

Feedbag

Beer facts

Dear Editor:
I have read several articles in The Sun this year that have totally unfounded complaints, but I feel I must reply to Nancy MacDonald's article entitled "Beer Prices Aid Bartenders Only", as her so-called "Facts" were really out of focus. She stated that the Student Union buys beer for less than 50¢ per bottle and sells it for \$1.05. According to Ms MacDonald, "That is over a 100% profit". On the surface this may appear to be true, but when it is looked at a little deeper, other costs can be seen. Beer cups are 5 1/2 cents each. The bartender's salary must be paid. Also, there must be Campus Police present at nearly every event. Their wages must also be paid. Ms MacDonald stated that "The majority of students on Campus feel that a 10¢ rise or a 95¢ beer is more than adequate to pay for increased expenses". Did she poll the majority of students? Even if she did, and most students do feel this way, they are incorrect. Remember last Thursday's Main Event at the Gym? How much money do you think the Student Union made on the liquor that night-\$500 more? After paying for things like liquor, sales tax, cups, mix, bartenders, C.P.'s and the rental of the Gym, it is estimated that there was a \$63.00 loss! I can show you the figures if you're interested, Ms MacDonald. Ms MacDonald goes on to say that "There are lots of students on campus that would work just for the wage alone", in referring to bartender's tips. In my four years here as a bartender, I haven't seen any of the staff refuse their tips. Would a waitress at a restaurant work just for wages and refuse her tips? Finally, she says that "It would be nice to take five dollars to an Event and get five beer instead of four". Well, wouldn't it be nice to get ten beer for five dollars, or even better, have the bartenders pay you for drinking beer? Sure it would, but it's not very logical. The increase had to be made, or it wouldn't have been done. I can understand Nancy MacDonald's resentment

of the increase in beer prices, but it's not really our fault. There are more important things around here that are being raised in price, such as tuition fees, but I don't hear much of a protest over that. Next time you get irritated about something Ms MacDonald, please check your facts and figures and make sure you have a legitimate complaint.
By Kent Walker, Head Bartender, U.P.E.I. S.U.

Tired Bartender

Ms. MacDonald
I have taken my time before writing in reply to your letter about beer prices being raised to help the bartender's tips. I think I have my blood pressure at a reasonable level so as not to say anything as out of context as some reporting which you did for The Sun.
Your article is a one-sided attack against the bartenders and you never took the time to even ask the bartenders questions upon which to base your article. Sure you went to Neil MacKenzie, our beloved Comptroller and after you listened to him, you went back and wrote your article totally out of context from what he told you.
In your article, you state beer prices were raised to \$1.05 to aid bartenders in their tips. I would have been happy if beer prices had been raised to 95¢, as we would probably average a nickel a beer in tips, but as it is now, we make less than 3¢ tip for each beer or drink sold. If beer prices were placed at \$1.00 ea. I think you would find service very slow upstairs because the reason for a tip is good service.
We feel we give good service and fast service. Compared to a night club, where you might wait 15 to 20 minutes, you hardly wait longer than 10 min. at UPEI, barring exceptions.
Your article states, and I quote "Students are paying extra money to ensure tips for the bartenders".
Take the blindfold off Ms. MacDonald and watch the bar some time. If a student feels they have

been given good service, then they may tip. If they feel otherwise, they are not obligated to tip. I never expect a tip instead I work hard for one..

You obviously never talked to John McAleer. In 1979-80 we lost \$287.00 at the bar as compared to 1978-79 when the bar made \$5,000 profit.

You tell us in your article that you talked to the majority of students on campus and they felt a 10¢ raise in beer prices was more than adequate. Tell me Ms. MacDonald when did you take the time to consult over 700 people to obtain a majority consensus, seeing as 1300 students go to UPEI.

You tell us for every beer sold, we make 100% profit, but you never bothered to write in your article that it costs us 5¢ for one beer cup, and that is only one little fraction of the expense that comes out of the so-called 100% profit.

Finally Ms. MacDonald, we the bartenders, had no say in the price of the almighty beer. Instead \$1.05 was suggested to us and we accepted. We are not given the power to raise or lower beer prices.

Oh by the way, Ms. MacDonald, after I read your article on page 7, I found another article written by you on page 2, which you state the junior class made a very tidy sum on the bar sales. You seemed happy in this article because the junior class was making 25% of every beer sold.

An injustice has been committed, in that, the bartenders are being blamed and we are on the receiving end for criticism. We don't pocket the \$1.05, the S.U. does.

You are never required to tip, instead it is etiquette to tip for good service.

Boy does my chest feel light!!! Next time people decide to criticize, come talk to the person involved and ask questions. Then when answers are given, listen to them with an open mind.

Yours truly,
A tired bartender,
Tom Clow

Editor:

I'm writing in as a result of Nancy MacDonald's letter on the price of beer.

I'd like to voice complete agreement, and put forward a few questions. How much do the bartenders make in tips? This, with their salary of \$3 per hour, gives them a total of about \$30 assuming 4 hours and a good crowd,

At the same time though, we have the C.P.'s making \$4 per hour for taking care of the door and taking shit from the drunks. For the same time put in they make about half what the bartenders make.

Would a solution be to raise the bartenders salaries to \$4 per hour and lower the price of beer to 95¢?

After talking like this, though, I get told that it would never change. The bartenders would raise too much shit or quit, leaving the Barn with no staff. On top of which it seems that the Student Union is making too much money to change systems. Besides, everyone keeps buying beer. Looks like a bumper year all round.

Figure that the Student Union is making more and more money to serve the student body. How are they doing this? They're taking our money then giving it back. Big Deal.

How is it that the price is decided on reasoning based on bartenders tips? But if the bartenders quit I'm sure that others could be found; \$4 per hour and 5¢ not withstanding.

Who am I to complain? I'm just one of those who bought the beer and grumbled. You have to tip, or you end up looking like some sour-assed tightwad.

I don't like either and perhaps with this letter my questions will be answered and my hackles lowered.

Is apathy alive and well? I hope to hell not!

Brian MacAdam.

Helios Nexus

GET YOUR BUNS TO THE SUN MEETING ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 27th. MO'S BIG BASH WILL BE DISCUSSED IN DEPTH, IN MAIN, IN THE SUN OFFICE, UNDER THE INFLUENCE...SO BE THERE!!!!