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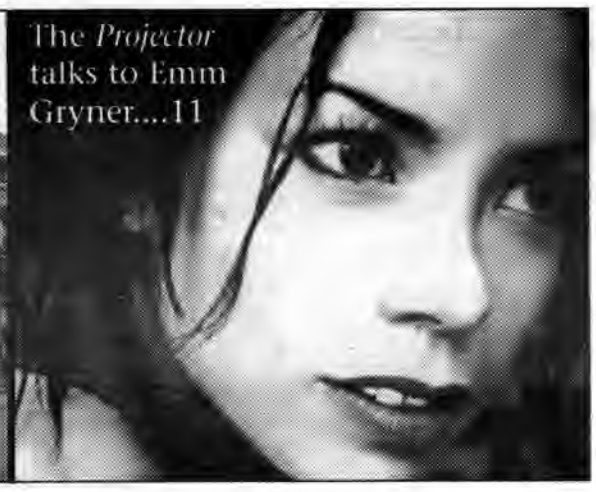

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THE PROJECTOR
RED RIVER COLLEGE'S NEWSPAPER
January 12, 2004

CKIC ready to hit the air

by Peter Vesuwalla

At long last CKIC, Red River College's radio station, is on the air. The station began broadcasting a test signal at 92.9 FM on Dec. 16, nearly a year later than former creative arts chair Robert McGregor had originally told students it would be ready.

The station is currently playing a five-hour test loop of blues while its management waits for Industry Canada Spectrum Management to determine whether its signal interferes with any other stations.

"In reality, other stations licensed when we were are still running a test signal as well," says RRC's broadcast consultant Richard Edwards. He gives CKY's announced FM station as an example.

The station, which operates from the basement of the William building and transmits from a tower on the roof of building C, will follow an adult album alternative format once it becomes fully operational sometime in February, says station manager Rick Everett.

"We're going to follow a format that's used a lot in the U.S. but not so much in Canada," says Everett. "It's sort of organic, rootsy folk, blues, and Celtic."

Everett says the format will draw attention to a lot of artists who don't get much airplay on other radio stations. "Record labels are ecstatic."

The station operates under a training license, and will sound more mainstream than CKUW and UMFM, says Everett. "Our biggest job is to best simulate a commercial radio station environment. Students are going to learn what it's like to follow a format."

Photo by Peter Vesuwalla

CKIC station manager Rick Everett in the station's new Princess Street studio.

But that doesn't mean the station will sound like a commercial station. Under its CRTC license, the station's content must be at least 25 per cent spoken-word, no more than 30 per cent hits, and at least five per cent of what the CRTC calls "category three," which includes roots, blues, and worldbeat.

The station is meant to be a training ground for students in the creative communications program's broadcast production major. Students have already been using the facility, but say they're disappointed they haven't had any on-air time yet.

"It's pretty much a wash for radio," says second-year broadcast production major Mayon Marcelino. "That's the consensus among the class."

Depending on when in February the station becomes fully operational, students will only have about two or three months of on-air experience.

"I wasn't surprised when the station wasn't ready in January," says classmate Sabrina Carnevale. "I'm glad it's on the air now. But the fact that I'm only getting between two and three months is just added to the list of things that have been disappointing."

Everett says he's currently looking for volunteers for the radio station. Anyone wishing to pitch an idea for a radio show should write a proposal and call him at 949-8373.

In the meantime, blues fans who have discovered the station on their own have been phoning in to let the station know.

"All of the phone calls we've had are overwhelmingly positive," says RRC's broadcast consultant Richard Edwards, who received three phone calls from satisfied listeners during our brief interview.

Edwards says having the frequency right between 92.1 CITI FM and Q-94.3 FM means a lot of people stumble upon the station while using the seek button on their car stereos.

"We haven't even told anyone we're on the air, and we've done no marketing, but a lot of people, mostly in the 30 to 40 range, have been going out of their way to phone us personally."

RRC MRI students to visit major U.S. hospitals

by Sandra Honke

A group of RRC students are planning a field trip south of the border in March to tour two high-tech medical facilities.

Seven students in the magnetic resonance imaging and spectroscopy course will be driving to Minnesota to visit the Fairview Hospital Center for MRI Research in Minneapolis and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

"At the Mayo Clinic, they perform around 217 MRI scans a day," says Rachel Oakey, MRI program class representative. "They are a world-renowned resource and training facility."

In contrast, St. Boniface Hospital, the first hospital to have an MRI machine in Manitoba in 1990, performs around 30 to 40 MRIs a day, according to their public relations officer, Helene Vrignon.

(continued on page 2)

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MRI students (cont'd from page 1)

Requesting financial sponsorship for their trip, Oakey attended the Dec. 18 RRC Student Advisory Board meeting and walked away with more than she had bargained for.

"We are so impressed with your field trip and feel it so valuable, that not only are we giving you the $500 you requested," says Becky Turner, VP Finance, "we are giving you $600."

The trip will cost an estimated $4,500. The students have now raised approximately half of the money needed.

"We will all be pitching in for the cost of this trip," says Oakey. "But because we are living away from home and attending college, it's difficult for us to afford a lot."

Six of the seven MRI students have traveled from other provinces to study in Winnipeg. RRC is the only educational institution in the country to offer the program on a full-time basis, according to Oakey.

"The students are from Prince Edward Island, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Kenora," says 25-year-old Oakey. "I'm from New Hamburg, Ont. and there is someone from Kitchener, Ont. and Windsor, Ont."

MRIs are a fairly new technology. The first clinical use began around 20 years ago, and the job market continues to grow.

"They are supposed to get 16 new MRIs next year in Ontario alone," says Oakey. "Here in Winnipeg, the Pan Am Clinic is getting an MRI machine, and the Health Sciences Centre is getting another MRI machine as well."

Keeping up to the demand for the technology means some hospitals run their machines around the clock.

"In Toronto, they perform scans 24 hours a day, so some people will have an appointment at 3 a.m.," says Corinne Leblanc, HSC charge technologist. "This is done just to try and keep up with the demand; they have an 11 or 12-month-long waiting list there for MRIs."

MRIs are commonly used for sports-related injuries and knee and shoulder injuries because they are far more definitive than X-rays, according to Oakey.

"An MRI machine basically images your body in 3-D, an X-ray images your body in 2-D," says Oakey. "An MRI makes it easier to diagnose problems. You can see ligament tears better and it's a lot less invasive of a procedure."

In order to gain entrance into the program, applicants must already be qualified medical radiation technologists with a diploma in radiography, nuclear medicine, or radiation therapy from a recognized institute or college.

Photo by Sandra Honke
MRI students Melanie Rondeau and Rachel Oakey, who are headed for Minnesota's Fairview Hospital Center and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

Princess Street students look forward to fitness centre

Facility not slated to open until September 2004

by Rachel Kuehn

Red River College students who attend the Princess Street campus are excited about the new campus fitness centre scheduled to open next fall.

"It'll be great when the new gym opens," says commerce and industry sales and marketing student Graham Jakilazek. "I'm looking forward to it, rather than going to the Notre Dame campus after classes to work out until five, and then coming home and missing *Simpsons*."

Jakilazek says he also wishes the fitness centre was in operation now, so he could lose his beer gut in preparation for a spring break trip to Mazatlan, Mexico.

The fitness centre will be located on the first floor of the Adelaide building and is currently scheduled to be in full swing – with treadmills, bikes, free weights, showers, TVs, VCRs, and staff – by September of 2004, according to Sarah Hodges, Students' Association vice president for Princess Street.

And when it opens, it will be an impressive, if compact, facility.

"It's bigger than most hotel fitness facilities," says SA executive director Owen Desnoyers. The SA is contributing $300,000 to the fitness centre from the RRC building fund.

Desnoyers says the Princess facility will be a lot smaller than the Notre Dame campus fitness centre, which occupies a whole gym floor. But Desnoyers says there are advantages to having a smaller facility.

"The trade-off is that there won't be quite as much space and equipment, but it will all be new," says Desnoyers, adding the new gym will be more like a high-tech Shapes Fitness Centre than a loft over a gym floor, like the Notre Dame campus currently has.

"The access level won't be much different. It's appropriate for that size of campus."

Desnoyers says the centre will, for all intents and purposes, be ready to go early this year, but equipment and staff won't be installed until September.

"We're waiting for the new budget year," says Desnoyers. "We understand (the college is) under a huge budget crunch this year and still looking for equipment."

The budget for equipment alone is about $50,000, says Desnoyers.

The Students' Association is asking the college to open the room for aerobics sessions or tai-bo classes in the meantime.

However, some students are upset the gym will not be open until the fall.

"It's disappointing because I'm only here until June," says Susan Ewasko, a student at the Princess Street campus. "But I'd bring in a video and do Pilates or something."

Ad campaign says "thank you" to smokers

Kick Butt program designed to help students quit

by Ruth Shead

Cigar hanging out of his mouth, looking spiffy in his suit and tie, first-year creative communications student Justin Deeley schmoozes with students outside Red River College's Notre Dame campus library, where a poster fair has attracted a small crowd.

Or at least he tries.

"Hey, hello! How are you doing? It's so nice to see you today," he says, trying to shake hands with bystanders. He receives a mix of raised eyebrows, funny looks, and weary smiles in return.

But Deeley, with the tenacity of a successful businessman, continues to interrupt conversations so he can ask his all-important question: "Are you a smoker?" If the answer is "yes," Deeley raises his voice: "THANK YOU, SMOKER!"

Given that we are living in an era of indoor smoking bans and increasing surgeons' warnings, Deeley's reaction is somewhat unconventional.

But that's the point.

Deeley is trying to draw attention to the Wellness Institute's Kick Butt program, which is arriving at RRC just in time to help out with New Year's resolutions. In character for Kick Butt at RRC's Jan. 7 launch, Deeley is performing as Leif Voorhees, the head of a tobacco company featured throughout the program's ad campaign, who thanks smokers for "blowing their money" his way.

Kick Butt has been running for three years, says Erica White, a behaviour counselor with the Wellness Institute, but this is the first time they have brought it to RRC.

"We thought, if we can take it to the work site, we can offer it to students," says White.

The Wellness Institute contacted Michael Whalen, wellness co-ordinator at the college's Health Centre, about bringing a two-year pilot program to RRC.

Whalen applied for a grant to subsidize the cost of the program to make it affordable for students.

"We got funding from Manitoba Health. The cost for someone is normally $265," says Whalen.

With the funding, students pay $35 to participate in Kick Butt. For their money, students receive a one-on-one assessment meeting with a behaviour counselor and a physician. The program first addresses the quitter's addiction, says White. This is followed by three group sessions with a behaviour counselor and another consultation session with a fitness expert.

"The program takes a look at lifestyle changes. One of the best things you can do when you quit smoking is exercise," says White.

"Once they've gone through and successfully quit they'll get their $35 back," says White.

A carbon monoxide monitor and a certain amount of honesty is involved in telling if the smoker has actually quit, she says.

"You have to want to quit," she says.

To draw smokers to the program, White and Whalen called upon the services of advertising students from RRC's creative communications program.

"There hasn't been anything effectively targeting youth to quit smoking," says Whalen.

But the ad students have taken an original approach.

"The ads are eye-catching. It's sort of a very retro look and it's taking a different perspective on how to attract smokers. You're going to have people asking 'Thank you smokers?'" says White, adding that the Wellness Institute is very happy with the advertising campaign.

Holly Allen, one of the seven students who worked on the campaign, says talking to smokers and trying to understand their relationship to smoking and what kind of things might get them to quit smoking helped them come up with a campaign that would be more relevant for the targeted age group.

"We needed something that's attention-grabbing or funny to pull someone in to read about what we're selling. The program will sell itself," she says.

Tag lines like, "Thank you, smokers... for blowing your money my way; for taking your medicine, and for your continued support," convey the attitude that tobacco companies may have: that smokers play into their hands.

Deeley estimates that only about 35 per cent of the people he's talked with as Leif Voorhees have told him they are smokers, but the reaction is positive.

"All of the smokers have been laughing hilariously when I thank them for smoking, shake their hand, and ask them to tell their friends to start smoking," he says. "The comedy is effective."

Downtown students to get day-care centre

by Sandra Honke

Students and staff may have access to a college-run, licensed child-care facility near the Princess Street campus as early as the next school year, according to RRC administration.

"We are expecting it will be state of the art in terms of a child care facility reflecting the most current practices," says Marilyn Valgardson, executive director for the RRC Early Childhood Centre at the Notre Dame campus. "We will be licensed for 52 children: 40 being preschoolers from the ages of two to five years, and 12 infants between 12 weeks and two years of age."

Valgardson says the facility will ideally be open for September 2004, but RRC Day Care Inc., a non-profit organization operated by parents, faculty, and administrative staff, has only been working on the project for a few months.

Unlike the Notre Dame campus, the Princess Street campus lacks room for a day-care centre, so the board of directors needs to find a suitable building in close proximity to the campus.

"The word commonly used to describe the building location is 'adjacent,'" says Valgardson. "It will be within a reasonable walking distance for a parent with a young child. We don't want to be many blocks away, especially for parents with infants when it's February and it's cold outside.

"We've only just begun the process, so we are attempting to find a building that we can either lease or purchase," says Valgardson. "We have received a $166,000 per year grant from the provincial government's Department of Family Services and Housing."

The provincial grant is strictly for operating purposes and requires the facility to be operational before the government will disburse any funds.

"We haven't received any of the monies yet, but will once the program is opened," says Valgardson. "We are in the process of getting together the necessary funds to acquire a building."

The centre's full-time staff members are experienced, trained child-care workers. Licensed child-care facilities are open to all members of the community with a need for child-care services.

Although the centre will be open to the public, Valgardson says children of RRC students and staff will have priority should space be an issue.

Valgardson says the new facility will also provide a place for early childhood education students to do their work placements in addition to many child-care facilities across the province.

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Notice of Class Rep Meeting

The next Class Rep Meeting will be February 10th, at 12:00 pm in the White Lecture Theatre.

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The Bottom Line on… Canada Student Loans

Ahhh… its that time of year again. You can hear the students bustling along, visions of plenty clouding their minds. That's right folks… once again its student loans time! The opportunity for the government to once again squash the dreams of many hard-working youg people, trying to get a leg up in the world. Lets discuss some of the fundamental problems with the CSLP. For starters, it punishes those who have worked hard and saved up not quite enough money for school. Then, if you have middle-class parents and haven't lived away from Mommy and Daddy's for more than four years, your parents are expected to cough up some money for your education- whether they like it or not (or like you or not). If your parents list a lot of assets, the government will tell them to liquidate their assets to send you to school. So, if your parents are farmers and have a some large pieces of equipment, they are supposed to sell them to send you to school. Well, I guess they could always go pack to using oxen to plough the fields.

So, the message we get from the CSLP and the federal government is, don't save money, move away from your parents when you are 14 (plenty old enough, and you can get a loan when you're 18 and ready for University/College), and sell everything you and your family owns before you come knocking on the governments' door for money. That's the bottom line according to Becky. Happy New Year/Student Loans Time!

Tecky Burner

Year 2004

January 9, 2004

January 23, 2004

February 6, 2004

February 20, 2004

March 5, 2004

March 19, 2004

April 2, 2004

April 16, 2004

April 30, 2004

May 14, 2004

May 28, 2004

June 11, 2004

Food Bank Days

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Hours of operation: 1:00 p.m. to 3:30p.m.

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Red River College Students' Association

Rural students face unique challenges

by Teresa Falk

University student Melissa Wieler is part of a large, distinct student population in Manitoba. She's a rural student who broke out of her small community and ventured to the big city of Winnipeg, only to encounter the many difficulties that come with being a rural student in Manitoba.

Students from Manitoba's rural communities make up a significant portion of the post-secondary education population. The exact statistics are not available because records are not kept for Manitoba.

Wieler attends school full-time in the University of Winnipeg's education program. She doesn't work during the school year and encounters financial issues.

"Even if I were to work, that might pay for my expenses, but not entertainment," she says. "I have way more expenses than city students."

Expenses include rent, hydro, telephone, food, and fuel for driving to and from the city. And then there are other expenses city students also face like bus fares, parking, books, tuition, and often cellular phones.

Wieler says that she's one of the lucky ones because she has a college fund, and realizes that many rural students have to rely on student loans.

"I have a college fund that my parents set up for me. It pays for approximately two-thirds of my tuition," she says. "I recognize that that is not the average situation. Most people have to take out student loans."

Rural student Todd Wohlgemuth is enrolled in the civil technology program at RRC and also deals with many expenses, such as rent and fuel for his truck. However, the employment insurance he receives from his last job provides some much needed financial assistance.

"Gas is a big expense for me," he says. "But I'm collecting EI, so financially that helps out big time."

Beyond expenses come the disadvantages of moving home for the summer months. Many rural students go home for the summer to save money on rent.

"Students can live at home, with less expenses and less opportunities for a summer, or stay in the city and have to pay rent, with another issue being where to work," says Wieler.

If rural students are away from the city for the summer, they miss out on the opportunities to take summer courses, hunt down cheaper textbooks in used bookstores, register in-person for the fall term, or change a conflicting course schedule.

"If they (city students) want to take a class in the summer, it's not a big deal," says Wieler. "Registration is huge; if you need to clarify anything it's a problem because it's best to be there in-person, but you can't be there in the summer."

Rural students who live near Winnipeg or Brandon have the opportunity to become drive-in students rather than live in the city. Students like University of Manitoba education student Jennifer Brown, who chose this path, have concluded fuel and wear and tear on the vehicle are cheaper than paying rent. This way they can continue to work near home if they already have a job.

"It's really expensive (to live in the city) and some students have to have a part-time job on top of school," says Brown.

She lived in the city her first year of university and then decided to become a drive-in student. She drives from Lowe Farm, about 45 minutes south of Winnipeg, to school at the U of M.

Driving into Winnipeg for classes can become very costly, so many students join a car pool and share fuel expenses.

"I car pool with other people, so it costs about $120 a month," says Brown.

Wohlgemuth had the opportunity to drive into Winnipeg from Steinbach every day for classes but decided against it.

"It's just over an hour to drive to the city and I decided I could spend this extra time studying," he says.

Wieler feels her city friends have it a lot easier when it comes to expenses.

"I look at my fellow classmates from the city and I think they have it pretty good," she says.

Besides expenses, some students who are living on their own feel they are gaining an independence that will benefit them in the long run.

"We (students that live on their own) have to do all those domestic duties. You will have to learn these things eventually," says Wieler. "And we learn how to manage money."

And living on your own can have other benefits as well, says Wieler.

"Not having to tell your parents everything, establishing your identity," she says. "It's been really good for me."

Despite these benefits, Wieler says she would move home if her family lived closer to the city.

"I would definitely live at home and take advantage of that if I could," she says.

Tim's opening forces Mercantile out of coffee business

by Joff Schmidt

The arrival of Tim Hortons at the Princess Street campus means coffee will no longer be available at the Mercantile, according to the college's contract with food service provider, Aramark.

With the opening of the Princess Street Tim Hortons location, slated for Jan. 13, the Mercantile, the Students' Association general store, has stopped selling coffee.

Todd Buchanan, general manager of the Mercantile, says that the Mercantile's virtual monopoly on coffee at the campus has been a boon to the store, which opened at the beginning of the school year.

"We were able to take advantage of the situation that was there," Buchanan says.

He says coffee has been a big seller at the store. "We brew about 30 pots a day," equivalent to 150 to 170 cups of coffee.

"We knew going into this that it wasn't going to be long-term," Buchanan says. He says the Mercantile will look at other ways of keeping students coming in, including a planned lottery terminal.

"The hopeful placement of the lottery terminal in the next month or so should bring some traffic through," Buchanan says. "We may look at expanding our cold drinks section."

Volunteers Needed
Meltdown Week is coming soon

Come on down to one of the information meetings below. (chips and cookies provided)

12:00 Noon
Tuesday, Jan 13
Room P110
Princess Street Campus

12:00 Noon
Wednesday, Jan 14
White Lecture Theatre
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Look for the Meltdown Guide inside the next issue of The Projector

Of new buildings and dental-damaging pastries:

by *Projector* staff

The year 2003 is far enough behind us that most New Year's resolutions have been forgotten, but still, we at the *Projector* figure it's not too late for a look back at the year that was.

New campus buildings, hirings, firings, elections, and dental-damaging pastries - 2003 saw it all at Red River College.

Here is our list of the top RRC news stories of 2003:

1. Princess Street opens phase two

The second stage of RRC's downtown campus at 160 Princess St. officially opened Sept. 22. Over 1,000 RRC students now attend classes downtown. Students saw an increase in services, including the opening of the Mercantile, the opening of a permanent SA office at Princess Street, and a downtown bookstore.

The opening also brought some controversy, including the $15,000 purchase of 16 armchairs for common areas of the college. Some students also complained of services not in place when the campus opened in September. "They need to finish it," second-year graphic design student Steven Cote said at the September grand opening. "Five years from now, this place will be awesome."

Phase two of RRC's downtown campus officially opened in September.

2. Student's Association president resigns

Ethan Stock, who was elected to the position of SA president in April 2003, mysteriously resigned over the summer holidays. "Mr. Ethan Stock has decided to resign his position for personal reasons," read a late-July e-mail notice from the SA. To date, no further explanation for Stock's resignation has been given.

Stock was replaced by Mark Pawlik, who was initially elected to the position of SA vice-president of student affairs, a position to which Student Advisory Board member Jon Mertins was later appointed.

Former SA president Ethan Stock resigned in July.

3. Instructor strike at RRC?

RRC instructors and their bargaining partners at Assiniboine Community College and Keewatin Community College rejected a management contract offer, the *Projector* reported in December. RRC instructors have been without a contract since June 30.

Representatives from both college management and the Manitoba Government Employees Union, to which RRC's instructors belong, say they are confident a decision will be reached and a strike can be averted.

Major issues of contention in the contract include wages, benefits, and instructor workloads.

4. Provincial election

June brought a provincial election, and a strong win for Gary Doer's NDP government. In a May interview with the *Projector*, Minister of Advanced Education and Training Diane McGifford said one of the party's main goals in its second term would be the creation of a northern Manitoba post-secondary institution, tentatively called the University College of the North.

In their April budget, the NDP doubled the interest-free period on Manitoba student loans from six months to a year, and gave a 10 per cent tax credit to employers who provide work placements for students in co-operative education programs. The budget also continued the province's freeze on tuition fees at colleges and universities.

But not everyone was happy with the province's support of post-secondary education. "We have to continue to put pressure on the provincial government to increase subsidies to post-secondary institutions," SA vice-president of finance Becky Turner said in May. "More and more things are changing; the college is expected to invest more in technology and such, and the funding just isn't there."

Mayor Glen Murray's "New Deal" drew mixed reactions.

5. New Deal draws mixed reaction from students

Mayor Glen Murray's proposal for new consumption-

PRESS RELEASE

DISCOVER THE DISTRICT

Winnipeg, Mb - The Exchange District BIZ, along with local merchants will be holding a "Business Fair" in the Atrium of the Red River College Princess Street Campus, January 20 & 21, 2004.

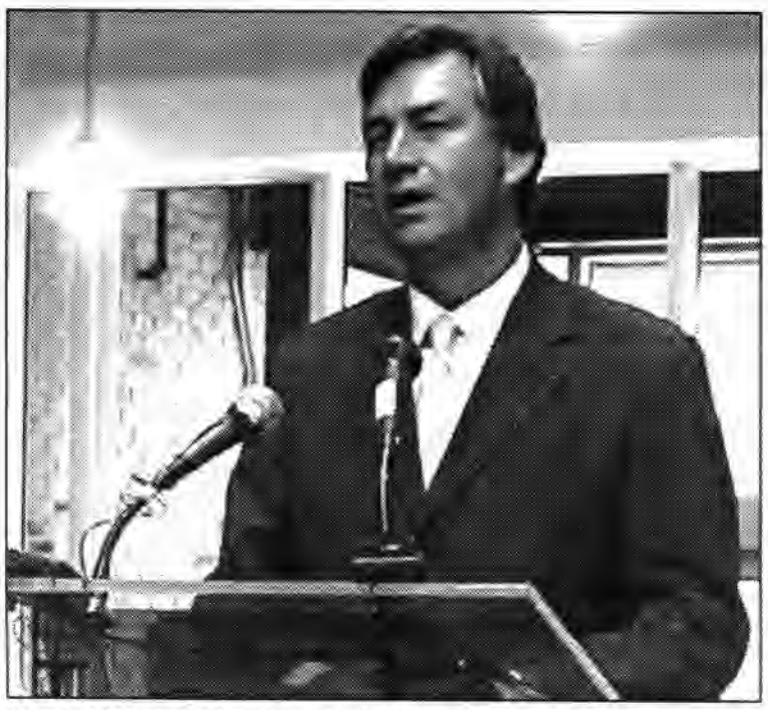
Students and staff are encouraged to stop by the Atrium to discover what the Exchange District has to offer. Some businesses will be selling and displaying their products and others will provide information on the services they offer.

Greg Tonn, owner of ***Into the Music*** and a participating merchant noted that "The addition of RRC to the area will give a remarkable boost to the District and is one of the many reasons I chose to relocate my business into the Exchange ". Greg feels that "It's the responsibility of the local businesses to create awareness of the services available to the staff and students of RRC. Holding a Business Fair is the perfect way to spark an interest in the area. Staff and students should be excited about the diversity of shops, services and restaurants that are readily available to them" says Tonn.

The Exchange District is a diverse community where people work, play, live and learn.
Experience the District and marvel in what lies beyond the College.
Discover the District and marvel in what lies beyond the walls of the College.
Discover the district January 20 & 21, 2004, in the Red River College Atrium between 9:00am and 4:00pm.

For more information please contact the Exchange District BIZ at 942-6716

the 2003 Red River College news year in review



Doer's NDP earned a strong win in June's provincial election.

based taxes, dubbed the "New Deal," essentially died by the end of the year. When it was announced last fall, though, the plan drew mixed reactions from students. Murray said aspects of the plan, such as a 50 per cent reduction in transit fees and a 50 per cent reduction in property tax, would benefit students. But some RRC students complained that they would be hurt by other parts of the deal, including a new five-cent-per-litre fuel tax and a seven per cent liquor tax.

6. SA announces Student Street renovation

After nearly 20 years of collecting $20 per year from each full-time student for a building fund, the Students' Association announced plans to move ahead with a set of major renovations, dubbed "Student Street," at RRC's Notre Dame campus, the *Projector* reported in January 2003.

The plan involves developing a common space for students on the mall level of buildings D and E, including quiet study areas, group work areas, an Internet cafe, and an expanded SA office.

7. CKIC still waiting for official kick off

RRC was granted a license to begin broadcasting at 92.9 FM in September of 2002. In February of 2003, then-chair of creative arts Bob McGregor told the *Projector* that CKIC, the college's campus radio station, should be on the air within a month.

While the station is still not officially on the air, Rick Everett was hired late in the year as station manager, and a test loop is currently being broadcast on 92.9 FM.

A series of construction problems at the Princess Street campus, the intended home of the station, delayed its launch, McGregor told the *Projector*. Part of the delay, the *Projector* reported in late September, was a provincial government decision to install an access elevator for disabled students. The construction of this elevator involved the temporary dismantling of the radio studio.

8. RRC aviation program tuition skyrockets

Students in the aviation management program, run jointly by RRC and the Winnipeg Flying Club, saw their tuition fees nearly double, the *Projector* reported in November. Fees for the program rose to over $30,000. The main reason for the rise in tuition was the last-minute addition of courses, according to a parent of one of the program's students. And in December, Dennis Giguere, vice-president of the Manitoba Aviation Council, said the problems raised questions about the program's future viability. Meanwhile, parents of students in the program were looking into the possibility of filing a class-action lawsuit against RRC and the Winnipeg Flying Club.

9. Creative arts students fight for spring break

The *Projector* reported in April that following a vote by creative arts students, the Senior Academic Committee would move creative arts programs from a three-term system to a two-semester system for the 2003-2004 school year. The newly-created semester system more closely follows the timelines at the province's universities, allowing RRC students to compete with university students for summer jobs. A major area of contention with the change, though, is the lack of a week-long spring break. Instead, a mini-break consisting of a four-day weekend in February was offered to students. Many students said they would simply take a week off in the form of a "student strike." As of December, the SA was continuing negotiations with college administration to provide a full spring break for creative arts students.

10. Creative arts chair dismissed

After nearly four years as chair of creative arts, Bob McGregor was fired in December. McGregor was unavailable for comment, and department dean Dave Williamson refused to elaborate on the reasons for McGregor's dismissal. Jim Beaque of RRC's human resources department also refused to comment. "This is a private matter between the HR department and the person in question," he said.

Graham Thomson, chair of management and marketing, is currently acting as interim chair of the creative arts department.

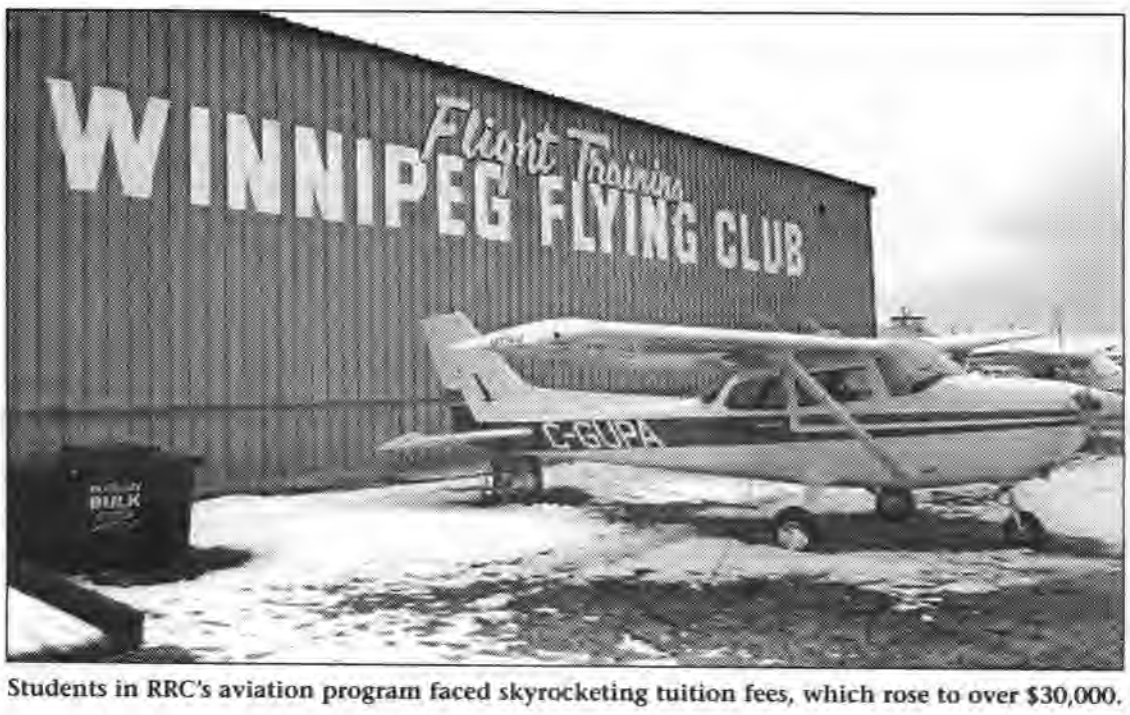
11. RRC program wins national award

The college's civil/CAD technology program won the 2003 Yves Landry Foundation award, the *Projector* reported in December. The award, presented to an outstanding technical cooperative education program at the post-secondary level, includes a $5,000 cash prize. "Receiving the award is a huge honour," said RRC president Jacqie Thachuk.

12. College sued for injurious pastry

Okay, so perhaps not one of the bigger news stories of 2003, but certainly one of the more unusual. The *Projector* reported in February that Morteza Nedjardrasul had filed a civil suit against the college, alleging that in January of 2003 he bit into a cream puff pastry purchased at the college and bit into a metal-like object, causing damage requiring $1,346 in dental work.

- compiled by Joff Schmidt



Students in RRC's aviation program faced skyrocketing tuition fees, which rose to over $30,000.

Attention Students!!

Want to know more about your Health and/or Dental Plan??

Drop by the Student Benefits Plan Info Pavilion!!

Jan 13 - Notre Dame Campus - Library Hallway Mall Level 10am -2pm

Jan 14 - Princess Campus – Atrium location (next to the Princess Campus SA Office P-110) 10am – 2pm

Can't make it?? Stop by the Student Benefits Plan Office RM FM 66 Notre Dame Campus or visit the Princess Campus SA Office P-110 (reduced hours).

Students can download useful information pertaining to the Health and/or Dental Plan at

www.gallivan.ca/studentnetworks

See you Jan 13 and 14, 2004 at the Student Benefits Plan Pavilion!

Student Benefits Plan Office 204-632-2503 (e-mail sahealth@rrc.mb.ca)

Britney, Mom, and me

by Ruth Shead

Having already broken holiday traditions by spending Dec. 25 with only my parents, and sharing lobster and regular adult conversation at the dining room table instead of the usual turkey spread and complaints from my mutant south-pawed siblings about bumping elbows with anyone (me) who was accidentally (mis)placed to their left, when my 61-year-old mother and I settled in front of the television set to watch a special about Britney Spears, it didn't seem at all odd.

The program was actually a re-run featuring performances from the 21-year-old's newest release, In the Zone, as well as "behind-the-scenes look at her hectic life."

"It's practically porn, isn't it?" my mother says almost immediately after we sit down.

Dancers wearing tighter outfits than either my mother or I would ever imagine owning (and I used to be a speed skater) matched the Gotham Hall setting.

"Hmm," was all I could say in reply.

After the dance, an interview with the young songstress appeared on the screen, which I assume is part of the "behind-the-scenes" element of the program.

"They think that you're still 15," says Britney to her interviewer, who, throughout the show is trying to get at what it's like dealing with the press and being famous.

"Looks like she's getting a pot belly," says my mother.

I squint my eyes, but can't see it.

More dancing comes on.

"They don't leave anything to the imagination," says my mother. "Jesus, they're slithering around like a bunch of snakes. Do normal people do that? Now Ruth, do you do that? You're normal."

And that was perhaps the best Christmas present I received: my mother called me normal.

My mother and I continued to watch, and during the commercials I'd flip over to World Idol, where Britney's capabilities became more and more apparent to me. Now this is all information about my life that I generally would never share with anyone, and it would be an easy fact to hide, or I could probably at least come up with a pretty good excuse about being forced to endure an hour watching the little pop-star that could, making me appear like a cooler, or even just better, person, but I found the whole thing entirely fascinating. I couldn't stop watching. And even after Britney removed her see-through belly tank top mid-way through one number leaving her in only a bra-type thing, causing my mother to say "I guess she was too hot," I think my mother even left impressed. And I say this because her final comments were "They're all doing the same thing at the same time. She knows all the moves too. That's a lot of work."

So while Britney may be revamping her New Year's resolutions to include something about becoming a born-again virgin and waiting until she gets married... or was that waiting to get married after she does it? Again. It. Did. She. Oops...

Well, whatever.

While she's doing it (or not), I have made my own resolutions not to think I'm so smart and cultured because I don't pay attention to things like Britney's music, while really, these are the things that are such a major part of our culture (even though RRC has a new (old) radio station that is finally, sort of, on the air, that will surely grow in popularity, bringing adult album alternative music to the forefront of culture where it deserves to be, and everything) that this kind of culture exists (en masse) even if you ignore it. Thus, it is necessary to try to understand it in order to truly understand the world and why it ticks. Like a clock. Which is really what New Year's is marking. Perfect timing.

Reflections on reflecting

by Joff Schmidt

Well, another New Year's Day has come and gone. It seems a fine time of the year for reflecting, so I thought I'd take this opportunity to share some thoughts on reflecting.

For starters, it's occurred to me that there's one place where there wasn't a whole lot of reflection as the old year wrapped up, and that's in every single class I took.

As the first term wrapped up in December, not one of my instructors gave out any sort of course evaluation or feedback form. For an opinionated whiner like me, this is a tragedy.

Now, before I go on, I should note that one of my instructors did come out for beers with us on the last day of our class, which gave us a good opportunity for feedback. It's not formal evaluation, but hey, it's better than nothing.

As for the rest of my six courses? Nothing. Nada. Zip.

Of course, you could argue that if I really have something to say to an instructor, I should take the bull by the horns and just say it to him or her.

You could also argue (warning: backpedaling ahead, as I realize I have courses this term with many of the same instructors I had last term) that things were a little weird for instructors in creative arts programs last term: it was the first term on our two-term "semester system," and as a result, the course content and timing of most of the courses I took last term was different than it had been in previous terms. The end of the term certainly "snuck up" on many students - perhaps it caught the instructors off-guard as well.

Still, that's not a really solid excuse. One of the things I've always appreciated about the program I'm in is the openness and accessibility of the instructors here. In the past, most have gone out of their way to solicit feedback from students.

Furthermore, end of course evaluations, my sources tell me, are mandatory. Every instructor should be giving some end-of-course opportunity for anonymous feedback.

And it's important. Most students aren't comfortable giving instructors candid, face-to-face feedback. (There are certainly some notable exceptions in my classes, and I applaud those people for their outspoken approach. You know who you are.)

Feedback gives students a chance to express their views on how effectively run a course was, and gives the instructors a chance to find out what is or isn't working in how they deliver their courses.

But it wasn't done in any of my classes, and apparently, I'm not alone.

Last issue, we reported that in spite of a policy requiring mid-course evaluations, many students weren't given a chance to provide mid-term feedback. In my courses, only one instructor (the same one who joined us for beer, by the way) gave mid-term evaluations.

So what gives? I know that it's not a matter of apathy on the part of my instructors - they are, by and large, a dedicated group of educators, and are sensible enough to understand the importance of student feedback.

I guess I'll just have to wait for their feedback to this editorial to get an answer.

And in other news, reflecting on the future, I'd like to take a moment to let you know about some changes you'll see in the *Projector* in the next couple of issues. Second-year creative communications students, including the *Projector*'s editorial staff, are headed out for work experience placements, so we're pleased to turn the paper over to our interim editors for the next two issues. You can find out who they are on page 2.

I wish them good luck, and I hope you'll appreciate their hard work and drop them a line - the *Projector* always welcomes feedback (even if we don't solicit it formally at the end of term).

How the grinch didn't steal Christmas

by Alana Pona

Christmas and Boxing Day had long gone and New Year's Eve was coming up in a week. I had just spent the holidays with the closest people in my life and loved every minute of it. Holidays in my family include the taste of delicious Ukrainian food, the smell of a fire in my aunt and uncle's fireplace, and the sound of my little cousins playing with their newest toys on the kitchen floor. Nothing could be better, right?

Wrong. Of course, human instinct is to ruin something when everything is perfect, especially among people who, I believe, lack important family values gained through functions like Christmas. I had walked out to my parking lot behind my apartment building with my boyfriend, only to discover someone had broken into my shitty '88 Ford Escort. Out of all the cars in the parking lot, they decided to hit up the crappiest, dirtiest car in the lot. And to no avail; after trying to pry open my back window with a crowbar, they smashed my passenger-side window to pieces, sending glass cascading all over the inside of my car. But hey, let's not forget the snow that happened to collect in there too. My stereo was stolen along with, surprisingly, my Club. That one I particularly don't understand, considering the key for the Club is on my keychain. They could use it, but it wouldn't be a wise decision.

The weeks that have followed have been somewhat difficult. It's not particularly easy to drive back and forth from small towns in rural Manitoba in a car with plastic over the side window. It's a hazard. When looking over my right shoulder to yield for oncoming traffic, I have to resort to taking off my seatbelt and pressing my face up against the glass to see whether I have the opportunity to move, because the plastic does not allow for proper vision.

Let's also not forget that when air seeps into the car, I have the wonderful task on cold days of scraping the windows not only on the outside of my car, but inside too. What a sight to see.

I believe, though, that this incident comes back to the idea that thieving individuals lack the important values gained through family interaction, especially during the most important times, like Christmas, when friends and families gather. Rather than having the proper venue to realize that they amount to something and are appreciated, and better yet, loved, these individuals look to others for acceptance and, in many case, fall into the trap of self-destruction.

My Christmas, however, was not ruined because of this event. I know I wasn't the only one that dealt with this problem over Christmas, as it occurs frequently during the holiday season. But at least I have the satisfaction of knowing that when the thieves try to sell the at best $60 no-name stereo they stole (poor sucker didn't know what he was wasting his time on stealing), they'll definitely not fall asleep with smiles on their faces.

ATTENTION RRC:
MARS NEEDS WOMEN!
BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE PROJECTOR NEEDS WRITERS.
SO JOIN US FOR THE FIRST STORY MEETING OF 2004:
TUESDAY, JAN. 13, 4:00 P.M.
THE NEWSROOM, W102 (PRINCESS STREET CAMPUS)
EVERYONE IS WELCOME. EVEN MARTIANS.

Manitoba Aviation Council president responds to article

Dear Editor,

The article "Pilot program in danger" in the December 1, 2003 issue makes reference to Dennis Giguere as vice president of the Manitoba Aviation Council (MAC), which may imply to some readers that the views expressed in the article are those of the Aviation Council. Dennis is VP of the Council, and was closely associated with development of the RRC program. However, the views he presented in the article were his own and are not those of the Council.

The purpose of the Manitoba Aviation Council is to promote, facilitate and protect the development of all facets of aviation within the province of Manitoba. An important part of this mission is education and training to assure the human resources who contribute to that development. The recent publicity regarding the Red River Aviation Management Program caused MAC concern, as does any negative story about aviation. While there may be concerns by some students about some aspects of the program, we have been assured that the program itself is not in jeopardy. We are confident that whatever difficulties may have been experienced will be overcome. Indeed, we understand that other students who have completed the course have been very pleased with the program. But it is not MAC's position to evaluate or pass judgement on any specific program. MAC's position is that it supports and encourages all such programs that combine advanced academic education with aviation training, to better equip the aviators of tomorrow to meet the challenges facing our industry.

MAC had already (last year) approached RRC about providing similar academic programs in partnership with other flight training commercial air services to ensure accessibility for students in all parts of the province, and a broad choice of flight training providers. Manitoba's flight training services compete for students from throughout Canada and internationally. The broadest possible availability of programs, such as the Red River Aviation Management Program, contribute to Manitoba's competitiveness.

Commercial air services contribute well over a half billion dollars and almost 10,000 jobs for Manitoba's economy, facts documented in an economic impact study by the University of Manitoba Transport Institute just last year. I would encourage your readers to visit www.manitobaaviationcouncil.ca to learn more. And any time that the *Projector* is planning a report on an aviation subject, I would invite you to contact us for factual information and context.

Yours truly,

Judy Saxby
President
Manitoba Aviation Council

"Sexist" ad draws reader's wrath

To the Editor,

What is the matter with you people?

There isn't enough perversion in your fucked up little lives? I am referring to your sexist ad from The Line-Up Restaurant in the Dec 1 *Projector*. [Editor's note: the same ad can be seen on page 3 of this issue.] Is it really necessary to have these type of ads in a college newspaper? Are you that hard up for advertising?

There is enough sexism and violence against women in society, or do you think Marc Lepine didn't kill enough women in Montreal in 1989? I guess you perverts at the *Projector* and The Line-Up think women are good for one thing only. While we are at it, let's take away women's right to vote, too!

Signed,

Thoroughly Disgusted

Editor's note:

Normally, the *Projector* does not print unsigned letters. However, after some debate, we decided to run this one - there's an interesting point to be made, and I think this letter is important for encouraging discussion about this topic.

As well, though, I want to clarify how advertising works at the *Projector*. The paper's editors don't actually solicit or choose advertising - Guy Lussier, the Students' Association's advertising manager, handles advertising for all of the SA's media outlets, including the *Projector*.

However, neither Guy nor the *Projector*'s editors are actually responsible for the content of the ads - they are created by the advertisers.

So, does that mean that as the editor-in-chief of the *Projector*, I have no control over advertising? Well, not exactly. The "I was just doing my job" excuse is a bad one, so I suppose I could refuse to run an ad, in which case I'm sure I'd quickly be fired. In this case, I chose not to be fired. I'm not going to wax philosophical on my views on the ad - I'd be more interested in hearing the views of our readers. However, I suppose my actions, in running the ad, probably indicate where I stand on this issue.

I'd be interested to know how other *Projector* readers feel. Please send your signed letters to the editor to rrcprojector@hotmail.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

- Joff Schmidt
Editor-in-chief, the *Projector*

Photo by Peter Vesuwalla

RRC-TV station manager Jarrod Tully and host Jeff Bromley sit behind the desk in Red River College's newly-renovated television studio at the Princess Street campus. The set was donated by CKY and valued at about $8,000. From behind the desk, you can still see some of the graffiti left by the crew, including the names of RRC grad Rachel Lagace, Gord Leclerc, Sylvia Kuzyk, and Keith McMahon. It also sports the message, "Vogelsang, put on your mic."

Conserve to Preserve

The RRC Energy Efficiency Program in conjunction with Manitoba Hydro Powersmart will be displayed in the Princess Street Atrium on January 14th from 11-1. Check out our booth for an opportunity to win an energy efficiency prize pack, generously provided by Manitoba Hydro.

Energy Awareness Quiz

1. The residential sector consumes the most energy. True or False
2. Greenhouse gases from the industrial sector represent the second largest source of emissions in Canada. True or False
3. The amount of energy used by the institutional sector is roughly half that of the commercial sector. True or False
4. The most intensive energy user of the commercial and institutional sectors is the restaurant sub-sector. True or False
5. The pulp and paper sub-sector accounts for the largest energy use in the industrial sector. True or False

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Answer Key

1. False. Residential energy use accounts for approximately 17 percent of secondary energy use in Canada, whereas the industrial sector accounts for roughly 33 percent.
2. True. As of 2000, industrial GHGs accounted for approximately 160 Mt, slightly below emissions produced from transportation sector at 163.4 Mt.
3. True. Energy use studies conducted in 1999 by Natural Resources Canada indicate that the institutional sector's energy use was roughly half of that used by the commercial sector.
4. True. A typical restaurant's energy intensity is approximately 8.3 GJ/m2 – significantly higher than any other sub-sector.
5. True. As of 2000, the pulp and paper industry accounted for approximately 30 percent of industrial energy use

What are your concerns?

- Pregnancy - Parenting - Relationship or family problems - Advocacy

Pregnancy Distress Family Support Services
Information and support line at 775-2877
Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 midnight

FITNESS CLASSES

YOGA

This introductory Yoga class is based on the Iyengar method. The poses taught will facilitate greater breath awareness and release muscle tension while building muscle strength and flexibility of the joints and spine.

Notre Dame Campus
Tuesdays, 4:15 – 5:15pm, F209
January 13 – February 24 (7 classes)
INSTRUCTOR: Brenda Reimer-Dorratt of Prana Yoga Studios
COST: STUDENTS - $35.00 (Including G.S.T.) **STAFF - $45.00** (Including G.S.T.)

Princess St. Campus
Fridays, 12:00pm – 12:50pm, P107 – Multipurpose Room
January 16 – February 20 (6 classes)
INSTRUCTOR: Angela Sommerset of Prana Yoga Studios
COST: STUDENTS - $30.00 (Including G.S.T.) **STAFF - $35.00 (Including G.S.T.)**

(Note: the cost difference between these programs is due to the Notre Dame classes being 25 minutes longer and there being 1 additional class)

Mix-It-Up: Come and get energized!

Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, 12:00pm – 1:00pm, North gym
January 13 – February 20
Instructors: Eleanor Tsang & Sharon Couldwell
This class will offer a variety of fitness modalities including step; hi-lo impact; ball work and muscle conditioning.
Cost: Staff $35.00; Students$30.00; Drop-in $4.00 (GST Included in all prices)

Aerobic Kickboxing

Mondays & Thursdays, 4:15pm – 5:15pm, North Gym
January 12 – February 19
Instructor: Eleanor Tsang
Join Eleanor for an invigorating workout! These classes are cardio based with some muscle conditioning.
Cost: Staff $20.00; Students $15.00; Drop-in $4.00(GST Included)

Self Defence for Women

Tuesdays, 4:15pm – 5:15pm, North Gym
January 13 – February 11
Instructor: Eldon Thiessen
The goal of this course is to provide people with knowledge to protect themselves using a variety of skills including: Physical Self-Defence; Awareness; Confidence; and Verbal Skills.
Cost: Staff $20.00; Students $15.00; Drop-in $4.00(GST Included)

Register Early! Some programs have limited space.

REGISTER: Payments can be made at the cashiers office, located in room C212, between 8:00am and 3:30pm. Methods of payment at the cashiers office include Interac/ Cash/ Visa or MasterCard/ Cheque. Credit card payments may also be phoned in to the Controller's Office at 632-2371. Payments by cash or cheque accepted at the North Gym equipment counter. Princess St.: pay at the Student Services Centre.

Call Recreation Services at 632-2399 for more information.

HAVE AN OPINION TO SHARE?

A RESPONSE TO SOMETHING YOU'VE READ IN THE *PROJECTOR*?

SOMETHING TO GET OFF YOUR CHEST?

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Living in the moment with Emm Gryner

by Marc Zienkiewicz

Emm Gryner gets asked the same questions over and over again, but she doesn't mind.

"It wasn't really meant to be a complaint," says the 28-year-old Canadian singer/songwriter, who recently wrote on her website about the repetitive nature of being interviewed.

"I think there are certain things that are interesting for people. Every interview I do is different and every person is different, so I don't mind. If there's something someone wants to know about, I'll tell them."

And there's plenty to know about Gryner. Who wouldn't want to hear what it's like working with the legendary David Bowie? Or how it felt to leave Mercury Records in 1999 after their merger with Universal, only to soldier on with her own label, Dead Daisy Records? Not to mention how she felt to have her album *Asianblue* nominated for Best Pop Album at last year's Juno Awards.

Gryner may face many of the same questions on a regular basis, but monotony is something she doesn't seem to let get to her. She's very adept at handling a self-important journalist who's trying to ask more timely questions, and she's acutely aware of how fragile a journalist's ego can be. After all, this isn't the first interview she's given today.

"But it's the most important one," she says, instantly breaking the ice.

Gryner is spending the day in her Montreal studio talking with members of the media and autographing copies of her new DVD, *Videochrome*. She's also preparing for a cross-Canada tour with Jann Arden, which she says is a refreshing change from the more static atmosphere of the recording studio.

"Every show is unpredictable. It's not like I'm going on and I know exactly what's going to happen," Gryner says. "There's so many different things that can happen. Whether it's (a reaction) from a fan in the audience, or from someone who's not a fan. Also touring with my band, a lot of things can happen just as an added element of how a band works."

The spontaneity of touring is something Gryner says makes her better appreciate her music.

"As a result of doing the tours, I really just enjoy playing my songs and playing with the band. The way people feed off each other adds an energy to the songs. It's more stripped-down."

Her new album, due for release sometime in 2004, has an unpolished quality Gryner says is reminiscent of a concert performance.

"I'm drawn to records in which you can hear the way they're put together. My new record sounds more organic," she says about the project, which she's working on with film composer Nathan Larson.

Videochrome, her first foray into the DVD format, features a more "stripped-down" side of not only her music, but of Gryner herself. Featuring home recordings of previously unreleased songs, the DVD showcases a more casual aspect of her personality that Gryner says may not be present on her studio albums.

"The DVD is very much me. I put it together in a way that people could see how I (make music) at home."

Despite the fact she's performed on *Saturday Night Live* and the *Late Show with David Letterman*, not to mention being one of Mike Bullard's favourite guests, seeing herself on the small screen makes Gryner uncomfortable.

"I don't like watching myself on TV, I'm not used to it. I don't sit there and watch stuff that I've done. If I sort of sat down and watched all my shows, I might not have such a problem with it," she says, adding that *Videochrome* is a real change for her, due to what she calls the "no-glam" quality of her home recordings.

And change is something she plans to take full advantage of while on tour. For Gryner, living in the moment is what being on the road is all about.

"It's the fact that you're constantly moving, you're constantly traveling, which really suits my personality," she says about touring. "I like constant change."

Emm Gryner performs at the Burton Cummings Theatre on Jan. 28 with Jann Arden.

Emm Gryner brings her "no-glam" live performance to Winnipeg Jan. 28.

Jump jivin' alive and swinging in Winnipeg

by Gillian Leschasin

Winnipeg is establishing itself as a city that sure knows how to jive with the creation of several swing dance clubs and classes that are seeing increased enrolment over the past five years, according to Winnipeg swing dance instructors.

As Suneil Pandy and Camille Metcalfe's feet start moving in a flurry of hops, jumps, and twirls, one can't help but be in awe that in 2003, people are still learning and thoroughly enjoying the popular 1930's swing dance.

Learn To Swing

For a modern refresher in swing dancing, think of the dancing associated with tunes like "Zoot Suit Riot" by The Cherry Poppin' Daddies and "Sing, Sing, Sing" by Benny Riot, the most famous swing band song often heard in commercials and movies.

"Swing dancing is a partner dance that you can do to jazz and most blues music," says Pandey, the University of Manitoba Swing Dance Club's (UMSD) vice-president.

The original swing dance, called the Lindyhop, developed during the 1930s and gained popularity throughout the majority of the '30s and '40s to jazz and blues music, according to Pandey. The lindyhop is described as the core swing dance that all the other dances are based on and is tricky to learn.

A new type of swing dance emerged during the 1950s called jive, which is a faster type of swing dancing that originated on the East Coast set to rock music. Swing dance beginners may want to try jive first because the dance follows a pattern, unlike the lindyhop, making it easier to remember.

Several classes are offered throughout Winnipeg on the various forms of swing dancing.

The University of Manitoba Swing Dance Club teaches Lindyhop I and II, Jive and Charleston (a swing dance supplement) each week and is open to the public. A class on aerials and lifts are also likely to be taught this term, says Pandey.

Patricia Armstrong, dance instructor and owner of Patricia's Dance Studio and Swing Club, says swing dancing is the most popular class she teaches. She's seen classes jump in size from 10 people a week to four swing classes per week with 20 to 30 people in each lesson. Instruction is offered in every kind of swing dance, including the East and West Coast swing and the hustle.

Those interested in sampling a wider variety of dances can try out swing dancing as part of a social ballroom dancing course offered through the city's parks and recreation programs, taught by Kathryn McGuire of Kathryn McGuire Dance Instruction.

Get the Benefits

Swing dancing is great for improving social skills.

Just ask Amber Sarassin, a new member to UMSD who has only been swing dancing for two months.

"It really helps because you're always changing partners and meeting new people. I mean, you have to talk to figure things out. You can't just do it by yourself. It teaches you a lot about partnership," says Sarassin.

McGuire recommends swing dancing not only for developing solid social skills, but because it's an excellent way to get exercise. Swing dancing burns calories, works out a variety of muscle groups, and gives people a good cardiovascular workout, she says.

"An aerobics class only lasts about 45 minutes while a dance only lasts about three. If you're a swing dancer, you're not just dancing for three minutes. When you go to a swing dance, they last for three hours and you're going to be dancing for at least three quarters of that, if not more."

"I find that if I don't dance regularly then I feel lazy because it's a really good workout," says Sarrasin before adding, "It's relaxing as well. It doesn't feel like you're running a mile race."

Swinging Winnipeg

Hardcore swing dancers can find a venue to dance virtually every night in Winnipeg through lessons, special events, and designated swing nights as the demand for swing continues.

Wednesday evenings are reserved for the singles swing club at Patricia's Dance Studio, where people can drop in and never worry about bringing a partner, while Sunday evenings are slotted for an open practice session.

Buffalo Bills, a CanadInns bar, holds a swing dance night complete with a live band every Thursday night.

And dancers can usually find a good swing event to attend on Saturday through the UMSD. The club holds at least one swing dance and/or workshop a month at the University of Manitoba.

While the Winnipeg swing dance scene is thriving, dance instructors agree there is a serious shortage of space to hold large swing events in Winnipeg.

"If we had bigger places to go in wintertime that would be fabulous," says Armstrong.

One of the largest swing dance events happens at Dancing Under the Canopy each summer. The outdoor event held at the Forks is a venue large to hold 2,500 to 3,000 people, says Armstrong.

"People don't realize how popular swing dancing is."

Not Just a Fad

Some people say that swing dancing is just a fad, but Pandey disagrees with that idea and says his club has grown since it first started over four years ago. There are currently 60 to 100 members in UMSD.

"I hope it's not a trend. We have a lot of dedicated swing dancers. I can see the club growing a lot bigger than it is now."

But McGuire isn't so sure that swing dancing isn't just the latest craze, she says.

"It's been going on a long time, but that's not to say something else won't come along and replace it. Salsa was very hot for awhile as well, it wasn't that swing died out, it was just that salsa got the attention. I think that once people get into swing, especially beyond the first year, it no longer becomes a fad...swing, maybe it's a fad with some people.

Armstrong says swing dancing won't die in Winnipeg because the people who enjoy swing dancing keep it going.

"Dancing makes the soul happy. That sums it up."

Over-rated *Return of the King* ain't got no soul

by Marc Zienkiewicz

The Return of the King, the third and final film in director Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, is similar to a pail of movie theatre popcorn: it's big, filling, and so unhealthy you'll be gasping for air once you've consumed the whole thing.

This soulless, over-rated movie follows Frodo (Elijah Wood) and Sam (Sean Astin) as they continue their journey to Mordor to destroy the magic ring owned by Sauron, a giant eyeball held in place by something that resembles a pair of tongs.

Sounds entertaining enough, but Jackson manages to make novelist J.R.R. Tolkien's classic story utterly boring. The film clocks in at three and a half hours, which is considerably longer than the average human being can sit in a movie theatre chair.

The 201-minute running time also means far too many long battle sequences that become as tiresome as they are gorgeous. *The Return of the King* will probably win an Oscar for its astounding visual effects, but all the technical magic in the world can't make up for the film's lack of character development.

And that's where the movie fails the most. Jackson substitutes character development with lots of crying (as Astin's character does all too frequently) and plenty of concerned, overly-emotional gazes shared between Frodo and Sam, making them look like a pair of star-crossed lovers. Oddly enough, the bad guys in the movie turn out to be the most interesting and conflicted, almost making the viewer root for Sauron and his legions of evil monsters.

Australian actor John Noble is wonderful as Denethor, a disgruntled king who's lost his eldest son in battle. His only remaining son is the timid but well-meaning Faramir, played by David Wenham (*Moulin Rouge*). Faramir is the last hope for Denethor's bloodline, and this unfortunate situation culminates in one of the film's most powerful scenes, thanks in no small part to Noble's skillful acting. Unfortunately, this subplot isn't put to good use, and it quickly fades into memory as the film progresses.

Christopher Lee, who played an evil sorcerer named Saruman in the first two *Rings* films, is noticeably absent in *The Return of the King*. This oversight puts the final nail into the film's coffin, leaving a big hole in the movie that cannot be filled with special effects and long battle sequences. Lee will supposedly appear in the extended DVD edition of the film, but this is small consolation for anyone who's put their back through hell seeing it in a theatre.

John Noble as Denethor, one of the few interesting characters in *The Return of the King*.

But waiting for the DVD might be wise, because sitting in a chair for over 200 minutes straight may cause permanent physical injury. And a box of microwave popcorn is a far better deal than Silver City's pail of over-priced poison.

Big Fish catches heartwarming tone

by Ryan Hladun

Tim Burton has finally reeled in the *Big Fish*, the title of his latest and best film. It's ironic that the man known for such dark delicacies as *Batman* and *Edward Scissorhands* has reached his pinnacle with a charming, colorful modern fantasy.

Working from the year's best script, written by John August (adapted from the 1998 novel by Daniel Wallace), Burton doesn't completely change his style as he takes us into a bizarre world of witches, werewolves and giants.

This is the world inside the mind of Edward Bloom, played magnificently by Albert Finney, a man full of stories about his seemingly larger-than-life adventures. Edward is dying and his son Will (Billy Crudup) returns home with his French wife (Marion Cotillard) to reconcile with his father. Will, a journalist, hates his father for hiding all of his life behind what Will thinks are lies.

These seemingly tall tales are the only thing William knows, but are what make Edward the extraordinary man he is. Tim Burton crafts his film around these stories as the elder Bloom narrates them, and builds the peculiar world as only he can, with extravagant settings and over-the-top characters.

Two delightful cameo performances by Danny DeVito and Steve Buscemi stage the forefront for the wackiness. DeVito plays a half-man, half-wolf circus ringleader who helps Bloom meet his future wife. And Buscemi plays a famous poet from a secret paradise-like town turned bank robber turned wall-street investor.

In the limelight of it all is Ewan McGregor, perfectly cast as the young, confident, yet dumbfounded Bloom. McGregor's likeable on-screen presence lends itself perfectly to Bloom's character.

Ewan McGregor tries to figure out what the hell he was doing in *Attack of the Clones*.

What's even more remarkable about Burton's achievement with *Big Fish* is the convincing human overtone he maintains (without being overly preachy), uncharacteristic of his prior films. His portrayal of the father-son relationship is arguably one of the best to be seen, which leads to the single most heart-warming scene in film in years.

Much like the stories elder Edward Bloom tells, *Big Fish* is almost dream-like. And much like the story's lesson that a fish grows with its surroundings, as Burton's masterpiece grows more outlandish by the scene, so will your appreciation of it. In the end, the film as a whole is unforgettable.

Mona Lisa Smile pretty, but unsatisfying

by Julie Horbal

Just as artist Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa leaves the impression of emotional upheaval, director Mike Newell's (*Pushing Tin, Donnie Brasco*) *Mona Lisa Smile* definitely leaves the audience with mixed feelings.

Set in 1953 New England, the movie tells the tale of 30-year-old, unmarried art history professor Katherine Watson (Julia Roberts), who takes a teaching post at Wellesley College.

To her surprise, Watson discovers her students are enrolled in the women-only school, not to gain an education, but to occupy their time until they move into their "natural roles" as housewives and baby-makers.

In an attempt to dissuade the group of girls (fronted by Julia Stiles, Kirsten Dunst, and Maggie Gyllenhaal) from falling into line, Watson defies the traditions of the college and teaches the girls of things unheard of at the time: modern art, law school, and life without a husband.

As would be expected, some of the girls respond more favorably to Watson's approach, while others make life a living hell for their professor, who, at 30 and without a husband, is already looked down upon in every state but her native California.

The film makes a desperate attempt to explore the role of females in post-war America - and almost succeeds.

The story's subplots (cheating husbands, miscommunicated romances, and freedom of choice) help keep the movie's study of resolving repression original and interesting.

But the story, although done with slightly different characters and superficially different dialogue, has been done before, and the struggles portrayed are far from unique and not worth the $8 admission.

However, that being said, just like Da Vinci's masterpiece, the film is strangely beautiful and satisfying to look at.

Gorgeous shots make the New England scenery unlike any other, with lush trees and gardens and flowing waterways. The best of the '50s is brought out in the decorum and the costumes are fascinatingly glorious. The sheer wonder of the shots and sights make the film wonderfully appealing to the eye.

But, as far as the ear is concerned, it's a different story.

Although the acting (on the part of Stiles, Dunst, and Gyllenhaal) is natural, believable and at times quite moving, the script is completely cliché - a faux pas that cancels out the young stars' promise and potential.

In addition to a stereotypical anti-establishment, pro-feminism dialogue (for example, Dunst's character's "surely, you must dread being a spinster" comment), Julia Roberts' character can't be separated from any of her other confused, coming-of-age, pretty women.

Roberts portrays Katherine Watson as the same, tired romantic heroine found in her many other romantic comedies/dramas, only this time, she's strong enough to have a life before and after her romantic conquests.

Despite the film's many shortcomings, it is somehow still interesting and heartwarming, although it doesn't completely convey its obviously desired effect.

If *Mona Lisa Smile* had been made in the period in which it was set, it would have been an outrageous and biting social commentary.

As things stand, it falls short of outrageous and lands somewhere between moderately entertaining and forgettable, leaving the viewer with a smile about the size of the original Mona Lisa's.

2003's best movies: return of the blockbuster

by Ryan Hladun

It was a fantastic year for film. In 2003, moviegoers saw the much-anticipated conclusions to two of the greatest film trilogies of our time. Blockbusters were actually good again. Visual effects, while reaching new pinnacles, took a backseat to storytelling, and independent films gained some much deserved attention. Here are the best films of this past year.

10. ***Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*** – Disney hit the nail on the head with this genuinely entertaining adaptation of their theme park ride. Johnny Depp is irreplaceable as Jack Sparrow, former captain of the Black Pearl turned rum-obsessed outcast. Sparrow leads Will Turner (now mega-star Orlando Bloom) on a crusade against the ship's new owner, Barbossa (Geoffrey Rush) and his crew of cursed pirates. The action is wild, the effects amazing.

9. ***X2: X-Men United*** – The prime example of the super-hero sequel done right. When the safety of all mutant-kind is threatened by mutant-hating scientist, Professor Charles Xavier (Patrick Stewart) and his team of mutants, led by the likes of Wolverine (Hugh Jackman) and Storm (Halle Berry), do all they can to save it. The effects in *X2* are astonishing, as they introduce a host of unique mutant powers, and the action (specifically the opening scene in the White House) is remarkable. *X2* succeeds in pleasing both comic and non-comic fans alike.

8. ***Shattered Glass*** – The true story of Stephen Glass (Hayden Christensen), the young hotshot journalist for the *New Republic* magazine whose career went into a tail-spin after it was found that over half of his articles were fabricated. Movies based on genuinely hated characters can be difficult to get across to an audience, but *Shattered Glass* pulls it off near-perfectly.

7. ***American Splendor*** – Based on the life of Harvey Pekar (played impressively by Paul Giamatti), a man who wrote hit comic books about his everyday life, *American Splendor* is the surprise independent hit of 2003. Narrated by the real Harvey Pekar, we're taken through his ups and downs and see how his seemingly normal life is changed because of his comics. *American Splendor's* unusual story and superb innovations in editing (playing between animation, documentary and narrative filmmaking) make for an enjoyable viewing experience.

6. ***Mystic River*** – One of the most critically acclaimed films of the year, and deservedly so. Legendary director Clint Eastwood takes us into the lives of three former childhood friends, Jimmy, Dave and Sean (played by Sean Penn, Tim Robbins and Kevin Bacon, who could all easily earn Oscar nominations for their roles), who were driven apart by a terrible incident but are reunited years later when Jimmy's daughter is murdered, and Dave is one of the prime suspects. The characters are complex and are expertly given the forefront of attention from Eastwood. *Mystic River* is thought-provoking and demanding.

5. ***Lost in Translation*** – Hollywood's beloved jester Bill Murray has finally made the transition to drama, and what a smooth transition it was. Directed beautifully by Sofia Coppola to the best performance of his career, Murray shines as Bob Harris, an American actor depressed in Japan. He meets a young American girl, Charlotte (Scarlett Johansson) and the two brighten each other's spirits by sharing a week in Tokyo. *Lost in Translation* is graceful and awe-inspiring.

4. ***Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*** – Russell Crowe plays Captain Jack Aubrey in a role tailor-made for him. During the Napoleonic era, he leads a crew of British seamen on a hunt for a French warship in the best film about naval warfare to date. *Master and Commander* combines intense action and realism.

3. ***House of Sand and Fog*** - A surprisingly excellent film about a woman (Jennifer Connelly) losing her home to an Iranian immigrant (Ben Kingsley) and his family, after she was wrongfully evicted, leading to intense clashes between the two sides. The script is one of the year's best.

2. ***Big Fish*** – Tim Burton is back with with his best film to date. Even though it is full of your usual witches, werewolves and mermaids, *Big Fish* is a modern fantasy like no other. Edward Bloom is an old man full of tall tales, except he thinks they're real. Burton takes us into these stories as only he can do, as a young Bloom (Ewan McGregor) escapes death and saves lives in a number of bizarre adventures. From a storytelling standpoint, there is nothing quite like it.

1. ***Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*** – The story of two little hobbits on a quest to destroy a ring is finally over. Now that it has been completed and placed in history, in terms of filmmaking, Peter Jackson's *Ring's* trilogy soars above all else. And *The Return of the King* capped it off flawlessly. The raw emotion and pure immensity of it define the term breath-taking. Even after the three-and-a-half hours, you want to see it again and again. *Return of the King* is the best film this year, and arguably of all time.

Ruthie's favourite gin-soaked meals

by Ruth Shead

Top 10 lists are the only way to end one year and start another. Unfortunately, they are pretty self-serving. Surely my top 10 CDs of 2003 are very (completely) different than editor-in-chief Joff Schmidt's, which surely include something by Ms. Amos. So here's my self-involved 2003 top 10 list, which I have limited to five, so I suppose it's a top 5 list.

My top five meals of 2003 (in no particular order):

1. Late September, Thursday: I only had one class Thursdays, so the day was already good. It was also my birthday and my parents wanted to take me out for dinner. As a student, I thought I'd take advantage of the situation and go somewhere I normally wouldn't, which was fine with my parents because they have higher standards than my normal tastes. It was early when I got out of class, so Lauren, who was going to join us, and I went to the King's Head for an aperitif. A few g & t's later, we walked up Main Street to the Fat Angel. I quickly regretted ordering the daily special because I remembered the last time I had pumpkin pillows (ravioli filled with pumpkin in reduced balsamic vinegar). But it was still good and the napkins match the chairs, and they let me sit in the purple one. We also had martinis, which were later followed by a night at the Toad that ended with Southern Comfort dripping off its chin.

2. Even if they insist on playing YMCA, weddings are a fantastic place to eat. My cousin Jill got married in late June and my whole family went. I was sitting at a different table than him, but I ran into my father at the buffet where there were six different kinds of fish. You know when my father likes a meal because he nods his head and says "not very bad." Jill's wedding? Not very bad at all.

3. Is gin a meal? Someone had a party. We had to ask our ride to stop so we could get some mix to go with our Sapphire Blue. They only had ginger ale, but we weren't feeling particularly picky and the idea of gin & gin was sort of funny. There were a lot of people at the party and we left 17 messages on our friend's answering machine because he didn't show up. When we were done we hitched a ride back to the Village where Dev hosted an after-party, where we shared bottles of peach wine and argued about politics, which you're not supposed to do when you drink. Hours into our debate the sun surprised us, so we decided that everyone could use some eggs and when we got outside we realized that it wasn't that cold anymore, and we walked down the street to Stella's where someone kept telling me to try the jam, but I was too full and it was way past my bedtime.

4. I'm going to put my lemonade in here. The one I had at Jet Fuel in Toronto. Toronto summers are suffocating. One rainy, hot, stuffy Sunday, when everything looked down and the weekend was going to end whether we did anything or not, Michael and I biked to Cabbagetown where there's a farm in the middle of the city, and Michael Ondaatje apparently has a house. The lemonade was $3, but it was divine. The woman behind the counter scooped brown sugar into the a tall glass and melted it with steaming water, while she squeezed lemons right in front of us. She mixed everything together with ice and water and when we tasted it the rain stopped, the sky turned blue, and birds came out. God was happy.

5. In my original conversation with a friend about my best meals of 2003, I included a meal we had shared at Papa George's. But I'm replacing it with another meal because that was before I went to the Falafel Place, which the same friend told me about. The poached eggs were perfectly runny and the coffee, bottomless, which is necessary when you're looking for breakfast, especially when the company is good, which is what a good meal is all about.

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From superstardom to super suckery

The Projector's guide to the best and worst CDs of 2003

by *Projector* staff

Two-thousand-and-three brought with it a whole mess of music, and the *Projector*'s reviewers tried to cover as much of it as we could. There was good, bad, ugly, and every shade in between. To wrap up the music year, we present our list of the best and worst CDs we reviewed in 2003. And if you hear anything in 2004 you'd like to share an opinion on, or would like to comment on our list, the Projector welcomes CD reviews and reader comments. E-mail us at rrcprojector@hotmail.com.

BEST (5 STARS):

Strapping Young Lad, *SYL* - "The metal gods have bestowed upon us another masterpiece," resident metal guru Andrew Wiens says. "With the ferocious drumming of Gene Hoglan, the low-tuned monster riffage, and Devin Townsend's powerful voice, SYL has everything you've been aching to hear." (Reviewed 4/14)

Tomahawk, *Mit Gas* - Reviewer Joff Schmidt appreciates Tomahawk's "sharp, smart songwriting, catchy riffs, and altogether aggressive approach," and says "The 11 tracks on the album are consistently fresh, engaging, and listenable." (Reviewed 9/2)

Fiction Plane, *Everything Will Never be OK* - "Fiction Plane shares much in common with countrymen like Coldplay and Radiohead," writes Joff Schmidt, "catchy guitar hooks, smooth as butter bass lines, beautifully airy production, and smart songwriting." The CD probably could have received a six-star review if it had been louder. (Reviewed 9/15)

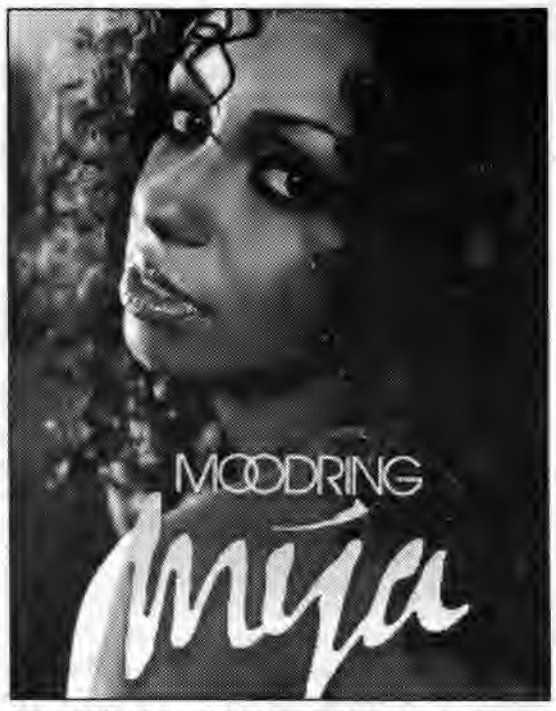
Fiction Plane - good listening for young and old alike.

The Weakerthans, *Reconstruction Site* - Local boys make good, according to reviewer Shawna Forester. "Despite all the polish, the songs at the core are still full of complex and sophisticated lyrics," she says. "*Reconstruction Site* falls far from selling out and makes you feel warm and fuzzy inside." (Reviewed 9/15)

David Bowie, *Reality* - "After almost four decades in the music business, David Bowie finally sounds like himself," says Marc Zienkiewicz, who praises the "soulful, contemplative quality that Bowie previewed on last year's *Heathen*, but which comes to full fruition on *Reality*." (Reviewed 9/29)

Keith Jarrett Trio, *Up For It* - Reviewer Trevor Kuna calls this "the type of jazz perfect for an evening of wining and dining, or if you're a student, drinking beer and studying... My feet began to tap the minute Jarrett's fingers hit the ivory keys." (Reviewed 9/29)

A Perfect Circle, *The Thirteenth Step* - Reviewer Ian Wheeler says, "Although it's hard to catch onto at first, eventually you become enveloped by Maynard James Keenan's melodic voice, and swallowed up by the rest of the band's encircling presence." (Reviewed 10/14)



Mya's *Moodring*: file under "utter crap."

WORST (LESS THAN 2 STARS):

Dashboard Confessional, *MTV Unplugged* - Reviewer Damian Purdy says "this bastardized emo crap is precisely the type of self-indulgent navel-gazing today's under-18 crowd would eat up... Painfully artless, but [singer/songwriter Chris] Carrabba is unfortunately a bard of his time nonetheless." (Reviewed 2/10)

Big Bear, Big Bear's Garbage Can: Reusing Resources - "A perfect example of bad Winnipeg rap comes forth," reviewer Jordan Chalifoux says. "Inadequate beats help form quite possibly the worst rap album to ever be released in Winnipeg." So much for supporting the local music scene. (Reviewed 3/17)

Siouxsie and the Banshees, *The Best of...* - With characteristic subtlety, former entertainment editor Sam "Disillusioned With Punk Rock" Thompson says, "As I sit here listening to this, I'm impressed I haven't regurgitated my dinner all over the CD player." Gee, tell us what you really think, Sammy. "I can't even begin to explain how bad this is... The Nintendo-soundtrack-turned-evil background music is completely inexcusable." (Reviewed 4/28)

I Mother Earth, *Quicksilver Meat Dream* - "This is an unadulterated piece of hard-rock crap from start to finish," says editor-in-chief Joff Schmidt. "Vocalist Brian Byrne's complete inability to carry a tune left me yearning for the return of the Edster [original vocalist Edwin]... The writing here is uninspired, uninteresting, and completely devoid of any personality." But at least it's Canadian content. (Reviewed 5/12)

Ashley MacIsaac, *Ashley MacIsaac* - speaking of Canadian content... entertainment editor Ruth "I hate everything" Shead actually gave this a star rating of "SUX," which arguably isn't really a star rating at all, but seems to sum up the CD. "MacIsaac's self-titled album makes my ears bleed," Shead writes. "It's unfortunate that he can't let go of the perverse idea that Celtic, electronica and pop music complement one another." Please send cotton balls for Ruth's bleeding ears. (Reviewed 5/26)

The Planets, *Classical Graffiti* - "If you like classical music, you'll hate The Planets. And if you don't like classical music, you'll hate The Planets," says Joff Schmidt. "It's hard to like, or even take seriously, a group that thinks it's a good idea to layer lame drumbeats and cliched electric guitar solos over horribly arranged pieces of classical music." (Reviewed 9/2)

Mya, *Moodring* - "The lyrics are unoriginal, tacky, and just plain boring, much like the accompanying music," reviewer Lori Ebbitt says. "Mya does have a beautiful voice," she says. "It's just a shame it's wasted on utter crap like Moodring." You'll find Moodring in the "Utter Crap" section of your favourite music store. (Reviewed 9/15)

Cold, *Year of the Spider* - "I suppose the most obviously grating aspect of Cold is the lame, heard-'em-a-million-times Creed-inspired vocals of Scooter Ward," says embittered Creed-hater Joff Schmidt. "But Ward can't be held solely accountable for the pure suckery of Cold - stale riffs are churned out by guitarists Kelly Hayes and Terry Balsamo." Wait a second - is "suckery" even a word? (Reviewed 9/15)

- compiled by Joff Schmidt

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CD REVIEWS

RACHEL'S
Systems/Layers
Quarterstack
*****1/2**

American avant-chamber trio Rachel's scored their fifth album, *Systems/Layers* for an art project put together by New York Theatre Collective SITI Company. The resulting album certainly feels like the accompanying backdrop to a larger work; *Systems/Layers'* 19 largely-instrumental pieces create powerful aural soundscapes that evoke crystalline scenery and lucid imagery.

The group achieves this effect through carefully considered and varied instrumentation including piano, strings, electronica, and field recordings. The album's best piece is the plaintive "Water from the Same Source," in which pensive strings anchor galloping piano lines to a waltz-like tempo. Like much of the rest of the album, it is immediately pretty, but repeated listens reveal the music's much more sophisticated intricacies. This is music that demands the listener's attention for full appreciation.

If all this sounds ambitious, it's really just a continuation of what the group has been doing for almost 10 years. With *Systems/Layers* Rachel's demonstrate that they have refined their understanding of experimental chamber music to the point where they can safely be placed at the top of their genre.

Systems/Layers may not break a lot of new ground for the group, but it is a pleasant and challenging experience nonetheless.

- Damian Purdy

EXPLOSIONS IN THE SKY
The Earth is not a Cold Dead Place
Temporary Residence
****

Post-rock has become something of a dirty word in indie rock circles since seminal groups like Slint and Talk Talk first pioneered the genre nearly 15 years ago. The innovations found on albums like *Spiderland* inadvertently provided a platform for countless bands of considerably less inspiration to present their own aimless meanderings. In music, just like sex, simple repetition and inevitable release reduced to a strict formula soon gets boring.

With *The Earth is not a Cold Dead Place,* Texas-based four piece Explosions in the Sky have crafted an album that is much better than bad sex. It not only rewrites the rule book of post-rock, but also reminds us what made the genre so jaw-dropping in the first place.

Explosions in the Sky's second album largely abandons the jarring soft/loud Mogwai-esque dynamics that characterized their debut *Those Who Tell the Truth Shall Die...* . Instead, the group displays a remarkable maturation in songwriting chops. Each of the album's five compositions is allowed ample space to expand and evolve. The result is a work that feels constantly in flux, growing and transforming with each note.

The album's most affecting piece is its closing composition, entitled "Your Hand in Mine." Armies of sparkling guitars weave in and out, overlapping and complementing each other, creating gorgeous melodies that rise and fall in sweeping movements.

Explosions in the Sky have released the album of the year, and established themselves as today's leading instrumental group. If I hurl enough superlatives at the wall, perhaps some will stick. Go buy this album.

- Damian Purdy

DEFAULT
Elocation
TVT Records
****1/2**

Oh-oh - sounds like somebody left the Creed-rock machine on overnight.

Okay, so maybe that's not an entirely fair assessment of Default's sophomore album, a follow-up to 2001's *The Fallout* (which included the hit, i.e. grossly overplayed, single "Wasting My Time"). But at their worst on *Elocation*, Default do sound an awful lot like Nickelback, who in turn sound like Creed, who, in turn, sound like shit.

This sound is particularly noticeable on tracks like "Taking My Life Away," the first single from the album, which sounds so unbearably generic that it could have been produced by any one of a number of crappy bands clogging the airways right now.

At the same time, Default does occasionally veer from formulaic hard rock. Sometimes this is a really bad thing - the soft-rock beat and vocal harmonies of "Made To Lie" create a sound reminiscent of the worst of boy bands.

But the very next track, "Crossing the Line," features an almost bluesy riff and driving drumbeat which borders on being interesting.

Elocation's not likely to stay in my CD player for any length of time, but it is an album that holds some promise.

- Joff Schmidt

SHAYE
The Bridge
EMI Music Canada
******

When a group is comprised of Kim Stockwood, Damhnait Doyle, and Tara MacLean, it's pretty well the closest thing Canada is going to get to a female supergroup, save Velvet Empire. The catch is, Shaye isn't all that super.

The three popular solo artists combine their considerable talents on an album that never really plays to their strengths. The three women all have powerful voices, and create some fantastic harmonies throughout the album.

The problem is their material - the songs are largely sickly sweet, middle-of-the-road country-tinged pop, and are all essentially forgettable (if you want to know how sickly sweet, check out these lyrics from the song "Big, Fat Babies:" "Turn off the TV there's nothing new in there/ Stop reading the papers/ ...Let's settle down you and me/ And make some big, fat babies").

It's a shame, too - only half of the album's 12 songs were written by Shaye, the others having been tracked down over the year and a half during which the album was produced. You would think that in nearly two years, these three talents could have found some better material.

I guess Shaye needs more time to look.

-Joff Schmidt

DREAM THEATER
Train of Thought
Elektra
******1/2**

Ah, progressive metal. Where would weird guys who spend 15 hours a day practicing guitar be without it?

This release is one of the heaviest, angriest, and most satisfying from Dream Theater, arguably the reigning kings of prog metal.

Beloved by long-haired music nerds everywhere for their stunning musical prowess, the foursome deliver pretty much what Dream Theater fans will expect - blazing guitar and keyboard solos, near-impossible bass runs, blistering drumbeats, and vocals only men in really tight pants can produce. As for songwriting, expect complex structures, mathematically-improbable time signatures, and really long tracks.

As usual, Dream Theater proudly wear their influences on their sleeves - you'll hear lots of influence from prog rock masters like Yes, Rush, and Kansas, as well as nods to metal mainstays like Black Sabbath and Metallica (in fact, "This Dying Soul" features a backing vocal line very obviously "borrowed" from Metallica's "Blackened").

What's different about this Dream Theater album is how consistently solid the songwriting is, and how unrelentingly dark and aggressive the songs are. Angry lyrics, such as those in the 14-minute album closer "In the Name of God" are found throughout the CD's seven tracks: "Listen when the prophet/Speaks to you/Killing in the name of God."

But Dream Theater should not be dismissed as just angry metalheads - these are superb musicians, who display their maturity as a band with *Train of Thought.*

- Joff Schmidt

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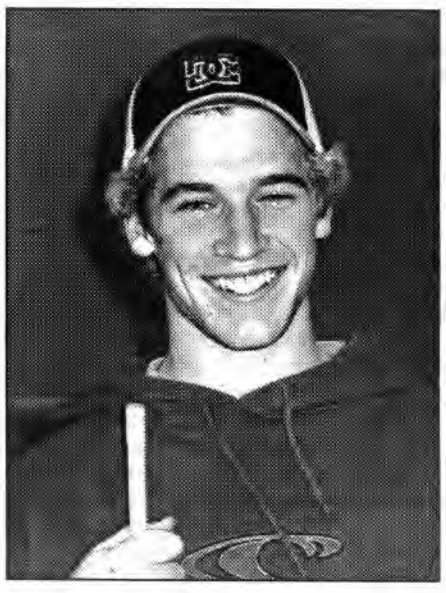
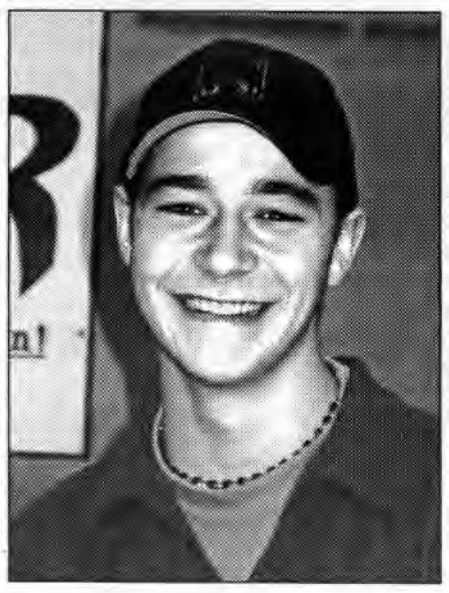
What is your New Year's resolution?

by Lindsay Winter and Jean-Marc Prévost



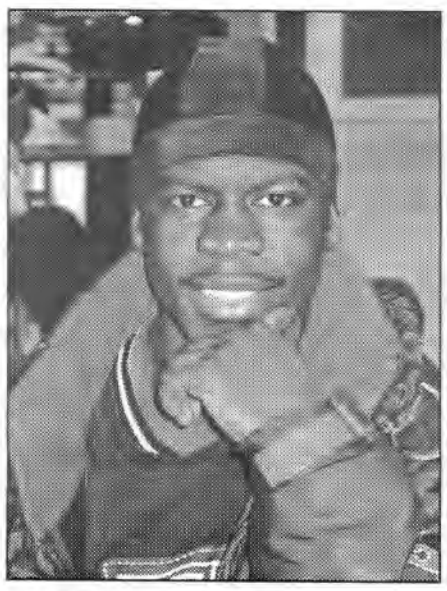
"To start attending classes."

Andre Dino
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



"To quit smoking."

David Deleurme
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

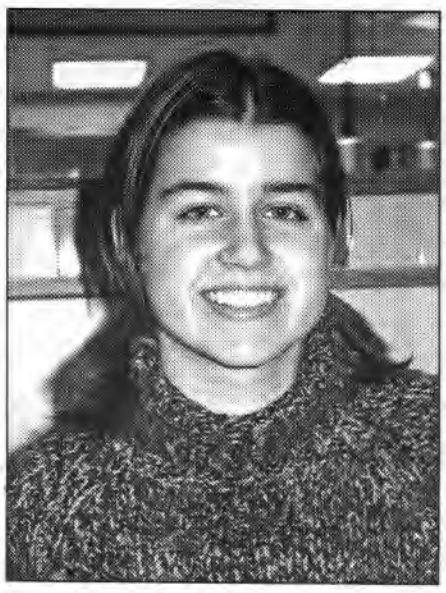


"To get a good tan in Mexico."

Leslie Mawejje
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

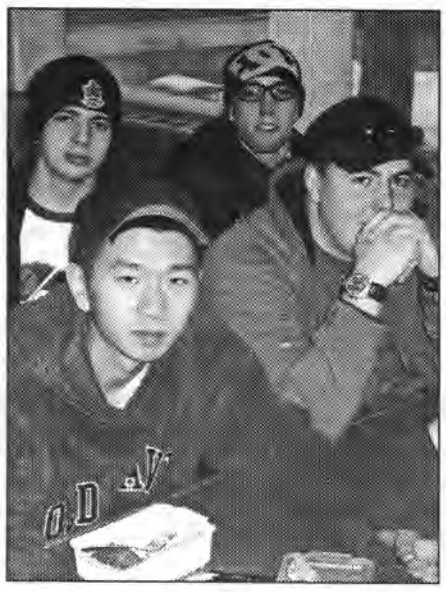
"To stop eating chocolate."

Jaime Unger
DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



"I want to stop buying new clothes. I have enough to last me six to eight weeks without ever doing my laundry."

Julie Turner
DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



"To pass Englsih with teacher Larry Y. 'Scary Larry'."

Jeff Ching
Chris Oppeneer
Nathaniel Forest
Neil Moran
TECHNICAL COMMUNICATIONS

"To never make a New Year's resolution again."

Tanis Suthern
DIPLOMA OF NURSING ACCELERATED

"No fast food!"

Christy Suderman
DIPLOMA OF NURSING ACCELERATED