

# gazette

The Dalhousie Gazette

North America's Oldest Campus Newspaper, Est. 1868

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## Zen and the Art of Spiritual Maintenance

Cover by Chris Parent and Jonathan Rotsztain

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# WEEKLY DISPATCH

## STRENGTHENING ADVOCACY

Note: Due to CASA By-laws, the DSU Executive was limited from engaging in discussion until March 13th (30 days after it informed CASA that a discussion about membership status would be coming forward to the DSU Council). For a full explanation of our proposal, we suggest watching the video archive of the Council Meeting from March 13th, or contacting president@dsu.ca. The following provides a summary in the meantime:

- **It's time we think critically about our advocacy goals.** This year's DSU Executive is unanimously proposing that we commission a 10 month review of our advocacy tactics and goals to determine a way forward built on strong student consensus. As part of this strategy we are proposing we move to associate membership within the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations and simultaneously invest in building our own capacity to take on research and campaigns internally. If the review concludes we should withdraw our membership from CASA entirely this would be voted on by student referendums during next year's election season.
- **We've been doing the same thing for 18 years and it's not working.** Federal investment in education has declined by 50% in relation to GDP since 1992. Tuition has risen three times faster than inflation during that time. Students are graduating with an average debt of \$27,000, and taking an average of 14 years to pay off (and Canadian students are faced with some of the highest interest rates in the world for student loans). This is happening at a time when 1/3 recent graduates are moving into low-skilled occupations. The cost of education is crippling for many within our generation, and the situation is getting worse. CASA does not believe in tuition reductions, nor does it have a strong national vision for the PSE sector.
- **It's time we try something new.** Many Student Unions across Canada (including McGill, UBC, Wilfred Laurier, Saskatchewan, etc) have reconsidered their membership within CASA, realizing the need to engage in grassroots education and advocacy with students and community partners to build a national movement around reinvesting in PSE. CASA is not built for outreach and education campaigns but rather relies solely on meetings with political representatives. In the current political climate, politicians are not responding to our asks, no matter how much evidence is provided to them. We need to educate students and communities at large to create a new political climate that will allow for the type of transformative change that is needed.
- **There are some immediate opportunities to affect change.** As we reconsider our membership within CASA we want to invest resources where we know there is opportunity for change. Over the next 12 months we will be in the midst of negotiating a new provincial funding formula, a new framework for Quality standards, new policy surrounding international students, and facing a provincial election as well. Moving to associate membership will allow us additional resources to invest in research and campaigns around these critical issues. In a time when our University is in a budget crisis, we must be proactive in developing solutions that address our students' needs.
- As an associate member we will still be able to participate in all CASA gatherings and still receive information from the organization. CASA will continue its work regardless if we are members and the DSU will still be able to continue meeting directly and independently with our federal representatives locally. If it is determined by the review and referendum that the DSU wishes to exit from CASA, we are happy to support our Association of Graduate Students in pursuing independent membership in the organization. In the meantime, we cannot continue blindly investing in an approach we know is not working. We need to test out what is possible by investing more in internally-led efforts as we review our goals and tactics for the long-term.

On March 27th, the DSU Council will be voting to change status within CASA to "associate member" for 2013/14 and to commission a formal review of our advocacy strategy. The meeting is open to the public at 6:30pm in room 303, and will be live streamed and video archived on the DSU's YouTube Channel. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Stay connected with the DSU through Facebook & Twitter

Facebook Page: Dalhousie Student Union  
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March 22 - March 31, 2013 •

# The Dalhousie Gazette

North America's Oldest Campus Newspaper, Est. 1868

## staff

Katrina Pyne, Editor-in-Chief  
[editor@dalgazette.com](mailto:editor@dalgazette.com)

Torey Ellis, Copy Editor  
[copy@dalgazette.com](mailto:copy@dalgazette.com)

Daniel Boltinsky, News Editor  
Calum Agnew, Asst. News Editor  
[news@dalgazette.com](mailto:news@dalgazette.com)

Sam Elmsley, Opinions Editor  
[opinions@dalgazette.com](mailto:opinions@dalgazette.com)

Andrew Mills, Arts Editor  
Meagan Deuling, Asst. Arts Editor  
[arts@dalgazette.com](mailto:arts@dalgazette.com)

Ian Froese, Sports Editor  
Graeme Benjamin, Asst. Sports Editor  
[sports@dalgazette.com](mailto:sports@dalgazette.com)

Chris Parent, Photo Editor  
[photo@dalgazette.com](mailto:photo@dalgazette.com)

Ethan Calof, Online Editor  
Joelline Girouard, Asst. Online Editor  
[online@dalgazette.com](mailto:online@dalgazette.com)

Ben Gallagher, Other Editor  
[theothergazette@dalgazette.com](mailto:theothergazette@dalgazette.com)

Jonathan Rotsztain, Art Director  
[design@dalgazette.com](mailto:design@dalgazette.com)

Paul Balite, Financial Manager  
[business@dalgazette.com](mailto:business@dalgazette.com)

Aaron Merchant, Business Manager  
[advertising@dalgazette.com](mailto:advertising@dalgazette.com)

Isaac Green, Advertising Manager  
[advertising@dalgazette.com](mailto:advertising@dalgazette.com)

## contact us

[www.dalgazette.com](http://www.dalgazette.com)  
The SUB, Room 312  
6136 University Avenue  
Halifax NS, B3H 4J2



## advertising

Isaac Green  
Advertising Manager  
902 401 9666  
[advertising@dalgazette.com](mailto:advertising@dalgazette.com)

## the fine print

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## DalGazette.com Website Top 5 BEST OF THE YEAR, 2012-2013

- 1) Dal hockey player speaks out on hazing penalty  
Henry Whitfield, Sports
- 2) Dal women's hockey pleads for reinstatement  
Henry Whitfield, Sports
- 3) Dalhousie, women's hockey team disagree on hazing facts  
Henry Whitfield, Sports
- 4) Swastikas shown at NSPIRG endorsed protest—Calum Agnew, News
- 5) 2013 Most Eligible Tigers—Paula Sanderson, Sports



—Jessica Perrie

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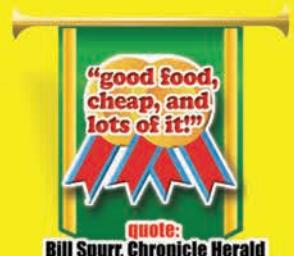
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# editorial

from  
the editorEmail Katrina at  
editor@dalgazette.com

Katrina Pyne Editor-in-Chief



## A ritual of sorts

### The moments of clarity in a world of chaos

**Katrina Pyne**  
Editor-in-Chief

The last *Gazette* issue of the year has finally hit stands. Its soft grey pages have been coated in warm ink, bundled tightly into packages and dropped at our various stands around campus and the city.

It's an important issue for us. As a staff we always think about how our last issue will sit on stands for the whole summer, staring down the passersby as they lurk to and fro.

So perhaps it seems peculiar to end a year of such excitement with a spirituality issue. It may be that it's our own way of giving an ode to the many pleas to God that will inevitably occur on the eve of so many exams. Or perhaps we thought it fitting, as so many individuals use the summer to pilgrimage to the many corners of the world to 'find themselves' or find solitude in the unique clarity that can only be achieved on a cool summer's eve beside the lake.

We each have our own rituals, be they spiritual—a prayer or meditation—or habitual—a walk in the woods to find our inner peace, or a yoga session to ease into the day.

After a year of such excitement it just seems fitting to cap things off with a time of reflection and thanks.

This year, I had the good fortune of using this almost-weekly editorial as my own personal writing therapy; much to the dismay of my friends and family I'm sure, whose anecdotal presence will forever remain documented in the *Gazette* archives.

And so with this last small chunk of space on the inside cover that I will be granted as editor, I can't help but reflect a little on our year here in room 312 nestled on the third floor of the SUB.

This year we've done our best to remain faithful to our student voice, to provide an open forum for issues on campus and within the city. From the women's hockey hazing scandal covered by our diligent sports team (Ian Froese, Graeme Benjamin) to a thorough analysis of the Campus Master Plan crafted by our own news editors (Daniel Boltinsky, Calum Agnew), we've looked at the issues through our own ever-critical lens.

Our team of always avant-garde arts editors (Andrew Mills, Meagan Deuling) and our colourful creative editor (Ben Gallagher) have kept our pages rich with texture while our opinions editor (Sam Elmsley) remained vigilant to make our student voice heard.

And then the person without whom this paper would be an endless series

of corrections is almost too valuable for words, our exceptional copy editor—and really just mentor for everyone—Torey Ellis.

It's a damn lucky journalist who gets to work with these incredible individuals.

This year more than ever we've tried to make the paper as interactive and accessible as possible. The forever changing layout of both the print edition and website is proof that our online team (Ethan Calof, Joelline Girouard) and art director (Jonathan Rotsztain) are constantly perfecting their crafts and our covers and photos are the brainchild of our cherished 'Mr. Perfectionist' photo editor (Chris Parent).

But of course none of this could be possible without the complete dedication of our business and advertising team (Pau Balite, Aaron Merchant) who have worked every corner of this city to keep our little paper not only afloat, but thriving.

So as our staff head out into the 'real world' once again, I feel completely confident that we will return re-energized and refocused in the more-than-capable hands of incoming editor-in-chief Ian Froese next fall.

It is with the fondest of farewells that I finally peel my fingers away



*Gazette* staff: the best and the brightest. • • • Photo by Pau Balite

from my laptop keyboard to avoid this inevitable gushing.

Cheers!

—Katrina Pyne  
Editor-in-chief 2012-13

### Correction

The previous issue of the *Gazette* was the Satire issue. It included many, many mistakes. The *Gazette* does not regret these errors.

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# news

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the greater Halifax community.  
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Email Daniel and Calum at  
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Daniel Boltinsky News Editor



DASSS Conference 2013. ••• Photo by Becky Richter

## DASSS ist gut

### Social science undergrads unite for national conference

#### Geordon Omand

Staff Contributor

••••••••••••••••••••  
“Dream big and it could happen.”

That's how Katherine Strynatka described the experience of helping organize the fourth annual Dalhousie Arts & Social Sciences Society (DASSS) Conference 2013, which took place March 8 and 9.

As the first fully student-funded and student-organized national undergraduate conference in Canada, the event played host to undergraduate scholars from across the country.

Last year, under the leadership of former DASSS president Max Ma, the society decided to open up the conference for the first time to the entire country.

“We were all really surprised when

it [succeeded so tremendously],” said Strynatka, the society's current VP (academic). “That kind of set the tone for future years.”

While many conferences for emerging scholars focus on graduate studies, DASSS 2013 provided a chance for students to showcase their undergraduate research.

“It's really a very rare opportunity,” said current DASSS president, Andrew Swift. “We need to recognize that it's in one's undergrad that we're forming ... key research skills.”

“It really starts now.”

Of the 60 submissions received from 16 different universities nationwide, 15 students were chosen to present. Half were from the Halifax area, while the furthest afield came from Grant MacEwan University in

Edmonton, Alta.

Not only did the presenters gain from participating, Strynatka said the conference planning committee also benefitted from the experience of hosting the conference. Between 20 and 30 students on council volunteered their time to review submitted abstracts and papers.

“This is a great opportunity to kind of gauge what their peers are doing—to review their work and decide whether they feel like this is worthy of being presented or not,” she said.

“To see the opposite side of that relationship has been really interesting; wouldn't everyone want a sneak peek at someone else's work?”

For the first time this year, the conference paired up with Writing Havoc, a three-day student creative

writing festival organized by Dal student Alexandra Kitson.

“We wanted to provide a more holistic and engaging experience for the conference,” said Swift.

“It's academically focused but it's not just about academics,” added Strynatka.

The conference's keynote speaker on March 8 was North Korean defector Shin Dong-hyuk, the only known person to have been born into the North Korean prison camp system and escape from it alive.

Swift said DASSS intends to put together an electronic journal following the conference and has already secured funding from the faculty toward that end.

Strynatka said she hopes to one day see the conference become bilingual.

“Here we are, calling ourselves Canada's first national student-funded, student-led undergraduate conference,” she said. “I feel like it should be accessible to all Canadians and all Canadians are not Anglophone.”

But Strynatka was happy with how the conference turned out.

“For me the triumph is when the conference finally happens and I finally get to meet the people I've been conversing with through email back and forth,” she said.

“They're standing in front of me, they've travelled hours on a plane to be here and it hits me. I think, ‘Wow, this is real,’ and it makes it so worth it.” ♪

## DSU AGM in review No Muslim rep, strategic plan, and VP break-up

#### Kristie Smith

Staff Contributor

••••••••••••••  
The Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) will not be getting a Muslim council representative and the union is one step closer to leaving the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations following the DSU's annual general meeting on March 18.

Students voted on constitutional amendments, including the creation of new council positions for a Muslim community representative and for the Rowe School.

Although the proposal for a Muslim community representative failed, the union is considering an equity and inclusion coordinator.

The DSU also presented its ‘strategic plan.’ The seven-page draft, yet to be ratified by council, was circulated around the AGM, summing up the accomplishments of the executive this past year. The plan also presents goals for next year, integrating the DSU Sustainability Office more, advocating for a summer U-Pass, and improving food services at the SUB.

Another proposal that has yet to be voted on is dividing the positions of VP (academic and external) and VP

(student life) into two positions each.

Aaron Beale and Aaron Wolfe, who held each of those positions respectively, found that by trying to do both, neither was done as well as it could be. It was suggested that the VP (student life) should be split into O-week and social events coordinators.

The DSU executive also put forward constitutional amendments that will set the stage for a review of the union's membership in CASA next year.

One amendment forbids the union from entering an agreement, partnership and/or membership with an external advocacy group that might compromise the union's autonomy. The union must also hold a referendum to enter any new agreements of partnerships. Finally, a new clause was added allowing council to change the union's membership status in an external organization, such as changing from ‘member’ to ‘associate member.’ ♪

Ben Wedge, Jamie Arron and Aaron Wolfe take questions at the DSU AGM.

••• Photo by Calum Agnew



# Shin Dong-hyuk visits Dal

North Korean prison camp escapee speaks with students



Dong-hyuk spent three days in Halifax. ••• Photo via the Foreign Policy Initiative

For more information on Camp 14 Project go to:  
[camp14project.wordpress.com](http://camp14project.wordpress.com)

Shin can be contacted on Twitter at @NKSDH  
or on Facebook at: [facebook.com/NKSDH](https://www.facebook.com/NKSDH)

**Geordon Omand**

Staff Contributor

Dalhousie students had the opportunity to imagine the unimaginable when North Korean defector Shin Dong-hyuk shared his story at Risley Hall on March 9 during his recent visit to Halifax.

Shin is the only known person to have been born within a North Korean prison camp and to have successfully escaped. Since breaking out of Camp 14—one of the six prison camps still operating in North Korea eight years ago—Shin has campaigned worldwide to raise awareness and shut down the camps that remain a hellish home for the people he left behind.

"We must not close our eyes just because it is beyond our imagination," said Shin through his translator, Henry Song of the North Korea Freedom Coalition.

"If we are human beings we all bear some responsibility to what happens to other human beings."

Sure-spoken, the small and unassuming man—who has addressed heads of state, UN ambassadors and world leaders—spoke informally with Saturday's group of about 35 Dal students.

Nineteen-year-old student Rodolfo de la Isla attended Shin's talk.

"At moments I tried to picture myself being him," he said, and added he felt very sad but motivated following the event.

De la Isla said the talk inspired him to become more active in human rights issues.

Shin was in Halifax as the result of work by a development and activism class taught by Dalhousie International Development Studies professor Bob Huish. Shin wanted to meet the students after learning about Camp 14 Project, the class campaign to raise awareness about North Korea's internment camp system.

"Once we realize there are certain issues in the world that are too perverse to turn your back on, we have a moral obligation to act," said Huish. "And the university is a great opportunity to put that in the classroom."

"The students of Dalhousie, of Camp 14 Project, they gave me great hope," said Shin.

The harrowing story of Shin's upbringing within North Korea's prison camp system and his eventual breakout is recounted in former *Washington Post* journalist Blaine Harden's book *Escape from Camp 14*. Huish's students read the book and voted unanimously to take on his cause as their advocacy project.

They organized a demonstration, lobbied to members of Parliament, interacted with the press and took to social media.

"Once (Shin) saw just how loud our voice was and the way we were organized, and that we were not just offering a message of sympathy but a call for action, he came to us," said Huish.

"He said, 'I'm coming to see you.'"

Saturday was the last day of Shin's three-day visit to Nova Scotia's capital.

On March 14 Shin spoke to an overcapacity audience of hundreds at Dal. The McCain Building's Scotiabank

Auditorium was filled far beyond its 250-seat capacity, with an estimated 450 people in attendance and 150 more waiting outside.

In comparison, Saturday's discussion was more conversational, with questions and dialogue flowing more freely between Shin and the audience.

"You come to realize it's the intimate conversations that matter as well as the big public conversations," said Huish.

"What Shin shows us is within all of us we have the potential to be an activist."

Despite the sombre theme of the discussion, Shin still succeeded in lightening the mood with an occasional joke or funny story.

Laughter filled the otherwise cheerless room as Shin recounted stories from his less-than-successful attempts at dating.

Still, the reality of constantly reliving the hellish initial 22 years of his life takes its toll on Shin. He described his advocacy work as "very painful," but said he has no choice but to continue, for those who remain in Camp 14.

"I don't like the work that I do," he says. But "they keep going; so must I."

"I think what we've seen here is the beginning," said Huish of the Camp 14 Project. "The beginning of a project and not the end of it."

Amnesty International estimates more than 200,000 North Koreans remain imprisoned in North Korea's labour camps. ♀

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Detail of: Dawit L. Petros, *Sign*, 2001, Digital print. © Dawit L. Petros and Dr. Kenneth Montague / The Wedge Collection



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Détail de : Dawit L. Petros, *Sign*, 2001, tirage numérique. © Dawit L. Petros et Dr Kenneth Montague / Wedge Collection

# opinions

**opinions**

gazette opinions welcomes any opinion backed up with facts, but we don't publish rants. Email Sam at [opinions@dalgazette.com](mailto:opinions@dalgazette.com) to contribute

Sam Elmsley Opinions Editor



## *More than an aura adjustment*

### Keeping healthy, spiritually speaking

Karin Murray-Bergquist

Opinions Contributor

Apart from its practical, functional purposes (namely, giving students something to pray to at exam time), spirituality is a central part of life. It includes religion, but is not limited to it. What spirituality is perhaps most concerned with is the search for truth, an exhausting quest from which humanity has not found a complete answer. Religion as an institution has not satisfied us, science explains a great deal but few are wholly happy with it as an explanation to everything, and indifference—who cares if there is or isn't a God?—still leaves the lingering question.

Now, in times defined largely by uncertainty, the question is sometimes asked: what is good spirituality? The definition is often general, in an attempt to avoid categorizing it too narrowly, though it has been given specific associations nonetheless. This is where the trouble with speaking of the benefits of healthy spirituality arises. The word is vague, can convey an over-emphasis on the self, or smack of new-age practices which have become institutions in themselves.

Spirituality, briefly put, is part of the way we all look at the world, whatever we believe or do not. If direct observation teaches us what there is in the world, the spiritual dimension determines how we interact with it, from our fellow humans to the ground beneath our feet. In this sense, spirituality is not so much a part of life as essential to it. To exist

is to contemplate questions of origin, of reason, and of direction, and this takes shape in many ways, of which spirituality is one.

In contemplating the kinds of questions students face every day, it is not surprising that a sense of spirituality has a pivotal role to play; everywhere, but especially in school, the problems the world face seem inescapable. When spirituality is healthy and active, it acts as more than a shield against these troubles, or a personal comfort. It points towards possible action, neither imposing nor denying one's own idea of truth. Spirituality has the potential to open the mind to possibilities beyond the ordinary; applied to student life, this role in particular is significant. It can, at its best, provide a vision and hope for a better future. Physical and mental health may be well served by spiritual practices such as yoga, dance or a walk in the woods—itself a spiritual activity when undertaken with a sufficiently active mind.

Healthy spirituality, then, is a variable idea, concerning at once the individual and the world around them. Introspection, soul-searching and questions of the self only go so far, though there is room enough in the world to consider them. It is equally important, though, to contemplate the greater-than-self, the things less tangible than a bounded individual. Spirituality, if it is to mean anything, must be less calculated for its possible benefits and more an acknowledged element, going beyond simple questions-and-answers, and beyond the institutions of society. ☐



Spirituality allows us to move beyond ourselves, "pointing toward possible action." • • • Photo by Bryn Karcha

## ON THE ROAD

### *Waking up in Amsterdam*

Josh Fraser

Opinions Contributor

• • • • • • • • • • • •  
Last stop. Bienvenue à Amsterdam.  
5:43 AM.

The night was a blur; the bus driver had made excellent time. I sat in the bus/train station. Nothing was open. Even if I *had* booked a hostel, I wouldn't have been allowed to check in for another six hours. My sleepless body was numb, my mind hushed. My reflection was dulled by the mist on the window.

## "I STEPPED INTO THE WELCOME EMBRACE."

Nowhere to go, everywhere to go.

Stowing my money and passport in a safe, dry pocket, I pulled the rain cover over my backpack, marvelling at my existence. Everything I needed was stowed in this chunky scarlet sack secured on my shoulders.

Autumn in Amsterdam.

My feet led me splash-splashing in search of the dawn. A smooth asphalt path ran next to a canal, luminous white sentinels transforming the cold rippling waters into funhouse mirrors. The water whispered to me

through sweet air while Apollo readied his chariot.

I moved in a daze. I felt no pain, no happiness, no sorrow, no smile.

I stretched my bare arms in front of me, waving them in the half-light, wiggling my fingers, but I couldn't feel a thing. Suddenly the mist evolved into a downpour, and I was soaked to the bone. I did not shiver; the ember of my soul was hidden, protected.

I wondered and wandered as the city wakened. A bike whizzed by me. And another. Soon I was forced from the path by crowds of eco-commuters. Heading down a residential thoroughfare, droves of families sped along on human-powered transportation. As I walked, it became a common sight to spy a mother or father settling three or four kids onto a single modified bicycle before clambering onto it themselves and setting off for school with ease, a feat of cooperation and collective balance.

I meandered for hours in my dreamlike state, before locating a hostel with comfort and very reasonable rates. The only car I encountered was a street cleaner.

Midafternoon rain pelted the sidewalk as I peered out of the window. I admired the cleverness of my backpack; little water had seeped through in the hours of roaming in the intermittent rain. I peeled the folds of soggy cloth from my body the way one might shed a skin. After wringing my clothes out and hanging them



Singing clock faces in the Amsterdam morning. • • • Photo supplied

to dry, I stepped into the welcome embrace of a hot shower. Through my dreamwalk, worry and fear had seeped from my pores, and were now washing down the drain under the therapeutic drumming of cascading water.

Reluctantly, I switched off the water jets before I grew gills; I had

been wet for hours. As I absently towed off, I looked at my nakedness in the mirror. I had lost weight since the beginning of the trip two weeks ago. My solid structure and musculature, no longer hid under layers of fat, self-pity and grief. Despite weakness and fatigue, my spine held me straight and tall.

I didn't smile nor frown into the mirror. I simply looked.

As I lay on my bunk, I felt an afternoon siesta take hold and pull me under the covers. My body melted into the mattress and I swam in my unconscious mind amid visions of acrobatic cyclist families and singing clock faces. ☐

**"It's not where  
you're from  
its where  
you're at"**  
—Rakim

# A wrinkle in time

## GLIMPSES INTO OUR SPIRITUAL MOMENTS

Where are you at? Three writers on flying, recovering and musing through spiritual moments. • • • Photo by Bryn Karcha



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**Leah Shangrow**  
Opinions Contributor

• • • • • Soaring, sublime, Shantih.

My Spiritual Moment. A loaded statement. Centuries of philosophers debating the body and the soul, the material and the immaterial, the brain and the mind.

I must be separate from and outside of something greater, and for a moment become a spirit then be thrust back in my body. Yet, if to experience something spiritual is instead to transcend the body, to move beyond borders, how can it be mine?

I have not felt the touch of God. I have not seen the light. To be connected, to find everything in the mind

**Samantha Elmsley**  
Opinions Editor

• • • • • Last March, Halifax experienced one glorious day—sent by some higher power, I'm sure—of summer weather.

The streets were filthy because the snow had just melted, and Spring Garden smelled like the city's toilet, but hey, it didn't matter! Everyone was downtown or on the boardwalk, soaking up 28 degrees of pure relief. What felt like 86 per cent of all university students skipped class that day.

I was one of them. I had just weathered the shittiest few months of my life and was still trying to cope with the fallout. Time in the sun, I decided, would do me good. And,

**Meagan Deuling**  
Assistant Arts Editor

• • • • • Despite an old-fashioned Catholic upbringing, the blown-out-candle smell of church doesn't evoke memo-

ries of the fleeting sense of belonging to something bigger than me. Memories from childhood Sundays include eating Cheese Whiz on saltine crackers at my grandma's after church and getting into trouble—there would come a point, near the end of service, where my dad would open his eyes (he kept his eyes closed during church), glance my way and give his

reflected in the body—this I can say I have felt.

I felt it at 3,500 feet. Not in a church, not on a yoga mat, not on a beach in Ireland, not in a forest at Walden Pond, but in a Comanche. In a five-seater plane with my hands on the yoke, hearing the ominous words "you have control," with a pulse racing to empty a heart overfilled with blood. To my left the pilot-in-command, Al Bieck, awe-inspiring in his own right, to my right a wing, with a few thousand feet of air beneath it.

Ahead is freedom. I have control. I see no obstacles: no walls to contain, no streets to guide, no doors to shut out. I can see Toronto from Collingwood and the world gets smaller. My pulse slows. I am Jonathan Livings-

ton Seagull, sailing, floating, and I am Coyote, watching, waiting. Not sly, but serene. I see the land that connects everything and everyone, and I am the air.

I am an I, and I am in two worlds at once. I exist, and yet I do not. There is no language here in this state, no words to describe the fear and the empowerment and the body's response to both at once.

I tell Bieck he has control. Memories of flight plans and air-safety regulations return yet I do not lose the tingle. I have flown.

How can the mind and body interact? No matter. I was more, more than a body or a mind. I felt more. I flew. ☭

Wrapped up in a blanket, sun-wearied and sipping my drink, I watched the towers at the Dartmouth refinery turn the sky orange as they caught on fire (again). Maybe I was just tired, maybe I had drank too much (I had). For the first time in months, I felt still.

My friend with the camera put her photos on Facebook the next day. Clicking through them, I stopped when I saw myself laughing at something someone had said. I looked skinnier than I could ever remember being, and the bags under my eyes rivaled any raccoon. But this was clear evidence that I had not fallen apart—I was there, with my friends, intact. ☭

The trees and ridges parted to reveal a view of the narrow valley through which stretched our neighbour's hay fields. It was a short horizon but the broadest I knew at the time.

The hayfield horizon made the space in my chest expand. When I watch seagulls surf thermals I get the same feeling. When I was 11 I saw the Pacific Ocean horizon for the first time. I wrote a note to myself about China and motorcycle road trips. Recalling memories from that vacation is the same as praying; it's the tenuous knowledge of the grandeur and possibility in the world. ☭

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arts covers cultural happenings in Halifax.  
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to contribute.

Andrew Mills Arts Editor



## THE CITY IS A PLAYGROUND

### PARKOUR AS A SPIRITUAL ANSWER

**Elise Palmer**  
Staff Contributor

The world is Glenn Knockwood's playground. He founded a parkour group in Halifax. Parkour is a sport often described as 'the art of movement'. To understand parkour, it's best to think of it as street gymnastics: vaulting, climbing and jumping in an urban environment.

But as Knockwood says, "It's almost impossible to explain what parkour is ... it's like asking 'what is reality?'" Parkour is less of a sport and more of a discipline, or a way of life.

Knockwood started doing parkour 10 years ago as a way of connecting with the city and, in turn, his spirituality. Knockwood grew up in Indian Brook, N.S., a Mi'kmaq community. His father taught him about four separate worlds: the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

He believes we live in all four at the same time, and by knowing each world individually, one gains a better and more holistic understanding of himself. Knockwood says he turns to the physical world as a way of coping with stress. To him, the physical world is a constant now, without comparison in it, so "by focusing on the physical world, [he] can get away from the stress of thinking about the past or thinking about the future."

Knockwood used Parkour as a tool to cope with the alienation he felt after he moved to Halifax to study media arts at NSCAD. Having grown up surrounded by nature, he felt suffocated by the city.

"Cities are killing, and they stifle you, and they don't allow for creativity or growth or community," he says. He would spend a few months in the city, growing increasingly depressed before escaping to nature to rejuvenate.

"Being out in nature gives me this

charge. It reminds me I am connected to all things. It would fill me with this life, or energy," he says.

While struggling to find a way to deal with this cycle, he stumbled across a video of parkour on the Internet. He was hooked.

"As soon as I saw little kids who were younger than me doing things I thought were impossible, I was like, 'You go, right now,' and I went out that night and started doing parkour."

He found something that made him feel like he'd been out in the woods, when really, he'd been clambering around the city. "A lot of people feel that cities are very stifling, but in reality, that's just perspective, and we can change our perspective," says Knockwood.

Knockwood realized he was training at night, in seclusion. "I was doing that because I was afraid of people watching me and judging me, but those are just obstacles," says Knockwood. Initially he would get distracted by people watching him or honking, but he channelled that distraction to a hyper-focus.

Knockwood says people see the physical aspect of parkour like using the world as a playground, "but what they want to know is why are you doing it?" he says. "And anytime you ask the question 'why,' you're asking a spiritual question."

"I do it to be more human. I do it to connect to the world around me. And those are spiritual answers. I feel at home everywhere I go, and I have been places that very few people have been. I feel like I have an intimate connection with the city."

It's even changed his attitude to the never-ending construction in Halifax, which he used to hate. "Now I'm like, 'Ooh, I wonder what kind of railings they're going to have outside the scaffolding?'" ☺



Parkour is a leap of faith. • • • Photo by Marco Gomes via Wikipedia

If you want to try parkour yourself, you can check it out Tuesday (4-6 p.m. at the Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre), Wednesday and Friday (3-6 p.m. at the Clock Tower) and Sunday (noon at the Clock Tower.)



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# The Gazette

other ↗



## ADVICE FOR STUDENTS

### Tom Traves

**Outgoing President,  
Dalhousie University**

Like sports or music, success in school requires hard work and long hours to build knowledge and skills. It is easier to commit to this if you love what you're doing, so find your passion and go for it! Mastery of your field also takes time, so be patient, stay focused and you will find your true path. Good luck!

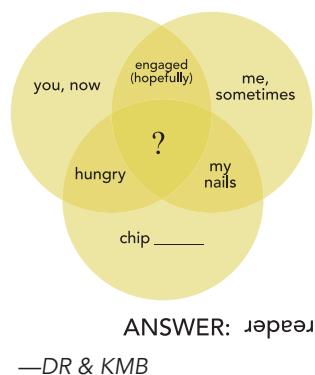


—Bethany Riordan-Butterworth

HL 13

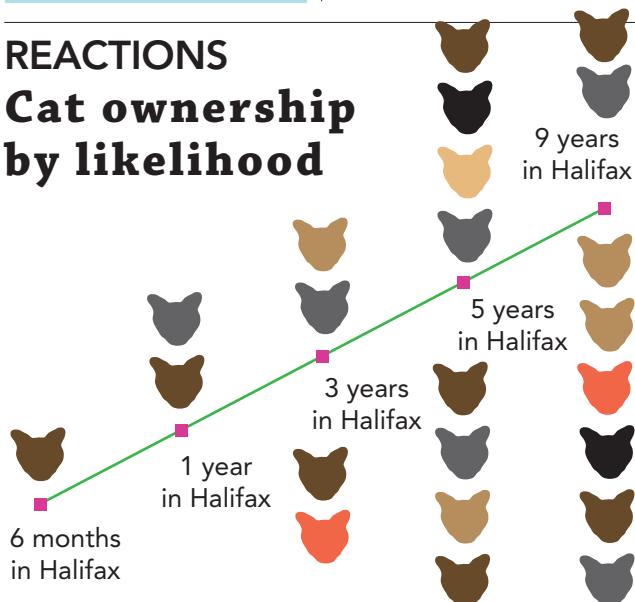
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## REACTIONS

### Cat ownership by likelihood



## LOOK-A-LIKES

### It's up to you



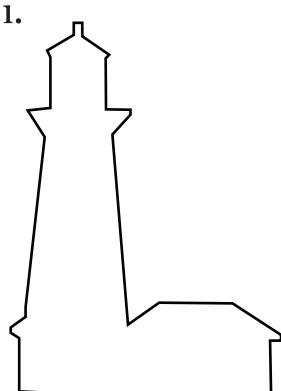
You have been in on the game of LOOK-A-LIKES all year.

Now it's your turn to play!

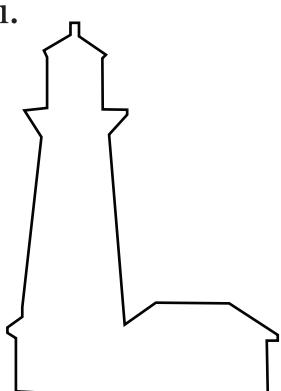
So grab a friend, and let your imagination soar!

We challenge you to make this lighthouse into...

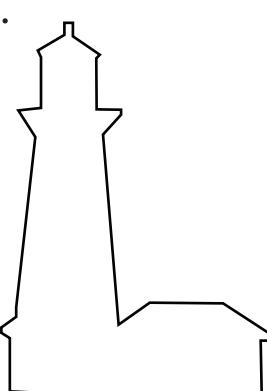
i.



ii.



iii.



i. A GIRAFFE

ii. A POTLUCK DISH

iii. DIGNITY (OR LACK THEREOF)

—Daniel Rotsztain, Kaleigh McGregor-Bales, Ricardo Cefala and Tracy Kent

## EAST COAST

### Bluenoser

"Bluenoser" has made it to the Oxford English Dictionary! The esteemed compendium of all things English gave the nod to the designation for Nova Scotians this year. Bluenoser, a noun, is defined as, "a nickname for: a native or inhabitant of Nova Scotia; (also occasionally) one from New Brunswick. Sometimes more generally: any Canadian. In modern use Bluenoser (Bluenoser) is more common."

Bluenose was already in the

dictionary as "as an allusion to blue noses due to cold weather, a reference to a type of purplish potato grown in Nova Scotia or a schooner from the province, like the ship depicted on [the Canadian] dime" as well as an outdated, derogatory slang for Presbyterians.

The original term, as it applies to the Maritimes, referred to fishermen who after a long day out at sea would return with cold, blue

noses. That, plus all the blue herring and blue potatoes that were staples of the pre-modern East Coast diet.

The name, first coined in the 1760s, is now widely used by businesses, organizations and events, including the ever-popular Bluenose marathon. And seeing as how it's still cold out at least six months of the year, Bluenoser is here to stay.

—Jonathan Rotsztain



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Levels of government

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DAL ADMIN



HRM



Canada  
FEDERAL

SCARY

—JR

## LOOKING BACK

### Party talk



—Rebecca Roher

the other ↗ OTHER GAZETTE  
is otherwise unavailable

## POETRY

### An Evening of Fun and Dance

For the first time tonight,  
I heard the wind whistle.  
It whistled to me,  
And I whistled back.  
For the first time,  
In a long time,  
I decided that it doesn't

matter anymore.  
The Kremlin be damned.  
Screw you Uncle Sam.  
I decided I wanted my life  
back.  
And I looked around,  
And I thought,

"What is my life?"  
The earth grows,  
And I grow too.  
And when I hear the wind  
whistle,  
I whistle back  
—Elliot Green



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other other other, are you  
talented and hilarious? submit:  
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Ben Hallapher Other Editor  
Jonathan Botreen Other Other Editor

# STREETER

*What's your spirit animal?*



"The head of a dolphin, with a body of a lion" **Adam Stone**  
2nd-year management



"A deer" **Emma Harrington**  
3rd-year neuroscience



"A turtle" **Robin Baggeley**  
2nd-year oceanography



"A lion" **Alberto Cajiao**  
Grade 11, Charles P. Allen High School



"A lion" **Korede Akindoju**  
3rd-year kinesiology



"A puma" **Mahmuda Begum**  
2nd-year biology



"A river otter" **Iain Caldwell**  
3rd-year biology and history of science and technology

by Calum Agnew and Daniel Boltinsky

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Richards and MacLeod sit down for a talk between authors. • • • Photo by Andrew Mills

## Driving through the dark

**David Adams Richards revisits his acclaimed 1976 book, *Blood Ties***

**Andrew Mills**  
Arts Editor

Something rare just happened and everyone knows it: the guy holding back tears and writing in his notebook knows it—even the lady asking David Adams Richards an absurdly personal and fawning non-question about her love for his writing knows it. This is the first time Richards has read from his 1976 novel *Blood Ties* in decades.

The New Brunswick author reads 12 pages from his second novel to a packed and reverent crowd Friday at Saint Mary's University McNally Theater for the Cyril J Byrne lecture. And 12 pages is enough to knock the room flat with the novelist's typically understated emotional power, before he sits down to speak and field questions with SMU professor and fellow Can-lit heavyweight, Alexander

MacLeod.

The passage from *Blood Ties*, a book he wrote at the age of 25, traces the heartrending courage of a rejected marriage proposal—a scene Richards prefaces by saying, “It’s a doomed love, but he can’t help it.” The passage has the typical Richards themes of fate, self-delusion, humour and tragedy. These ideas are writ small between images of Miramichi life, where characters bound by blood, place and complex history offer disarming dialogue against Richards’ mysterious backdrop of cosmic darkness.

For all its pastoral romanticism, Richards early work has the kind of flaws which, both author and audience know, should be celebrated. “I used to be more lyrical when I wrote *Blood Ties*” he says, “but, now [in my books], I’m more analytic.”

An audience member mentions

how Richards illuminated the parallels between the Southern states and the Maritimes, and MacLeod suggests he talk more about the Southern and Russian authors.

Richards acknowledges a debt to the searing moralists to whom he’s often compared, Flannery O’Connor and William Faulkner. But it’s another existentialist from an earlier century with whom he most relates.

“Dostoevsky is one of my favourite prophets. He had real problems—as crazy as a bat in a bottle, but he’s one of my favourite prophets,” says Richards, who gets under the skin and heart tissues of alienated outsiders as well as any contemporary writer.

The recurring image of the evening is one of driving at night, introduced in MacLeod’s opening remarks as an apt image both for Richard’s writing, and his actual journey across the dreaded Cobequid pass to make it to

Halifax on the snowy Friday evening.

E.L. Doctorow famously said, “Writing is like driving at night in the fog. You can only see as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way.” Richards’ career, spanning 26 books, has seen many of his recurring characters navigate through the common tragedies of life with moral courage in a seemingly callous universe.

A gritty, open-ended lyricism has always been the operative mode for Richards. He’s tried his hand at more philosophical thought in recent years, such as the 2009 collection of essays *God Is*, an exploration of faith in the context of an increasingly nihilistic and amoral literary world. Richards, one of three Canadians honoured with a Governor General’s award for both fiction and non-fiction, isn’t slowing down, but the retrospective moment on Friday felt like a good

resting point under the lights along a long, dark roadway.

Maybe MacLeod sums it up best in his introduction to Richards’ work.

“I have always maintained that David Adams Richards has devoted his entire career and in a very tangible way, a serious proportion of his life’s force, to writing just one book, not the 26 we have now,” he says.

“We are reliably returned, time and again, to the same abiding concern for the emotional and ethical integrity that every individual has to struggle for with their choices and the same sympathetic, but clear eyed cataloguing of all the consequences—the sometimes joyful, sometimes hilarious, sometimes tragic and sometimes brutal consequences—that flow on from every one of those decisions.”



Songs of praise.

• • • Graphic by Jonathan Rotsztain

**Samantha Elmsley**  
Opinions Editor

In small-town Ontario, it’s almost impossible not to grow up religious. In keeping with this eventuality, my parents hauled me (and, once they came along, my sisters) every Sunday through the doors of the Anglican church around the corner from our house.

I spent the first five years of my Christian life playing with xylophones in the nursery, the fiery Mrs. P from Scotland (knitter of the best socks around) my keeper under the eyes of God. From there I moved on to Sunday school, taught by my dad

## SOUL FOOD

### An unwavering faith in the sung word

for a number of years, and around 14 was deemed fit to sit through the entire adult service. Hurrah.

I liked it, actually—and my favourite part was the songs. They always had been. When we were little my dad would bounce us to the beat on his knee, pretending to almost drop us in time with the rhythm. Our minister was a genius for picking catchy tunes and our entire congregation (at least 100 people) would belt it out at the top of our collective lungs. Some of the older ladies, who sounded like professionals to my untrained ears, would harmonize at certain points of particular songs. By unspoken agreement they marked out their own min-

ute in the spotlight and stuck to it. To this day, certain songs sound incomplete without a key change in the third pew on the left, or a few extra notes added in from the seat at the very back.

At 15, I was singing these songs and reading the Bible cover to cover and trying really hard to pay attention to the whole sermon. Religion provided a framework through which to experience life, something I needed at the time. But I had always found the Bible-as-God’s-Word pretty hard to swallow. Turns out this is a crucial clause in the Christian contract. At 18 I was losing faith in the church; finally, my university encounter with

philosophy killed what little I had left completely.

I can’t ever find what I’m looking for in church ideology again. That framework has been taken down. I can, however, be pulled outside of myself while listening to a favourite song. I can roll down the truck window on a sunny day and drive fast, friends or family in the backseats, belting out Bohemian Rhapsody. I can learn to sing acapella with only my sisters. I can forget to be self-conscious at an open mic when the whole crowd is singing. Whatever else, music is my line of continuity.

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Ian Froese Sports Editor



## DALHOUSIE TIGERS

### WINTER 2013 SEMESTER IN REVIEW



Ian Froese Sports Editor, Henry Whitfield, Benjamin Blum, Stephen Campbell, Monica Mutale Staff Contributors

Let's not gloss over it: this was a semester unlike any other for Dalhousie Athletics. Instead of the slap to the wrist many expected, the university garnered international attention by taking a strong stance against hazing, forcing women's hockey to forfeit the second half of their season. The suspension—and criticisms about its severity—easily made hazing the most talked-about story on campus this year.

It took a while, but once hazing left the headlines, there were a number of teams (minus women's hockey) turning heads with their actions in competition. The usual teams claimed AUS titles and there was a changing of the guard in women's volleyball.

We recap what went down in our latest Semester in Review. Come for the women's hockey jokes, stay for everything else. —IF



This banner ends a seven-year championship drought for women's VB. ••• Photo by Derek Nakonieczny via NLsportsphoto.com

### Women's volleyball :::: A-

This season was a successful one for the Tigers, who culminated an impressive AUS campaign by avenging their loss in last year's championship to seize the crown. Led by AUS coach of the year Rick Scott and a strong core of veterans and young players, women's volleyball had a season for the ages. They did fall short in the CIS quarter-final, but achieved their goal of bringing home their first conference banner since 2004-05. —BB

### Swimming :::: A

A 16th straight AUS banner for the men and a 12th for the women, these teams continue to control the AUS competition but have failed to turn that into success at the national level. —HW

### Track & Field :::: A-

Surprise, surprise. Both the men and women dominated this season, crushing their opposition at most meets and breezing to another AUS banner. This year marks the 24th women's title in a row and 12th consecutive for the men. Rob McCullough and Simon Watts each claimed a bronze medal at nationals. —HW

### Men's basketball :::: B

The men's basketball team surprised us this year. They had just two wins under their belt by the end of December, when they swept their home exhibition tournament just in time for the New Year. Despite crashing out in the AUS quarter-finals, John Campbell's squad played better ball in 2013 to improve their final ranking by one step, finishing the season in fourth place. —MM

### Men's volleyball :::: B-

This was a year to forget for men's volleyball. A huge turnover in the form of 11 new players did not limit Dal to clinching home court advantage in the finals against UNB, but two straight losses in four sets to the V-Reds abruptly ended their season. —HW ☹

without a banner. Dal's dominance over the AUS-winning 31 of the last 34 titles—is slipping, as UNB has topped the Tigers twice in the last three years to effectively end Dal's dynasty. —SC

### Women's basketball :::: C+

Inconsistency was the name of the game for women's basketball. The squad managed to win only three of their last 11 games. Combine this with a fall in the early round of playoffs, and you get a disappointing season. While their fourth place finish is definitely an improvement on landing sixth on the table in 2011-2012, it's not enough to earn them more than a C+ from this sports desk. —MM

### Men's hockey :::: C

The futility streak is expanding for men's hockey. Dal has spent two consecutive years outside the playoffs and nine of the past 10 seasons in a league where six of eight teams qualify. The Tigers played close games down the stretch, sure, but their ever-shrinking fan base wants more. —IF

### Women's hockey :::: D

They forfeited their final 12 games after a hazing scandal suspended all of their veterans, but the fact is, they didn't have much success before the sanctions were handed down anyways. The Tigers were just 2-10 prior to their suspension and there are a lot of holes to be addressed in the lineup. —HW ☹

## BEST OF THE DAL TIGERS

### Best Player: Louise Facca, women's volleyball

Honourable mentions: Rob McCullough, men's track and field; Simon Watts, men's track and field

In her final season as a Tiger, Facca went out in style by leading the women's volleyball team to an AUS title. The captain was consistently an invaluable contributor, finishing third in kills and second in aces this season in the AUS, and was recognized for her community service off the court in winning the Erin Bursey Memorial Award. —BB

### Best Individual Performance: David Sharpe, men's swimming

He's the Tiger who made it all the way to the London Olympics, and he's still blowing the competition out of the water. Sharpe's stellar season included setting Dalhousie and AUS records in the 200 metre backstroke and individual medley. He

also brought home the hardware at nationals, winning two silver medals and a bronze for Dal swimming. —MM

### Best Moment: Last women's basketball game for Keisha Brown, Anna von Maltzahn

In their final game wearing black and gold, Anna von Maltzahn and Keisha Brown gave the hometown crowd one last thing to cheer about by putting up 27 and 22 points, respectively, in a 88-77 victory over the Acadia Axewomen. In an emotional celebration, the pair were honoured with a post-game presentation of plaques and flowers, thanking them for their service to the team. A choked up coach Anna Stammberger expressed her gratification for their significant contributions in their years as Tigers while wishing them the best in their future endeavours. —SC

### Best Ass-Kicking: Women's volleyball's season

It was a dominant season for a Tigers team that mauled the competition in the AUS. Dal women's volleyball capped off an undefeated AUS season by winning 29 straight sets en route to a first place regular season finish and won their first AUS crown since 2005 by dispatching the defending champs from Saint Mary's. Impressed? You should be. —BB

### Best Fan Support: Dalhousie Residence Charity Face-off

Despite being shipped up to the Halifax Forum this year (yeah, another result of demolishing the good old DMA), residence students turned up in droves and created a rocking atmosphere. The game itself was memorable, a 7-6 shootout win for the Big Horns. —HW

### Best Rookie: Jordan Bruce, men's track and field

Honourable mentions: Sarah Taplin, women's track and field; Hassan Abdullahi, men's basketball

Under the mentorship of multiple CIS All-Canadian Simon Watts, triple jumper Jordan Bruce took advantage of the expertise at his disposal in his outstanding debut season. He didn't earn a medal like Watts did at nationals, but Bruce was a close fifth place. The rookie also qualified for nationals in hurdles, as well. —IF

### Best Program We're Pulling For: Men's and women's hockey

Abysmal seasons on and off the ice, we're hoping that something can change in the 2013/2014 season. It cannot get any worse, right? —HW

### Best Turnaround: Women's hockey

They had a horrible first half of the season, but after Christmas they went undefeated... Oh wait, what? That's awkward. —HW

### Best reporting: Henry Whitfield's coverage of women's hockey hazing

Surprise! Whitfield has no idea this would be here, but the recognition is well-deserved. His exclusive conversation with a women's hockey player after the team's suspension garnered remarkable attention. Hits on the *Gazette* website went through the roof, his work was credited on Deadspin.com twice and it helped divert national conversation about the hazing saga away from the team's bullying to whether the university's sanctions were fair. This exclusive, which undoubtedly frustrated the big media outlets that spent days to get the same information themselves, is really unmatched. —IF



AUS player of the year Jimmy Dorsey assisted on Cape Breton's winning basket. • • • Photo by Chris Parent

## Best Game: Men's basketball loses by two to Cape Breton

**Honourable mentions:** Dalhousie Residence Charity Face-off decided in a shootout Mar. 9; men's hockey wins 8-7, still eliminated from playoff contention Jan. 26

There hasn't been as much excitement at the Dalplex in quite some time the way there was on the eve of Jan. 26. The Tigers took the undefeated Cape Breton Capers to the brink and put on a show for a packed house on residence night. The Tigers, who held the lead for most of the game, were trailing by three with eight seconds left when star rookie Devon Stedman drained a huge three-pointer to send the Dalplex into a frenzy. The night did not end in Dal's favour, as the Capers added a bucket with two seconds left for the victory, but the gutsy effort proved that Dal can compete with the league's best. —SC (9)

HOT OR LON	
Irresponsible partying as a regular university student	Irresponsible partying as a varsity athlete
While suspended, women's hockey teaching school kids about the dangers of bullying	The irony of that
Mooseheads hockey	Tigers hockey
Quality of the AUS TV webcasts	Quality of the CIS TV webcasts
Women's volleyball dominating all season	Women's volleyball losing first game at nationals in straight sets
The shoot for tuition contest: a chance at \$5,000!	Contest wasn't held at Feb. 2 men's hockey game—no interest from the few students there. Seriously.
New weight room equipment at the Dalplex	Dalplex
Average home attendance of seven other AUS men's hockey teams: 1,145	Average home attendance of Dal men's hockey team: 195 (last place)
Continued dominance of swimming and track and field	Lack of media coverage for swimming and track and field

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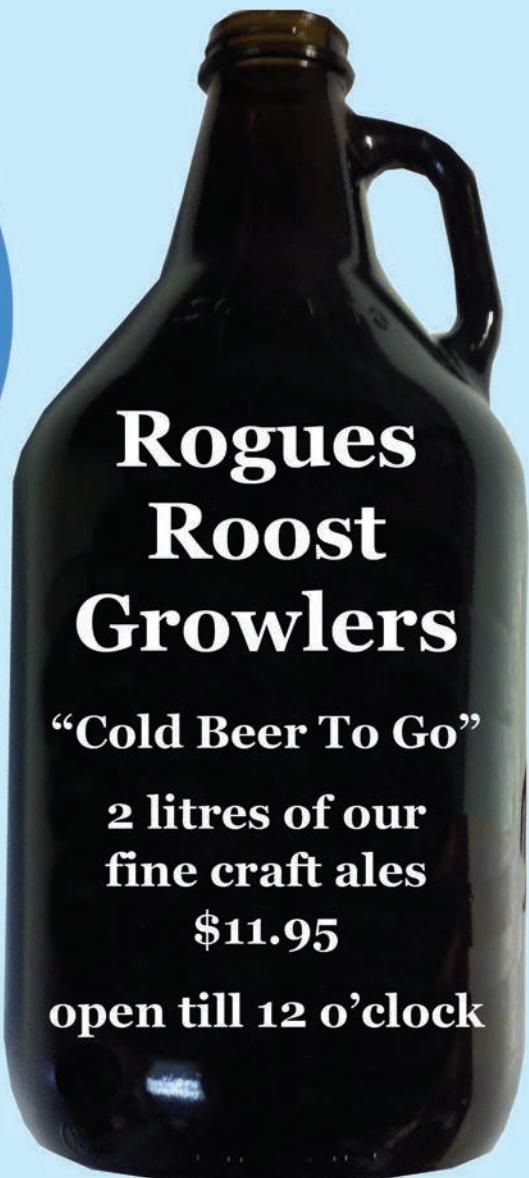


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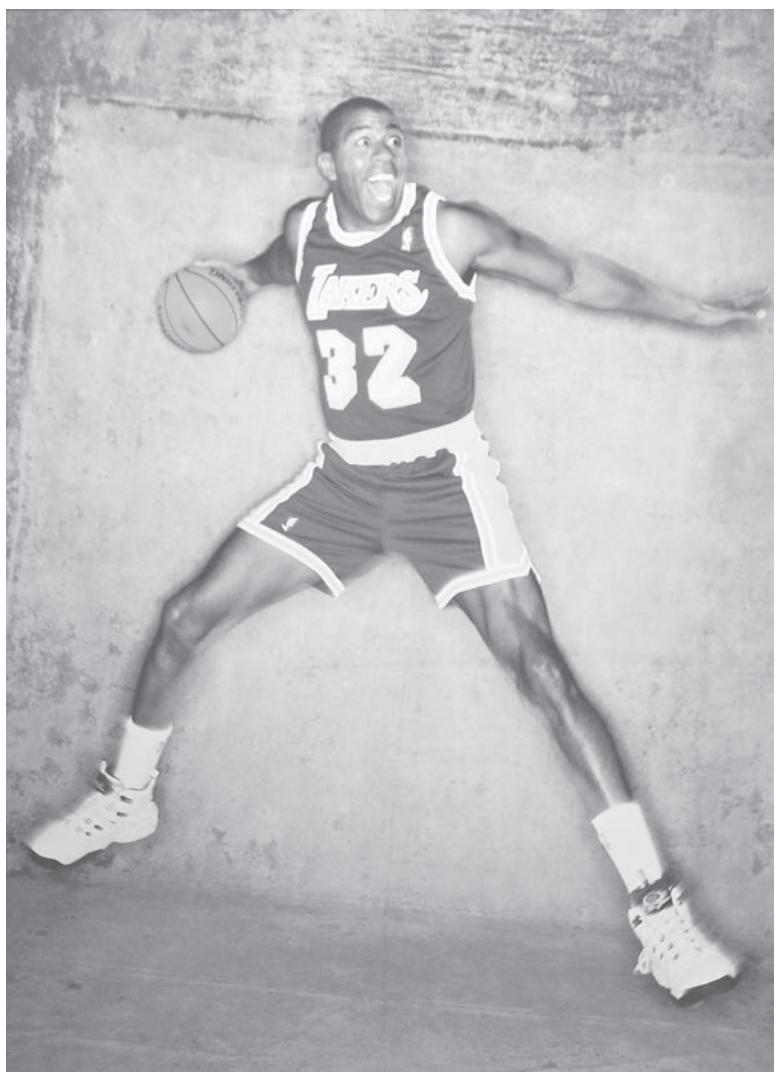
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## BEN'S 10

Benjamin Blum  
Staff Contributor

The Internet has finally done something good. After putting up with grammatically challenged cats and an insufferable dance that no Harlem denizen would take pride in, the Ben's 10 Twitter contest proves there is still hope for this computer fad. My Muppet and I decided that the winning idea came from Nick Schroeder, who suggested nicknames in sports. Enjoy that Iced Capp, kid.

### "HE WAS BIG. HE HURT THE BALL."

Nicknames are one of the great intricacies of sports. Whether commenting on someone's playing style and appearance (think about anyone ever named "Red" ever) or by simply affixing "-zy" at the end of a last name (go ahead, try it on yourself), nicknames add a creative flair to any team. Some nicknames have become so synonymous with athletes that we forget they have real names. So, for

## TOP NICKNAMES IN SPORTS

the last time this year, here are 10 of the most unique nicknames in sports.

**Honourable Mention:** **The Broad Street Bullies:** Those Philadelphia Flyers in the mid-1970s were feared, loathed and above all respected for winning two Stanley Cups. This one's for the Gordon-Lerman clan in Philly.

**10. Al "The Mad Hungarian" Hrabosky:** This raging reliever would walk off the mound after every pitch, talk to the ball, then turn around and try to melt the batter with heat vision. Definitely an apt nickname.

**9. Bernie "Boom Boom" Geoffrion:** This nickname came from the sound of the Canadian's powerful slap shot. Incidentally, it's the same noise Memorial Arena made when it was unceremoniously dynamited last year.

**8. Lawrence "Yogi" Berra:** No, he did not steal pick-a-nick baskets, but seeing the Hall of Fame catcher on this list is like déjà vu all over again.

**7. Anthony "Spud" Webb:** A trailblazer for short guys and potatoes, his performance in the 1986 Slam Dunk contest was larger than life.

**6. Frank "The Big Hurt" Thomas:** He was big. He hurt the ball. Shakespeare was right: brevity is the soul of wit.

**5. Pelé:** Try fitting Edison Arantes do Nascimento on the back of a soccer jersey. Go ahead, I'll wait.

**4. Maurice "Rocket" Richard:** Proof that I'm an unbiased journalist despite being an ardent Leafs fan. This is the second Canadian on the list!

**3. William "The Refrigerator" Perry:** Watching the 335-pound defensive tackle run it in for a touchdown from one yard out: sweetness. Wait, "Sweetness" is teammate Walter Payton's nickname. Well, this is awkward.

**2. Magic "Earvin" Johnson:** His nickname is so prolific that his real name is in quotation marks.

**1. The 1970s Oakland A's:** Our first repeat winner. You can't argue with nicknames like Catfish Hunter, Blue Moon Odom, Mr. October and Rollie Fingers. Plus, they had moustaches. Case closed. ♀

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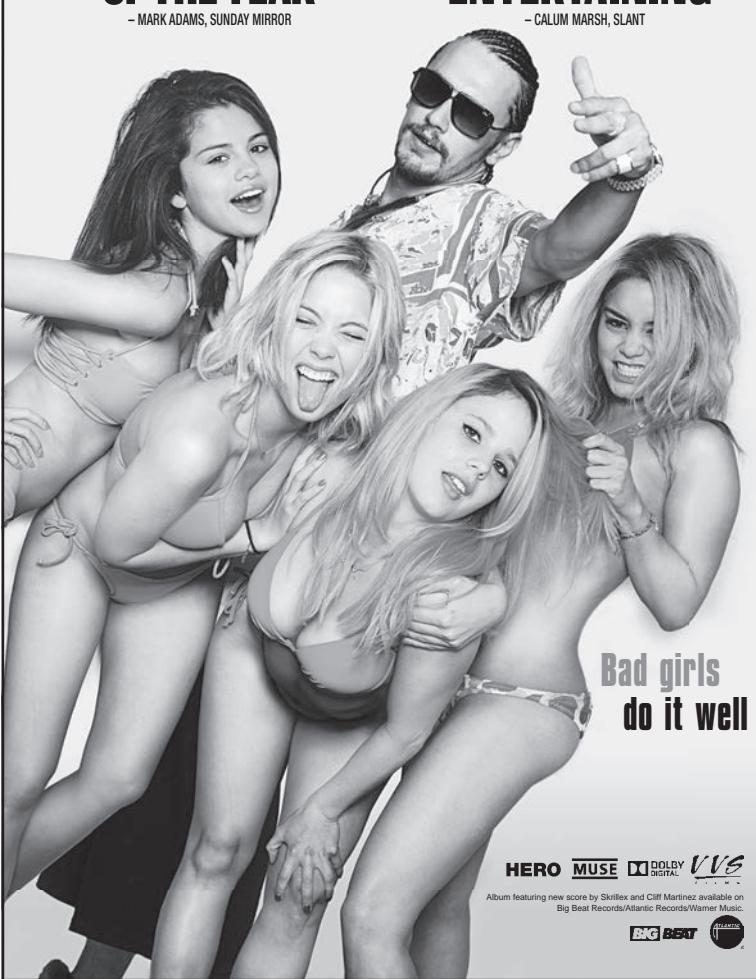
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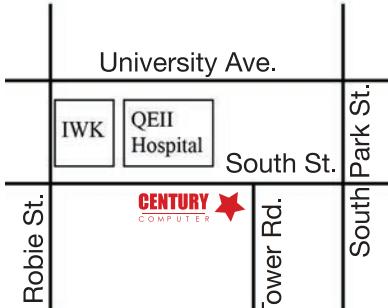
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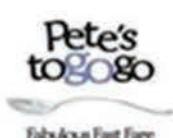
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# THE SEXTANT

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF DALHOUSIE SEXTON CAMPUS

## Piloting a solar-powered portable microgrid in Zanzibar

### Community Forests Pemba builds solar system for the community



Sebastian Manchester  
Contributor  
MASc Candidate

It is amazing what can be built in three weeks. I left Halifax (and my responsibilities as a grad student) in February for Pemba (1/3 of the Zanzibar archipelago). I had a basic plan to bring electricity to a remote island community called Kokota off of the Pemba coast in the Indian Ocean. After three weeks working together with Kokotan locals and an organization called Community Forests Pemba (CFP), we saw the excitement of 80 families as they turned on the lights for the first time ever.

They called me the technician and the Canadian solar engineering expert. They said that I had come to bring them electricity. This made me feel uneasy, given my lack of experience in this type of project, and the countless variables that remained unknown in our plan. What I came to realize over the course of my short time there was that my role was the most straight forward and simple. Design a system, source and buy components, plug them in. They were the experts. They mobilized a community, performed logistical miracles, and built a supply chain out of thin air.

CFP is a sister organization to Community Forests International (CFI), which is based in Sackville, NB. CFI first began working in Pemba on tree planting projects to help communities fight soil erosion and deforestation. The strong uptake among communities led to the founding of CFP, which is now engaged in a number of climate change adaptation and resilience activities across Pemba, ranging from rain-water collection to fuel-efficient cook stoves.



PV installed in Kokota (top), a household lighting system (bottom left), and Kokotans waiting for their batteries to charge (bottom right).

We wanted our energy system to span the island in order to power everybody in the community. The idea arose to develop a "portable micro grid" and avoid the technical difficulties of installing power lines. In the system we built, solar energy is collected and stored centrally and distributed to individual homes using 12 V motorcycle batteries. In each house, the batteries supply power to a 3 W LED lighting system, which provides about 36 hours of light per charge. When the lights go out, the batteries are brought back to charge, which takes about 4 hours. The project also involved electrifying a newly built school (which is where the central system is housed) and a Mosque. At the school, we installed 700 W of PV modules, two inverters capable

of meeting a combined AC load of 1.6 kW, 5 kWh of stationary battery energy storage, and a mobile phone charging station. At the mosque we installed a single 100 W PV module, 1.5 kWh of stationary battery energy storage, a 12 V PA system for the call to prayer, and lighting. To put it in perspective, the total energy demand of the entire village will be supplied by a system which could not even meet the demand of an average Canadian home. The point here is that a little bit goes a long way in a community that cooperates.

The previous successes CFP and CFI have been due to the fact that they develop partnerships with the communities they work in (through grant funding and charitable donations), and provide them with

the means to accomplish their own goals. Kokota wanted electricity, just like they wanted fresh drinking water and a school (past CFI/CFP projects). What so often fails in rural electrification projects is that technology is deployed without a transfer of knowledge and without a support structure. Something breaks, and there is no one to call to fix it (and no electricity to charge your phone to do so). CFP's continued presence on Kokota should prevent this, and the locals I was working with showed an eagerness which makes me confident that when I return later this year, they'll be the technicians showing me how they fixed my design oversights. ☺

## Dalhousie achieves best-ever finish at the GNCTR



Dustin Johnson  
Contributor  
Mechanical '13

Most people who have heard of it think that the concrete toboggan competition, otherwise known as the Great Northern Concrete Toboggan Race (GNCTR), is for civil engineers alone. Not so. Dalhousie's team, captained by a mechanical engineer, with six other mechanicals, three environmentalists, a materials, an electrical, and only two civils, traveled across the country in January

to Vancouver and took third place out of twenty schools, Dalhousie's best-ever showing in many years of competing. Three trophies will soon grace the Alumni Lounge's display cabinets: third place overall, best concrete reinforcement design, and best spirit for a small school. Unlike most other engineering competitions, a major component of team spirit is built into GNCTR. Each school has a theme each year, complete with costumes, chants, and a matching technical display. This year, Dalhousie's theme was Monty Python and the Holy Grail, and we donned shields, tunics, and helmets, galloped around

the event with coconut halves, and walked around downtown Vancouver with swords on our hips.

To bring home these lofty awards, beating out larger and better-funded schools like Ryerson, Waterloo, and UBC, Dalhousie has had to struggle through some difficult times. We've had to work out of the basement of the Heavy Structures Lab. For those not familiar with it, it is not the most organized storage space in the school, and occasionally has trouble with flooding, as we encountered multiple times. Actually building the toboggan also lead to some difficulties: a fabricator was originally supposed to

weld our aluminum frame together, but then received a large emergency job from a major corporation and he had to back out, though he still provided our aluminum. Fortunately, the technicians in the mechanical and civil departments were willing to help out, and the frame was built. Without their aid, we would never have made it. As the winter break drew nigh, and team members departed for their vacations, a valiant few struggled through the final assembly and last-minute design modifications. The reward? The glory of Dalhousie's best-ever performance at the Great Northern Concrete Toboggan Race. ☺



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