

LAUREN MILLET
SPORTS EDITOR

After controversial officiating in their home game on January 17 against the Brock Badgers, the Wilfrid Laurier women's hockey team has been involved in prompting much-needed changes to refereeing at their home games.

After what was interpreted as unprofessional conduct on the part of the referee and linesmen, Director of Laurier Athletics Peter Baxter lodged a complaint to Ontario University Athletics (OUA).

The complaint was filed with the understanding that there had been disrespectful conduct from both the referees and the players. Two WLU players were thrown out of the game.

"The issue with the officials has nothing to do with their interpretation of [the calls]," said Baxter. "It has to deal with their conduct towards our student athletes."

OUA rules and code of conduct state that there is zero tolerance when a coach makes negative statements to the press. Both Hawks'

coach Rick Osborne and Badgers' coach Todd Erskine were given a one-game suspension for their comments to the press.

Once the complaint was lodged, the OUA was in contact with the Waterloo Hockey Referee Association (WHRA), to find a solution to the problem.

Baxter feels that the results proposed by the WHRA did not address the specific problem of the referees' behaviour in the January 17 game.

"My issue is that if we, as a league and as an athletic department, hold accountable the actions of people within our responsibility, then they should do the same thing," said Baxter.

"If a group doesn't want to make people accountable for their actions, then I don't want my student athletes subjected to the same kind of behaviour."

Since the OUA does not have authority to sanction referees within an association, the decision was made to pull out of WHRA and move officiating responsibilities to the Ontario Women's Hockey Association (OWHA).

Laurier will now have exclusively female referees officiating their games.

"I think it's time. I've been outspoken about the quality of officials at the national level and I want to be part of the solution," said Baxter.

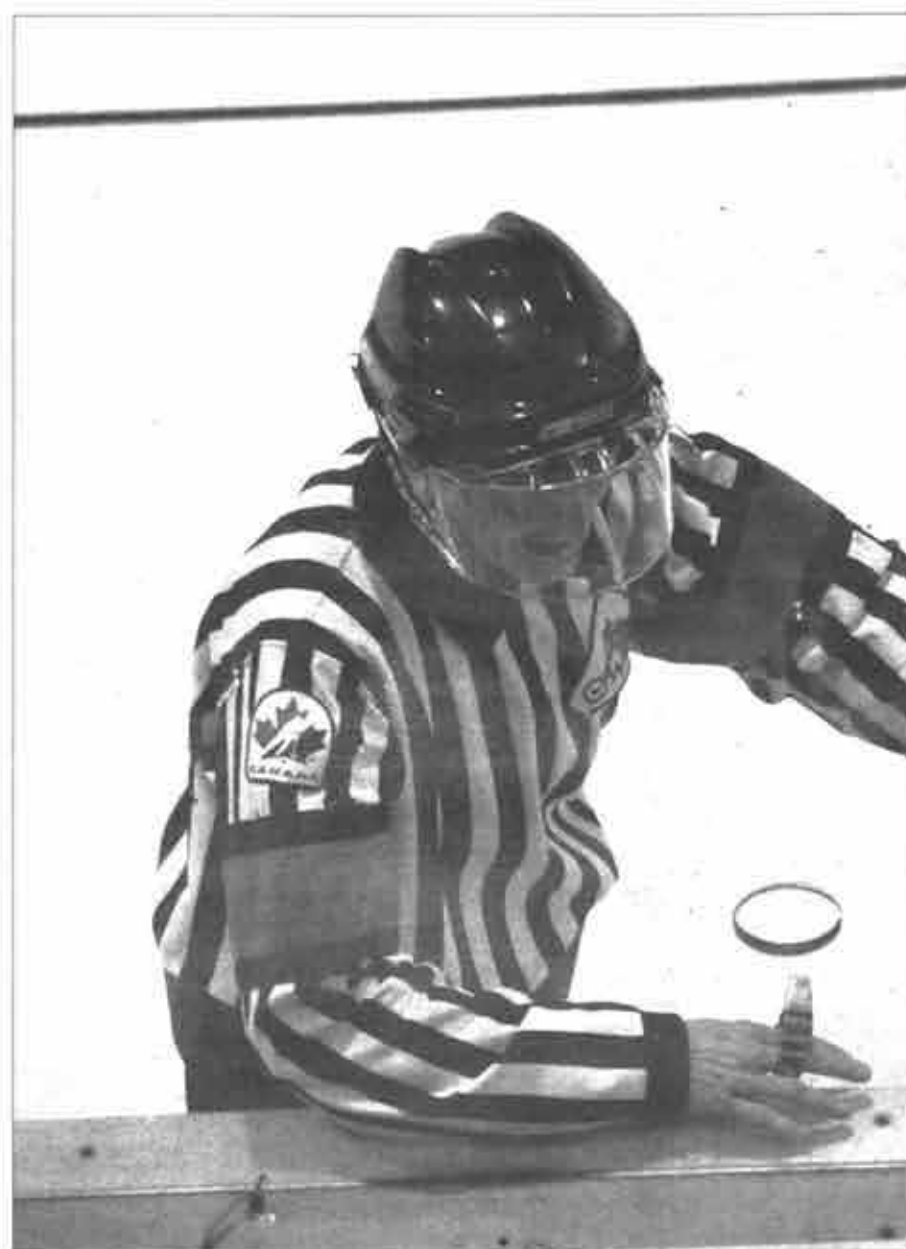
There was also a similar issue of questionable officiating that occurred at the 2008 Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) National Championships, where Laurier took home the silver medal.

Coaches of teams at the Championships expressed the need for more education and professional development for female referees.

Baxter said that having the women gain experience at this refereeing level can benefit them and allow them to grow.

Since there is no real mentorship program for women, Baxter thinks that this might serve as recruitment to get more young women into refereeing.

"There needs to be some encouragement and it fits with the long-term plan," said Baxter about the future of the level of the sport.



RYAN STEWART

IT'S OFFICIAL - WLU women's hockey will be refereed by the OWHA.

Hawks defeat Warriors twice

Muirhead shines as the Hawks move to 21-0

JUSTIN FAUTEUX
STAFF WRITER

In the aftermath of last week's refereeing debacle, the Wilfrid Laurier Golden Hawks women's hockey team extended their season-long winning streak to 21 games over the weekend, with a pair of wins over cross-town rivals the Waterloo Warriors.

The first installment of the home and home series saw the Hawks come out on top 4-1, with assistant coach Jim Rayburn behind the bench, as Head Coach Rick Osborne was serving a one-game suspension as a result of last week's officiating situation.

"WE KNEW CAITLIN HAD TOP-SIX FORWARD POTENTIAL. ONCE SHE GOT HER CONFIDENCE, SHE HAS BECOME A DYNAMITE PLAYER."

- Rick Osborne, head coach

The Hawks saw goals from Andrea Ironside, Lauren Barch, Alicia Martin and Kaley Powers, with Barch's second-period tally marking the 100th point of her Golden

Hawk career.

On Sunday night, the Hawks welcomed Osborne back to the bench, and with a new officiating crew on the ice, blew the Warriors away 8-0.

"The officiating was very good tonight," was all Osborne had to say on the issue. The controversy had no effect on the match, as the crew called a balanced and controlled game.

With the refs out of the equation, the Hawks were able to flat-out dominate. The line of Barch, Ironside and rookie Caitlin Muirhead was particularly effective, combining for five of the Hawks' eight goals.

The line's production culminated in a breakout game for Muirhead as the Waterloo native recorded the first hat trick of her university career.

"It was really exciting," said Muirhead. "Our line was playing really well and I wouldn't have been able to do it without them."

"[Barch and Ironside] see the ice so well, so I just try and get open for



RYAN STEWART

SLAPSHOT - Rookie Caitlin Muirhead scores one of her three goals in Sunday's game against Waterloo.

them because I know they're able to get the puck to me. They're awesome players for sure."

The hat trick gives Muirhead seven goals on the season, and she has only recently begun to hit her offensive stride.

The rookie forward's increased production hasn't gone unnoticed by her coach, as Muirhead has seen her role expand greatly in recent weeks.

"We knew Caitlin had top-six forward potential," said Osborne. "Once she got her confidence, she has become a dynamite player."

The terrific leadership on this Hawks team has played a huge role in Muirhead's development.

Players such as Barch and Ironside, along with team captain Andrea Bevan and veterans such as Stephanie Crarey and Kate Psota have been terrific role models for all the younger players on the team.

"All the girls are really encouraging and supportive. It's a really good group to be involved with," said Muirhead. "Playing on a high-level team like this, it really motivates you to step up your game."

Another key factor in the big win was the stellar performance from veteran netminder Cindy Eadie.

In her third regular-season start this time around with the Hawks, Eadie stopped all 19 shots she faced and has yet to surrender a goal in

any of those three starts.

Having Eadie along with third-year starting goalie Liz Knox gives the Hawks a massive amount of skill and experience in net.

"It's really a coach's dream to have Knox and Eadie both in net," said Osborne. "You don't have to burn any one of the two out and you can switch back and forth without skipping a beat."

Now sitting at 21-0-0 on the season, the Hawks have a commanding 12-point lead on second-place Guelph in the OUA standings, and rank third in Canada.

They resume play next Saturday, January 31 at home against the University of Toronto Varsity Blues.

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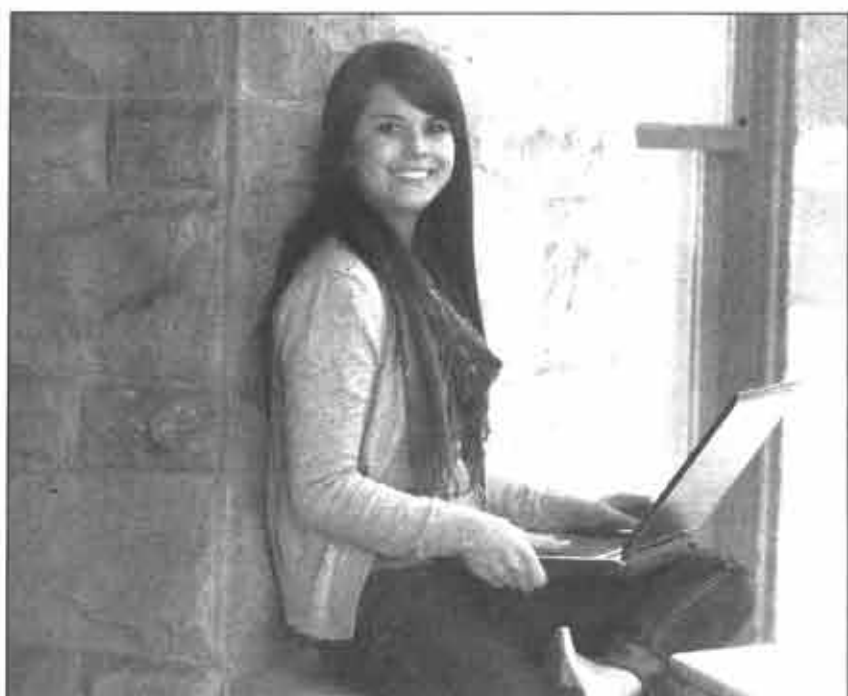


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	2		3				8	4
								1
	1	4	7		8		5	
6			2		3			9
	3		6		5	8	1	
8								
5	9				4		2	
7		1	5		2		9	8

Last issue's solution:

3	6	9	1	8	5	7	4	2
2	5	4	7	9	6	8	1	3
8	7	1	3	4	2	9	5	6
5	4	2	6	7	1	3	9	8
6	3	8	9	5	4	2	7	1
1	9	7	8	2	3	4	6	5
4	2	3	5	1	9	6	8	7
9	8	5	2	6	7	1	3	4
7	1	6	4	3	8	5	2	9

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Dining Hall continues to disappoint students

Maclean's On Campus recently published a review of Wilfrid Laurier University's Dining Hall, giving it a meagre one star out of five.

This low rating hardly comes as a surprise. Even though Food Services underwent considerable effort to revamp the Dining Hall this year, their changes did not alleviate many of the long-time problems students have experienced from the service.

The *Maclean's* critique proves that students are not alone in their view that the Dining Hall is of substandard quality.

The On Campus reviewers began by pointing out a common discrepancy held by students: the Dining Hall's hours are limited. The reviewers were perplexed that a school's cafeteria would close at 6 p.m. on a Sunday.

Maclean's also pointed out that the food wasn't very good, something students can attest to as well. Fruits and vegetables aren't always fresh, and some meals, especially the value menu options, are often served lukewarm.

The review also noted that meal options were limited, especially for vegetarians.

On top of the criticisms brought up by *Maclean's* in their one visit to the Dining Hall, students who visit it frequently are likely to notice other problems.

For one thing, many of the staff members can be unpleasant to students, especially during peak hours.

Students have also complained about prices being high.

Despite undergoing renovations this summer, the Dining Hall still frequently operates only two cash registers during prime hours, creating large lines.

These points are familiar to most students, and this is an indication that there are clear, longtime flaws with the way the Dining Hall serves the student body.

The recent *Maclean's* review only serves to remind us of what we think every day: that our food services can better accommodate the student population.

It is important that Food Services increases its efforts to collect and respond to feedback from the Dining Hall's customers. The current level of service is not acceptable either to students or to business operators.

Furthermore, there are currently four candidates running for president of Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union (WLUSU). Promising to advocate for an improved Dining Hall would be a great way for candidates to fulfill their roles as elected student leaders.

As for Food Services, having a long-term contract with the university is no reason not to seek improvement. While not all these complaints can be remedied all at once, some improvement clearly needs to be seen.

Smartphones help schooling

Beginning in August 2009, MBA students at Laurier will be given BlackBerry Smartphones to use with integrated curriculum material.

The initiative means not only that students get to use Smartphones to access course material, but also allows them to find innovative ways to use technology in the classroom.

It is an affirmation that the School of Business and Economics recognizes the importance of technology in the future of the academic and business worlds, and wants its graduates to be future leaders.

It's clear that academics and

technology are closely linked, but this initiative goes beyond PowerPoint slides and online quizzes to teach skills that will translate to the real world.

Projects like this are important because they help ensure that the methods of university education remain relevant in a changing society.

Laurier as a whole should learn from the MBA program to pursue projects such as this that seek out new ways to make its students the leaders of tomorrow.

These unsigned editorials were agreed upon by at least two-thirds of The Cord's editorial board and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Cord's volunteers, staff or WLUSU.

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GRAPHIC BY MATT ENGLISH

Vaccination campaign was too aggressive

Mumps vaccination advertisements didn't even describe the disease



DAVE SHORE
OPINION EDITOR

No hugs. No parties. No classes. No bars. No fun.

What could this possibly be referring to? Well, unless you've been living under a remarkably large rock for the past few weeks, you should recognize these as the symptoms of having mumps, or at least, so says the government of Ontario.

The mumps are a contagious disease, but the advertising campaign aimed at promoting the free mumps vaccinations on campus yesterday seemed to spread just as rapidly.

Posters warning students about the disease sprang up everywhere, not only on campus, but in bars and clubs around the Waterloo community. The vaccination campaign reached its climax on Monday, when demonstrators took turns standing in a large plastic bubble for hours in the Concourse to raise awareness for the program.

While I'm not necessarily against vaccinations, I do think the campaign promoting them on campus was too aggressive rather than informative.

First of all, what do you know about mumps? If all you've seen are the posters advocating the vaccine, then you'll know that "mumps is a very contagious

disease that can have serious complications."

In other words, the campaign on campus asked you to get vaccinated for a disease without really telling you what the disease is or does.

Going to the website provided on these posters provides a little more information. It describes mumps as the "painful swelling of one or both salivary glands," sometimes followed by further complications.

The most serious complication usually cited along with mumps is orchitis in males, the swelling of the testicles that can sometimes lead to sterility. *The Windsor Star* reports that 30 percent of males that contract mumps will get orchitis.

Okay, so the mumps sound pretty bad. But what Ontario's Ministry of Health doesn't tell you is that the mumps themselves, while highly contagious, don't require medical treatment. Like the flu, the disease only calls for a few days of rest.

As for orchitis, the actual possibility of full sterility is next-to-none. Orchitis usually only affects one testicle, and even in the case of that testicle becoming sterile, the other testicle produces more than enough sperm to conceive.

Yesterday's on-campus vaccination clinic is part of a province-wide program to offer vaccinations to all university and college students. While students have the choice to be vaccinated, the one-sided campaign clearly shows that

the government of Ontario wants us all to have the vaccination.

The first 100 participants of the program yesterday were even given free prizes as an incentive to get the vaccine.

Yet, for all this, there has been no mention of the controversy surrounding vaccinations. Some health professionals are convinced that vaccines in general cause more harm than they do good to a person's health. Others say that there is no conclusive evidence that vaccines even help to prevent diseases.

Specific to the MRR vaccine – the one used to prevent measles, mumps and rubella – there have been concerns in the UK that the vaccine caused autism in young children. While this claim has been widely discredited, controversy still remains over the health benefits of these shots.

Overall, being vaccinated is seen as the healthy and socially responsible thing to do. I don't have a PhD in biology; I cannot say for certain whether or not vaccinations are worthwhile.

The point is that neither can anyone else. The practice of vaccination is still contestable, and should be a personal choice for all those involved. Any campaign on the subject should be one informing students of its benefits and risks, rather than a one-sided effort to inoculate the entire population.

Undergrad TAs need strict regulations

It is unfair that students can be graded by other students, often those without proper training or full understanding of the course



JONATHAN RIVARD
FROM THE SOAPBOX

Do you often feel like you are graded unfairly? Maybe it's time you looked into who is doing the marking, and just what qualifications they have.

I recently heard an anecdote about a first-year Laurier student hired to be a Tutorial Assistant (TA) for a first-year course. This student completed the fall class, and proceeded to assist in the winter term

— six months out of high school and she was already grading and aiding peers at a university level.

This story serves to illustrate the current lack of requirements for undergraduate teaching assistants, and the need for a means of regulating their hire. It's time we reassess the value of undergrad TAs.

Although undergraduate TAs are all too common in Canadian universities, the concept still irks me. I'm in disbelief that a peer — potentially a lower-calibre student — is given the power to grade student assignments.

We need to ask ourselves if it's acceptable for inexperienced, im-

mature students to take on such a tremendous position of authority.

I'm not saying undergrads shouldn't be hired as TAs — I know many that do an excellent job — instead, my issue rests with TAs that are new to the university scene. Marking requires a strong command of the course concepts, and this mastery isn't always achieved in the first few years of an undergraduate degree.

For most undergrads struggling to cram and get decent grades, concepts are only memorized long enough to regurgitate them into an exam booklet. Expecting a student to remember the material from a

year before and then mark students' grasp of the material is ridiculous.

When lucky, the professor implements a marking scheme or reviews the marked papers personally. But due to crowded classrooms and overworked staff, the grade is often at the discretion of the TA.

Furthermore, a solid understanding of course material is not enough to effectively grade a student. Four or five years spent writing countless essays and muddling through a host of bibliographic formats is an education in itself.

I know my essay-writing has considerably improved since I first attended Laurier, and I'd be naïve to expect my abilities to plateau and progress no further before I'm finished.

Undergrad TA-ship can provide practical experience for those interested in teaching and education but, when marking duties are passed along to students, the professor is virtually severed from the students' progress.

Marking is not only a chance for educators to track their students' academic development, but it is also an opportunity to provide invaluable feedback. The growth of a student's writing style, focus and ideas relies on such criticism. A lack of qualified feedback equals a deficit in our education.

Since it's impossible to avoid using undergrad TAs, I don't think it's unreasonable to establish a criterion for potential assistants.

Currently, Laurier offers no standards for hiring teaching assistants, and the decision is often left to the professor. We're expected to trust their discretion in choosing an aide, yet the selection process goes little beyond their pre-existing personal

relationships with students.

Establishing a required minimum GPA and grade-level for TAs would confront the issue of hiring academically unqualified and immature students. Not only would standards improve the quality of assistance that students receive, but it would help eliminate favouritism and personal bias in the hiring process as well.

Wilfrid Laurier's only measure of quality control is found in the Annual Teaching Assistants Conference held by the Office of Educational Development (OED). Although the OED does a fine job securing a number of qualified presenters, the training is nothing more than brief workshops, PowerPoint presentations and a free lunch; the entire day of training lasts 4 ½ hours.

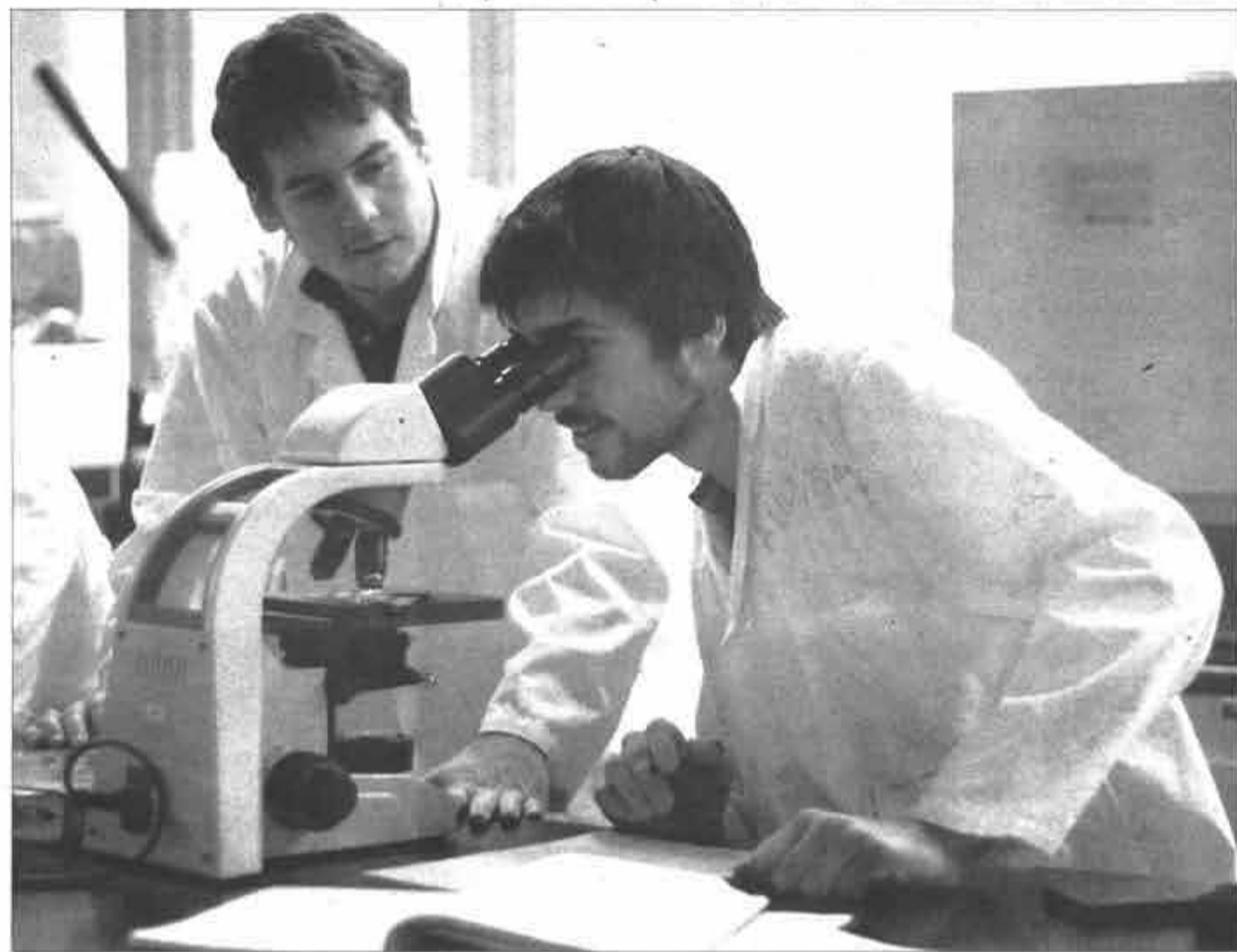
A single afternoon spent in lecture cannot qualify anyone for TA-ship, especially when the conference isn't mandatory. For new TAs, following mandatory GPA and senior-level student requirements, compulsory training and education would be a good second step.

For the benefit of Laurier's students, it should be remembered that TA stands for "teaching assistant" not "teacher's assistant." The position is not meant to assist an overworked professor, but to aid in the education of the student body.

Without the educated assessment, critical feedback or direction from a qualified, senior-level TA, students aren't experiencing the academic growth they should.

Until the hiring process is re-evaluated, I would suggest you ask your professor to personally mark your paper.

letters@cordweekly.com



KAREEM LARCHER

I GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS - An undergraduate TA teaches a botany lab.

Obama maintaining American egotism



MICHAEL KOCHIEFF
THE EVERYMAN

I must say that after reading Barack Obama's inauguration transcript I felt inspired, but anxious. Obama presented himself as a character committed to peace and dignity, yet prepared to engage in pragmatic decision-making.

The steady barrage of American and Canadian punditry has caused me to believe that these two goals cannot be fused.

Yet I remain hesitant. I am not a Republican and I am also not a Democrat. While Barack Obama's vision is inspiring, I remain, unlike most Canadians, a sceptic of this new administration.

More broadly, I remain a sceptic of America. Still, I possess an anxious hope that Barack Obama will give me reason to drop my guard. In this article, using only quotes from Barack Obama's inauguration speech, I will provide a few reasons for my own brand of Canadian scepticism.

If I in any way misrepresent the vision of

Barack Obama, feel free to chastise.

At the beginning of his speech, Obama addressed sceptics like me directly by saying, "Now, there are some who question the scale of our ambitions — who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans.

Their memories are short. For they have forgotten what this country has already done; what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage."

America, as Barack Obama's speech revealed, is more of a faith than a nation. The free men and women of America have accomplished many great things, but they have also engaged in some pretty dastardly doings. I need not list them off.

To me the speech revealed little of this legacy; it presented a view of American history and the American future that demands faith rather than reason. Obama's synopsis of American history is not a faithful one.

Midway through his speech Obama stated that, "Time and again these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked 'til their hands were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than the sum of our individual ambitions; greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction."

What, then, is the source of America's current state of discord? While the Bush administration may be largely responsible for the current scenario, the American people must share the blame for voting him in twice and perpetuating the culture of egotism.

Obama remarks that, "We are the keepers of this legacy. Guided by these principles once more, we can meet those new threats that demand even greater effort — even greater co-operation and understanding between nations."

Obama's appeal to co-operation with other nations is refreshing. However, I am still sceptical.

It seems to me that America still conceives of itself as the proverbial centre of the world.

They are the keepers of the "tempering qualities of humility and restraint." Like Bush and the Republicans, Obama and the Democrats cling to the myth of American altruism.

I say this not as another Canadian anti-American, but as an individual who believes that the ground has indeed shifted. So much so that fanciful notions of an American saviour must be cast aside. The Obama America is indeed powerful and a great deal more co-operative, but the time has come to part with the ego.

Nearing the end of his inauguration address Obama declared that, "Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience's sake. And so to all other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born: know that America is a friend of each nation."

It is time that America realized how much they need the world. While the "faith and determination" of the American people is necessary, it is not sufficient. I fear that this reality has yet to sink in.

The breadth and depth of the current crisis is overwhelming. It is an indicator that a complete overhaul of the American psyche is due.

Over the past few weeks and months many Canadians, inspired by Barack Obama, have sharply criticized the lack of hopefulness in Canadian politics. These criticisms have some merit.

Yet we Canadians have something profound to contribute: awareness. If being aware of your limitations is akin to hopelessness, then I declare myself a hopeless Canadian.

letters@cordweekly.com

Lefties are persecuted



ALLIE MAXTED
RESIDENT CYNIC

With Obama elected the first black president of the United States, it appears we have reached tremendous heights in minority rights. But while this is surely cause for celebration, there is much left to do in the fight for human equality.

I am here to bring out the voice of a silent but increasingly restless minority that for years has faced prejudice and discrimination, and whose time to fight may soon be coming.

Though you wouldn't know it looking at can openers, notebooks or cameras, about 10 percent of the population is believed to be left-handed - with that number higher in males than females.

Over the years, left-handedness has become more acceptable in the general public and some strides have been made towards accommodation.

In pop culture, *The Simpsons* character Ned Flanders opened the Leforium, a store selling products for lefties. Its stock included everything from left-handed notebooks to can openers to pens.

A real-life Leforium, called Anything Left Handed, has opened up

in the UK and online. The internet has become a source for the provision of left-handed products, since it is more capable of reaching the fairly dispersed market.

The Internet has also acted as a tool for organization and community-building, including a Left-Handers club which claims to have over 45,000 members and cites August 13 as International Left-Handers Day.

The proportion of openly left-handed people is much larger for the youth population, suggesting that this change in attitude has made young lefties less fearful to reveal their true identities.

Left-handedness is even becoming a source of pride as lefties reflect on the accomplishments of their brethren - Leonardo DaVinci, David Bowie, Queen Elizabeth II, Oprah, Bill Gates, M.C. Escher and Jerry Seinfeld are among the many notable lefties.

The Left-Pride Facebook group "All the best people are left-handed" has over 9,000 members. But with all of this progress, it is easy to forget the dark past that lefties have faced and how far we still must go to reach equality.

As a lefty myself, I was the first in my family allowed to write with my natural strong hand. I grew up hearing the tales of knuckle-rapping and hand-tying faced by my grandfather and those others that

came before me.

Because of the social stigma attached, lefties lived in fear of making the "mistake" of using their left hands in public.

While punishment is no longer so severe or even intentional, the classroom continues to be the most difficult place for the lefty.

All lefties at Laurier will have at some point faced the choice between sitting in one of a few lefty desks provided - often housed in sub-optimal locations - and twisting themselves awkwardly into a righty desk.

And you can always identify a lefty in exam period by the pen smudged down the side of their hands.

Our language continues to be a source of oppression for lefties, to a degree many people are not consciously aware of.

While it is an honour to be considered someone's "right-hand man," it is an offence to be given a "left-handed compliment."

Those who are clumsy are considered to have "two left feet," whereas the word "dexterity" comes from the Latin word "dexter," meaning "right." The biblical connotations of right and left have the left associated with evil and the right with good.

It could ironically be the discrimination we face that makes lefties stronger. Having to live in



LAURA TOMMINS

DESK DILEMMA - For lefties, sitting in the right desks is crucial.

and adapt to a world not designed for us has forced us to constantly come up with creative solutions.

My right-handed roommates have yet to figure out the bizarre way I use our right-handed can opener with my left hand. It is with this ability to overcome adversity that we will fight.

Obama himself is a lefty, as have been half of the US presidents since the end of WWII. But although we have held many offices of power in recent years, there have yet to be any major improvements in daily life for lefties.

This could be changing very soon as lefties become more organized

and our demands grow louder.

While in many ways mirroring the discrimination faced by most minorities, the offence against lefties is far more trivial; this is indeed the point.

With new levels being reached in gender and racial equality, the future path is being paved for something like a lefty rights movement.

With a community of growing strength and Ned Flanders as our fearless leader, we lefties will one day hope to be the last fight for minority rights.

letters@cordweekly.com

Letters to the Editor

Please save the pool

I am writing in response to the sadly misinformed article called "Pool Fees Controversial" in the January 21st edition of *The Cord*.

First of all, the referendum was not "put forth by the Laurier Swim Team," but rather a concerned group of students that would hate to see this asset go to waste. Laurier's 50 metre pool is one of ten in Ontario, something for which students should be proud.

Secondly, the writer of the article mentioned competing for pool time with the community swim groups, as well as the varsity swim team. The pool is heavily used from 5:30am-8:30am, as well as 2:30pm-5:00pm. Other than that, you may use the pool any time you please.

My third and final point is one regarding the "burden of costs" and the sad assumption that municipal and provincial governments have not been contacted. Laurier finds out at the end of this month whether or not they are to receive funding from varying levels of government. The community has also come forth and pledged over \$700,000 to this cause, and the University will continue to pay the operating costs for the pool. The students are the very last piece to the puzzle. If the pool were to close, Laurier would be one of few schools in Ontario without a swimming facility. Students should be proud to have such a beautiful

facility on campus. I implore you, Laurier, to be informed rather than misinformed when it comes time to make a very important decision. Please vote on February 5th, 2009.

-Amy Hucal

WLU pool is part of our community

As a student unaffected by the future of the Laurier pool, I would still like to make a rebuttal to the editorial article written in last week's paper regarding the Laurier pool referendum question. I do understand the point of the editorial and yes, maybe students should not be responsible for this financial burden but here are a few things to consider.

1. I recall signing a petition earlier in the year that was taken to the government to ask for assistance in funding.

2. \$700,000 was raised by the community to fund the pool repairs.

3. Laurier had the budget to do the repairs many years ago, yet the money went to other fitness facilities. As you can see, the students will not be the only once helping financially. Still not convinced? Consider this: I came to Laurier because it was a small school and a caring community. I can understand that this pool means the world to many students here on

campus. I would like to think that if the one thing in the world I loved the most, maybe even lived for, was going away that those around me would step up and help. Yes, Laurier should have paid and the students should not have to, but they screwed up and that is not these swimmers fault. We all make mistakes and getting angry at the school won't help, so here is my proposition. We all rally together as a school; prove we still care for one another. I strongly believe that the school feels badly for this situation, and if we can keep the pool open for now, they will make a plan in the future and stand by it! Come on, it is \$10 a term, in the long run that is no that much to ask to keep the dreams and potential of OUA, CIS and even Olympic Champions from Laurier alive! I am voting yes because it is the least I can do.

-Sarah King

Letters Policy:

All letters to the editor must be signed and submitted with the author's name, student identification number, and telephone number. Letters must be received by 12:00 pm (noon) Monday via email to letters@cordweekly.com or through our website at www.cordweekly.com. Letters must not exceed 350 words.

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Charity doesn't have to begin in our backyard

Aid should be given to those who need it most, not just to those that we see in our daily lives



ANDREA MILLET
THE BRIGHTER
SIDE OF LIFE

It is well understood that charity begins at home.

We donate nonperishable food to the local food bank, help buy presents for a family in need at Christmas time and donate our spare change to a poverty-stricken individual on the street and we feel that we have done our part.

Rarely do we stop to think about the people who don't live in a community that can collect food and money for them, the people who are not our neighbours but are still in desperate need of our help.

Last year, the World Bank estimated that 982 million people living in developing countries were trying to survive on the equivalent of one American dollar or less per day.

IT IS A SAD REFLECTION OF THE SELF-INVOLVED WORLD WE LIVE IN WHEN WE CAN CLASSIFY ONE PERSON AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANOTHER JUST BECAUSE THEY LIVE CLOSE TO OURSELVES AND ARE EASIER TO RELATE TO.

This means that nearly one-sixth of the world's population is in an extreme state of suffering and the rest of the world, who have the power to make a difference, pretend that nothing is wrong.

We may be willing to give food and money to those in our community who are living in poverty, and of course they are in need of it, but not in any more need than those who suffer all over the world.

Just because we cannot see the poverty and the hunger, just because we cannot see the pain and suffering, does not mean that it does not exist or that it should be ignored.

People suffering in third-world countries are just that: people.

They feel the pains of starvation and injury just as much as we do, just as much as those suffering in our own communities do.

The idea that charity begins at home is flawed.

To believe that the problem of poverty can be fixed by every person helping a neighbor in need is to assume that every person in need has a neighbor able to help them.

What about the people in war-torn countries where everyone is suffering the same poverty and

starvation? What about the millions of displaced families who have no communities to turn to for help?

There are enough resources in the world to meet everyone's basic needs: food, clothing and shelter.

The problem is that such a large percentage of the population does not have access to any of these resources without our assistance.

Sure, it's easier to feel compassion and to feel a responsibility towards helping others when we can see the suffering and when we can see the direct effect that our time, money and aid have.

But that does not excuse ignorance. We cannot simply look the other way and pretend there is not a world out there beyond our community or even our country that is full of people who need our help.

It is a sad reflection of the self-involved world we live in when we can classify one person as more important than another just because they live closer to ourselves and are easier to relate to.

When I was in high school, a group of schools in our region held an annual pilgrimage to raise money for people in need.

I used to hear questions about why we send a large portion of that money to third-world organizations when there were people in our community that could use it.

It made me wonder how anyone could assume one life to be more valuable, or one person's need to be greater, just because they lived closer to home.

Instead of only giving to our neighbours, instead of keeping charity "at home," why don't we try and raise the poverty line by giving to those with the most need, regardless of their geographical location?

Poverty is not restricted; it does not attack a certain race, nationality, religion, age, gender or culture. It can affect us all.

We need to realize that our money and our efforts should go where the need is the greatest, and not just where we have the gratification of seeing its direct result. Whether that is to our neighbors or to an unknown individual on the other side of the world should not matter.

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Campus Pictorial



MUMPIN' - Trapped inside a giant bubble in the Concourse? Yep. You've got mumps.

ALEX HAYTER

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The Dark Knight got what it deserved

Where are the two big Oscars? Get over it, says **Trevor Loughborough**



TREVOR LOUGHBOROUGH
MEDIA JUNKIE

Sometimes you can tell when an article or opinion piece is written in advance of whatever it is officially talking about, because there is not much doubt that it would be wrong.

I feel that way about the news relating to this year's Oscar nominees, which almost universally made liberal use of the word "snubbed." The film with this word attached most frequently to it is *The Dark Knight*; a movie that was seen by a few people, or so I hear.

Now, it is important to note that the film did receive eight nominations, but only one of them is in a category that people care about: Heath Ledger's posthumous Sup-

porting Actor nod.

Despite this, people were still quick to point out the snub of not getting a Best Picture or Best Director nomination, though I'm sure that most entertainment writers knew a long time ago that this was exactly what was going to happen.

Some people argue that it shows the Academy is out of touch with mainstream - I say mainstream taste should get a little more refined. But I'm an elitist like that.

Now, I don't begrudge the Ledger nomination. If Jack Nicholson can get a Golden Globe nomination for basically playing Jack Nicholson with green hair and white makeup, the transformative and terrifying turn by Ledger in the same role certainly deserves some recognition.

But best picture? Are people serious? I think I have identified the phenomenon at work here. See, nearly everyone saw *TDK*. And it was a good movie - really. But then

everyone talked about how it was so good, and it got built up in people's minds.

And since everyone seems to agree, well then I guess it should be nominated for Best Picture. Except, well, no.

I bet the Academy was tempted to give it a shot just so more people would watch the show. But while *TDK* was a breakthrough blockbuster, and I really hope other summer and comic book movies aspire to the standards it set, it's still not a great movie when compared to its peers. Why not? Let's see.

The main character spends half the movie talking like the Cookie Monster.

The plot is mostly a way to get from one set piece/action sequence to the next, with little attention paid to whether it actually makes any sense, or has narrative direction.

Think of the climactic scene with the ferries, and just how convolut-



CONTRIBUTED IMAGE

WHERE ARE THEY? - Batman *did* sound like the Cookie Monster.

ed the plan was that the Joker had to create to get to that situation.

The characters had the emotional depth of a spoon. And the messages the film tries to send are either vague or confused. (Spying on everyone is bad! Okay just this once! It saved the day! Now it's bad again!)

I guess the point I'm belabouring is that the movie was doomed by what it was. No matter what level of quality, it's a big-budget, comic-book-based blockbuster. It was not trying to have the qualities that

make a best picture. Emotion and artistic vision had to be put aside for cool lines and big explosions.

Besides, I'm pretty sure the producers are somehow managing to sleep at night despite not getting the nomination.

It only made a billion dollars (really) worldwide, and Ledger stands a very good chance of getting another posthumous award for his penultimate role. The film has gotten more than enough recognition to satisfy its promoters and fans. So quit your bitchin'!

The truth wasn't so tricky

Frost/Nixon is a great piece of political drama that shows the human side to a much maligned historical figure, Richard Nixon

ANNE DONAHUE
STAFF WRITER

Despite its then-notoriety, most of us are now unaware of the famous television interview that occurred between British journalist David Frost and shamed former-president Richard Nixon in 1977.

As both a history and pop-culture junkie, I was surprised to discover how little I knew of the interview and the context in which it was delivered.

However, regardless of historical

background, previous knowledge or interest in American politics, Ron Howard's *Frost/Nixon* is a brilliant film with explosive performances and captivating cinematography, highly deserving of its Best Picture Oscar nomination.

Within the first ten minutes, Howard succeeds in capturing the attention of his audience, transporting viewers back to the Watergate scandal and the era in which it unfolded.

After being acquainted with Nixon (Frank Langella) and the

circumstances responsible for his political undoing, we meet David Frost (Michael Sheen - no relation to the American Sheens), a charismatic and comedic television host desperate to achieve the fame and success he once held.

In an attempt to prove himself as a bankable and worthy personality, Frost succeeds in cementing the only post-Watergate interview with Richard Nixon, which Frost's team hopes will serve as "the trial [Nixon] never had."

Howard develops his characters

beautifully. Sheen's performance is natural and believable, shining as the likeable but flawed Frost and leaving audiences to root for the charming underdog. The supporting cast complements both Sheen's performance and the film as a whole, succeeding in making both comical and emotional scenes seem convincing and realistic.

Despite the superb performances put forth by all, the true star of the film is Frank Langella as Richard Nixon. Not only does Langella completely encompass the persona of the former president, he adds a very endearing quality that forces audiences to view the character as a tragic human being.

At one point Langella delivers a monologue so moving, powerful and emotional you feel almost uncomfortable to be watching such a personal - yet dynamic - moment unfold on screen. Although Mickey Rourke may be this year's awards golden boy for his turn in *The Wrestler*, Langella's Nixon is a worthy opponent.

Frost/Nixon is beautifully shot. In addition to documentary-esque interviews throughout, the classic "1970s" look - everything from costumes and props to the tint of the film - adds to the legitimacy of the film. I found myself forgetting I was watching a movie unfold since Howard so successfully submerged me into the story world; as far as I was concerned, 1977 was only mo-

ments ago.

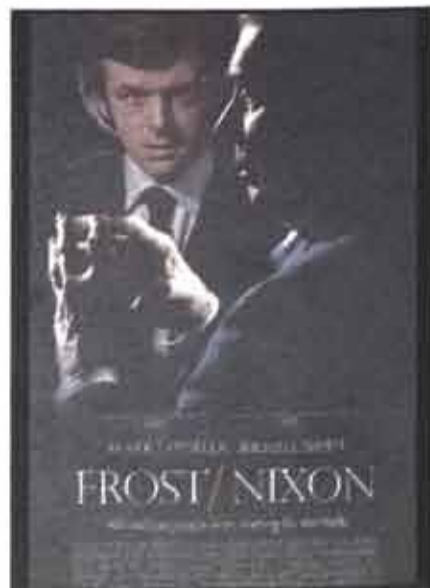
Unlike so many political dramas that act as an altar on which to worship past American presidents, *Frost/Nixon* is a realistic representation of all parties involved: flaws are exposed, strengths are revealed and the characters remain human - a feat not easily achieved by many films.

Frost/Nixon achieves everything it sets out to do as a film, and for that it's worth a trip to the theatre.



CONTRIBUTED IMAGE

A SILENT SCUFFLE - Frank Langella (Nixon) and Michael Sheen (Frost) re-create the intense interview.



Frost/Nixon
Director: Ron Howard
Starring: Frank Langella,
Michael Sheen
Release Date: 26/12/2008
Rating: A

Rourke back in the ring

Mickey Rourke makes the comeback of a lifetime in *The Wrestler* as a washed up '80s pro-wrestler

LAURA CARLSON
SPECIAL PROJECTS EDITOR

Hollywood loves a comeback.

And Mickey Rourke in *The Wrestler* is the perfect example of why.

Rourke's performance - which has already earned him the Golden Globe for leading actor and is considered by many to be the front-runner for next month's Academy Award in the same category - carries the film and is worthy of all of the critical praise he has received.

Rourke plays a washed up '80s wrestler, Randy "The Ram" Robinson, a former wrestling champion who desperately tries to cling to the fame he once had.

His performance is gritty, real and, most importantly, the sentimental moments in the film aren't over the top. Rourke makes us sympathize with his "broken down piece of meat" character in both the action-based and sentimental moments of the film.

Randy works a dead-end job in a grocery store, has a daughter who wants nothing to do with him - in a remarkable performance by Evan Rachel Wood - and he can barely afford his trailer park rent due to his high-maintenance life of salon and tanning parlor visits.

He's addicted to pain killers, and pumps himself full of steroids; and his health is faltering, forcing him to make decisions about what is actually important to him in his life.

We come to feel for this former superstar, who we recognize isn't trying to stay in the past, but really has no reason to move forward.

The hope for Randy's future comes with the bond he shares with Cassidy (Marisa Tomei), the "stripper with the heart of gold."

Tomei in the role of Cassidy, who is also deserving of the Oscar nomi-

nation she has received, complements Randy's character as she too is experiencing what it is to be in a performance-based job a little bit past her prime.

A film which truly relies on the acting of the central characters - of which there are just three - only works because of such committed performers.

Director Darren Aronofsky (*Requiem For a Dream*) makes some attempts to incorporate more artistic elements into the film, some of which don't work particularly well, such as the shaky camera effect, and



THE RAM - Mickey Rourke, playing Randy "The Ram" Robinson, shows the brutal side of wrestling.

others that add a whole new level of depth to particular moments.

This is evident in one particular scene in which the bloody aftermath of a fight directly precedes the flashback, which allows it to have a greater impact on the audience than if we were privy to witnessing the entire thing as it happened.

But it is Aronofsky's abil-

ity to bring us into the world of a wrestler that is his greatest accomplishment.

We are exposed to the tricks of the profession, such as the razor-blade in the padding that Randy uses to cut himself during a match, and the conversations that take place between the competitors before the fights occur.

The predetermined nature of the entire sport makes the brutality of it have all the more impact.

The film couldn't have ended any other way than it did, allowing the audience to see that one man's commitment to something, no matter how self-destructive it might be, may continue if he has nothing else to live for.

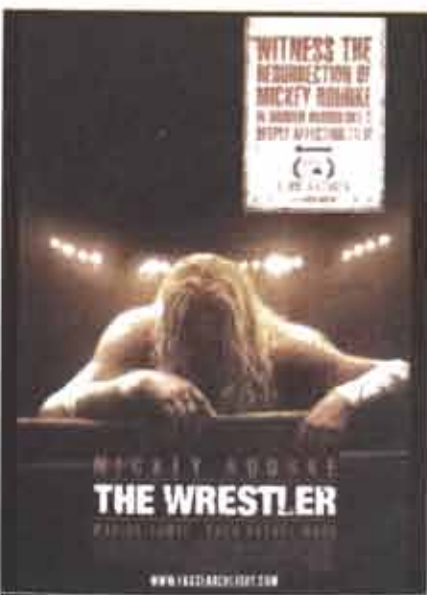


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The Wrestler
Director: Darren Aronofsky
Starring: Mickey Rourke,
Marisa Tomei
Release Date: 09/01/2009
Rating: A -

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Laurier gets hyped for ill

Popular Canadian reggae-pop band illScarlett visited the Turret on Monday, enchanting a crowd of faithful supporters

KARI PRITCHARD
FEATURES EDITOR

Even though it was a Monday, two nights ago the Turret nightclub was at capacity with Laurier students eager to see Toronto-based band USS and headliners illScarlett of Mississauga.

After fans had crowded the stage and the legally aged had drinks in hand, Ubiquity Synergy Seekers (USS) took the stage.

Although USS blasted the Turret with their synthetic and energetic jungle of pop songs, the crowd was not quick to show their interest.

Standing still with moderate head-bopping and fist-pumping, the crowd still refused to dance when USS busted out with their unique brand of live performance such as DJing with a mic stand, or when DJ Human Kebob carried guitarist Ashley Boo-Schultz on his shoulders.

The crowd still paid their respects to USS as they wrapped up their set, leaving the stage ready to be taken over by the band they came to see — illScarlett.

The four-man band hit the stage to a warm reception, filling the Turret with their “pop-infused, rock-reggae” music, as described by lead singer Alex Norman.

illScarlett started off with a mix of both recent and older songs — like “Who’s Got It?” and “Not a Prophecy” — a trend that continued throughout the night.

Because of illScarlett’s current lack of new material, excluding a brief snippet of new music used in their intro, they sounded tight.

Since the band hasn’t released any new songs since July 2007, illScarlett has been able to perfect their sound, allowing optimum audience pleasure.

But new music is on the way. “We’re writing our new record right now, should be out in September, October, November next year,” said drummer Swav Pior to *The Cord*.

“We have thirteen songs total that are being completed. The music’s there, the melodies are getting there and the lyrics are getting there too,” added Norman.

New songs or old, it was clear that Laurier students hold a spot in their hearts for illScarlett. Crowd-surfing at any chance and clapping along at the slightest command from the band, the crowd often sung together, their voices ringing over that of lead singer Norman.

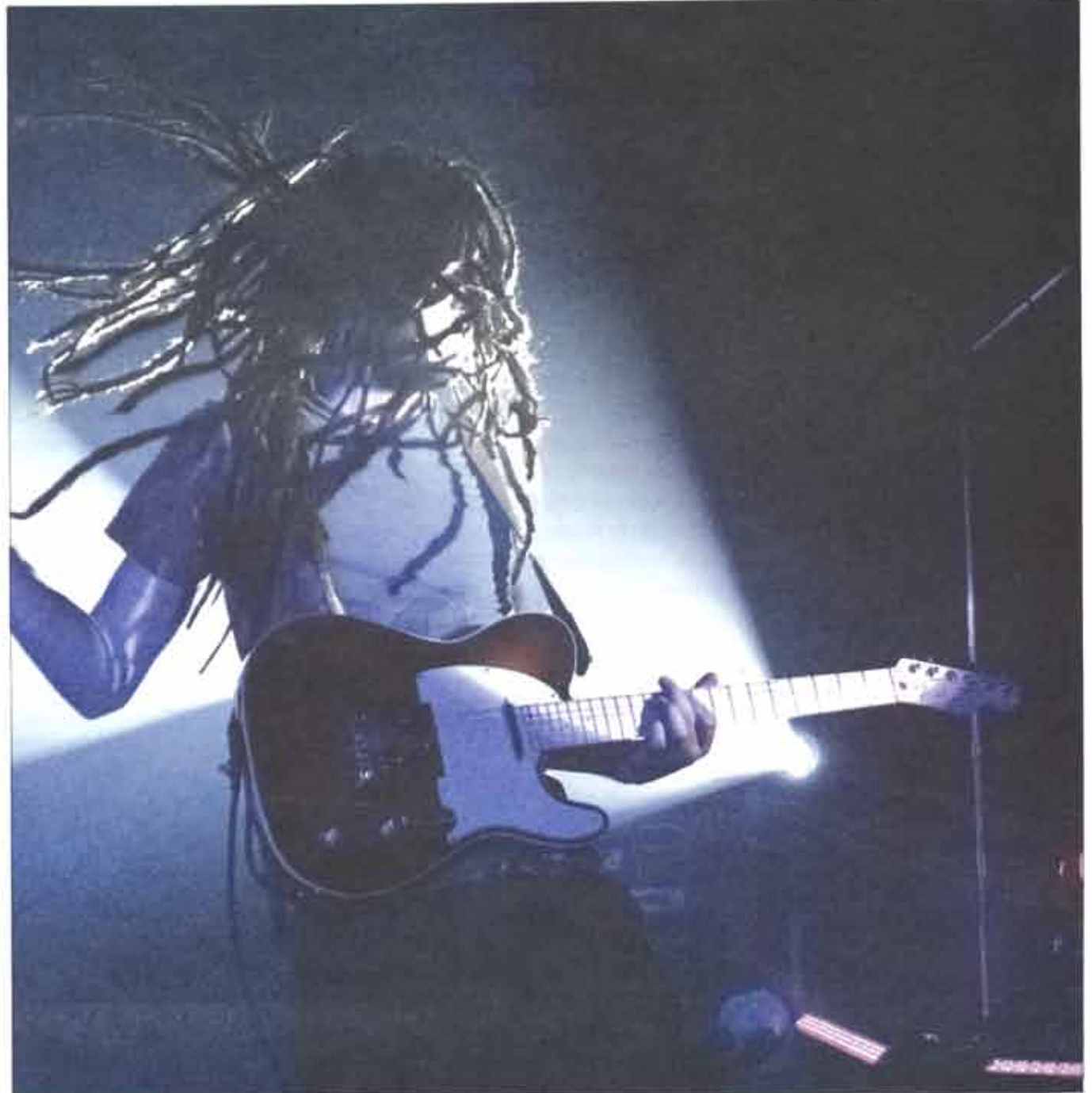
Likewise, university students hold a dear spot in illScarlett’s heart. “Our third most valuable resource on the planet is university students,” joked Norman, coming after their kids and high school students.

Though Laurier students clearly show a taste for illScarlett, the band has been met with criticism for their youth-oriented sound.

Although in the past Pior admitted that he may have reacted immaturely to negative comments, he now knows that “you get criticized no matter what.”

“For every person that goes out of their way to tell you ‘you suck,’ there’s ten people who go out of their way to tell you they love you,” reasoned Norman.

illScarlett ended the night by pre-



RYAN STEWART

FLAILING ABOUT - illScarlett’s Will Marr last Monday at the Turret, busy looking epic with a punk-rock hairdo.

dicting their own encore. Laurier pulled no punches and demanded it on cue.

The band returned to the stage to play three more songs, includ-

ing their radio hit “Life of a Soldier,” and classic favourite “Mary Jane.”

As the Turret cleared out, many stayed behind to try and meet the band, giving them the encour-

agement to make a return trip to Laurier.

Judging by Monday’s turnout, Laurier has most certainly caught the illScarlett fever.

Country French ruffian club

Tokyo Police Club member Graham Wright talks about his recent collaboration with Laurier’s Will Currie and Born Ruffians’ Luke Lalonde

ESTHER WHEATON
STAFF WRITER

Tokyo Police Club’s Graham Wright, Luke Lalonde of Born Ruffians and Will Currie (of Laurier’s very own Will Currie & The Country French) recently spent a single day writing and recording a collaborative album.

Friends back in high school, Currie and Wright came up with the idea one night, and with the help of Chemical Sound Studios owners Dean Marino and Jay Sadlowski, they made it a reality two Sundays ago, on January 18.

“It exceeded my expectations, for sure,” said Wright in an interview with *The Cord*.

“It was sixteen hours, from noon until four in the morning,” he said. “We decided to extend it, to go in

another day and mix it, but we did all of the recording and writing and creating in one day.”

The five artists came up with the songs in advance and met one night prior to demonstrate their ideas and to decide which songs would be used on the album.

“We had heard the songs once,” Wright explained, “so we just went in and recorded them.” The process was filmed too, by documentary filmmaker Wade Vroom of Toronto. The resulting film will be displayed on an upcoming hidden website.

The 24-hour-album concept had its flaws, of course; lack of sleep being a main issue. Wright noted that they had to be careful not to be too silly “because the music would be bad.” But it wasn’t all strictly business, either: “At the end of one of the songs Will did two takes of this

crazy honky-tonk piano solo, and we put them both in, and it’s okay,” said Wright.

Five artists with very different sounds are bound to make an interesting album, but Wright thinks that the result fits together perfectly. “It definitely has a lot of variation to it, but because everything was written so quickly ... even though we switched around on instruments, there is definitely some coherence to it,” he explained.

“It starts off with Dean’s song, which is a country pop song, and goes into Will’s, which is a straight-up ‘50s-style ballad. It goes all over the map from there, and maybe I’m biased, but I think there is some cohesiveness to it.”

While Currie and Wright have collaborated often, and Wright has also worked with Marino and Sad-

lowski previously, he had never worked with Luke Lalonde. “I was really excited to get a chance to do that,” he said.

“One of our first shows in Toronto was with the Born Ruffians; I think it was one of their first shows as well. And we became friends, sort of via MySpace. We’ve played with them and toured with them and hung out with them.”

The artists have not yet worked out every aspect of this project. Their idea is that the CD will not be available for purchase or download, but hidden in public places, such as concert spaces, libraries, subway cars and so on.

“We’re so used to going out and promoting the band,” said Wright. “Here’s our Facebook and our MySpace and our Twitter, and we go here and go there. It’ll be fun just to do something that is the exact opposite of that, to let people find it on their own.” He admits the idea could backfire spectacularly if no one finds the album, but hopes that

will not be the case.

An album made by bands as popular as Born Ruffians and Tokyo Police Club would be sure to turn a profit, but Wright feels it is not in the spirit of the project.

He was exchanging text messages with Currie during the interview, figuring out financial matters. “We’ll probably just all end up pitching in,” he said, “and try to keep costs low.”

“We just went in and did it off-the-cuff, so it was really free and enjoyable,” he explained. “It just seems to suit that experience. To try and sell it and distribute it just gives it a whole other level, and it feels really pure right now.” Wright would prefer to avoid the PR machine in this project, saying, “It will keep it a little more special, to me at least.”

Billed by the CBC as a Canadian “super group,” the album is sure to stand out, thanks to the eclectic sounds of the five participating artists, not to mention the unorthodox guerilla marketing.