Unhappy GSS president shuts down 'happy hour'

By Bryan McGill

Angered by what he terms an indifferent membership, Al Rydant, president of the Graduate Students' Society, is considering the possibility of dissolving the GSS. As starters, Rydant told The Ring he is cancelling all GSS social functions, including the time-honored "happy hour" which is held every Friday evening in the Student Union Building and which has been a popular draw for faculty, staff, students and alumni wishing to relax over the cheapest beer on campus (50 cents a bottle).

The happy hour, beginning this Friday, will be dropped indefinitely. "I have no qualms about closing the GSS down," said Rydant, who is considering one alternative of throwing its membership under the authority of the Alma Mater Society, which now represents undergraduate students.

What is gripping Rydant is that while he and his executive have been working for better financial deals for graduate students, they have received little or no support from the membership-at-large.

Rydant, a graduate in the Geography Department, made appeals to the members to step forward for five positions coming vacant on the executive, but only two persons did so, Steve McClelland and Judy Wigmore, both first-year graduate students in Geography.

One of the positions left unfilled is that of social director, which is the reason for the cancellation of the happy hour, all wine-and-cheese socials, and the annual GSS dinner-dance.

"Since we have no social director we are going to divert funds from GSS social functions to other purposes," Rydant said.

Rydant is also going to discontinue GSS representation on the Canadian Union of Graduate Students. "If graduate students are not interested in working with the executive we will determine what will happen," Rydant said he is forced to work two or three hours a day on GSS business, while at the same time he has his studies and teaching to do. "Frankly I don't care if we have the GSS or not."

Nevertheless, whether the GSS continues or not, Rydant is still concerned that fairer financial deals for graduate students, they will have to pay a $42 fee, compared to $15 they now pay, and if them on official university bodies, such as the Board of Governors and the Senate, he pointed out.

Rydant said President Howard Petch told the GSS executive that the council will not, the GSS case "a high priority item with the aim of supporting us more in line with what graduate students get at other universities."

Because government money is tight these days, the GSS was told higher allocations for teaching assistants will have to come from within the university.

Rydant speculated that if half the approxi- mate total of scholarships and fellowships distributed annually to graduate students was allocated to help paying teaching assistants this would bring their level of income up to that of U.B.C. teaching assistants, who are paid more than those at Uvic, but less than those at S.F.U.

Some 191 graduate students out of a total of 500 are teaching assistants here, and they are all paid $570 a month for a 14-hour week compared to $546 for an M.A. and $665 for a Ph.D. at SFU for 15 hours, and $450 for both at UBC.

About $275,000 in scholarships and fellowships was allocated to a number of graduate students this year.

Rydant is critical of the way in which this was done, that is on the basis of marks, when he feels it should be more on what university the graduate comes from and on his financial need.

At the meeting with the executive council, the GSS was told by Dr. Steve Jennings, Dean of Graduate Studies, that he agreed different criteria should be used for allocation of fellowships and scholarships.

It was also suggested that such monies be given in lump sums to the various departments to be passed on to their graduate students, instead of the current practice of distributing through the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Rydant said that though the GSS might be absorbed into the AMS, he doesn't want to see the position of graduate students weakened on the economic issues.

If the AMS takes over the affairs of graduate students, it would also represent them on official university bodies, such as the Board of Governors and the Senate, he pointed out.

Rydant said if graduate students go under AMS, they will have to pay a $42 fee, compared to the $15 they now pay, and if they are dissolved as a society and become some kind of bargaining unit on their own

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they will have to pay $30 in athletics fees, instead of the current $6.50.

The GSS subsidizes happy hour to a tune of $811 a year, which covers the cost of selling beer at 50 cents a bottle rather than at 70 cents, which the AMS offers through its SUB pub.

Rydant is already sitting on $7,000 from membership fees, and he is thinking of spending it on the creation of a graduate scholarship fund or diverting it along with social functions money into research or "some relevant community projects."

In his anger at the membership, Rydant said he is also going to annoint "representatives" in Art graduate students who recently complained to him. And the way a GSS representative was appointed to a committee answering to the Dean of Arts.

"They say we need them, but they have really let down the GSS because none of them stepped forward to work on the executive."
The new television studio, with its two color cameras, is now fully installed and ready for use, says Gerald Testar, supervisor of Television Services. Media and Technical Services (MATS) Faculty wishing to use this facility, which is located in the basement of the McPherson Library, are asked to call Arthur Hall, media co-ordinator, at Local 4307. Testar says Television Services also provides full or partial 16mm television program production for in-class use or telecasting lecture, and video taping for student and professional evaluation.

The Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies will sponsor lectures in English by two distinguished scholars next week. Dr. Olga Baguña, professor of Italian at Columbia, will talk on "Paradiseo's Six Characters in Search of an Author," Nov. 25 at 12:30 p.m. in Elliott 167, while Dr. David Roundtree, Department of Slavic and East European Studies, will lecture on "Pablo Neruda and the Spanish Civil War," Nov. 29 at 2:30 p.m. in Cleary 306.

A panel discussion on "Man Tse-tung: The Man and His Legacy", will be held in MacLaurin 144 under the sponsorship of the university's lecture committee and the departments of History and Slavonic and Oriental Studies. Visiting participants will be Rene Goldman, Department of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia and James Townsend, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria. From UVic will be Harry Haioo (Slavonic and Oriental Studies), Howard Biddulph (Political Science), and Ralph Croziner (History).

J. Les Green, vice-president of the Victoria section of the Canadian Association of University and College Employees, and Friends, will speak during an open meeting on campus Nov. 25 on "The Laetrile Cancer Cure Controversy". John Elliott, 167, will include a film and discussion. "Some workers are a cancer cure when others insist it is quackery," said R.H. Mitchell (Chemistry), who will be chairman of the meeting. He added that the TV show "is not a panacea, but not in Canada. The meeting is sponsored by the Chemical Department and the Chemical Institute of Canada.

The Faculty Club's popular Friday buffet is being extended 15 minutes to 1:45 p.m. to accommodate those who have to give 12:30 lectures, according to R.H. Mitchell (Chemistry), chairman of the club board. "We would, however, like to point out that the best time to attack it is between 11:45 and 12:15 when most tables are empty," he said in circular notice. "We are sorry if we have waited awhile in between, but on last Friday, for example, the club served a record number of 220 lunches."

Faculty members or departments often send us small submissions, usually about lecture tours and research visits to other parts of the world, which The Ring doesn't necessarily publish. We like to be kept informed about what faculty are up to, and it is possible some of these small items qualify as news and lead to expanded features. But because a faculty member travels to Hong Kong or Paris or wherever to give a lecture it isn't automatically news. Therefore, when a faculty member publishes, we do invite a bibliographical description (Chicago style) which we will list. We are particularly interested in hearing about research projects, for often they make excellent stories. Some departments have appointed one of their members to act as liaison with The Ring. This is helpful. We then have a more balanced and informed view of what is going on in a particular department. We wish more departments would follow this practice.

In the past we have published letters from persons who are petitioning for seats on the Board of Governors or Senate. As of now we are declining such material. We feel that when an election is on we should print everyone's platform or no one's. But we can't promulgate everyone's views, because we don't have the space, coming out as we do every two weeks with normally only eight pages, or the time, that is, trying to track everyone down in the interests of fair coverage.

We are shuffling around a few of our Ring distribution boxes. One is being moved from the Faculty of Law lounge area to the main entrance of the new Clearview wing to accommodate such departments as English, French Language and Literature, and Slavonic and Oriental Studies. (Sorry about that, Murray, but we will still leave a stack in your lounge.) Another box is being moved from the Elliott Building tunnel area up into the Elliott's main lobby. Incidentally, the stump, or the hut area, has not been entirely ignored. A box has been installed in "M" Hut. New Sedgwick Building dwellers will find boxes in what was used to be the English Department reception area near the Classics Department. Usually each issue appears around campus by about 5 p.m. each second Wednesday.

Two more RINGS are scheduled for this term, on Dec. 1 and Dec. 15. The first Ring of the second term is planned for Jan. 19, the deadline for which will be Jan. 12.

Bryan McGill
Editor
It's an age of nostalgia when people are looking back to what they think were the good old days. The good old days for UVic were the Sixties, when it started out with high expectations as a university, and wound up at the beginning of the Seventies torn by dissent and bitterness. You might say UVic, with some hindsight, is looking more ahead these days to the jubilee year of Victoria College and the 15th anniversary of UVic. Anyhow our office has hundreds of photos taken on campus during the Sixties, and every time we thumb through them we can only chuckle. So here are some of the better ones. There are some faces in them which are still around, though it is hard to believe they are the same people. Such as that fellow with the hair on his head thumbing through an ancient book.
Dr. Alan Gowans takes the comics seriously. When he first started describing comics, television and advertising as art forms, Gowans, chairman of the Department of History in Art, found that most people got terribly upset. Now when he describes L'il Abner as an "American Adam in Eden" or a particular Wizard of Id strip as an "allegory on socialism," he finds fewer people turning up their noses.

Gowans is an internationally recognized authority on architectural history, and he lectures at universities around the world. His reputation, however, does not prevent some people from scoffing at the idea of serious consideration of the popular arts.

"Some people are conditioned so that they feel in their bones that popular arts are cheap and vulgar and commercial," said Gowans in a recent interview. Gowans does not press the issue with these people. "Increasingly people are becoming more tolerant and less elitist, less snobbish about it."

But why study the comics as an art form?

Gowans explains that his interest in the popular arts stems from his belief that "they do in our society what traditional arts did in earlier days.

"Art in historic times had a function enabling social institutions to work and society to hold together. Popular arts today preserve the historic conscience of art in the past."

When most people talk about art they mean painting and particularly modern painting, but Gowans includes many other forms.

"My interest in the popular arts is that they preserve the historic conscience of art in the past."

Gowans hastens to add that he is not a person who sees the popular arts as being great or even good. "I'm interested in looking at them in terms of what they do and who they are for."

While he doesn't feel that television commercials are a 20th Century sonnet, Gowans does feel the comics, in reflecting the mood of the people they are written for, can become quite profound.

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**FACULTY PAY HIKE APPROVED**

This time it is for sure: Anti-Inflation Board (AIB) approval has been received on pay increases for faculty and office and technical staff (Local 951 of CUPE). The union The Ring had jumped the gun in erroneously reporting such approval had been given.

Bursar Robert McQueen said the only university group not yet to have their pay hikes ratified are specialist instructional staff.

Approval was earlier granted to administrative and academic professionals and to maintenance and Food Services staff (Local 917, CUPE).