

NEWS

# American sailor death raises after hours questions in Charlottetown

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Contributor

## McInnis is a Holland College student

Security is at full force come closing time at many bars around Charlottetown and sometimes the need for it is clear, a downtown Charlottetown employee says.

Andrea Goeseels works for Jack's Pizza in downtown Charlottetown, a common meeting place for bar-hoppers. And for confrontations.

The restaurant is open past 2 a.m., the time bars in Charlottetown are closed. This makes Jack's a popular place for bar hoppers to go to get a quick slice after the party's over.

But with alcohol in their system, the desire to eat can sometimes make for a messy situation, Goeseels said.

"People have a tendency to fight if they don't get their pizza quick."

Bar fights became a worry at many places after a confrontation at a Halifax bar escalated and a man died. On Nov. 4 a 28-year-old American sailor was stabbed to death in a bar brawl outside the Halifax bar, Rain. At about 4 a.m., the time the bar closed, a scuffle involving about 20 people made it's way into the street where a U.S. navy member was stabbed. He was pronounced dead at the hospital.

This raised questions about whether time is a factor in these bar fights.

Megan McMillan was the event coordinator at Myron's in downtown Charlottetown, a popular bar in this area before closing. The time bars close has little to do with fights. Having two hours less time means bar-hoppers

would drink more in a shorter span, she said.

"If the bars were open a few hours later people would go out later."

And just because the bars say it's closing time doesn't mean the bar patrons will stop drinking. After bar drinking is also a common occurrence which can lead to more issues, she said.

"It's a person's personal decision to drink."

It's not uncommon to see someone on the street, beer in hand, even after the bars close, she said.

"If they really wanted to keep drinking they would have."

Though fights do occur, it's not a common scenario for a death to happen, Goeseels said.

"My first Saturday night here there was a big fight."

Unfazed by the fight early into

her new job, Goeseels continued to work. It doesn't make a big difference to her whether the security is even in the restaurant, she said.

"For myself, it doesn't matter if they're there."

Other customers will often help stop a fight, jumping in if police don't act fast enough, she said.

"Most people, if it gets too out of hand, jump in."

The same police usually spend their shift working at the Jack's, alternating between about six of them each weekend, so the officers are known to the customers, she said.

"The cops are usually nice and easy to get along with."

New officers can sometimes cause a problem trying to show their authority in a new place. This is why officers with more experience are sent, she said.



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