

Large turnout for Student Union Elections

By Derrick Webber

THE STUDENT UNION elections held last week had a surprising turnout. Ron Cameron, Returning Officer for the SU, says that 813 students in total participated in the elections. This is 41.3% of the student body, he says.

The turnout was the best UPEI has seen in a while. Cameron says that approximately only 18% of students voted in the elections held last September while 33% turned out for the polls during the last set of full elections held one year ago.

"I attribute this to an increase in student spirit and

students getting involved in the Student Union," says Cameron.

Elected President for next year was Dean MacMillan with 706 votes versus Rhonda MacLellan with 91. VP Operations will be Mary Anne FitzPatrick, elected with 422 votes versus Kirstin Lund with 259 and Tony Doyle with 122. For VP Academic, Lisa Murphy was elected with 510 votes versus John Scott with 177. Elected VP Finance was Joan Masterson with 522 votes, versus Don Carr with 249.

Complete election results appear elsewhere in this issue of The Gem.



THE POLLING STATION IN ROBERTSON LIBRARY.

Robertson evacuated as fumes fill building

By Derrick Webber

STUDENTS FLEE as fire alarms howl and smoke hangs in the air. This is becoming a familiar experience to UPEI students as Robertson Library was evacuated Monday.

Don Coles of the UPEI Physical Plant says that workmen using a grinding tool in the mechanical room of Robertson accidentally set off a bucket of flammable cleaning solution.

"I think you could compare it to a garbage can burning", says Coles. "If you act quickly you can either extinguish it or remove it."

Coles says the workmen tried using an extinguisher on the bucket, but it continued to smolder. They then carried the burning bucket out a door behind Robertson to let it burn. Unfortunately where they left the bucket was next to the air intake vent for the Library, and smoke was drawn into the building.

The UPEI Security office says that at 12:45, someone noticed smoke and pulled the alarm. The building was evacuated and remained closed until 2:00 so fans could remove the smoke from the air.

Neither Coles or UPEI Security believes there was

any danger to students from the smoke or the fire.

This is the second fire touched off by workmen employed by Steens Contractors. In October, welders for the firm ignited insulation in a heating pipe in a service tunnel resulting in Dalton Hall and most other buildings on campus being filled with toxic fumes. In that case, workmen apparently didn't know the insulation on pipe they were welding was flammable.

However, Coles says UPEI is not worried about the level of care taken by Steens. He says they have been involved in no other incidents of fire on campus since the October mishap and that things like this happen frequently during construction.

"It's not a result of them being sloppy... the can was there. It wasn't anything they brought in," says Coles.

He says the whole incident was a comedy of errors. The workmen were apparently following a company safety plan designed to prevent workmen from setting fires, but it appears the plan did not involve clearing the work site of flammable materials. New additions to the



Graphic/Carillon

plan released this week by Steens Manager Marc Galant require that "the immediate and surrounding area

shall be checked by the workmen and his supervisor for any debris, materials, equipment, etc. that may ig-

nite and/or support combustion."

Council decides to hold referendum

THE SMOKING debate that had many students fired up at the last General meeting of the Student Union will be concluded with a referendum to be held April 6th and 7th. UPEI Student Council decided to hold a referendum during their regular meeting last Sunday night.

The debate centers on the choice of making the Robertson Library Lounge (The Pit) either a non-smoking or a smoking area. If non-smoking is the choice, students who smoke will have an area prepared for them outside of The Pit. It has

been proposed to use the rooms that now contain the UPEI Information Office for this purpose.

However, if students decide to allow smoking to continue in The Pit, a new ventilation system will be installed to purify the air for non-smokers. At the general meeting held March 15th, SU President Steven Wynne stated that the ventilation system could cost \$40,000. However, another Student Union official says that the students will not have to pay for it.

Students will get a chance to vote on the matter during the upcoming elections for Vice-President

Communications. According to the Chief Returning Officer for the SU, the results of the referendum will be binding.

The issue of making the Robertson Lounge smoke free has been raised as result of a non-smoking plan being phased in by the administration. The plan calls for most buildings on campus to be smoke free except for designated areas.