

CIMN soon off the ground and on the airwaves

By Marc MacDonald and Sarah Murphy

The Island's only alternative radio station once again has had some life breathed into its ailing lungs.

Spearheaded by second year Chris Power, a plan is underway to get the station up and running again. The unofficial station launch is scheduled for September 29th.

Once the station is organized and a consistent, quality product is underway, the station's plan is to apply for a CRTC Developmental licence. The Developmental license, in effect for three years, would enable CIMN to broadcast on low-power FM band, which could reach audiences over a five kilometer radius.

It has been a bumpy ride for the campus station in recent years. After promises of increased funding and then a complete withdrawal of funds, and a threat of eviction from the barn, Station Manager Rob McIsaac does not want to get his hopes up.

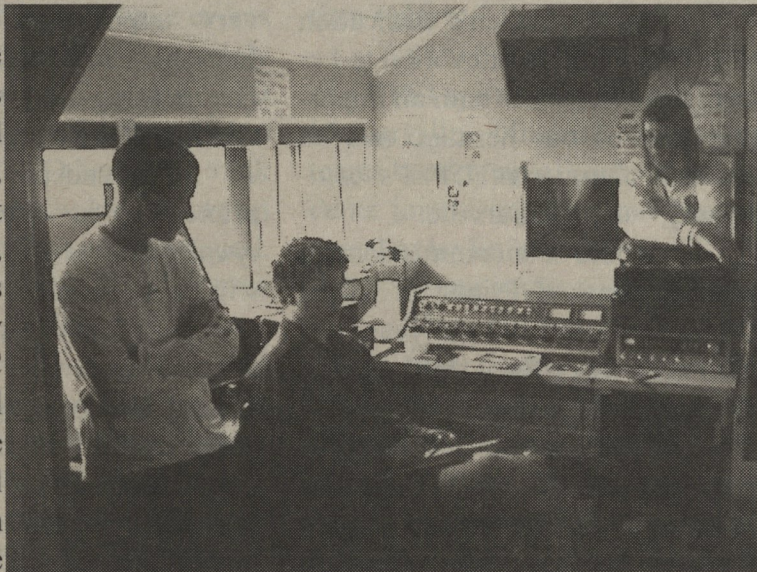
"There is a lot of organization that has to be done," said McIsaac about the present status of CIMN. "Volunteers have to be brought in and trained and shows and schedules have to be established."

Power agrees but is a lot more positive about the future of the campus radio.

"A lot of changes have to be made," said Power, who would like to see the station's broadcast underway as soon as possible.

Program schedules must be worked on, he agrees, but more importantly, an audience has to be built. Power would like to see a greater number of students exposed to CIMN.

To gain student support for the station, McIsaac believes the station will have to prove it can provide a consistent product.



The meeting.

"People will support it if it is cool," he said.

This consistency and support will lead to an extended broadcast and greater exposure for the Station, believes Power. Such exposure on campus and in the community could lead to sponsorship.

Power and other CIMN volunteer and staff plan to broadcast to residences and to possibly improve the signal in the Pit, which is difficult to listen to due to the interference caused by the large amount of electronic equipment in the surrounding area.

Despite animosity towards the campus radio in previous years, BJ McCarville, UPEI student Union President says the union is taking a different approach to the station this year.

"I know there has been conflict with the union in the past,"

said McCarville. "We are not offering funding [to CIMN] right now, more support is what we can offer."

McIsaac is glad to see renewed enthusiasm in the station, but is apprehensive of all the work ahead. "It is like trying to get a snowball rolling," he said, "It's surreal. All the positions are filled, but we don't know what to do with them [jobs]." But McIsaac, obviously weary of all the work that has been put into the station, is encouraged by the incoming volunteers nonetheless.

"Without a full time, paid station manager it is hard to get things done," said Power, who thinks the station should be given a kick-start with the material and human resources available, while waiting for the Developmental license.

McCarville is also excited to see the number of new volunteers.

"It is great that there are students that are ready to help on the organizational level, getting it going," said McCarville, who is willing to do all she can to help the station off its feet. "It [CIMN] would be terrific for campus communication."

Internet radio could also become a possibility for CIMN, although it would require the purchase of new computer equipment.

CIMN may resort to fundraisers and a media fee to secure much needed funding. A referendum has been tentatively scheduled for the spring Student Union election in order to get student feedback on the issue of a media fee.

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