

Calgary dwelling on minor details

CALGARY'S CITY COUNCIL PASSED A MOTION on Monday that outlined a research study to review illegal housing units within the city. Many of these suites—estimated to be around 50 000 in total—are considered illegal because of zoning bylaws. For example, some of the residential areas of the city are zoned for single-family dwellings, making basement suites and the like against the law.

Some of the councillors that support the motion argue that allowing multiple tenants in such zones would lower property values in the surrounding area, while others feel that some of the suites that have been converted from basements might not stack up to the City's building codes and could put renters in danger.

While making sure that any secondary suites have proper electrical, plumbing and heating systems is both reasonable and necessary, City councillors calling for a crackdown on secondary suites because of zoning issues are misguided. Simply put, Calgary has a booming economy and one of the lowest vacancy rates in Canada, currently hovering around the area of 0.6 per cent. All indications show that the number of available homes will continue to decrease as more and more people search for a place to call home.

The need for affordable, available housing in Calgary is one that far outweighs concerns over property values, especially in a city where the price for a newly built home has jumped 56 per cent in the last year alone, according to the *Ottawa Business Journal*. Enforcing the single-family zoning bylaw would cause serious problems for the thousands of people living in those 50 000-plus secondary units—namely, homelessness. What's more, many of them are presumably students, seniors and single parents whose limited finances would make it all but impossible to secure any other housing in a city where the average home is going for over \$350 000.

At this stage, City Council has only approved a study on the illegal suites in the city and hasn't yet made any decision on what, if any, action will be taken on the issue. That said, some of the sponsors of the motion have already gone on record stating that they eventually hope to eliminate suites in areas zoned for single-family dwellings.

The City's time and resources could be better spent making sure that any suites are up to code and that those living in them are safe. For a city in dire need of housing, any move to eliminate secondary suites for the sake of property values should be kicked swiftly to the curb.

SCOTT LILWALL
Deputy News Editor

Bush's tactics old hat

ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 9/11 ATTACKS, George Bush wasted no time in inciting fresh fears in his people that the US is "safer, but we are not yet safe" and that his nation is involved in a "struggle for civilizations."

Despite the US system of fixed election dates, one hardly needs a calendar when pre-election rhetoric such as this starts flying. And with the US congressional mid-term elections date fast approaching, the scare tactics are predictably being applied yet again.

While this process involves electing members of the House of Representatives—and not, you know, the president—Congress members control which of the Bush administration's policies become political reality. As such, keeping enough Republicans on his side is Bush's main objective here, and what better way than to scare the electorate into thinking that only his party can protect them?

You don't have to be a disciple of Noam Chomsky to know that a scared population is an obedient one—and one that's willing to sacrifice civil liberties in exchange for promises of safety at the same time. Bush and co know this well, and that's exactly their plan of attack, if you'll pardon the pun. The scariest part: what happens when there's something to be truly terrified about? It appears that Bush and co haven't heard the one about the boy who cried wolf after all.

ADAM GAUMONT
Opinion Editor

LETTERS

Gateway breaks cardinal rule of journalism

Only into the second week of the new school year and the *Gateway* has once again proven why the University of Alberta is in dire need of a Journalism program.

Believe it or not, my grievance is not with the opinion writers or the irrelevant news stories. It is with the blatant disregard for the cardinal rule of front-page photography.

Barring the championship win or loss of the local team of any sport, a sports picture should never be on the front page. This shows a lack of imagination and artistic capability. It screams, "Hey, we have nothing to put on the front page so let's slap on a picture that delivers no news and no thought."

Printing a sports photo on the front page represents the second lowest form of newspaper journalism, only to be outdone by the now-defunct *Dose's* blatant use of advertising on the front page.

We may not have the best newspapers in the world, but check out the latest issue of the *Globe and Mail* and even the *National Post* or the *Edmonton Journal*. You will not find any sports on the front page.

Sports is not news. Please, keep it off the cover and bury it in the "Sports" section where it belongs.

BRAD RICHERT
Philosophy/Religious Studies IV

Breakfast faithful baffled by Powerplant's switch-over siesta

Although I realize that the Powerplant was in need of some sort of restructuring due to the massive monetary losses happening over the last few years, I have to question one of the methods.

One large problem must obviously be that revenue isn't sufficient. So what was one tactic imposed by management? Shut the place down for the peak breakfast time from 10-11am.

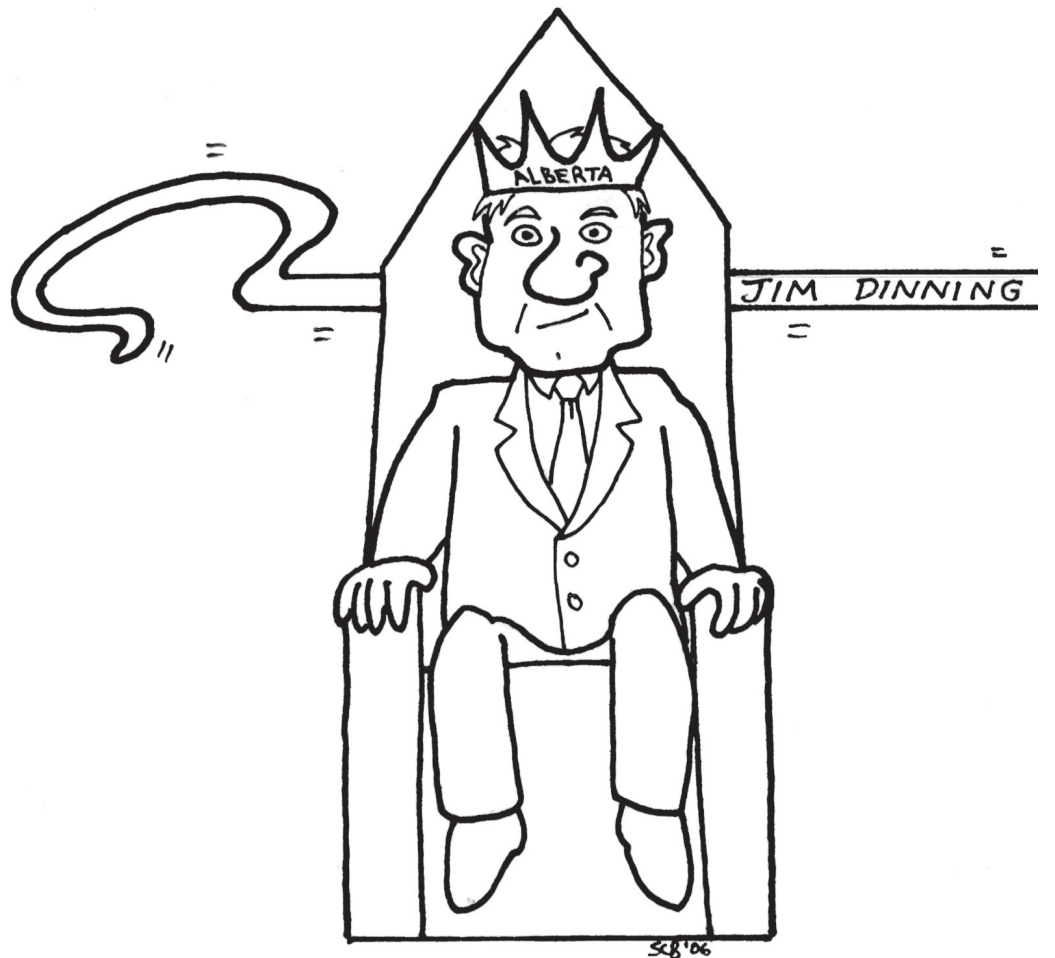
Now I'm part of a large group of friends who have made it a five-year tradition to go for 'Plant breakfast at 10am on Fridays every week, pretty much religiously. We plan our school schedules around it.

So it was a huge disappointment when we found out that even though the place had been open since 7:30am, the doors locked us out at 10am so they could prepare for this almighty 'Plant-salvaging buffet idea.

We were quite upset that we couldn't go give the 'Plant some money and enjoy our long-lived tradition. We even would have paid a bit more for the meals if necessary. Especially considering that in previous years this was a very busy time in there even without our posse, this doesn't make much sense. We even talked to a waitress who was irritated at sending away an hour's worth of tips.

Powerplant, please give us the best part of our week back. We want to throw our money at you, if you'll let us.

MICHAEL KENNEDY
Mechanical Engineering V



'Plant's new buffet likely won't cater to this diet

As an avid supporter of putting things in mouths, I found that Kim Misutka's report on freshman diets (re: "Weight gain a heavy issue," 12 September) raised some very disturbing suggestions. Subway, fifty blueberries and a Figaroo for lunch? What is this, the Blitz?

Students truly interested in maintaining their figure ought to stick to the real university diet: coffee, cigarettes, and prescription amphetamines.

JAMES STORRIE
Arts IV

Article on youth offends legal beagle

While reading Evan Smith's article on being a minor in university (re: "Pity the minor minority," 12 September), I noticed a disappointing error. Smith references the Young Offenders Act, which was replaced by the Youth Criminal Justice Act on 1 April 2003.

It is not as if this is a recent change. I am appalled that a university student would not know the name of the current legislation regarding youths and crime. I am even more appalled that a writer for the campus newspaper would not check his references and by doing so, miseducate his fellow peers.

SAMARA BIRCH
Criminology II

Boob tube no match for commercial-free DVD

In response to your article "I can't

watch TV anymore" (12 September), I don't know if I can resist tuning in for the new season of *Veronica Mars*, but other than that, I'm with you when it comes to swearing off trying to watch series on TV.

The last straw for me came when I discovered the series *Farscape* playing in syndication on WGN. I'd always heard great things about it, but the show seemed to make no sense to me—that is, when it wasn't being moved around or pre-empted for baseball. So I decided it wasn't for me and gave up.

Months later, a friend insisted that I borrow her *Farscape* DVDs, which is when I realized that WGN had been skipping some episodes and showing two seasons simultaneously.

What a difference it was to see the show in order, with no commercials and no pre-emptions. Because of the idiotic TV schedule, I had nearly missed out on one of the most fantastic series I've ever seen. So count me in for the DVD bandwagon. I'd much rather support my favourite shows directly anyway.

MICHELE LEE
Via e-mail

Resident expert lauds Lister review

I'm glad to see that Amanda Ash presented a fair conclusion regarding Lister Hall (re: "rez the roof," 12 September). Listerites are far from the nuckle-dragging, STD-infested nudists that she initially projected. These neanderthals are actually the cream of the crop from every other high school that is outside of the Edmonton area.

Lister Hall takes your university experience to the next level. We

have a 1300-person Dodgeball league, great programs year-round, in-house academic support, tutors, volunteer opportunities, charity fundraisers—and yet we still throw the finest parties on campus. Just because our moms don't do our laundry doesn't make us any less mature than the countless students living at home.

Lister Hall fosters a sense of U of A pride that goes beyond anything I have felt elsewhere on Campus. Just look at WOW, Shinerama, the Students' Union, and the University as a whole: many are comprised of Lister Alumni. For 40 years Lister Hall has been the breeding ground not for a new strand of HIV, but for the leaders of tomorrow.

Want to know the best thing about Rezfest? All proceeds from the 1200 attendees are donated to the Cross Cancer Institute. I encourage all readers possessing misguided stereotypes of Lister to get to know some Listerites—just look for the dodgeball shirts.

MICHAEL JANZ
Lister Hall President

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building, or e-mailed to letters@gateway.ualberta.ca.

The *Gateway* reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libellous or otherwise hateful in nature. The *Gateway* also reserves the right to publish letters online.

To be considered for publication—letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the name, student identification number, program and year of study of the author.