

LOCAL

Browns Court Becoming Major Concern: Collins

Katie Smith

Contributor: Smith is a student in the journalism program at Holland College

Police are cracking down on partying and noise occurring at Brown's Court and surrounding apartments across from UPEI.

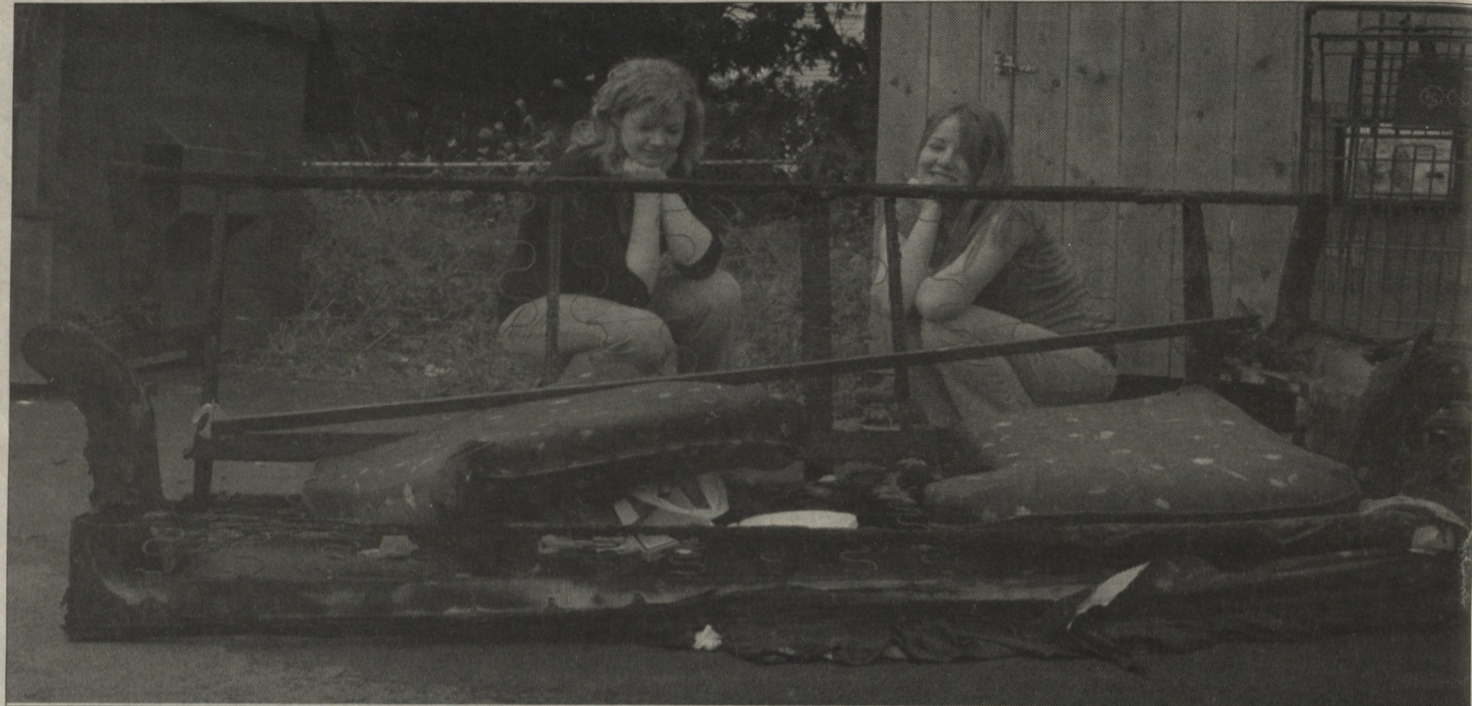
Deputy police chief Richard Collins said the area experiences similar events every year but for some reason, this year is off to a worse start than in previous years and concerns are growing. "We're worried about a situation getting out of control and someone getting hurt or someone getting behind a vehicle and driving impaired."

Although there are some families who live in the area, the majority of the population is students and younger people, he said.

"It's giving the student population a bad name. I think a lot of people target or blanket the student population," he said, adding that's not fair to those who have nothing to do with the problem.

The police, who are really busy on Friday and Saturday nights, are trying to work with the university and Holland College to see what can be done to fix the situation.

"We want to see if, collectively, all of us can do something to minimize this and to hopefully avoid something more serious happening," he said. "We just don't have the time and resources to put into



Katie McGarry and Caitlin Brown show off the remains of a couch that was set on fire after a weekend of partying at Brown's Court last month.

Photo: Katie Smith

policing one area of the city on a constant basis on the weekends." Collins said at least a half dozen charges were laid last weekend, mostly relating to alcohol, but he isn't sure how effective they are. "They often don't care about the ticket."

If someone is having a party that's getting out of control, Collins encourages him or her to call the police.

"We'll do our best to help clear the apartment."

Maria Trainor lives in Brown's Court and said she is sometimes scared, especially on weekends.

"We pretty much always lock our doors, even when we're home."

She said the noise is out of control and there is garbage and broken glass all around the property.

"My friend drops me off at the crosswalk because she doesn't want her tires to get busted by all the glass."

Trainor works at the campus bar, the Wave, and said she is scared to walk home at 4 a.m., and she's not alone.

"Our friend slept on our couch the other night because she was scared to walk home, and she only lives in the residence (across the street)."

It's hard to feel safe, she said.

"I got dropped off in a cab the other night and there were at least 40 guys standing between me and my house and I was just like 'Oh God, am I going to get attacked?'"

Her roommate, Katie McGarry, said there were people sitting outside their apartment on her car and there were a lot of yelling matches going on.

"It's scary," she said. "There were cops everywhere, we didn't know what was going on."

Another roommate, Caitlin Brown, said she would like to see police around the area every weekend, keeping situations under control.

"I feel selfish, but I would like them here all the time," she said. "We need security. Security on the weekends would be awesome."

The three girls said they feel embarrassed to tell people they live in Brown's Court because of the bad reputation it has developed. They agreed they wouldn't want to live there again next year.

Flu Season Well On Its Way

Susan Stewart-Lane

Contributor

As tissues become a regular school supply, and classrooms begin to echo with the sounds of coughing and sneezing, we know that flu season is just around the corner.

The season runs from November to April and an estimated 10-25 per cent of Canadians catch the influenza virus annually.

Dr. Lamont Sweet, P.E.I.'s chief health officer has reported that flu vaccine manufacturers have experienced problems in growing one of the strains recommended for the 2006-2007 flu shot. As a result, the

vaccine should be available to P.E.I. residents several weeks later than usual.

"The flu shot delay shouldn't be a problem for UPEI students, although efforts should be made to receive the flu shot before Christmas," says Dr. DI Stewart, MD.

The World Health Organization annually predicts the three most common strains of the influenza virus and a vaccine is developed for that year. Because the viruses are constantly changing, a new vaccine is needed each year to make sure the body forms antibodies against these new flu viruses.

"In the meantime, students should take active measures in flu prevention," Dr. DI Stewart said.

Some measures recommended by Health Canada are: frequent handwashing, healthy eating, adequate sleep, physical activity and respiratory etiquette.

Respiratory etiquette follows that individuals cover their mouth and noses with tissue or elbow sleeves when sneezing, blowing noses, or coughing. The influenza virus spreads quickly through droplets in the air emitted from our mouths and noses.

These viruses can live for 48 hours on the surfaces of doorknobs, computer keyboards, and other hard surfaces.

To prevent contracting the flu, you can avoid sharing cigarettes, food, eating utensils, drinking glasses or anything else that might be contaminated with virus.

If you get the flu, you should increase your fluid intake and get plenty of rest for seven to ten days. There are also new medications to treat influenza. If you take them within 48 hours of the onset of your symptoms, they may reduce the length of your illness by an average of one or two days.