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Rapper mcenroe's new EP 'convenient'

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Red River College's newspaper

The Projector

April 22, 2002

Lyman elected Students' Association President

By Natalie Pona

The Students' Association election results are official: David Lyman is Red River College's new SA President-elect.

"I'm excited ... I'm looking forward to another year here at the College," says Lyman from his current office as Vice-President of Finance.

This year, the election had over 650 votes cast, roughly 12 per cent of the full-time student population of 5,500. That number is up from last year's total of 511 votes.

Lyman, who takes office July 1, says that his first order of business as the new president will be to spend the summer "getting up to speed on everything."

"People don't realize how much goes into kick-off week and getting ready for the new students coming in," he says.

Lyman says that he is particularly looking forward to RRC's new Princess Street campus, which he toured last week.

"A campus in the business sector will put you closer to businesses. Students will get a chance to mingle with the people that are going to hire you."

Lyman's excitement contrasted with disappointment and frustration from some of the defeated candidates.

The election for the new executive positions on the SA was not without problems. Lyman defeated Daniel Kreutzer for the presidency.

"Even seeing Dan in the hall is a little awkward, but he's a good sport," Lyman says about his former opponent.

Kreutzer says he is discontented with the results of the elections.

"Did I feel the elections were run right? No. There were issues... like the little cards that were used," Kreutzer says, referring to the business cards Lyman distributed as part of his campaign.

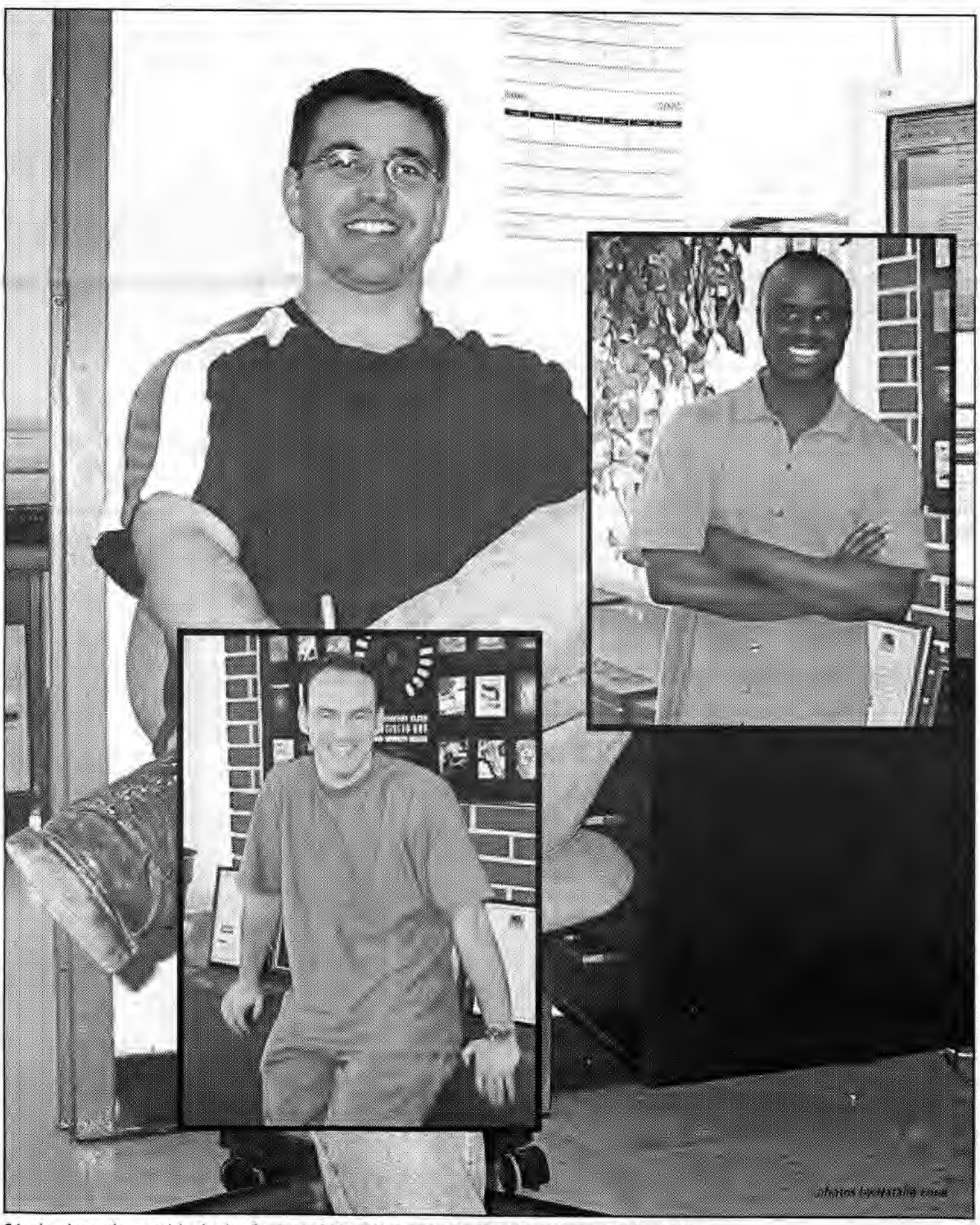
"All campaign material had to be down but the little cards were everywhere."

Kreutzer isn't the only defeated candidate who sources his disappointment with the results of the April 11 election.

Ethan Stock was declared winner of the Vice-President of Student Affairs position at the Rock the Vote kegger in the Cave on April 11.

However, because Stock had won by such a small margin, Schubert Beaubrun requested a recount.

Continued on page 2



SA election winners (clockwise from top) David Lyman, Schubert Beaubrun and Lars Vik.

GRADUATION PHOTOS

MAY 7, 8 & 10, 2002

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Young leaders converge at RRC

By Tamara King

Even though Winnipeg is almost 3,500 kilometres from Hollywood, Jamie Brown has had a hand in making Hollywood movies from home.

Though Winnipeg is not seen as a hotbed of major motion pictures, Brown, the CEO and executive producer for Frantic Films, thinks there are possibilities for making major movies outside the big city.

"The opportunity is there. There might have been a time where to do high-end visual effects work, you'd have to leave the city because it just wasn't being done here. But I think that's changing and the doors will continue to open," said Brown.

Last year, Frantic worked on a special effects sequence for the movie Swordfish with John Travolta.

And the more opportunities there in Winnipeg, the more jobs there are for freshly graduated computer technicians, at least according to the four information technology panelists who spoke to Red River College students at the beginning of April.

The conference was hosted by Young Leaders of Winnipeg. Young Leaders, which is a division of Economic Development Winnipeg, hosts panel discussions at post-secondary institutions to show young Winnipeggers the interesting job opportunities available in the city.

"We want to show people that Winnipeg is a good place to live and work," said Ian Scott, the College's recruitment co-ordinator, and also a member of the Young Leaders.

The technology industry employs about 23,000 people throughout the province.

A recent survey of digital businesses in Winnipeg indicated 65 per cent of respondents expect sales and jobs to increase in the near future.

And the best part? Frantic Films is hiring. They expect the staff of 37 to grow to about 100 people within the next few years.

photo courtesy Universal Studios

Winnipeg's Frantic Films created special effects for the movie Swordfish.

Brown says people interested in working for Frantic should send in a resume and a cover letter, specifying exactly what it is they want to do within the company.

"It's not enough to say 'I want to work in the movie industry,'" Brown cautioned.

And students shouldn't be discouraged if they can't find a job, according to one panelist. After all, there's always the possibility of making a job.

That's what Neil Schwartzman did. Not that he couldn't find a job anywhere, but as an Internet company employee in the mid-1990s, there weren't a lot of companies for Schwartzman to work for.

Schwartzman, who has studied computer science and psychology, founded Web Slingers in 1996.

His first office was 300 square feet in the basement of his parent's River Heights home.

As the company and the client list grew, it was time for more office space.

"It was funny, because it went from being 300 square feet in my parents basement to 300 square feet in some building in the Exchange District," Schwartzman said.

Recent statistics from Industry Canada reported employment opportunities growing in the information and communications sectors by 5.7 per cent over 5 years. In most other industries, employment grew by 1.9 per cent.

By-laws allow recount

continued from page 1

The by-laws for the election state that candidates who aren't confidant the vote count was correct can request a recount up to five days following election day.

Beaubrun exercised that right and, following a second recount that was requested by Stock, was officially declared winner at a Student Advisory Board meeting. Beaubrun won by a single vote on April 17.

"The only thing I'm upset with is how can 14 people count these ballots four times, and it comes out right, then five people count it again and it comes out wrong."

Stock gave a spirited acceptance speech at the Rock the Vote kegger which included him dropping his pants to expose his heart-covered boxer shorts intended to express his feelings for his voters.

A disappointed Stock says he is trying to keep a good attitude about the contentious election results.

"There is room for improvement," Stock says, "especially with more controls to be sure of accuracy. Really what I'm doing is expressing concern and not anger," Stock notes through a drained smile.

He says he already has a new plan for next year: he is going to apply for the position of station manager of Red River's campus radio station, CMOR.

Kevin Haiko, the current VP of Student Affairs, says that the miscounting of the ballots for the new VP of Student Affairs was due to a number transferring mistake.

"The error made was that the tally sheets at the Voyageur were correct, but in transferring that number to the official poll sheet, there was an error."

The SA is considering several changes, including poll clerk training and an automatic recount in close races, to improve election procedures.

There is also some question about the future of tentative celebrations, like the Rock the Vote Kegger, which include declarations of unofficial winners and their acceptance speeches.

The official winner of the position of Vice-President of Student Affairs, Schubert Beaubrun, says his first order of business is to understand what went wrong with this year's election.

"This is the second year this has happened. I want to get a good foundation about elections. Situations like this really hit hard that every vote counts."

Beaubrun also says that getting broken clocks throughout the College fixed and the working clocks in sync through RRC buildings is also a priority.

Lars Vik, the new Vice-President-elect of Finance, won his position with 85 per cent of the "yes" or "no" vote.

"I want to focus on getting established and getting used to this position," says Vik, who is considering a getting his Marketing major over his term in office.

Vik says that after he takes office July 1, he intends to start making improvements to RRC's housing directory.

"Just going through the directory and getting students set-up with places to live ... that all has to be done before school starts," says the new VP.

Red River College's newspaper

The Projector

Red River College's Student Newspaper for over 30 years.

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Sam Thompson

If you have an opinion about something you've read in The Projector, or would like to address an issue concerning Red River College, please write to us.

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Advertising can be reached at 632-2070.

Students mine medals at skills contest

By Lindsey Anderson

Over 400 high school and post-secondary students competed in the fifth annual Skills Manitoba Competition, which was held at Red River College Thursday, April 11.

Students competed in such areas as Sheet Metal, TV/Video Production, Culinary Arts and Auto Body repair in various venues across the college.

The competition is an Olympic-style event for the trades, in which students' skills and understanding are tested.

The students have most of the day to complete their assignments before judging takes place.

Medals are then handed out to the top three competitors in each category, with most of the gold medal winners going on to represent Manitoba at the Skills Canada national competition.

The atmosphere among the competitors was a nervous one, as students worked fast to complete their projects.

"I feel like I'm going to throw up," said Colleen Houde, a Tec Voc student competing in TV/Video production.

"I just want to get this day over with."

In the early hours of the competition, Red River student and Sheet Metal competitor Shawn Kowalke had no idea medals were even awarded in the competition.

His attitude towards the competition changed when he found out.

"We've had no indication that this is really a big deal," he said. "I'm a little nervous now." At the end of the day, Kowalke took home a gold medal.

Red River students also won gold medals in categories such as Masonry/Brick Laying, Refrigeration, and Restaurant Service.

Skills Manitoba's focus is to stress the importance of supporting technical and vocational training and post-secondary education.

At the opening ceremonies, Skills Manitoba President Kim Jasper stressed the importance of developing skills and keeping trained workers in Manitoba.

"Skills work," she said. "And we hope you all put them to work here in Manitoba. Raise your kids here, build your career here."

Education Minister Drew Caldwell was also on hand to present Skills Manitoba with a cheque for $40,000.

"Over the next few years, 70 per cent of the new jobs will require some form of post secondary education," he said.

"There is a focus on the need for a highly skilled workforce."

The Skills Manitoba Competition has seen the amount of competitors triple since its inception in 1998.

"When you see that kind of growth... please understand that you are part of an extremely important movement," said College President Jackie Thachuk at the opening ceremonies.

57 of the gold medal winners from this year's contest will get to represent Manitoba at the Skills Canada National competition, being held in Vancouver from May 30-June 2.

The two day competition is being held at B.C. Place, featuring 39 categories.

Manitoba representatives will compete in 37 of these events, and some of the gold medal winners from the national competition may go on to compete in the 37th annual World Skills Competition in Switzerland in 2003.

photo by Lindsey Anderson

Over 400 high school and post-secondary students competed in the fifth annual skills competition, held April 11 at the College.

New eye in the sky in North Gym hallway

By Sam Thompson

Walking down the hall toward the North Gym, one might notice something a little... well... spacey.

Above that happy little fountain/rock garden hangs an ominous eye; a new camera watching your every move.

Unfortunately, this "Death Star" is not as sci-fi as it looks.

It's just a camera.

I expected to find out about fiendish lasers or mind-control rays emanating from this floating orb, but as it turns out, it's just an extra security precaution.

"There are no specific problems within the College," said Bob Lechow, Security Services supervisor.

"We just do as much as we can with the funding we can get."

Cameras at Red River College were originally only an external presence. They watched over the parking lot to help prevent car theft.

In order to continually ensure the safety of students, security has moved indoors. The "Death Star" is just an addition to their in-school coverage.

Although security tries to keep the entire campus safe, "we could not begin to watch EVERYTHING", says Lechow.

So this bizarre-looking security device is really harmless. Still, I've tried to avoid walking anywhere near it. I don't want to turn over to the Dark Side just yet.

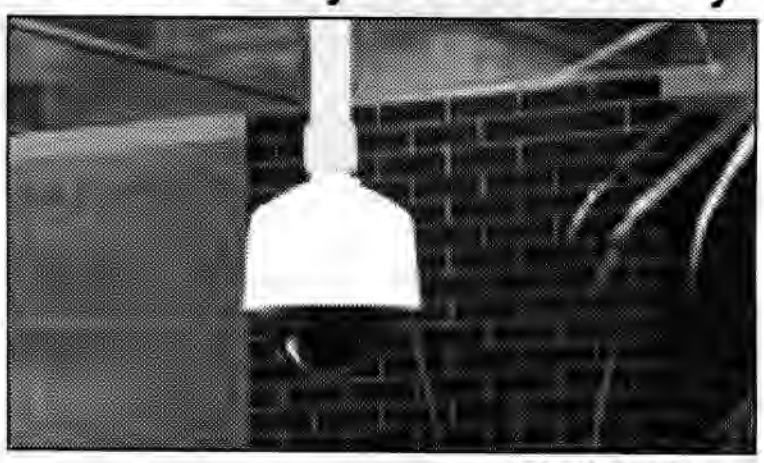

photo by Sam Thompson

Is it the second coming of the Death Star? No, it's just a security camera, perched in the North Gym hallway.

Kick start your career...Volunteer!

Want to add experience to your education? Gain practical skills like communicating, teamwork and problem solving? Volunteering can help you develop the top labor market skills potential employers want. And it couldn't be easier to get to the Health Sciences Centre....just take the #27 Notre Dame bus directly from Red River College. Parking or bus tickets are provided for volunteers who drive or use transit. Visit our web site http://www.hsc.mb.ca/ to explore our volunteer opportunities.
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MAY 7 / 2002

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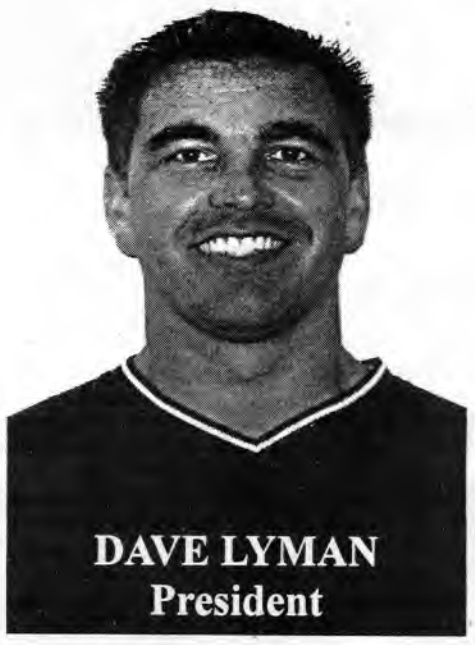

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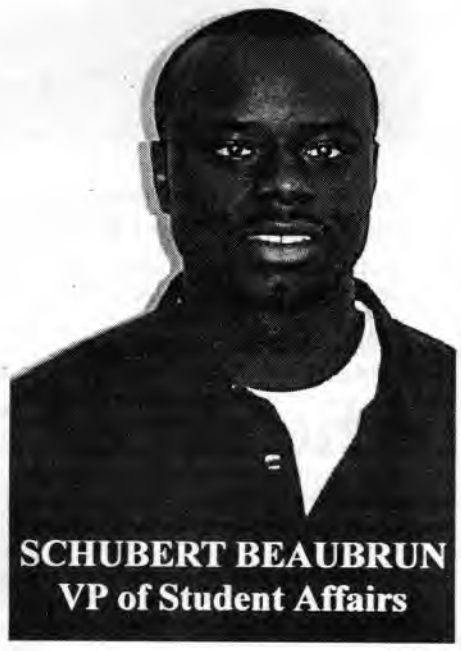
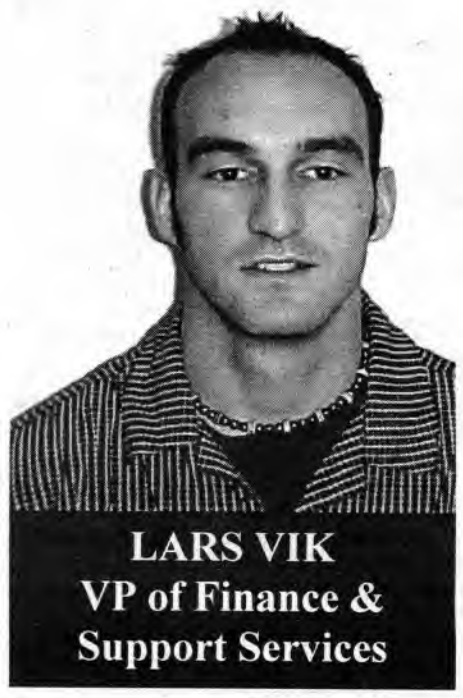


SCHUBERT BEAUBRUN
VP of Student Affairs



LARS VIK
VP of Finance & Support Services

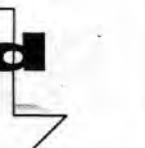
UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, May 3

LAST DAZE SOCIAL
(Tentative)

Friday, May 10

RRCSA Golf
Tournament

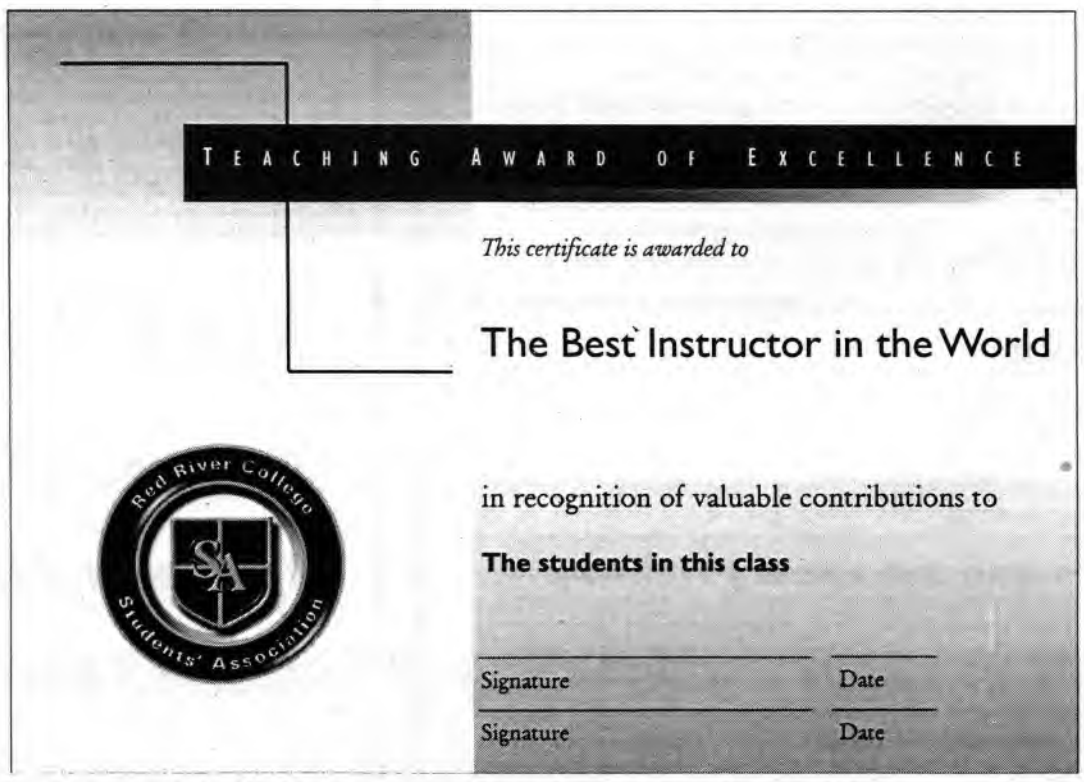


Does your instructor:

- √ Make classes interesting for all students?
- √ Care whether students learn the material presented?
- √ Present material in an organized manner?
- √ Come well prepared to class?
- √ Encourage class discussion?
- √ Accept new ideas and viewpoints?
- √ Keep you informed on how you are doing and how you can improve?
- √ Give notice before canceling classes?
- √ Keep up to date on the information he or she is presenting?

If you answered yes to most or even just a few of these questions, you may be able to nominate your instructor for the

Teaching Award Of Excellence.



If you think that one of your instructors deserves the Teaching Award of Excellence, pick up a nominations form at the SA office (DM20) or talk to Kevin Haiko, VP Student Affairs.

Carpooling to save the planet, sanity

By Scott Prouse

Do you ever get tired of driving to school? Sick of costs related to getting you and your car from home to school, and back again? Maybe you have a friend with an amazing CD collection who lives near you?

Or maybe you just need another reason to drag your sorry ass out of bed and into class.

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, then the Red River College carpool program may be the answer for you.

The program is open to all registered students, staff, and faculty.

Developed by a non-profit society, commuter connections, the carpool program is used by over 120 employers and post-secondary institutions across Canada.

"This gives students an opportunity to get together with others in their area," says Kevin Haiko, student association vice-president.

"They can save money on gas, parking, and other driving costs."

Registration in the carpool program can be made through www.carpool.ca, or through the RRC Web site, following the commuter connections link.

Applicants must register who they are, where they are traveling to and from, working hours, and music preference.

"This is a free service for those wishing to improve their transportation choices," says the RRC Web site.

The first year of service for RRC is free, and if the college decides to continue using the service the annual fee would be $1,700.

There are different types of carpools available to students, faculty, and staff.

The designated driver carpool has one driver who pays all the costs and provides the vehicle, while passengers pay a fare based on expenses.

An alternating carpool has drivers alternating on a regular basis. When you drive you pay, when you ride it's free.

Perhaps the greatest benefit for students in the carpool program is added savings from sharing rides.

CAA reports that the average cost of operating a motor vehicle for one year, including insurance, gas, and general maintenance, is almost $8,000, or $22 a day.

The carpool program can offer added savings to cash-strapped students.

There are also added health benefits related to car pools. Driving to and from the College on a daily basis can add to an already stressful school year.

It's not like Los Angeles out there, but icy winters and the tendency of Winnipeg drivers to ignore most turn signals and red lights can add worry lines to students concentrating on their next tests or essays, and not on the bumper in front of them.

The environment will also be thanking participants of the carpool program for using fewer cars.

Less pollution and less demand for new roads and parking lots means more trees. Not to mention growing greenhouse gases and climate change, something everyone is guilty of contributing to.

The commuter connections Web site also provides tips on carpool etiquette. Settling on costs in advance will ensure happy carpools. The ability to be on time for pick-ups and deliveries will also help.

Carpools should also set guidelines for their respective teams.

Showing up drunk to pick up your carpoolers, stopping to do some laundry along the way, or blasting NSync from the stereo are all discouraged

Computer test increases employability

ICDL (International Computer Driving License), the North American equivalent of ECDL (European Computer Driving License), was developed and initiated by not-for-profit IT (Information Technology) organizations with the aim of improving the general public's level of personal computer skills and IT knowledge.

Over 1.25 million people have been certified in Europe thus far, and momentum in North America is increasing rapidly.

ICDL is widely accepted by numerous corporations, government, and private institutions worldwide. It is surpassing many end-user IT skills certification programs, due to its ability to identify real IT skills for the real world.

Employers are taking notice of this certification since anyone who completes the course is guaranteed to have basic computer skills.

As a result, having this credential stands to increase an individual's employability.

ICDL tests skills in seven areas of study: Basic Concepts of Information Technology, Using the Computer and Managing Files, Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Database, Presentation, and Information and Communication.

The first module deals with theory and has a pass mark of 60 per cent, while each of the other hands-on modules requires 80 per cent to pass.

Each test has a time limit of 45 minutes, and the modules can be completed in any order that a student prefers. If required, retests on different tests are available at a cost.

The importance of ICDL cannot be denied. Bruce Talbot, head of the ICDL test centre at RRC stated: "This is important for students because ICDL is quickly becoming a worldwide standard of basic business computing skills. As interest and awareness of ICDL continues to grow in Canada, the value of having this credential on your resume will only increase. It measures what you can do – you either have certification or you don't. Employers like that."

RRC is the fifth testing site in Canada, and the first in Manitoba. Talbot and seven other RRC certified testers have implemented a pilot project at RRC that is currently putting the PC skills of 70 students to the test.

ICDL is not a course of study, but a certification process. ICDL is best suited to individuals who have a good working knowledge of computers and general business applications.

If your computer skills are not honed, it is best to take a course on the subject, or study the ICDL test manual or CD-ROM before beginning the process.

In order to self-assess your readiness for ICDL, a skills checklist is available. A few ICDL texts and tutorial CDs are available for 24-hour sign out at the library.

For current RRC Day students interested in pursuing ICDL certification, the package (i.e., Skills Cards and 7 module tests) is being offered this term for an introductory price of $200.

The price is expected to be a minimum of $250 in September.

To learn more and to try out a demo of the tests, you are invited to sign up at the Students' Association for one of the noon hour information sessions being held in FM-35A, April 25-26 and 30. Space is limited, so sign up early.

If you would like further information about ICDL certification, call Bruce Talbot at 632-3767, or e-mail him at btalbot@rrc.mb.ca

For anyone other than RRC students interested in pursuing ICDL certification, the total fee (for all 7 modules and the Skills Card) is $350. Minimum initial payment is $150, which includes the Skills Card and any 3 module tests.

To register, please contact Lynette Ribachuk of Continuing Education at 632-2190.

Submitted by
Patti Johannesson

ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS WITH BOOKS ON CONSIGNMENT

The Ox Used Book Consignment Service, is now winding down its operation for this year. As stated in the Used Book Consignment Contract, ***ALL MONIES AND BOOKS MUST BE PICKED BY JUNE 15, 2002.*** All books and monies remaining after that date will immediately become property of the Ox. Disposal of all remaining books will occur shortly after June 15th. Please ensure all books and cheques are picked up by then. **No exceptions will be made !!!**

Police snatch cash machine snatcher

By Kelly Stifora

Winnipeg police have arrested one suspect in the robbery of a cash machine from the Cave lounge in D building that occurred Dec. 1.

Detective Mike Gibson said that details of the investigation could not be released because it is ongoing. He did say that more suspects would likely be arrested, however.

"The Red River incident was just one of many, many incidents that this crew were involved in," said Det. Gibson.

Gibson did not say whether any of the suspects are known to be Red River College students.

"I wouldn't jump up and say, 'it's a student,'" said RRC Students' Association executive director Owen Desnoyers shortly after the break-in.

"There are times when non-students use the area, too."

In order to steal the machine, the thieves ripped through the plywood roof that houses the Cave's vending machines.

At that point, they bent the brackets that held the cash machine in place with a crowbar.

They would have then had to move the machine several metres, and up a flight of stairs, to get it out of the D building.

The machine itself was valued at $3,200, and the thieves also made off with $500 in cash contained within the machine.

Aramark Refreshment Services, which owns the machine, replaced it shortly after the theft occurred.

Although RRC Security manager Jim Drever ensured that security practices would be revised in light of the theft and said that six to eight cameras would be added at the campus, he was unwilling to divulge any more details at the time.

At the time of the theft, there were no cameras near enough to the cave to record any suspicious activity.

Although the Cave is open from 10 a.m.-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays (such as Dec 1.), the alarm in the lounge would not have been set until 9:00 p.m.

Electronics institute branch of interest to RRC students

THE Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) has a student branch at Red River College.

It is located on the second floor of building A in room A206A. It is well known in western Canada for the many awards that its student members have won since it opened in 1964.

The IEEE should be of interest to all students enrolled in the electronics, computer, electrical, instrumentation and communications technologies.

It is part of a worldwide technical organization that seeks to better society by helping develop the technical, professional and networking skills of its members.

The IEEE offers scholarships to student members and supports various student activities and competitions during the school year.

The most well known event is the IEEE Student Papers Night Competition, which is held in May each year.

The branch has a trophy case full of awards that student members have won for projects built or technical papers they have written.

Student members are encouraged to network with local IEEE student members or members of the local Winnipeg IEEE section in order to develop professional skills and advance their careers.

The student branch organizes tours to local technical and manufacturing companies several times each year to allow students exposure to some of the careers they might eventually choose.

Student members have access to the IEEE Web site (http://tesla.rrc.mc.ca/ieee), which provides online information such as the monthly IEEE Spectrum magazine, IEEE society publications, and IEEE Xplore, which allows members to search for technical information.

The site also contains extensive career development assistance and a free resume posting service.

Students can contact IEEE local members and members worldwide who may be able to assist them in their studies or in their future careers.

Each student member also has an e-mail address at IEEE.org, which helps give a professional image to correspondence and resumes.

The RRC branch will loan student members technical equipment such as oscilloscopes, function generators, power-supplies, multi-meters and Altera boards that they may need to finish labs or to work on special projects.

The branch also has a fully equipped shop that student members can use when assembling and testing circuits. We also sell students parts and tools they need for college projects at a competitive price.

Our student branch has its own Web site, which members can use to post resumes and items for sale.

It is also used as a bulletin board for individuals or groups wishing to use post announcements or questions.

The Red River IEEE student branch is looking for students who wish to volunteer to assist the branch as 2002-2003 student branch executive members.

Various positions on the board are available. Working in these positions is an exciting and rewarding way to improve your professional and networking skills. It also enhances your resume.

Student memberships cost only $15.

This is a discounted rate, but entitles student members to the monthly Spectrum magazine, Potentials magazine, access to the IEEE web site and all other student member benefits.

Look for the green IEEE signs on the second floor of building A. Visit us in Room A206A and see what we have to offer!

SECURITY NEWS

By: Jim Drever / Security Manager

Recent Incidents:

03/April - Theft from auto - N4 lot - tools stolen

03/April - Theft from auto - N4 lot - stereo equip. stolen

05/April - Theft from auto - N4 lot - stereo equip. stolen

11/April - Theft from locker - A/Bsmt. - laptop stolen

Crime Prevention Tips: (personal property)

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For more information or to register, please phone Adrienne Alford-Burt at 988-0902 or toll free at 1-800-268-7582.

Nursing editorial smacks of arrogance

Firstly, I should identify myself as a regular reader of The Projector.

While I commend you on your efforts in publishing it, I must also note that the smug arrogance you consistently display in your editorials never ceases to amaze me.

Andrea Slobodian's latest offering, for instance, ("It's not about the Benjamins", Apr. 8, 2002), simply begs for an injection of rational thought.

Clearly, this journalist has no understanding of the importance of labour relations to the average working man or woman. Perhaps that's because it's never been necessary for her to develop one.

While it is most noble that Ms. Slobodian would be willing to work for $18,000 a year as an entry level journalist, I find it difficult to believe she would be willing to live off, much less support a family on, that amount for the rest of her life.

I must ask you, Ms. Slobodian, as a full time journalism student, how do you pay your bills and keep a roof over your head? Or do you still live at home with your parents? No, you couldn't.

Surely no thoughtful person would have so much nerve as to criticize working men and woman who are fighting for fair compensation for their training and the work they do, while she herself is still relying on her parents to pay the bills.

Ms. Slobodian writes that she heard that graduating nursing students can make up to $40,000 upon graduation – twice what her entry level salary as a journalist would be.

Is this what passes for a reasonable argument in journalism these days? "It's twice what I would make, therefore, nurses should be satisfied."

Next, Ms. Slobodian goes on to wax philosophical about how nurses should "selflessly care about the needs of others, and not their own salaries." Wow. Surely Ms. Slobodian is not suggesting that everyone in the world who does a job should do so without the expectation of reasonable compensation. No, of course not.

So why should nurses, who provide an essential service to society, be any different?

I suggest to you that, in some cases, simply being willing to do this job (never mind doing it with compassion and empathy) is enough of a testament to the commitment and "selflessness" of nurses.

Nevertheless, I do wish you good luck with your utopian vision of society, in which nurses go through two to four years of intense training, only to enter the under-staffed and over-burdened world of health care, all without the expectation of a competitive salary. That's what you'd want for yourself if you were a nurse, right?

But I do agree with Ms. Slobodian on one count. Nurses probably would say she is stupid, at the very least, to suggest that one can compare journalism to nursing.

Does anyone's life, or quality of life, sense of well-being, comfort, or emotional health depend on you doing your job well on a daily basis? Have you ever comforted anyone in his or her dying days? Helped a person through the loss of a loved one?

Have you ever done any one of these things while under-staffed and over-worked, not to mention (as you've demonstrated) under-appreciated?

More to the point, are there, or are there not, journalists working in the field who have not graduated from recognized journalism programs?

The answer is yes. This would not, and could not, happen in the field of nursing. Why? Because lives depend on the work nurses do.

This fact, in itself, underlies the differences between the two professions.

In closing, I hope you will have the courage to print this letter, because I would welcome your thoughtful response.

Donald Armstrong

Nursing editorial comment out of line

In regards to the article in the April 8 issue about the nursing raise and the journalism student, we have a few comments.

We are second year JBN students here at Red River.

First of all, we would just like to say were does this girl get the right to say that nurses don't deserve a raise?

We as nursing students see the conditions that the nurses are now working in, and our opinion is that the nurses deserved more than the 20 per cent raise over two years that they received.

It is obvious that the editor of this article was extremely uneducated in regards to this issue.

Saying that if nurses were truly passionate about their profession and cared for their patients they wouldn't ask for a wage increase, is just a nonsense comment.

If we as nurses don't care about our patients enough, wait till you are in the hospital yourself under the care of the overworked, underpaid nurses and then you will be wishing they got their raise.

Two nursing students

Carpool Program Update

Since the launch of the Red River College Carpool Program there are 36 people on the database! Most people have between 1 and 6 matches. A couple of people have no matches yet, but that should change as the database grows. Sign on to the database to see if YOU have any matches! If you do form a carpool, remember to send in the information on the survey form so we can track greenhouse gas savings! Get all the details at http://www.rrc.mb.ca/carpool/.

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Pickup info at the Ox anytime

jostens

The Projector
Opinion
April 22, 2002

I Had a dad

Dear Dad,

I've been thinking about you quite a bit lately, as is usual when significant events draw near.

I think about what you might think of me, and of the choices I've made, as I meandered my way through the past 13 years.

I wonder if you lost respect for me while I had my head buried in books, bad habits and headphones throughout high school, instead of in scrimmages, or face-offs, or thighs.

I wonder if you shook your head when I decided to study theatre in university, rather than something more practical or profitable.

Did you think I was careless? Were you laughing as I stumbled my way through, reading Henry Miller, grabbing sex and fun wherever I could without too much effort, wasting money and fancying myself an artist? Were you as surprised as I was when I graduated at the top of my class, or were your thoughts in your eldest son Andrew's words when he said, "Yeah, but it's only an arts degree?"

I've tried a lot of things, as I know you have. I've climbed into one career track after another, jumping ship when the call for real commitment drew nigh. Do you see me as a 28-year-old boy, unfocused and directionless?

I hope not.

You see, I've come to realize lately that the thing I've been missing; the thing that has eluded me and left me unsure for so long is your judgment. It's made me feel a little less than whole, to be honest. Like my lack of a present father has made me somehow less of a man. Has it?

Don't get me wrong; Mom brought me up well. She's an angel, your wife. She taught me to respect others and myself and to laugh with others and at myself. She taught me to treat people with dignity, no matter who they are. She taught me generosity and patience. She loves me and shares her pride. Most of the time I remember the lessons she taught me... most of the time.

Perhaps most importantly, however, Mom tried her damnedest to make me believe that I could do anything that I wanted to do. But I didn't, really. I guess I always felt that without your guidance, the equation was incomplete.

That's why I'm writing you this letter. As you may know I'm about to graduate again, this time from college, from a good program with a high employment rate. I've gained some new, arguably more useful skills here. They even made me editor of the campus newspaper.

I wish I could tell you what I'm going to do when I graduate a month from now, but I don't know yet. Somehow the details don't seem as important to me right now as the real reason I'm writing you: confidence.

I love you and I miss you Dad, as I always have, but I don't think I need your judgment or your guidance anymore. After all, I'm 28 now.

And this time I'm graduating with something that I've never had before: a deep, resounding, sense of confidence. For the first time since your death, I really feel like I'm going to be all right.

I've got these new skills, and great friends, and what's left of our family.

I'm my own man and I've got my own two feet, planted squarely on the ground.

But I'm looking up Dad, and I think I'm just about ready to fly.

Wish me luck.

Your son,

Kelly Stipes

Media provides essential service

In response to the letter from Donald Armstrong regarding my April 8 editorial (see page 7), I've realized that something I said was, in fact, wrong.

I wrote, "Nurses may think I'm stupid to compare journalism to nursing." Armstrong agreed that, yes, nurses would think I'm stupid. But now I take that comment back. I've realized the importance of media.

I never went into journalism thinking I could make a huge difference in the world. I liked the career because I liked being out in the community, talking to different people, learning about something new every day.

I now realize that the world would be such a different place without media. With no newspaper, radio, television or Internet site in existence, people would be pretty much in the dark. People survived before mass media, but think of the difference it's made. I'm not talking about tabloids here, or paparazzi, but responsible, dedicated journalists.

In his letter, Armstrong wrote this about journalists: "Does anyone's life, or quality of life, sense of well-being, comfort, or emotional health depend on you doing your job well on a daily basis?"

Actually, yes. More so than you apparently realize.

Missing children have been found after the media's published their pictures. Criminals have been found too, and taken off the streets. People have been educated on the horrors of things like child prostitution, eating disorders, violence. When people become educated of something, they begin to take action.

Or take an e-coli outbreak for example; how would the City of Winnipeg tell more than 600,000 citizens their water was contaminated without media? That's a pretty big poster campaign or a helluva lot of phone calls to make.

Then there are wars and terrorism and starvation in countries across the world. People living here know of these things, yet they still seem distant and they don't affect our everyday lives. Imagine how out of touch we'd be without CNN, without the world news in the papers. We may not have heard of the West Bank or Osama Bin Laden or third world countries.

The media puts us in contact with the entire world and makes us aware of things we would never otherwise heard of. Without it, maybe a few Manitobans would have heard of Sept. 11 because their sister or someone in New York telephoned them. If that sister lived in Brooklyn and not a building next to the trade centre towers, she may have seen smoke but she may not have even known what happened if there was no form of news.

Journalists have earned the reputation of being shit disturbers and sensationalists. Maybe some rightly so. People probably wouldn't rank us high on a list of important positions in society. But take one day to note all the things you wouldn't have learned without the media. Surprising, isn't it?

A Slobodian

"Faint-hope" hearings just that: faint hope

He walks in, and the first thing that comes to mind is "This guy could be my buddy's dad."

Fred Bleich has returned to Winnipeg to plead his case in front of the Court of Queen's Bench. He's currently serving a life sentence for two first-degree murders he committed during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Bleich is eligible for parole in 2008, but after serving 24 years he wants an early release.

Bleich's lawyers are arguing on his behalf at this "faint-hope" hearing - which if successful will give him a chance to apply to the National Parole Board for early parole.

And according to witness testimony at the hearing, Bleich has been a good boy while in jail. A Corrections Canada supervisor at Kingston Penitentiary (where Bleich has spent the last 18 years) described how both he and inmates respected Bleich.

So much so, in fact, that Bleich was granted a "wall clearance", which allows the bearer to work off-site under the supervision of a prison guard. Only eight people from the prison population of 500 are given these passes, which is indicative in the trust placed on this man. An electrician by trade, Bleich was also allowed to carry around a bag of tools - usually a definite no-no in the prison system.

You can also add family man to Bleich's post-incarceration resume. While in jail (thank God for conjugal visits) he met a woman and fathered three children. According to his mother-in-law, who also testified at the hearing, Bleich is "soft-spoken, courteous, polite. He is not what I pictured."

It's only six years until Fred Bleich gets the chance to go home to his family. How could letting him go a few years earlier hurt?

It depends on your view of the purpose of incarceration. I think the role of jail is to punish offenders and protect the innocent. In a perfect world, offenders would be put in jail when they break the law. While in prison, their condition would be evaluated. When they're no longer a threat, let 'em go.

But how to evaluate an inmate's condition? Some say jail should, can and does rehabilitate social deviants. But as the prison supervisor said at the hearing: "We can't force people to drink from the trough."

No one can force a criminal to change whatever it is that made them commit their crime. That's up to the individual. And while behind bars for 20 years, many people do decide to change. Unfortunately, that can never be measured because some individuals are able to trick others into thinking they have changed.

So where does that leave Fred Bleich, and others of his kind? Should we push for shorter sentences for the rehabilitated?

By all accounts, Bleich has changed. No doubt he longs to see his teenage children before they turn into men and women. Unquestionably, 24 years is a long time to spend in jail. But not long enough.

Let's not forget, Fred Bleich snuffed out the lives of two people. I'm not going to give you that eye-for-an-eye bullshit, and I'm not in favour of the death penalty. However, the sentence you're given is the one you should be forced to serve (presuming you haven't been cleared of the crime since a la David Milgaard).

Jail sentences aren't retribution for the families of victims. Keeping with the punish and protect paradigm, they should be only as long as they need to be. But for every person who has changed there are always those who haven't. The justice system has received far too many black eyes from convicts who were released early and re-offended.

The solution: keep the original sentence. If it takes a murder 50 years to think about what he or she did, then so be it. I'm sorry Fred, but you'll have to wait six years to see your family.

Andrew Buck

RED RIVER COLLEGE
OF APPLIED ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

3rd ANNUAL DIVERSITY ESSAY CONTEST

"Our Cultural Mosaic is our Pride"

By Mélanie Pittet 1st Prize

I originally grew up in a small rural community of six hundred residents. Somerset, Manitoba, located 200 kilometres south-west of Winnipeg, probably isn't considered by anyone to be a mecca of cultural diversity. And I'll admit, I never thought it would even come close to being considered so.

When I did decide to think about it though, I discovered there is diversity in Somerset. My own heritage is diverse – My family has French and Swiss ancestry. My hometown was founded by English settlers, (hence the name Somerset). Some of my past neighbours are Icelandic and German.

Then I began thinking outside of my community to other small, surrounding ones. Swan Lake, five kilometres east of Somerset has a proud Belgium heritage. Another five kilometres west of Swan Lake you'll find the Swan Lake First Nations. Twenty kilometres to the east of Somerset is Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, a strong French community. To my surprise, I could continue with long a list of different cultures in my rural setting -- proof that population doesn't only influence diversity.

I moved to Winnipeg in the fall of 1999 to start my post-secondary education. I settled in St. Boniface, an area of the city where French dominates, where I still live. When I explored the area, there was much more than only a French presence. Within a two block radius from my home there is the Dutch Meat Market, the Caribbean Connection restaurant and Mékong restaurant, offering Vietnamese cuisine.

I further considered diversity in Canada. When I went to Toronto last summer, I was immersed in a frenzy of cultural diversity. There were a million extra people in Toronto's downtown area. They gathered to attend the biggest festival in the world celebrating Caribbean culture -- Caribbana. I encountered people from the United States, Europe, and Central and South America, not only in one country but, in one city.

On a much smaller scale, there is an annual event in my hometown and area called the Gathering of Nations. We celebrate different cultures at several venues with food, drink, music and exhibits of cultural traditions. At the First Nations pavilion you can dance in a pow-wow. At the Belgium tent you can eat all the waffles you want. At the Ukrainian pavilion you can fill up on perogies and cabbage rolls.

In Winnipeg, there's a similar celebration called Folklorama. Forty cultures are showcased and celebrated with traditional meals and world beats. There's also the Festival du Voyageur, Western Canada's largest winter festival held annually in St. Boniface. The 10-day festival celebrates the voyageurs – fur traders and early explorers – while showcasing Métis and Franco-Manitoban culture.

In most Canadian cities you'll find a China town or a little Italy. You can taste, see and hear the cultural diversity everywhere. Canadian residents are visibly proud of their country's cultural mosaic. Our various displays of cultural diversity are like microcosms of the entire country. We as Canadians choose to express our acceptance by presenting our different cultures, reflecting the beliefs of our country. Our efforts to learn about the diversity in our own backyard prove we are cultured.

Canadians are fortunate to be able to see the world at home. There is no need to travel to have a worldly experience. That experience is waiting for us, right in our own neighbourhoods. And we can easily be a part of it. Add an exotic flavour to your next meal. Go to a Greek market and use some fruits and vegetables you've never tried. Cook up that South American dish you found a recipe for. Go to the Ethiopian restaurant your friends keep telling you about. Purchase a C.D. by an international artist. Take a walk down the street and talk to your neighbours. If we open ourselves to new experiences, it isn't difficult to experiment with diversity.

It's been hard to avoid the media attention given to cultural non-acceptance in the rest of the world recently. Wars are raging over land and religion. There are disputes over culture and heritage. Some of these wars have been fought for decades. Children are dying of starvation. Families are being torn apart. All of these tragedies are happening unnecessarily.

Because we have so much diversity in Canada, we do have a lot of differences. Certainly there are obstacles to acceptance in Canada that need to be overcome but, we have been able to remain peaceful in our attempts to overcome these challenges in our own land. Discrimination and prejudice are problems that have surfaced but I believe they are being beaten. And we proudly continue to work on solving such problems. Canada stands as a distinct symbol to the world of the acceptance that can be achieved through peaceful means.

Because of the vast cultural diversity in Canada, people might question – How can Canada and Canadians be described? How can the country define itself? What does it mean to be Canadian? I think the answers are clear.

Canada and Canadians are innovative, open and free. We are a respectful and loving people. Our diversity and the fact that we maintain prosperity and peacefulness with our differences prove this. Living together with so many cultures, in one society, with unity and acceptance, makes us Canadian. But most importantly, our cultural mosaic is our Canadian signature in the world and is what we should be proud of.

B. Dixon presenting Scholarship Award to Mélanie Pittet.

The Projector
Entertainment
April 22, 2002

Draggin' it out for diversity

PHOTOS BY NICK MARTIN

Drag king Carlos Las Vegas (above) at the April 11 drag show in the Tower Lounge. The show was part of RRC Diversity Events.

Performers were worried about RRC atmosphere

By Nick Martin

It was a full out drag show, but there were no choice automobiles at this show. No, instead we saw lots of man flesh, covered with make up and foundation, fish net stockings and high heels. And it was all in the name of diversity.

Brenda Dixon, a Red River College staff member responsible for organizing the drag show, said it's all about diversity. "It's to help people learn to overcome their fears about others."

Performers for the event were worried about attending Red River College at first, as they understood the college to be an unwelcoming environment for members of the gay and lesbian community. "Carlos Las Vegas," a male impersonator and host for the afternoon, said they had security accompany the performers around campus. "We were really worried about performing at the campus, but once the show began we really got a different impression of the College. We're hoping to come back next year and perform, we've really enjoyed being here."

"Roxanne Stone," a female impersonator, said she really enjoys performing and was excited to perform at the College along with three other performers, despite being incredibly nervous. "It's a great way to let people see the show who wouldn't normally come out and see our shows. I only do this once a month, but I really like it. We get to break boundaries when we perform...we get to be really in your face."

fast drag facts:

- There are over 40 drag performers in Winnipeg.
- Drag performers travel all over North America to compete in various impersonation and drag competitions. Of the four performers who performed at our college, there were two award-winning performers, as well as a former Maury Povich guest.
- There are title competitions here in the city for drag kings and queens. These competitions are fierce, as the winner will hold their throne for the entire year.
- The University of Manitoba and University of Winnipeg regularly have drag shows on their campus, but this is the first time such an event has taken place at Red River.

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To participate in this study or for further information, please contact:

Catherine McGowan, Research Associate
E-mail: ummcgowa@cc.umanitoba.ca
Tel: (204) 287-8411 ext. 22 (collect)
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Romantic comedy refreshingly real

he said, *she said*

Movie review: The Sweetest Thing

By Kelly Stifora

★★★1/2 out of 5

Romantic comedy is one of film's most tried and true genres, and as such, one of its most tired. Boy meets girl, boy loses girl, and boy embarks on ludicrously contrived journey of self-discovery, at the end of which he wins girl back. For most of the last century, this formula hasn't changed. Time and again we've shelled out our cash and slumped into the seat beside our girlfriend hoping for at least one good belly laugh from amongst all of the sentimentality and stock-character sameness. Sometimes, as is the case with The Sweetest Thing, the laughs come in unexpected droves, and we are shown that, once in a rare while, Hollywood is capable of breaking the mould.

My first notable brush with this stretching of the romantic comedy form came in 1997, when My Best Friend's Wedding was released. After actually studying the archetypes and story models of romantic comedy in a university genre studies course, I was convinced the romantic comedy was the equivalent of the television soap opera: fun to look at and make fun of, but incapable of saying anything new, or of providing any type of revelation, filmic or real. The Julia Roberts vehicle renewed my faith that maybe this musty format still had some life in it. Here was a film wherein not only was the protagonist a woman, but she was actually competing with another woman for the affections of a man that, until it was almost too late, she had not considered romantically at all. The most refreshing aspect of My Best Friend's Wedding, however, is its refusal to give in to expectation: in the end our hero doesn't get the guy.

The Sweetest Thing, although it doesn't take that final leap away from the norm that Wedding did, is closer to that film than to the films that informed its marketing campaign. Written by former South Park scribe Nancy M. Pimental, and chock full of what is promised in the trailers as toilet comedy, The Sweetest Thing was billed as a female Dumb and Dumber; a Farrelly brother flick for chicks. It is actually much more than that.

Though The Sweetest Thing is full of what we have come to know as toilet humour, it is a more sophisticated and naturalistic form of lowbrow than we are used to seeing lately. The absurd torrents of bodily fluids and close ups of all things pubic are here replaced by situations that, albeit somewhat absurd, are also painfully plausible. In two such scenes Christina's (Cameron Diaz) friend Courtney (Christina Applegate) decides to use a urinal rather than waiting for the stall, with hilarious results, and a muscle spasm leaves the girls' other friend Jane (Selma Blair) in a severely compromised position requiring the attention of paramedics. Don't be surprised if you turn red remembering the drunken oversexed follies of yourself and your friends while watching.

The writing, directing and performances all contribute to a sense of believability that surrounds these situations and characters, a genuineness seldom seen in movies today.

Much of the credit goes to the three female leads; especially Applegate, who gives a performance here that proves her star deserves to rise as high, or higher than Diaz's already has. The two realizes an onscreen friendship between Christina and Courtney that is so natural I was convinced upon leaving the theatre that the two actors must have known each other since birth (I checked, this is the first time that they have ever worked together, and did not know each other personally prior to filming).

However, the real achievement of Pimental, Diaz, Applegate, male lead Thomas Jane and director Roger Kumble (Cruel Intentions) is not simply in elevating the lowbrow without comprising its banality, or in turning a genre as old as film itself on its head once again, but in the fact that they still manage to make it all seem so damn romantic in a way that smacks of reality rather than fairy tale.

By Andrea Slobodian

★★★★1/2 out of 5

I had my doubts about this one. I was half expecting a cheesy romantic comedy. But The Sweetest Thing's real-life, sometimes even crude characters made this more South Park than Sleepless in Seattle. And it's no wonder; screenwriter Nancy Pimental was a writer for South Park.

The first good move was pairing Cameron Diaz as Christina Walters with Christina Applegate as best friend Courtney Rockliffe. The result: a pair of believable high-energy, goofy party girls you'd want to go out dancing with.

The characters and mood are set immediately. The movie opens with a title, "Tell us about Christina Walters." Clips from past flames show us Christina's a player, scared to get serious. When one ex-boyfriend, interviewed as he rides a stationary bike at the gym, gets emotional and flies off the bike into the water cooler and mirror, it foreshadows the hilarity to come.

Then we meet Christina and Courtney, chatting via cell phone, walking home from work. Both are high-strung as they babble in their own special breed of slang and shake their booties up the streets of San Francisco.

The real story begins when they take Christina's broken-hearted roommate Jane (Selma Blair) out dancing. At the club, Christina tries to pawn Jane off on a guy walking by, but he denies the offer. He overhears Christina calling him a dick and confronts her. This is how she meets Peter (Thomas Jane). Jane locks eyes with a sexy stranger and leaves Peter and Christina to verbally battle it out.

Peter is bang on when he accuses Christina of being scared to let down her guard. She buys him a drink, they talk until his drunk and disorderly brother Roger (Jason Bateman of Silver Spoons and The Hogan Family 1980s sitcom fame) is ejected from the bar. Peter invites Christina to an after party – she chickens out.

Christina realizes she's falling for him, and she and Courtney embark on a three hour road trip to Peter's brother's wedding. The trip involves a faked oral sex scene, two simultaneous disasters in a gas station rest room, and other side-splitting laughs.

The rest of the movie goes on to become predictable and slightly cheesy (especially the "movie sequence" and the sing-a-long inspired by Jane's tonsils being stuck on her boyfriend's genital piercing).

There's only so much that you can do within the genre. But what sets this one apart, and keeps it rolling till the end, is the comedy more than the romance.

The Sweetest Thing takes normal scenes and makes them interesting. Such as Christina and Courtney talking in the washroom at the club. Courtney nonchalantly carries on the conversation as different girls grope her breast implants (she caught a girl staring and invited her to touch them, who in turn invited her friends). Peter's grandpa wears a "Who farted?" T-shirt, Jane has sex with a man in a blue elephant costume in the change room of an upscale clothing store.

One Free Press movie critic said the characters were overly crude and she only rated the movie one star out of five. To me, the characters were believable because they were like people I know. I don't know what that says for me...

Regardless, comedy cancels out the few flaws in this movie, and it really is a sweet thing to see.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES

Restaurant ready for RRC Princess St.

By Rayna Anderson

Restuarant Review
The Lineup
★★★★ out of 5

For the RRC staff and students moving to the new campus in the fall, one of their big concerns, after parking, is food.

Even if there aren't any food services on campus, there are plenty of intimate eateries in the Exchange and new ones are popping up all over the place! One of the newest is the Lineup at the tri-corner of Albert, Arthur and Bannatyne.

This isn't a typical resturant. The menu has a strange variety of foods, all prepared in their open kitchen. You can get everything from shanghi noodles to gyros to fish and chips. The shanghi noodles stirfry comes in a variety of mixes of veggies and meats and smells absolutely delicious. Wraps are prepared Subway-style where you can pick your choice of veggies and toppings. The choice of meats even includes lamb! The fish is battered in locally brewed Fort Garry's Dark Ale and comes wrapped in specially printed paper with information about the Exchange. You have your choice of dips for fries, including curry-mayo. All of the dishes cost around $5. Other than your typical fountain beverages, they have what seems to be the entire line of Jones sodas and juices available.

The young people who work there seem a little unskilled, but that could be because this place only opened April 8. Only the manager seemed to know what went into each dish, but I'm sure they'll get better the longer the place is open.

The place is small, so expect during busy lunch to have to take your food to go. The chairs that they do have are brightly painted in primary colours, giving the place a happy atmosphere with music playing in the background.

The place will live up to its name when it gets busy. As soon as you enter, you're sheparded into a weaving lineup that will lead you from the cashier, to the drinks, to the toppings/conidments and finally to your order.

The Lineup is an eclectic restaurant with a variety of foods that will keep you coming back to try different combinations of their unique ingredients.

PHOTO BY RAYNA ANDERSON

The Line-up, on the corner of Albert, Arthur and Bannatyne.

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Carlin "one hell of a set"

By Lindsey Anderson

George Carlin
April 9 @ the Centennial Concert Hall
★★★★ out of 5 stars

At the tender age of (almost) 20, no one has been able to figure out my sudden interest in George Carlin. I've even had an English teacher here at the college question why someone my age even knows who Carlin is (because he was Mr. Conductor!). I kept this in mind, thinking my friend and I would be the youngest people there by far. However, the ages of Carlin's fans span from young 20 somethings like me, to people in their 50s and 60s.

Comedian Dennis Blair opened the show with a 45 minute set that was surprisingly funny. Blair strapped on a guitar and did some hilarious parodies of top rockers, including a great Rod Stewart take off (to which he sang "If you want my body/And you think I'm sexy/Girl, you must be fucking blind"). I was most surprised by Blair, because I was thinking, to be opening for Carlin, you've got to be pretty damn funny. Blair had the audience cracked up from the beginning, which set the mood for Carlin's 90 minute set.

After a 20 minute intermission, Carlin took the stage, dressed in black pants and a black T-shirt, and silver shoes. The crowd cheered loudly, missing the first few lines of his greeting, but what followed was your typical George Carlin set. Complaints, observations, and one of the funniest bits of the night, "People who Ought to be Killed" (including singers with only one name, and parents who let their children record the outgoing messages on answering machines). Mix in a lot of foul language and Carlin's usual scowls and glares, and you've got one hell of a set on your hands.

Carlin took some time to mention how his career has evolved over his 40 years in standup. "I'm going to be 65 years old next month," he said. After a lengthy applause from the crowd, he remarked "They always clap when they hear you aren't dead yet."

Another highlight of the set was a particularly funny sketch about music. "There are way too many goddamn songs!" he exclaimed. "I'm sick of hearing about other people's pain, unless of course it's cancer pain." He glared out at the audience. "I know cancer's a touchy subject. Fuck you!"

Carlin also took it upon himself to shorten the Ten Commandments down to two, because, "Ten is too many!" By the end of the sketch, he was down to "Thou shalt always be honest and faithful, and thou shalt not kill anyone unless they pray to a different invisible man than you." His rationale? "Religion has always been a little flexible with the whole killing thing."

All in all, 90 minutes is just not enough Carlin. Even though I found the set to be a bit short, it was easily worth every penny of the $50 I spent on the ticket, even if I had to sit in the top balcony. I figured Carlin is 65, and who knows if I'm going to get a chance to see him again. I recommend if you ever get the chance to check him out, do it regardless of price.

Plug in: all night long

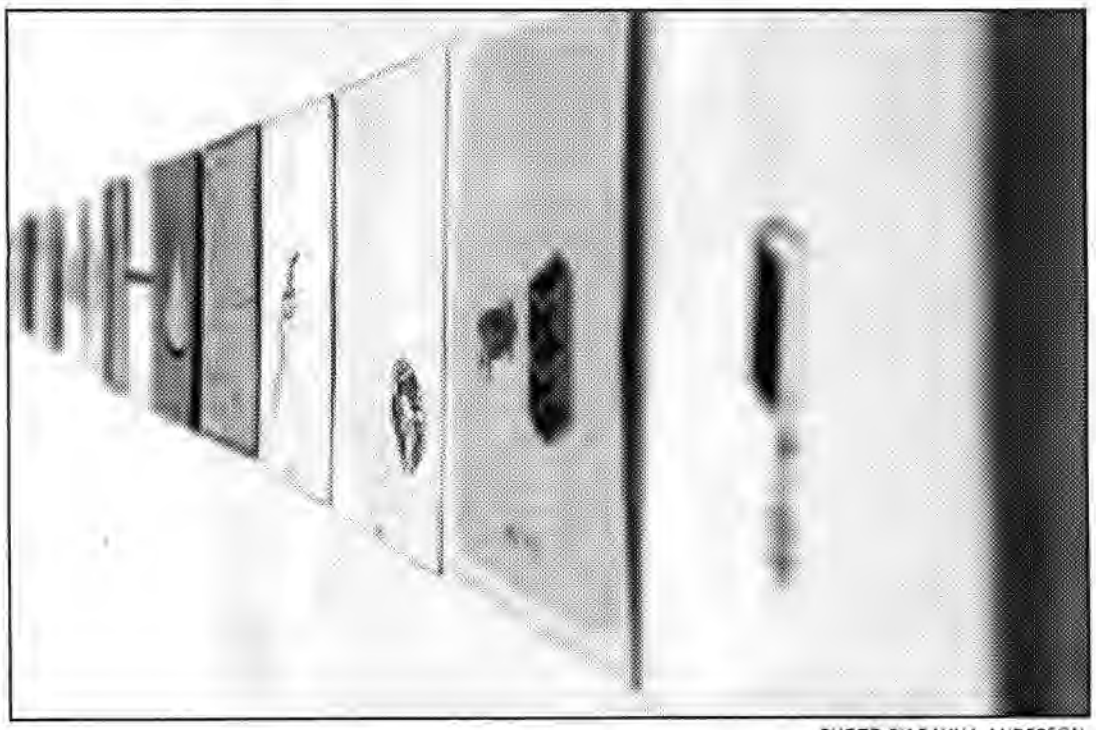

PHOTO BY RAYNA ANDERSON

Cordova's art on the wall at the Plug In gallery.

By Lindsay Roberts

You Shook Me All Night Long
@ Plug In ICA
Until May 18

Music, cum, and stuffed bunny rabbits. What do these three things have in common? All three are featured in You Shook Me All Night Long, a new exhibit by William Cordova.

You Shook Me All Night Long is Cordova's first solo exhibition in Canada. In this exhibition Cordova uses different mediums to examine identity and the way music relates to identity. The exhibit contains autobiographical, postcard size drawings, larger drawings, and a found-art sculpture. The sculpture contains beer bottles and a broken guitar body as well as some other items, all of which were collected around Winnipeg.

Throughout the postcard size drawings perches the small stuffed bunny, along with music references, phallic symbols, and dollops of white stuff. Through these images, Cordova shows how music relates to everything in our lives.

Hope Peterson, the Outreach Coordinator at the Plug In, says the reaction has been "very positive" so far, and the exhibition has been appealing to a wide range of people.

Cordova was born in Lima, Peru, but now lives and works out of Miami, Florida. He graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1996. Cordova has also been a part of exhibitions in Miami, Chicago, Tel Aviv, and Rio de Janeiro.

CULTURAL INSIGHTS COLUMN

Homophobia is another kind of prejudice

Many people experience prejudice because their race, sex, religion or disability. All kinds of prejudice aren't the same, but they all hurt people. Fear, hatred and discrimination towards lesbians, gay men and bisexuals is called homophobia. Homophobia is another kind of prejudice, and it hurts people too. We all take part in homophobia when we:

- Laugh at jokes about lesbians or gay men.
- Reject family members who come out as lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Don't include gay partners and friends at family events.
- Deny basic rights – like spousal benefits – to lesbian and gay couples.
- Harass or attack people because they are lesbian or gay.

Why it is important to address homophobia

- In a recent study of a random sample of over 1200 Canadian gays and lesbians – 22% had been physically assaulted and only 26% of the assaults were reported to the police.
- 30% of completed suicides among youths can be attributed to issues surrounding sexual orientation.
- 80% of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth report severe isolation problems including having no to talk to, feeling distanced from peers and family, and lack of access to good information.
- Up to 25% of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth whose parents react negatively to their sexual orientation are disowned or forced to leave home.

The above information was provided by the Rainbow Resource Centre serving Manitoba's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered and Two-Spirited communities. If you need more information or just want to talk to someone, call the Rainbow Resource Centre at 474-0212 or 284-5315. All calls are kept confidential and are answered by trained peer counsellors.

For more information, please contact the:
Student & Community Advisor –
Diversity & Inclusive Initiatives Office
Room F214 Ph: 632-2404

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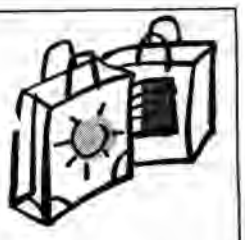

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Profile

From farm fresh to convenience

By Sam Thompson

The year was 1996. I had just started high school. True to the punk rock that never left my Walkman, I could be seen wearing a used army jacket, riddled with pins and patches. To me, back then, hip-hop was not a musical genre as much as it was some kind of sick joke I didn't get. Someone talking over a pre-programmed beat?? As far as I was concerned, rap was just a stupid fad that was (hopefully) going to die down in a year or so.

When legendary Winnipeg punk act Propagandhi announced a concert at Le Rendezvous, my friends and I jumped at the chance to get our advance tickets. Propagandhi were backed up by local pop-punks Kirby and the Bonaduces, ska sensations the Conspirators, the savage heaviness of Malefaction and two bands I'd never heard of; Mood Ruff and Farm Fresh.

Little did I know that this show would be my introduction to a type of music I never thought I'd be able to tolerate, let alone enjoy. That evening was my introduction to local hip-hop courtesy of a man named Rod Bailey, a.k.a. mcenroe, a name that would appear in my record collection for years to come.

Farm Fresh's "Crazy Friction" album was my first taste of Peanuts & Corn, the record label owned and operated by mcenroe himself. Since then, Peanuts & Corn has released a series of successful records by Canadian rappers (many of whom are Manitoban), such as Pip Skid, John Smith and Gruf the Druid. Their most recent release is a brand new solo effort by mcenroe; "the Convenience EP." It's his first solo recording since 1998's "the Ethics EP."

"Let me tell you about the Convenience EP," says mcenroe. "I consider the Convenience EP a single with a shit-load of bonus tracks." Unlike his previous effort, which was conceptualized as a mini-album, the Convenience EP is a "teaser for an upcoming full-length with lots of fun stuff added in."

One major change since 'the Ethics EP' is that mcenroe has now taken on the Peanuts & Corn record label as a full-time job. Until about six months ago, rapping and producing was only a side project to an engineering career.

"It's a lot of work," he admits, "but it's the kind of work I enjoy. Waking up in the morning is no chore. I never call in sick." Calling it 'a lot of work' seems to be a bit of an understatement. If you listen to virtually any P&C release, mcenroe is a very key player, occasionally as a guest MC, but usually as a producer. The unique sound of mcenroe's beats seems to have created a distinct flow throughout all of the Peanuts & Corn releases; he seems to have come up with his own 'signature sound.' I asked mcenroe about his "sixth sense for hookin' up the track."

"I dunno man, I just do my thing. I work pretty hard on the production end and try to push myself. But for me it all starts with a loop, and loops jump out at me when I am listening to a record. Like when I was checking out this one record, and the piano for "Raggedy Anne"(a track produced by mcenroe for Pip Skid's "Friends4Ever" LP) absolutely jumped out at me, so I sampled it and chopped it up. Bam! Plus I have a bunch of tricks I do with drums."

Although mcenroe's production style is very distinct and easily palatable, even to first-time listeners, his rapping is another story.

"They say I am an 'acquired taste' as an MC. I think my voice has been getting much deeper and my delivery is a lot better than the Farm Fresh days." As someone who's listened to mcenroe's flow in various forms over the years, I tend to agree. His unconventional hip-hop delivery is a little off-putting at first, but mcenroe's story-telling lyrics have always piqued my interest in his music.

"My favourite MCs have always been people like Pharoahe Monche, Q-Tip, Posdanous and lots more. But I sound nothing like any of them," he admits. "I don't sound like anybody." Although he's still primarily a rapper, mcenroe assures me his upcoming full-length LP will be a drastic change.

"The LP is going to be something special, I think. I sing a lot. I will produce it like crazy...craft it. " An introduction to the vocal stylings of Rod Bailey can be found on the Peanuts & Corn CD compilation, "Factory Seconds." Mcenroe provides the melodic hook to a track by former Farm Fresh partner-in-rhyme Pip Skid.

In fact, mcenroe has spent more time contributing to his label-mates' recordings over the past few years than he has working on his own material. Working with the other Peanuts & Corn artists, however, is a labour of love for the MC, who has nothing but glowing praise for those acts.

"I can't discount the influence of Pip (Skid)," he says. "We have each crafted our styles alongside each other for 10 years, so his influence has been huge."

When I asked mcenroe to name his favourite MC at the moment, he selected John Smith - another Peanuts & Corn rapper and the pride of Churchill, Manitoba.

"John Smith's writing is just so fresh! There has to be another John Smith project this year...he's just killing it!"

While mcenroe is working on his solo full-length, the label has "too many" releases on schedule. 'The Convenience EP' is the first of many P&C records on their way in the coming months, including efforts from Hip-Hop Wieners, Gruf the Druid, Birdapres, Yy and the Gallivanting Spoof.

Unfortunately, there are no plans for a Farm Fresh reunion anytime soon, but as mcenroe states on his www.mcenroe.net Web site, "there are no plans to play again, but never is a long time." The MC admits he'd like to do a reunion "Glass Tiger-style", but they need a "big cash advance" before they go back to their hometown of Brandon and make a new record, which mcenroe admits will be "really stupid.....heads ain't ready!"

The Convenience EP is out now in a good record store near you. Mcenroe is currently rapping, producing and finishing his full-length. He left Manitoba for Vancouver but plans to come back for another show in a few months.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MCENROE

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!!

The Winnipeg International Children's Festival is looking for two volunteers to help out with a variety of activities with both the Festival and our inner-city youth at risk Circus and Magic Partnership program, throughout our 2001-2002 season. We are participating in the Youth Serves Manitoba program for university students to volunteer their time for a minimum of 100 hours from January – June, 2002. Once the student completes 100 hours, they will receive a $500.00 bursary towards their tuition or student loans. Interested students can contact Jennifer Kaufman at 958-4749 or email: jen@gatewest.net for more information about application information and volunteer positions.

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Lifestyle

Kickin' butt

A look at kickboxing history and its entrance into the mainstream

By Andrea Slobodian

On May 24, Sony Pictures' new movie Enough opens. Jennifer Lopez stars as a woman running from an abusive ex. One part of the plot involves J-Lo learning kickboxing as self-defence.

This is testimony to kickboxing's presence in the mainstream: It began as a competitive martial art, incorporating kicking with the strategies and techniques of boxing. Then people realized its merits in terms of fitness and self-defence, and its popularity is growing fast.

"Kickboxing has gained recognition as a highly effective martial art for both ring fighting and for holistic fitness," says Martialarts.org.

A less competitive, more aerobic form of kickboxing has found its way into fitness clubs, alongside step aerobics. Martialarts.org explains the benefits of kickboxing as a workout: "The kickboxing workout is excellent for developing body toning, burning fat, and at the same time developing confidence."

Ladies kickboxing classes are offered at several local venues. Shapes offers weekly classes, described as: "the basics of kickboxing with instruction on stances, kicks and combos. You will experience hands-on, no contact kickboxing for fitness."

International Martial Arts and Fitness, located on Donald St., also offers ladies kickboxing. "The class tries to emulate a ringside fight without striking in the head," says Justin Akinleye, Director of Public Relations.

Akinleye says he often hears women saying they want to lose a few pounds, or that they want to be more confident in self-defence. Kickboxing helps in both instances.

The women's workout involves conditioning, building strength and proficiency, eye-hand co-ordination and timing. It also involves cardiovascular building. "It ends up being sort of an aerobics class," he says.

Yet it's still a total body workout – Akinleye says if punching and kicking is done properly, "every part of the body is incorporated."

While suburban housewives and college girls are being introduced to kickboxing in local fitness clubs, the martial art is still being practiced in its traditional, competitive form.

Modern American kickboxing began in the 1960s with martial artists like Joe Louis, Bill Wallace and Chuck Norris, according to Martialarts.org. These fighters developed new strategies and fighting styles for the comprehensive form of fighting that would become kickboxing. According to Kickboxing.com, in the 1970s, American karate practitioners were frustrated with strict competition rules that didn't allow full contact kicks and punches. So kickboxing became a sport, complete with safety rules and protective clothing. Kickboxing organizations and schools started opening.

In kickboxing lessons, according to Martialarts.org, "Students learn the effective use of both boxing and kicking techniques, which makes students confident in self defence, and also helps them develop strong bodies."

Red River College student Ajit Singh is on this end of the kickboxing spectrum. He trains in Muay Thai at Double Dragon Kickboxing.

Muay Thai is "significantly different" from American kickboxing, Singh says. "It's more violent. It's huge in Thailand like football or basketball is in North America."

It has its roots in Thailand during the 15th and 16th centuries. According to Kickboxing.com, a ferocious style of unarmed combat decided the fate of Thai kings. It became a required part of military training. By the 1700s, Thai Boxing was promoted as a national sport.

"To this day, many martial art aficionados consider the Thai style the ultimate in hand to hand fighting," says Kickboxing.com.

Singh has been involved in Muay Thai for about a year and a half. Before that, he had training in other martial arts. His friends kickboxed at Double Dragon and he decided to try something new. He was in for a shock when he did. "I used to do weights six times a week, I thought I was in good shape," he says of life before kickboxing. "My first day of kickboxing, I almost threw up."

His training at Double Dragon involves skipping rope for 30 minutes, stretching, punching bags, practicing technique, sparring and abdominal work. Double Dragon also offers classes.

Right now, Singh isn't competing because school takes up too much time for him to get into competition form. But it's something he'd like to get more involved in.

His one attempt at competing was cancelled. "The other guy didn't make weight," he says.

Singh says there is a growing kickboxing scene in Winnipeg - there are a lot of kickboxing matches and clubs, and "the rivalries between clubs can get intense."

Singh's instructor, Jerrick Hodge, was one of the first kickboxers in Winnipeg. His first fight was in 1979. He says kickboxing is the greatest thing that's happened in his life. He says he's seen many other lives changed from it as well.

Hodge says he remembers kids taking up kickboxing and getting off the streets. And as well as teaching self-defence to weak kids who were getting picked on, the discipline has also taught bullies to walk away from fights.

Some people believe kickboxing will teach them to be good streetfighters - maybe Hollywood has something to do with this. Akinleye says that kickboxers will be "better than average" scrappers, but they won't last against great streetfighters if the streetfighter takes the kickboxer down. Kickboxing technique doesn't involve grappling (ground fighting).

Hollywood has introduced kickboxing, and martial arts in general, to the masses. Hodge's interest in kickboxing was sparked when he saw a Bruce Lee movie. Lopez's upcoming performance in Enough may fuel women's interest in competitive kickboxing, or continue its rising popularity as an aerobic class.

Singh acknowledges that kickboxing is forking off from its competitive nature. "Martial arts are becoming mainstream as a form of exercise," he says. "When you get anything going mainstream, it's going to be conformed to meet more specific needs."

Whether it's a competitive fight in the ring or an aerobic kickboxing class, Singh says the benefits of kickboxing are numerous. "The obvious one is fitness," he says. Another is discipline: "You're battling your body most of the time." He lists self-defence and self-esteem as other positives. He says doing a hobby builds self-confidence, as well as knowing what to do in dangerous situations.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES

Red River College Students' Association

Upcoming Events

Tel: 632-2081
Email: sa_events@rrc.mb.ca

LAST DAZE SOCIAL – FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2002

8 pm - 1 am, South Gym, $5 Advance tickets available at the Ox Student Store

NOW HIRING - EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR

Would you like to help plan events such as socials, rock concerts, nooners, keggers, trips, and more? Are you a returning student in September 2002? If so, drop by Room DM20 for more information, fill out an application, and drop off your resume by May 10.

DID YOU KNOW, Movie Tuesdays is now sponsored by JUMBO VIDEO?
That's right, Jumbo Video supplies all movies in the Tower Lounge every Tuesday.
Be sure to catch "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" on April 22, "Spy Game" on April 29, and "Not Another Teen Movie" on May 6.

RRCSA Annual GOLF TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2002

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- Sponsored by Molson Canada and Corby Distilleries.
- For more information or to sign up drop by room DM20 (space is limited so sign up early!)

CD reviews

Sparta
Austere
Dreamworks Records
★ out of 5

Thankfully, this CD is only 4-tracks long. Any longer I would've had to commit hara-kiri. Don't buy this record!! It's very rare to hear an album so boring, uninspired and just plain annoying that your ears feel like they're bleeding internally, but Sparta's figured out how to do just that.

How can I describe their sound? The term "crap" comes to mind....but, honestly, imagine the worst emo/indie-rock type of group you've ever heard. Now add a drum machine in the background. On top of all of this, the lyrics are like some sort of horrible high-school free verse poem. Get a load of some of these lyrics: Harmonic turbulence shakes./Ties red booths to magazine./Stand and Clear./Harmonic./We will assume the worst.

It's very possible for a good lyricist to write confusing or obscure songs and still get their message across. Sparta has no message...at least not as far as I can tell. With an equally artsy, unintelligible album cover and song titles like "Mye" and "Echodyne Harmonic De-Mix", Sparta seems to be hoping people will spend more time analyzing the CD's artistic values than actually listening to this feeble attempt at a record.

It boggles my mind that a respectable record label like Dreamworks could actually sign something this bad. For shame.

- Sam Thompson

36 Crazy Fists
Bitterness the Star
Roadrunner
★★★ out of 5

Why settle for 24 crazy fists when you can get a whopping 36 for the same price? What an amazing deal!

Actually, this debut release from 36 Crazy Fists ain't too shabby. Bitterness the Star isn't sirloin steak, but it's no bargain basement deal either. More like the chicken breasts that went on sale last Wednesday.

Typical of bands from the Roadrunner stable, Fists serves up a heavy assault of four-minute guitar blasts. And screaming. For those who like the heavy stuff, this System of a Down/Korn-sounding group provides plenty of anger and aggression.

But what separates Bitterness the Star from trash-noise efforts produced by the likes of labelmates Slipknot is its ability to move beyond the mindless anger that could only created by 12 troubled young musicians wearing masks.

Those who aren't necessarily fans of metal can enjoy the album's semi-melodic guitar work and an unique vocal style that brings back memories of a young Ian MacKaye circa Minor Threat. "An agreement Called Forever" is an example of vocalist Brock Lindow's ability to change his voice from a deep roar to an emo-tinged cry in the same sentence.

That these two strengths aren't drowned out by thudding bass lines and six percussionists is a testament to the band's rhythm section. The drums and bass are powerful, but unlike many thrash/metal efforts, are not overpowering. That's a good thing.

- Andrew Buck

Toots & the Maytals
20th Century Masters
Island Records
★★★★1/2 out of 5

Finally, a '20th Century Masters' disc highlighting the music of one of the century's true legends, Frederick 'Toots' Hibbert. With a career dating back to 1962, the year of Jamaica's independence, Toots has been on the cutting edge of reggae music. I had the pleasure of seeing the legend himself in concert earlier this year, and 20th Century Masters is an equally impressive work. The diminutive singer's vocal power and intense energy translates as well onstage as it does on this best-of record.

Although another greatest hits package, Time Tough: The Anthology, was released a few years ago, this new collection manages to cover Toots & the Maytals' illustrious 40-year career with only 12 carefully-selected tracks. Even when discussing serious issues like ghetto 'sufferation' ("Time Tough") and Toots' 1966 jail term ("54-46 was My Number"), these songs carry themselves with an unparalleled spirit. It's impossible not to be in a good mood when listening to Toots. Blending gospel-style, soulful vocals with syncopated reggae rhythms, Toots is like the Rastafarian James Brown. (Although a devout Rasta, Toots, a former hairdresser, never grew dreadlocks)

The comparison to James Brown is not only in Toots' voice; a number of his most famous tracks combine American funk/soul influences with upbeat Caribbean vibes ("Reggae Got Soul", "Funky Kingston"). The most impressive tunes in the collection are perhaps "Sweet and Dandy" and "Pressure Drop". Originally recorded for the 1972 Jimmy Cliff film The Harder They Come, these two tracks provide the backbone to what is arguably the greatest soundtrack in history. The Harder They Come was instrumental in widening reggae's audience to a worldwide movement, and the Maytals were there, leading the way. They're the two highest-energy songs on that soundtrack, but Toots Hibbert has apparently never heard the term "low-energy".

Although I've been a Maytals fanatic for years, this disc is the perfect introduction to one of history's best (and perhaps most underrated) artists. Even if you've never heard of Toots & the Maytals, it'll be impossible for you not to put on your dancing shoes when you hear the distinctive opening to "54-46"; Stick it up mister/Throw your hands in the air, sit..... Brilliant. A must-have.

- Sam Thompson

The Apex Theory
Topsy Turvy
Dreamworks
★★★ out of 5

Three members of California four-piece The Apex Theory are of Armenian descent. The influence left on them by the traditional Armenian and Bosnian music of their youth comes through on their debut label disc, adding an interesting element to their brand of nu-metal.

It's most obvious in the irregular timing of the rhythm sections, and in the percussive vocals of Andy Khachaturian. The result is something that is definitely different than most of the crap that falls under the genus of Metal today.

Early first single candidate "Shhh... (Hope Diggy)," opens with a rollicking chant, building the pressure until it explodes into an irregular and never less than forceful double chorus-verse structure that features Khachaturian alternating between singing and flat out ranting.

The techno tinged thrasher "Bullshed" is another highlight.

The traditional, and in this genre approach to the rhythm section is made to seem right at home underneath rushing, whining and crunching guitars and those here there and everywhere vocals of Khachturian.

The only real disappointment lies in Khachaturian's lyrics. Although the liner notes are full of preachy messages about strength and determination, and enough thank yous to populate a small country.

In the end, The Apex Theory has put together a challenging and surprisingly developed debut album, considering that they've only been together for two years.

- Kelly Stifora

The Full Nine
★★1/2 stars out of 5

Although this band shows promise, they really need to find themselves an identity. It's not that the band lacks talent, as each song on this record has a definite hook and melody, which are necessary to survive in the radio rock format. However, they can't seem to make up their minds as to what their band's sound will be.

Mixing influences from Econoline Crush, Stone Temple Pilots, Radiohead, and the easily forgotten Gin Blossoms, this band really has no idea what they want to sound like. It's great that they can write everything from riff rock to crap pop, but the fact that they can't decide makes the band appear as wandering artists, opposed to a uniformed and up front rock band.

Unfortunately a poor mix drowns out much of the vocals for the first three tracks, but is corrected once the band shifts styles.

These guys have the potential to be something, but right now I think they're struggling to become anything.

- Nick Martin

Rival Schools
United By Fate
Island Records
★★★ /5

As soon as I put this CD in my CD player, I thought I'd be setting myself up for a disappointment. The jarring, distorted opening to "Travel by Telephone", the first track, screamed "emo! Emo! EMO!" I was tempted to turn it off right then and there...but I decided to give it more of a listen. I'm glad I did. As it turns out, United By Fate is a decent record, and is certainly not emo.

Rival Schools is the brainchild of Walter, the former leader of Gorilla Biscuits and Quicksand. He describes the group's sound as moving further away from straight up hardcore to an indie-rock feel, but the hardcore edge apparently hasn't disappeared completely from the group's sound. (Rival Schools also feature ex-members of Iceburn).

In an interview with Law Of Inertia magazine, Walter said, "I think that Rival Schools' songs like "Travel By Telephone" or "Good Things" are Gorilla Biscuits songs slowed down. A lot of these songs, if you speed them to a thrash beat, then you have GB."

There is certainly some truth in Walter's statement. A number of tracks on United By Fate (named after an old-school video game) have the strength and ambition of hardcore, although the playing has certainly matured. Instead of banging out 2-minute masterpieces, Walter & co. have tried to create a rich soundscape, drawing from not only hardcore punk, but jazz, reggae, rock n' roll and anything else you can imagine. The unfortunate thing is that it goes on for too long. Without a definite focus, United By Fate can't keep up the momentum for 13 tracks, making it difficult to listen to in one sitting. While Gorilla Biscuits were admittedly influenced by Minor Threat, Rival Schools share some sonic similarities (how's that for alliteration??) with Ian MacKaye's current band, Fugazi. Since Fugazi are world-renowned indie legends, this bodes well for Rival Schools' future, however it did absolutely nothing for me as the listener. I would have liked to hear more speed and aggression out of some of these tracks. The talent and intensity is obviously there, but these ex-hardcore musicians are obviously going for a more sensitive feel with this effort.

- Sam Thompson

Read the
Projector!
No, really... read it.
...please?

Teacher Education-

Diversity Training Indeed

The day began as any other Thursday in this term: Educational Psychology, Chemistry, and Course Design and Curriculum were on the menu. For us Vocational teachers, our Thursdays are long but very productive. This particular Thursday was to be a little different however. Merv Maxwell was bringing in a guest speaker for our Course Design and Curriculum class for the afternoon. After lunch, we were to be treated to Barbara Dixon, Red River's Student and Community Advisor. Her topic for us prospective teachers was to be diversity and inclusiveness initiatives.

As we re-gathered for our class, in strolled the familiar face of Ms. Dixon. She's a recognizable figure who's spoken to many classes here at the college and whose office is just down the hall from our meeting place on the second floor of the "F" building. We'd seen her around and now we had the pleasure of her acquaintance. Mr. Maxwell performed the ritual introduction and, after the applause subsided, the floor belonged to Ms. Dixon. She quietly shuffled her mountainous pile of overheads, quickly re-arranged her notes, and began to address the class. From well behind her desk, she proceeded. As her address wafted through the classroom, her posture was rather slumped and her voice was very direct. Her gaze was fixated upon the floor and over her deadpan, monotone delivery, the restless shuffling of students feet could be noticed. Soon, we were all very uncomfortable with this speaker as she continually hid behind the safety of the desk, spoke even more directly and monotone, gazed her eyes to the floor, and continued to speak on something that we had tuned out of by now. She was doing everything that we had been instructed was horribly incorrect in a classroom setting! Quick glances to other students revealed that the entire class was readying to settle back into what would be a LONG afternoon. The phrase "What a b****" entered my mind.

I couldn't have been more wrong. Within a few minutes, Ms. Dixon stopped and bluntly asked what we thought of her so far. In the most polite terms, our class hesitantly informed our "polished" speaker that her act was a tad tarnished. As it turned out, "act" was the operative word. In fact, Barbara Dixon could've won an Oscar for her performance that day. We had been involved in an exercise on first impressions. As we were rapidly discovering, our first impression of Ms. Dixon was entirely incorrect. Instantly, our speaker began doing all the little things we teacher education students had been taught to do. She began to add drama to her voice, make eye contact and move about the room. Instead of reading from a script, she began speaking from her heart and from all the lessons of her life so intrinsically learned. We'd been had, and suddenly were on our toes wondering what this creative speaker would surprise us with next.

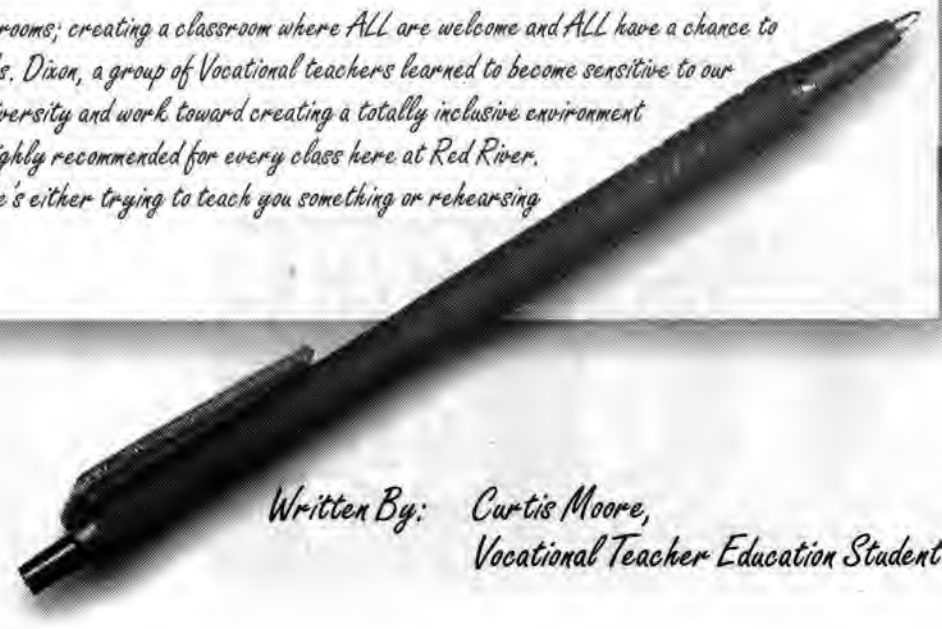
Once we had learned to look past first impressions, we began to look at other aspects of life that we so rarely even ponder. She asked us to write some things and draw a picture of a flower, but it had to be done with our non-dominant hand. This proved much more difficult and time consuming than imagined. The final product was also rather brutal. We were then asked to consider what it would be like for someone in our classroom who was living with a disability. Is that person playing on an even playing field? What could/should we as teachers do for this student? From a very simple writing exercise, her point was well taken.

We then moved on to language; specifically, students whose first language is not English. We live in the most beautiful country in the world. All of us have an immigrant background. Based on our latest census, we can expect even higher immigration numbers in the future. As teachers, it is a given that we will encounter many students who will have problems at school directly related to language. The well-traveled Ms. Dixon explained that many new immigrants translate directly from a dictionary. As a result, many problems result from missing the subtle nuances of the English language. We study the meanings of words but we often speak in idioms. Direct translation of an idiom will, at best, lead to confusion and, at worst, lead to personal embarrassment. As prospective teachers, it became clear that we should find ways to assist these students whenever possible.

We spoke of and did more exercises aimed toward finding similarities and differences among us within our class. There were scores of differences among this seemingly similar group of 15 students. We began to become even more aware of how these differences influence how we see the world. Add in cultural differences within a public school, and one begins to see that some cultures view schools, classrooms, and authority figures like teachers in vastly differing ways. The challenge from Ms. Dixon: Could we be mature and responsible enough to be sensitive to all of this and act accordingly?

This is in reality the challenge facing all teachers. We don't get to "pick" our students. We are to teach whoever walks through the door, whoever they may be-literally. We must recognize the rich diversity all around us, and what that can mean in a classroom setting. We assume so much and take so much for granted, but through her charm, wit, personalized approach, and group exercises, Ms. Dixon had many of our students beginning the process of becoming sensitive to these very real classroom issues.

Further, Barbara Dixon had us planning for inclusiveness in our classrooms; creating a classroom where ALL are welcome and ALL have a chance to learn. Throughout this particularly fast moving afternoon lead by Ms. Dixon, a group of Vocational teachers learned to become sensitive to our rich diversity. We then took up the challenge to learn to recognize diversity and work toward creating a totally inclusive environment within our classrooms. Her workshop was more than worth it and is highly recommended for every class here at Red River. If she comes across a little "curt" at first though, remember that she's either trying to teach you something or rehearsing for that Oscar winning performance.



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