

What has your SU been up to?

By Janice Broderick

Two things have consumed a lot of the Executive's time this week: the Student Union Election and Referendum, and preparations for the student march on Province House on November 12th.

We are really making an effort to make participation in the protest march attractive to students. In the past, attendance at Student Union marches has been sporadic at best, embarrassing at worst. The message that is sent to the public from a poorly attended protest is exactly the opposite of what the march is meant to accomplish. The public sees poor support, and assumes that only a handful of individuals actually care about the cause. If only 50 students were to turn up at the march on the 12th, the message would be that most students don't think that rising tuition and funding cuts are an important issue.

The Student Union feels very strongly that a commitment to higher education in this province is needed from our politicians. Otherwise, funding cuts will come until the University is no longer able to operate. Therefore, we are offering... "incentives" to students willing to take a stand against funding cuts. Free food, music and other goodies will be available at Province House on the day of the march. There will also be transportation back to the University available for students with classes or labs in the afternoon. There will be lots of chances to yell and get really mad, but we will also make positive steps towards our goals. Let's show that students are willing to stand up for themselves. We need to get our message across before it's too late.

The Student Union has ordered t-shirts that will be available for students to purchase at cost. The message on the t-shirts is, "Government and Administration: we are students WORK FOR US". The shirts are ready for the march on the 12th (and will be big enough to be worn over a sweatshirt or jacket... it is in November, after all!), but they can also be worn to registration day, meetings with government or administration or other activities where students have contact with these two groups to get the message across; THEY WORK FOR US. They sometimes seem to forget that. (*a note: the shirts are NOT meant to be a dig at Faculty. Students and Faculty have many of the same concerns, and need to work together to achieve their goals*)

The election and referendum is finally over, and things (thankfully!) ran relatively smoothly. Thanks go to Lisa Muzumdar, our interim Chief Returning Officer, and her committee of cool volunteers, the Campus Police who staffed the polling station in the Breezeway, and the candidates for behaving. Oh! And special thanks to everyone who took the time to vote!

So tah tah for now. If anyone ever has a question or comment (positive OR critical) for the Executive or any member of Student Council, come on down to the barn. All of the Executive keep regular office hours, and messages can be delivered to councillors.

Who are the councillors again?

EXECUTIVE:

President: Janice Broderick
VP Internal: Jamy-Ellen Proud
VP Operations: Tim Willis
VP Finance: Stephen Ramsay

SENATE REPS:

Darcy Murphy
Wendy Venema

VET MED REP:

Candace Marche

ARTS REPS:

Michael McKenna
Colleen Taylor
Emily Ledwell

SCIENCE REPS:

Chantal Theriault
Pauline Tran
Chole Campbell
Satnam Nijjar

* and all the keen new folks just elected!

Rally commitment

By S. Ramsay

On Wednesday, November 12, the UPEI Student Union will be hosting a rally at Province House.

There are many important reasons for this rally to take place. The University of Prince Edward Island is an important and necessary part of Island culture. Our university is a meeting place for the scholastic community as well as the general population of PEI. Some courses, such as the short courses provided by the Extension Department, appeal to a portion of Islanders that otherwise may not take advantage of our university; most courses are designed for the student who has made a serious and time-intensive commitment to the university and to oneself.

As a province, PEI deserves and needs a centre of higher education; as a community, the Island deserves the presence of the university in its role of nurturing students into scholars, athletes, professionals, and community leaders. Why, then, has the government of PEI not shown a sufficient commitment to the survival of higher education and the University of Prince Edward Island?

The current provincial government shows its *insufficient* commitment to the university through fiscal policies--cuts to our university's operating grant. The University of Prince Edward Island should not and does not take valuable monetary resources away from needed areas of Island life; the university itself is an important part of the Island and needs its resources protected. Our student rally will demand protection for our university and demand a commitment from the provincial government.

Government is in a position from where it can help us protect our university. Policies need to reflect the concerns students have towards student issues. Universities must be allowed to operate without fear of the unknown, including unforeseen budget cuts and changes of political attitudes towards higher education. Again, we ask why the government of PEI has not shown a commitment to the survival of higher education. The ideal commitment to the University of Prince Edward Island may not be possible to achieve, may not be definable. We can, though, ask for three things that the present government owes us.

A multi-year financial commitment, allowing the university to plan ahead.

A social commitment, allowing students the knowledge that our government is working on policies that will keep our university accessible and relieve debt loads.

A faith commitment, allowing the Island and university communities the knowledge that our government believes in our university, accepts its importance, and will always look out for our university's best interests.

These three requests total a beginning for a sufficient commitment to the University of Prince Edward Island--a commitment that we start asking for on November 12, the opening day of the provincial legislature. All students are asked to attend the rally. At 12:30pm, Wednesday, November 12, we will meet at the gazebo's new and convenient location next to Cass. There, we will be worked into an enthusiastic frenzy of student protest as well as be informed of an exact agenda for the rally. In the planning stages, our rally will consist of speakers (including our enigmatic Student Union president, Janice), some food, music, and transportation back to campus. Most importantly, our rally will consist of students making their voices heard, quite literally, to the legislature's politicians.

please see detailed rally notice on page 19.