

... AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT: The Rants of a University Student

By Ryan Gallant
Reporter

Well the journalistic geniuses at Magic 93 have done it again, using the cunning news reporting technique of ignoring whatever the hell it is that's going on in the world, and pretending that Jumbo Movie Trivia and Paul Alan's social life are the most important things on earth. This past Thursday, when every other self-respecting media organization was reporting the crash of a cargo plane in Halifax and the deaths of seven crewmembers, Paul was telling some incredibly amusing anecdote about his life, a life that is perpetually fascinating, being as it is that of a radio broadcaster. The crash issue was ignored completely, and the only time I heard anyone mention anything about an airplane was when Paul, again recounting moments from his über-exciting life, talked about how he had watched *Lost* on TV the night before. But who am I to judge? How can I expect Magic 93 to report every single little story? This is the same radio station that on September 11th disregarded the small little detail that terrorists were flying passenger jets into random buildings: To their credit however, they did report that: "Um... apparently flights are delayed or something...for some reason...Back to our incessant replaying of N*SYNC and Britney Spears right after this."

Your prayers have been answered. Yes, sources tell me that now available for sale are, yes, you guessed it, PEI Rocket Thongs. Wicked. Now, does no one else see a problem with this? Perhaps something to do with ethics or morals or something? Now we all know that there are several people who follow the Rocket around to all their games and, dare I say, idolize the guys that play for them, and I mean, who wouldn't, you know - with their to-die-for pick-up lines. ("Hey, you wanna be famous?) But I certainly don't think that the marketing team of our friendly local sports team should be playing into this. Personally, correct me if I'm wrong, but the last time I checked, the objectification of women, specifically those under the age of 16, was not a commonly accepted business practice. But hey, those Rockets are good boys, I hear they're always very well behaved and humble and are never confrontational, even when they're drinking. (Not that I'm suggesting that they drink or anything) Nooooo. (Insert thick sarcasm here)

Just a random thought: does anyone know why the hell there is a meat market on University Avenue called the Queen Street Meat Market? That does not make any damn sense.

The CDP was torn down this week. In a few months a so-called "racino" will rise from the rubble of the historic building, creating a new place for Grandpa to go bet on the ponies and now, through the innovation of our wonderful government, will also have the option of gambling away his pension cheques on VLT machines. Now I'm not sure how many people, but it was Binns' government that initially placed restrictions on how many VLTs could be in operation on the island, but I guess now they have reason to believe that VLTs provide great benefit to the community and the social fabric of PEI as well as contributing to the vibrant horseracing industry. Yeah? Bullshit. Either that or dreams of dollar signs danced in their heads. I hate to break it to the people involved, but horseracing is not struggling because we don't have fancy racinos or VLTs or multi-million-dollar purses, it's struggling because no one gives a rat's ass about horseracing, save, of course, for four or five old men and the people that go to the Gold Cup and

Saucer Race every year. All the VLTs in the world won't change that.

Last year, the provincial government decided to give a million dollars to the horseracing industry to increase purse sizes and to spark interest. What did that do? Not a damn thing. (At the same time, government announced that it was cutting \$750,000 in funding that had been promised to UPEI, due to "budgetary constraints.") Now they want to increase the number of VLTs to increase revenue, a move made on the whim of racing industry lobbyists and the Atlantic Lottery Corporation. This is an irrational decision that will indisputably lead to an augmentation of the number of problem gamblers on the island. These same problems contribute to many social problems; broken families, chronic debt, increases in crime, and in comparison to other jurisdictions, numbers suggest that this problem alone will directly cause two suicides a year on PEI. Now does that sound like a government with its priorities in order? Money and gambling ahead of education and societal well being? I mean I'm sure we would all like our roads

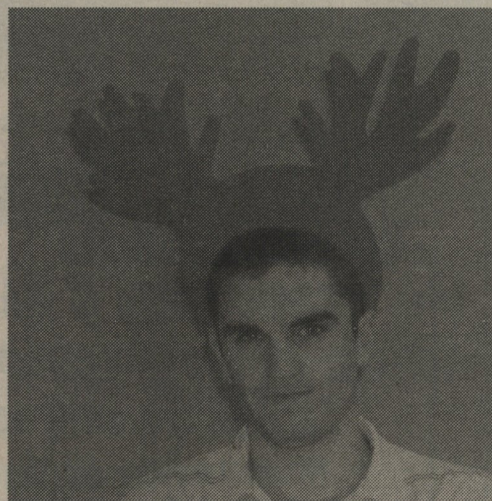
paved now and then, but when it comes to public policy, the ends do not always justify the means, especially when the means include cheapened morals, rising crime rates and death. I don't know, again maybe it's just me, but when a private corporation tells my government to jump, I'd rather hear them say "Piss off" than ask "How high?"

Reality TV pisses me off. Number one, it is not reality. Reality is me sitting here on my ass writing papers and studying and getting 3 hours of sleep. Flying around the world for free and eating bull testicles and cleaning other people's houses is not. And trading wives? Yeah, we already invented that - it's called SWINGING. Don't even get me started on *The Apprentice*. If "the Donald" wants to wear his hair à la rabid baboon, that's fine by me. Go right ahead, hire people, fire people, I don't care. But why on national television? And who watches this? I'm sorry, but

is there not something possibly more meaningful that we could be doing with our lives? I'm sick of Jeff Probst, William Hung, Vanilla Ice, Sass Jordan, Mark Cuban, Joe Rogan, Swans, *Idols*, *Bachelors* and all those friggin idiots. Here's a reality show for you, it's called a reality check, and instead of spending millions being idiots and eating bugs and jumping off buildings, you give the money to charities. Maybe do a show called *Survivor: Hurricane Jeanne in Haiti*, or *Food Factor in Ethiopia* or *Who Wants to Win an AIDs Vaccine?* in Zimbabwe. Seriously, can our society be that self involved that we'd rather watch Simon crush the dreams of some tone-deaf high-schooler than see people live to see tomorrow? Apparently so.

Finally, on par with D-Day and Christmas, this week marks the 128th anniversary of the first shipment of 857 bushels of wheat from Manitoba to eastern Canada. God bless those western Canadian jerks.

Have a good one!
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What's Your Beef?