



Check out upcoming flicks on page 6.



Congratulations Team Canada! page 12.

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THE JOURNAL

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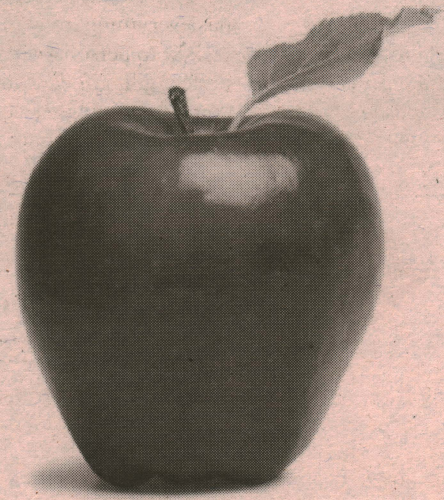
EXPIRY DATES GOT YOU DOWN?

FIND OUT WHY GIFT CARD GIVING IS LOSING ITS APPEAL.
PG. 3.



smusa NEWS

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THE WELCOME BACK
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FRIDAY

January 11th
FACULTY
FRIDAYS

SATURDAY

January 12th
CLOSED

SUNDAY

January 13th
CLOSED

MONDAY

January 14th
WORLD SPORT
LOUNGE

TUESDAY

January 15th
WORLD SPORT
LOUNGE

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PERSPECTIVES

Letter From The Editor: Gift Certificate Giving, What's The Catch?



AMANDA WENEK

Gift certificate giving has become a popular Christmas tradition. In lieu of the possibility of receiving that dreaded two-sizes-too-small sweater from Grandma, the CD by a band you stopped listening to five years ago, or that new pair of socks people are opting to give and receive gift certificates.

A gift certificate seems to be the obvious solution to end the giving of unwanted and unused gifts. Many people are opposed to them being given as gifts since they are

impersonal. To handpick a specific present for someone comes with personal sentiment, and gift cards are often seen as a cop out.

Proponents of the gift card argue that although they may be impersonal they nevertheless decrease the number of unwanted gifts that go unused. Many people shopping for coworkers, acquaintances, or 'that person who already has everything' may not have the insight to personally pick out that perfect gift; gift cards are a welcome option in these cases.

Love them or hate them, they

do come with a downside. Last year alone, 8 billion dollars in gift cards went unused because of expiry dates. The stores benefit since they already have the money made from the sale of the gift certificates, it's the consumers that feel the loss.

Ontario has recently passed a law that there can be no expiry dates on gift certificates. This is done with the hope that consumers won't feel cheated if, one day, their gift certificates are no longer valid.

The Mic Mac Mall in Dartmouth provides a clear example of the negative aspects of a gift

card; a senior employee there, who would like to remain nameless, has experienced it firsthand. She shared with me the practice that Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited had taken on; gift certificates to the mall would lose value with each month that they went unused. The catch? They didn't tell the customers this.

"Customers would come in with a \$20 gift certificate five months after they received it, and [unbeknownst to them] it would suddenly have a value of only \$15." It often is the case that gift

cards are saved for that perfect purchase, or that once a year mega sale, so this scenario was not uncommon. When employees tried to call Cadillac Fairview to rectify the situation, the number given on the card to call in case of problems was out of service. Employers instead took to warning each customer that purchased a gift card for the mall of this inconvenience.

In light of this, the remaining provinces will hopefully follow in Ontario's footsteps in making expiry dates on gift certificates, and other such "catches", illegal.

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

While I was visiting Halifax this past week I happened to pick up a copy of the Journal (from the Wired Monk Cafe), and I was encouraged by Jessica Woodman's article, "When is a Protest a Waste of Time?" which was about a demonstration held in Victoria Park by students who wanted to express their disagreement with the U.S. invasion of Iran. I must say first off that it has been almost twenty years since I was politically active as an undergraduate on my campus, and I too, at times, faced the same type of frustrations expressed by Ms Woodman, as is implied clearly in the title of her article.

But numbers in a protest do not necessarily determine the

success of a demonstration. For example, Martin Luther King Jr. started off his protest career from his small Montgomery church with less of an amount of people than those who showed up at the Victoria Park protest. In addition, when I went along with a professor of mine to protest the "distinct society" clause of the Meech Lake Accord on Parliament Hill back in the late 1980s, there on the Hill, I was amused at the sight of a "one" man protest by a certain individual who was attempting to make the public aware of how the Brian Mulroney government was "pork belling" government contacts out to his friends and law associates. This one man show wore a small placard while handing out pamphlets. These handouts documented meetings between Mulroney's

cabinet ministers and "friends" of the PM who were apparently receiving government contracts without going through any formal conditions of government tender. Although I talked with this man for a while and read the pamphlet he gave me, I didn't take him all that serious, and in fact, I thought he was pretty much crazy, until the next day when I picked up the Ottawa paper and saw a photo of him being beaten up by two men on bikes, and who were wearing suits and mirror-sunglasses (too nicely dress for an afternoon bike ride, I would say). Well, one only has to look to our current news to find out that Mr Mulroney is still fending off those "tender" Furies. There are many more examples that I could provide from my own "stories," however, there is little

space here to do that, so I will get to my main point, which is conviction matters, not numbers, in any protest.

History is now showing us that our involvement in the Middle East conflict, including our foray in to Afghanistan) is a North American failure, and sadly yet, the blood of our young Canadians will be seen as running in the same direction as the American blood that soiled Vietnamese trenches, not thirty years ago. With over two and half million people being purged from Iraq, the American attempt to bring the branch of peace to the Middle East for the past 18 years has shown us the real fruits of the "Burning Bush", and that the source of that "holy" fire is not Yahweh of the Old Testament, but the other god that is worshipped in

North America too— oil! Lastly, with the rampant complacency prevailing today, on campus and off, I was thrilled to see in Ms Woodman's article a small light flickering in our present societal darkness of complacency. These protesters in Victoria Park were brave enough to protest the evil "fruits" of our new Roman Empire and its modernized version of Manifest Destiny, and to protest against those who want to evangelize the whole world with their "gospel" of the American Dream, now coming to us in the form of democracy. For those who attended the protest, I want to say, "Keep your lamps" burning (in the midst of this nightmare) with the oil of peace and love for our neighbours in the Middle East.

-Gilbert McInnis

"How I Survived 16 Hours in an Airport"

After a cancelled connecting flight left three friends and I stranded in Newark, New Jersey, we started an adventure that can only be explained as taxing.

Taxing in the 'we couldn't leave the terminal without a four hour security check', 'pesky conversion charges maxed out the credit card', and 'cockroaches are sleeping next to me and that creepy guy is going to steal my stuff' kind of way.

It all started in Vegas when we asked how long our flight would be delayed, and when the stewardess asked where we were connecting to we replied "Halifax". The look on her face said it all, and her

response of "Oooohhhh, have fun with that" was not quite what we had hoped for. We were in the air late, but the pilot got us back on track and slid right into Newark with three minutes to spare.

At 9pm we arrived at the airport ready to sprint from gate 111 to 127 in three minutes to catch our connecting flight (with a wheelchair in tow I might add). Our first man off the plane started the mile long sprint only to be met by the red highlighted TV screen indicating every flight to the Eastern half of the continent was cancelled.

That's when we went to the long line up at the Continental Airlines Customer Service counter. The woman in front of us kicked up a fuss with one of the workers,

screaming about Miami, timelines and finding her a plane in the next hour. She was excused from the line, and asked to return when she had calmed down... no flight, no pillow or blanket, just one pissed off look from the Continental worker. We were up... oh great. Our server was a woman who had just been lambasted by a guy on a cell phone trying to get to Milwaukee or Indiana or somewhere. After asking where we were going the woman instantly perked up; apparently Canadians are nicer people. After a frantic search on her computer the woman had a rather dejected look on her face. She felt compelled to explain that the three previous flights to Halifax were also cancelled that day, and she wouldn't be unable to get us

in the air for 16 hours (1pm the next afternoon). Realizing there was nothing to do but accept or complain (and remembering that woman from Miami), we accepted the seats graciously.

Next thing we knew we were met by four sets of meal vouchers (sure they barely covered the tax of airport food but), pillows, blankets, and even a toiletry set which included Dove hair spray and shaving crème.

The team and I proceeded to find food; \$18 chicken fingers later... oh and don't forget a drink and a snack for later since everything closes for eight hours... ok, so \$25 later we ate our first meal since breakfast that morning.

After 'supper' we decided to wait at our gate and bunker down

for a while taking shifts to ensure nothing bad happened to our luggage, as the security reminder said every five minutes: "Please ensure that your luggage is always attended; any luggage left unattended may fall victim to theft or security risk". Shift sleeping doesn't really work when you're running off of minimal sleep over four days, are bitter and cold, exhausted by travel, and are still hungry. I awoke at one point to find all of us sleeping, and a cleaning guy lifting our luggage to clean under us. That was about the point we all woke up, clinging to our belongings for dear life.

- Laura MacIntosh

Dear Editor,

I wonder what the President of SMUSA will do to discipline one of his executive who has been censured by the SRC for irregularities with the Vanier Cup bus trip. It seems that while there were a great number of students that wanted to travel to Toronto and just couldn't afford to do so. The VP internal was able to facilitate the travel of his friends such as Shane Cunningham on the bus for free. Rumour has it that 4 of Chris McDougall's friends were able to go to Toronto for free because they were designated as monitors on the bus. The process for choosing these monitors is unclear but what

remains is that all the monitors are close associates of the VP Internal. So if the rumour mill is correct and Mr McDougall runs for re-election or for higher office what can we expect his patronage system will deliver for those that are not his friends? Only time will tell. I am disappointed with the SRC for their hush hush attitude to this and that during this meeting the tone was generally that you are lucky that we won't rat you out. As a councillor I am also responsible because I am not giving my name, but I felt that all students should be aware of this scandalous behaviour.

- Concerned SRC Member

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NEWS

News You May Have Missed

SMU SEPARATES ROLE OF ARCHBISHOP & CHANCELLOR

A major change which has seen plenty of coverage in The Journal in the past months has finally been made official. The Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church of Halifax will no longer automatically be appointed to the role as Chancellor of Saint Mary's University.

The University was not looking to sever all ties with the Catholic Church, but simply to change a policy that seemed a little dated to many. Until this legislation was passed the Archbishop was automatically appointed as Chancellor of the University, despite the fact there is not a strong Catholic influence at Saint Mary's today.

The decision to change this policy was mutual and viewed by both the Church and the University as necessary. It was time for the Chancellor to better represent the Saint Mary's of today.

That being said this was not an attempt to cut the Church out of SMU life all together. Without the Church's influence and support in the early days Saint Mary's may not have grown into what it is today. This history is important to what SMU is all about and as a result the Archbishop has been given a seat on the Board of Gov



<http://www.stmarysbasilica.ns.ca/>

ernors to help preserve the University's relationship with the Church.

GUARDIAN ANGELS TO SET UP LOCAL CHAPTER WITHOUT MAYOR'S APPROVAL

Their will be a chapter of the Guardian Angels set up in Halifax early in 2008, without the approval of HRM Police Chief Frank Beazley or Mayor Peter Kelly. In a joint statement

how good their intentions may be they cannot condone volunteers getting involved in potentially dangerous situations.

Kelly said in the statement it is the job of trained

no circumstances can we condone or encourage regular citizens doing this." Kelly went on to say that other City Councillors were in favour of the group setting up shop in Halifax, but in the end it is too risky for the City to be encouraging ordinary citizens to take things into their own hands.

The Angels, led by founder Curtis Silwa of New York, visited the Province in late 2007 to look into setting up a Chapter of the citizens watch group in Halifax. Other Chapter's have been very successful in curbing crime in other big cities. Several people have already begun training to serve in the city. These citizens are trained to make citizens arrests as well as get involved in violent physical confrontations when absolutely necessary.



Courtesy of Paul Darrow

Dec.27th both Kelly & Beazley expressed the belief that, no matter how helpful the group may be, and no matter

Police Officers "to put themselves in harm's way and intervene in potentially dangerous situations. Under

SAINT MARY'S STUDENT MISSING, FOUND DEAD IN HALIFAX

Shengwei Mao, 21, A TESL student at Saint Mary's went missing October 28th and was found dead November 30th in Halifax.

Shengwei had only arrived in Halifax from Gui Zhou, China in September of this year. Saint Mary's contacted Shengwei's family

and the Chinese Embassy to express their condolences and offer any assistance. Organizations, such as the Chinese Society of Nova Scotia and student groups on campus worked to offer as much assistance as possible to Shengwei's family.

Although the investiga-

tion is still open Halifax Police have said his death was not suspicious.

Shengwei's Memorial Service was held January 7th in the Saint Mary's University Art Gallery.

FIGHTS AND BAD PRESS LEAD TO TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE DOME

Following weeks of controversy and debate over cheap drinks at The Dome and other local Halifax nightclubs, those in favour of doing away with the dollar shot nights gained lots of ammunition over the holiday break.

In two separate incidents at Cheers and The Dome (which are connected, admission to one gains access to both bars, as well as The Attic) on "Dolla Holla" nights, bars made headlines for violence. The first landed a man in hospital with a head injury following an altercation outside Cheers, involving other party-goers as well as a bouncer. The second on Dec. 23rd, broke out as things were winding down inside. It turned into what some describe as a riot and led to 38 arrests. The RCMP were called in to back up City Police in the fight in which over 200

people were involved.

As a result the bar's liquor license was temporarily suspended for a week. When a hearing was held

It will also no longer be filled past capacity at any point, the owners agreed not to exceed 80% of it's 1,124 person capacity.



between the bar's owners and Nova Scotia's Utility & Review Board the owners of the Bars presented a series of changes they are prepared to put in place to ensure they will be able to operate. Among these conditions, the end of dollar drink nights at the Dome, Cheers & The Attic. The bar must charge a minimum of \$2.50 a shot every night of the week. Other changes to be noted will be an increased police presence, as well as better training of employees and the banning of unruly patrons.

Also the Bar remained closed New Years Eve as there were not enough off duty police officers available to support the expected turn-out. Oddly enough, the night the Dome reopened there was an incident at Bubbles Mansion, when a man was assaulted with a beer bottle.

Lovers of cheap drinks need not worry yet, as many downtown bars are still offering dollar shots during power hours and the Palace is still going ahead with it's dollar drink nights Wednesday and Sundays.

CHRYSLER DONATES \$100,000 TO SAINT MARY'S

In late November SMU Alumni and the Executive Vice President-North American Sales for Chrysler, Steven Landry announced a \$100,000 gift to Saint Mary's on behalf of Chrysler Canada. The funding, in support of the Hearts & Minds Campaign, will be used to provide two \$2,500 Scholarships annually.

One of the awards will be given to a student in the Engineering Program and the other to a student enrolled in the Sobey School of Business.

The presentation ceremony was held during

the second last day of classes and attracted over one hundred people. Mr. Landry had the opportunity to speak with many students enrolled in both programs that this funding is set to support.

President Colin Dodds, expressed gratitude from the University Community saying "Chrysler Canada's gift ensures that we as a univer-



EDITHS/NA/AA

sity remain on the road of success and continue growing while attracting the best and brightest students from around the world."

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INVESTS IN SAINT MARY'S

In November the Canadian Government committed two million dollars to Saint Mary's to help fund the construction of the Atrium as well as a Global Learning Commons. Additional funding for the project will come from the Hearts & Minds Capital Campaign.

Minister of National Defence Peter MacKay made the announcement November 30th. The funding is coming from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) which Mr. MacKay also represents.

The new state-of-the-art facilities will feature wireless IT technology, additional computer labs and video conference facilities. The Global Learning Commons will also provide office space to many compa-

nies involved in economic development in partnership with the University.

In addition to being technologically advanced, the building will also incorporate innovative architectural features. These include a "green roof", a green house, research areas as well as a "bio wall" that will filter air naturally.

Minister MacKay said at the announcement ceremony "Our investment in this facility will encourage greater collaboration between members of the academic and community development worlds, ultimately resulting in greater integration of efforts and helping to build a better sustainable future."



<http://www.smu.ca/newsreleases/2007/11-30-2007.html>



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Turmoil in Pakistan Following Benazir Bhutto's Assassination

KIM DARES

Admired and renowned former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto was assassinated December 27th. Bhutto, a second generation leader of Pakistan had only returned to the country in October after a self-imposed exile to try and protect herself and her family, and to avoid corruption charges.

Bhutto made history when in December 1988, as leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), she became the first female to head an Islamic State. While in power Bhutto led her country to great change, she pushed for the reduction of gender discrimination as well as introduced better health and education programs in the nation.

Bhutto followed her father into Politics, a choice that led to a tragic end for both of them. In 1979, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed, just a few years after he had led the country as Prime Minister. Two of Benazir

Bhutto's brothers also died violent deaths.

Bhutto was Prime Minister from 1988 to 1990 and then again from 1993 to 1996. Both terms ended on allegations of corruption. Before coming to power in 1988 Bhutto spent five years in prison, most of which were spent in solitary confinement, following a military coup.

She and her children left the country in 1999, and only returned in late October 2007 after President Musharraf granted her amnesty against the corruption charges. Her return raised many questions as to whether she would run in the upcoming election.

Then after years of trying to prevent it, the inevitable happened. Bhutto was assassinated after a rally in Rawalpindi. In the days following her death, its cause was called into question many times.

Initial reports claimed she had been shot twice and then her truck was hit with a suicide bomb, then the Pakistan Government began pushing a different story. In this ver-

sion Bhutto had been shot at, but the shooter had missed.

This story was quickly debunked as the medical reports proved it was inaccurate.

The way the scene was handled following the attack has also been called into question as within hours of the attack all evidence had been washed away, shell casings, pools of blood, any DNA, and much more.

This story quickly unravelled however when video surfaced that appears to show the shooting, and then a few seconds later, the explosion. Two shots can be heard and then Bhutto falls through the sunroof, and then there is an explosion. At least twenty others were killed in the attack.

Across the country protests and other more violent attacks broke out. Reactions ranged from open weeping, to the destruction of cars and other property. Many cars, as well as a train were set on fire as a result. At least 58 people have been killed by violence following Bhutto's death and over 200 million dollars in damage has been caused.

Bhutto's assassination came just days before the Country was headed to the Polls in a Parliamentary Election. Due to the upset caused by Bhutto's assassination the election date has been postponed until



February 18th. The new date will give officials a chance to repair election offices and replace ballots that were burned in the days following the assassination. Asif Ali Zardari, Bhutto's husband has taken over as leader of the PPP and has announced that the PPP will still participate in February's election.

As a result of all the controversy surrounding his wife's death Benazir Bhutto's husband is calling for a UN enquiry into the cause of death and who was behind it. There has been much speculation following the false story from the Government about its involvement. He is not the only person looking for an outside party to lead the investigation as there is little trust in the ruling elite in Pakistan to launch a credible investigation. The US and other leading nations have said an outside investigation is not necessary and as of right now there will not be one, the British are just helping the Government's investigation.



Winter Weather Bashes The Maritimes

KIM DARES

Although Winter only officially began December 21st, many people have already had more than enough. There is no comparison to be drawn between the past few winters and this one, as there were more major storms in December than in all of last Winter combined.

It seemed almost daily there was another Winter Storm Warning issued causing inconveniences Canada-wide. Many of the storms hitting Nova Scotia had already left their mark in Western Canada or the Eastern United States.

The nasty weather led to many delays at airports, making holiday travel near impossible in some cases. Hundreds of passengers faced major waits or flight cancellations, and by the time airport officials cleared up one delay another storm hit and backed things up again. Also, slippery conditions led to several car accidents.

Snow removal crews and plow

drivers worked endlessly to try and keep the City clear and accessible for people but it was a challenge to keep up with the weather. With only so many employees and limits on how long they can work many independent companies, in addition to provincial contractors, struggled to prevent employee burnout. Some city snowplow drivers have worked nearly 25 days straight, and are running out of steam.

This burnout is beginning to be felt by citizens in the Halifax Regional Municipality as City crews struggle to keep sidewalks clear. It seems every time they get the sidewalks clear, another freezing rain storm crashes into the region and then they are back at square one. Many residents who rely on clear sidewalks to get around are becoming increasingly frustrated with the situation but there is not a whole lot that can be done to fix it. Salt is only effective when the temperature is relatively high, within about 5 degrees C of zero either

way, and following many of these storms temperatures have plummeted dramatically leaving very little option for sidewalk clearing. The only other option is to use pick-axes which will damage the sidewalk underneath so it appears all that can be done is to wait for warmer weather.

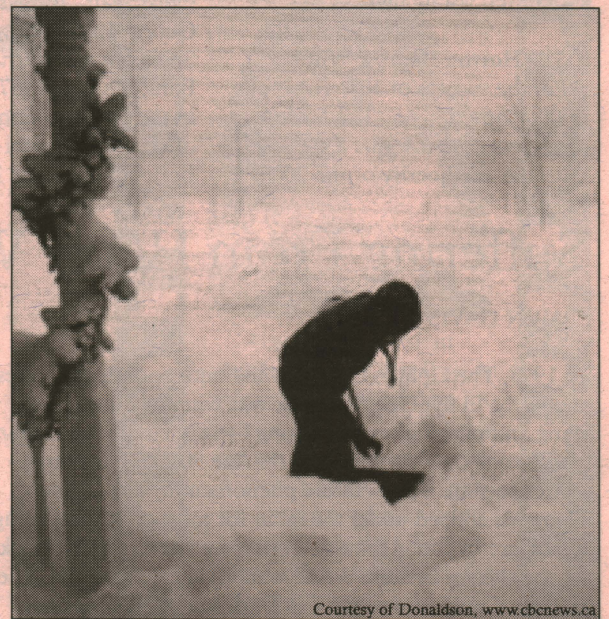
Luckily for many, an early morning storm on New Years Eve cleared out in time to allow for a festive evening, and despite being freezing cold out 2008 blew in relatively clear.

Inland regions, as well as much of Western Nova Scotia have bore the brunt of many of these storms, at least with regards to snowfall. Moncton, New Brunswick is currently buried under 165cm of snow. Snow blowers, shovels, and salt are hot commodities, if consumers can find a store that has any of it. Following the past few "easy" winters, many retailers ordered less snow blowers, as they have been unable to sell them in the past. Now they are nearly impossible to find. In

Nova Scotia, salt is the big ticket item many homeowners are looking for, and are unable to find as many stores are completely sold out.

In November and December of 2007 Nova Scotia was hit by 16 major snowfalls, more than double the 7 that hit in 2006. In Prince Edward Island they need just 3 more centimetres of snow to beat their record of 197cm for all of last winter.

With no predictions of this winter weather easing up anytime



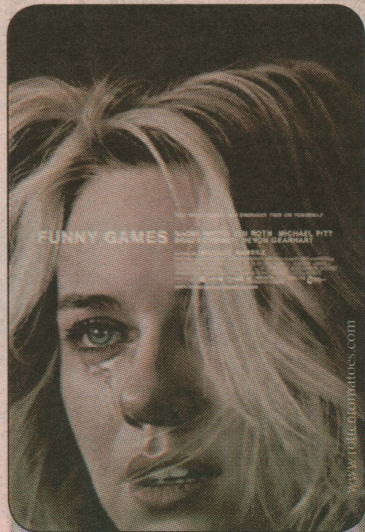
soon it seems its best to keep the shovel and salt (if you can find any) handy.

THE JOURNAL IS LOOKING FOR WRITERS AND PROOFREADERS!!

If you have the desire to report on groundbreaking SMU and community news, or help out with proofreading, then come to the 5th floor of the Student Centre on Mondays, or email submissions to thesmujournal@gmail.com

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

2008 Preview Part 1: Film



RESSA PETERS

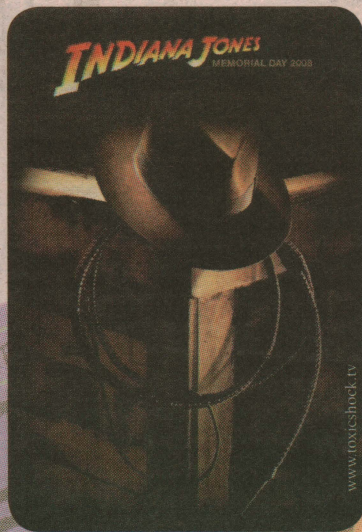
The Writers Strike may be showing its affects on television but the film industry might take a bit longer to feel the absence as many films take years to develop. There are already a ton of films in the can ready to be released this year. Like every year, most of them will be forgotten before they leave the theatre, some will be famously bad and some will be your new favorites. Telling them apart is the hard part, here are a few I'm willing to keep an eye on.

Funny Games

I'm usually pretty cold toward American remakes of European films, but there are a few things going for this one. Directed by Michael Haneke who was responsible for the original 1997 Austrian film, which is disturbingly great, and it stars Naomi Watts and Tim Roth as vacationers who are held captive by two intelligent and brutal young men.

Horton Hears a Who!

After the success of Ron Howard's 2000 adaptation of "The Grinch", Dr. Suess cash-ins met a setback with the mediocrity of the 2003



release of "The Cat in the Hat". However, this one tries to get back into Suess's drawings by using Computer Generated Imagery instead of people in make-up. Jim Carrey plays Horton the elephant this time around, with Steve Carell as the mayor of Whoville and the film features the voices of Dane Cook, Will Arnett, Seth Rogan, Jonah Hill, Carol Burnett and Jaime Pressly.

Harold & Kumar Escape From Guantanamo Bay

Harold and Kumar's last munchie-inspired outing was well received by fans and critics alike, a rare distinction for buddy/stoner comedies. John Cho and Kal Penn return for another series of misadventures courtesy of ignorant old white folk, various nude women and the ever rascally Neil Patrick Harris.

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull

Once again, Indy is produced by George Lucas, directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Harrison Ford. It's now 1957 and Indy is in the Soviet Union searching for, of course, a crystal skull. Shia LeBeouf and Cate Blanchett (as

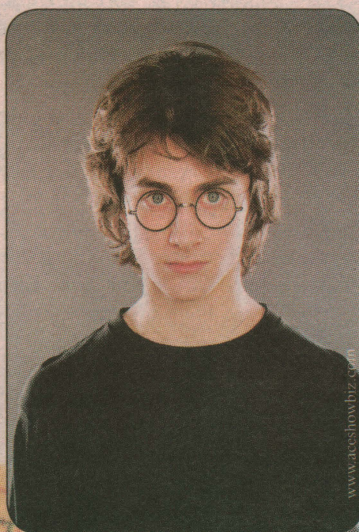


Dark Knight

Christopher Nolan's recreation of the Batman film franchise continues with the new addition of Heath Ledger, who just may have actually out-Joker'd Jack Nicholson. Goth kids, please don't ruin this new look come next Halloween. Katie Holmes notwithstanding; the entire cast of Batman Begins returns, yet another way Nolan is breaking the tradition from the Schumacher and Burton renditions.

The X-Files Movie 2

No title yet, but this film, the first since 1998's *The X-Files: Fight the Future*, will not be a "mythology" or conspiracy driven story but more of a "monster-of-the-week" horror story. Of course it wouldn't be *The X-Files* without Mulder and Scully, thankfully David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson



Where the Wild Things Are

Maurice Sendak's 1963 classic children's book is being adapted for the screen using live-action, CGI, animatronics and "suitmation" (think Jim Henson productions). Spike Jonze, who's directed numerous music videos and the films *Being John Malkovich* and *Adaptation* is directing and novelist Dave Eggers (*A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*) has written the screenplay. The *Wild Things* are being played by James Gandolfini, Catherine Keener, Lauren Ambrose, Catherine O'Hara and Forest Whitaker.

Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince

You already know if you'll be seeing this one. If you're a Potter fan you must, and if you aren't there's probably nothing



I can say that will convince you to. The regular cast, with the addition of Jim Broadbent as Horace Slughorn, returns for the preparations of the final battle with Lord Voldemort and the kids rediscover teenage drama. Oh, and this is the one where you-know-who (not Voldemort) dies.

Sex and the City

Again, if you're a fan of the series you'll probably be heading to this one and if not, then you'll probably stay home unless some female friend drags you to it. All of the regulars reprise their roles with last year's Oscar winner Jennifer Hudson as Carrie's assistant. Rumor has it one of the ladies will get married. Will it be Carrie and Big?

Speed Racer

The Wachowski Brothers, the guys who gave us the *Matrix* trilogy and the screenplay for *V for Vendetta*, bring the cartoon to the big screen. Emile Hirsch is Speed, John Goodman and Susan Sarandon are Pops and Mom racer, Christina Ricci is Speed's girlfriend Trixie and Matthew Fox (Jack from *Lost*) is Racer X. Much like *The Matrix*, this movie looks like a lot of fancy visuals but not much else.

Suffering From Harry Withdrawl? Philip Pullman's The Golden Compass

DAWN DAVIS

In 1998, *The Golden Compass* slid onto bookstore shelves modestly. In the UK, this book was winning a mind-boggling amount of awards among literary circles while Harry Potter took over the media in the late 90's. While Harry Potter became a pop-culture phenomenon, *The Golden Compass* slipped under the radar for most of us, becoming a treasure in young fantasy. Today, we can't keep the book on the shelves because we all want to know what it is. *The Golden Compass* and the *His Dark Materials* series has finally risen to the surface to achieve the public renown that it deserves.

The preface of the book explains to us that *The Golden Compass* takes place in a world quite similar to ours. Everyone is born with a daemon - an animal partner that lives with you forever. As a child, your daemon can change into whatever it likes and when you hit puberty it will settle into one form. This form says a lot about you - it reminds you who you are because it represents a part of you. A mysterious particle known as Dust is attracted to you after your

daemon settles, and everyone is eager to know what it is and why it acts as it does

Lyra has lived in Jordan College since she can remember. She's your normal young girl, very mischevious and an incredible liar. Lyra is a very different person for a writer to pick as their protagonist. She has an insatiable curiosity about the happenings of the North, where people have been discovering things about Dust and other universes, but she doesn't quite understand it all. What she does know is that many children her age are beginning to disappear, including her good friends. Lyra also soon discovers that the woman who takes her in as her protege may have something to do with it. This book is hard to summarize, because everything gives something away. I'm sure the succeeding books won't make things any easier.



After reading *The Golden Compass* myself, I am going to be much more reluctant to recommend it to younger children. The way I see it is that once you've read all of Harry Potter, you're ready for *His Dark Materials*. An older audience will understand much, much more of it than the younger will, and the faint of heart might want to think about it before picking this one up. This series is not written to be read individually; if you choose to pick it up, be prepared for a three-book investment. If you have read Harry Potter and you're looking for a new series to satisfy your fantasy craving, this is definitely what you need to read. *The Golden Compass* is the perfect young adult or fantasy fan gift this Christmas, especially with the interest caused by the movie.

If you saw the movie and thought that was good, I can assure you it quivers in a corner in comparison to the book. I understand that there was a lot of ground to cover, but it really didn't do the book justice.

	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p>THIS WEEK IN HALIFAX</p>	<p>\$Rockin' 4 Dollar\$ w/ The Superfantastics, Myles Deck and the Fuzz, The Establishment and Gunt. Reflections, \$5, 10pm.</p> <p>The Hupman Brothers. Stayner's, \$3, 8.30pm.</p>	<p>Fast Times with Tittsworth, DJ Double A, T-Woo, GhettoSocks vs. Cosmo and Lucky Comix. The Marquee, \$7 advance, \$10 door.</p> <p>Big Game Hunt, Lull in Conversation & Glitter Cinnamon and the Candy Wrappers. The Attic, \$5, 11pm.</p>	<p>NickNonsense and Aarron Collier. The Seahorse, \$5, 10pm.</p>	<p>Kid Koala, with special guests TBA. Marquee 10pm, \$15 advance, \$20 door.</p> <p>Gordon Gets Lost and NickNameless. The Seahorse, \$5, 10pm</p>	<p>Life as a Legend: Marilyn Monroe till February 17th. Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, \$5 students, daily 10am-5pm.</p>

Danger, Danger!

KIM DARES

Prince Edward Island, a land famed for its potatoes, now has another hot export. The Chucky Danger Band is gaining headlines and critical acclaim Canada-wide. Their video, "Travelling" is in high rotation on Much Music and the boys are currently touring the country promoting their newest self-titled album.

In addition the band recently received four ECMA nominations, in the running against another well known Maritimer, Joel Plaskett. The boys are nominated for Recording of the Year, Rock Recording of the Year, Group Recording of the Year, and Video of the Year.

The guys, David Cyrus MacDonald, John MacPhee, Rob MacPhee, and Colin Buchanan, got together in 2004 and have been touring endlessly trying to get their name out, and it's working.

Much of the song writing is done by brothers John and Rob. The band got together when John returned from a humanitarian trip overseas with a few songs. After showing them to his brother and their neighbour Colin and then after a brief search for a percussionist the guys re-united with an old high school friend who was working on a BA in Music Education at UPEI and after a few live shows they decided to keep going. A good choice indeed.

Their songs are catchy and melodic. "I'm On Fire" is one of those songs that

you find yourself singing along to almost instantly. They have a great sound, it's very unique and hard to describe as it really has no boundaries. Their songs combine a mixture of rock, pop and folk to create a wonderful sound. "The Sheriff" is another great track, described by the guys as "a fun song with lot's of great guitars and vocals."

The Journal recently got the chance to talk with John about all the recent success of the band. "This is a big year for East Coast music and we are very excited to be nominated with some of Canada's best musicians. We were on the road last year and had to miss the ECMA's in Halifax so it's definitely going to be great to get home and join the party in Fredericton" explained John, when asked about the band's ECMA nominations.

Colin also spoke to The Journal about the bands recent Halifax show at the Seahorse Tavern, which was delayed due to another major snowstorm. "The Seahorse show was awesome. The crowd had tonnes of energy despite the bombardment of winter storms surrounding the show. At one point, we were leading an acoustic song along from the middle of crowd and everybody was singing."



CHUCKY DANGER
www.chuckydanger.ca

The guys had a busy year performing over 250 shows, as well as a stint on the Warped Tour, which gained them much critical acclaim. They put on a fabulous live show, keeping the audience entertained from the first chord to the encore. With the new album and their ever increasing popularity it seems Chucky Danger won't be slowing down any time soon.

If you want more information on Chucky Danger, or to preview some of their songs, visit their Myspace page www.myspace.com/thechuckydangerband.

Bite Sized Entertainment

IN / RAINBOWS
IN RAINBOWS
IN RAINBOWS
IN RAINBOWS/
IN RAINBOWS/
RADIOHEA_D
RADIO HEAD

New CDs Out This Week:
In Rainbows by Radiohead, American Gothic by Smashing Pumpkins, Broken Parachute by Northstar and Warning Device by Teenage Bottlerocket.



New Movies Out This Week:

First Sunday, The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything, The Orphanage, and In the Name of the King: A Dungeon Siege Tale.



Burton in Wonderland

Tim Burton has signed a deal with Disney to make a motion capture (like the recent Beowulf film) film adaptation of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. No word on if Johnny Depp will make an appearance.



Homegrown Talent

Halifax's own Ellen Page is winning amazing praise for her role in Juno. The 20 year old has been nominated for A Best Actress award from the Broadcast Film Critics Association, the Chicago Film Critics association, the Screen Actors Guild and the Golden Globes and a plethora of others.



TV Geek's pick of the week.

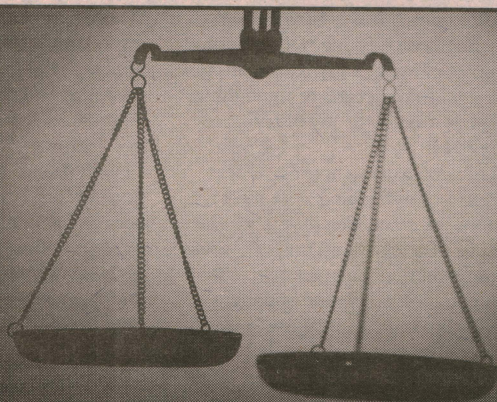
The Sarah Connor Chronicles. Sunday January 13th at 8 on Fox. 300 beauty Lena Headey stars as the mother of John Connor (Thomas Dekker) after the events of Terminator 2: Judgment Day. Firefly's Summer Glau co-stars in one of the few new shows to debut during the strike.

Photo Of The Week



Photo by: Denyse Hockley

Want to see your photo in print? Submit to arts.smu@gmail.com



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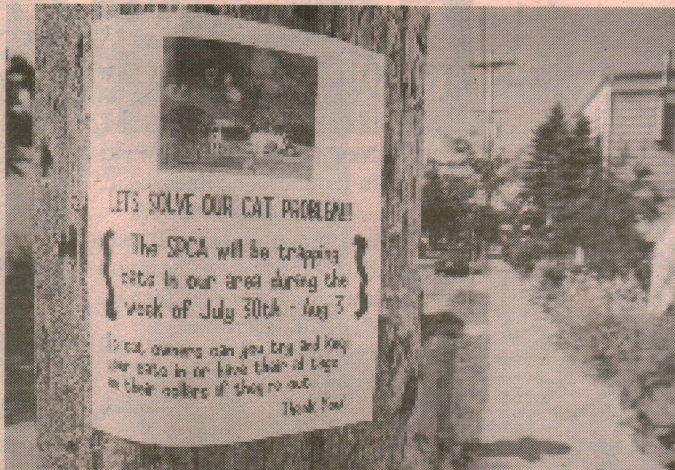
The Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research



Canada's Capital University

FEATURES

“Missing” ... wide-eyed, short hair and four PAWS



BRITTANY HILTON, PRESIDENT
TIFFANY VAN KROONENBURG, VP

This summer, the local SPCA collected and euthanized cats by the thousands...

Right now in the HRM, we are faced with an increasingly over population of feral cats, estimated at 300,000. The extremity of the situation has resulted in extreme measures, such as the SPCA's catch and kill cat mission, where they enter neighborhoods, after posting signs on nearby poles, warning residents of their presence asking that pets be kept indoors during this period. But how sure were they?

As most breeding is accidental, the litters and residents are both feeling its effects. Found wandering afraid and alone, just as hundreds are, alone and without any home, more and more spontaneous adoptions are taken place from off the streets as the problem continues to surface.

Although the right intentions are in place, people do not always realize the financial burden of taking in an animal, such as a stray cat. Students, especially tend to adopt kittens they find on the street because they're too cute to leave behind, all the while not realizing the money the kitten will cost or the importance of investing in a neutering operation, until an unexpected litter comes along. Assuming shelters are able to take in their unwanted animals; but unfortunately because of current overflow shelters are turning away

almost 50 cats a day. In its place, residents are utilizing alternative means, such as cases of kittens being drowned, suffocated or left abandoned on the streets is the unfortunate cycle, which are becoming a common trend.

With the numbers of stray cats in HRM steadily increasing, a new city bylaw, A-300, has been proposed and implemented to deal with this problem. This bylaw allows people to rent humane traps to capture local cats to be delivered to local animal shelters. Once captured and after a grace period of three days, during which if the cat has an owner (i.e. is registered), he/she can claim the cat, provided the fees (redemption, boarding and possible vet fees) associated with that cat are paid of course. The fate of unidentified cats by the third day however is not so fortunate, as euthanization is the preferred solution by the animal shelters, as they are all at maximum boarding capacity.

The Partnership for Animal Welfare Society of SMU (PAWS) has proposed a solution to the problem of the multitudes of stray cats. Planned Pethood is a non-profit organization that is seeking to help prevent the over population of cats in HRM. The goal of this organization is to serve as financial aid for spay/neutering operations to income-eligible applicants. Planned Pethood believes in preventing them, not killing them. Cats made sterile will result in a drastic decrease of unwanted litters. Spaying one female cat can prevent 36,000 kittens in five years. Neutering one male cat can prevent hundreds of unwanted pregnancies. Overall, sterilizing one pair of cats can reduce almost 420,000 kittens. Spaying and neutering can also reduce cancer in cats, lower risk of aggressive behaviours as well as territory battles. Planned Pethood believes that in spaying/neutering our cats, it will reduce the number of unwanted and abandoned litters, thereby slowly reducing the number of feral cats around HRM.

PAWS will be attending the UrbanButter Showcase event on Saturday, January 12 on Granville Street. Representatives will be present with more information on Planned Pethood as well as the PAWS society.

Amanda's Lament

MARK MERCER
The Cranky Professor

Amanda Wenek, who will graduate from Saint Mary's this year with a Bachelor of Arts degree, wonders what the point of her university career is and worries that her studies and her degree will prove irrelevant to her future. Amanda, the Editor in Chief of The Journal and a fourth-year honours philosophy student, expressed her frustration and fears in an editorial in the November 21st edition of this paper. Amanda advises other students about to graduate simply to push on through and complete their degrees despite the stress and the boredom, and even should they feel their hard work is pointless.

So what is the point of being an Arts student?

Earning a degree, preparing for a career, even learning something or acquiring certain skills—none of these is the central point of studying at a university. The central point lies entirely within whatever one is doing during one's activities as a student. The central point of attending a university is meeting the standards of excellence that give meaning to the various activities in which one's life as a student consists.

Let's take one of those activities—writing an essay. A good essay is one in which something significant is said well. A student meets standards of excellence for essay writing when she says something significant on the topic at hand and says it well. Now saying something significant and saying it well requires thought, hard thought about the topic and hard thought about how to organize one's thoughts about the topic. That requires writing and rewriting, thinking and thinking again. Meeting standards of excellence for essay writing is not easy. Yet during the process of writing, one experiences little and large moments of satisfaction, a moment of satisfaction on each occasion one manages well with a difficult idea. When one is finished, one has in one's hands a good essay. That is why one is studying at a university: to produce good work and to enjoy the process and result of producing good work.

Participating in class, participating in an intellectual discussion outside of class, working hard to understand a reading, viewing a newspaper or magazine article through ideas and skills you've recently acquired, listening attentively and critically to a lecture—these are just a few more activities that make up one's life as a university student. Each can be done well or poorly. The point of being an Arts student is in the joy of doing each of these things well, or at least in the joy of trying to do them well.

Think of playing hockey. One attempts in playing hockey to meet standards of excellence for the various things in which hockey consists—stick handling, finding the open man and passing to him, taking the opponent off the puck, hitting cleanly and effectively. These are not easy things to do and

they can be done poorly. The point of playing hockey is to do these things well, to participate in a well-executed play, to contribute importantly to a well-played game. In meeting the standards of excellence in the game of hockey one contributes to a well-played game and takes satisfaction and joy from doing so. Studying at a university is really no different.

Being a hockey player is not easy. You've got to get up early, you've got to lug your equipment around, you've got to endure the antics of some idiot teammate. And all that's before you even hit the ice. On the ice you have to practice and drill, you have to listen patiently to the coach as she bawls you out, you have to wait your turn. And all that's before you even scrimmage, let alone play a game. During the game you again have to wait your turn, you have to skate hard right until the end of your shift, you have to go into the corners and pay the price. None of that is fun at all. And yet contributing to a well-played game is a joy as great as any. All the drudgery, fatigue, and pain is worth it just because it's all necessary if one is to contribute to a well-played game. Studying at a university is really no different.

Now of course getting a degree, acquiring credentials useful in beginning a career, making friends, establishing contacts, acquiring knowledge and skills, and all the rest, is terrific and fine. But none of that is any more central to being a student than developing one's skills, getting a good workout, signing a pro contract, winning a game, or even winning the cup is to being a hockey player. Perfectly fine though each of these reasons for being a student is, no set of them amounts to a sufficiently good reason for being a student. The only sufficiently good reason is that you love what you are doing.

I worry that too few students know this. I worry that too many students think that university is just preparation for something else. If you are not capable of finding satisfaction and joy in writing a good essay or in participating well in class, then you ought not to be at university; or, at any rate, you are not here for the right reason. I hazard that most students are quite capable of finding joy in meeting standards of excellence in their studies; they rarely do find this joy, though, because they don't know that that's what they are here to do. Without that joy the drudgery is just drudgery and the pain is just pain.

To Amanda and to anyone else experiencing the fourth-year blues (or the third-year blues, or the second-year blues), then, I say sit down, pay the future only a little mind, and reconnect with the present. Become intent on doing well those things that define your life as a student. Listen attentively and critically in your literature class, sit with friends to discuss the elections in Russia in light of what you've been doing in history, and work hard on your philosophy essay. Get back in the game. That's where the fun is and that's what will make all the rest worthwhile.

SMU Student Awarded Big-Time on National Radio



TOM WESTOLL

Last year, SMU Finance student Jamie Hawkins went to the Royal Bank ATM in the Student Centre to get some money for lunch. What he found sitting beside the machine was a sack of cash large enough to buy him all the Pizza-Pizza slices in the cafeteria, and then some.

How many times have we all imagined finding a magic suitcase full of cash seemingly unattended that would wipe out a large chunk of our financial woes? This happened to Jamie when he found \$10,000 in a bag at this time last year, yet he was conscience enough to do the right thing and turn the money in. All of it.

Well, much was made of the story when it hit the national news, the story was all over the place

from USA Today to the CBC and people were impressed with his honesty and it has started to pay off for him. After the money bag incident he received a \$500 donation from the Security Company who looks after the bank machines on campus, as well as an anonymous cheque for \$1000 from a woman in Toronto.

The big news now though, is that Stuart McLean from CBC Radio's The Vinyl Café (you know, the guy who tells story's about Morely and Dave) has recently awarded Jamie with the Vinyl Café Arthur Award of over \$15,000 that was raised over the past year by passing around a bucket and collecting loonies and toonies at the live tapings of his show across the country. The presentation happened on McLean's New Year's Day show but if you missed it,

fear not, an encore presentation is being aired so make sure you tune in to hear Stuart's interview with Jamie and the presentation of the award on Saturday, January 12th at 10 a.m. on CBC Radio Two; or you can also hear it on Sunday the 13th at 12 p.m. or Tuesday the 15th at 11 p.m., both of which will be on CBC Radio One.

LET'S GET BAKED WITH MAT AND DAVE

Welcome back to school, kids! Hopefully the holidays were full of yummy food, but now it's time to start eating healthy again, and what better way to do that than to cook along with Let's Get Baked. Winnipeg rapper Pip Skid helped to make these delicious rice wraps. They're easy and fun to make and they taste like a million dollars, so try 'em out! Remember to tune into CKDU 88.1 on Thursday's at 5 pm to hear more of your favourite bands and the food they cook on Let's Get Baked with Mat and Dave.



Pip Skid enjoys a Skid-licious Wrap

Skid (W)rap with Pip Skid


- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 4 medium carrots, grated | 1 bunch of green onions |
| 2 cobs of corn | 3 tbsp peanut butter |
| 2 cups of cooked quinoa | 1 package of Rice Wrap papers |
| 4 cloves of garlic | 1 1/2 cups rice milk |
| 1 onion | juice of one orange |
| 2 avocados | black sesame seeds |

Directions: Quickly sauté up the garlic and onions. In the meantime, boil your corn and cook your quinoa. Mash the avocados, some fresh garlic, chopped onion, orange juice and some salt and pepper to create a guacamole that will go in the wrap. When the corn and quinoa are cooked, cut the corn kernels off the cob and mix it with the quinoa. Boil some water up to soak the rice paper in. To assemble the wraps, soak a sheet of the paper in hot water for about 12 seconds, then add a scoop of the quinoa, a scoop of the guacamole, and a sprinkle of the shredded carrots. Roll it up by folding in the sides and rolling up the goods. For your sauce, just blend up the peanut butter, rice milk, sautéed onion and garlic, some fresh garlic and salt and pepper to taste. Drizzle that all over your wraps then sprinkle on some sesame seeds and you're in business.

THE JOURNAL PRESENTS AA ASKS....


Q & A with Amanda & AJ

“What are you most looking forward to this semester, or, conversely, what are you most fearful of?”




ASHLEY RAWLE
1ST YEAR UNDECLARED

“I’m excited for an easier semester than last semester, and just to hang out with friends.”



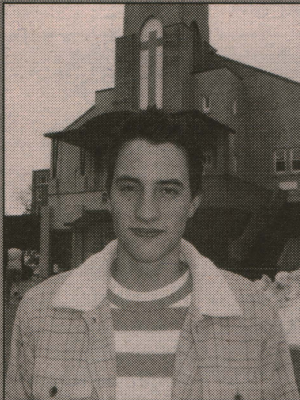
LAURA WEEDEN
1ST YEAR ENGINEERING

“This semester will be the first time all the engineering students get to integrate and I’m really looking forward to that!”



CHRIS FITZNER
APPLIED SCIENCE (Ma)

“I am scared of getting my student loan too late to pay rent”



TYLER ROSS
1ST YEAR ARTS

“I’m excited mostly for getting more credits because I’m still finishing my first year technically, and putting my life together.. and seeing the summer come back into play!”



MEGAN JOHNSTON
1ST YEAR IDS

“I’m looking forward to new classes and new opportunities to meet people.”



BRANDON WONG
4TH YEAR COMMERCE

“I’m excited to graduate, to finish up and have a good last semester here.”

Photos courtesy of Amanda Wenek

SMU DOKU

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

NOV 28TH'S SOLUTION

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

HOT OR NOT

- New Year’s resolutions
- Rehab
- New Hampshire
- Writer’s strike
- Juno
- Re-usable water bottles
- Kissing at midnight
- Air Emirates
- New classes
- Holiday leftovers

- The Tower being packed for two weeks
- Suicide watch
- Iowa
- Golden Globes
- Jamie Lynn Spears
- Nalgene’s potentially causing cancer
- Not recognizing them in the morning
- Air Canada
- Waking up before noon
- The effect on your waistline

G SPOT Long Distance Lovin’

SS RANDY BLUE

“Hey SSRB, my girlfriend and I have been going together for almost two years now. She’s graduating this year and will be moving to grad school in the fall. I still have another year of school. What’s the best way to keep our relationship together or should I just break it off and find someone who’s still here? Any help would be awesome, thanks.

-Lonely in Loyola

Hey LIL,
Trying to maintain a long distance relationship will probably be one of the hardest things you’ll ever

have to do in a relationship, other than trying to help your girlfriend plan your wedding. But don’t worry; I have lots of tips and help for you to keep your relationship going strong.

First off, you need to get a cell phone plan that has a few long distance minutes and a decent webcam for your computer. In order to keep your relationship together it will take a lot of commitment and a bit of a time investment on both of your behalves. Try to establish a regular time when you both will be free and available to talk to each other on the phone. This can be tricky, especially with school commitments, and more so if she’s

moving to a different time zone. If you can’t afford all the long distance minutes (those nickel nights and dime days can add up pretty quickly) then the webcam option may be best for you.

Most webcams are “plug and play”, and work with most IM programs like MSN, AIM, or ICQ. With the webcam you get the benefit of seeing each other in real time. This way when you see her at Christmas, and she has cropped off all her hair and pierced her nose, it’s not a complete shock. If you’re feeling lonely in the loins then webcams, again, are your best option. Instead of just having your girlfriend talking to you sensually

over the phone she can act out those moves right in front of you, and if you add a microphone into the mix then it’s almost the same as being right there beside her bed. Get her a nice vibrator before she goes away and may get to see her use it and act out a video scene for you with it. Also, the best part about webcams is that even if you’re sitting in class with your webcam off she can still have hers on at home and put on a show for you. It may mean that you are a little distracted in class and miss those notes about how to do derivatives or on economics in South East Asia. But, class notes you can copy from a friend anytime, your

girlfriend acting out a nude show for you can be quite rare so weigh your options carefully.

If you find that she wants no part in trying to do little sensual activities for you, or you for her, and the relationship starts to sour then it may be in your best interests to call it off for a while. If you two finish school and reunite then it was meant to be, if you each find someone else then at least be thankful that you got to spend two years with a great person.

Until next week SMU, keep it safe and clean, or dirty...however you like it, and don’t forget to send your questions into smu.gspot@gmail.com

BUSINESS

Too Broke for Bookstore? Discover your other options



LAURA MACINTOSH

First off, Happy New Year! Second, I pose a question to you readers. How are your finances? Rather gouge your eyes out with

a plastic spoon than max your credit card with course packs and textbooks? You're not alone!

Here are some great ways to save a little cash this semester.

With no money in our pockets and the highest tuition in the country, not to mention post-Christmas gift giving; some students just can't afford the extra expenses of University.

SMUSA's book exchange is a good place to look for used texts. On the book exchange, students can

exchange or purchase used texts for cheaper than bookstore prices. Students can advertise the books they no longer want, or the books they need, and search for matching ads. Check www.smusa.ca for

information on the book exchange. Unfortunately there is no guarantee that the text you're getting is the right edition or includes those pesky CD tutorials.

Another good option is to check the bulletin boards around campus. Many of the boards have ads for used texts and have searching for ads as well. Keep your eyes peeled and snap up any opportunities you find.

Another (more obvious) answer to your text book problems is to borrow off past students. Check your friends to see if they've taken the course before, or ask your prof if they know of any former students that might be able to help you out.

If you can't get your book through SMUSA or the bulletin boards; there are more options. Chegg.com is a great way to get your books at lower prices. Chegg is an online textbook rental site; you order the books you need and

send them back when you're done! Students using Chegg save an average of 60% off title prices.

Textbookflix (the book renting division of Chegg) works like this. Browse the website or use keyword searching to find the titles and editions you require, and then create your text list. Order them online using credit card or gift certificates. Chegg has fast delivery (2-6 days) and great shipping rates of \$6.00 for the first text and \$2 after that.

The company buys text books from wholesale partners based on student demand; the more students who want Management for Dummies; the more copies they have. Based out of a US warehouse, this Santa Clara company has over 2 million titles to choose from.

With the savings students can get from using a company like Chegg, there's no reason to worry about not affording those pesky books. At the end of the semester, you ship them back with pre-paid

mailing labels and forget it; or you can keep the text for an additional cost.

Another great thing about Chegg is that it's an eco-friendly; for every textbook you buy, a tree is planted.

Another online option is Ebay. On Ebay you can find Canadian suppliers or sellers and purchase in Canadian dollars. Canadian suppliers also save you all those pesky duty charges for American importing.

Bookstores around town also carry some text books you may need. Marketing and arts books are pretty easy to find at Chapters, where psychology and religious studies majors may be out of luck.

Whatever you choose, there are options to cheaper text books. Hope this helps you out this semester; welcome back to the grindstone, students.

What the Heck is Airsoft? An investigative journalist sets out to find out.

LAURA MACINTOSH

This is a question I asked not only myself but a car load of crazy guys this past weekend, while in a car headed to the middle of nowhere. As they explained the pretense of this combat style sport I wondered how hard it would be to hitch hike back to Halifax; but in retrospect I'm glad they didn't let me out of the car.

Airsoft is similar to paint ball, but there's less pain and less mess. The game uses replica and stylized guns which are either spring, electric or gas powered, that shoot small ball bearings (BB's). There are many different styles of games to be played, many of which are similar to military-type training games (like paint ball). The game relies on the honor system when players are hit, as BB's do not leave distinguishable marks like paint balls do.

The combat game was created in Japan in the late 1970's for those with an interest in firearms. Japanese law prevented the ownership of real firearms so the game of Airsoft was created to fill the void. Since the early 80's, Airsoft has found growing interest in Europe and North America, but the game has grown more rapidly in Asia. There have been many advancements to gun quality (changing from spring loaded to electric, etc.) made over the last decades and Japan is still the leading country for exporting Airsoft goods.



Offensive team sneaks up on their opponents

In fact North America has next to no retailers of the supplies, and none that ship to Canada, so local Airsoft aficionados have to import their weapons and BB's from Japan. Because of the rapidly growing interest in the sport, don't be surprised to see retailers popping up in the next few years. It would certainly be a smart business endeavor. Last year there was a huge 'zombie' style game of Airsoft in Ontario, with three teams; civilians, military and zombies (unarmed players who had to tag others without getting shot). High numbers showed up at the unofficial game, showing promise for Airsoft business in Canada. Most of the supplies used in the Ontario zombie game were imported from Japanese retailers.

I have a feeling that as the stock in Airsoft rises in North America, you will see a merchandise explosion similar to that of paint ball; with local Wal Marts even selling Airsoft

equipment in the future. That will certainly bring price drops and make the game more affordable for everyone.

So how does Airsoft stack up to paintball? Air guns are currently a lot more expensive than paint ball guns as they still need to be imported from Japan. Guns range from \$300 to \$1000 for Airsoft and \$70 to \$700 for paint ball guns. The price cut comes for those who play fairly frequently, as BB's are a lot less taxing on the wallet. For 4000 BB's you'll pay about \$20, where the equal number of paint balls will set you back \$120.

So if you feel the need to beat up your buddies, run around and shoot things, Airsoft is the game for you. Suit up in military garb with a pair of goggles and you're pretty much set for a game! I had an absolute blast (and I'm a wuss) shooting up my friends with the spring action single shot wannabe sniper rifle (they all had automatics). But there are warnings that come with Airsoft... don't just go play on the Commons or people will think you're really running around with guns. Find a secluded area as to not disturb (or frighten) neighbours and then go at it. It's a great workout and blasting BB's at that annoying friend is a great way to get out the bad vibes.

Photos courtesy of Laura MacIntosh

SMU Self-Employment Centre's Student Business Showcase: "Chocolates by Design"

Gourmet chocolates are a delicacy enjoyed by many Canadians. Often eaten in celebration or received as a thank you, chocolates are the perfect way to mark a special occasion. The sheer popularity of such a product has resulted in a large variety of different chocolate suppliers. Mainstream, popular brands such as Hershey and Cadbury can be found at almost any corner store; higher end chocolates such as those produced by Lindt are staples at grocery stores. Despite the public's love affair with the cocoa bean, most people would be hard pressed to identify a chocolatier that could provide them with unique services such as hand wrapping and customized orders.

"Chocolates by Design" is the brainchild of Omar Khartabil and his wife, who both not only recognized the public's love for gourmet chocolate, but were also able to identify a unique niche in the chocolate market by playing upon customer's appreciation for a more personal experience tailored specifically for them. "Chocolates by Design" takes pride in originality and pays special attention to detail. The company specializes in importing individually wrapped gourmet chocolates encompassing a wide variety of mouthwatering and smooth tastes. Each chocolate piece is individually wrapped in an elegant and attractive way before being arranged delicately and artistically tailored to the customer's request and occasion's theme.

Started in 2005, "Chocolates

by Design" is run by Omar and his wife out of their Halifax home. Currently, "Chocolates by Design" products are available across Canada. Pete's Frootique is the only current local retailer selling the chocolates; "Chocolates by Design" is sold one the website.

Although the company is becoming more successful with each day, it has not been easy. Omar and his wife faced many challenges, primary among them being the improvement of their understanding of the Canadian Food Agency's requirements needed to start up business in the first place. Since then the biggest hurdle for "Chocolates by Design" has been in the area of promotion. Although response to their products has been overwhelmingly positive, getting the word out was, and still is, easier said than done.

Omar credits the success and survival of his business to passion, perseverance and the product itself. Through use of their website, flyers, sponsorship and approaching specific target markets such as students, and the incorporation of discounts and special deals, the community's familiarity with Omar's chocolate has continued to increase.

There is no limit to what can be done with Omar's chocolates—simply choose your occasion and rest assured that you will enjoy the look and taste of the "Chocolates by Design". For more information or to place an order visit: www.chocolatesbydesign.net



Taking cover in a dark stairwell

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Diaries of a Mad Retail Worker

LAURA MACINTOSH

Oh the holiday season; filled with cheer, joy and plenty of stories from the front lines of Boxing Day sales. I've asked around for some of the best stories and advice from this past holiday season.

Suzy Q sized up:

Here's the scene; Suzy is in the middle of her 12 hour shift at a local clothing store on December 28th. A customer (let's call her Lacey) walks in and asks for Suzy's help picking out a new outfit. "She wanted to put that gift certificate to good use at our sales rack," Suzy



recalled. "First of all Lacey didn't seem to understand that with 5 workers and 25 customers in the store I didn't have time to be her personal shopper."

After explaining to the young female that she couldn't in fact be the personal fashionista but she'd be back to see how things were going, and that all sizes in sale items were out on the racks, Suzy went to help other customers. "I was in the middle of helping a woman and her daughter find jean sizes and all I hear is 'Do you have this in my size?' With my head in the jean rack I asked what size my size was, but when I turned around I saw Lacey with a sweater from the sales rack. I repeated that all sales items were out and there were no more sizes in back, and her reply was 'Well do you have it out here in a medium?' I felt like screaming at the stupidity of the question but instead I handed over two pairs of jeans to my other customers and walked Lacey over to the sales rack." After leafing through the sales rack and confirming that there were no more mediums, Suzy went on to her other 3 customers.

"It's like I couldn't even start a conversation with another customer before she was back again." Lacey was back with another item from the sales rack, and the same size question. "It literally took me saying to her, I don't have magic powers; if YOU don't see it on the sales rack than WE don't have it. Then she started asking if I could at least check in back for her; that was all I could handle."

Mac's two cents on the topic:

I've seen this one a lot, even in

my own store. There are two big issues in this example; knowledge of stock and time constraints. During the busiest time of the year, don't expect personal one-on-one service. Most workers have multiple customers on the go at any one time, and everyone needs to be served in a timely and fair manner. If that means cutting off your conversation about matching black and brown, it might just be cut. The other big issue here is about stock. Workers get to know their stock over the course of a season; the holidays are the end of the winter season for most retailers.

This means that there are already limited sizes and such, and that retail workers have been in and out of the back room so many times that they certainly know what is and isn't there. If they say they're out of something, they are. It's not lack of customer

service or laziness, the fact it that the worker has probably been back to check on that particular item 10 times that shift.

The Cinderella story:

Jason was another worker to fall victim to the Boxing Week blow-ups. While working at a shoe store in downtown Halifax, Jason had an encounter with a rather demanding customer. Now Jason has only been working at with his employer for a few months, and had never been part of a mad

Boxing Day rush before. Eager to please, Jason asked the woman if she needed any help or advice. The woman instantly set Jason on the most wild goose chase of his retail career.

"First she explained what she wanted. That was fine except that she had one of those perfect visions and nothing else was going to be good enough. Then she explained that she had bunions and wide feet... but she was still a perfect size 7." After picking a few shoes out with the woman, Jason went into the back room to look for sizes. Unfortunately there was no size 7's left in what the woman had picked.

"I thought of another shoe that was similar but we only had it in a 7.5. I brought it out with me anyway, that was one of the big-

gest mistakes I've made in my job. I showed the woman what I had found and first she mumbled 'You mean you don't have any of what I asked for?' to which I apologetically said no. Then I explained that what I did have was comparable and although they were a 7.5 the style had been running quite small and the 7.5 was likely the right fit. The woman scoffed at the idea of wearing anything but a 7, saying 'I already told you, I'm a perfect 7'. I finally convinced the woman to try the shoe I had brought and despite fitting perfectly in the heel she promptly kicked it off saying it was way too big. Just when I thought things were bad, things got worse. The woman and I had an encounter that will haunt me for weeks. She actually asked me to bring out every size 7 I had in shoes. Thinking it was a joke I asked if she was serious... she just looked at me and said 'Didn't I sound serious?'

["...I asked if she was serious... she just looked at me and said 'Didn't I sound serious?'"]

I don't know if he overheard the conversation or if it was the look on my face, but thankfully I was saved by my manager.

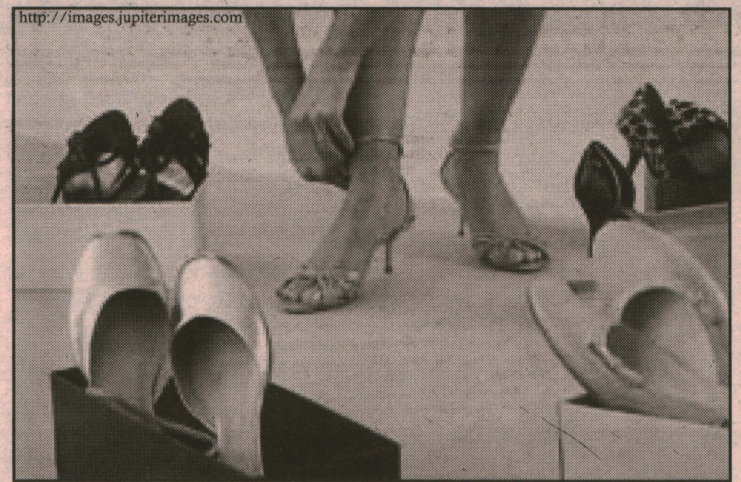
Mac's Two Cents:

Oh Jason, so much to learn! Working in another of Halifax's shoe stores, I know all about this situation. I'm not sure if it's just brazen customers or if people don't really get it, but no, we can't go check every style and colour of shoe for you! There are hundreds

of styles of shoes in a store; in various colours and usually 10 different sizes... that means literally thousands of pairs of shoes lay behind that employees only sign. Searching for every size whatever would take hours.

Second, this perfect size 7 is the perfect example of size confusion. Sizing is just a guide, it isn't standard, varying across brands, styles and sizing schemes (US vs. UK for instance). Just try to go to the GAP and Le Chateau, you'll probably find you seem to have two different waist sizes. Shoes are the same way, some brands run small or large, there is no such thing as a foot that fits every size 7 ever made.

Although our last story is from the food industry, it happened over the holidays and it was just too



good not to include!

Heather's Hitter:

"A group of guys came into the restaurant the night before New Year's eve. I did the whole Hi I'm Heather I'll be your waitress thing then took there drink orders. Everything seemed normal at first but while I was serving other tables

patience for it. I felt like screaming at him 'News flash, asking your waitress to pick your meal is not a good way to hit on her, it's a good way to get hit!' I ended up ordering him up the most expensive thing on the menu and he was pretty shocked to get his bill. I calmly said, 'And that's why we're not supposed to pick for customers', took his credit card and walked away. I got stiffed on the tip from him but his buddies more than made up for it. At least they were entertained that evening."

Mac's Two Cents:

Note to eaters; it's true, most restaurants won't let their employees choose dishes for customers for many reasons; allergies are a big one, and also it's easy for the customer to complain and get a free meal.

Oh... and hitting on a waitress by asking them to pick something... overdone, overrated and so very, very lame. New material people!

Whether as a worker or customer, we've all had some memorable run-ins. Send in some of your favorite moments for the next edition of Diaries of a Mad... at business.smujournal@gmail.com.

I noticed them looking at me and giggling like a bunch of school girls."

Heather gave the guys time to look over the food menu then approached to take their orders. "One guy said; 'I have to be last... I'm always last'. I found it weird but didn't think much of it and I took everyone else's orders. When I asked the last man what he wanted he looked up at me and (thinking he was a big hot shot) said 'I can't make up my mind, why don't you decide for me'. Instantly knowing where it was going I tried all the routine blocks like what were you thinking between, what kind of food do you like and the cheese tortellini is our special to-night. I was met by all the unhelpful answers like 'It all looks so good, yeah sure' and my personal favorite 'I don't know, you should just pick for me and I'll eat whatever you bring'.

"After explaining to him that I actually wasn't allowed to pick for him he still insisted on my choice. It was an obvious (and very lame) attempt at flirting and I had no



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SPORTS

Canada Beats Sweden in Rematch for Gold

ROBBIE NAUFFTS

Canada and Sweden faced off for a second time during the World Juniors with Sweden having the win 4-3 in the first match. Sweden has not won a Gold Medal since 1981 and had only made the Gold Medal game the last time in 1996. Canada would be defending their three Gold medal streak this year.

Canada opened the game with Brad Marchand (joining the Halifax Mooseheads later this week) scoring only 1:27 into the first period after grabbing a rebound from Claude Giroux. Canada would stay on the offensive for the first few minutes with Brandon Sutter throwing his body into a Swedish player for the first big hit of the game. Keeping Canada's physical game going, Stefan Legein would throw a hard shoulder check early on and leave the Canadian bench for the period. (Later on Team Canada doctors would announce Legein had a separated shoulder and would not return). Canada would kill off their first penalty in their own zone and then attack into the Swedish defensive zone for their second chance at a goal with a two-on-one opportunity that ended in a hard wrist shot that was gloved down by Jhonas Enroth.

During Canada's first Powerplay Marchand would pass the puck out in front of the Swede net and Giroux would fire it past

Enroth for Canada's second goal. Sweden would take another penalty at the end of the period and setting Canada up for the one-man advantage for the Second.

Sweden would start out strong and Mason would keep the score at 2-0 with a brilliant glove save. Sweden would go on the powerplay soon after and keep Canada on the defensive until the defensemen could dump the puck the length of the ice. As Canada returned to full strength they would again attack the Swede net for two good chances before Berglund would take another penalty for slashing and give Canada another 5 on 4 powerplay. Halfway through the second period Sweden would start playing a panic game, scrambling to keep Canadian players covered. At the end of the penalty Marchand and Giroux would crash the net again and try to poke a loose puck into the net. Team Canada would lead the shots during the second with ten and keeping Sweden with only one shot on the Canadian goal. Sweden's Anderson would pull down a Canadian player for another penalty. A dangerous play when your team's goalie is facing three good shots on net per penalty. The left post would keep the Swedish deficit at two after a hard shot from the blue line.

Canada would dominate the offensive zone for the last few minutes of the second period and Sweden almost went down by

three with a dangerous turn-over in front of their own net that was slammed back at the goal. The period would end with Team Canada seeing light at the end of the tunnel with twenty minutes left to play.

Turris would make sure the Swedish goalie was awake during the carry-over powerplay from the second period by intercepting a Swedish pass in the offensive zone and ringing it off the cross bar. A few inches lower and it would have been 3-0. Sweden would start dominating the Canadians by working the sides of the rink and a frantic Team Canada would take a penalty. Only a few seconds in, Sweden's Carleson would catch a rebounding puck and put it behind Mason making it 2-1.

Sweden would raise the pressure more in the Canadian zone for almost two minutes before Marchand would race up the ice for another shot on net before Sweden would again close off the neutral zone. The Swedish panic play had suddenly turned organized and brutal with Canada responding to Sweden's plays. The Canadian defense would be caught on the wrong side of the ice as a Swedish player took advantage and had a free shot on Mason. Sutter would take a hard shot on the Swedish goal minutes later that was deflected into the corner. Both teams were lucky as the referees allowed several trips and holds to go unpunished, giving both teams a break before Marchand would leave his feet for a body check and receive a charging penalty. Sweden was 1/3 on the power play with less than seven minutes left.

At this point, my grandfather who is from Bir-



mingham, England and is a bigger hockey fan than most Canadians turns to me and asks "Do you think we're going to win it?" and I reply "I'm not even going to say anything." My stomach was upset watching the Swedes firing on the Canadian net and just missing the upper-right corner with ten seconds left in the penalty. Marchand would redeem his penalty by charging out of the penalty box and almost getting a break away. Still 2-1 Canada. With 3:56 left Mason would again rob a Swedish shot on goal. Steven Mason would keep Canada up by one with another big glove save.

Canada would start playing a conservative game when Berglund would race through the Canadian players for a shot on net that Mason let rebound before covering it and the Swedish team tried to capitalize on it by crashing the net. Mason would again stop the Swedish tying goal by stopping a shot down low with the pads.

Sweden would pull their goalie with 1:45 left and Canada would

beat out the icing call, but again the referees would make a bad icing call. Sweden would tie the game after crashing the net with thirty seconds left and catching Mason trying to recover from the first save. The period would end with Sweden coming alive and Canada starting to be visibly worn out and Overtime looming.

Overtime would start with both teams playing strong and Sweden edging out a few good shots but it would be Canada's Halischuk snapping the Gold winner past Enroth for the 3-2 in Overtime. After one of the hardest fought games in hockey, Team Canada would win the Gold Medal in the World Juniors for the fourth time in a row. Sweden would receive Silver with Russia following up with bronze after beating out Team USA.

Jakub Voracek will be returning to the Halifax Moosehead line-up later this week along with Brad Marchand who arrived in Halifax to a crowd of over 100 excited fans at the Halifax International Airport.



Moose Claim Penalty Minute King

ROBBIE NAUFFTS

With only a week before the trade deadline in the QMJHL the Mooseheads bring another forward to the herd for the second half of the season. David Bouchard has been picked up after playing for Drummondville this season and is the leader in penalty minutes in the league. He is 6'1 and weighs in at 208 pounds and has to date racked-up 204 penalty minutes with over 25 fights. In only 38 games.

At first this may sound like the player that you should be watching out for on the other team, not the forward you would want handicapping your team by spending most of their time in the "Sin Bin" and leaving you a player short. But Bouchard has joined the Moose to bring a more physical presence to the ice, for a team that has been lacking slightly in the physical department.

During the warm-up Bouchard was quick to start taunting a few players from the Fog Devils before focusing on number 14, Wes Welcher and trying to intimidate him. Also during the warm up Bouchard was noticeably left by himself and out of place as the herd warmed up and had the appearance of still finding his place with the team.

On his first shift with the Mooseheads Bouchard was again found getting in a few faces and trying to throw some Fog Devils off their game and at the whistle trading a few shoves in front of the opposing net. His second shift out, while the play moved into his own end Bouchard had his back turned to his teammates as he got in Welcher's face again, trying to start a fight before moving up with the play. Most of his first period was spent hanging off the play and trying to shove and start a tussle with anyone wearing a black jersey.

With no penalties yet in the first period, Bouchard passed

a puck to the front of the opposing net for a one-timer shot that bounced back towards him behind the net. Almost automatically Bouchard flicked the puck off of the visiting goalies back and into the net for his second goal of the season. On the bench several Mooseheads congratulated David on bringing the team back to trailing by one. A few minutes later he would find the net again for a second goal and firing up the Herd.

The second period Bouchard showed his aggressive side more by jumping on the ice during a line change and driving his body into another opposing player and throwing him backwards to the ice in front of the referee. The Metro Center erupted in cheers for the third time as he chased another Fog Devil into a corner and stapled him to the boards with a crunching bodycheck. After a Fog Devil tossed out a knee to deliberately hit another Moosehead, Bouchard was pulled off another player by a linesman during the scuffle, showing that he would make the other team pay for dirty hits on his new teammates.

Afterward the Linesman broke up the shoving match, Bouchard skated past the Fog Devils bench, glaring at the players to come out and challenge him. Bouchard would spend most of the second period trying to rough-up the other team and even hooking a few players while he skated to face-off circles before the puck drops.

Surprisingly though, David Bouchard didn't throw any dirty hit's or trade fists with the Devils. At the end of the night, Bouchard would have two goals and one assist for his first game with Halifax and surprisingly, no penalty minutes to claim the first Star of the game. However Bouchard was a key player in setting up and reading plays to make sure he was in position to make a play successful. Bouchard would also find himself alone with the puck twice and have a

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chance to show his speed and his ability to move the puck as he dashed into the opposing zone. As a well rounded player Bouchard may not be spending most of his games on the bench but instead as a key player on the team.

Bouchard looks like a well disciplined and defense minded forward as he fell back to help the Moosehead Defenseman break up several plays in front of their own net. It looks like the Herd has the physical presence they have been looking for with Bouchard throwing hits out on the ice to anyone giving him a dirty look and making the other team look for him before charging into a corner after the puck.

Bouchard's third game with the Mooseheads would result in his first fight with the club with PEI's Brad Gallant only six seconds into their first shift. Moosehead Goalie Pelletier stated later that night on CJCH 920 that "Bouchard doesn't fight for himself, he fights for the team."