

The infamous faculty lounge and its inhabitants

BY Todd MacLean

The Faculty Association is being accused of mal-informing the faculty, and in particular, their recent switch to the procedure of voting via electronic mail may not be as holistically effective as originally planned.

Last fall's renovations to the Faculty Lounge were voted upon in this manner via e-mail. Though a large quorum approved the decision to go ahead with the alterations, some still think that some faculty members were not well informed of the costly changes.

The lounge actually had initial "upgrading" early in the fall without consultation from much of the faculty, and it was only when the Faculty Association decided to another \$5000 into renovations that the e-mail vote finally occurred in mid-October.

"We didn't ask for it, and there was no real vote until after the fact," said Colman O'Hare, professor of English. "I shouldn't be forced to pay for the upkeep of the building in which I work."

Many faculty members were not made aware of the initial changes because it was done by the university as general upkeep. Further, the Faculty Association Executive handled any matters that needed to be addressed on this issue.

"The executive has the power to speak for all of the faculty," said Paul Boudreau, co-chair of the Social Committee for the Faculty Association. "No, we didn't go to the faculty and say, 'as of Sept. 1st, etc.' but those matters of renovation were being discussed for a while--maybe some professors weren't paying attention. But the vote that was held obtained overwhelming support."

"We know we get a large readership from e-mail," said Gerald Johnson, Head of the Faculty Association. "It's conceivable that we miss a few here and there [with the e-mail voting] however if the secretary is aware of people not using e-mail, then a written letter will be sent out."

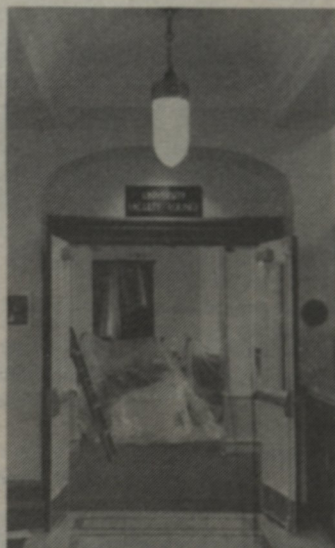
The e-mail voting system does encompass a larger percentage of the faculty than the previous procedure of conducting the vote at general meetings, as it usually misses only an estimated 10 out of about 180 members.

"At a general meeting vote, if we get a quorum we're happy," added Johnson.

There will be a meeting held this month to address the matter of e-mail voting, [ED: as opposed to an e-mail vote on e-mail voting] where it will be up to the faculty to decide if it will continue with this method of voting.

The faculty will now have an "optimal" place in which to conduct their meetings, as the renovations to the lounge are now coming to a very positive close.

"We've had a lot of supportive comments," concluded Boudreau. "And some are actually saying [in terms of renovation costs] that 'maybe we need more money.'"



Wrongfully convicted man says law students should keep an open mind

By Andy Vainio

WINDSOR (CUP) - Guy Paul Morin says he hopes law students can learn from the 11 years he spent trying to clear his name of a murder he didn't commit.

"Hopefully they understand how justice could go wrong and realize that it's not a perfect system by far and [they try to] make it a better one by being fair when they get involved with the system," Morin said after speaking with University of Windsor law and criminology students last month.

Morin's ordeal with a justice system gone sadly awry began in 1984 when he was charged with murdering his 9-year-old neighbour Christine Jessop. The Queensville, Ontario man was tried and acquitted of the charges in 1986, but was retried and convicted in 1992. After spending a total of a year-and-a-half in jail and a quarter of a million dollars on legal bills, he was exonerated through DNA testing in 1995.

A public inquiry into Morin's wrongful conviction has brought to light admissions from two hair and fibre analysts who worked on his case at Toronto's Centre for Forensic Science that they were aware since 1985 that the physical evidence used to convict him was contaminated. The Crown's case against Morin hinged on fibres found in his car and on Jessop's clothing.

"To know that [contamination] took place is a

very scary thing," Morin told the students.

The centre will be re-examining 10 years worth of evidence used in other cases as a result of the revelations.

When asked what advice he would give to students studying law, Morin joked, "Never be a lawyer is what I say."

But on a more serious note, he commented afterwards that it was important for those who go into the legal profession to be fair.

"Not all people who are brought into court as an accused are guilty.... Being open minded in the whole process is the most important thing," Morin said.

Morin told the students that he is not bitter, despite everything that he went through.

"If there's a little good [that came out of it], that's good enough for me," he said. "I'm not bitter because I see that some people tried to help out the proper flow of justice."

Morin announced that this was going to be his last public appearance. A music lover, Morin says he plans to become a piano tuner. But for now, the focus for him is moving on.

"I want to close the chapter on this dark moment of my life, if that is possible. I think it is," he said.