

# Newsbites

## DALHOUSIE BANS GAME

A Dal student was arrested January 27 after witnesses saw him enter a classroom with a weapon. Charges were not laid because he did not point it at anyone. The weapon, a squirt gun, was part of a residence-wide assassination game put on each year to "boost student morale"

The game is similar to UPEI's "vaccinator" game except it is played with large pink squirt guns instead of syringes. The arrested student had painted his gun black, and witnesses did not know that it was a squirt gun.

Terry Gallivan, associate director of residence life, said the strong reaction to the arrest was directly related to a campus shooting that took place on January 13. At the time of the shooting, Howe Hall's assassination game was already in progress and was stopped immediately. "We do have a social conscience," said Pritchett, adding that the game did not resume until the shooting incident was out of the media spotlight.

For the time being, Dalhousie has banned residences from playing the game.

Is "vaccinator" next?

## ONTARIO STUDENTS DRINK LIKE FISH

Ontario students drink almost five times more than the general population's average of three drinks a week. These results are from a 1993 survey released by the Addictions Research Foundation.

The \$45,000 study, called "University Student Drug Use and Lifestyles Behaviors," surveyed more than 6,000 students at six Ontario universities. The universities were not named.

The survey showed such things as: students living on campus are almost three times more likely to be heavy drinkers than those living off campus and arts students are more likely to drink more than science students.

About 95 percent of Ontario students drank in 1993, and the average amount was 15 drinks per week, a level it calls "hazardous."

Engineering student Doug Raby says he was surprised that so many students drank 15 or more drinks per week. "On a good week you could do that, but not on average."

While the survey does not explain the high use of alcohol by students it suggests "programs that focus on first-year students, particularly males, should be expanded, or developed and implemented."

## MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS CAN BE SAFER FOR WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Did you know that you are risking your health and harming the environment when you use menstrual products from your local drugstore?

Most women are aware of the possible effects of Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS), but other hazards are related to the production of pads and tampons. For example, most use chlorine bleach. When the chlorine is combined with organic tree molecules, a toxic chemical called dioxin is formed. When dioxins are released, they move up the food chain through their attraction to fats. The physiological effects of dioxins include damage to the liver, infertility, and cancer. Magnesium, acids, alcohols and waxes can also be found in tampons.

The average North American woman throws away an average of 250 to 300 pounds of tampons, pads and applicators in her lifetime. In addition, the excessive packaging leads to enormous amounts of bulk waste.

So what can you do? There are alternatives such as chlorine-free products and the menstrual cup available. North American women spend approximately \$2 billion dollars each year on menstrual products. Use this buying power and call the toll-free numbers provided by the companies, and demand environmentally friendly products.

# Animals protest clear-cutting in Ontario

By Jeff Blundell (CUP)

A trout, a cougar and a pine tree chained themselves to the doors of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in defence of the Algoma Highlands.

The activists-- who were dressed up as the animals which would be forced from their homes if the highlands are clear-cut-- were part of a protest held recently in Toronto.

The timber management plan, announced Jan. 6, opens the 1,200 square km forest to clear-cutting. The region, 100 km north of Sault Ste. Marie, represents the last substantial area of road-free, uncut old-growth white pine in the world, says Lee-Anne Mallet, chairperson of Earth First, the group which organized the protest.

Ron Reffle, the area supervisor for the Sault Ste. Marie district for the Ministry of Natural Resources, says Mallet's claims are ill-based. "I've looked at maps of the area and it is anything but road-free. There have been roads in there since the sixties. Sure there are some areas which are road-free but so is my backyard. You don't call that a road-free area," said Reffle.

"As for the name Algoma, I don't even know where they got that from. It sounds nice, though."

Yet a sub-unit of Reffle's own department is named Algoma Crown Land Management Unit, says Jeff Egan, a member of Earth First.

Numerous environmental groups have been arguing that it is an important area to protect because it supports a rare species of cougar.

"It's a rich area for wildlife," said Mallet. "There are a number of wolf packs in the area. There have also been over 100 sightings of the eastern cougar, but the ministry refuses to believe that there are eastern cougars in the area. They claim that the sightings are of western cougars who are disoriented and have stumbled into the area," said Mallet. "[The government] said they won't believe [the eastern cougars] are there until they see a corpse."

"The last confirmed sighting of an eastern cougar in Ontario was at the turn of the century," said Reffle. "Claims about seeing eastern cougars are like you telling me you saw a Dodo bird. The eastern cougar is basically extinct. The region they are talking about is not even cougar habitat."

Mallet is critical of what she calls the government's

mercantile attitude towards the forest.

"They're treating the trees as a marketable resource, instead of as the linchpin of an entire ecosystem," said Mallet.

Reffle explains the ministry's policy of resource distribution as "the most the forest can sustainably supply. We determine what a sustainable portion is based on the best calculations and the best information available."

He said, "We look at it as a bank account. You have a principle and interest. We'll dish out the interest, but I'm not eating into the principle."

A 60 square km conservation reserve has already been set aside by the ministry. This area will remain free from both roads and logging, Reffle said.

But activists say that even the entire 1,200 square km area they are trying to protect is quite small by ecological standards.

"What we are trying to save is really just a postage stamp of what all of Northern Ontario used to be. There are trees up there that are so big, two people with their arms outstretched couldn't reach around them," said Egan.

"It's the last remnants of the white pine forests that used to stretch from North Carolina, to Illinois, to Manitoba and all the way out to the Maritimes," said Andrew Pepall, an old-growth white pine activist with Earth Roots.

"It also contains the head-waters of five pristine rivers, so whatever way you look at it, either from wildlife, water or the trees themselves, this area is worth saving," said Mallet.

Reffle says the new plan dramatically reduces the amount of wood supplied to the lumber companies.

"For example, the wood supplied to St. Mary's Paper Products has been cut from 107,000 cubic m to 65,000," said Reffle. "I'm surprised some of them are still in business, but this is all the forest can supply."

St. Mary's uses the lumber to make calendars and pamphlets, says Egan.

"According to the timber management plan, 75 per cent of the old growth white pine will be clear-cut starting on April 1. The remaining 25 per cent will be left as a shelterwood cut. Those trees will be cut down in five years," said Mallet. "Anyone who has seen a shelterwood cut will tell you it looks a heck of a lot like clear-cut."



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