

## Meal plan inadequate say some

By Danny Mullen

with research done by Elizabeth Donovan and James Connolly

The meal plan for in-residence students has now come under fire from home economists.

We spoke to Doris Anderson of the Home Economics Department at UPEI, as well as to Andy Dean, Head of Food Services. The outcome of these interviews reveals a definite clash of views.

Earlier in the year, a student approached Mrs. Anderson to draw up a nutritionally adequate meal plan for a refugee student. This student is a person sponsored each year by the university community. He is given free tuition, free textbooks, and put on the SAGA meal plan. But is the SAGA plan adequate?

Said Mrs. Anderson, "I wanted to see what foods were available, so I asked Mr. Dean for a copy of the menu. Mr. Dean (suggested) this student should be on the largest meal plan. The fee is \$650

per person, which averages out to \$6 per day for 150 days."

However, Dean differed with Anderson on this point: "I strongly recommend the largest plan to most students, but one cannot put a dollar value per day on it. It can be very misleading to someone who goes home on weekends or

eats off of campus a great deal." He did agree, however, that for the set amount of days, there is a rough average of around the six-dollar mark.

Anderson attempted to work out a nutritious diet on the meal plan according to Canada's Food Guide. She and Dean went through the line-up with the student, but, "When I tried to figure out a sufficient diet with enough vegetables and minerals, I wasn't able to do it on the \$6 a day," stated Anderson. When trying to devise a diet with the emphasis on four to five servings of fruit and vegetables (along with the proper mineral content), Anderson found it impossible

with the current three meal plan.

"The six-dollar restriction is not enough to get a balanced diet. To get an adequate nutritional diet, it would have to be \$8 at least (per day)," Anderson stated.

In response to this, Dean observed that "some students are heavier eaters than others — some girls can get along quite well on the first (formerly known as the "light") meal plan, but some other students require that they purchase extra books (of meal tickets)".

Anderson gave an example of the problems with the meal plan: "If you took advantage of the breakfast special which costs \$2.50, then you only have \$3.50 remaining for the rest of the day. Then, if you grab a cheeseburger and milk for lunch, that's another \$2.40. That only leaves about a dollar for supper. I found I couldn't get all the necessary nutrients in. Even if you skipped lunch, not many of the a la carte menus are under \$2.50."

Dean counters, that "We are in competition with the Burger King's and McDonalds' out there. We provide top quality — A1 —

meats, but are they required to out there?" He justified his costs as being competitive with the off-campus restaurants.

However, it would be proper to point out that SAGA operates both Wild Pizza and the snack bar in the Robertson Library. Both accept the meal plan coupons, cutting down on the amount of coupons that a student has when budgeting his or her requirements for breakfast, dinner, and supper. Andy Dean's concern? "It may cut into the cafeteria's bottom line, but eventually it all winds up in the same pot."

Said Anderson, "If you have just so many dollars for food then it is even more important to know how to choose a high-density (proportion of nutrients to calories) food. This seven-day meal plan may not be so bad for students going home on weekends

but for those who stay on campus all week, things can get pretty tight. I would think that the students (on the three-meal plan) would be hungry, and be forced to eat in between meals and snack, but they have to pay for this themselves."

Are the meal plans a good deal for students? Anderson is skeptical of the prices of the food itself. "It costs \$2.40 for four, nine-ounce glasses of milk in the SAGA food cafeteria. If you buy an equivalent amount of milk in a store, it costs only \$1.04. This (SAGA's price) seems a little high considering the milk is served in those (bulk) milk dispensers."

"We're here because we run a good operation," stated Dean. He feels confident that the cafeteria is doing the best job it can for the university's food needs, but still admits that the current coupon system has its problems, "but it is the fairest to the lighter-eating students."

It seems that at UPEI, there are few of those to be fair to.

## SU President feels conference success

S.U. President Gordon Cobb, described his recent International Youth Year "Come Together" Conference as a "great success". The conference was planned by Cobb, as well as by Cathy Campbell and Alcide Bernard

When asked if he thought a conference such as this should be organized again, Cobb replied, "Sure, a bigger one, with more planning."

"The conference had approximately 30 core people who went from start to finish. Over the weekend, about 100 participated," Cobb commented.

Cobb felt the panel on "Youth and the Political Process", was the most popular event of the conference. He observed that the majority of the participants were "very active people, interested in political studies".

The biggest disappointment of the event in Cobb's opinion was the fact that the conference, "wasn't representative of youth organizations". He added to this

statement that the organizations in attendance had, however, struck a committee, made up of both students and non-students to look towards youth federation in the province, and to plan a convention. "People thought something had to be done," Cobb said.

Although the conference was geared towards high school groups, as well as to college and university groups, there was not a good turn out from the high schools at the conference. Cobb attributes this lack of attendance to "some resistance on the part of the high school administration, but was mostly due to the fact that the high schools were the last to receive information," about the conference.

Concerning the conference overall, Cobb stressed that it constituted a "good move towards more student-organized academic and cultural events."

by Sheila Lund

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