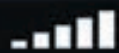


THE LINK

concordia's independent newspaper



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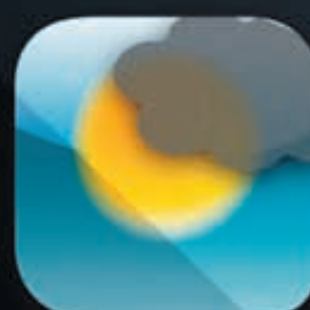
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Features.

Firing A President Isn't Easy • Opinions & News

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CONDOMS: CSU KEEPS YOU SAFE AT NIGHT



Board Mum on Firing

‘What More do you Want the Board to Say?’ Asks Student Union President

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

With one columnist writing about a “leadership crisis” at Concordia, the first week of classes after the firing of President Judith Woodsworth on Dec. 23 was not a pleasant one for the university’s board of governors.

New details surrounding the former president’s dismissal have emerged—including her testimony to CTV on Jan. 5 that she was fired and did not resign as claimed in the university’s official statement.

“I was told that some members of the Board had lost confidence in me,” Woodsworth told CTV, adding that she was “shocked” by the firing.

With the board having fired its second president in three and a half years, students and other members of the Concordia community, including both faculty associations, have demanded explanations from the board, which is composed overwhelmingly of business leaders.

All groups except for one notable exception, the representatives of the university’s 35,000 undergraduate students: the Concordia Student Union.

“We haven’t put out a press release, we are waiting to get all the details, and we are working on finding things out ourselves,” said CSU President Heather Lucas, who is one of four undergraduate students sitting on the board. “I don’t want to go ahead with a press release and give the university a bad reputation due to a blind comment.”

“The rumours and speculation are not healthy.”

While Lucas said she hoped for proper accountability measures in the process of the appointment of an interim president—expected to happen as early as this week—she was unwilling to call for the board to explain why the president was fired.

“According to the press release, she left for personal reasons,” said Lucas, who was then informed of the president’s statement to CTV. “Yeah, she did say that. What more do you want the board to say?”

What has emerged in the past week is that the decision to fire Woodsworth was made by the



Former Concordia President Judith Woodsworth told CTV she was ‘shocked’ to find out Concordia’s board of governors lost confidence in her. PHOTO JONATHAN DEMPSEY

board’s executive committee in November while the president was away on university business in Quebec City.

The executive committee, a subgroup of the board composed of eight governors—including the board’s chair, Peter Krut—and undergraduate student and former CSU President Amine Dabchy, met on Nov. 2 and Nov. 23.

“I am a member of the board, but I am not a member of all the committees. I tried to be in the Executive Committee, I put forward my name, but unfortunately I couldn’t,” said Graduate Student Association President Adnan Abueid, the only graduate student on the board. “I have spoken to Amine about what is going on in the committee, but he cannot tell

me everything, even though I am a member of the board of governors.”

At the GSA Council meeting on Jan. 27, Abueid said that a decision was forthcoming on what position would be taken with the board. He said he was confident that the council will give him a mandate to demand an explanation for the president’s firing at the next board meeting on Feb. 17.

Despite the position of graduate students, Lucas said she could not speak about her thoughts as a board member.

“I can’t talk to you as a board member because what happens sometimes is confidential, that’s just how the business is.”

With the board not expected to speak for a month and Concordia

spokesperson Chris Mota unable to comment on the situation beyond the university’s official position, students might need to wait until mid-February for answers.

While an interim president may be named soon, the quest to find a new president might take much longer.

“Who would want to come here? I don’t know,” said a faculty member who requested anonymity. “We need clear explanations from the board. Why are they doing it? What is in it for them? There are a couple of people who seem to think that they can run things as a personal business.”

Dabchy, the student representative on the executive committee, was not available for comment before press time.

New Chancellor at Con U

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

Concordia’s board of governors appointed Jacques Ménard, the chairman of investment firm BMO Nesbitt Burns, as the university’s new chancellor on Dec. 9.

Concordia’s seventh chancellor, Ménard will replace David P. O’Brien, the chairman of the Royal Bank of Canada, in the largely honorary position. The university chancellor’s main responsibility is to preside at occasions like convocation.

Despite the appointment and the listing of Ménard on the board’s roll, Concordia has yet to officially announce his appointment.

“We are holding off until we have Mr. Ménard available to answer questions before making the announcement,” said university spokesperson Chris Mota. “The press release has been written for a month.”

As president of the BMO Financial Group in Quebec, Ménard oversees all of the bank’s operations in the province. The new chancellor also sits on a number of other boards in Quebec and Ontario, including the Montreal Heart Institute, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the Montreal Alouettes, HEC Montreal and the Glendon College at York University.

The chancellor also sits on the boards of a number of economic and political organizations, including the Institute for Research on Public Policy, the Trudeau Foundation and the Task Force on Competitiveness, Productivity and Economic Progress. While all of these organizations are listed as non-partisan, they support the industrial funding of research at universities and the “preventative detention” of terrorists.

Closer to Quartier Concordia, Ménard also sits on the board of Claridge Investments, the Bronfman-controlled firm that is building the Seville condo complex near the Faubourg, the proposed site of the recently defeated student centre.

Ménard’s official appointment is expected this week.

CJLO On Funds?

Student Radio Station Seeks Fee Levy Increase

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

Concordia's student-run radio station, CJLO 1690 AM, is exploring a possible move to an FM frequency next year. To help fund the possible migration, the station will be looking to add \$0.09 to its existing \$0.25 per credit fee levy at the Concordia Student Union general election in March.

CJLO Station manager Katie Seline will speak at the CSU Council meeting on Wednesday to request that CJLO's fee levy increase be put on the March ballot.

Since 2008, when CJLO moved from an internet-only station to an AM frequency broadcast, the station's profile has risen significantly. In 2010, CJLO won station of the year at the College Music Journal Conference, was listed as one of the best radio stations in North America by the Huffington Post and was the only Canadian radio station invited to the International Radio Festival in Switzerland.

"Getting our broadcasting license was a long, drawn-out process, but when we flipped the switch and began broadcasting on the radio it really made us a part of the media landscape in Montreal," said Seline. "The acclaim was just the product of all the hard work we get from our student volunteers."

On the heels of this success, CJLO was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Community Radio Fund of Canada to start an after-school program training Montreal high school students in the field of radio broadcasting. After extensive training from CJLO's staff, 10 students produced their own radio shows and many are now considering pursuing a career in broadcasting.

These accolades and initiatives have come with a hefty financial burden. CJLO had to buy and install a 1,000-watt AM transmitter at an estimated cost of about \$71,000. The transmitter was



GRAPHIC CHRISTOPHER OLSON

erected on a plot of land in Lachine that CJLO rents each month.

"We want to be the voice of Concordia students and we're putting ourselves out there but we're also growing beyond our means," said Seline. "We're limited in what we can do in terms of advertising, and we don't really want to be an advertising-based station anyway."

Currently, CJLO receives a \$0.25 per credit fee levy from Concordia undergraduate students as well as \$0.54 from graduate students. The station regularly holds fundraising events but Seline said the increased fee levy would go a long way towards alleviating CJLO's monetary woes.

If students approve the fee levy, Seline said the station would hire a professional consultant to conduct an impact study and look into the cost of a switch to FM radio.

"[CJLO] is a great representation of Concordia outside the university's walls," said CSU President Heather Lucas.

If the fee levy increase makes it to the ballot, the radio station will face an uphill battle. Last year, students voted down three out of four fee levies. Cinema Politica, the only successful student group to lobby for a fee levy during this period, had their \$0.05 increase squeak by with just over 50 per cent of undergraduates voting in favour of it.

Con U Faculty Association Speaks Out

CUFA Criticizes Board of Governors

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

After criticizing the recent firing of President Judith Woodsworth by Concordia's Board of Governors, the Concordia University Faculty Association announced it will hold an open meeting to discuss the university's "crisis in governance" next Monday.

On Jan. 4, CUFA President Lucie Lequin posted a letter on the association's website demanding the board of governors explain the reasons for Woodsworth's dismissal and denouncing the former president's \$700,000 severance package as a "golden parachute."

"The board has acted arrogantly," Lequin told *The Link*. "They can't run the university like their own personal business [...] this is the second time in three and a half years that the board has fired a president. It's an embarrassment to the university."

Former Concordia President Claude Lajeunesse resigned in 2007. His severance package was worth over a million dollars. In September of 2010, Kathy Assayag resigned as Concordia's VP Alumni relations. A few weeks later, Concordia's longtime VP Services Michael DiGrappa left the university to pursue a similar job at McGill.

In the past five years, five Concordia VPs and a number of other senior administrators have resigned with generous severance packages. The cost of these departures is accumulating rapidly and occurring at a time when the university's budget is being tightened, which Lequin said af-

fects the quality of education at Concordia.

Concordia Student Union President Heather Lucas, who sits on the university's Board of Governors, would not comment on the nature of Woodsworth's removal from office.

"The board has acted arrogantly."

—Lucie Lequin,
CUFA President

"All I can say is that I'll do my best to ensure the board is as transparent as possible in the future," said Lucas.

In a mass e-mail sent to members of the Concordia community Monday, Board of Governors chair Peter Krut wrote that Woodsworth was not fired for financial missappropriation, but provided no details as to why the former president was forced out midway into her five year mandate.

Concordia spokesperson Chris Mota also refused to comment on the firing but told *The Link* that Concordia would be listening to the concerns of CUFA and various student groups on campus in the coming weeks.

Lequin will be accepting proposals from CUFA's membership on pressure tactics and other methods of making a difference in the university's governance.

"Monday's meeting will be a turning point for the Board of Governors," she said. "The board has to realize that their attitude towards senior administrators at this school has to change. And hopefully we can send them a clear message."



the asterisk

President Judith Woodsworth's \$700,000 severance package made headlines after she was fired on Dec. 22, but it was only one example of the kind of compensation senior administrators are afforded at Concordia University.

The Policy Concerning the Remuneration of Senior Administrators outlines what type of benefits Concordia's President, the seven members of the President's Senior Administration and the five Academic Deans are entitled to.

In addition to the President's salary, which varies between \$200,000 and \$350,000, the President is entitled to:

- A \$1,200 monthly car allowance plus expenses—not including gasoline
- A \$3,000 monthly allowance for university-related entertainment at their personal residence
- Two club memberships

Vice-Presidents and Academic Deans with an office at Loyola Campus are entitled to:

- A \$900 monthly car allowance plus expenses not including gasoline

- A \$5,000 yearly allowance for professional development or scholarly research

- One club membership

- Senior administrators who were promoted to their posts from within the university and are not re-appointed to the same post get a year's administrative leave with pay.

The President is entitled to a \$1,200 monthly car allowance and two club memberships among other perks

trative leave with pay.

If the administrator was re-appointed to a second term, he/she is awarded a bonus equivalent to six months salary. At the conclusion of his/her second term, the administrator gets a year's administrative leave with pay.

Protests in Montreal, Riots in Tunisia

At Least 10 Killed by Tunisian Police Since Mid-December

• MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Dozens of Tunisians and their supporters gathered outside their country's consulate in Montreal on Sunday to denounce the political violence that has left as many as 20 protesters dead and many more injured.

Shouting "down with the dictator of Tunisia" and "stop the carnage, get out of [the presidential palace] Carthage," they called for the immediate end to the massacre of Tunisians and for the ousting of President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.

It was the fifth Montreal demonstration since the violent uprisings began in mid-December over high rates of unemployment and the rising cost of living gripping the North African country.

Haroun Bouazzi, organizer of Sunday's rally, said the nation-wide uprising now consisting of thousands of lawyers, students, and union members has been decades in the making.

"The Tunisian people have been quiet and boiling for the past 23 years," he said, referring to the time since Ben Ali was first elected in 1987. "Today all Tunisians are together not only for social justice, but also against corruption and for democracy."

Riots began on Dec. 17 after 26-year-old unemployed graduate Mohammed Bouazizi desperately lit himself on fire when police confiscated the fruits and vegetables



Protesters demonstrate against escalating government sanctioned violence in Tunisia. PHOTO MEAGAN WOHLBERG

he was selling on the street without a permit. He died several weeks later from third-degree burns.

Up to 20 people have been shot dead by police since the protests began. Many more have been injured or arrested. There have also been reports of other attempted suicides.

More recently, several journalists, bloggers, alleged hackers, and even a rapper have been arrested and their computers seized and have not been heard from since.

Ghassen Ben Khelifa, who spoke at the Montreal demonstration, said that it is now obvious to the world that the Ben Ali regime is not only corrupt, but "bloody" and a "terrorist [organization]."

"It's very sad what's happening, but we can also see things from a positive viewpoint," said Khelifa. "Why? Because according to the famous saying, in a dictatorship everything goes well until the last 15 minutes. The fear changed camp today. It shows that the dictatorship is weakening. It is scared

and its days are numbered."

Ben Ali enjoys friendly relations with western countries due to his strong pro-trade stance. But the recent killings of civilians are prompting Tunisian-Canadians to say that such support for this dictatorship is hypocritical.

"The Arab world is starting to be free and asking for democracy," said Aziz Hathout, another of the rally's organizers. "We just want the Harper government to understand that, as Canadian citizens as well, we won't accept Canada sup-

porting this regime."

Opposition leader Nejib Chebbi has called for a ceasefire to protect the lives of citizens and their right to protest peacefully, but authorities say that police are only using force when necessary to protect property and lives.

Ben Ali, who has consistently won disputed elections with 90 per cent of the vote for 23 years, called the protests "unacceptable" and warned that they could further injure the economy by discouraging tourists and investors.

Queen Mary Road Businesses Fight Eviction, Gentrification

• MEAGAN DOLSKI

An eviction notice is prominently on display atop the bar in Rodos restaurant.

Christina Yotis, owner of the 30-year-old Greek eatery located on Queen Mary Road, was not alone in receiving news that her business would need to move elsewhere this spring—all of the shops and restaurants on her block have been told they need to leave. These included Ermitage, Toto Express, Queen Sushi, Aux plaisirs du Palais and Clove Flower shop.

The businesses on the strip are ethnically diverse, mostly small and family run. Some of them have been in the same location for decades.

"This is not like changing apartments," said Yotis. "Rodos is a landmark here."

The tenants facing eviction are not the only ones upset about the matter. Recently, a group of friends and loyal customers of the businesses joined together to form the Snowdon Committee—an effort to raise awareness about the evictions, and an attempt to push for the preservation of the block.

The group has created Facebook, YouTube and Twitter pages, in addition to a website which hosts a petition to allow the businesses on the block to stay in hopes of preserving the street's ethnic diversity.

The committee needs 1,500 signatures to take their case to the city. At the time of publication, 679 people had signed—not including the signatures on the paper copy housed in Rodos.

Ksenia Solokoff, Concordia student and secretary of the Snowdon Committee, described the block affectionately as the epicenter of a tight-knit cultural community.

"It has become part of our lives," she said. "I hope that everyone gets to know those places the way I got to know them."

Allprime Properties Inc., the new owner of the building, intends to demolish the block to pursue a project called L'Aragon Queen Mary. The plan is to turn the strip into a complex of condos with a Pharmaprix and a Subway located on the main floor. The pre-existing Subway was the only business on the block granted the right to stay.

"I support the small businesses in a case like this," said Peter McQueen, a city councilor representing Notre Dame de Grace. "I'm not against new construction, but if we're not careful the city will become too homogenous."

Yotis claims that while she has long since received an eviction notice, she has yet to see evidence of a demolition permit. "I think he prematurely tried to evict us, having nothing in his hand—and it's not fair," she said.

Yotis asked to continue renting from the new owner; however, she says that she was categorically refused. Her lease was due to finish in 2013.

"I just don't see how they can treat good citizens and small businesses in this respect," she said.

There will be a hearing held on Jan. 17 in which Allprime Properties Inc. will present their plans to the city. The Snowdon Committee will be there, as will the signatures. She said the hearing should give everyone a better idea of where they stand.

Yotis and Solokoff refused to give up.

"I will fight," said Yotis.



Christina Yotis' bakery 'Rodos' has been on Queen Mary Street for 30 years. Rodos and five other small businesses will have to relocate to make way for condos and a Pharmaprix pharmacy. PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

'Ello Gov'nor

Adrienne Clarkson Coming to Con U



Former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson will speak at Concordia on Thursday.

• ADAM KOVAC

Concordia will be receiving the royal treatment on Thursday, as former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson will be giving a talk as part of the Concordia Student Union Speaker Series.

"When we decided on the speakers, we appreciated what she had to offer Canada in general," said CSU VP External & Projects Adrien Severyns. "We honestly believe she has a lot to offer and the students have a lot to learn from her, especially in terms of her having enhanced Canada's relation-

ship with the international community, promoting multiculturalism and diversity."

Clarkson served as the Queen's representative to the Canadian government between 1999 and 2005. During this span she garnered widespread praise for her close relationship with members of the military, having presided over the return of Canada's unknown soldier from France, and visited troops in Afghanistan in 2002, among other trips taken to overseas Canadian Forces bases.

Prior to her appointment by Prime Minister Jean Chretien,

Clarkson had been an influential and respected journalist, working for *Maclean's* and the CBC, where she hosted Adrienne at Large and The Fifth Estate, winning several Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists awards as well as a Gemini.

"Clarkson was asked to speak because of her numerous travels abroad as a promoter of the Canadian identity in general, what she has done to reach out to different interest groups in civil society in Canada," said Severyns. "She is a big promoter of art as well, it has definitely been something that we'd

like to see promoted at Concordia."

Severyns declined to reveal specifically what Clarkson will be speaking about, saying only that it will touch upon many different themes that are important to Canadian students.

"The main theme is diversity, and I wouldn't like to go too much into details because I'd like to reserve a bit of surprise for the people that will be attending, but it will touch on many themes."

Severyns also confirmed that during Black History Month, the next speaker will be civil rights activist Martin Luther King III.

The Student Union Thinks You Look Cold

And Would Like to Offer you Some Cocoa

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

The Concordia Student Union's Winter Orientation may lack the glitz and glamour of its Fall offerings, but the CSU doesn't want to leave newly arriving students out in the cold.

"It's going to be a smaller scale orientation," said CSU President Heather Lucas. "We just wanted to do something different from last year," when the CSU handed out coffee and snacks to students coming off of the shuttle bus, she added.

Instead, the student union will host "Icefest" on the Reggie's

Terrace on Monday, with an ice bar, snowboarders performing tricks and breakdancers—for the breakdancers, you'll have to move indoors, Lucas said

Starting at 11:00 a.m. on Jan. 18, more than 60 CSU-affiliated clubs will offer free eats during the "Many Tastes of Concordia" event on the 7th floor of the Hall Building.

If vodka and pierogies are your poison, Jan. 19 will bring the CSU's "cultural night," whose theme this year is the Ukraine.

"We were just trying to think of different countries to represent," said Lucas. "We just

thought Ukraine, you know, winter is pretty common there."

On Sunday, The Hive will be granted special permission by the administration to keep its doors open until 11:00 p.m. with a concert featuring artists Scratch, Skcratch, Scratch, which the CSU promises will be "ill."

If you're hungover on Sunday morning—and come on, who wouldn't be?—the CSU will once again host a "Hangover Breakfast," with free eggs, pancakes and sausages. Fruit is also on the menu.

VP Student Life Andres Lopez has yet to attend a winter orientation in the four years since he

began his studies. This will be his first time organizing as well as attending.

"Being an international student, I always keep a week off [before returning to classes in January], so I'm usually back the second week, and I've never been able to attend those orientations and see how it is," said Lopez. "That's why I really wanted to have this orientation in the following weeks of school so that more people can attend."

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS YEAR'S WINTER ORIENTATION, VISIT CSU.QC.CA.

Briefs

Snowplow fatality

A 68-year-old woman was killed and three others were injured as a snowplow hit a vehicle in Ormstown on Sunday. LaSalle resident Elsie Rose Lightfoot was declared dead shortly after being hospitalized. A spokesperson for Sureté du Québec said "the roadway was covered in snow and visibility reduced." The snowplow driver was not injured.

Skunk Weed

Police raided Gatineau resident Olivier MacQuat's house on Thursday, looking for a marijuana grow operation. Police found no drugs, however, as they apparently confused the smell of marijuana with the scent of a skunk that lives on MacQuat's property. MacQuat is asking for a formal apology.

Montreal Stabbing

A man was arrested after a stabbing in a Snowdon bar at 3 a.m. on Saturday. Montreal Police Constable Olivier Lapointe said the arrest took place after someone was stabbed during an argument, possibly over a woman, at Bar Mecs on Decarie Boulevard. The victim suffered a minor injury.

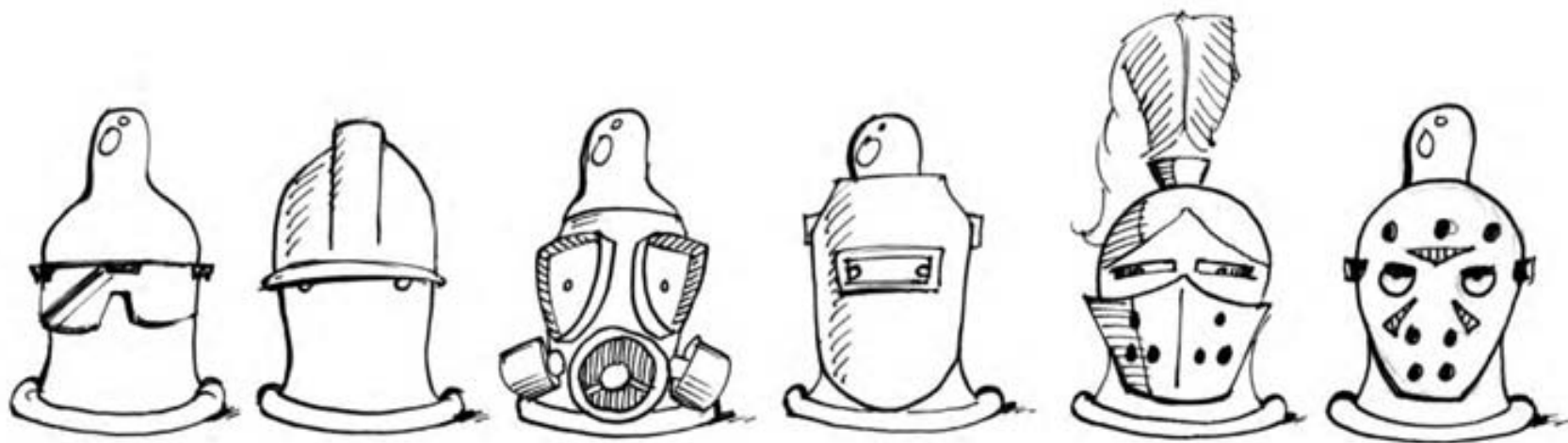
Nurse-In

A Montreal mother who was asked to stop breastfeeding her infant daughter in an Orchestra clothing store is asking for supporters to attend a nurse-in on Jan. 19. Shannon Smith posted her account on a blog and supporters started a campaign for the nurse-in. Smith received a written apology from the company.

Shannon Sues

About 3,500 of Shannon, QC's 4,000 residents have launched a class-action lawsuit against the federal government over toxic chemicals, including trichloroethylene, that were discovered in town's water supply in 2000. According to the Shannon Citizens' Committee, hundreds of residents have died of cancer and an even larger number are still fighting the disease. Nearly 100 witnesses, including doctors, engineers and groundwater experts, are expected to testify in court.

Safer Sex On Campus



GRAPHIC DAVID BARLOW KRELINA

Concordia Sex Kit Distribution Centers Await Approval From CSU Council

• CLAY HEMMERICH

Free condoms, lube, and gloves on campus are becoming a reality, according to Concordia Student Union VP Sustainability and Promotions Morgan Pudwell.

“The plan is to have everything, or at least some of the [safe sex kit dispensers] ready to go [at] the end of March, beginning of April,” she said. “We want elections to die down and have an opportunity for it to be unpoliticized and also have the media attention it deserves instead of elections overshadowing it.”

The safe sex project’s fate is now in the CSU Financial Committee’s hands. A financial plan will be presented to and voted on by Council in February. If Council approves the plan, funding will come from the Special Projects Fund.

“Hopefully before then they’ll be able to get some seed money for this project to start,” said Pudwell.

CSU councillor Lex Gill said that initially there had been some discussion as to whether or not the project would be beneficial to students. One councillor was concerned about non-students taking

the provided safe sex materials.

“Even if non-students are using it that’s alright, Concordia students aren’t just having sex with Concordia students,” said Gill.

After council discussed the idea, most councillors said they fully supported the project that Pudwell and the stakeholders—Queer Concordia, 2110 Center for Gender Advocacy and Concordia Health Services—put forth.

“The Dean of Students Office is not 100 per cent committed yet, but they have been involved in discussions,” said Pudwell.

Pudwell and the stakeholders

lobbying for safe sex dispensers on campus spurred the Policy Reform Committee to draft a proposal advocating sexual health and awareness. The Policy on Healthy Sexuality had been approved by the Custodial Committee and will be presented at the Wednesday council meeting.

One part of the policy outlines that this project would continue for at least five years.

“[The policy] incorporates a lot of things. It’s about anti-discrimination. We don’t want students to feel discriminated against whether it’s because of their sexuality or whether they

just need info or want materials about sex,” said Pudwell. “We want a stigma-free campus.”

The policy also outlines the CSU’s support for clearly marked gender-neutral bathrooms and safe spaces, and zero tolerance for homophobia.

“In a lot of ways there are efforts towards [creating tolerance in sexuality] but the CSU hasn’t been that active in that role. We want to involve the CSU in a solid role,” said Pudwell. “Queer Concordia does a really good job already, keeping things stigma free. They have been a big player in [the project].”

Movin' On Up

Installation of New Escalators in Hall Building Begins This Month

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

The Hall Building’s infamously defective escalators will be gutted and replaced starting Jan. 17. Concordia University’s board of governors approved a proposal on Dec. 9, awarding the \$15 million contract to Quebec construction giant Pomerleau.

“Pomerleau can get the project done on time and they underbid their competitors,” said Jean Pelland, Concordia’s director of projects.

Pomerleau was the general contractor for the construction of Concordia’s EV Building. Over the course of its 45-year history, the Quebec-based company has built over 80 office complexes, 40 health facilities and dozens of sporting venues across Canada.

Construction will begin in the Hall Building lobby between Bento Sushi and the security desk as well as on floors nine through

12 to minimize interference with the nearly 10,000 students who use the building every day. In preparation for the overhaul, Tim Horton’s was shut down and relocated to the opposite side of the lobby over the holidays.

“The first phase shouldn’t be much of a problem,” said Pelland. “Work on the busiest floors of the Hall building will begin in June, when most students aren’t in school.”

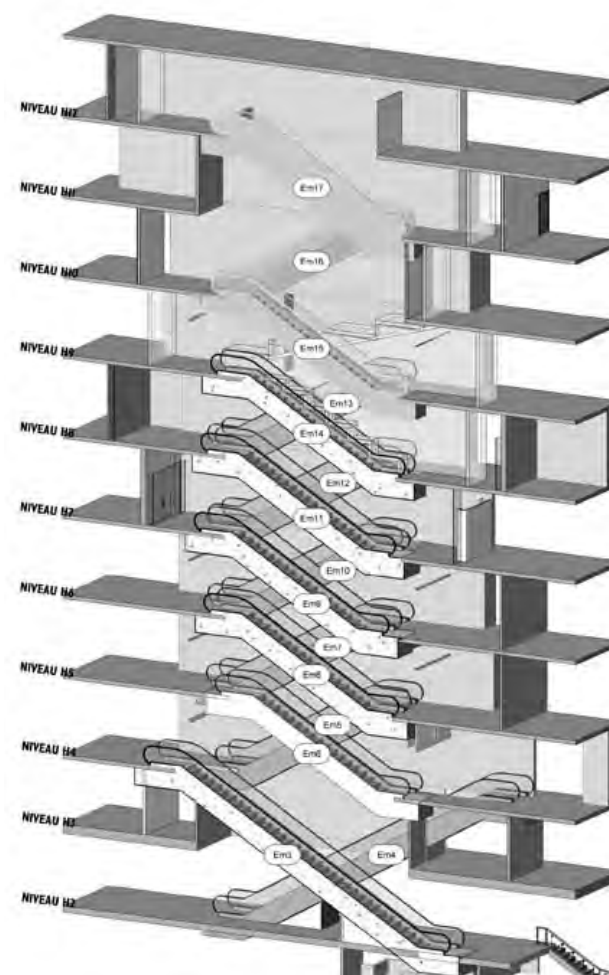
The \$15 million project should be wrapped up by December 2013. In the meantime, said Pelland, the university will “optimize” use of the elevators and students will have to get used to expending a little extra energy navigating the stairwells.

Malfunctioning escalators have plagued the Hall Building since it was built in 1966. The company that manufactured the building’s escalators went out of business in the late ‘60s leading to

an immediate shortage of spare parts. As a result, maintenance workers were forced to cannibalize lower priority escalators to keep the busier ones up and running.

This shouldn’t be much of a concern with the new project, however, as Pomerleau will install escalators built by Kone, a Finnish manufacturer that delivers about 50,000 new escalators each year.

Two other Concordia buildings will also undergo major repairs this spring. The GM Building is slated for a \$14 million facelift. Beginning in March, the GM’s elevators and heating system will be replaced, its lobby expanded and its outer walls torn down and re-clad to fit in with the modern looking EV and MB buildings. Meanwhile, netting has been placed at the base of the Faubourg tower in anticipation of the replacement of the tower’s bricks.



Phase one of the Hall Building’s escalator overhaul is scheduled to begin on Jan. 17. The project is slated to end by December 2013.



The Coltan Conundrum

How a Mineral Essential to the Cellphone Industry Contributes to an Ongoing Human Rights Nightmare

• CLAY HEMMERICH

The smartphone industry is booming and there is no sign of it slowing down. The mobile phone market is expected to be worth over \$200 billion USD in 2013. But with the growing demand for smartphones, there is also a growing demand for the precious ore coltan—approximately 80 per cent of which is mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Coltan mining in the Congo may be the most overlooked problem that is literally in our hands.

After extraction, coltan ore is refined into tantalum, a highly conductive metal that is a necessity in producing smartphones—it's found in every type, size, model and brand. It's inside laptops, mp3 players, Xbox controllers and much more. Coltan is in such high demand that the industry surround the mineral brings in about \$2 billion a year worldwide.

Usually, when a state becomes resource rich, the citizens tend to prosper, but the Congolese have not basked in the benefits of a resource boom. On average, its people earn \$710 a year, which ranks it as one of the poorest countries in the world—201 out of 208 according to the World Fact Book. To compare, Canada's per capita income is \$29,740.

Congolese miners work in deplorable conditions. Researcher Charles Chalondakwa of the *Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural Bukavu* said in a Pulitzer Center documentary, *Congo's Bloody Coltan*, that “they dig naked. They are unprotected. They use a simple flashlight you buy at the market with two batteries. Their hands are bare while using a chisel and a hammer. Some die in [the mines]. There is no air down there. These are unimaginable conditions.”

Local human rights organizations say that it's not uncommon for police officers or government officials to extort miners for their daily earnings, and millions of people have lost their lives to a war enabled by the mining industry.

The situation is dire, but who is to blame? On one hand, demand is fueled by consumer behaviour, but international companies are the ones who own the means of gathering resources necessary to make a given product. Is it the consumer's fault for not demanding a product

go through proper fair-trade agreements, or is it the responsibility of international companies to gather coltan legitimately, regardless of consumer demand?

Reality of the Game

Dr. Samantha Nutt, founder and executive director of War Child told the *The Globe and Mail* that resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo will “require a tremendous amount of initiative that is going to have to ultimately come from consumer momentum and from the industry itself.”

A smartphone costs anywhere from \$150 to much more—an Apple 32 Gb iPhone costs over \$300. The cost of these phones would be even more expensive if coltan was mined with ethical labour practices. Would consumers pay substantially more for an iPhone if they knew it would improve the situation of the Congolese? They should, but they don't have to—that's their choice.

Concordia Marketing Professor and author of *The Consuming Instinct*, Dr. Gad Saad believes that one must recognize the biological forces that have compelled consumers to engage in the behaviours that they do. According to Saad, the problem comes from what he calls the “Tragedy of the Commons.”

He said that it is easy for someone to say they are in support of saving those suffering as a result of coltan mining in the Congo, but that person may think their actions are a small drop in a larger bucket so they don't have incentive to act.

“The intoxicating pull is that everyone thinks this way,” said Dr. Saad, also a *Psychology Today* blogger.

But it's not about whether or not consumers would be interested in purchasing a zero-conflict smartphone, because they are. The average consumer wants a product that will make them feel good about the choice they make. But Dr. Saad believes that in order for consumers to make conscious choices towards alleviating the conflict, consumers have to “find a way to make the Congo fit within their concentric circle of influence.”

“It is very difficult to keep intimate relationships with more than 150 people,” said Saad, reflecting on the Dunbar theory, which hypothesizes that there is a limit on the amount of people with which one

can maintain a social relationship. “So asking for someone from Montreal to feel an affective reaction to something in Congo without any local base, it is equivalent to asking them to care about something happening on Jupiter.”

According to Saad, the key is to make global issues into local ones.

“You have to make coltan mining part of a consumer's daily reality rather than a global issue. You have to convince the consumer that they can have an impact on it and it is relevant at a local level,” said Saad. “If it isn't then it's simply counting on people to be altruistic in a general way.”

Saad isn't suggesting that generosity doesn't exist, but that it is easier to convince people to care if it impacts them directly.

“Take for example helping a needy African child. ‘Please give money to African needy children’ doesn't work. But ‘Give money to your foster child named [insert name here]’ works a lot better, even though in both cases you are still asking for money,” said Saad.

Positive Measures

In the recent past, there have been failed attempts to boycott cellphones manufactured with embezzled Congo coltan, such as the “No Blood on my Cellphone” campaign in Europe. Unfortunately, the campaign proved futile in slowing down the demand for cellphones produced with blood coltan.

Canadian human rights organizations have also been fighting for justice in the Congo. A Montreal-based mining company, Anvil Mining, has been accused of fueling the Congolese civil war and on Nov. 9, 2010, the Canadian Coalition Against Impunity filed a class action lawsuit against the company. *The Gazette* quoted them saying the mining company provided “logistical assistance, played a role in human rights abuses, including the massacre by the Congolese military of more than 70 people [...] in 2004.”

But six days later, the mining company logged a record of \$6.1 million net earnings in the third financial quarter, compared to last year's net loss of \$0.2 million during the same quarter. Despite accu-

sations of being an unethical company enabling the Congolese civil war, their stock price did not suffer. In fact, the company's stock index closed at \$5.02 on Nov. 9 and peaked at \$5.81 on Dec. 1.

In the stock market, social responsibility plays a secondary role to the bottom line.

“Governments should pass legislation to regulate [mining in the Congo] and companies should track where they get their minerals from to ensure it's not financing conflicts,” said Dewar in a recent *The Globe and Mail* live chat.

Efforts have been made by New Democratic Party MP Paul Dewar to combat this issue. He tabled a bill—Bill C-571, the Trade in Conflict Materials Act—with support from the Liberal Party of Canada. If the bill is turned into law, Canadian companies would be held accountable for the means through which they gather resources, and in turn,

stop funds from keeping the war in Congo alive.

But the responsibility to change Congo's fate doesn't only lie on the government and those directly involved in the mining industry. Consumers and citizens can play a direct role in the lives of millions of Congolese people by petitioning for their institutions to pressure technology companies to regulate the mineral, supporting Bill C-571, being aware and spreading the word on where their smartphone comes from, and making this a local issue.

“I believe there's widespread support, not only in Canada, but globally, to regulate conflict minerals,” said Dewar. “That's where citizens come in. Voices should make the difference.” Therein lies the irony of coltan mining—in an industry that relies on voices for survival, those same voices can also affect the biggest change.



GRAPHIC ERIC BENT

“Not a Crazy Dream”

Headquarters Galerie + Boutique Closes Its Doors, Opens Others



Headquarters Galerie + Boutique will host their last event this Friday.



PHOTO LAURA BEESTON

• LAURA BEESTON

After five years of indie-influenced community, retail and art, Headquarters Galerie + Boutique will be holding their final vernissage this Friday, Jan. 14, before closing their doors and moving on to craftier pastures.

Angie Johnson and Tyson Bodnarchuk, the transplanted Winnipeg duo who run the hybrid space a stone's throw from The Village, started HQ in June 2006 to showcase handmade designs and create a hub for like-minded makers in Montreal to show and sell.

“Starving” for a collaborative, artistic community they couldn’t find in Winnipeg, the two said they moved to Montreal during an influx in the greater DIY crafting movement in Canada, and starting HQ was part of “riding this wave.”

“It really worked out,” said Johnson. “What we were trying to do was make a headquarters, a network, and now we’ve got it.”

Collaborating with well over 200 artists over the years, HQ quickly became the place to go to find that one-of-a-kind print, gift, zine or signature piece, while also

offering an opportunity to take in new exhibitions each month in the gallery on the lower level of the shop.

“Looking back now, I feel like we were super naïve about opening a store and running a gallery [...] we didn’t know about so many things,” Johnson continued. “Physically doing it is such a crazy amount of work, organization and requires so much energy to stay excited. It’s really hard and people don’t think about all the little things that go into it. Retail is tough, [...] but we had a lot of nerve.”

“It was 100 per cent worth it,” chimed in Bodnarchuk. “One of the greatest things about the store is how much I’ve learned through the artists I’ve met and collaborated with. The influences artists have on each other—you can see it! Everyone’s feeding off each other, playing with each other. [Collaboration] really forces you to think about how you’re working.”

“That was probably the best part of having the store,” Johnson added, “it was like a key to meeting all these amazing people and the best excuse to talk to and organize

with other independent artists and designers. We wanted to help each other.”

Though the pair said they feel bittersweet about the loss of HQ as a specific space, the fact that the independent, DIY scene in Montreal has evolved so much over the last few years—influenced, in part, by the Internet and sites like Etsy that allow artists to sell their own wares online—makes the duo feel optimistic about the future.

“When we started doing this, we were often the only venue where our designers were selling,” explained Bodnarchuk. “But now, all of them are pushing their own websites instead of telling people to come and visit a store, and we totally understand that change.”

“That’s part of the reason why we’re not as enamored as we were with the idea of having an actual store,” added Johnson. “It’s not as exciting anymore. I’m more interested in online selling and the possibilities there, or creating an event over a weekend—it makes it a little more special.”

“Besides,” she said, “people love to meet and speak with the designers. And this way, designers get to

hold onto more money as well, instead of us having to put a portion of their profit into bills for the store, or giving it to some dude who owns the building.”

Though HQ may be closing, there’s no doubt the craft circuit and collaboration will continue. In December, Johnson and Bodnarchuk completed their second successful Smart Design Mart—a three-day arts & crafts sale.

“[We plan] to turn the Smart Mart concept into mini-marts, like an art mart, a fashion mart, a vintage mart, a nerd-mart—these kind of pop-up places for art,” Johnson explained. “It’s going to be Headquarters in an event format. So you can’t just pop by [the store] anytime, but we’re going to be around—doing the same kind of stuff in a different form.”

Besides keeping the crafty community connected, Johnson and Bodnarchuk are also truly looking forward to the “free brain space” to work on their own projects, instead of worrying about the day-to-day “crazy retail things” that running a store requires.

Johnson will continue working full-time on her clothing and jew-

elry line—the celebrated Norwegian Wood—and Bodnarchuk looks forward to finally having some time off to create books and art, while developing his own Etsy shop. He also plans to put his energy into curating a couple of art shows in the New Year.

If making a successful business from the ground up has taught them anything, it’s that doing what you love full-time is “totally doable, totally possible and that people are doing it together.”

“I think a lot of people have realized, because of this store, that it’s not a crazy dream—but you have to know what you want in your life,” said Johnson. “We want a quality of life where we spend it working on stuff, and with people we believe in.”

THE LAST HQ GALERIE + BOUTIQUE VERNISSAGE “BFF” WILL TAKE PLACE THIS FRIDAY, JAN 14 FROM 6:00 TO 11:00 P.M. AT 1649 AMHERST ST. THE GALERIE WILL FEATURE OVER 50 LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS IN A GROUP EXHIBITION, AND DJ GARRY VICKERS WILL KEEP THE ROOM SPINNING. ENTRANCE IS FREE.

One of These Jokes is Not Like the Other

Liar, Liar Show Keeps Audience Guessing



The Liar, Liar Show makes its big debut this Thursday at Le Belmont.

PHOTO GILLIAN SZE

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Everyone stretches the truth now and then.

Maybe that funny anecdote we told at dinner was exaggerated a teensy bit, and maybe This American Life contributor David Sedaris didn't really work as a staff clerk in a mental hospital at age 13 to great comedic effect.

But two comics performing at Le Belmont later this week will take a sworn oath to tell the truth, the whole truth, and not leave out the funny bits. A third comic, however, will lie through their teeth just to get a rise out of you. Only thing is, you won't know which is which.

Concordia graduate Sasha Manoli is the brainchild behind the Liar, Liar Show, a new monthly stand-up comedy series where audiences are tasked with identifying who is telling the god's honest truth, and who would perjure themselves just for a laugh.

"I think as audience members, we sort of take for granted how difficult it is for comics to go up there and not mix the two," said Manoli.

The concept of "two truths, one lie" may be familiar to anyone who has gone to summer camp, or experienced an elementary school education, she said.

"I remember when I was in junior high school, teachers would often get us to play that game so that everyone could get to know one another. I just thought it was really cheesy and it was always kind of an uncom-

fortable thing that we were made to do, but I also thought it was really conducive to comedy."

While many of the comedians selected for the show, including the high energy performance of Dave Merheje, David Heti and the versatile Asaf Gerchak, take their inspiration from real life, spinning lies woven from whole cloth will come as a challenge, says Manoli.

"Usually I'm just doing standup shows in a club with a host and a headliner, so anything different is worth it to me," said Merheje, a Toronto comedian who will be visiting Montreal for the show.

Finding humour in everyday life, says Merheje, helped him cope with reality while growing up.

"I really loved Richard Pryor, and what he did was he took anything and everything around him and flipped it into funny. So that's what I try to do," he said. "In some instances you have to embellish certain things just to add a little twist, but I always strive to make it as real as possible."

"Sometimes the truth is stranger than fiction, but it helps if you hang out with strange people," said Chris Betts, who'll be hosting the show in much the same campy vein as a 1970s game show host while wearing a three-piece suit borrowed from The Salvation Army.

"There are times where I've tried to exaggerate a real life occurrence for comedic effect and it just bombs, but then I tried telling the story as it actually happened and suddenly people

were laughing," said Betts.

Running parallel with the Liar, Liar Show is the web series the Hard Lying Truth, featuring comedians, artists and authors either recounting the greatest lies they've ever told—or the most embarrassing, revealing truths.

"You basically end up finding out gradually through the story whether or not what you're hearing was about this person telling a lie or them telling something honest," Manoli explained.

The range of questionable truths includes a comedienne who once told her parents that she was nearly kidnapped, to a woman who brought up the 'realness' of her date's boobs and then never heard from her again.

Operating like a mass lie detector, audiences at the Liar, Liar Show will be given ballots to vote on which comedians they think strayed too far from their source material. If that night's fibber is sufficiently deceptive, they'll be crowned the resident "king of deception." The comics who fared worse will get a consoling hug from a yet to be determined motherly figure.

THE LIAR, LIAR SHOW WILL PREMIERE AT LE BELMONT (4483 ST. LAURENT BLVD.) ON JAN. 13 AT 8:00 P.M. TICKETS ARE \$12 IN ADVANCE OR \$14 AT THE DOOR. IF YOU HAVE A MOTHERLY NATURE AND WANT TO HUG THE LIAR, LIAR SHOW'S LOSERS EACH MONTH, CONTACT SASHA MANOLI AT LIAR-LIARSHOW@GMAIL.COM. FOR THE HARD LYING TRUTH, VISIT FLAVORS.ME/LIARLIARSHOW.



Kaputt Destroyer

• ASHLEY OPHEIM

Kaputt,

I don't even know why I like you but you kept me in on New Years. You're keeping me away and under and turning.

I am playing with sandart at sandart.com. I am sprinkling hues of pixels onto the screen with my arrow and the sand makes a noise like the ocean (imagine it, go there).

Let's create a cursor which points to the right.

There is sand in your video for "Kaputt"—sand and pyramids and fog and a computer screen and a whale and a metaphoric balloon. There are strange noises everywhere—the fridge dying, text messages ringing in, and you in the corner writing poetry for yourself.

Your voice is a thing of purity. It's you and only you and magenta is only partially pink and blue is only partially sky. The ocean sandart sounds sound perfect behind you.

I don't even know why I like you but it's 11:11 and that seems wickedly symbolic. "It don't mean a thing, it never means a thing," you sing.

I don't even know why I like you but your last song is 11:18 minutes long and it feels like something sacred, strange, immensely secretive and naked and how can I get everyone to listen to it and feel it like they mean it? How do I computer screen scream without using exclamation marks?

There is a moment at exactly 5:11 (11 is my lucky number) where music does to me what it rarely

does: makes my stomach feel like tiny silver fishes tickling holding breath (imagine it, go there).

Longings, longings, longings. Pixels. Pixelated balloons lifting us up out of this year and into something strangely similar, but not. Pop it with your cursor. Steal everything.

Kaputt is an expression for 'done,' isn't it? Feels true.

"The world's just bones. The world is black stones dressed up in the rain with no place to go but home." That's my favourite line and on a night like tonight I'm pro stars, pro sky.

Destroyers can be creators too.

Kaputt, we spent the morning together. You made it through the underground and through metro-window reflections. The tide comes in. Bathed in gold and sunlight all around. Let's imagine it. Let's go there.

Yours truly.

don't miss:

THURSDAY, JAN. 13, 2010

The Fine Arts Reading Room is aspiring to run a monthly reading group. Check out their first meeting this Thursday, Jan. 13 at 6 p.m. in their space (EV 2.785).

The intent of the meetings is to generate and foster a creative interdisciplinary dialogue that circles around social, political philosophical, scientific and literary texts.

ALL THE READINGS ARE BEARABLE IN LENGTH AND AVAILABLE AS FREE DOWNLOADABLE PDF'S ON THEIR SITE, STUDENTS ARE ADVISED TO DO THE READINGS IN ADVANCE SO THAT A DISCUSSION CAN OCCUR AT THE MEETINGS

READINGROOM.CONCORDIA.CA



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PIQUE-NIQUE ÉROTQUES

Nicole Fu

New Sound, Old Tricks

The Besnard Lakes Reinvent Space Rock



The Besnard Lakes newest release, *Are The Roaring Night*, wants you to feel "that '70s experience." Whatever that means.

• COLIN HARRIS

Richard White wields the six-string in The Besnard Lakes, a group that much prefers studio methods of the past to the bedroom recordings so popular today. Their latest LP *Are The Roaring Night* is a landscape of guitar-driven music largely inspired by layered progressive rock of the past.

"Most interviewers say to us, 'Your music is so dark, but when we interview you guys you're just clowns,'" said White. "I think that's pretty funny. People are surprised when they realize we're not huge drug addicts."

It's easy to see where these assumptions come from, with the band creating a hybrid rock sound that builds and recedes with ample amounts of guitar fuzz. But The Besnard Lakes prove cheerful people can sculpt dark epics, too.

"In this band it's a combination of surf sounds, a lot of tremolo and reverb, with almost a classic rock thing which is kind of fatter," said

White. "I mix that with delay, kind of shoegaze influenced stuff, and integrate those three influences in a way that's cohesive."

Growing from studio experiments of founding members Jace Lasek and Olga Goreas, the band's latest record has found all four bandmates working closer than ever before.

"The first record, *Vol. I*, was almost exclusively done by Jace and Olga, and I think it's been a gradual thing since then," said White. "*Are The Dark Horse* was done with a bit more involvement with all the members and with this record the four of us pretty much play on everything. It's been more collaborative for sure."

The Besnard Lakes' increasing amount of live performances has led to deeper collaboration. "Before [2007's] *Are The Dark Horse* there was no real heavy touring. Since then our live sound has developed a lot because of all the shows we've done, and that sound has crept in the studio," said

White. "The way we sound live is more rockin' out, more of a visceral thing. It's found its way on the [latest] record and I think that's great," said White.

"Playing in the band we've all kind of grown together," he said. "We've become a tighter ensemble in a way. [Personally], my style has evolved to serve the whole band sound. It's kind of a streamlining process within the parameters I have already to really just serve the music better."

Are the Roaring Night's tracks form a cohesive piece of music, and with its heavy '70s influence, this record's definitely something best suited for vinyl.

"One of the big concepts of the last two records is the '70s experience of getting a record and staring at the cover while you're listening to it. It's definitely in there, just look at the cover," White laughs. "It looks hilarious on CD, but on the larger vinyl format it's interesting. We've been selling quite a bit of vinyl on the road."

Don't be fooled by the band's throwback style. The Besnard Lakes offer a fresh approach on guitar-driven space rock firmly planted in the 21st century.

"The pacing isn't what everybody's used to, but I feel that you're rewarded for just being patient," said White. "I think we have a unique sound, we've gotten to a point where everybody has their own sound and it works as a unit. That's what a lot of bands I like strive towards, and it's what we strive towards."

"We're all into what we're doing, it's almost like a pleasant surprise when other people are too," he continued. "Music should be a subjective experience. You go to a show where there are like 500 people and you're all experiencing the concert; it's a collective thing in a way, but everyone's there for their own reasons."

Are the Roaring Night is an album that borrows heavily from past sounds and aesthetics, but White is interested in contempo-

rary music as well.

"I liked the Beach House record *Teen Dream*, and I just saw this Australian band Tame Impala, this sort of psychedelic rock band that's pretty cool. This band Wolf People from the U.K. too, I think their record's called *Steeple*, and I really liked the *Women* record," said White, the latter two being label mates on Jagjaguwar.

"I like a lot of stuff, even like that Best Coast California stuff," he continued. "I know they get bashed for their lyrics, but obviously they're just doing an homage to girl groups. And Suuns, they're pretty great. Jace recorded them and we ended up doing some shows with them. I've been listening to them a lot. They sound quite different than us, but live we work well together."

YOU CAN CATCH THE BESNARD LAKES WITH SUUNS AND VALLEYS JANUARY 15TH AT CABARET DU MILE END (5240 PARC AVE.). \$15 AT THE DOOR.

“Just Watch Me”

Writers Read Welcomes Celebrated Canadian Playwright Linda Griffiths

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Heralded for the “sheer range of her career” by *Maclean’s* magazine almost 20 years ago, Canadian playwright Linda Griffiths says finding the time and the energy to attend live theatre nowadays is hard work—a fatigue that’s common to anyone who’s been working in the profession for three decades or more, she claims.

But if the average person doesn’t attend more than one show a year—let alone a lifetime—Griffiths says that the power of the theatre exceeds the number of actual bums in seats.

“Sometimes it’s like you go to a party and there are only 20 people there, but it seems like everyone experienced it and is talking about it afterwards. Theatre is like that,” she said.

“I believe it to be a very high art, because there’s many things going on at the same time. It’s a three-dimensional living form. I’m one of those people that always thinks ‘I should have gotten into film,’ and I always think I should have done prose, but really, I am a theatre animal, and while I do other things, theatre is always where the pulse, the gut-to-gut connection is.”

Although *Maggie & Pierre*, a solo performance in which Griffiths played both former Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau and his wife Margaret, is what got her the greatest attention of her career, Griffiths continues to challenge herself.

Her most recent work, *The Last Dog of War*, is a retelling of a trip she took with her father to the last gathering of the Royal Air Force 49th Squadron Bomber Command in London, with which her father served in World War II.

Griffiths developed the play by “bits and pieces” over a period of four years with dramaturge Daniel MacIvor, a Canadian theatre icon.

“We actually sort of got kicked out of [my father’s] last reunion,” she recalls of the visit across the

pond. “The show is very much me telling that story, which involves a relationship with my father and a relationship with war, and then a relationship with England as well. It’s very, very simple, but to get that simplicity has taken four years.”

As much as her stories are typified by the intersection between sex and politics, the crossroads of magic and spirituality, according to Griffiths, play a much larger part.

“You could call it magic realism,” said Griffiths, “for lack of a better word, but I think all of my plays have this reach to another dimension.”

In *Alien Creature: A Visitation from Gwendolyn MacEwen*, for example, Griffiths portrayed the eponymous poet who died under suspicious circumstances at age 46 as she returns to the modern world, all the while performing sleights of hand and conjuring up puffs of smoke.

“I did those things constantly through the show, and so that was an obvious allusion to magic, but also to the poet as magician.”

On Jan. 14, Griffiths will visit Concordia’s De Sève Cinema, where she will perform selections from some of her many works.

“They bring with them a lot of baggage,” she said of past plays, but particularly of *Maggie & Pierre*. “I was on tour for two years with that play, by myself, playing huge venues. It nearly killed me.”

But it’s a risk she’s willing to take for the theatre.

LINDA GRIFFITHS WILL DO A PUBLIC READING AND PERFORMANCE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ON JAN. 14 AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE DE SÈVE CINEMA (1400 DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD. W.), AND A MASTER CLASS IN LB-646 FROM 10:00-12:00 A.M. EXCLUSIVELY FOR CREATIVE WRITING STUDENTS. FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT WRITERSREAD.CONCORDIA.CA



GRAPHIC DAVID BARLOW-KRELINA

Lit Events

Carcanet Press Launch for *Modern Canadian Poets Anthology*

Featuring Readings by Anne Compton, Mary Dalton, Evan Jones, Robyn Sarah and Norm Sibum

JAN. 13
7:00 P.M. ONWARDS
DRAWN & QUARTERLY
BOOKSTORE
211 BERNARD ST. W.
FREE ADMISSION

Maisonneuve Mag Winter Issue Launch Party

Open Mic Night
Featuring Music, Poetry,
Assorted Creative Acts

JAN. 13
7:30 P.M. TO 10:30 P.M.
LE CAGIBI
5490 ST. LAURENT ST.
FREE ADMISSION

Slideshow and Conversation With Lynda Barry

Author and Cartoonist
Does POP Montreal
Co-Sponsored Reading,
Signing

JAN. 15
6:30 P.M. ONWARDS
UKRAINIAN FEDERATION
5312 HUTCHISON ST.
TICKETS \$5 AT DRAWN &
QUARTERLY OR AT THE DOOR

Lit Writ

Rapture

• CLAY HEMMERICH

The end started with a phone call at night.

I was wasting the day for this one because the verdict was in the hands of this girl—the apple of my eye. Hallucinations of ringing sounds ebbed and flowed, but mostly flowed in all directions the whole day and the whole night, even.

Finally she called at three in the morning, from a payphone.

I picked up and answered nonchalantly. I said, “Hello?” like I didn’t know who it would be.

There was a pause. “Chuck? It’s me.” She sounded like she was somewhere loud, and I knew her well enough to know that the shake in her voice said more about her state than she would.

“Hi, Rose.”

“You got any beer?” she asked.

“No.”

“Can you pick some up?”

“It’s 3 a.m., baby.”

“Fuck.” She paused. “Do you have any weed?”

“No.”

“Cigarettes?”

“Yeah. Just two, though.”

“Good enough.”

And she hung up.

Three thirty came and so did she, with eyes puffed, mascara running from sweat and fatigue; but not from tears because she’s not the crying type. Her hair looked like someone had teased it mercilessly and she smelled like another man’s cologne hiding the scent of another man’s body.

“I had a rough night,” she said, swaying, beer breathed, cigarette scented.

“Yeah? Me too.” I asked her what happened, even though I knew it didn’t matter. She was here, she was with me.

“It doesn’t matter.”

“We can talk about it later.”

She started undressing like it was nothing, like it was just in her nature to be scantily clad. Like I wasn’t even there. Walking past me, she slipped

her dress down from her shoulders, letting it rest on my floorboards.

“What are you doing?” I asked. I just wanted to tell her how perfect her sweet cream skin looked in black lace.

It didn’t matter.

“I’m just getting comfortable.” She came back to me and pressed her breasts against my chest. After a second she brushed me away and walked toward my record player, sitting beneath the window, the blinds all up. But she didn’t care that her flawless body was exposed for everyone on the streets to see. She shuffled through my records, standing there, tossing records that weren’t according to her tastes on the floor.

Finally she put on Blondie. She’d left it here last time she was over, the last rendezvous. She stepped toward my bed like a dancer, embraced me. We fell slowly and she stayed on my chest, wrapping her ballerina legs around me. Rapture played in the background.

“Toe to toe, dancing very slow, barely breathing, almost comatose. Wall to wall, people hypnotised, and they’re stepping lightly, hang each night in Rapture.”

“Where’d you come from?”

“Does it matter?” And it didn’t. She whispered it in such a way as to suggest that our conversation should be had without words.

“Is it all done and over with, at least?”

She didn’t answer for a while. Eventually she said, “Everything’s gonna be okay.”

“Is it?”

A pause. “No. I don’t know.

No.” We let the record player do our talking for a bit. Blondie played on. “Face to face, sadly solitude, and it’s finger popping, 24 hour shopping in Rapture.”

“Fuck it. Want a cigarette?” I asked.

She smiled and inched up me until we were face to face. She spoke softly.

“How about giving me a reason to smoke, for starters?”



GRAPHIC ERIC BENT

THE LiNK

2011 BYELECTION

Byelection

January 28, 2011 4:00 p.m. H-649

The following positions are open:

- Sports Editor
- Student Press Liaison
- Opinions Editor
- Photo Editor

The following contributors are eligible:

Rob Amyot, Joel Balsam, Esther Bernard, Alex Boudreau-O'Dowd, Jeff Bush, Pierre Chauvin, Ray Corkum, Sebastien Cadieux, Megan Dolski, Sophia Gay, Colin Harris, Chris Hampson, Les Honeywill, David Kaufmann, Nadim Kobeissi, Vivien Leung, Clément Liu, Matt Marotti, Shawn McCrory, Alex McGill, Christopher Olson, Jasmine Papillon-Smith, Daryna Rukhlyadeva, Sam Slotnick, Erin Sparks, Joseph Ste. Marie, Joel Suss, Nicholas Ward, Megan Wohlberg, Natasha Young, Andrea Zoelliner

Applications for the positions must be posted one week before the election in *The Link* office, Hall building, room H-649. Applicants must have contributed to at least four (4) issues during volume 31 and must include a one-page letter of intent, as well as three (3) contribution samples.

For more information email: editor@thelinknewspaper.ca or call 514-848-2424 ext.7407



HOCKEY



The men's hockey team lost 6-2 against McGill on Sunday on home ice. PHOTO DYLAN MALONEY

Scoreboard



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

W 59-57 v Laval fri

L 75-67 v UQAM sat

MEN'S BASKETBALL

L 86-76 v Laval fri

W 69-66 v UQAM sat

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

L 3-0 v McGill sat

MEN'S HOCKEY

L 6-2 v McGill sun

Schedule

MEN'S BASKETBALL

@ McGill
8:00 p.m. THURSDAY, JAN. 13

v. Bishop's
6:00 p.m. SATURDAY, JAN. 15

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

@ McGill
6:00 p.m. THURSDAY, JAN. 13

v. Bishop's
8:00 p.m. SATURDAY, JAN. 15

MEN'S HOCKEY

v. Carleton
2:00 p.m. SATURDAY, JAN. 15

@ Ottawa
2:00 p.m. SUNDAY, JAN. 16

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

@ Montreal
7:00 p.m. FRIDAY, JAN. 14

v. Carleton
3:00 p.m. SUNDAY, JAN.

Stinger Picked for Team World

Congratulations to Concordia Stinger Shaquille Armstrong, who was selected from hundreds of athletes to participate in the International Federation of American Football's 2nd annual Team World vs. Team USA match.

Armstrong—a 6'2, 288-pound Defensive Tackle who joined the Stingers' lineup in March 2010—was chosen as one of 22 Canadians to play with a 40-player World Team. The team is comprised of athletes from eight different countries and four continents.

The World Team will play against 45 of the top 19-and-under high school seniors from the United States on Feb. 2 in Austin, Texas.

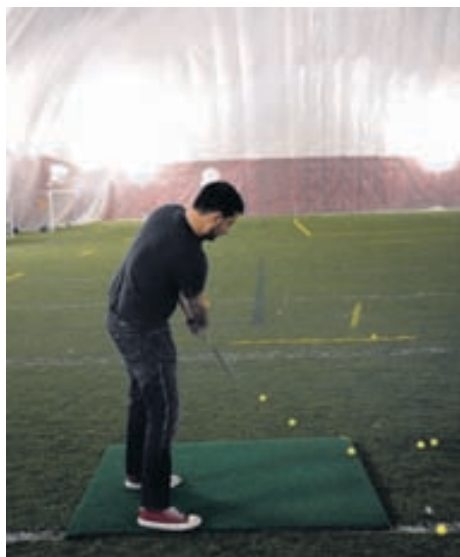
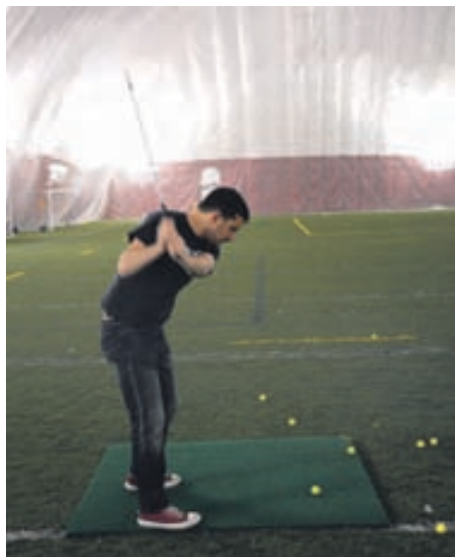
Before starting at Concordia, Armstrong played in many of Football Manitoba's top programs, including the St. James Rods and the Winnipeg Rifles, and was selected for the U17 and U19 Provincial Teams.

Do YOU Want to Write For Sports? Cover Games? Take Photos? Be Part of *The Link's* Editorial Board? Send an e-mail to sports@thelinknewspaper.ca for more details!

The Link hits the Links

Get Your Swing Into Shape at the Stingerdome

PHOTOS ERIN SPARKS



Fore! The Stingerdome is home, sweet home for winter swingers.

• ADAM KOVAC

It's -7 outside, but the Weather Network website is telling me that it feels like -16. There are several feet of snow on the scenic Loyola campus, and if it weren't for my mittens, my fingers would have less feeling than an auto-tuned ballad at the top of the pop charts. All things considered, it's looking like a great day for golf.

Since Jan. 3, the Stingerdome has become the part-time home of a driving range, so summertime duffers can keep in the swing of things, despite Montreal's current winter-wonderland appearance. Although you don't get all the advantages of

a real round of golf (fresh air, lovely scenery, pushing the carts to inhuman speeds), you do get to whack some balls around and stay in shape. I took the shuttle down to Loyola to bang a few balls into the horizon, despite being unable to find my argyle knickerbockers and matching tam o' shanter.

As I prepared for my practice session, I noticed two things—the range was deserted, and the length of it was, frankly speaking, a bit on the short side. Of course, as I'm sure Tiger Woods proved to his myriad lady friends, it's not the size of the range that counts: it's how you use it.

"It's about 60 to 65 yards, so you can

work on your short game. Or, you can just let one rip," said athletic department employee Alberto Moreira with a chuckle.

After paying \$8 for a bucket o' balls and the use of the Stingerdome's motley collection of golf clubs, I pulled out a 7 iron and started swinging. While the solitude was nice—particularly every few shots when I grounded the ball 10 yards instead of making it soar into the roof with a satisfying 'thunk'—I soon started feeling a bit isolated and lonely (much like Tiger Woods, no doubt, just before he calls himself up one of those lady friends of his).

"Right now, it's the first week, it's winter, it's cold outside, everyone is just get-

ting back from their holidays, so it's slow, as are other golf domes throughout the island of Montreal," said Moreira. "As it picks up, we'll start advertising it."

After about 15 minutes, 75 balls, and two slightly blistered hands—the dome does not rent out golf gloves—I handed my gear back and reluctantly stepped back into the bitter cold.

My temporary summer was over. But like a Tiger Woods sex scandal, the Stingerdome promises many good times to come.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DRIVING RANGE, INCLUDING HOURS AND PRICES, CHECK OUT ATHLETICS.CONCORDIA.CA

Bittersweet Basketball

Stingers Take On UQAM, With a Win and a Loss

• CLEMENT TAGNEY

Men's Basketball: Tight Court, Tight Win

Concordia - 69

UQAM - 66

Concordia's men's basketball team pulled victory from the jaws of defeat last Saturday night, as the Stingers came together to narrowly beat the Université du Québec à Montréal Citadins 69-66.

The fast-paced first quarter of the match—which saw both teams tied at 14-14—set the precedent for the rest of the game, as both teams moved constantly back and forth from each end of the court, coming back into each quarter tighter and harder.

Notably, UQAM's point guard Arthaud Plesius and forward Gregory St-Amand put the Stingers' defense to the test in the sec-

ond quarter, but Concordia guard Kyle Desmarais handled the pressure with help of forwards James Clark and Evens Laroche.

"It wasn't pretty, but we turned up the defense intensely in the second half as a team and it paid off," said Desmarais, who finished the game with 18 points and 4 assists.

"In the end, we did what we had to do to win," said Stingers head coach John Dore.

"It was a very physical game. UQAM competed very well and played well defensively—we were fortunate to hang on."

Desmarais' play also made an impression on Citadins head coach Olga Hrycak.

"Kyle is a hell of a player. He made a couple of shots down the stretch and we couldn't and that was a big difference," she said. "[But] that's Concordia pride, they always come back."

Women's Basketball: Slow Start

Concordia - 67

UQAM - 75

"It's always a tough game against Concordia," said UQAM Citadins women's basketball head coach Jacques Verschuere after Saturday's match. "They just never give up [...] there's always action. At the end of the match I said to myself, 'We can't lead the whole game and lose it in the last minute!'"

A rough start to the game, which enabled the Citadins to take a 27-17 lead in the first quarter, was what ultimately kept the Stingers from catching up for the win—but not for lack of trying.

Coming back hungry in the second period, the Stingers found the net. Point guard Yasmin Jean-Phillipe played 30 minutes, scoring 16 points, with teammates Kaylah Barrett and Andreanne Gregoire-Boudreau adding an-

other 19 for the home team.

But all their heart wasn't enough to outplay the Citadins. Jessica Bibeau-Côté, managed to keep up with 15 points, and Marjolaine Gauthier-Théorêt added 14. The Citadins were just too aggressive, dictating the match with a great passing game.

"We came at them pretty hard in the second [period], but we made a lot of pretty poor decisions offensively [...] We gave them too many second chances and they're too good to do that," expressed Stingers head coach Keith Prudent. "Until we learn to play consistently, we'll keep having days that we win and days that we lose."

Stingers guard Magalie Beaulieu agreed with the sentiment.

"[We need] better passes with control [and] more emotional control. We played with too much with fire. If we would take our time, we would control the court better. The game showed us that it takes hard work and you have to fight to win."

DEAR BOARD OF GOVERNERS: FACULTY MEMBERS UNITE TO DEMAND ACTION

White Obsession

Billion Dollar Lotion Industry Fuels Insecurities

• CLAY HEMMERICH

BANGKOK, THAILAND—Westerners on vacation in Thailand usually get stoked on laying out in the sand at tropical island beaches and getting a sexy tan. But Thai people avoid the sun like a kiss of ray is going to sabotage their life.

And it just might.

In Thai culture, skin colour is an indication of which class one belongs to. Having pale, white skin is considered a physical trait of superiority.

To Bangkokians, having tanned, dark skin insinuates that the person is of a lower class which has to do manual labour outside to make a living.

Usually, most of this “lower class” are from Northern Thailand or Laos, and are referred to as Isaan.

Men and women of all economic backgrounds carry umbrellas with them to protect their skin from garnering any colour. Some even go through extreme lengths to protect their face from browning by wearing full masks and long sleeves. This can be a dis-

comfort when the average temperature is 30 degrees and sunny.

“Originally, [Thais] preferred yellow skin to white skin,” said professor Anucha Thirakanont to Philip Cornwel-Smith, editor of *Time Out Bangkok*.

Anucha added that during the Ayutthaya period, Chinese and Western traders influenced traditional Thai beauty.

“They were always pale so [that is when] Thais started putting white powder on their face and body.”

Before, yellow-white skin was preferred.

White face make-up—so much that it makes one’s face look like a porcelain doll’s—is essential for women when dressing up for lavish High Society parties. Men splotch prickly heat powder all over their face and body to keep cool and protect themselves from tanning.

According to a collection of essays called *Very Thai*, about \$1.7 billion baht—or \$56 million CAD—is spent annually on skin whitening creams that have not been proven to add extra whiteness to one’s natural skin colour,

but only to merely restore it. These creams are often poisonous.

Though the Thai demographic demands a product that will give them a fairer complexion, is it ethical for companies to market something that is perpetuating classism in South East Asia?

Brands like Nivea, owned by Beiesdorf Group, who promise “desirable white skin” upon use of their cream, are international companies.

Their unique International reach, spending power and pool of talented marketers gives them the chance to alleviate this blatant problem in Thailand.

Of course it would be dumb for a company to ignore the societal buying trend, but would it kill profits that much to launch the same marketing campaign in Western countries where a product like that would be intolerable? In Canada, Nivea’s slogan is, “your everyday partner for normal to mixed skin.”

The perk of being a consumer is choice, so why not let them have it?

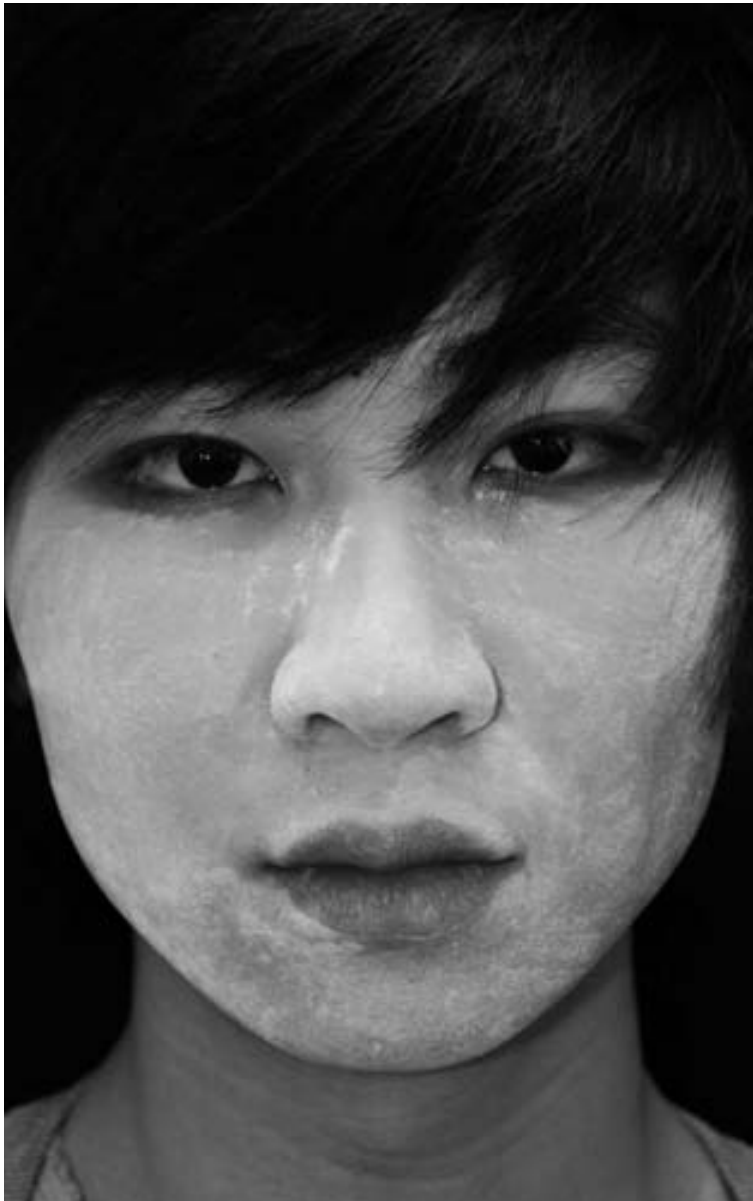


PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

Something in the Water

Is Fluoride in Tap Water Beneficial to Dental Health?

• ANDREW HAMILTON

I’m sure we have all heard some conspiracy theory nut talking about the fluoride in the water blocking our chakra paths and all sorts of mumbo jumbo. I was curious about the actual facts, and I simply wanted to know why fluoridated water spurred all of these conspiracy theories.

Many major communities in Canada fluoridate their public water supply—about 43 per cent of Canadians have fluoridated tap water, as stated by Health Canada in a 2009 water fluoridation study. Montreal remains one of the only major cities to steadily reject efforts to put fluoride in their water. The Center for Disease control justifies fluoridation by claiming that it has been one of the ten major health achievements, as evidenced by reduced cavity tooth decay rates.

According to the U.S. Public Health Services Oral Health Report, water fluoridation is directly correlated to the “remarkable improvements in oral health

over the past half century,” and has spurred the creation of dental care products, such as mouthwash and toothpastes.

I love the fact that oral health has improved, but do these two have any correlation to each other or are they incidental? I’m certain that toothpaste, mouthwash, general hygiene practices and dentistry practices have also improved over the last 60 years since fluoride was originally introduced to public water supply.

The CDC says fluoridated water is safe—that’s cool. The latest, most in-depth study is available for purchase for only \$60. What are the conspiracy theorist kooks going on about? Why does anyone think this is bad?

So far it has been proven that small doses of fluoride is safe to ingest, but at higher levels there can be weakening of the bones, blockage of the pituitary gland and discoloration of the teeth to name a few.

In most European countries—Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Holland are

just a few examples—they don’t fluoridate and they have witnessed the same dental health improvement. So has fluoride-free Montreal.

Health Canada says that fluoride in drinking water occurs naturally and it’s acceptable to ingest a maximum amount of 1.5 milligrams of fluoride for every litre of water. But if we can’t say conclusively that fluoridated water is the cause of reduced cavities, why would I pay to have more of it put in my water?

Even Health Canada said that they couldn’t come to a full conclusion on the health benefits of pumping fluoride into our water.

Fluoridated water, properly measured with instructions for use just like toothpaste, would be a great addition to the Colgate product line. If there is any point in this that irks me, it is that I wasn’t told about it.

Inevitably someone will say that I’m out there about this, and to that I say lead paint was once thought of as safe.



GRAPHIC DOMINIQUE COTE

KNOW YOUR BOARD

GRAPHIC JULIA WOLFE

Concordia's board of governors, the university's highest governing body, is composed of 40 individuals drawn from the school and the community around it. While one might expect teachers or students to dominate the body, it is in fact another group with the peculiar title of "community-at-large" that holds a majority of the seats. Far from being representatives of the community around Concordia, the board's self-selected majority is dominated by people with corporate titles besides their names. This is a quick look at the board that fired President Judith Woodsworth before Christmas.



NON-PROFIT

Sister Françoise Boisvert
Retired Director General
Marianopolis College

Dr. Arvind K. Joshi
Chief Executive Officer
St. Mary's Hospital Center

Ms. Annie Tobias
Director, Leadership Institute
The Jewish Community
Foundation of Montreal



LEGAL

Me Rita Le de Santis
Partner
Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg, LLP

Ms. Hélène F. Fortin, FCA
Associée
Demers Beaulne, S.E.N.C.R.L.



FINANCIAL

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Consultant

Mr. Peter Kruyt
President and Chief Executive Officer
Victoria Square Ventures Inc.

Mr. Tony Meti
President
G.N.D.P. Consulting Services Inc.

Ms. Patricia Saputo
Chief Financial Officer
Placements Italcan



OTHER

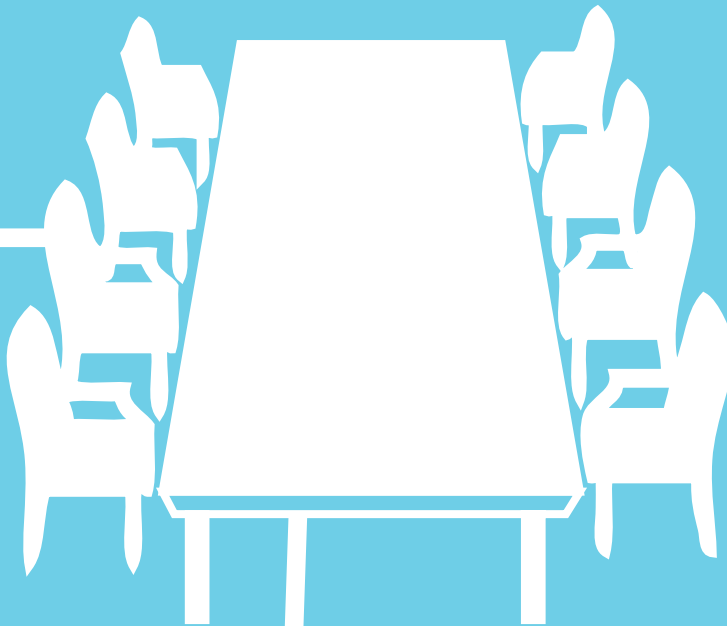
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President
Balcorp Limited

Mr. Brian Edwards
Corporate Director

Dr. Arvind K. Joshi
Chief Executive Officer
St. Mary's Hospital Center

Mr. Ivan Velan
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Velan Inc. (Montreal)

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Aéroports de Montréal

Mr. Norman Hébert, Jr.
President and CEO
Groupe Park Avenue Inc.

Me Marie-José Nadeau
Executive Vice-President, Corporate
Affairs and Secretary-General
Hydro-Québec

Mr. Michael Novak
Executive Vice-President
SNC-Lavalin Inc.

Mr. Jonathan Wener, C.M.
Chairman and C.E.O.
Canderel Management Inc.

An Open Letter to Peter Kruyt

In light of the unexplained and arbitrary dismissal of Concordia University president Judith Woodsworth, we the undersigned members of the Concordia community demand a thorough and public review of the governing structures of Concordia University, with particular attention to the constitution and the powers of the Board of Governors.

In light of a series of dismissals and departures from the university's senior administrative ranks—specifically, the firing of two university presidents in three and a half years and the resignation of five vice-presidents in six years—the Board appears to have assumed the role of a modern-day star chamber, acting according to its own dictates, accountable and answerable to

no one. It is an abuse of power.

As evidence of the Board's cavalier governing style, the press release announcing Dr. Woodsworth's departure was released on Dec. 22, just as the university was to close for the Christmas holidays, and sought to deceive the university community and the public by stating the president resigned "for personal reasons" when we now know her resignation was forced by the Board.

These dismissals and departures cost money that faculty members, staff and students are constantly told the university does not have.

They hurt Concordia's reputation within the academic world and in the eyes of the public at a time when we are supposed to be building that reputation.

They hurt the chances of recruiting future leaders; who would want to be a senior administrator at Concordia knowing the rug can be pulled out from under them at any time and with no explanation? And these decisions run the risk of rendering cynical and jaded the university's front-line workers—staff, students and faculty members alike—who work in so many ways to make this institution one we can be proud of.

What is particularly distressing about these dismissals and departures is that they serve to overshadow and detract from all the good things going on at Concordia University.

The Board of Governors is the senior governing body at Concordia University, responsible for its legal and administrative frame-

work. Twenty-three of the 40 members of the board represent the "community-at-large," but in fact represent a very narrow segment of that community given that the vast majority are from the corporate sector. At its upcoming meeting in February, the Board seeks to cut faculty membership—from six to four members.

Five external Board members sit on the all-important Executive, Nominating and Senior Salaries committees, constituting an elite clique within the Board itself.

As a significant first step in this review, we ask that the Board of Governors issue a clear statement of its vision for Concordia University and how its actions—including its recent personnel decisions—serve that vision.

Signed,
180 Faculty Members



Scan this QR Code with your smartphone to see every single name. See if your prof signed their name.

Consequences of BOG's Actions

Concordia's reputation should not be tarred by apparent conflicts among and between some elements of the senior administration and the Board of Governors.

The sudden and unexplained departure of the president of the University has left the Concordia community stunned and shocked. However, given Concordia's recent administrative history we—faculty members, librarians, staff and students—should probably not have been surprised and we can only attempt to interpret this event in the context of that history. In a letter to full-time faculty members and librarians, I have outlined that history.

Allow me, however, to repeat that two presidents have stepped down within a three and a half year period and received enormous golden parachutes. We now know, from a CTV News clip on January 5, 2011, that Dr. Woodsworth has been asked to resign.

These two departures and others have created a climate of instability and unpredictability. One of the aims of Concordia is to be classified among the best three comprehensive universities in Canada, as this would attract more students, more funds and more potential faculty members of high calibre.

Our real quality is in fact

much higher than our current reputation, but external perception, however inaccurate, plays a significant role in these external classifications.

The obvious impact on students is that these events harm the reputation of the university and make it much more difficult to attract well qualified and competent candidates for important senior administrative positions, such as president, provost or dean in the future.

It will also discourage some students from attending Concordia. It will adversely affect fundraising and it will fail to encourage applications from top notch potential faculty.

If fundraising is affected, Concordia's ability to attract top graduate students is threatened. At the present time, Concordia does not provide enough scholarships and bursaries compared to our sister universities that are in the same large geographical area—for example, universities in Ontario. Also, there are not nearly enough bursaries and other monetary elements to reward our best undergraduate students and to help students in need.

Why is it that Concordia has money for the very expensive departures of senior administrators and not enough money for scholarships, bursaries, etc.?

Similarly, Concordia has inadequate funding for the Library and a sufficient number of staff employees who perform front-line services for students.

All this being said—and despite Aislin's witless cartoon in *The Gazette* about Concordia's alleged dysfunction—it is important to recognize that at the levels of teaching, supervising students' work and faculty research, the real work of the university continues and functions very well. Concordia's reputation should not be tarred by apparent conflicts among and between some elements of the senior administration and the Board of Governors.

However, this real work of the University would operate much better if we were not handicapped by the antics in the current spotlight.

—Dr. Lucie Lecien on behalf of the
CUFA Executive, CUFA President /
Présidente de l'APUC

21 opinions



Letters

@thelinknewspaper.ca

Welcome back

The Concordia Student Union executives would like to wish you a happy new year and a warm welcome back to campus! We hope that you got to unwind properly before hitting the books again and are looking forward to another semester full of new and exciting things here at the CSU. We're happy to be back and are ready to give you the best semester yet. There's a lot going on this semester, with something happening for everyone.

We would like to offer our warmest welcome to our new Concordia students. Our campuses can be a maze at first, but rest assured, we offer campus maps and free agendas at the CSU office on the 7th floor of the Hall building and the first floor of the SC at Loyola.

We are here to represent you in all aspects of student life: everything from academic representation and fighting rising tuition fees to hosting some fabulous parties. Our doors are always open to respond to student needs and we always remain accessible. Feel free to drop by anytime in person or on our web site, csu.qc.ca.

There are many ways to get involved in your union: volunteer, join a committee or club, apply for a job, or attend an event. Student life extends beyond the classroom and we are there every step of the way.

We would like to point out that Winter Orientation begins on Jan. 17 with activities all over campus. Numerous events will be taking place this month: Former Governor General the Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson will be speaking in H-110 on Jan. 13, and Loyola on Ice will take you outdoors the first week of February. This is a great occasion for both new and returning students to get a chance to meet other members of the Concordia community, relax a little and, most importantly, have a good time.

Last semester was exciting and now we are looking forward to working together again this semester to make it another success and take the CSU to new heights.

—CSU Executive Team 2010/11

The Link's letters and opinions policy: The deadline for letters is 4:00 p.m. on Friday before the issue prints. *The Link* reserves the right to verify your identity via telephone or email. We reserve the right to refuse letters that are libellous, sexist, homophobic, racist or xenophobic. The limit is 400 words. If your letter is longer, it won't appear in the paper. Please include your full name, weekend phone number, student ID number and program of study. The comments in the letters and opinions section do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board.

Students Don't Benefit from Merit-Based Teaching

• ADAM KOVAC

The principles of the free market can be handy. The invisible hand makes sure we're not paying a few hundred bucks for something small—like a candy bar—and also that the work that goes into something big—like a Ferrari—is properly compensated.

However, those principles that can be applied somewhat easily to tangible goods get a little bit harder to apply when it comes to services. That's why the recent proposal to base teacher's pay on performance—the idea was put forth by Kevin Falcon, a contender for the leadership of the British Columbian Liberal party—is so troublesome.

In an interview with *The Globe and Mail*, Falcon was quoted as saying, "When you look at education ... it is not how great your physical facilities are, it's not how fantastic the technology in the classroom is. It is actually the teacher at the front of the classroom that is the best determinant of student outcomes." As such, "teachers' growth in income shouldn't just be determined by how long they have been in a classroom, but by how well they are doing their job."

On the surface, it's a sentiment that makes sense. People who do a good job should get paid more than the shlubs who scrape by with the bare minimum, right? Unfortunately, when it comes to education, things are not that simple.

Falcon's proposal assumes that a good teacher is one who

gets their students to score well on standardized tests. It's similar to parts of the American No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, in which public schools' funding were tied to academic performance.

Critics have charged that the reliance on standardized testing as the measuring stick for students' progress has been destructive on a few levels. Think back to when you were a kid, learning the first principles of math. Odds are, you were taught that if you had two objects, and you were given two more, you could count out a new total that would equal four.

It's a system that doesn't teach you that the answer is four, but how to figure out for yourself that the answer is four. Critics charge that since teachers have a good idea of what will appear on standardized tests, they are less inclined to teach such esoteric concepts as deductive reasoning and lean more on teaching to the test—forcing memorization of answers likely to appear on an exam.

Paying teachers based on job performance is an intriguing idea. Who doesn't like the idea that the best get the highest reward? Unfortunately, what defines a "good teacher" is subjective. Is it the teacher who inspires and changes lives? The one who makes their students comfortable in the classroom and piques their imaginations? Until there is an objective metric that can be used to quantify educators, merit-based pay should stay a purely academic idea.



Wanted: Educators. Pay: Commission.

GRAPHIC DOMINIQUE COTE

Nah'msayin? Just My Luck.

People need to stop using "luck" to mean its exact opposite.

Yesterday I slammed my face into the corner of a chair after turning off my bedroom light and retiring to bed. Before I went to sleep, I bent over to pick up a piece of clothing off the floor and instantly gave myself a black eye. People said I was "lucky" I didn't damage my eye, or worse, lose it.

What the hell happened to our standards of luck?

If I nearly get struck by a truck but I'm spared by the skin of my teeth by a well-placed woodchuck, that doesn't make me lucky. That makes me incredibly unlucky, but not unlucky enough to lose my life.

Similarly, the one person to survive being murdered in a horror movie is not "lucky." They're fortunate, but not that fortunate if they're in a horror movie. The lucky people don't appear in the film because they're not in the film.

Luck is when incredibly good things happen to you, like winning the lottery, or spending your lottery earnings on sex and fabulous dwellings.

By the standards we ascribe "luck" today, the man who's always on the precipice of being suddenly axed, immolated or crushed is the luckiest person in the world. That person isn't suffering from an abundance of luck. They're just fucked.

—Christopher Olson



Notice something that just doesn't make sense? Got an axe to grind? Send in a rant to Nah'msayin? 300 words max.
opinions@thelinknewspaper.ca

Tremendous Tales by Christopher Olson



Elmer Bowie recalled the incantation to reverse the spell all too late, and so he would be president for the remainder of his term in office without a clue in the world as to how to balance the budget.

Beardo and the Bear

BY MATT MAROTTI



Angst

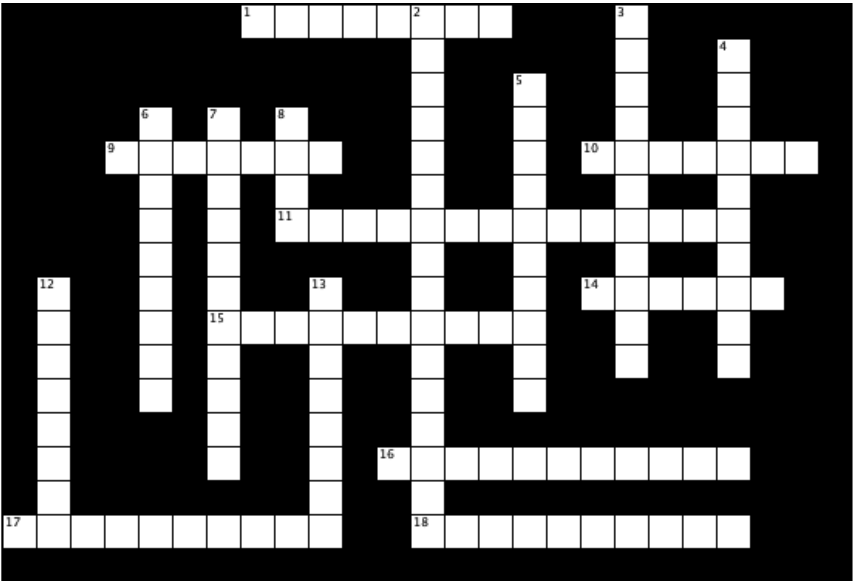


GRAPHIC ELIZABETH LEE

Quik-X

“Famous Fads”

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON



Across

- 1. Only an advertising executive in the 1970s could have conceived of selling people inanimate objects as “pets.”
- 9. This video game series encouraged kids to capture wild animals and train them for brutal combat in hopes of becoming the world’s most notorious 12-year-old gamesman.
- 10. The ship sunk. My heart, however, will go on.
- 11. Briefly retitled Pacific Air Flight 121 during production, lead actor Samuel L. Jackson had the film’s campy working title reinstated.
- 14. This 1980s arcade staple featured a character who ate pills in the dark, had the munchies and was constantly being chased by “ghosts.”
- 15. These “digital pets” combined the pleasures of owning a

- puppy with the portability of a key chain, minus the actual pleasures of owning a puppy.
 - 16. Ah, the old bait and switch: instead of mixed nuts, the can contains Rick Astley’s “Never Gonna Give You Up.”
 - 17. The 1980s produced many, many fads, among them these pieces of fabric that covered your calves.
 - 18. What could be more fun than drawing geometric graphs with a pen and a funky ruler?
- Down
- 2. “They’re babies... but also produce? I’m not getting the concept behind this doll.”
 - 3. “Hey, did you hear about this homeless guy with a beautiful announcer’s voice? Oh...”
 - 4. In the 1990s these toy animals stuffed with plastic pellets were practically worth their weight

- in gold. Now they’re worth their weight in plastic pellets.
- 6. Possibly the most destructive fad in the history of the world. But it was worth it just to get rid of Czar Nicholas II. Smarmy bastard.
- 7. These juggling batons, or “flower sticks,” instantly rose to popularity after someone came up with the idea to name them after the antichrist.
- 8. Little round pieces of decorative cardboard that many elementary schools banned from their grounds. I had one with Batman on it.
- 12. While he might not be The Most Interesting Man in the World, actor Isaiah Mustafa came close in his series of ads for this body deodorant.
- 13. Sunlight used to be their kryptonite, but in their most recent resurgence of popularity they simply glitter like a cheap lime-stone glove in its presence.

editorial

Not All Press is Good Press

Once again, the all-seeing eye of the media is focused on Concordia. Unfortunately, the theme of today’s programming is a familiar one for the school: dysfunction.

As is too often the case with our fine institution, we only seem to get people to notice us when we’re doing something wrong. The “voluntary departure” of former President Judith Woodsworth has led to *The Gazette’s* cartoonist Aislin mocking the image of our university. Similar coverage is being carried out in news outlets across the province and the country.

While Woodsworth’s apparent firing hasn’t been adequately explained, the former president hasn’t exactly helped along the process of transparency. If she was getting pushed out, wouldn’t it have benefited her to at least bring the matter to a vote or at least identify the members of the board that wanted her out?

Based on the fact that Woodsworth went to the national news after her dismissal and refuted the official line, the \$703,500 was not hush money. Why then didn’t Woodsworth head to the public and let the light of transparency attempt to save her? That would have been a better, although perhaps more bruising, form of political survivalism.

Indeed, there are far more questions than answers in the wake of the departure of virtually the whole top of the administrative power structure at Concordia. Who on the board decided that they had “lost confidence” in Woodsworth, and why? Who is the board accountable to? Why, for a school that loves to cry poor, is Woodsworth getting paid hundreds of thousands to not-so-quietly go away?

This last point is especially galling, particularly in light of the increasing desire for tuition hikes from the administration under Woodsworth. It seems students are being asked to fund administration real-estate projects, like the student centre, as well as rich severance packages for the revolving door of senior administrators. All this without even being granted the courtesy of an explanation from the shadowy board pulling the strings from behind the curtain.

Indeed, Concordia’s Board of Governors, created by the National Assembly, sees no reason to explain to Concordia students or the outside world why Woodsworth was pushed out the door. With no real accountability system in place, the Board has been able to do whatever it pleases, all the while petitioning the students to fund its ConU comedy of errors.

Clearly, Concordia’s Student Union has failed in whatever minimal watchdog role they could potentially have inhabited. They have refused to criticize the Board for the decision, essentially taking them at their word. Of course, with several former members of the CSU power structure being members of the board, it’s hard to expect pointed criticism from our so-called student leaders.

Who, then, to turn to?

It seems one of the only options available to Concordia students and faculty is to directly petition the Premier or the National Assembly to put our board of governors on ice. Depending on how the board acts over the next few weeks, either selecting another applicant as interim president or asking the Concordia community for help, the provincial government may have to put our board in trust and start from scratch.

—Diego Pelaez Gaetz,
Copy Editor

issue 17 crossword solutions



THE LINK
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